



2014

ISSN: 1945-6195

---

## Librarian, Heal Thyself: A Scholarly Communication Analysis of LIS Journals

Chealsye Bowley & Micah Vandegrift  
[\[0000-0002-6132-3853\]](#) [\[0000-0001-8429-7697\]](#)

---

Bowley, C. & Vandegrift, M. (2014) Heal Thyself: A Scholarly Communication Analysis of LIS Journals. *In the Library with the Lead Pipe*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.994261>

© 2014 by the author(s). This open access article is distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution License, which allows unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, providing the original author and source are credited.

In the Library with the Lead Pipe is published independently every other Wednesday.  
<http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/>

## In Brief

This article presents an analysis of 111 Library and Information Science journals based on measurements of "openness" including copyright policies, open access self-archiving policies and open access publishing options. We propose a new metric to rank journals, the J.O.I. Factor (Journal Openness Index), based on measures of openness rather than perceived rank or citation impact. Finally, the article calls for librarians and researchers in LIS to examine our scholarly literature and hold it to the principles and standards that we are asking of other disciplines.

## Introduction

January 2014 saw the launch of Sponsoring Consortium for Open Access Publishing in Particle Physics ([SCOAP<sup>3</sup>](#)), which was the first major disciplinary or field-specific shift toward open access. Considerable numbers of journals and publishers are moving to embrace open access, exploring a variety of business models, but SCOAP<sup>3</sup> represents a significant and new partnership between libraries, publishers and researchers.<sup>1</sup> Simply, 10 journals under the SCOAP<sup>3</sup> program were converted to open access overnight and are being supported financially by libraries paying article processing charges through a consortium rather than purchasing subscriptions. The Physics field has been at the forefront of open access for more than 20 years, beginning with the foundation of arXiv.org and followed by their premier society, American Physical Society (APS), actively evolving their publications to provide efficient open access options for authors. There has yet to be any such movement in the professional literature of Library and Information Sciences (LIS), despite the fact that the library world is inextricably linked to "open access" both in principle and in practice. The authors note this disciplinary discrepancy, and through an analysis of LIS journals and professional literature hope to inspire those researching and publishing in the LIS field to take control of our professional research practices. We conducted this analysis by grading 111 select LIS journals using a metric we propose to call the "J.O.I Factor"<sup>2</sup> (Journal Openness Index), judging "How Open Is it?" based on a simplified version of the [open access spectrum](#) proposed by Public Library of Science (PLOS), the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC), and the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA). It is our hope that doing so will lead to the shifts in the scholarly communication system that libraries are necessarily pursuing.

---

<sup>1</sup> See Open Access Directory "Journals that converted from Toll Access to Open Access." Accessible at [http://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/Journals\\_that\\_converted\\_from\\_TA\\_to\\_OA](http://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/Journals_that_converted_from_TA_to_OA)

<sup>2</sup> Bolick, J. (2014). "We need a scale to measure the #scholcomm friendliness of a journal: based on @SPARC\_NA and @PLOS #howopenisit: HOII factor?" Tweet available at <https://twitter.com/joshbolick/status/453586422004744193>



## Background

Scholarly publishing is evolving in many ways, as anyone connected to academia knows. Discussions about publishing often center on the potential that digital technology offers to disseminate the results of scholarly research, a role traditionally filled by scholarly associations, societies, university presses, and commercial publishers. Scholars and researchers at institutions ranging from Ivy League universities to state colleges are raising questions about how non-traditional “digital” scholarship will be evaluated, what criteria and credence should be given to new, openly accessible online journals, and what role open access repositories have in disseminating and preserving the scholarly record. Reaching even into public policy, the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) convened a Scholarly Publishing Roundtable in 2009. That group's final report offered the recommendation that each federal research agency (National Science Foundation, National Endowment for the Humanities, etc.) should expeditiously develop and implement public access policies, offering free access to results of federally funded research. 2013 saw OSTP revisit that recommendation and, in response to an overwhelming petition, [issue a directive](#) to all federal funding agencies with more than \$100 million in R&D funding to develop and implement open access policies, similar to the National Institute of Health’s Public Access Policy, in effect since May 2, 2005.

Popular media are also taking up the question of how scholarly publishing will evolve. *The Guardian* regularly features pieces in its Higher Education Network calling for redefinition of the publishing cycle that earns large publishing companies significant financial gains off of the gift economy of intellectual content and peer-reviewing in which faculty participate. [One opinion piece](#) went so far to say, "Academic publishers make Murdoch look like a socialist... down with the knowledge monopoly racketeers." *The Economist* coined the term "[Academic Spring](#)" in a February 2012 piece, referring to faculty's rising discontent with the current system. They cite the example of Timothy Gowers, an award winning Cambridge mathematician who called for a boycott of Elsevier, a large STEM publisher, for its unsatisfactory business practices. As of April

21st, 2014 that boycott, [thecostofknowledge.com](http://thecostofknowledge.com), had 14,599 signatories. Finally, *US News and World Report* [published a piece](#) in July 2012 that opened with Harvard University's Faculty Advisory Council stating "many large journal publishers have made the scholarly communication environment financially unsustainable and academically restrictive."

Responding to these "[tectonic shifts in publishing](#)," university libraries and academic librarians are undergirding a system that is shaky at best. Budgets remain flat, while subscription costs continue to rise; all the while many libraries are investing in staff and infrastructure in the area of scholarly communication, supporting open access initiatives, or moving directly into publishing themselves.<sup>3</sup> While the primary push for adapting this system has been working through disciplinary faculty to change research culture, academic librarians are slowly engaging the idea that publishing practices within our own journals and professional writing could be an effective way to mold the future of academic publishing. The scope of this article is to engage our own community, librarians who publish in professional or academic literature, and target pressure points in our subset of academic publishing that could be capitalized upon to push the whole system forward. We are approaching this topic with the goal of plainly sketching out what LIS publishing looks like currently, in terms of scholarly communication practices like copyright assignment, journal policies for open access self-archiving and open access publishing.

## Literature Review

Studies of this magnitude have been conducted in the recent past, although they have primarily focused on the attitudes of individual librarian authors toward publishing practices more than analyzing the publishing practices and policies journals themselves. Elaine Peterson, in 2006, produced an exploration of *Librarian Publishing Preferences and Open-Access Electronic Journals*, in which she conducts a brief survey. The results show that academic librarians often consider open access journals as a means of sharing their research but hold the same reservations about them as many other disciplines, i.e. concerns about peer review and valuation by administration in terms of promotion and tenure.<sup>4</sup> This line of thought is continued in Snyder, Imre and Carter's 2007 study which focused more specifically on intellectual property concerns of academic librarian authors and allowable self-archiving practices. They quote Peter Suber, author of [Open Access](#) and director of Harvard's Open Access Project, writing, "There is a serious problem [serials pricing and permission crisis], known best to

---

<sup>3</sup> Information pulled from Library Journal's annual Periodicals Price Survey, accessible at <http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2013/04/publishing/the-winds-of-change-periodicals-price-survey-2013/>

<sup>4</sup> Peterson, E. (2006) *Librarian Publishing Preferences and Open-Access Electronic Journals*. *Electronic Journal of Academic and Special Librarianship*, 7(2). Accessible at [http://southernlibrarianship.icaap.org/content/v07n02/peterson\\_e01.htm](http://southernlibrarianship.icaap.org/content/v07n02/peterson_e01.htm)

librarians, and a beautiful solution [open access] within the reach of scholars.’ One can draw the conclusion from Suber’s statement that librarians as authors should be the most prominent supporters of open access and that, as scholars, they would practice self-archiving.”<sup>5</sup> This study in particular lays a unsettling foundation that 50% of respondents cared mostly about publication without considering the copyright policies of the journals in which they published and that only 16% had exercised the right to self-archive in an institutional repository.<sup>6</sup> These and other similar studies highlight the simple fact that concerns about changing publishing habits are the same within librarianship as they are in many other disciplines.

*College and Research Libraries (C&RL)*, a well-regarded journal for academic librarianship, published four articles between 2009 and 2013 that studied the publishing practices of academic librarians through surveys.<sup>7</sup> Each has contributed valuable insights while reaching very similar conclusions across the board. Palmer, Dill and Christie conclude that in attitude, “Librarians are in favor of seeing their profession take some actions toward open access [...] Yet this survey found that agreement with various open access–related concepts does not constitute actual action.”<sup>8</sup> Mercer, focused on the publishing and archiving behaviors rather than attitudes of academic librarians, highlights the substantial differences between the dual role many academic librarians inhabit; library professional first and academic researcher second. She writes, “...librarians may be risk takers in their professional roles, where they are actively encouraging changes in the system of scholarly communication and adoption of new technologies but are risk-averse as faculty in their roles as researchers and authors.”<sup>9</sup> Taken together, the research could lead one to think that academic librarians are invested in changes to the scholarly publishing system about as little as disciplinary faculty and are just as cautious about evolving their own publishing habits.

Many academic authors write and publish out of passion for their research and to contribute to the progression of knowledge in society. Unfortunately, because of the system of measurement in which academia is mired, credentials, merit and perception can also play a substantial role in the publishing decisions of faculty. Without delving too

---

<sup>5</sup> Carter, H., Carolyn Snyder, and Andrea Imre. (2007) "Library Faculty Publishing and Self-Archiving: A Survey of Attitudes and Awareness." portal: Libraries and the Academy, 7(1). Open access version at [http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/morris\\_articles/1/](http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/morris_articles/1/)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Additionally, its partner newsletter, *College and Research Libraries News*, has [run a column dedicated to scholarly communication](#) since 2000.

<sup>8</sup> Palmer, K., Emily Dill, and Charlene Christie. (2009) "Where There's a Will There's a Way?: Survey of Academic Librarian Attitudes about Open Access." *College and Research Libraries*, 70. Accessible at <http://crl.acrl.org/content/70/4/315.full.pdf+html>

<sup>9</sup> Mercer, H. (2011) Almost Halfway There: An Analysis of the Open Access Behaviors of Academic Librarians. *College and Research Libraries*, 72. Accessible at <http://crl.acrl.org/content/72/5/443.full.pdf+html>

deep into the [discussion of tenure for librarians](#), the expectations for publishing in certain journals, or at all, are slightly different for librarians than other university faculty. Both the [h-index](#) and journal [impact factor](#) are measurements of supposed “impact,” based on the citations an article receives, which have in turn been equated with quality.<sup>10</sup> The h-index is an impact measure for an individual, whereas impact factor applies to the journal level. Two recent studies follow Mercer’s line of argument and look at the journals in the LIS field, rather than the authors, using these two traditional measures of “impact”.

Jingfeng Xia conducted a [fascinating study](#) proposing that the h-index of authors published in a journal, as opposed to that journal’s impact factor, could provide an efficient method of ranking LIS journals, especially those that are open access and not listed in [Journal Citation Reports](#). Xia’s article also underscores some of the complications that arise when lumping together all journals in the Library and Information Science field; *Library and Information Science Research* (LISR), a researcher-focused journal published by Elsevier (h-index = 21, impact factor = 1.4, not open access) is judged alongside *D-Lib Magazine* published by the Corporation for National Research Initiatives (h-index = 33, impact factor = 0.7, open access), a journal aimed at the practice of digital librarianship. *LISR*’s impact factor (1.4) is high for LIS journals (median 0.74), but when compared to the h-index of *D-Lib*’s authors *LISR* seems to have less “impact.” Xia’s employment of the h-index as a measurement, illustrated in this example, shows the breadth and depth that alternate matrices may introduce, the complications of judging journal quality based on citations, and the potential inversion of perceived impact depending on how one looks at it.

Expanding on the idea that acknowledging the perceived quality of journals is a valuable practice within librarianship, Judith Nixon’s “Core Journals in Library and Information Science: Developing a Methodology for Ranking LIS Journals” was published in 2013 by *C&RL*. She proposes, based on successful practices at Purdue University Libraries, that “Top LIS journals can be identified and ranked into tiers by compiling journals that are peer-reviewed and highly rated by the experts, have low acceptance rates and high circulation rates, are journals that local faculty publish in, and have strong citation ratings as indicated by an ISI impact factor and a high h-index using Google Scholar data.”<sup>11</sup> The production of a ranked list like this aligns perfectly with the type of study we performed, and our conclusions will highlight some similarities and differences between

---

<sup>10</sup> For more on the issues associated with impact factor, see this Editorial from Nature - <http://blogs.nature.com/news/2013/05/scientists-join-journal-editors-to-fight-impact-factor-abuse.html> A response to these issues is the recent push toward altmetrics (alternative metrics), measuring many other forms of impact beyond simply citations - <http://altmetrics.org/manifesto/>.

<sup>11</sup> Nixon, J. (2014) Core Journals in Library and Information Science: Developing a Methodology for Ranking LIS Journals. *College and Research Libraries*, 75. Accessible at <http://crl.acrl.org/content/75/1/66.full.pdf+html>

Nixon's list and our findings, pitting the Journal Openness Index (J.O.I) Factor against the Top Tier journals she presents.

Whereas some of these studies in LIS publishing focused on the "people" angle, studying librarians and their attitudes and practices around publishing, we chose to follow more recent research and widen the lens to look at the journals in which librarians might publish. A challenge presents itself when broadening to this scale: there is the ever-present blurred line between the publishing habits of working librarians and those of teaching/research faculty in library schools and academic departments -- *Library and Information Science Research* vs. *D-Lib Magazine* for example. There are obvious differences between these groups, so pairing analysis on the specific journals where professional librarians typically publish with the more specific studies on that same group's publishing habits will present the most accurate portrait of the scholarly communication landscape as it has been studied to date. We leave the extension of this research for future study.

## Methodology

Our live dataset is viewable here on a [Google Spreadsheet](#). Downloadable and citeable data are accessible on [figshare](#).

### *Journal Selection*

The journals that we began with came from an internal list compiled as part of a professional development initiative at Florida State University Libraries. A student worker in the Assessment department compiled the original list of 74 journals, and then the co-authors of this piece expanded that list to 111 after consulting the [LIS Publications Wiki](#). The journals were ingested into a spreadsheet with columns for impact factor, scope, instructions for authors, indexing information and other common details. Our first task was to add columns for copyright policy, open access archiving policy, and open access publishing options. Our journal list includes an extraordinarily broad range of journals including research focused journals and those in subfields of librarianship like archives and technical services. This decision was made so as to gather data from the broadest possible representation of LIS scholarship.

### *Data Collection*

After compiling and organizing the journal list, we collected each journal's standard policies on copyright assignment, open access self-archiving ("green open access"), and open access publishing ("gold open access"). We began gathering these data by searching the [SHERPA/RoMEO](#) database for commercial journals and the [Directory of Open Access Journals](#) (DOAJ) for open access journals. After searching these databases, we double checked policies and open access options on the journal and/or publisher's website using the following workflow: locate the policies section of the

website, which is commonly labeled “Policies,” “Policies and Guidelines,” “Author’s Rights,” or “Author’s Guidelines”; identify the copyright policy of the journal; identify the open access self-archiving policy or “[green open access](#)” options that the journal permits; identify the open access publishing or “[gold open access options](#)” of the journal, which may be listed in the policies section or a specific “Open Access Options” section; and finally view the copyright transfer agreement or other author agreement, if available. All details were inputted to the spreadsheet and coded for consistency.

### *J.O.I Factor (Journal Openness Index)*

Grading journals based on how “open” they are, as opposed to citation impact or h-index, is a novel approach, and one that had not been applied to LIS literature to our knowledge. In fact, it is not clear that this measurement has been used extensively in any field or practice aside from the production of the spectrum and some supporting documentation by PLOS, SPARC, and OASPA. Potentially then, as further research is done using the J.O.I Factor, the grades we apply to journals herein may be different based on how many measures of openness are used and how they are counted. Our proposed enumeration of the J.O.I Factor is indicated on the image below, superimposed over the “[How Open Is It?](#)” scale produced by SPARC/PLOS. The application of J.O.I Factors to specific journals is contained to our Conclusion section for purposes of clarity and emphasis.

| Access | Reader Rights                                                                                   | Reuse Rights                                                                                                                          | Copyrights                                                                                         | Author Posting Rights                                                                                             | Automatic Posting                                                                                                                                  | Machine Readability                                                                                                                                                                  | Access |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 4      | Free readership rights to all articles immediately upon publication                             | 4 Generous reuse & remixing rights (e.g., CC BY license)                                                                              | 4 Author holds copyright with no restrictions                                                      | 4 Author may post any version to any repository or website                                                        | 4 Journals make copies of articles automatically available in trusted third-party repositories (e.g., PubMed Central) immediately upon publication | 4 Article full text, metadata, citations, & data, including supplementary data, provided in community machine-readable standard formats through a community standard API or protocol | 4      |
| 3      | Free readership rights to all articles after an embargo of no more than 6 months                | 3 Reuse, remixing, & further building upon the work subject to certain restrictions & conditions (e.g., CC BY-NC & CC BY-SA licenses) | 3 Author holds copyright, with some restrictions on author reuse of published version              | 3 Author may post final version of the peer-reviewed manuscript (“postprint”) to any repository or website        | 3 Journals make copies of articles automatically available in trusted third-party repositories (e.g., PubMed Central) within 6 months              | 3 Article full text, metadata, citations, & data, including supplementary data, may be crawled or accessed through a community standard API or protocol                              | 3      |
| 2      | Free readership rights to all articles after an embargo greater than 6 months                   | 2 Reuse (no remixing or further building upon the work) subject to certain restrictions and conditions (e.g., CC BY-ND license)       | 2 Publisher holds copyright, with some allowances for author and reader reuse of published version | 2 Author may post final version of the peer-reviewed manuscript (“postprint”) to certain repositories or websites | 2 Journals make copies of articles automatically available in trusted third-party repositories (e.g., PubMed Central) within 12 months             | 2 Article full text, metadata, & citations may be crawled or accessed without special permission or registration                                                                     | 2      |
| 1      | Free and immediate readership rights to some, but not all, articles (including “hybrid” models) | 1                                                                                                                                     | 1 Publisher holds copyright, with some allowances for author reuse of published version            | 1 Author may post submitted version/draft of final work (“preprint”) to certain repositories or websites          | 1                                                                                                                                                  | 1 Article full text, metadata, & citations may be crawled or accessed with permission                                                                                                | 1      |
| 0      | Subscription, membership, pay-per-view, or other fees required to read all articles             | 0 No reuse rights beyond fair use/limitations & exceptions to copyright (all rights reserved copyright) to read                       | 0 Publisher holds copyright, with no author reuse of published version beyond fair use             | 0 Author may not deposit any versions to repositories or websites                                                 | 0 No automatic posting in third-party repositories                                                                                                 | 0 Article full text & metadata not available in machine-readable format                                                                                                              | 0      |

\*HowOpenIsIt?™ Open Access spectrum™, © 2013 SPARC and PLOS, licensed under CC BY

The original spectrum breaks openness down to six categories, three of which overlap neatly with the criteria we used in our analysis: 1) Copyrights, 2) Reuse Rights, and 3) Author Posting Rights. The remaining categories, Reader Rights, Automatic Posting, and Machine Readability were mostly ancillary to our focus, and so the J.O.I Factor numbers that we apply only account for the three criteria we researched. The “Reader Rights” category does include some details about embargoes but typically refers to embargoes on the final published PDF released after that term expires by the publisher. Our use of the embargo data point was in terms of Author Posting Rights, so we chose not to include Reader Rights as a category in our J.O.I Factor calculations.

Also, the spectrum lumps open access publishing options, another of our data points, in with Reader Rights as “immediate access to some, but not all, articles (including the ‘hybrid’ model” -- “hybrid” meaning the business model where articles can be made open access on a one-by-one basis for a fee. We decided to add a “-” for journals that offer open access publishing for a fee, illustrating the negative connotation that might have for authors. Journals that are fully open access without any publishing fees will have a J.O.I number and a “+” illustrating positive connotations. *Information Technology and Libraries*, for example, published by Library and Information Technology Association/ALA, would have a J.O.I Factor of 12+; four points for author retention of copyrights, four points for broad reuse rights (CC-BY), four points for the author being allowed to post any version of the article in a repository and “+” for the journal being fully open access without imposing any publication fees.

We hope that the application of the J.O.I Factor in this article serves merely as a proof of concept, and [we invite colleagues to use our data](#), apply J.O.I Factors to all the journals we listed there, and extend this work to account for the full range of possible factors of openness.

## Data Analysis

The most common major publishers from our sample were Taylor & Francis (25 journals), Emerald (12 journals), and Elsevier (8 journals). Commercial publishers were closely followed by Society/Association publishers with 23 journals, and Universities or University Presses at 18. The remainder were either unknown, other types of organizations, smaller publishing houses or “self-affiliated.” The three clearly self-affiliated journals, [First Monday](#), [Code4Lib](#) and [In the Library with the Lead Pipe](#) are all fully open access<sup>12</sup> but have a range of difference in their copyright policies, illustrating the variety of publishing options within the LIS field.

Each journal was assigned a corresponding code for its copyright, open access archiving, and open access publication policies. These codes were used primarily for organizing the information in our spreadsheet, and are not conflated with our proposed J.O.I Factors which are applied after all data were collected, organized, and analyzed. The codes represent the range of possible options under each category, based on the variety of options we identified in the journals we reviewed. For example, the Copyright field could range from (1) required full transfer of copyright to (4) copyright jointly shared between author and publisher. Self-archiving policies ranged from Not Permitted (0) to allowing the final published PDF (6), with a range of embargo periods for each category

---

<sup>12</sup> Our use of “fully open access” throughout this article means published online, freely accessible to anyone with an internet connection, with broad copyright and reuse options for authors and readers respectively.

in between. (See Table 1 for all codes)

**Table 1 - Journal Policy Coded Options**

| Code | Copyright Policy                                             | Code | Archiving Policy                                           |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | Required to transfer copyright                               | 0    | Archiving is not permitted                                 |
| 2    | Author retains copyright                                     | 1    | Pre-print may be archived                                  |
| 1/2  | Choice between transferring or retaining copyright           | 2    | Pre-print and post-print may be archived                   |
| 3    | Author retains copyright, article published under CC license | 2.#  | Pre-print may be archived, post-print after # months       |
| 4    | Copyright jointly shared by author and publisher             | 3    | Post-print may be archived                                 |
|      |                                                              | 4    | Pre-print, post-print, and publisher's PDF may be archived |
| Code | Open Publishing Options                                      | 5    | Post-print and publisher's PDF may be archived             |
| OA   | All articles are published open access                       | 6    | Publisher's PDF may be archived                            |
| APC  | Publishers offers open access publishing for a fee           | 6.#  | Publisher's PDF may be archived after # months             |
| N    | There is no known open publishing option or policy           | UC   | Allowed to archive, but unclear which version              |
| R    | Journal is published openly in a repository                  | UK   | Policy is unknown                                          |

### Copyright Policies

Despite librarianship's [ongoing waltz with copyright complications](#), 43 of the LIS journals we reviewed still require the author to transfer all copyrights to the publisher, “during the full term of copyright and **any extensions or renewals**... including but not limited to the right to publish, republish, transmit, **sell**, distribute and otherwise use the [article] in whole or in part... in derivative works throughout the world, in all languages and in all media of expression **now known or later developed**”<sup>13</sup> (emphasis our own). However, leaning toward a more expansive rights agreement, 61 journals allow the author to retain copyright, 38 of which require a License to Publish be granted to the publisher.<sup>14</sup> 21 of the 38 that require a license granted to the publisher are Taylor & Francis journals, which fall under their [new author rights for LIS journals](#). Taylor and Francis shows leadership in adapting their rights agreements for LIS journals, although one co-author of this article sought to [push them further, with success](#). The remaining 23 journals that allow the author to retain copyright also offer the article to be published under a [Creative Commons](#) (CC) license, ranging from Attribution-Non-Commercial-No Derivatives ([Collaborative Librarianship](#)) to Public Domain (*First Monday*). The boldest and most progressive copyright policy goes to *First Monday*, which offers total author choice, from copyright transfer (©), through every possible Creative Commons license, to releasing the work in the public domain (CC0).

→ Snapshot: 38% of the journals require full transfer of copyright; 54% of the

<sup>13</sup> Language pulled from a standard Wiley agreement, although only one LIS journal we reviewed is published by Wiley. Elsevier would be a better example agreement, but curiously Elsevier's copyright transfer agreements are nearly impossible to find on the web anymore.

<sup>14</sup> Further study should be dedicated to determining if these “licenses to publish” are exclusive, non-exclusive or have other clauses that render them less than they seem.

journals allow authors to retain copyright; 5.4% had a choice between full copyright transfer and retaining some rights; 2.7% were unknown and 0.9% had joint copyright between the author and publisher.

*Open Access Self-Archiving Policies (Green open access)*

This category provided the broadest range of possibilities, mostly due to the fact that different publishers assign different terms of embargo for self-archiving. Assuming that well-informed LIS authors who submit to these journals desire the simplest and broadest open access options, 24 journals allow the pre-print (submitted version), post-print (accepted version) and final published PDF to be archived in an [open access institutional repository](#), with no stated embargos. 22 of these 24 are fully open access journals, and they are all published by societies, associations, universities or self-affiliated groups. [Common thought in academic publishing](#) tends to say that society/association publishers lose the most when going open access; it is heartening to see this is absolutely untrue in LIS literature. The strictest embargo on self-archiving in an institutional repository is 18 months for 10 of the Taylor and Francis journals. University of Texas Press and University of Chicago Press both allow archiving after 12 months, while ironically, given the topic of the journal, the *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* published by Toronto University Press only allows archiving of the pre-print with no policies for post-prints.

An important point to consider when discussing self-archiving policies is the farce that they truly are. Kevin Smith, Duke University's Scholarly Communication Officer stated it most plainly in his February 5 blog post titled [It's the Content, Not the Version!](#) He writes,

...this notion of versions is, at least in part, an artificial construction that publishers use to assert control while also giving the appearance of generosity in their licensing back to authors of very limited rights to use earlier versions. The versions are artificially based on steps in the publication permission process (before submission, peer-review, submission, publication), not on anything intrinsic to the work itself that would justify a change in copyright status.<sup>15</sup>

The practice of self-archiving is totally dependent on copyright transfer agreements, and based on the representative sample of LIS journals we reviewed, all but 8% had direct or implied policies regarding what the author is allowed to do with specific versions of the same work. The author's false sense of control over their work and the publishers exploitation of that sense deserves a study unto its own. Suffice it to say that if the field

---

<sup>15</sup> Smith, K. (2014) Its the content, not the version! Scholarly Communications @ Duke [blog], posted on February 5. Accessible at <http://blogs.library.duke.edu/scholcomm/2014/02/05/its-the-content-not-the-version/>

of Library and Information Studies considers a green open access policy a good deal, there is much work to be done.

- Snapshot: 45% allow pre-print and post-print archiving; 13% allow pre-print and post-print archiving after 12-18 months; 21% allow pre-print, post-print, and publisher's PDF to be archived; 4.5% have unclear policies and 2.7% are unknown.

#### *Open Access Publishing Policies (Gold open access)*

[A common misconception](#) about achieving open access is that it always requires a fee on the part of the author. While this is mostly true for traditional commercial publishers attempting to retain their income stream while “acquiescing” to the desires of their authors, it is a falsity broadly, which is proven in our analysis. 56 journals offer open access on an article-by-article basis and require an article processing charge (APC) ranging from \$300 to \$3,000. 52 of these are published by commercial publishers (Elsevier, Sage, Springer, Wiley, Taylor and Francis, and Emerald). In stark contrast, 35 journals on our list are fully open access and all articles are published without a fee. A significant number, 20 journals, either do not offer a “gold open access” publication option or do not publicize it. A number of the 20 journals that do not offer or publicize a paid open access business model are University Presses (6), and association/society journals (7).

- Snapshot: 32% of journals are already Open Access and publish without a fee, 50% offer open access publication options through an article processing charge, and 18% of journals offer no gold option or do not publicize it.

#### *Open Access LIS Journals*

As noted above, within these LIS journals there is considerable diversity in policies. We wanted to further explore that depth of difference by looking specifically at the fully open access journals in our sample. This section reiterates some of the analyses from previous sections, but we thought it still important to enumerate the complexities of publishing within this subset of a subset. 38 of the 111 journals that we looked at are open access, and only two (The *International Journal of Library Science* and *IFLA Journal*) have a publication charge, \$300 and \$1500 respectively. While two of the 38 open access journals require a full copyright transfer (*International Journal of Library Science* and *Student Research Journal*) a little more than half of them (21) allow the author to keep copyright AND attach a Creative Commons license to the work.<sup>16</sup> 27 of these fully open access journals allow the author to deposit the final published PDF in a repository, meaning that 11 fully open access journals either place some restrictions on

---

<sup>16</sup> CC-BY is the most common license for these 21 open access journals.

the reuse of open access content or have poorly defined reuse policies.

Even though these are open access journals, the data suggests that what qualifies as “open access” even within our own field is still loosely defined, a point we attempt to illustrate by applying the J.O.I. Factor at the close of this article. Some might make the argument that any restriction of authors’ rights (copyright) and readers’ rights (reuse via licenses) toes the line of not achieving pure open access. Emily Drabinski, a reviewer of this article, made the salient point that the policies we discuss as needing to change are under the purview of journal editorial boards who are often in the complicated position of being between authors (colleagues) and publishers. To that end, we encourage journal Editors as well as authors to [lead by taking action](#). Regardless, as the measures of openness are more effectively discussed within our communities of practice, the LIS field is making slow progress toward public access (readability) and open access (re-usability), a trend we expect to broaden and deepen.

## Conclusions

This article illustrates something with which every researcher in the field of Library and Information Studies must contend. A significant percentage of our professional literature is still owned and controlled by commercial publishers whose role in scholarly communication is to maintain “the scholarly record,” yes, but also to generate profits at the expense of library budgets by selling our intellectual property back to us. Conversely, there is much to be proud of, including the many association, society and University-sponsored journals that are well-respected and proving important points about the viability of open access as a business model, a dissemination mechanism, and a principle to which librarians hold -- our “free to all” heritage. It is our hope that this article inspires the activism that the earlier articles from our review of the literature pointed out as a disturbing discrepancy in our professional practice. Simply, this is our call for librarians to practice what we preach, regardless of, or even in the face of, tenure and promotion “requirements,” long-held professional norms, and the unnecessary fear, uncertainty and doubt that control academic publishing. We already have models for activism on the [collections side of our work](#); we call our colleagues to echo those impulses on the production side of scholarship, as Editors, authors, bloggers, [library publishers](#), and consumers of research.

There are three practical means of seeding this change; 1) exercise the right to self-archive every piece of scholarship published in LIS journals, or better yet never give those rights away in the first place; 2) move the “prestige” to open access, meaning offering the best work to journals that are invested in a more benevolent scholarly communication system; and 3) as Editors, work diligently to adapt the policies and procedures for the journals we control to align with our professional principles of access,

expansive understanding of copyrights, fair use, and broad reusability.

Returning to “Nixon’s list,” which proposed a possible ranking system for LIS journals, it is interesting to grade her list in terms of the “openness” criteria we’ve employed in this article, and in light of the practical actions we propose. Nixon’s findings present 18 journals that were determined to be the “Tier One” journals, based on the criteria she and her colleagues developed.<sup>17</sup> 11 of those were also identified as top LIS journals from her literature review. Table 2 shows those 11 “prestige” journals, as graded by our applied J.O.I Factor.

Table 2: Tier One LIS Journals graded by J.O.I Factor

| Journal                                  | Publisher                                                        | J.O.I Factor | Copyright                                                                                                | Reuse Rights                                   | Open access archiving                                               | Open access publishing                                                       |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Information Technology and Libraries     | Library and Information Technology Association (ALA)             | 12+          | Author retains (J.O.I 4)                                                                                 | Published CC-BY (J.O.I 4)                      | Allowed to deposit any version (J.O.I 4)                            | Open Access journal, no fees. (J.O.I +)                                      |
| College & Research Libraries             | Association of College and Research Libraries (ALA)              | 9+           | Author retains, License to Publish granted to Publisher (J.O.I 4)                                        | N/A (J.O.I 1)                                  | Allowed to deposit Publisher's PDF (J.O.I 4)                        | Open Access journal, no fees. (J.O.I +)                                      |
| Library Trends                           | Johns Hopkins University Press                                   | 4            | Copyright transfer to publisher required (J.O.I 0)                                                       | All Rights Reserved (J.O.I 0)                  | Allowed to deposit any version (J.O.I 4)                            | N/A                                                                          |
| Library Quarterly                        | U of Chicago Press                                               | 4            | Copyright transfer to publisher required (J.O.I 0)                                                       | All Rights Reserved (J.O.I 0)                  | Allowed to deposit Publisher's PDF after 12 month embargo (J.O.I 4) | N/A                                                                          |
| Library Resources & Technical Services   | Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALA) | 4 or 9       | Author can choose copyright assignment (J.O.I 0) or License to Publish (J.O.I 4)                         | All Rights Reserved (J.O.I 0) or N/A (J.O.I 1) | Allowed to deposit any version (J.O.I 4)                            | All issues from vol. 40 through the fifth-most-recent issue are open access. |
| Reference and User Services Quarterly    | Reference and User Services Association (ALA)                    | 4 or 9       | Author can choose copyright assignment (J.O.I 0) or License to Publish (J.O.I 4)                         | All Rights Reserved (J.O.I 0) or N/A (J.O.I 1) | Allowed to deposit any version (J.O.I 4)                            | N/A                                                                          |
| The Journal of Academic Librarianship    | Elsevier                                                         | 2-           | Copyright transfer to publisher required (J.O.I 0)                                                       | All Rights Reserved (J.O.I 0)                  | Allowed to deposit pre- and post-print (J.O.I 2)                    | \$3000 (J.O.I -)                                                             |
| Journal of Documentation                 | Emerald                                                          | 2-           | Copyright transfer to publisher required (J.O.I 0)                                                       | All Rights Reserved (J.O.I 0)                  | Allowed to deposit pre- and post-print (J.O.I 2)                    | \$1595 (J.O.I -)                                                             |
| JASIST                                   | Wiley                                                            | 2-           | Copyright transferred to the American Society for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T). (J.O.I 0) | All Rights Reserved (J.O.I 0)                  | Allowed to deposit pre- and post-print (J.O.I 2)                    | Open access publishing offered, for an undisclosed fee. (J.O.I -)            |
| Library and Information Science Research | Elsevier                                                         | 2-           | Copyright transfer to publisher required (J.O.I 0)                                                       | All Rights Reserved (J.O.I 0)                  | Allowed to deposit pre- and post-print (J.O.I 2)                    | \$3000 (J.O.I -)                                                             |
| Library Journal                          | Media Source, Inc.                                               | N/A          | Trade Publication - Unknown                                                                              | Trade Publication - Unknown                    | Trade Publication - Unknown                                         | Trade Publication - Unknown                                                  |

The results are striking. *College and Research Libraries*, widely regarded as a top journal for practicing librarians, received a J.O.I Factor of 9+, whereas *Information Technology and Libraries* (ITAL) measures at 12+, all because of ITAL’s generous

<sup>17</sup> “Top LIS journals can be identified and ranked into tiers by compiling journals that are peer-reviewed and highly rated by the experts, have low acceptance rates and high circulation rates, are journals that local faculty publish in, and have strong citation ratings as indicated by an ISI impact factor and a high h-index using Google Scholar data.” Nixon, J. (2013), <http://crl.acrl.org/content/early/2012/07/23/crl12-387.full.pdf>

Reuse Rights policy (CC-BY). *JASIST* is tied for last place (J.O.I Factor 2-) with Elsevier and Emerald journals because of copyright transfer requirements, no reuse rights and middling author posting allowances. *Library Trends* and *Library Quarterly* (university press journals) sit solidly in the middle, entirely due to their author posting policies which allow posting the Publisher's PDF.

Based on this, in closing, we submit these final questions to the LIS research community: are these the journals we want on a top tier list, and what measure of openness will we define as acceptable for our prestigious journals? Further, how long will we tolerate measurements like impact factor and h-index guiding our criteria for advancement, while accounting for very little that matters to how we principle ourselves and our work? Finally, has the time come and gone for LIS to lead the shifts in scholarly communication? It is our hope that this article prompts furious and fair debate, but mostly that it produces real, substantive evolution within our profession, how we research, how we assign value to scholarship, and how we share the products of our intellectual work.

*Our thanks and gratitude go to Emily Drabinski for her thoughtful, helpful and engaging comments as the external reviewer of this article. Thanks also to Lead Pipe colleagues and editors, Ellie, Erin, and Hugh, for challenging our ideas, correcting our bad grammar and making this lump of coal into a diamond. Most of all, thanks to Brett for proposing the term "Journal Openness Index" to replace our not creative and weird-sounding original concept.*

## Bibliography

Peterson, E. (2006) Librarian Publishing Preferences and Open-Access Electronic Journals. *Electronic Journal of Academic and Special Librarianship*, 7(2). Accessible at [http://southernlibrarianship.icaap.org/content/v07n02/peterson\\_e01.htm](http://southernlibrarianship.icaap.org/content/v07n02/peterson_e01.htm)

Carter, H., Carolyn Snyder, and Andrea Imre. (2007) "Library Faculty Publishing and Self-Archiving: A Survey of Attitudes and Awareness." portal: Libraries and the Academy, 7(1). Open access version at [http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/morris\\_articles/1/](http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/morris_articles/1/)

Palmer, K., Emily Dill, and Charlene Christie. (2009) "Where There's a Will There's a Way?: Survey of Academic Librarian Attitudes about Open Access." *College and Research Libraries*, 70. Accessible at <http://crl.acrl.org/content/70/4/315.full.pdf+html>

Mercer, H. (2011) Almost Halfway There: An Analysis of the Open Access Behaviors of Academic Librarians. *College and Research Libraries*, 72. Accessible at <http://crl.acrl.org/content/72/5/443.full.pdf+html>

Nixon, J. (2014) Core Journals in Library and Information Science: Developing a Methodology for Ranking LIS Journals. *College and Research Libraries*, 75. Accessible at <http://crl.acrl.org/content/75/1/66.full.pdf+html>

Smith, K. (2014) Its the content, not the version! *Scholarly Communications @ Duke* [blog], posted on February 5. Accessible at <http://blogs.library.duke.edu/scholcomm/2014/02/05/its-the-content-not-the-version/>

## Data

Vandegrift, Micah; Bowley, Chealsye (2014): LIS Journals measured for "openness." figshare. <http://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.994258>

## Other readings

Malenfant, K. J. (2010) Leading Change in the System of Scholarly Communication: A Case Study of Engaging Liaison Librarians for Outreach to Faculty. *College & Research Libraries*, 71. Accessible at <http://crl.acrl.org/content/71/1/63.full.pdf+html>

Sugimoto, C. R., Tsou, A., Naslund, S., Hauser, A., Brandon, M., Winter, D., ... Finlay, S. C. (2012) Beyond gatekeepers of knowledge: Scholarly communication practices of

academic librarians and archivists at ARL institutions. College & Research Libraries, 75. Accessible at <http://crl.acrl.org/content/75/2/145.full.pdf+html>

Xia, J. (2012) Positioning Open Access Journals in a LIS Journal Ranking. College & Research Libraries, 73. Accessible at <http://crl.acrl.org/content/73/2/134.full.pdf+html>

Henry, D. and Tina M. Neville. (2004) Research, Publication, and Service Patterns of Florida Academic Librarians. The Journal of Academic Librarianship, 30. Open access version at <http://hdl.handle.net/10806/200>. Published version at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2004.07.006>

Joswick, K. (1999) Article Publication Patterns of Academic Librarians: An Illinois Case Study. College & Research Libraries, 60. Accessible at <http://crl.acrl.org/content/60/4/340.full.pdf+html>

Hart, R. (1999) Scholarly Publication by University Librarians: A Study at Penn State. College & Research Libraries, 60. Accessible at <http://crl.acrl.org/content/60/5/454.full.pdf+html>

Wiberley, Jr., S. Julie M. Hurd, and Ann C. Weller (2006) Publication Patterns of U.S. Academic Librarians from 1998 to 2002. College & Research Libraries, 67. Accessible at <http://crl.acrl.org/content/67/3/205.full.pdf+html>

Harley, D.; Acord, Sophia Krzys; Earl-Novell, Sarah; Lawrence, Shannon; & King, C. Judson. (2010). Assessing the Future Landscape of Scholarly Communication: An Exploration of Faculty Values and Needs in Seven Disciplines. UC Berkeley: Center for Studies in Higher Education. Accessible at <http://www.escholarship.org/uc/item/15x7385g>

Frass, W. Jo Cross, and Victoria Gardener (2013) Taylor and Francis Open Access Survey - Supplement 1-8 Data Breakdown by Subject Area. Accessible at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/openaccess/opensurvey>

Priego, E. (2012) Fieldwork: Mentions of Library Science Journals Online. Accessible at <http://www.altmetric.com/blog/fieldwork-mentions-library-journals-online/>

The Price of Information (Feb. 2012) <http://www.economist.com/node/21545974>  
A (free) roundup of content on the Academic Spring (April 2012)  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/higher-education-network/blog/2012/apr/12/blogs-on-the-academic-spring>

Academic Publishers make Murdoch look like a Socialist (Aug. 2011)

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/aug/29/academic-publishers-murdoch-socialist>

Is the Academic Publishing Industry on the Verge of Disruption? (July 2012)

<http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2012/07/23/is-the-academic-publishing-industry-on-the-verge-of-disruption>