

The Right to be Forgotten: Scholarly Communication and Ethics

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Abstract

Scholarly communications often values free access above all else, but what happens when that drive for openness conflicts with ethical issues of consent and ownership? In this CARL IG Showcase panel, members of SCORE (Scholarly Communication and Open Resources for Education) will discuss some of the thorny issues of ethics and scholarly communication, including: consent (particularly among diverse communities outside of the institution) and digital collections, students as information creators / library as publisher, and decolonizing who we consider scholars and what we consider scholarship. This panel will feature speakers who will share current discussions and personal stories on issues pertinent to scholarly communication and ethics.

Panel Member: Amanda Makula

Biography

Amanda Makula is the Digital Initiatives Librarian and Liaison to Ethnic Studies and Digital Humanities at the University of San Diego. She manages USD's institutional repository, Digital USD; conducts outreach and education on issues related to open access, intellectual property, and copyright; advocates for new and open practices in scholarly communication; engages faculty and students in digital projects and information fluency; and oversees USD's annual Digital Initiatives Symposium.

Contribution

Makula spoke about the [San Diego Lowrider Archival Project](#), a collaborative, interdisciplinary endeavor between the University of San Diego and the local San Diego lowrider community, to recover and document the history of lowriding in San Diego and the surrounding borderlands by preserving and showcasing photographs, car club documents, memorabilia, dance posters, lowrider art, and more. The project celebrates the lowrider movement and the qualities that it embodies -- creativity, independence, cultural pride, resistance, activism, community service, collectivism, tradition and ritual, and cultural continuity -- and aims to engage and inspire key constituents and community members, including: current and future lowriders, educators and elders, regional car club members, students and employees at USD, and the public, thus encouraging relationship-formation and bridge-building across diverse groups.

Makula shared images and stories from the collection alongside its background history and context. She presented the origin of the project and the collaboration between a USD faculty member in Ethnic Studies, the director of community engagement at a non-profit organization, and the university library. This partnership resulted in a community “scan day,” in which members of the lowrider community were invited to share their materials, followed by a coordinated effort to curate the items and ingest them into the institutional repository.

The presentation also addressed key issues and considerations that arose throughout the process, such as informed consent among participants, skepticism and suspicion of the university’s motivations, uncertain copyright status, and avenues for participants to voice concerns, issue corrections, or request removal. Makula discussed efforts to address these concerns and emphasized the importance of building strong connections with the lowrider community in order to position their voices at the center of the project. Today, publicity and partnership endeavors are underway to promote awareness of the collection and increase community involvement.

Panel Member: Kristin Laughtin-Dunker

Biography

Kristin Laughtin-Dunker is the Coordinator of Scholarly Communications & Electronic Resources in the Leatherby Libraries at Chapman University. She manages Chapman’s institutional repository, [Chapman University Digital Commons](#), which houses scholarship and creative activity by Chapman faculty, students, and staff, and also disseminates the library’s Special Collections and Archives. She also assists scholars with questions about issues such as open access, copyright, citation metrics, and data management; oversees the selection, acquisition, and maintenance of the library’s electronic resources; and serves as the liaison to the School of Communication, Department of Sociology, Honors Program, and Alumni Alcove.

Contribution

Laughtin-Dunker discussed ethical issues pertaining to the balance of power between creators of intellectual property, illustrated by two examples from the [Chapman University Digital Commons](#). The first involved student-faculty collaborations that were presented in poster format at the twice-yearly [Student Research Days](#). She discussed the process by which student posters are added to the repository, how it has evolved over the past several years, and the ethical ramifications of the current process. Initially, students were asked whether they would like to submit their poster to the repository at the time they applied to present, a process which did not allow for faculty input. After this drew protest from collaborating faculty members who did not want their early-stage work disseminated, the process was updated so that faculty members had to be asked for permission before the library could reach out to the students—even in cases where faculty were not collaborators and did not own the intellectual property. This raises questions about the balance of power between collaborators and who gets the right to make dissemination decisions, and also issues of equity for students not granted the option to disseminate their posters (even if they own all of the IP). Laughtin-Dunker also discussed the ethical issues behind several requests for removal of individual posters from the repository.

The second portion related to a collaboration between an undergraduate journalism class and underage students at a local middle school, who collaboratively create a volume of editorials that are [disseminated through Chapman's repository](#). Laughtin-Dunker discussed the ethical issues of getting consent from the underage students' parents, the perceived fears of incrimination of interview subjects, and possible desires for redaction as the underage students come of age.

Panel Member: Paige Mann

Biography

Paige Mann is the Scholarly Communications Library and STEM Librarian at the University of Redlands. Her research interests include interrogating the norms of who counts as scholars and what counts as scholarship. Her responsibilities include managing the institutional repository, leading the library committee on open access and open educational resources, and teaching information literacy classes.

Contribution

Mann began with a statement that people have been creating new knowledge across the world since their existence. She contrasted that with the current definition that requires a terminal degree which typically means a Ph.D. after having completed a dissertation. However, both of these have only become a global norm in the last century, and institutions granting these badges of honor gained this authority only in the previous century. The value of these institutions and degrees are undisputed, but issues arise when we consider who we include and exclude in these

relatively recent and restrictive definitions, and who we make exceptions for (e.g., Aristotle, Galileo, and Newton).

This underscores the fact that we use a scholarly endorsement system rooted in Western ideologies which elevate individuals, observable and disembodied knowledge, as well as modern understandings of knowledge that can be owned and exchanged for a profit. This simultaneously subordinates nature, knowledge of a spiritual or intangible nature, knowledge based on relationships or tradition, embodied knowledge, and knowledge of no commercial value.

Contrasting Western interpretations of knowledge with non-Western interpretations, Mann asserted that scholarship as Westerners currently understand it did not develop naturally or inevitably, nor it is universally understood. Rather political agendas legitimize and protect Western forms of knowledge and can be observed in systems such as copyright law which overlooks unfixed knowledge, and the market which disregards knowledge that can neither be copyrighted nor commodified.

Moderator: Lana Mariko Wood

Biography

Lana Mariko Wood is the Health Sciences and Scholarly Communication Librarian at California State University, East Bay. She is also the current chair of the Scholarly Communication and Open Resources for Education (SCORE) Interest Group. Her research interests include the intersections of scholarly communication and information literacy.

Contribution

Wood began the panel with an introduction to the topic and information about SCORE. She moderated the Q&A session following the presentation, where questions and discussion ranged from technical to philosophical, and helped to further illustrate the connections between the three presenters.