

Digital Humanities Observatory

Ireland's window on humanities e-scholarship

A project of the  ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY
ACADAMH RÍOGA NA HÉIREANN

Discovering Open-Access Resources

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Open-access literature

OA literature is:

- online
- freely available to read, download, and share

More from Peter Suber at <http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/overview.htm>



E-MAGINATION: SOURCING, EVALUATING & DELIVERING ELECTRONIC INFORMATION RESOURCES

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Open-access literature

OA literature is:

- online
- freely available to read, download, and share

This does not mean that there is no:

- copyright
- peer review
- revenue
- indexing and abstracting
- print version
- prestige

More from Peter Suber at <http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/overview.htm>



In short, there is a lot of OA literature worth accessioning in your online catalogue, online research guides, or both.

But how do you find it?



Directory of Open Access Journals

Thousands of journal titles:

- browse by subject
- browse by title
- search by title

Does not include:

- delayed OA journals (in which recent articles are not available until after an embargo period)
- hybrid OA journals (in which selected articles are freely available)

Directory of Open Access Journals

The knowledge base behind your OpenURL resolver or federated search system probably includes them already.

You can also harvest metadata about them using OAI-PMH.

OpenJ-Gate

Includes more than DOAJ, but criteria for inclusion are unclear.

Note that 'quick search' covers journal articles, not journal titles.

For users: cross-journal searching

DOAJ and OpenJ-Gate allow you to search the article-level metadata (like a journal indexing service).

In DOAJ, this only works on selected titles.

[JURN](#) offers an interface for searching the fulltext of journals.

Preprints

According to [SHERPA/RoMEO](http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/):

- 63% of publishers allow some form of self-archiving
- 97% of journal titles allow some form of self-archiving

That's a lot of content potentially available on faculty webpages, in institutional repositories, and on preprint servers!

<http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/statistics.php>

<http://romeo.eprints.org/stats.php>

Faculty webpages

If you search for known article titles in a search engine, you may find the article posted on a personal webpage.

There's no hope of monitoring content to add to any local research guide or catalogue.

Institutional repositories

An IR is a service that allows authors at an institution to upload content and supply metadata for archiving and publishing online.

While IRs have searching and browsing interfaces, most of their traffic comes from search engines, which can take advantage of the structured metadata.

IRs can be searched through:

- [Scientific Commons](#)
- [Google Scholar](#) (includes non-OA resources)
- [OAster database](#) (includes non-OA resources and things that aren't scholarly literature)

Preprint servers (and other subject repositories)

These let you search and browse articles in specific disciplines and have well-developed notification services for new content.

Since you probably won't add individual articles to your catalogue or research guide, better just to point users to these services.

These services are listed:

- in the Open Access Directory under [Disciplinary repositories](#)
- in Wikipedia along with other [academic database and search engines](#)
- in [OpenDOAR](#)

Beyond discovery

What does this mean for the future?



Disintermediation?

Subject repositories and metadata harvesting systems can connect users with self-archived copies of scholarly literature.

The following functions of journals are losing importance:

- providing most accessible version
- providing version of record for readers
- filtering mechanism for readers

Disintermediation?

However, journals still provide the version of record for authors (for promotion in universities)

In many disciplines, they still provide the most trusted mechanism for peer review.

If institutional cultures become more accepting of non-traditional publishing and if subject repositories build trusted mechanisms for peer review, we may no longer need journals!

Cancelling subscriptions?

You might try searching for open-access versions of the articles in a given issue to see how many are available online. If a high proportion can be found that way, and you're willing to assist users used to finding them in the print version or through an online subscription, you could, in theory, cancel your subscription.

However, publisher 'big deals' make it impractical to cancel subscriptions to individual publications.

What can I do to promote OA?

[What you can do to promote open access](#) contains suggestions for:

- faculty
 - librarians
 - administrators
 - students
 - journal editorial boards
 - learned societies
- and more.

Evangelisation to your researchers

Point them to:

- [Create Change](#): ‘an educational initiative that examines new opportunities in scholarly communication, advocates changes that recognize the potential of the networked digital environment, and encourages active participation by scholars and researchers to guide the course of change’
- [OER Commons](#): a portal on open education resources, which they can use (and improve!) for teaching to save their students money on buying textbooks

Slides available (free registration required) at

<http://dho.ie/node/659>

