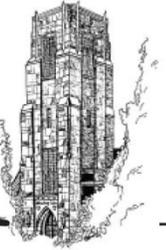


BELL TOWER



VOLUME 6, NUMBER 1, Fall 2012

The Open Question of Open Access

Many things feel free because we don't pay when we use them. Taxes fund roads, but we don't notice a cost until we drive through a toll booth. Until the printing credit from student fees runs out, printing seems free. It feels like you can check out books and read journal articles from the library for free. But library resources are not free; when it comes to journals, each year we struggle to buy the best titles, balancing a limited budget against ever-increasing journal prices.

And Geneva is not alone in this struggle: the increasing cost of journals affects all libraries; even large research universities are canceling expensive journal subscriptions. *Time* reported that Harvard spends \$3.75 million annually on journals, with some titles reaching \$40,000 each year; Harvard's two top journal publishers raised prices 145% over the last six years. See Wagstaff.

But why the spiraling prices? While it's true that producing a scholarly journal costs something, portions of producing it cost nothing. Authors write scholarly articles to disseminate their research, without pay. Professors peer review the articles, without pay. Digital journals have no printing and mailing costs, and word processing programs reduce the cost of typesetting print journals. Despite these savings, however, most journal prices are rising much faster than inflation.

In response, librarians and other scholars have championed the notion of *open access* for scholarly publishing. The Budapest Open Access Initiative credits the main benefit of open access as journal articles having "immediate, free availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search or link to the full text of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software or use them for any other lawful purpose ..." Open access scholar and advocate Peter Suber, describes the goal of open access as to "[m]ake research literature available online without price barriers and without most permission barriers."

"Make research literature available online without price barriers and without most permission barriers." Suber, *Open Access*

Without annual subscriptions or article access fees, journals adopting this open access model must find other ways to cover journal production and distribution expenses. Some universities help by hosting the journal on their web server, for example. Some journals are funded by author fees: after an article is accepted, the author pays a fee for editing and publishing it online. To overcome this author-paid barrier, some institutions, Dartmouth, MIT, Cornell, and others, are experimenting with subsidizing the cost. Their model,

called "The Compact for Open-Access Publishing Equity," aims to "underwrite reasonable publication charges for articles written by their faculty and published in fee-based open-access journals when other funding sources are not available. The compact recognizes that publishers add value and seeks to minimize the financial risks to publishers willing to move to a fee-based open-access model." See Cornell Library.

Regardless of novel or innovative ideas, speculative funding sources lead to concerns whether open access is a sustainable business model. Voluntary subscriptions and author fees may not be reliable enough to ensure that the journal content remains perpetually online. Will open access journals be forced to turn to advertising, and catering to the demands of advertisers or other monied interests? Will material that was open access be taken down because the publisher can't afford to pay for the website any longer?

Despite these questions, some journals have been successfully publishing open access for over a decade. It is a fundamentally different, still evolving cost model for journal publishing, but in this time of tight budgets for colleges it may end up as the best way for scholars to make knowledge available to the most people. If you are interested in open access, browse the links below to learn more or talk to a librarian. <http://bitly.com/bundles/kef135lib/2>



Learn more about open access

- Open Access 101 from SPARC <http://vimeo.com/6973160>
- Cornell Library Compact www.library.cornell.edu/compact/
- *The Access Principle: The Case for Open Access to Research and Scholarship* by John Willinsky Z286.O63 W55 2006
- "Open Access Overview" by Peter Suber <http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/overview.htm>
- "If Harvard Can't Afford Academic Journal Subscriptions, Maybe It's Time for an Open Access Model," by Keith Wagstaff <http://techland.time.com/2012/04/26/if-harvard-cant-afford-academic-journal-subscriptions-maybe-its-time-for-an-open-access-model/#ixzz2BeDL3ogD>

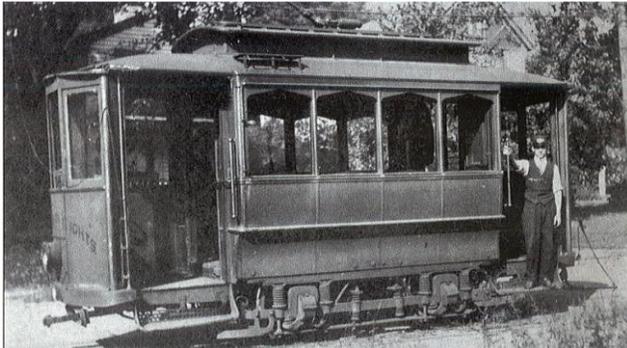
Read open access materials

- *Little Brother* by Cory Doctorow PZ7.D66237 Lit 2010 (Juv) or <http://craphound.com/littlebrother/download/>
- *Q* by Luther Blissett In print: PQ4862.L47 Q213 2005 or <http://www.wumingfoundation.com/italiano/downloads.shtml>
- "The Pentad of Cruft: A taxonomy of rhetoric used by Wikipedia editors based on the dramatism of Kenneth Burke" by Andrew Famiglietti in *First Monday*, v.17, no. 9.

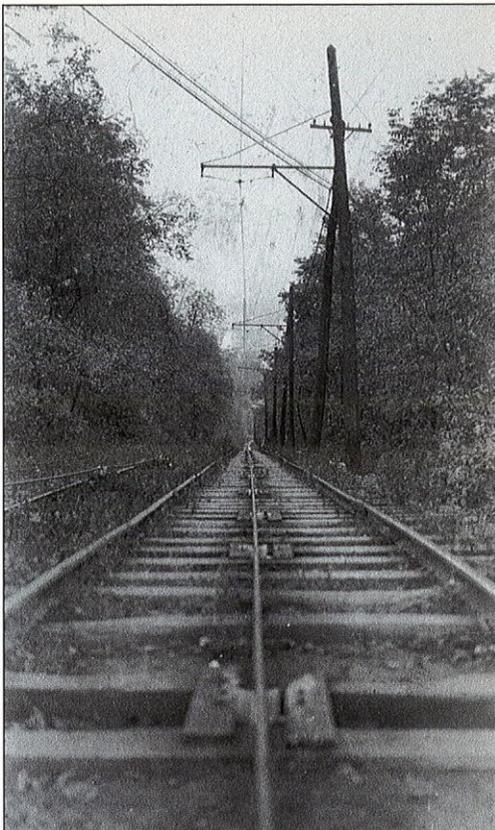
The Library's Best Stuff: *Images of America—Beaver Falls*

Beaver Falls is famous as Joe Namath's hometown. But did you know that Beaver Falls once had a canal next to the Beaver River as part of the Pennsylvania canal system? It operated from 1834 to 1872.

Or did you know Beaver Falls once had an incline that operated up the slope into Patterson Heights from 1896 to 1927? The City even ran an elaborate streetcar trolley system between 1885 and 1937. You can learn more about the plentiful history of our town in the book, *Images of America: Beaver Falls* by Ken Britten. **F 159 B3 B75 2000**



Picture of the Patterson Incline trolley circa 1920, designed by John Reeves, the benefactor for Geneva's stadium. Picture from *Images of America—Beaver Falls*, p. 59



Looking up the 35 percent slope of the former Patterson Incline. From *Images of America—Beaver Falls*, p. 59

Christmas in the Library

Students for generations have enjoyed a Christmas display in the Library's West Reading room. The Farra Stage, enveloped by Willet's Paradise Lost windows, has offered a warm and inviting corner for kindling the Christmas spirit.

The Library has customarily trimmed a tree with candy canes in several flavors for the students to pick off the tree and enjoy while studying for fall semester final examinations.

This year, Abbi Gregg, McCartney's Periodicals Technician, suggested creating a spot at one of the tables where students could fashion their own ornament for the tree. We supplied various blank ornaments (miniature gingerbread men, Christmas trees, snowmen, stockings), along with paint, glue, glitter, faux jewels, etc.



This year's tree. Some student ornaments are visible.



THE BELL TOWER

is a publication of
McCartney Library
Geneva College
3200 College Avenue
Beaver Falls, PA 15010

www.geneva.edu/page/library

Edited by John Doncevic
Layout by Amy Lynn

Pro Christo et Patria