

Unlocking Research

An interview with Danny Kingsley

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Danny Kingsley's name is familiar in digital library circles. As the founder of the UK's first Office of Scholarly Communication, in Cambridge, she has been responsible for an initiative that brings the library to centre-stage in the activity of the university. At the same time, she is a familiar face at conferences and manages a very lively and readable blog, [Unlocking Research](#), which is one of the most reliable and unopinionated places to seek out when an issue about scholarly publishing is being discussed. I talked to her in the OSC office at Cambridge University Library. During our wide-ranging interview, during which she showed the energy with which she has approached her role, she gave us some details about her background, revealing an earlier career as a science journalist, as well as sharing her forthright views on several current controversies.

My background

I was actually born in Cambridge, although both my parents are Australian. My father was a PhD student who studied pulsars with Jocelyn Bell. However, I left Cambridge at the age of three, when my parents moved to Leiden.

I studied science at university, although I actually wanted to be a dancer! I was also involved in a lot of theatre as a student. My studies were interrupted as I actually left university for a couple of years before returning to complete my degree. When I returned, I had just one goal in mind: to get the right grades to complete the course, and stumbled upon Science and Technical Studies where I found to my surprise that by doing the work I could get the grades I needed.

After university, the degree I had, Honours in the Sociology of Science, equipped me to work in science publishing. Accordingly, I applied for a job as a science journalist in trade magazines - and got it, the very first job I applied for (the publisher was Reed - which later became Reed Elsevier). After that, I became a writer for science online at ABC (the Australian Broadcasting Corporation),

After a few years of that, I returned to university to take a PhD, on open-access, at the Australian National University (ANU), in Canberra. This was a PhD with a professional angle to it, and the challenge was that there was nobody at ANU who was able to supervise me in this subject! So I ended up recruiting a whole panel of supervisors who gave me the input I needed - this was anything but a typical guided PhD, where the supervisor gives you

an experiment and tells you to get on with it. Actually, the offer of the PhD stipend arrived just as I became a parent - in fact the very next day after giving birth to my son.

The PhD was about attitudes to open-access publishing. The odd thing was that 93% of scientists were saying it is a great idea, but only 10% (at that time) would make their work available via open-access. So clearly there was a big gap between theory and practice.

Just as I was completing the PhD, I was asked to work for the library of the ANU. This involved managing their scholarly communications and epublishing programmes, as well as updating their institutional repository (using DSpace software). In fact, like Cambridge the ANU was a test bed for the DSpace software, which is now very widely used around the world for institutional repositories. When we re-launched the IR, we faced all kinds of challenges. The head of the Division of Information told us we couldn't call it a repository.

After four years at ANU, I was invited by Emeritus Professor Tom Cochrane - who introduced the first institution-wide open-access mandate in the world at Queensland University of Technology - to create an open-access promotion group: I set up and worked as the Executive Officer of the AOASG (Australian Open-Access Support - now Strategy - Group).

After two years at AOASG, I applied for the job at Cambridge, where I have established the UK's first Office of Scholarly Communication, in many ways a similar but more expansive role to the post I had at ANU.



The Cambridge Office of Scholarly Communication

The Cambridge OSC was indeed the first OSC in Britain; by January 2016 there were eight.

The Cambridge OSC is actually three things:

- We provide compliance with funder policies, mainly open access, which is the activity of depositing copies of research outputs into our repository and administering the Article Processing Charges for researchers who have a funder requirement to publish open access
- Our second role is educating the library and administrative community. This is done via a variety of means, including training and events. Last year we began the “Supporting Researchers in the 21st Century” programme
- Outreach - blogs, events, presentations at conferences, writing papers and so on

On taking this job, it meant bringing the family (my partner and two children) to the UK from Australia. I started on January 5th, 2015, and the family arrived in March. When I arrived at Cambridge, they had already completed a user study of the research community, which found that there were no natural ‘touch points’ for researchers when they published a paper. So the Library built a simple [website](#) that enables researchers to upload an article and fill in a simple form, so that they could have their open access requirements managed by us.

The OSC is an initiative between the Research Office and the Library. In keeping with this joint initiative, we hot desk, with members of staff having space both in the Research Operations Office in West Cambridge, as well as working at the Research Strategy Office in the Old Schools, in addition to the main library here.

We are a very interdisciplinary group, working across the University administrative areas, and have recently embarked on a project to try and join up our communications about research management.

We find that many academics need guidance on things that might be self-evident to an information professional. It is not uncommon for a researcher, for example, to be confused between [ResearchFish](#), the required repository of outputs for an RCUK-funded project, and [ResearchGate](#), the commercial service that provides article dissemination and a repository for researchers.

One aspect of our work is to ensure that funders’ policies on data sharing are implemented. If you publish a publicly funded article, in almost all cases the data must be available and linked from the paper. My colleague Dr Marta Teperek runs the Research Data Facility, which addresses these requirements.

Over the last eighteen months we have facilitated discussions between researchers and funders about research data management. We have broadened the conversation from open access simply meaning compliance to a consideration of the benefits of open research. We have contributed nationally and internationally to the discussions about the huge

challenges that face the research and library communities and have starting bringing our local communities on board. To summarise, scholarly communication is a real connector with direct relevance to the library budget.

What is the role of the library today?

This is an interesting time for libraries. Libraries have traditionally acted as gatekeepers of curated content, but of course today they also manage licensed content. My focus at the OSC is disseminating research generated by the institution itself, including (but not limited to) theses, datasets, special collections, even, here at Cambridge, a collection of molecular structures. We provide facilities for these things to happen.

Another activity we are carrying out is reviewing library courses. To be frank, I think that librarian training is not fit for purpose for academic librarians. It's not surprising that most of my team here at the OSC are not librarians. The majority of them are PhD holders, which means that they can talk as peers with researchers. To this end we are analysing existing library courses, to identify topics that are currently ignored or neglected, such as open access. For this activity, we are talking to organisations such as [UKSG](#) about training courses, as well as making recommendations to CILIP.

The position of the librarian varies quite a lot from country to country. In the US, librarians are tenured and expected to do research, although this is not the case in the UK or in Australia.

We face the challenge of adapting the skill sets of our current workforce. Librarians have very specific skills, such as cataloguing and we don't want to lose these. We want to get the data in the institutional repository cleaner and tighter, but we face frequent disagreements over indexing. Do we index the journal as "The Lancet", "Lancet, The," or "Lancet"? The answer to that question is different for a cataloguer and the repository manager.

We are currently researching who in our library community is publishing in the academic literature. Our librarians may publish in librarianship journals; but we also have many specialists who are researchers in their own right or who collaborate closely with the research community on work. We need to respect and encourage all these activities.

How researchers access content

There has been a lot of discussion recently on how users access content - via the library catalogue, or by Google Scholar, or via publisher portals. How do you think researchers access content?

There was a very relevant piece of research on this, the "[Day in the Life of a \(Serious\) Researcher](#)" project, carried out by Ithaka S+R and Cornell University. The findings are showing that there is no best way of carrying out research that everyone should follow. Instead, researchers discover a way of accessing content, and then stick to it forever - even if their methodology is idiosyncratic.

Personally, I do my own research by scanning email lists, blog posts, attending conferences and reading articles. In my area, the research does come to me, in the form of blogs, tweets, social media of all kinds. I maintain my own 'database' of links and papers by blogging about a topic and later accessing my own posts.

The SciHub controversy

I attended the recent Open Scholarship Initiative workshop and we continue to have an active discussion list. A recent hot topic has been SciHub (see the recent [Science](#) article about it.) It seems that many people in the Cambridge area are accessing it.

We need to make it clear to our community that using SciHub is illegal, but at the same time understanding why people are accessing it. SciHub is indicative of a wider malaise in access to academic literature - both in terms of pay walls but also discovery platforms. Vitek Tracz of F1000 states that the scholarly journal is dead. Instead, we need publishing platforms - if research were published in a different way it would be more accessible.

We need to look not just at the illegality of SciHub, but at the dysfunctional situation that has given rise to SciHub. Journals present information in a very unhelpful way. One commentator at the OSI event pointed out that even the display of journal information is poor - one publisher journal portal showed a content list of articles with subheadings showing rights information, but not including any descriptive text or abstract to give the would-be reader a chance to understand anything about the article. This is possibly because publishers want you buy (on top of your subscription) their discovery layer. In addition, it is really difficult to discover open access articles in hybrid journals. It is ridiculous that you cannot identify them.

The embargoed metadata controversy

This controversy appears to be an example of the UK repository community being penalised for trying to comply with funder and publisher requirements. Basically, [HEFCE](#) (the UK government funding agency for academics) requires we collect on acceptance any metadata for an article for the next [Research Excellence Framework](#) (REF). The metadata includes such things as title, author and abstract, available prior to publication. Our records detail the accepted paper, and do not provide the full text.

For some reason, many researchers are worried that the metadata is available before full publication. Publishers are now being asked what their position is on pre-publication metadata being available. Of course, publishers don't refuse to publish papers; but they may be panicking and want to crack down on potential lapses.

One article was published in *Science*, and data was added to repository, as required. We embargoed the data until publication. The publisher asked us to shut down the metadata, because of the researcher's concern and request to do so - but it was Good Friday, so we were unable to do anything before anyone returned to the office five days later. Nature

Publishing has confirmed unequivocally they do not pull papers because metadata is available prior to publication. I have written about this problem in some detail.

I suspect that publisher confusion about embargoes may be a deliberate ploy to ensure we comply without question. We don't understand why we are being punished for doing the right thing to embargo content, when often it is available against any publisher's copyright restrictions on ResearchGate or SciHub.

It was a shame to have to bring such a fascinating interview to close. I have no doubt that scholarly publishing will be managed effectively in the coming years at Cambridge with the OSC.

[Editor's Note] The use of the hashtag [#ICanHazPDF](#) is also used on Twitter to request scholarly journal articles which are behind paywalls. It will be interesting to hear from UKeiG members how they are addressing these issues in terms of user education and copyright awareness, and the impact these 'workarounds' are having on document delivery services.