Putting scholarly publishing at the heart of the Academy

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Democracy and Power. The Delhi Lectures
by Noam Chomsky. Introduction by Jean Drèze

Chomsky’s early insights into the workings of power in the modern world remain timely and compelling. Published for the first time, this series of lectures provides the reader with an invaluable introduction to the essential ideas of one of the leading thinkers of our time.
Research Centre

• Base institutional unit of academic research for this discussion – the ‘heart’ of the Academy:
  – University Faculty or Department
  – Externally funded research centre
RC: Objectives

Objectives will be different for every RC, but some may include:

- Conduct high quality research
- Attract high quality researchers
- Provide resources required for research
- Address specific issues or audiences
- Financial sustainability
Who are the audiences RCs seek to engage with?

- Other researchers
- Students and lecturers in research area
- Research funders
  - Public funding councils
  - Private enterprise
- Potential students (attract good students undergrad/phd – attract funding through fees – overseas students)
- Policy makers
- Alumni
- Other ‘users’ of research
  - Industry
  - personal
- Geographic reach
Legacy Model - Indirect Dissemination

• Leave the dissemination strategy to the researcher
  – don’t take copyright from author
  – don’t tell author where to publish

• Researcher delegates dissemination to publisher
  – Objectives of individual researcher may differ from the RC
  – Signs over copyright, exclusive publishing clause etc

• Exclusive publishing clause:
  – means RC cannot proactively develop independent dissemination strategy
Impact of indirect control

• With legacy model control over dissemination by researchers can only be through the employment contract with the researcher.

• Is it surprising that we have such reliance on citation metrics and specific journal/publisher destinations in performance appraisal?
OA allows direct dissemination

• CC BY licence and non-exclusive publishing agreement means that research centres are free to develop their own dissemination strategy without interfering with either the researchers rights or publisher restrictions.

• Similarly individual researchers have more flexibility over their own dissemination strategies.
Direct dissemination

• Allows researchers to develop innovative research techniques and processes
• Different audiences require different information, in different formats
• Ways to interact with audiences differ
• RC ‘brand’ can be developed
• RC can use research for objectives that may not directly align with the researcher
What to disseminate?

- Research findings - articles, books, working papers, seminars
- Research data – open data
- Research methods
- Blog posts
- Literature reviews and surveys
- Filters and collections of articles – references sources for others
- Lectures/Course notes – MOOCs
- Archives
How to disseminate?

• ‘legacy’ publications – journals/books
• working papers
• Blogs/social media
• metadata
• Archives
• Platforms/tools for providing access to data bases
• Nanopublications
Dissemination as infrastructure of RC

What do you want your dissemination infrastructure to achieve?

– Provide flexibility for improved and innovative activities by researchers
– Provide improved teaching resources for lecturers
– Provide RC with better ways to interact with external audiences
– Develop the ‘brand’ or awareness of the RC
Problems for Research Centres

• Problem 1: Resources
  Don’t have the technical & professional expertise to undertake all aspects of dissemination

  – Lesson 1: Be clever with resources you do have
  – Lesson 2: Look for general resources available externally
  – Lesson 3: Share resources & knowledge
Assess Resources Available

Different support teams may exist already

- IT Services
- Archives
- Textual support / Manuscript preparation, research grant preparation, teaching and research assessment exercises
- Copyright & IP offices
- PR & marketing teams
- Alumni ‘development’ offices
- What external resources can you easily harness
Example: Journal provision

Objective: Provide researchers with the ability to establish their own journal

External Source: Open Journal Systems is a wonderful software platform to do this

Action: Encourage an IT person to install OJS (a couple of days work) understand how it works, and become contact person for researchers.
But there is more to running a successful journal than having the software: defining objectives, organizing editorial board, peer review process, ethics reviews, attracting authors etc

**Action:** Coordinate information transfer between those that have and those that want to set up journals - “how to” seminars etc..

Support for journals to increase impact. Creation of metadata, DOIs, citation index, advertising, social media etc...

**Action:** Contact person to administer

Typesetting

**Action:** Assess level of typesetting support available
Problem 2: Archiving/Longevity

- Many RCs only have a short life – funding for x years
- Many dissemination initiatives will fail – but need the research to live on

**Action:** Coordinate with existing archiving services
Who should do the dissemination?

Providing dissemination infrastructure will requiring coordination across many different agents

– Researchers, IT, data managers, archivists, marketing & PR, copyright & IP, librarians ... 

Where should it be housed?

– Libraries? IT/admin support?

Lesson 4: Keep strategic control
OBP Case studies: RC Book Series

• Case study 1:
RC has an existing legacy publishing house, wishes to convert to OA

Solution: OBP Distribution only
RC keep existing process in place
OBP: Takes “camera ready files”
   Creates multiple digital editions
   Distributes print/digital/open access editions through our existing infrastructure
Case Study 2:
Our mission

Conservation Evidence is a free, authoritative information resource designed to support decisions about how to maintain and restore global biodiversity.

We summarise evidence from the scientific literature about the effects of conservation interventions, such as methods of habitat or species management.

We also publish new evidence in our online journal Conservation Evidence.

Why not search the database of summaries of over 4,200 papers that determine the consequences of interventions? Why not look at our synopses that summarise all the research looking at whether interventions are beneficial? Current synopses cover amphibians, bats, bees, birds, European farmland, natural pest control, enhancing soil fertility and sustainable aquaculture, but...
Conservation Evidence

• Mission: authoritative information resource designed to support decisions about how to maintain and restore global biodiversity.

• Database: of over 4000 summaries of academic articles assessing impact of environmental policies

• Journal: to publish empirical data (OJS)

• Synopses: by family (Birds/Bats/Bees/Amphibians)

• Handbook: updated annually
Case study 3:

An urgent global initiative to document and make accessible endangered oral literatures before they disappear without record.

For many communities around the world, the transmission of oral literature from one generation to the next lies at the heart of cultural practice. Performances of creative works of verbal art - which include ritual texts, curative chants, epic poems, musical genres, folk tales, creation tales, songs, myths, legends, word games, life histories or historical narratives - are increasingly endangered. Globalisation and rapid socio-economic change exert complex pressures on smaller communities, often eroding expressive diversity and transforming culture through assimilation to more dominant ways of life. As vehicles for the transmission of unique cultural knowledge, local languages encode oral traditions that become threatened when elders die and livelihoods are disrupted. > more
Provide services – see what happens

• Find out what dissemination already occurring – and how you can support.
• Don’t wait to be asked
• Inform researchers of services available
• Showcase how they can be used
• Encourage innovation, and adopt a “can do” attitude
And remember:
Help is available ....

- Digital dissemination: Google Books, OAPEN, OpenEdition
- Print distribution: PoD Amazon/Lightning Source
- Typesetting/Proofreading/Copyediting/Indexing well established markets & service providers
- Software: PKP, OATA ..... 