

Publishing Bulletin

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From the PSP Executive Director's Desk

John Tagler, VP & Executive Director, PSP Division, AAP

I want to welcome you to our *Bulletin* issue featuring reports on the PSP 2017 Annual Conference, “*Adding Value in the Age of Open.*” Two of our long-time contributors – Myer Kutz and Barbara Meyers – have written thoughtful pieces on the Annual Conference and Pre-Conference. I appreciate their insights as both are seasoned scholarly publishing professionals and know the industry and players very well.

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Born Accessible

***Reported by Barbara M. Ford,
President, Meyers Consulting Services***

“Born Accessible,” coined by Benetech, a non-profit technology firm founded by Jim Fruchterman, was the catch phrase for the 2017 PSP Pre-Conference, Accessibility Is the New Innovation: From Compliance to New Opportunities. “Born Accessible” was the center of attention for the day: making materials innately accessible to all people, especially to the visually-impaired. *(Continued on page 4)*

The 2017 PSP Conference - OA, IFs, SCNs, SCI-HUB and more

By Myer Kutz, Editor, PSP Bulletin

I had a little bit of trouble finding a print copy of The New York Times on my first dawn walk in Washington, DC during the 2017 PSP Annual Conference (Adding Value in the Age of Open, February 1st-3rd, Grand Hyatt Hotel.) *(Continued on page 6)*

Each year, I await the PSP conference with excitement and trepidation. In light of the strong list of topics and roster of knowledgeable speakers, this year's program promised to be very strong. But there are myriad things that can go wrong – starting with whether the weather gods will look favorably upon us. This year they did just fine.

We had an active and creative program planning committee for the 2017 conference. It was interesting to watch the committee work together over an eight-month period – first lots of ideas flailed about, and then came the process of honing and refining myriad suggestions into a cohesive program. My hat is off to the committee, to Thane Kerner (committee chair) and especially to Sara Pinto, who spends many months herding everyone to get the job done. (A list of committee members' names appears at the end of this article.) The strength of the program was apparent even before the conference started. This year we had 255 registrants (excluding speakers), the strongest turnout in more than a decade. A diverse range of important topics was covered – digital piracy, the ever-changing world of metrics, data repositories, scholarly communication networks, new approaches to peer review and, to kick off the meeting, Vitek Tracz, always a provocateur, got things off to a lively start.

The Pre-Conference focused on accessibility, an increasingly critical topic in scholarly publishing. Registration – at 63 – was slightly below recent pre-conference levels of 75 attendees. Much to our delight, however, evaluations were terrific, with 78% of respondents rating the program “excellent” and the remaining 22% rating it “good,” with no detractors. It's a challenge to get people to attend a session on accessibility. Perhaps the perception among most publishing staff is that it's someone else's responsibility – the topic is not of the moment or related to their work. Actually, a wide variety of staff need to understand accessibility – not so much how to implement the process but how the process fits into overall publishing workflows. With the enthusiastic response from those who did attend, we are exploring opportunities with other associations to organize a series of accessibility seminars or webinars that will reach a wider audience.

Kudos to Kate Kolendo and John Jenkins for another successful PROSE Awards luncheon. Unlike another awards program, our team batted a thousand in announcing winners correctly. We were happy to have Maria Pallante, AAP's new President and CEO, do the presentation honors this year. And John ran the proceedings in his usual clockwork fashion.

There were two special moments during the luncheon. Last year's R.R. Hawkins Award winner, Aldon Morris, who was in the audience, is featured in the PROSE video *Aldon Morris: The Scholar Affirmed*, an excerpt of which debuted at the PROSE luncheon. The film traces his life from his childhood in Tutwiler, Mississippi, to his career on the Northwestern faculty and his award-winning book, *The Scholar Denied: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Birth of Modern Sociology*, published by the University of California Press.

Yale Prof. Carlos M.N. Eire, author of this year's R.R. Hawkins Award winner, *Reformations: The Early Modern World, 1450-1650*, published by Yale University Press, gave an eloquent acceptance speech that tied the world that was born during the Reformation, when there first emerged acceptance of differing opinions, to the modern era, where truth continues to be under challenge in different ways. Prof. Eire gave a profoundly moving call to civic action

through publishing and the exchange of knowledge. He noted, “There is nothing dictators fear more than freedom of expression . . . and books.” A video of his acceptance speech can be found at <https://proseawards.com/winners/>.

The environment always affects a conference, sometimes subliminally and at other times obtrusively. This year we held the program at the Grand Hyatt, which is a large conference hotel where PSP was one among several other programs, both larger and smaller. At one particularly grating period during the opening session, competing speakers in an adjacent room made it difficult to hear our own speakers. Luckily, the second and third days were better, but there was often noise from several directions, and hotel staff seemed unable to create an atmosphere conducive to a professional meeting. In previous years we always sought a smaller venue where PSP got more personalized treatment, and we plan to return to one of the more intimate facilities we've used in recent years.

Special thanks are in order to a couple of people who support PSP's conference efforts. Jack Farrell has been responsible for sponsorship fundraising for several years and once again delivered a great list of sponsors: Silverchair, Access Innovations, Aries, Atypon, Cenveo, CHORUS, Copyright Clearance Center, Impelsys, Jack Farrell & Associates, NEWGEN, Sheridan and SPi Global. Their generosity helps PSP deliver a more comfortable conference experience for our attendees.

Appreciation also to Darrell Gunter who serves on the program planning committee and helps market the conference. In addition, for five years he has organized and moderated our closing session, *The Innovators*. It was remarkable to see so many people attending this year's conference closing session on a Friday.

And no conference would be successful without a long list of speakers who give the time to share their insights and experience. Without their dedication and commitment, all is lost. Nonetheless, there's no time to rest on one's laurels. We'll have to run pretty fast to equal or exceed this year's success. They say you're only as good as your last performance. And so the process begins again.

All the best,
John Tagler

2017 Program Planning Committee Members

Richard Brown, Georgetown University Press

Selene Carey, Wolters Kluwer

Feng Chen, ACS

Ralph Coviello, Bowker

Susan Dawson, Silverchair

Bill Deluise, Wiley

Philip DiVietro, ASME

Amanda Fielding, McGraw-Hill

Matt Giampoala, Elsevier

Scott Grillo, McGraw-Hill

Lee Greenhouse, Greenhouse & Associates

Darrell Gunter, Gunter Media Group

Jon Gurstelle, Wiley
Jamie Israel, SPi
Phillip Kalantzis-Cope, Common Ground Publishing
Thane Kerner, Silverchair
Penelope Lewis, ACS
Ani Mahapatra, ACS
Audrey Melkin
Tom Reller, Elsevier
Brian Scanlan, Thieme
Diane Scott-Lichter, ACP
Mary Grace Stefanichik, ASME
John White, Semantico, Ltd.
Jason Wilde, AIP Publishing

Born Accessible

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An underlying theme for the pre-conference was that making content accessible means not just obeying the American Disabilities Act (ADA). As John Rennie¹ put it during his introductory remarks: “It’s not just the law; it’s a good idea.”

In her keynote address, U.S. Deputy Assistant Attorney General Eve Hill further emphasized accessibility's importance: “accessibility is a civil right and it is good communication and it is good business.” She urged publishers to build in accessibility at the front end of any new instructional technology because “building it the same old way without accessibility stymies innovation.” She strongly suggested that accessibility should be incorporated in digitalization of information and not be an afterthought or retrofit. This concept of building in accessibility at the front end was supported by Apex VP Bill Kasdorf, who reported on the latest version of web accessibility standards, EPUB3 and HTML5: “EPUB3 is the basis, the master format for all accessible content.” He called the recent BISG document, *Quick Start to Accessible Publishing*, a primer for publishers to learn about building in accessibility and encouraged them to learn about how best to use this newly-termed assistive technology.

The day's first panel, “The World of Accessibility: Why it is Important,” began with a first-hand account by George Abbott, Director, AFB Press and Professional Development of the Foundation of the Blind, on what it is like to deal with the lack of accessibility when visually handicapped. In his student days, syncing access with reading requirements had a huge impact on the courses he took and ultimately what he studied. He recalled what it was like to listen on the phone to newspapers that weren't current, the exorbitant price for screen readers that spoke text out loud, and the price range for refreshable braille display readers - anywhere from \$1,000 to \$10,000. If a textbook or supplemental text wasn't available in braille and wouldn't be translated into braille quickly enough for a class assignment, he was

¹ Editorial Director, Science, International & Professional Group, McGraw-Hill Education and co-chair of the Pre-Conference with Darrell Gunter, President & CEO, Gunter Media Group.

left with finding a friend to read the book to him or else missing out on the full extent of that lecture.

Jamie Axelrod, Director, Disability Resources and ADA Coordinator for Northern Arizona University, addressed alternative format materials. He explained how difficult it is to make customizable textbooks for students who need accessible files. The biggest problem is the files received from publishers. Over 80% of files need remediation in order to make their content really accessible. At the moment, the most accessible file is a style-based Word document. The ideal would be for publishers to share EPUB digital files and allow him and others like him across the nation's campuses to create an accessible text network where students can buy course-required readings. Students need to purchase a hard copy or ebook version of the textbook in order to receive a textbook customized for the visually impaired. But unlike those of us who keep textbooks for years after graduation, these students are not allowed to keep files after a semester is over. Here is an untapped market that publishers have long ignored.

Further to this point, Timothy Creagan, Senior Accessibility Specialist at the U.S. Access Board, stated that information can be inaccessible for many reasons and there is a need for flexibility of design to eliminate barriers. He reported that, just two weeks prior to the Pre-Conference, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act was updated to include language that defined accessible information as being as timely and in the same format (online, mobile, etc.) as original publications.

One organization devoted to making sure that products are not just born-digital but born-accessible is Benetech. Director of Content, Robin Seaman, shared information about a number of projects underway. In 2013, Benetech began a five-year R&D project dubbed DIAGRAM, available at the DIAGRAM Center on Benetech's website. This project aims to educate publishers about how to make content fully accessible for everyone from the very beginning of the publishing process. Poet, a web-based, open source tool developed by DIAGRAM provides publishers with Image Description Guidelines. Benetech is launching an EPUB3 Accessibility Certification and will provide accessible training based on Open Source software free to publishers.

In the second panel, "Accessibility—The Publishers Speak!", Ann Gabriel, Vice President, Academic & Research Relations at Elsevier, discussed the importance of incorporating ALT-TEXT from the beginning in order to facilitate all aspects of the research process. She encouraged publishers to join the Accessible Books Consortium (ABC), an international multi-stakeholder partnership launched in 2014, comprised of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO); organizations that serve people with print disabilities; and organizations representing publishers and authors. ABC's primary aim is to increase the number of books produced in accessible formats. A Benetech initiative, Bookshare, an accessible online library for people with print disabilities, along with Lead2Learn, are good starting points for publishers serious about developing born accessible books.

Pearson's Head of Accessibility Product Management, Jonathan Thurston, recounted how Pearson, the world's largest publisher, is updating their technology to align with new standards and thus creating healthy workflows where content is born accessible. He explained that the new EPUB3 standard eliminates the need for PDFs and is a much better option for accessibility. He also encouraged publishers to investigate VitalSource, a

company that provides publishers with services for converting printed books to a digital format with interactive functionality and for helping publishers create new content digital-first. In many areas Pearson is setting standards by 1) having experts in accessibility on every product development team and 2) developing and promoting the Pearson Accessibility Guidelines.

Kevin Ohe, Director of Academic Publishing, Digital Resources, Bloomsbury Publishing, a UK trade house, which you might recognize as the publisher of the Harry Potter series, brought a different perspective to the conference. In 2010, they used some of their Harry Potter profits to launch an academic unit, bloomsburyfashioncentral.com, which includes a digital library of books for higher education in fashion design. Because fashion design students are often dyslexic, there is an emphasis on visuals. Bloomsbury works with third parties to develop and test their products and audit results. Based in London, with a major design school nearby, they are able to go straight to students whenever they have a new product idea.

Angie McAllister, SVP of Personalized Learning & Analytics at Pearson, gave a closing keynote that focused on four themes: 1) literacy accessibility is too low around the world; 2) accountability of personalization and outcomes is key to success; 3) metadata are our love notes to the future; and 4) we all need to become friends beyond the binary. She asserted that we have a moral, legal, and civic responsibility to begin to design accessibility at the front end. We can't just think access; we need to build in effectiveness.

The 2017 PSP Conference - OA, IFs, SCNs, SCI-HUB and more

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My favorite storefront newsstand, which had newspapers and magazines from all over and was on K Street near the corner of Connecticut Avenue, is gone, at least for now - major construction is going on where the building that housed the newsstand stood. (Gone, as well, was the inexpensive little place on M Street where a short order cook could quickly dish up a fresh plate of eggs and warm toast and I could get a whole navel orange - that building was a pile of rubble.) I didn't see any boxes on the street with The Times, but I could find a couple of copies of the paper on the top of a newspaper rack near the door in most Starbucks, although I couldn't find a rack in the Starbucks nestled in a corner of the Hyatt, where I was staying.

The hotel did leave a few free copies of The Wall Street Journal near the elevator on my floor. They weren't snapped up very quickly. I suppose that the relatively few remaining daily readers of newspapers access them on electronic devices, so why schlep a print copy throughout part or all of a busy day? So Twentieth Century it would look like. Indeed, my own subscription to The Times is electronic only. It's on trips when I like to get the print version of the paper, so I can leave my iPad at home (I just know I'd lose it somehow) and I get to attempt the crossword when I'm on a train or a plane. (I finished Wednesday's puzzle, got stuck on some unusual words on Thursday's, and abandoned Friday's, nothing to

be ashamed of inasmuch as the puzzle gets progressively more arcane and difficult as the week moves along and I hardly ever try to do it except when I'm traveling.)

Supposedly, in this age of electronically interconnected convenience, this vignette of what it took me to overcome difficulties (of my own making, to be sure) of finding information, sustenance and even intellectual stimulation mirrors a way of life that academic researchers, major consumers of PSP output, have left far behind. But as I sat through the sessions at this year's PSP Conference, I heard that there is still much work to be done to achieve this Nirvana and that some academically accomplished (conference panels were salted with PhDs) and other very smart people are engaged in doing so. The session on data repositories, moderated by David Crotty (OUP), was a good example of a complex initiative driven by such high-powered people as panelists Patricia Knezek, PhD (NSF), Jennifer Lin, PhD (Crossref) and Howard Silver (MIT Libraries), who has degrees not only in librarianship, but also in zoology. They discussed principles behind curating data and methods of making the data more readable, analyzable and downloadable. I found the comments and questions at the end of this session mind-numbingly detailed.

An earlier, also high-powered, session (well, all conference panels were high-powered) on metrics, moderated by consultant Lee Greenhouse, had as panelists Jeremy Berg, PhD (editor-in-chief of Science and its journals, as well as holding a couple of academic positions), Iain Craig (Wiley), Sara Rouhi (Altmetric) and Prof. Cassidy Sugimoto (Indiana University School of Informatics and Computing.) The formal title of the session was "The Changing Face of Metrics," but it could have been called "Metrics and Our Discontents." With Elsevier's acquisition of Plum Analytics as background, panelists focused on the hope offered by altmetrics, which, among other things, measure how research is interacted with, shared, commented on and promoted. While altmetrics may be very much on the edges still, according to the panel, they do offer a possible antidote to the inadequacies of such traditional metrics as citation counts and journal impact factors, which, despite their often adverse effects, are still very much in favor at institutions of higher learning (which Jeremy Berg wryly acknowledged to audience laughter live in the past - 500 years ago, actually). The panel's collective judgment was that traditional metrics can steer individuals and institutions in wrong directions; they don't help build teams. As Cassidy Sugimoto put it, you can get "a taste for the metric, not the science."

Impact factors were very much on the mind of the Conference keynoter, the celebrated Vitek Tracz (currently Founder & Chairman, 1000 Group). Vitek didn't mince words. He said that readers don't care about impact factors; better tools are needed to find what you want to read. (I think I heard him say that Gene Garfield, who invented the impact factor concept, agrees with him.) Vitek was just as hard on journals themselves: they act against the interests of science; the article selection process amounts to delay in publication; editors aren't sufficiently knowledgeable about the subjects their journals address; the secret peer review process leads to improper article selection. Change will happen faster than you think, said Vitek. "Journals will go [away] in my lifetime;" the current system is damaging and we need something else. Data analysis could be a new service; we need to develop software tools.

Vitek's been around for a long time. Born in 1940, he founded the Current Opinion journals, the scientific community sites BioMednet and Chemweb, and the open access publisher

BioMed Central, all of which he sold in the nineties and the aughts. (As far as I know, these endeavors were all successful while he owned them, but he joked at the beginning of his talk that you should make as big a loss as possible in order to sell your business.) The way I figure it, Vitek, and thus journals, in his own estimation, could be alive for at least the next fifteen years. Fred Dylla (AIP, emeritus), who, together with Catherine Holland (Digital Science), moderated the session on Scholarly Collaboration Networks right after Vitek's keynote, took issue with his looming-demise-of-the-journal pronouncement. (So did Glen Campbell, when I ran into him at the elevators later that night. Another old publishing friend muttered that the speed of horrible change under the new Trump administration was evidence that anything can slip away no matter how tightly you cling to it.) The headlines are premature, Fred said, while agreeing with Vitek that publishers and scholars need to work together to provide new services, such as SCNs, which can provide wide access to scholarly articles.

Starting with Vitek's negative comment, the discussion on the pros and cons of impact factors went on through much of the conference. For her part, panelist Sarah Tegen, PhD (ACS) mentioned that impact factors are still vital. She spent most of her time at the podium on a report on Jose Luis Ortega's 2016 book, *Social Network Sites for Scientists*, which discusses such questions as who's using SCNs; which disciplines predominate; what do researchers want from SCNs? Sarah pointed out that CrossRef, founded 20 years ago, and CHORUS, five years ago, are key components of a world where it takes an author only a few keystrokes to share an article. Another panelist, Chantelle Rijs (Frontiers), also stressed the continued importance of impact metrics for the Open Access journals portfolio (she said it's the sixth largest in the world) that the company she works for publishes. Your reverence for such traditional metrics as impact factors, it seemed to me, depended on where you sat.

The three other panelists - Laurence Bianchini (MyScienceWork and a consultant), Gregg Gordon (SSRN) and Prof. Erin Lavik (Department of Chemical, Biochemical, and Environmental Engineering, University of Maryland Baltimore County) - discussed the gamut of SCNs available to researchers, such as Mendely, ResearchGate and academia.edu, which are dwarfed by Dropbox (which isn't public) and Google Scholar, which Prof. Lavik mentioned would still be around even if all the other research sharing sites were to disappear. She focused her comments on the fiscal constraints her laboratory faces. She struggles with submission fees. Using SCNs increases your work's impact, but there's no money for them. Worse yet, people aren't great about sharing their work, she said, except when they're up for tenure.

So the academic world, it would seem, isn't all peace and harmony, not by a long shot. There are actors within that world who promote other SCNs that may be widely used, but are not benign, SCI-HUB being the most notorious. I thought that the panel on pirated content, moderated by Elizabeth Nolen (OSA), was very good on discussing the problems that have created pirated content web sites (difficulties of access to journal articles, pressures on library budgets); the problems the sites are creating for authors, publishers and libraries (Marquette University Library Edward Sanchez talked about his library being hacked and that many other research libraries have been compromised as part of pirated content web sites being given, or stealing, passwords that unlock more doors than just those leading to password-protected journal web sites); who's cheering on the pirate sites - SPARC, for instance; and what publisher organizations are doing to combat piracy

(Elsevier's Chris Shillum discussed STM's RA21 - Research Access in the 21st Century - initiative for optimizing scholarly sharing). Prof. Sandra Aistars (George Mason University School of Law) presented the case for why authors and publishers are entitled to copyright protection. Not only are authors' rights a public good, but also publishers have devoted considerable resources to making journal articles available online. Elsevier, for example, has invested at least \$172 million in Science Direct.

The most eloquent of the panelists was Richard Brown, PhD (Georgetown University Press), who said that digital piracy is a moral challenge to publishers. His "modest proposal" included: acknowledge the tension between human rights and intellectual property rights; engage librarians; develop a strategy for making more content available to those who can't afford access. After his time at the podium, he interjected a story about his visiting a library in Ghana when the power went off for four hours and where he experienced first-hand deprivations in a country where poor researchers are shut out of publisher journal web sites.

Two questioners led off the Q&A with pointed comments. The first asked whether Open Access was leading to government regulation of publishers. Europe has gone off the deep end, he said. The second, echoing the charges of Russian hacking during the presidential election, mentioned that with SCI-HUB, there is evidence of hacking into university systems. I was reminded (as if I needed to be) of my column in a recent issue of *Against the Grain* magazine where I wrote a fictionalized account of an evening in the life of a young woman, mistress of a pirate content web site, whose apartment is invaded by a gang who wants the passwords her site has amassed. Conspiracy theories abound! It doesn't take that much imagination to come up with one.

As if in anticipation of Vitek's comments on the coming death of journals, conference planners had scheduled an early Thursday morning session, moderated by Thane Kerner (SilverChair, generous sponsor of the Wednesday evening cocktail reception), on subscription trends, with panelists David Celano (AAAS), Jay Flynn (Wiley) and Brian Crawford, PhD (ACS). All these industry veterans were unflappable in the face of flat subscription revenues from 2013 to 2016. "We had a good ride from 1986 to 2012," Thane Kerner showed with his graphics, but, he noted, there has been a 57% decline in library budgets in relation to university budgets. The discussion swirled around the tension between serving authors and libraries while helping publishers survive, quality standards, the impact Open Access is having on how publishers do business, how EU libraries are driving Open Access through mandates, impact metrics, peer review, the "big deal" for bundling journals for customer consortiums and whether (as was alleged in the Q&A) big deals were meant to freeze out smaller publishers, whether the hybrid model is the right answer, help the industry needs from economists to develop new journal business models, and "cascading" through a publisher's journal portfolio (when a submitted paper is passed down from journals with higher to lesser reputations until it is finally accepted). At one point, Brian Crawford posited a system of facilitating articles submissions and acceptances across the industry. Maybe Vitek's group could develop the necessary software, I mused.

It was in response to a question that Vitek said he wasn't sure that books would face the same problems that journals will in his lifetime. A possible way forward for scholarly and reference books was presented by the single conference books session, which was chaired

by Richard Brown on Thursday afternoon. (He was also on the Friday morning pirated content panel.) Much of this panel, which included Andrea Maculso (SpringerNature), Alison Mudditt (University of California Press), Charles Watkinson (University of Michigan Press and Library) and Michael Zeoli (GOBI Library Solutions), focused on foundation and university library support of Open Access books. Mellon is a big player in this space, and libraries have provided varying levels of support for books published by their institutions' presses. The University of California Press has a major initiative underway with its Luminos project on Open Access books (22 titles are now available). For-profit publishers are not standing by idly. SpringerNature has done a lot of market research into author attitudes toward Open Access (of course, authors want to get their work out to the largest potential audience). At the same time, potential readers need to be able to find and get these books, and funders want to demonstrate their impact, possibly by measuring the amount of downloading, while altmetrics are becoming increasingly important. (Overall, library ebook expenditures nearly quadrupled between 2011 and 2015.) At the end of the day, branding is still dominant, even in this Open Access book space.

The midpoint of a PSP Annual Conference is the PROSE Awards luncheon, presided over by PROSE chair John Jenkins, with the estimable AAP staffer Kate Kolendo working effectively behind the scenes, as she does throughout the PROSE submission and judging process, as well as during the rest of PROSE activities. John is an expert ringmaster, and the ceremony goes off with precision. A highlight this year was a 15-minute excerpt from a biographical film being made about Aldon D. Morris, whose book, *The Scholar Denied: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Birth of Modern Sociology* (University of California Press) won the top PROSE award, the RR Hawkins, last year. Prof. Morris, accompanied by members of his family to the luncheon, made a moving appearance at the podium.

As a PROSE Awards judge (as I have been for many years), I was given a seat at the head table, and I wound up next to this year's Hawkins winner, Yale Prof. Carlos M.N. Eire, who took many years to complete his masterpiece, *Reformations: The Early Modern World, 1450-1650* (Yale University Press). We had a lively conversation about publishing, academia, the importance of books and public libraries, and the country from which he escaped in the 60s - Cuba. At one point, I said, "I heard a Yale professor on NPR say some harshly negative things about Obama's rapprochement with the Castro regime."

"That's me," Prof Eire said with a laugh. "I went to high school in Chicago with Saturday morning NPR host Scott Simon, and he puts me on so he can ask me provocative questions." We both laughed then, put our disagreement on the matter aside, and talked about how important it is to be in the right place, at the right time, and to have someone around who is, or might someday be, important in your life, and who gets to know you.

The Aldon Morris film excerpt and his podium appearance were tough acts to follow, but Prof. Eire pulled it off with aplomb. He drew on his own history when he said that the past is what we have as identity. Reformations continue today; people want to change the world and make it better. But freedom, especially freedom of speech is very fragile. There is nothing that dictators fear more than books, more than freedom of expression. Let's keep publishing books, Prof. Eire concluded, that annoy and anger people. And fine ones, like his own, he might have said.

The PROSE Awards ceremony produces great moments, and while the awards enterprise is very much of the present, it does celebrate the past. And while PSP conferences look to the future (AAP's new president and CEO, former U.S. Register of Copyrights Maria A. Pallante, who is taking over from former congressman Tom Allen, made a reassuring impression in her brief appearances at the conference), I was happy at this year's edition to hear mention of several great names from PSP's recent past. Karen Hunter's name was evoked at Friday's sessions. When I passed by a group of three attendees, none of whom I knew, I heard one of them say, "We're the new Eric Swanson and Pieter Bolman."

The conference's final session was, for the fifth year, Darrell Gunter's (Gunter Media) The Innovators. The session followed a familiar pattern. Darrell, a genial, knowledgeable and sharp host, introduces the four entrepreneurs he's invited to the session, each of them talks for a few minutes about his (this year all were male, which hasn't always been the case) budding organization, then Darrell asks some excellent questions, and finally members of the audience participate in a Q&A until time runs out. The session works. Attendance is good, and most audience members stay until the end. Kent Anderson, a veteran medical publisher and former mystery novelist ("I did three and I'm done," he told me), talked about Redlink, which helps academic publishers, editors, readers, users and libraries employ data to streamline their collaborations, and Redlink Network, a public benefit company, which allows libraries and publishers to connect and collaborate to resolve access and support issues with a community-driven offering. Prof. Peter Burnhill (University of Edinburgh) talked about several groups he's involved with that are dedicated to preserving the scholarly record, such as preventing "reference rot," which can occur when web references are lost or content "drifts." In those cases, you freeze content with note-taking software. As illustrations, Prof. Burnhill used pictures of fish in various stages of decomposition. Doctor Paul Kudlow (on leave from his residency and working toward a PhD in bibliometrics and content discovery) talked about TrendMD, which deals with information overload and works to drive serendipity by annotating published articles with Netflix-style recommendations. The company has now gone beyond medical content. Daniel Whaley demoed the capabilities of Hypothes.is, an annotation trail provider that is intended to replace ubiquitous comments widgets, which don't work effectively because a comment is not placed next to the content being commented on. He annotated an Open Access law journal article, then went to the linked Congressional bill, where he inserted more annotations. There was some discussion during the Q&A as to whether he'd defaced the archived text of the bill. I found the session entertaining.

My apologies to the moderators and speakers in the concurrent sessions that I was unable to cover. Kudos to the conference planners who devised the solid program for this year's edition, to Jack Farrell (Jack Farrell & Associates) for his invaluable work with the conference sponsors, as well as to John Tagler (VP and executive director, PSP) and Sara Pinto (director, PSP), who always keep the conference gears meshed, even with their eyes continually on PSP's extensive educational, governmental and industry activities, which were spelled out during the brief PSP open business meeting on Thursday morning. Topics chosen for this year's sessions were appealing. The number of attendees - 255 - was the highest for half a dozen years. When I looked around the room during the sessions, I was heartened to observe that the male/female ratio of attendees seemed to be about 50-50. Of course, they weren't taking home prescriptions for what needs to be done to better serve authors, researchers and librarians or, for that matter, to save scholarly and professional

publishing. But they did get the lay of the land and pointers for success. When I asked Christine Charlip (ASM PRes) what she learned at the conference, "the importance of networks" was her immediate answer. When I asked Julie Nash (J&J Editorial) which session she found most interesting, she quickly responded that it was the session where Sarah Tegen was a panelist. That would also be the one on SCNs. On the train home later, I asked myself this question: in the future, maybe after my and Vitek's lifetimes (we're about the same age), will game-changing and vital story-telling research papers go viral, thereby proliferating throughout the research community and eventually filtering through to the general public all by themselves, or will they continue to need the imprimatur of respected journals, and publishers, to launch them? Then I thought about a shout-out to all those researchers who laud sites like SCI-HUB, which are dedicated to bringing the journals business crashing down: be careful what you wish for. Very careful.