

## From Open Access to Sheet Music: Selected Session Reports from Congress and CAML 2014

By Deborah Wills

### Congress 2014: Wednesday, May 28, 2014

#### Debating Open Access and the Future of Academic Publishing

This event was the second in a series of three debates on copyright and the modern academic organized for Congress by Blayne Haggart of Brock University. It brought together Michael Geist, Canada Research Chair in Internet and E-Commerce Law at the University of Ottawa, and Glenn Rollans, from the Association of Canadian Publishers. They considered the question: should open access be the primary publishing model for Canadian academic and research publishing?

Michael Geist discussed the three main areas of academic publishing: journal articles, academic monographs and textbooks. For articles, he indicated that we have already reached a tipping point in Canada, with more than 50% now published in open access journals. Geist stressed the value of open access for articles, including wider dissemination of knowledge and increased numbers of citations. He argued that the public pays for much of this research and that publishers have not suffered a loss of revenue.

For scholarly monographs, Geist expects the same shift to take place. Again, public money is involved. For example, Wilfrid Laurier University Press receives about \$8000 in public money for each book published. Textbooks are the most challenging area for open access, though Geist argued that student expectations are driving the issue, and many of the materials used for courses are already in the public domain. Geist's main point was that authors of academic materials write to be read and to contribute to knowledge, rather than for compensation.

Glenn Rollans agreed with many of Geist's ideas. He expects that the Association of Canadian Publishers will not oppose the idea of open access. However, he stressed that there are other options.

---

Deborah Wills is Liaison Librarian for Music, Communication Studies, English, Film Studies and Journalism at Wilfrid Laurier University Library.

According to Rollans, the basic publishing model, which turns money into books and books into money, is disrupted by open access. Publishers add value and quality control through their editorial team. They have a responsibility to their audience, and publishers who do not respect their audience will be out of business. Publishing is a process: creating the product is just the first step in keeping a publication in the public eye. Open access, on the other hand, can disempower readers, who should be allowed to vote with their money. In addition, Rollans stressed that open access depends on institutional support, and public money can disappear. He predicts that increasing page fees will put more pressure on institutions to provide funding. The big question for Rollans: where is the money coming from?

By the end of the debate, it seemed clear that the speakers agreed on many points and saw value in both publishing models. They continued to disagree about which should be the primary model for Canadian academic materials.

## **CAML Session C: Thursday, May 29, 2014**

### **Capturing Culture: Metadata Elements, Descriptive Vocabularies and Authority Control in the Design of the McGill Music Library's 19th-century French Sheet Music Database**

Andrew Senior (McGill University) described a project to create a database for the nineteenth-century French sheet music collection acquired by McGill from Library and Archives Canada in 2007. The collection is composed of nearly 20,000 items, spanning the 1820s to the turn of the twentieth century. With its wide range of genres and art forms, this collection has significant research potential for cultural historians, musicologists and librarians. Of particular interest are the relationships among publishers, singers and composers which the database will help illuminate.

A local metadata standard has been created with enough granularity to assist research. It closely resembles the Sheet Music Consortium Metadata Guidelines and could be mapped to that system. Since the authority files provided by the Library of Congress are often lacking for this type of music, in-house authority master files have been created. For the iconography and cover art, which is of central importance to the collection, there are plans to use the Art & Architecture Thesaurus from the Getty Research Institute among other standards. The project aims to find a balance between controlled vocabulary and natural language description. Future plans include selective digitization.

## **Genre of the Moment: Creating a Genre Taxonomy for the 19th-century French Sheet Music Collection at the Marvin Duchow Music Library, McGill University**

Kathleen Hulley (McGill University) described the challenges of determining an appropriate taxonomy for her library's French sheet music collection. She stressed the need to draw not only on genres specifically mentioned on the works, but to also examine historical documents and include additional genres common to the period. The rich variety of genres is an important facet of the collection, and the goal is to make genre an access point for information retrieval. Since the Library of Congress provides only a limited range of genres for popular music, the database creators decided to produce an in-house genre taxonomy. This taxonomy will enhance access and allow an historically informed approach to research. Genre can be discovered from a variety of sources: the subtitle of a work, marketing materials, reviews, memoirs and other historical writings. In the database, genre and sub-genre will be searchable by keyword or through a list. In cases where an item contains contradictory genre information, different genres can be attached to a single work. Once the database is complete, it will be possible to link genre in a rich variety of ways to other aspects of the collection.

## **Reinforcing the Front Line: Music Publishing and the War Effort, 1914-1918**

Timothy Neufeldt (University of Toronto) began his presentation with a vivid description of front-line warfare told in the words of a soldier. That example, and other excerpts from primary sources, set the historical context for a discussion of music publishing in Canada during and shortly after the war. The music publishers of the time appealed to the understanding of their audience, who used newspapers as their main source of information. At the beginning of the war, newspapers were organs of propaganda for encouraging enlistment. Given that purpose, song lyrics tended to assume victory with no repercussions for the individuals on the battlefield. As the war progressed, front-line soldiers soon experienced a different reality, and the disconnect grew between soldiers and those on the home front. In response, publishers changed their approach and provided songs depicting war as a perilous cause necessary for defending the Empire. These songs acknowledged danger while appealing to the manhood of would-be recruits. At the end of the war, the intent of the songs changed once again. Now the public was encouraged to buy sheet music to support the returning soldiers. Throughout the presentation, Neufeldt quoted from song lyrics to illustrate how publishers marketed the war effort by reflecting popular understanding.