Chris Bird, from the Wellcome Trust, said that although the trust encourages researchers who receive their funding to make work openly accessible, compliance is very low: about 5%. He claimed that OA and open science are good for the economy, and cited the Human Genome Project as an example, which has led to economic activity and job creation. "Researchers must believe that it is a good thing for research to be freely accessible," he exhorted us, and I fully agreed.

Next, Prof Curry of Imperial College said that he, like most academics, had stayed away from debates in scholarly publishing for a long time. But when Elsevier extended support to the Research Works Act, he joined the OA movement. He stated that the public shouldn't have to pay twice for research: the first time to make the research happen, and then to see the output. He also lamented that researchers focus too much on the impact factor, saying "Focusing on the impact factor is a lazy and easy thing to do."

David Hoole from NPG took a balanced view. He explained that *Nature* has always focused on communicating science to the general public. NPG's first OA journal – Molecular Systems Biology – was established in 2005, and he said that NPG was the first publisher to encourage green OA, or self-archiving. But he explained that *Nature* journals in general cannot easily operate with an OA model: because of low acceptance rates (around 5%), much of the processing time and ensuing costs is in rejecting articles and not publishing them! Therefore, article-processing charges, which most OA journals levy on successful authors, would be excessively high.

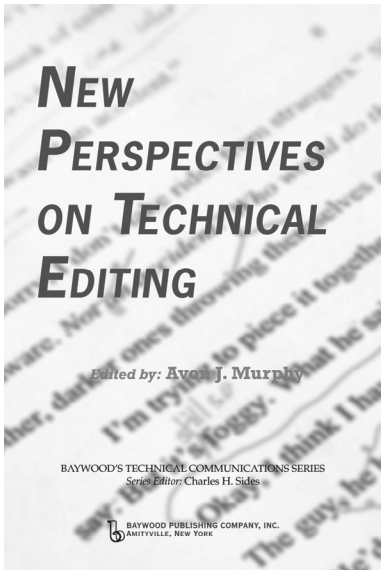
Michael Jubb from the RIN put things in context: there's no doubt that OA is good for researchers, the public, and the economy, but how can OA happen on a large scale? UK authors produce about 6% of the approximately 1.9 million articles published every year in journals, so there's not a lot the UK alone, or for that matter any one country, can do.

After the four speakers had their say, Graham Taylor from the Publishers Association began defending the traditional model. His stand was that publishers are the stewards of scientific information, and they do the things others don't do, many of which are onerous tasks. They are pragmatists, and, in his words, they are neither rogues nor philanthropists. As he spoke, the tweets from the audience made it clear that he was not the most popular speaker.

With many differing and yet well-founded views on OA, perhaps the only conclusion that can be reached at this point is that the debate on OA will continue.

Book review

New Perspectives on Technical Editing by Avon J. Murphy (*ed*.) ISBN : 978-0895033949 (2010) Baywood Publishing Company Inc, Hardcover, 210 pages, 35.5 GBP



This book presents a collection of 10 chapters dealing with diverse aspects of technical editing (ie, editorial planning, and analysis and structural changes made to other people's technological documents): research in technical editing, trends and teaching of technical editing, copyediting, and technical journal editing. The role and function of the modern journal and book editor is also dealt with in detail.

Each chapter is written by an expert in the field: senior editors, university professors in technical communication, technical writers and linguists. The ever-evolving role of the editor is clearly elucidated in several historical reviews, and in the descriptions of the expectations for the future.

A very striking aspect of this book is its extensive collection of bibliographic resources: every chapter lists dozens of very useful references, and the closing chapter, and annotated bibliography, contain many not so well known references, and are most useful. All in all, the book is a treasure trove listing more than 400 references, in addition to numerous webpage URLs embedded in the texts.

The book is designed to help readers to understand current practices and norms in technical editing, and to help them to take action in editing as well as in teaching and educating would-be editors. The audience for this book thus includes editors and teachers, but also writers, researchers and students. A deep reading of this book will result in a better understanding of the difference between full technical editing and its much narrower component so well known as copyediting, and will convince any prospective editor that editing should not be undertaken if the people involved do not master the art of precision and accuracy in technical (as well as in human) communication, do not possess the technical know how and computer skills, or do not have a very broad knowledge base.

The language fluency of every contributor makes this book a pleasure to read, and this particular volume of Baywood's Technical Communications Series is very well edited. The subject index covers almost 8 two-column pages.

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