OPEN LITERACY

& the Problem of Access Refusal

Robyn Hall | Red Deer College | Spring 2012

Overview

- Open Access
- Open Literacy
- Findings
  - Problems
  - Suggestions
  - Challenge
- Questions

robynhall.ca/OpenAccess

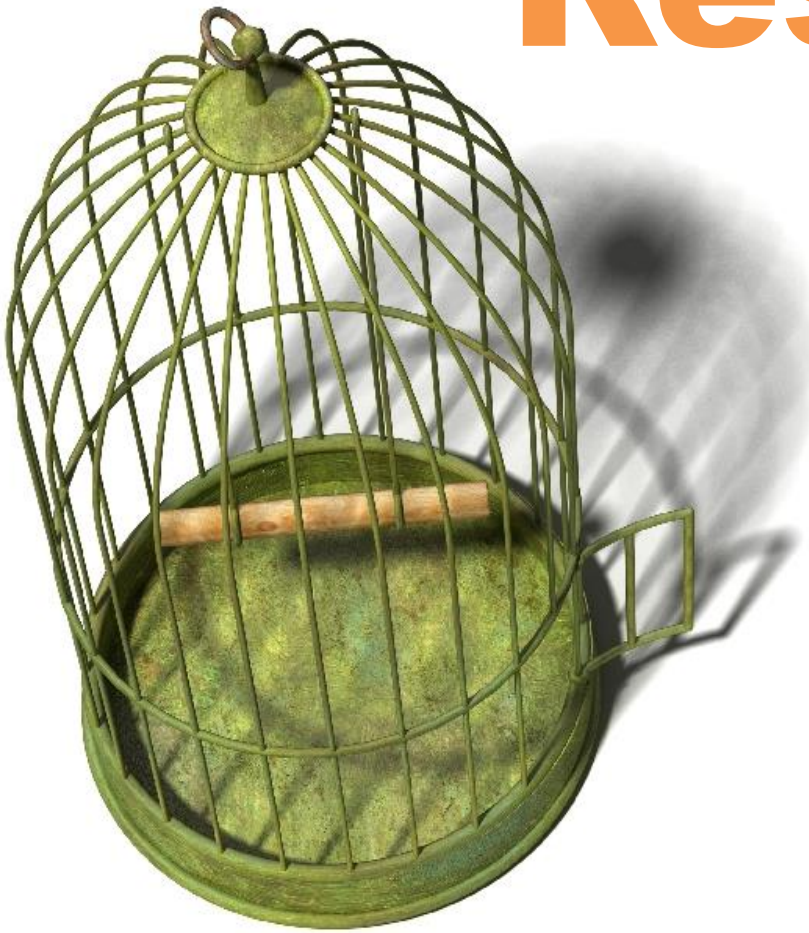
OA
in a
Nutshell

Information Literacy

- “foundation for continued growth throughout their careers”
- “informed citizens and members of communities”

Access Denied

Real World Research



The gift of **Open Literacy**

Perspectives?

Fluid Surveys .com

RESULTS

Years as a librarian?

Response	Percentage
0-4 years	29%
5-9 years	25%
10-14 years	15%
15 years or more	31%

Institution?

Response	Percentage
University	73%
College	24%
Polytechnic	4%

Classes taught yearly?

Response	Percentage
0 classes	2%
1-4 classes	16%
5-9 classes	16%
10-14 classes	20%
15 classes or more	45%

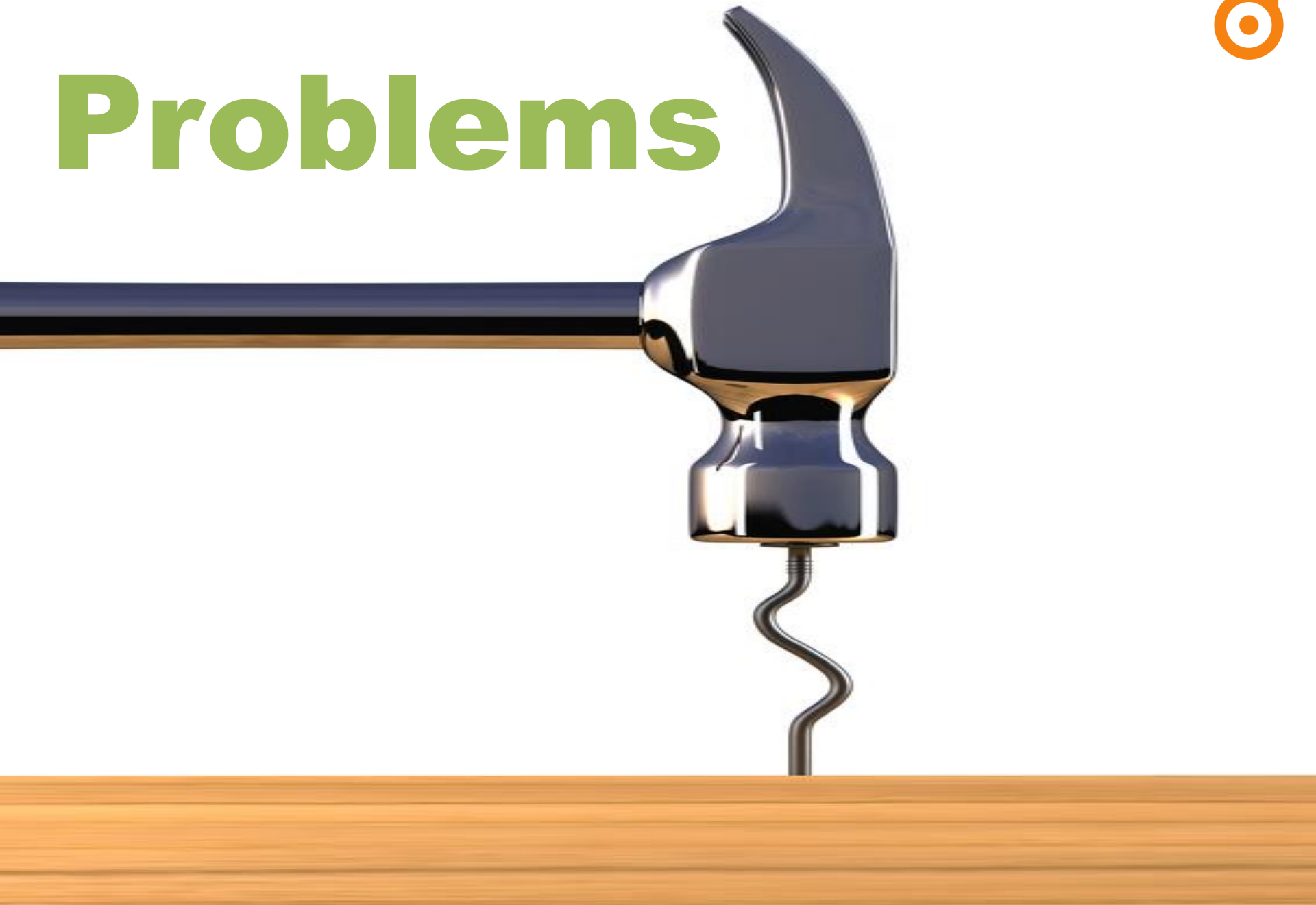
Education level?

Response	Percentage
First or second year of higher education	38%
Third or fourth year of higher education	11%
Graduate students	15%
All of the above	36%

Taught students OA?

Response	Percentage
Yes	57%
No	43%

Problems



Baby Steps

Given that I am often teaching them their first class in Library/scholarly research, it seems that baby "in-house" steps are more useful and less foreign.

The students experience a pretty steep learning curve when it comes to academic research. I like to make sure they have the basics under their belts ...

My level of college and level of classes is more at the "I cannot tell if this is a scholarly source -- could you help me?" or at the using newspapers and finding that challenging -- level.

Info-Noise

Undergrads need to know where to find evidence and how to evaluate it. Adding the concept of OA would be increasing irrelevant "noise" in an already overwhelming information learning process.

My knowledge of them is limited, and there are already so many things to show students, it seems like an extra frivolity.

Relevance?

Open Access doesn't include titles of interest to our students, many of them are rather obscure.

Undergrads are only ready to learn about the information concepts that will get them through their immediate information need - usually an assignment.

... OA is primarily of importance to librarians.

…the students care about the information and its quality, not the packaging.

Paid vs. Unpaid

We feel that our resources are sufficient.

[We’re] trying to promote the resources we pay subscription fees for.

Some of the management are reluctant to advertise free resources when we are paying so much for databases and the like.

Faculty Support

... their discipline instructors want us to concentrate on the subscribed resources.

It is something that we try to speak to Faculty about but never receive a positive or encouraging response.

I don't know how it could be done, given the institutional culture.

Not Enough Time

“Not enough time to differentiate. Too complex.”

“The class time is too limited to cover even the basics.”

“Many classes are much too short with much too much to cover.”

There are only so many hours in the day: we are incredibly understaffed and really do very little promotion in any way.

Should librarians do more to teach students about OA?

Response	Percentage
Yes	92%
No	8%

Suggestions

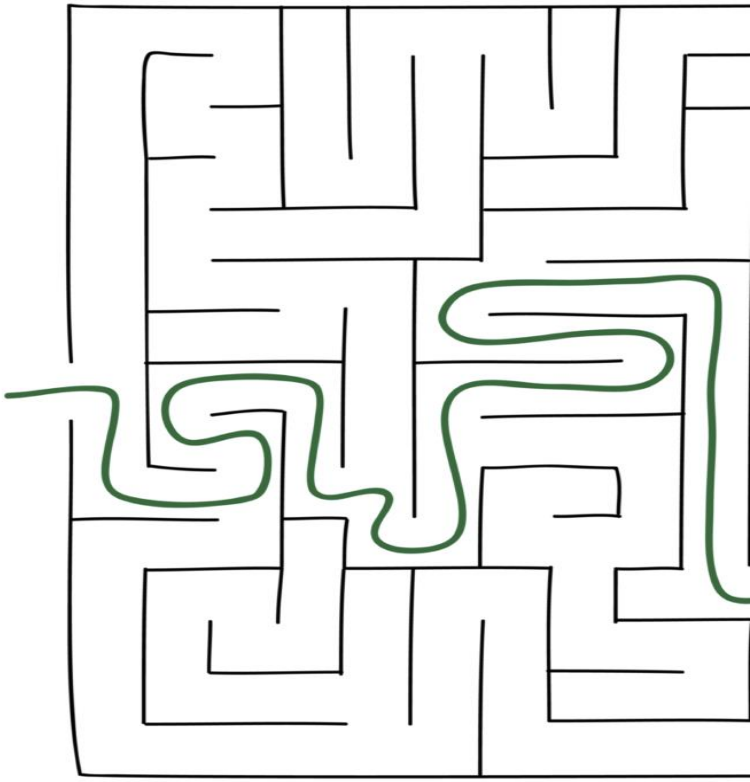
OA Promotion

Response	Percentage
Celebrating OA Week (www.openaccessweek.org)	61%
Including OA in online subject or resource guides	72%
Adding OA to OPAC	70%
Educating reference staff	63%

openaccessweek.org

For the most part, the sessions are attended by librarians and library students because it's heavily promoted to these groups. The library should call on Communication Officers to plan Open Access week events together to attract a wider audience.

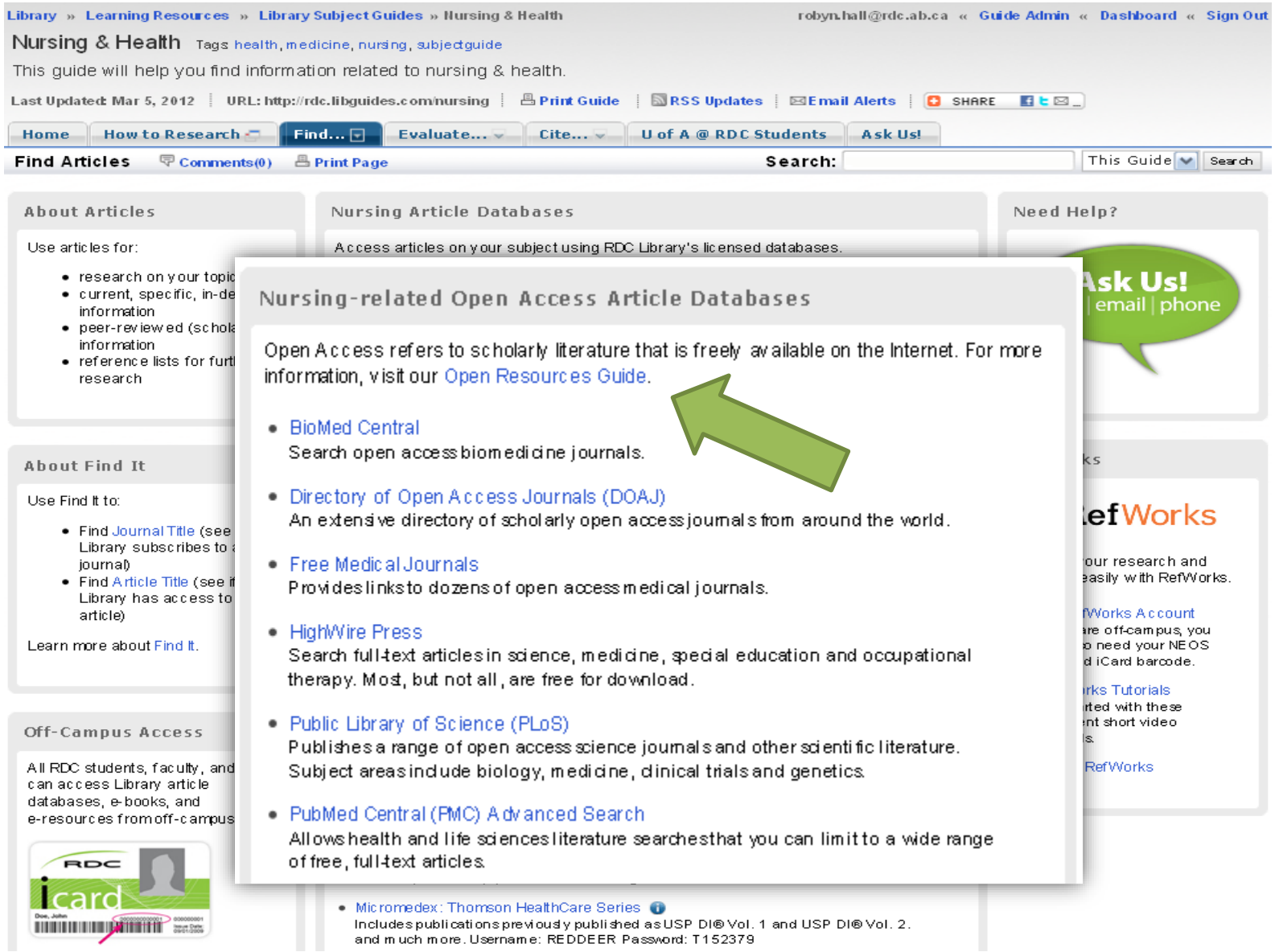
Research Guides



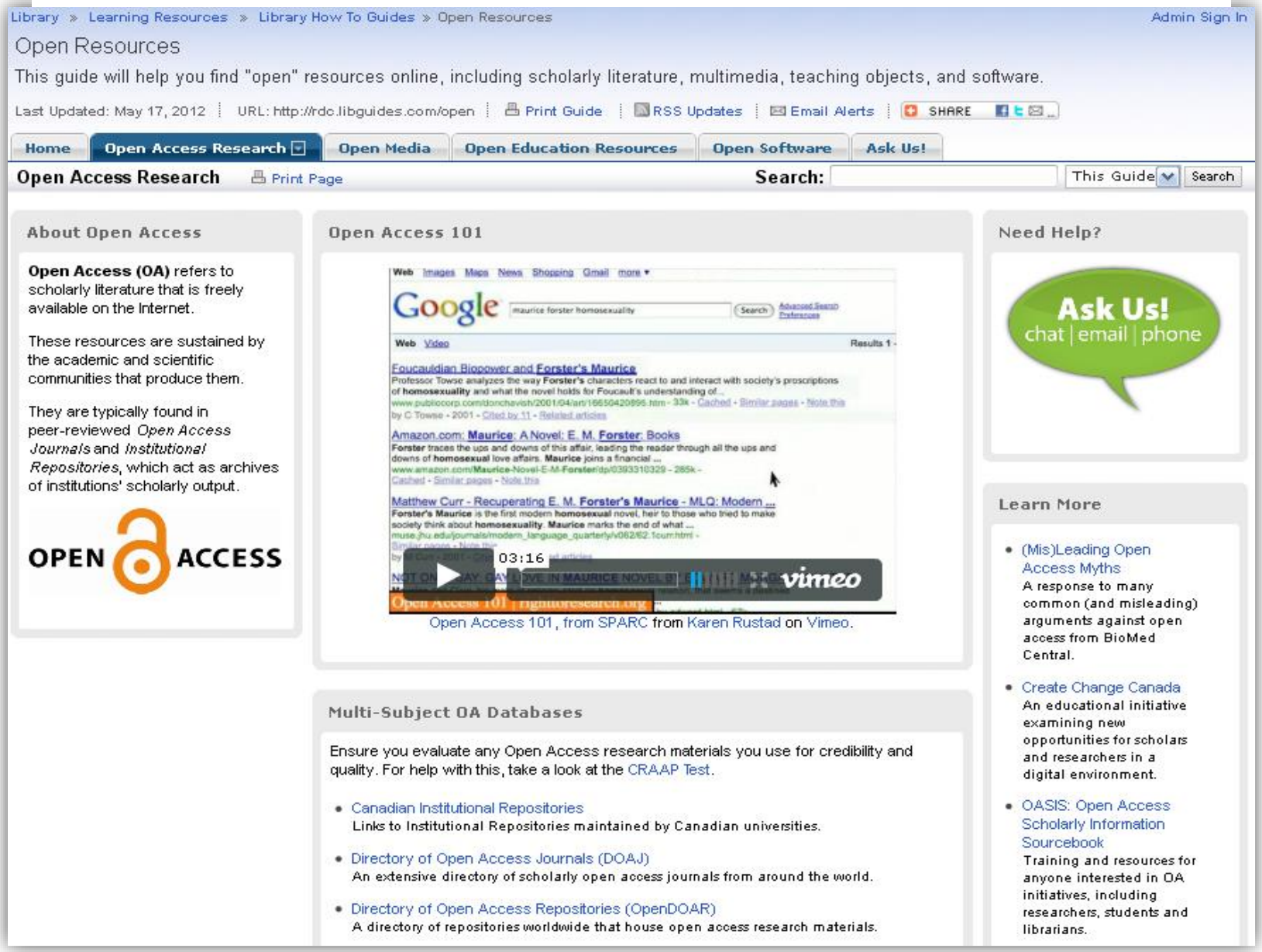
“I certainly try to include open access into the research guides when appropriate.”

“Pointing them out as a viable alternative (in the research guide alongside Biological Abstracts and Web of Science) with a note on why they are "good" will raise their profile.”

rdc.libguides.com/nursing



rdc.libguides.com/open



Library » Learning Resources » Library How To Guides » Open Resources

Admin Sign In

Open Resources

This guide will help you find "open" resources online, including scholarly literature, multimedia, teaching objects, and software.

Last Updated: May 17, 2012 | URL: http://rdc.libguides.com/open | Print Guide | RSS Updates | Email Alerts | SHARE

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About Open Access

Open Access (OA) refers to scholarly literature that is freely available on the Internet.

These resources are sustained by the academic and scientific communities that produce them.

They are typically found in peer-reviewed *Open Access Journals* and *Institutional Repositories*, which act as archives of institutions' scholarly output.

OPEN ACCESS

Open Access 101

Open Access 101, from SPARC from Karen Rustad on Vimeo.

Multi-Subject OA Databases

Ensure you evaluate any Open Access research materials you use for credibility and quality. For help with this, take a look at the CRAAP Test.

- Canadian Institutional Repositories
  Links to Institutional Repositories maintained by Canadian universities.
- Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)
  An extensive directory of scholarly open access journals from around the world.
- Directory of Open Access Repositories (OpenDOAR)
  A directory of repositories worldwide that house open access research materials.

Need Help?

Ask Us!
chat | email | phone

Learn More

- (Mis)Leading Open Access Myths
  A response to many common (and misleading) arguments against open access from BioMed Central.
- Create Change Canada
  An educational initiative examining new opportunities for scholars and researchers in a digital environment.
- OASIS: Open Access Scholarly Information Sourcebook
  Training and resources for anyone interested in OA initiatives, including researchers, students and librarians.

Use OA

“I've explained the term "open access" and found examples of open access journals for the students.”

“I briefly mention the fact that if a journal is not available via the library, the students could check the web to see whether it is freely available in an open access journal. If I am teaching PubMed, I point out the 'free' journals.”

Google
scholar

BioMed Central
The Open Access Publisher

DOAJ
DIRECTORY OF
OPEN ACCESS
JOURNALS

Search
Advanced Scholar Search
Articles (include patents) Legal opinions and journals
Stand on the shoulders of giants

PubMed

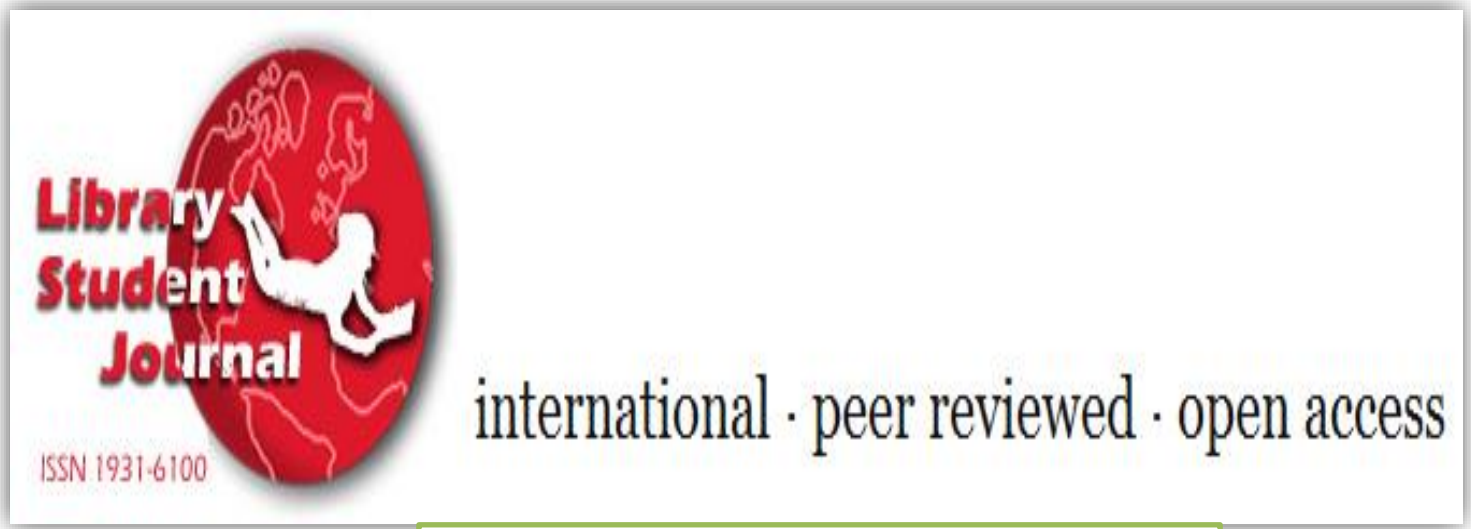
PLoS
PUBLIC LIBRARY of SCIENCE

Evaluate OA

A good way to approach it is by showing actual examples of article citations on the same topic in open access journals vs. traditional journals.

We have a discussion of critically assessing information and what may or may not be available to them where they work…

http://www.anthropologymatters.com



http://www.librarystudentjournal.org

OA Assignments

Encourage students not only to use OA resources, but plant the seeds of publishing or at least archiving their own publications in OA repositories.

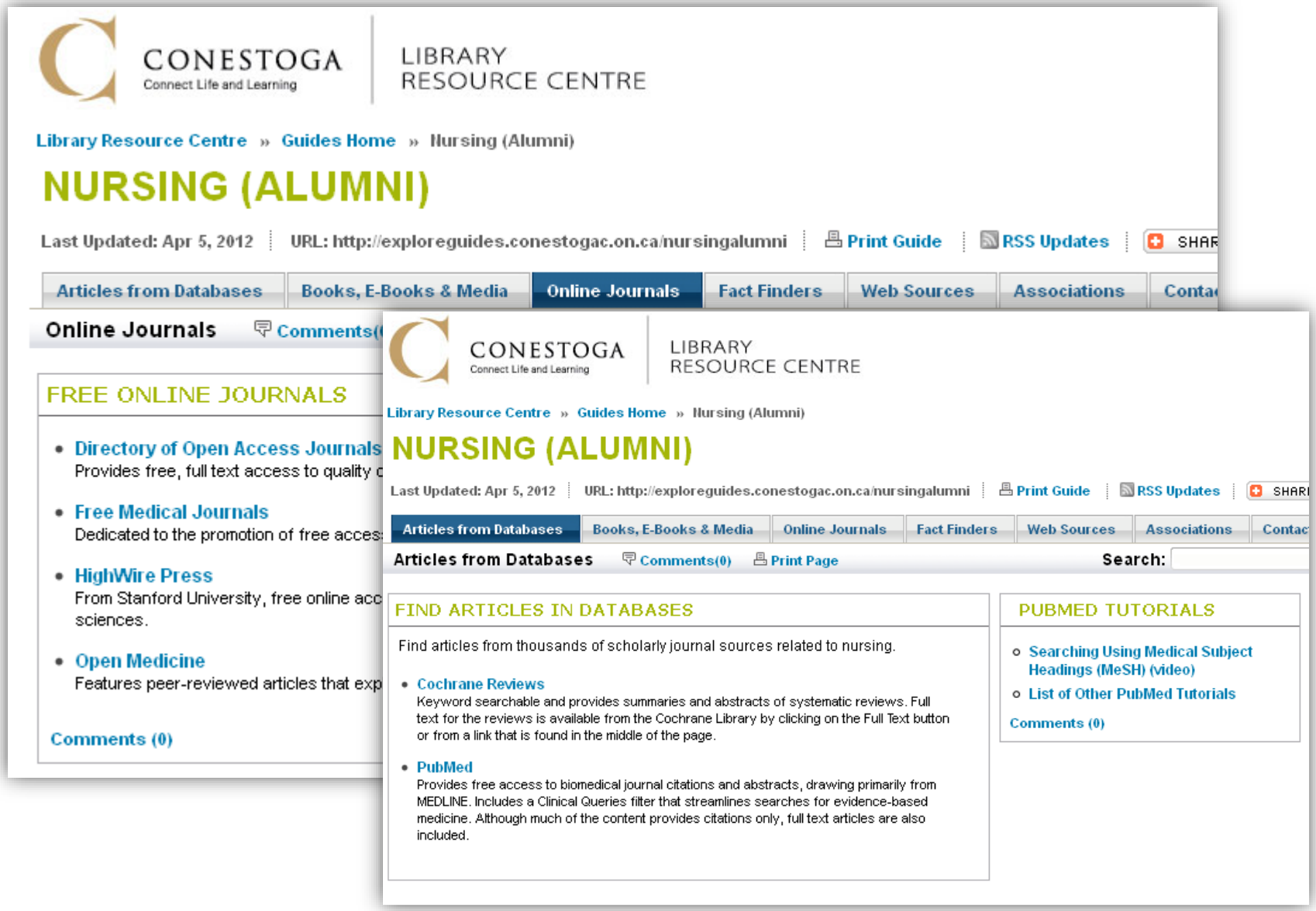
Higher
Education

I let higher level students know that upon graduation, they will lose access to the library's resources and that many of them will have to rely on materials that are freely available on the web.

We should make it clear that we want them to learn how to use resources that will actually be available to them when they no longer have access to the library's collection - put Open Access resources in the context of their future in the workforce.

… graduate students and Alumni would likely benefit from this type of information more.

exploreguides.conestogac.on.ca/nursingalumni

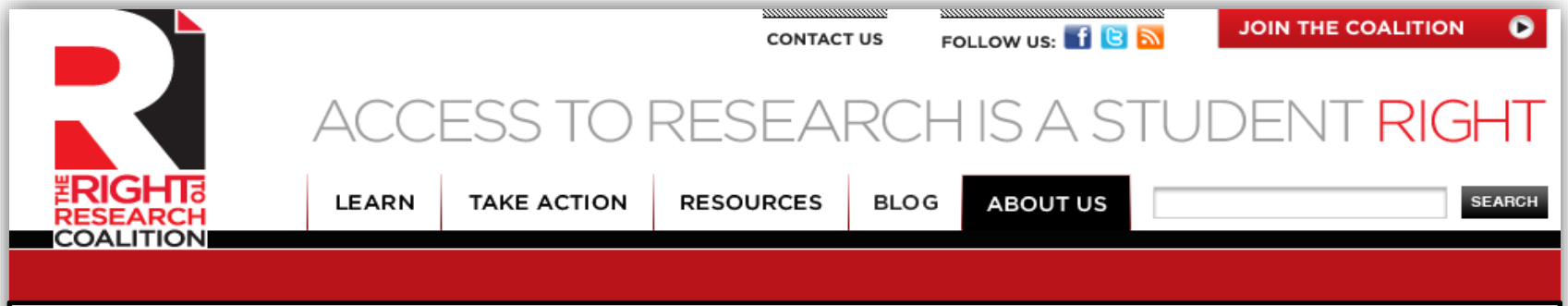


Just Tell Them...

We have compiled a Q&A for faculty regarding OA publishing and associated questions, but this survey has led me to think about also compiling a 5-minute blurb about OA for students with an accompanying handout.

Open access is very important -- for the world, for academics, for research. Understanding a lot about open access is not very important for my students. Knowing that it exists and to know at a basic level only why it is important is excellent and enough for them.

righttoresearch.org



"We will undertake activities, in our membership and on our campuses, to educate students about Open Access and to engage them in efforts supporting Open Access."

“There is a great need for us to teach OA more.”

“Thank you for this eye-opening survey! I was almost embarrassed to admit that I don't talk about OA with students - just with faculty, but this is a great way to bring up important issues, and explore solutions. I would be interested in reading about your findings! Thanks again!”

“More discussion of OA at all conferences would be helpful.”

Vigour, Thrift & Resourcefulness

Take the Open Literacy Challenge

robynhall.ca/OpenAccess

Questions?

Thank You!