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Canada Celebrates International Open Access Week 2018

by Caroline Winter | 27 November 2018 | English, Observations and Responses | 0 comments



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This post was written by Caroline Winter.

At a glance:

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October 22 to 28, 2018, marked the 10th annual **International Open Access (OA) Week**. Founded in 2008 by **SPARC** and its partners, Open Access Week is now recognized around the world as an opportunity to start conversations about OA, plan collective action, and build a presence of OA in the scholarly community and beyond (Shockey).

This year's theme—Designing Equitable Foundations for Open Knowledge—emphasizes the community-driven nature of the OA movement and the importance of local action:

“This year's theme reflects a scholarly system in transition. While governments, funders, universities, publishers, and scholars are increasingly adopting open policies and practices, how these are actually implemented is still in flux. As open becomes the default, all stakeholders must be intentional about designing these new, open systems to ensure that they are inclusive, equitable, and truly serve the needs of a diverse global community. This year's Open Access Week invites all interested stakeholders to participate in advancing this important work.” (Shockey)

Universities and colleges across Canada celebrated OA Week 2018 with talks, workshops, [Wikipedia edit-a-thons](#), and exhibits. Many hosted screenings of *Paywall: the Business of Scholarship*, directed by Jason Schmitt (Clarkson University, NY). *Paywall* is a documentary about the for-profit academic publishing industry that advocates for OA. In keeping with the principles of OA, *Paywall* is available to stream, download, and screen.

To kick off OA Week celebrations at the University of Victoria (UVic), the Electronic Textual Cultures Lab (ETCL) and the Digital Scholarship Commons hosted a [public talk and Wikipedia edit-a-thon with the Lab's honorary Resident Wikipedian, Constance Crompton \(University of Ottawa\)](#). Crompton's talk, “Donating and Developing: Contributing to Wikipedia to Make a Better Web,” emphasized the need for scholars and students to mobilize their knowledge by contributing to Wikipedia and the opportunities for research offered by WikiData.

Following an introduction to using Wikipedia by Michael Redmacher and Matt Huculak, which described the process of writing and editing the [Transgender Archives at the University of Victoria](#) article, edit-a-thon participants got to work editing and creating articles.

On October 24, UVic Libraries hosted a [free public screening of *Paywall* followed by a panel discussion](#) by Frank van Veggel (Chemistry), Chris Eagle (Mathematics and Statistics), Lisa Petrachenko (Associate University Librarian, Research & Collections), Maxwell Nicholson (Senior Economics Lab Instructor and Undergraduate student), and Alyssa Arbuckle (Associate Director, ETCL). This event was organized by Inba Kehoe and moderated by Jonathan Bengtson, UVic's University Librarian.

[The ETCL also tweeted about OA](#) throughout the week using the official #OAWeek hashtag.

Other universities and Colleges throughout British Columbia recognized Open Access Week as well. BCcampus, Simon Fraser University (SFU), the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT), Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU), Langara College, University of the Fraser Valley (UFV), and the University of British Columbia (UBC) collaboratively hosted a panel on Wednesday, October 24 called “[Open but not Free: Invisible Labour in Open Scholarship](#).” The Panel featured Melissa Ashman (KPU), Sanjaya Mishra (Commonwealth of Learning), Carol Munoz Nieves (SFU), and Juliet O'Brien (UBC), with Bronwen Sprout (UBC) facilitating.

[KPU celebrated Open Access Week](#) by offering workshops on launching journals with [Open Journal Systems](#) and making accessible open textbooks with [Pressbooks](#). It also offered a workshop for instructors getting started with KPU's [Zed Cred](#) program, the first in Canada, which allows students to complete selected programs with zero additional cost for textbooks: course materials include open access materials as well as resources available through the KPU library.

BCIT hosted “[Open Access Week Wednesday](#),” which included a Wikipedia edit-a-thon and a game called “Check Your Informational Privilege.”

[Douglas College hosted a series of events](#) during the week, including “Introduction to Open Journals,” a

talk by Kevin Stranack of the [Public Knowledge Project](#); “DOOR Open House,” a tour of the [DOuglas College Open Repository](#); and a talk called “Implementing [Opus](#),” KPU’s open publishing suite.

UBC celebrated with a whole suite of events: a Creative Commons “license sprint,” a demo session at its [Emerging Media Lab](#), a learning analytics hackathon, and workshops about complying with the [Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications](#), creating and managing your academic profile, using [TEI](#), and working with Open Educational Resources (OER).

SFU celebrated with a screening of *Paywall*, complementing [workshops on issues related to OA](#) hosted by the Library year-round, such as pitching an idea to *The Conversation Canada* and ethical publishing.

In Canada, universities and colleges beyond British Columbia also celebrated OA week. [The University of Ottawa’s OA Week events](#) included a Wikipedia edit-a-thon introduced by Constance Crompton, as well as a roundtable discussion with Michelle Schira Hagerman (Education), Natalie Carter (Community Research Lead, Arctic Corridors and Northern Voices Research Project), and Kyle Conway (Communication). The roundtable event included the presentation of UOttawa’s [Open Scholarship Award](#).

[The University of Waterloo hosted a full week of programs related to OA](#). These included a full-day conference–Open Access Day–featuring talks about the endgame of the OA movement, openness and equity in Inuit communities and Arctic research, predatory publishing, and open education in Ontario, among others. It also hosted a journal price guessing game, OA information booth, and a discussion panel about OA beyond journal publishing.

[The Robertson Library at the University of Prince Edward Island hosted an exhibit](#) called the “True Cost of Research,” which investigated the subscription costs of subscribing to the 70 sources in a single published article and found the total cost to be over \$100,000.

[McGill’s Open Access Week](#) events included workshops about publishing in OA venues for graduate students in different disciplines, copyright, and predatory publishing. It also included two exhibitions, one called [Microfiches \[Open Access Series\]](#), which features snippets of textual information about OA in English and French that are illustrated and printed on cards and displayed physically and digitally, and an interactive touch-table exhibition.

Although the events listed here celebrate the official International OA Week, its organizers note that opportunities for advancing open access and scholarly inclusivity happen throughout the year: “Diversity, equity, and inclusion must be prioritized year-round and integrated into the fabric of the open community, from how our infrastructure is built to how we organize community events.” (Shockey)

Work Cited

Shockey, Nick. “Theme of 2018 International Open Access Week to be ‘Designing Equitable Foundations for Open Knowledge.’” May 24, 2018. <http://www.openaccessweek.org/profiles/blogs/theme-of-2018-international-open-access-week-to-be-designing-equi>.

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