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Pause & Ponder

“In the nonstop tsunami of global information, librarians provide us with floaties and teach us to swim.”

– Linton Weeks

Readers Please Note

Tap the Title to read the full article

Public libraries in district seek readers’ choice of magazines

People who frequent libraries across the district will soon be able to read magazines of their choice at public libraries. Librarians from across 191 public libraries in the district are engaged in collecting readers’ opinions on magazines they would like to read. This comes after the Tamil Nadu government released a transparent book procurement policy on March 7. As part of this policy, librarians are required to upload readers’ feedback on the procurement of magazines they wish to read in public libraries or on the government website. District library officer Rajendran said the process will be completed within a week. “Based on readers’ opinions, we will place purchase orders. Previously, we selected the magazines, but now readers are being given an opportunity to select what they want to read. A similar method will also be followed for books and the procurement of books will likely commence after June,” Rajendran said.

K Lenin Barathi, president, Library Readers Circle, said, “Students preparing for competitive exams form a significant portion of readers in some libraries. On the other hand, farmers and women are the primary readers in libraries in villages. So, the decision to let people choose books and magazines, based on their needs, is a

welcome move by the government.”...

Source: [The Times of India, 09 Apr 2024](#)

‘We may lose ability to think critically at all’: the book-summary apps accused of damaging authors’ sales



A tech sector dedicated to boiling things down has raised temperatures in some quarters of the publishing world

Hungry for niche knowledge to impress your colleagues? Troubled by the size of a hefty new book? Doubt your abilities to understand complex arguments? Well, today an increasingly competitive industry offers to take away these problems with one product: a book summary app.

Since these digital services first promised to boil down a title, usually a nonfiction work, a decade ago, the marketplace has become crowded. So much so that authors and publishers are concerned about the damage to sales, as well as to the habit of concentrated reading.

Some successful writers, including Amy Liptrot, also fear that apps such as Blinkist, Bookey, getAbstract and the latest, Headway, may be undermining the book trade and misrepresenting content...

Source: [The Guardian, 07 Apr 2024](#)

Will the Gates Foundation's preprint-centric policy help open access?



The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, one of the world's top biomedical research funders, will from next year require grant holders to make their research publicly available as preprints, articles that haven't yet been accepted by a journal or gone through peer review. The foundation also said it would stop paying for article-processing charges (APCs) — fees imposed by some journal publishers to make scientific articles freely available online for all readers, a system known as open access (OA).

The Gates Foundation is the first major science funder to take such an approach with preprints, says Lisa Hinchliffe, a librarian and academic at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. The policies — which take effect on 1 January 2025 — elevate the role of preprints and are aimed at reducing the money the Gates Foundation spends on APCs, while ensuring that the research is free to read...

Source: [Nature, 04 Apr 2024](#)

India's public libraries, clawing for relevance

Amidst a rich literary heritage and a nation aspiring for progress, why are we living in a ragtag and bobtail era

when it comes to public libraries in India? With India becoming the world's most populous nation, the anticipated demographic advantage will yield results only when the dysfunctional education system is reconstrued in the country and a complete overhaul of the pathetic state of public libraries is done to meet the needs of its citizens across varying age groups and cultural differences.

As per the Ministry of Culture, Government of India; there are 54,856 public libraries in India, but only a small fraction meet international standards. As per the 2017 International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) report "The World's Public Libraries: Key Trends and Statistics" an average Indian public library had just 5,700 books compared to a collection of 108,000 books in the developed world. Acc. to the 2018 Unesco Institute of Statistics report "Measuring Information and Communication Technologies for Development" only 12% of Indian public libraries have computers and just 8% have internet access. Moreover, according to the 2016 Press Trust of India (PTI) news article "Only 10% of the 1.2 million librarians in India are professionally qualified."...

Source: [The Times of India, 02 Apr 2024](#)

Who loses when scientific research is locked behind paywalls?



Imagine you're a scientist doing research you hope will improve the health of people in your region. Working on a particular question—maybe having to do with tuberculosis (TB), or maternal mortality, or malaria—you come across the title of a scientific research paper that you think may have some answers. But that paper is locked behind the science journal's paywall, and the price for access is thousands of dollars—much too high for your lab.

When I was doing HIV/TB research many years ago in Vietnam, I frequently encountered this issue, and it continues to be a problem today. Emmanuel Mugisha, director of PATH's work for the Typhoid Vaccine Acceleration Consortium project and advisor on vaccines and immunizations, based in Uganda, says researchers in low- and middle-income countries face these kinds of roadblocks daily...

Source: [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 27 Mar 2024](#)

Journal editors are resigning en masse: what do these group exits achieve?



Earlier this month, the editors at the linguistics journal *Syntax* publicly announced their resignations in response to changes to the

manuscript-handling process imposed by its publisher, Wiley.

“We have come to the conclusion that our position as editors of the journal is no longer tenable,” wrote editors Klaus Abels and Suzanne Flynn in an open letter to authors and reviewers of the journal on 9 March. They added that measures designed to cut costs and tackle a backlog of papers — namely assigning copyediting tasks that were previously handled by *Syntax*'s independent editorial office to a production team without specialist knowledge of linguistics — meant the journal could “no longer meet the needs of our community”.

Wiley says it will continue to publish and invest in *Syntax*. “Any changes Wiley has made to *Syntax* have been designed to facilitate the timely and high-quality publishing of the journal,” says Allyn Molina, vice president for publishing development...

Source: [Nature, 27 Mar 2024](#)

Artificial intelligence puts 8 million UK jobs at risk, report finds



An estimated 8 million jobs in the UK are at risk from artificial intelligence (AI) unless the government enacts proactive policies to prevent this, a report from a think tank has warned. The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) has said that back-office, entry-level and part-time jobs in particular are heavily exposed to

automation, and women are also “significantly” more affected.

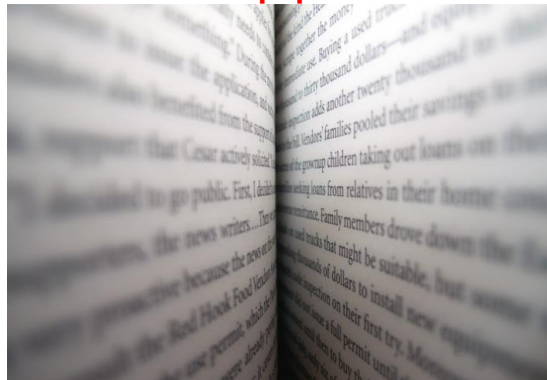
The report identifies two key stages of generative AI adoption: the first wave, which is already here, and a second wave, when companies will integrate existing AI technologies further and more deeply into their processes.

The body analysed 22,000 tasks in the UK economy, covering every type of job, and found that while only 11% of tasks are thought to be exposed to existing generative AI, this could rise to 59% if companies integrate the technology more deeply.

‘Routine cognitive’ tasks such as database management and ‘organisational and strategic’ tasks such as scheduling or inventory management are most exposed to generative AI, which can read and create text, software code and data...

Source: [Engineering and Technology, 27 Mar 2024](#)

When it is and isn't OK to recycle text in scientific papers



Plagiarism is never acceptable, but when is it appropriate for scholars to reuse their own words in published papers?

Plagiarism has long been recognized as a form of scholarly misconduct. Charges of intellectual misappropriation were being made

2,000 years ago and, more recently, accusations of plagiarism formed part of the criticism that led to the resignation of Claudine Gay, then President of Harvard University. In its simplest form, plagiarism consists of copying text written by another person and presenting it as one's own work without acknowledging the original author....

Source: [Nature Human Behaviour, 25 Mar 2024](#)

How a Hyderabad organisation helped establish over 600 libraries in India



“We help connect idle books to hungry minds,” reads a statement on the website of Hyderabad-based Food4Thought Foundation (food4thoughtfoundation.org). Formed in 2015 as a bridge connecting individuals who want to donate books idling on their shelves and educational institutions and those seeking books to open a small library, the organisation has helped set up 622 libraries across India. Their goal is to establish 1001 libraries by 2025. “Initially, we were contacting people and telling them about the need for libraries. Today, we get nearly 20 inquiries daily,” says Madhavi, one of the co-founders and director.

The libraries they have helped set up are at government schools, hospitals, parks, gated communities, and even prisons. While cities such as Bengaluru and Hyderabad have been

proactive, there has been increased interest from Northeastern States and Gujarat, says Madhavi. So far, the Foundation has helped set up 250 libraries in Bengaluru, 135 in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh and 55 in the Northeast...

Source: [The Hindu, 21 Mar 2024](#)

The Challenge of Science Communication in the Age of AI



Scientists, along with the general public, have been amazed at the rapid advancements and public explosion of Large Language Model (LLM)-based AI tools over the past year. Many scientists have also experimented with these new tools, and the result is that AI is now involved at all levels of the scientific process. Whether it is research; data extraction, interpretation, or visualization; text production; or creating other forms of multimedia content: AI is fundamentally changing the way we generate and share knowledge.

In the long term, the impact of this relatively new development is likely to be as transformative as the digitization of scholarly publishing and the media landscape in the 1990s and 2000s. AI tools will undoubtedly increase the productivity of science, and research output will continue to accelerate. Yet there are also significant reasons for concern. A key question is what this will mean for external science communication, for the exchange of information and opinions between

science and the public? There will be at least as big a change here as in internal science communication, i.e. the professional exchange between experts. What will this mean for us as a society?...

Source: [Stanford Social Innovation Review, 21 Mar 2024](#)

Wiley Launches Pilot for AI-Driven Papermill Detection Service

From the London Book Fair, Wiley today unveiled plans for its new AI-powered Papermill Detection service. Following an extensive series of internal beta tests, Wiley will advance this new service into the next phase of testing in partnership with Sage and IEEE.

The Papermill Detection service is one of many ways Wiley is advancing its technology to meet the specific needs of research publishers and societies while making publishing more efficient, effective, and fit for the challenges of the future.

"Our leadership in research publishing technology, paired with our own significant experience in combatting papermills, uniquely positions Wiley to develop this technology," said Jay Flynn, Wiley Executive Vice President & General Manager, Research & Learning. "We're grateful to IEEE and Sage for helping us fine tune these advanced checks that will ultimately benefit the entire scholarly publishing industry."...

Source: [Mirage News, 13 Mar 2024](#)

**This issue has been compiled by the
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