

From the Chair

Benjamin Aldred

Documents to the People is coming up on the 5th anniversary of going open access, trying to live up to the meaning of our name, actually delivering documents to the people. In honor of that anniversary, we are looking to take an additional step in that journey and I want to talk a bit about why and what open access should mean to collection philosophy in the government documents world.

Government documents have a long history of dedication to the principles that underlie open access, even before the terms were used in a library science context. Concepts like the Congressional Franking Privilege, the public domain copyright status of works produced by the federal government and the Federal Depository Library Program all represent efforts that make sure information is available to the public. Efforts to make sure that the fruits of government work were not hedged off from public access. These tie to core elements of the philosophy of open access and have been part of government information not just in the United States of America, but in many parts of the world.

But open access isn't always enough. Open discoverability is important too, so that people can find their way to this

information in the ILS of their local libraries. Without discoverability, the information may remain hidden. It is for this reason that *Document to the People* is seeking indexing in the Directory of Open Access Journals. The DOAJ provides free metadata to everyone, including libraries, allowing the direct linking of full text in a way that makes information more accessible. While *DttP* is indexed in several prominent subscription databases, those may be out of the price or subject range of the libraries that the majority of Americans have access to.

It is our hope by seeking inclusion in the DOAJ that we can increase our reach to libraries that could not afford those databases, so that we can increase the access of patrons who do not have access to an academic library, that we can increase the reach of our authors talking about many of the important issues facing the world in these troubled times and hopefully plot a strong course for *Documents to the People* in the future.

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