

# Semantics and Pragmatics

## The launch of an open access journal

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## A New Semantics Journal

- Title: Semantics and Pragmatics
- Editors: David Beaver and Kai von Stechow
- First issue: Early 2008
- Open for submissions: September 2007



## Why a new journal?

- Our field is served by several excellent journals.
- Commercial publishers perform provide us with valuable services — most obviously, publishing!
- But the current journal publication system is far from optimal.



## Problems with the Traditional System

- Although we give our services as editors, reviewers and authors for free, the journals cost money, and take time to reach their audience.
- The publishers' business model depends on limiting availability of content.
- They believe that to make a profit they must *prevent* people from freely reading what we write.
- Thus some of the publishers' goals run counter to ours.



## Do We Need Commercial Publishers?

- Our dependence on publishers includes

**Practical Services** i.e. infrastructure, production, and distribution;

**Reputation** ... the reputation that publishers lend to the journals serves as an independent accreditation respected by the institutions that we depend on for employment and promotion.



## Electronic Production and Distribution

- In the modern world, we can provide all the *practical services* at close to zero cost:
  - The infrastructure that the publishers lend our journals is not great, at most one editorial assistant, and limited copyediting. Software is available to facilitate many editorial tasks.
  - Modern desktop publishing and typesetting allows us to give visual grace to even our most esoteric work without the need for a salaried typesetter
  - Distribution via the internet is leaving printed journals (sadly perhaps) in the dust. It costs next to nothing to make our work available to approximately a billion people within seconds.



## A logical step

- We all use the web (Semantics Archive, personal homepages) for distributing our work.
- Publishing and supporting an electronic open access journal is the logical next step.



## Our Journal

- High quality papers in semantics and pragmatics
- Rigorous peer-review
- electronic distribution (as soon as papers are ready)
- open access
- optional print issues (for a fee)



## Gravitas

- But what of the gravitas which the publishers lend our journals?
- And what of the great reputation which our journals have earned themselves through consistent publication of high quality work?



## Reputation and quality

- The toughest problem we face in setting up *Semantics and Pragmatics* is that of gaining a reputation that is trusted by not only everyone in our field, but also by the academic institutions that employ us.
- So the success of the project depends crucially on the investment of time, energy and intellectual capital in the project by.....
- you!



## Community Support

We need support from across the fields of semantics and pragmatics in the form of:

- Sending us great submissions yourselves;
- Spreading the news, and encouraging others to submit whenever they have something worth saying in semantics and pragmatics;
- Editorial and reviewing help;
- Ideas and feedback;
- Did we already mention sending us great submissions?



## Role Models

- In computer science, two of the most highly rated peer-reviewed journals are electronic open access journals:
- *Logical Methods in Computer Science*  
(<http://www.lmcs-online.org/>)
- *Journal of Machine Learning Research*  
(<http://www.jmlr.org/>)



## Our target

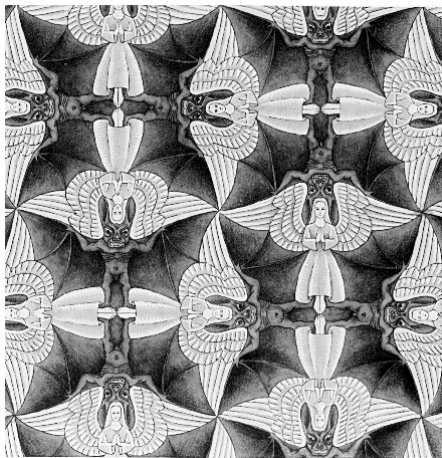
- We feel that with support from the field, we can establish *Semantics and Pragmatics* as a frontline journal in, shall we say, less than the time it takes to get tenure.



## A Look Ahead

- We'll be opening for business in just a few months.
- We look forward to hearing from you!
- We will be hosting an open discussion on the project at a weblog devoted to the start-up process of the journal.
- Please visit us there and contribute advice and comments:  
<http://semantics-online.org/sp>





The end.

