Open Access is

ABOUT

Scholarly communication

Not existing means of communication
Journals developed as an affordance of print.

They are a bundle of services
Services vary with time

They can be unbundled!
The emerging digital context reveals the constructed dimensions of journals

- Journals structure communities;
- Journals filter;
- Journals also orient problem choices
Journals have also affected evaluation

- Journal editors organize peer review
- Journals compete with each other in terms described as “quality”
Up to WWII, a majority of journals were under the direct control of scientists and scholars

- Scientific societies
- University presses
- Some commercial presence, relatively modest, mainly in Germany (e.g. Julius Springer)
After WWII

- Growth of the literature is enormous
- Bibliographies have trouble following
  - New tool appears in '60's: SCI
Some consequences of SCI

- Science is divided into “core” and “the rest”
  - “The rest” is de facto excluded
- Number of citations is linked with quality, not visibility
  - A citation calculus is invented: the impact factor
Beyond journals, the impact factor becomes the basic measurement unit of scientific quality: individuals, institutions, countries...

THIS IS THE BASIC CONDITION NEEDED TO FORM A SYSTEM OF GLOBALIZED COMPETITION
This shift is marked by a vocabulary shift:

EXCELLENCE

rather than

QUALITY
Robert Maxwell understood two things:

1) Core science = inelastic market
2) Impact factor aligns quality (baptized as excellence) with market share
NOW, THE SCENE IS SET

Commercial publishers can begin to take over

Consequences?

• Subscription prices soar

• They become dominant in “core science” publishing
BUT THIS IS NOT ALL!

- Large commercial publishers increasingly own journal titles (through buy out or creation)
  - Now, they CAN NAME editors
- Now they CAN SELECT publishing areas in terms of trends (fads?) observed in “core science”
Publishers exclusively go by the measurement standard of excellence: the IF

Institutions (universities, research centres, funders) have bought into this flawed scheme to EVALUATE
Consequences:

1) A scientific oligopoly of researchers found in leading laboratories and institutions, allied with the largest publishers STEER scientific research worldwide

2) This is the present, globalized, state of scientific research

3) To which we must oppose a truly universal science
This is the context where OPEN ACCESS INTERVENES
Only through digitization is OA possible

OA also builds on the perspectives opened by digitization (e.g. journals and publishers as bundles of services)

It helps refocus on communication rather than means of communication
AISA 2015 – Pisa
Jean-Claude Guédon

What are the sensitive points OA should aim at?
ACCESS FOR ALL!
But also:

1) Restore quality at the level of work: evaluation of all science, not just “core”

2) Restore the right to INITIATE questions anywhere

3) Add access to data to allow better reliability of results

4) Value small as well as large contributions (the free software model)
How to get there?

1) Network repositories

2) Repackage content in many ways

3) Repackage content also according to questions, not exclusively disciplines

4) Create an evaluation layer over the repository network
In terms of Gold OA

1. Favour mega-journals

2. Avoid Article Processing Charges: they make “predatory” journals possible

3. Refuse Hybrid journals

4. MAKE MEGA-JOURNALS AND DEPOSITORY NETWORKS CONVERGE
Molte Grazie !