

## Open Access – What's it all about?

Commentary to accompany Prezi available for viewing at <http://prezi.com/o7xnxjkg41jw/open-access-whats-it-all-about/>

This presentation was the first of a series delivered at University of Adelaide in Open Access Week 2011. It was originally presented by Vanessa Barrett, Digital Services Librarian to an audience of staff and students on the afternoon of Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

The screen shot for each step of the Prezi path is included immediately above the relevant commentary. To move through the Prezi use the forward arrow on screen or use the right arrow key on your keyboard.



This presentation will take a broad look at Open Access and what is meant by this term. We'll explore the impetus behind the OA movement, discuss some of the definitions of OA as well as other terms such as Green and Gold OA and Gratis and Libre OA.

I'll start with a quote from a Library Journal article from 2008 about journal pricing and embracing openness.



'It's been touted as the liberator of information that wants to be free, the arbiter of shared intellectual property rights, and an engine that can drive discovery, invention, cures, and economies.

It has also been vilified as an assault on capitalism, a catalyst for the collapse of responsible publishing and the rise of junk science, and a naïve invention of some pointy-headed idealists who have no idea how the real world works.

"It," of course, is open access (OA).'

Van Orsdel, L. C. and K. Born (2008). "Periodicals price survey 2008: Embracing openness." Library Journal 133(7).

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This quote captures the diametrically opposed views on OA that can be found voiced on a wide range of blogs and mailing lists and other online forums. This presentation aims to present a balanced view of Open Access rather than promote either of the extremes represented by this quote.



I want first of all to provide some context for our discussion.

Something that probably everyone involved in scholarly publishing already knows, but a fact that surprises many of those who are not intimately involved, is that

Scholarly journals do not pay authors for their articles,  
and have not done so since the first journals were  
launched in London and Paris in 1665



Guédon, Jean-Claude (2001) "In Oldenburg's Long Shadow : Librarians, Research Scientists, Publishers, and the Control of Scientific Publishing", in Proceedings of the 138th ARL Membership Meeting, 70pp,  
<http://www.arl.org/resources/pubs/mmproceedings/138guedon.shtml>

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There is an excellent paper called "In Oldenburg's Long Shadow" in which Guédon provides some very pertinent background details about the development of scholarly publishing acknowledging that researchers publish not in expectation that they will be paid but rather that they will gain impact and credibility with their peers by exposing the results of their research. Journals provided a mechanism to do this that was not possible before the printing press.

Journals were more timely than books, establishing priority over other scientists working on the same problem. Journals gave authors the benefit of a fast, public time-stamp on their work. Because authors were rewarded in these strong, intangible ways, they accepted the fact that

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journals couldn't afford to pay them. Over time, journal revenue grew but authors continued in the tradition of writing articles for impact, not for money.

### Serials Crisis

Journal subscription prices have risen nearly four times faster than inflation since 1986

OA was physically and economically impossible in the age of print, even if the copyright holder wanted it. Prices were not only unavoidable for print journals; they were even affordable until the 1970's, when they began to rise faster than inflation. Journal subscription prices have risen nearly four times faster than inflation since 1986. And it is this change in the affordability of journal subscriptions that became known as the Serials Crisis.

### Timeline

[http://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/Timeline\\_before\\_2000](http://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/Timeline_before_2000)

At about the same time as the serials crisis was developing along came the internet which could provide quick and convenient access across time and distance barriers and it is relevant to look at the timeline of the OA movement in the context of the escalation of the Serials Crisis and the emergence of the internet.

Timeline of Open Access movement - [http://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/Timeline\\_before\\_2000](http://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/Timeline_before_2000).

This timeline as it states on the website “includes a small number of entries on the early history of the internet and world wide web, to show how quickly scholars moved to take advantage of the new medium”



So with that context in mind we move on to consider the question – OPEN ACCESS TO WHAT?

## Open Access – What's it all about?

### OPEN ACCESS TO WHAT?

Royalty-free scholarly publications  
Peer-reviewed journal articles and conference papers  
Thousands of journals publishing millions of items annually

When talking about OA we are referring to scholarly publishing and specifically to journal articles and conference papers that are peer-reviewed and published in one of the thousands of academic journals which publish millions of items annually. This is work that is royalty-free. That is authors create these works for impact, not for money. Those outside the realm of scholarly publishing are often surprised to learn that authors of papers in academic journals do not get paid for their work.

OA does not have to be limited to literature. It can apply to any digital content, from raw and semi-raw data to images, audio, video, multi-media, and software. However the majority of our discussion is focussed on peer-reviewed journal articles because these are written for impact and usage and not for profit unlike some books (especially textbooks).

### WHAT IS OPEN ACCESS?

#### Definitions

The 3 Bs  
Budapest February 14, 2002  
<http://www.soros.org/openaccess>  
Bethesda June 20, 2003  
<http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/bethesda.htm>  
Berlin October 22, 2003  
<http://oa.mpg.de/lang/en-uk/berlin-prozess/>

#### Characteristics

Free  
Immediate  
Permanent  
Full-text  
Online

So the next question to look at is what is open access? We can start with some more formal definitions.

### Definitions

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From the end of 2001 to the end of 2003 there were three milestone meetings each of which resulted in a formal declaration or statement. They are known collectively as the Three Bs.

The first was from a meeting convened by the [Open Society Institute](#) in Budapest on December 1-2, 2001. This resulted in the [Budapest Open Access Initiative](#) (BOAI) - February 14, 2002.  
<http://www.soros.org/openaccess>

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The second was the [Bethesda Statement on Open Access Publishing](http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/bethesda.htm) from the participants at a meeting convened by the [Howard Hughes Medical Institute](http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/bethesda.htm) in Maryland, USA June 20, 2003.

And lastly, the [Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities](http://oa.mpg.de/lang/en-uk/berlin-prozess/) from the [Max Planck Society](http://oa.mpg.de/lang/en-uk/berlin-prozess/) and [European Cultural Heritage Online](http://oa.mpg.de/lang/en-uk/berlin-prozess/). (Berlin October 22, 2003)

These statements or declarations include definitions of Open Access which are worth reading in detail but for our purposes here today I am going to focus on some specific characteristics of Open Access and they are:



... that the items are free, immediate, permanent, full-text and online. That is there is no cost to the reader, the reader can access the items immediately they are published (therefore no embargo period), the items are maintained permanently, in full text (not just abstracts) and it almost goes without saying but it is a necessary characteristic that the items be available online.



Ideally Open-access (OA) literature is digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions. But there is a need to be clear about the meaning of Free in relation to Open Access and here I want to highlight the difference between Gratis and Libre Open Access.

- Free as in "Gratis" means being *able* to access and read without a price-barrier, Gratis OA is free of charge, but not free of copyright or licensing restrictions
- Free as in "Libre" means being *allowed* to modify and re-use the work, without a permission barrier.

So at a minimum the work must be free to access and read but in an ideal world there would also be no barriers to re-use.

Here's how the [Bethesda](#) and [Berlin](#) statements put it: For a work to be OA, the copyright holder must consent in advance to let users "copy, use, distribute, transmit and display the work publicly and to make and distribute derivative works, in any digital medium for any responsible purpose, subject to proper attribution of authorship...."

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We need to be clear also about what OA is not! And that is it is not Universal!

Even after OA has been achieved, at least four kinds of access barrier might remain in place:

- *Filtering and censorship barriers.* Many schools, employers, and governments want to limit what you can see.
- *Language barriers.* Most online literature is in English, or just one language, and machine translation is very weak.
- *Handicap access barriers.* Most web sites are not yet as accessible to handicapped users as they should be.
- *Connectivity barriers.* The digital divide keeps billions of people, including millions of serious scholars, offline.

## WHY???

So having talked a little about what OA is and is not let's now look at Why Open Access

I have grouped the reasons into three categories – altruistic, compliance and personal.



A strong argument for OA is that publically funded research should be publically available. Many OA initiatives focus on this. If the research papers based on taxpayer-funded research are locked away in conventional journals that require payments for access, then taxpayers will end up paying twice for the same research. The primary version of the argument is that it would be wrong to make taxpayers pay a second fee for access.

The second related argument is that not everyone can afford Toll Access to scholarly journals in order to read the results of research. Most universities and research institutions can only afford to

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subscribe to a fraction of journals published, that means that all those articles are accessible to only a fraction of their potential users, which in turn means that research is having only a fraction of its potential usage and impact, and achieving only a fraction of its potential productivity and progress.

This leads to the third altruistic argument which is that OA can maximise the impact of research. This is particularly true for scholars in third world countries who do not have access to published articles relating to health or economic research that is directly relevant to their circumstance.

### Compliance

Mandate by organisation  
Mandate by funder

There are many organisations which support the OA movement by mandating that their authors must make their research outputs available in Open Access. These include Queensland University of Technology, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Harvard.

Many funding agencies also mandate Open Access. They include US National Institute of Health and Wellcome Trust in UK. Here is Australia ARC funding rules encourage, but stop short of mandating, open access deposit of research outputs. You can see the full range of Open Access mandates at ROARMAP: Registry of Open Access Repositories Mandatory Archiving Policies <http://roarmap.eprints.org/>

### Individual

Citation advantage  
Discoverability  
Aggregation of works

The last category of reasons is the more personal one that relates to an individual who is authoring scholarly outputs.

**Citation advantage** - According to some studies research that is freely accessible on the web has 25% - 250% greater research impact.

Lawrence, S. (2001) Free online availability substantially increases a paper's impact, Nature 411(6837): 521 <http://www.neci.nec.com/~lawrence/papers/online-nature01/>

<http://www.istl.org/10-winter/article2.html>

If you are interested in learning more about this aspect of Open Access I recommend the following article Wagner, B. (2010), 'Open Access Citation Advantage: An Annotated Bibliography', Issues in Science and Technology Librarianship, Winter 2010, <http://www.istl.org/10-winter/article2.html>

**Discoverability** - Material stored in an Open Access repository will be quickly indexed by Google Scholar and other web indexers. This will rapidly expose research to a global audience in a way that traditional dissemination routes fail to offer. More people can find your work if you put it in a repository and logically the more people who can access and read your work the greater impact your work will have.

**Aggregation of works** - Libraries and repositories can uniquely be trusted to accurately and assiduously record publications information. It is very unlikely that anyone outside of your institution

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has an accurate record of all of your research – indexes like [Web of Science](#) and [Scopus](#) are by definition partial – and repositories can act as an online CV of your work.



Having looked at reasons why you should make your work Open Access it is only fair that we also address some of the arguments used against Open Access. OA literature is not free to produce or publish and there is a strong lobby from commercial publishers against OA. The reasons “Why Not??” listed here have counter arguments and these are best presented in a resource from BioMed Central which addresses the myths of OA.

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/openaccess/inquiry/myths/>

One example of these counter arguments is the response to the criticism that Open Access makes peer-reviewed medical literature available to patients who aren't qualified to understand this material and may end up confused. The BioMed resource asks “Can it really be beneficial for society as a whole that patients should have access to all the dubious medical information on the web, but should be denied access to the scientifically sound, peer-reviewed research articles?”

## HOW???

The next question to deal with is how can you make your work Open Access?



There are two roads to provide OA to research articles, [OA journals](#) ("gold OA") and [OA repositories](#) ("green OA").



## Gold OA

### Gold OA Publishing

The Gold road to Open Access is by publishing in one of the more than 3,000 OA journals.

## Green OA

### Green OA Self-Archiving

The Green road to Open Access is by authors Self-Archiving the articles they publish in an institutional or subject OA repository.



Gold publishers include Public Library of Science (a non-profit organisation) as well as for profit businesses such as BioMed Central.

Some, but not all, Open Access publishers recover costs through institutional subscriptions, or through author or institutional publication charges. Others offer a hybrid model where articles are only accessible behind a paywall, unless article processing fees are paid to make the article Open Access.



You can use the Directory of Open Access Journals to search for journals in a specific discipline. <http://www.doaj.org/>

## Green OA

### Green OA Self-Archiving

The Green road to OA is for authors to self-archive a version of their paper in an Open Access repository. Which leads us to the next question of

## WHERE???

... where to self archive. There are both discipline or subject specific repositories as well as institutional repositories. The question of what version of your paper to deposit is one we will cover in detail in the second in this series of presentations.



Examples of discipline specific repositories include arXiv, which was the earliest open access repository and is mainly used for Physics, Mathematics, Computer Science, Quantitative Biology, Quantitative Finance and Statistics. <http://arxiv.org/>

RePEc (Research Papers in Economics) has a mixture of full text and metadata only records for papers in the field of Economics. <http://repec.org/>

PhilSci-Archive is an electronic archive for preprints in the philosophy of science <http://philsci-archive.pitt.edu/>



Authors at the University of Adelaide have the option of self-archiving an appropriate version of their papers in AR&S (Adelaide Research & Scholarship)

Directory of Open Access Repositories (OpenDOAR) and the Registry of Open Access Repositories (ROAR). <http://oia.eprints.org/>

The two leading lists of OA repositories around the world are the [Directory of Open Access Repositories](#) (OpenDOAR) and the [Registry of Open Access Repositories](#) (ROAR).

## WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE???

Here at University of Adelaide we have a number of Open Access initiatives.

## Open Access – What's it all about?



In terms of Open Access Publishing we have the University of Adelaide Press and we are also a supporting member of BioMed Central.



The University of Adelaide Press is an ePress, publishing scholarly monographs written by University of Adelaide staff. These monographs are freely available on the internet, and print copies are available upon demand.

<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/press/>



The Library's current subscription/agreement with BMC is to support 70% of the cost of publishing a peer-reviewed article in any of the open access journals up to the value of the subscription.

The following criteria are applied in deciding which papers to support in this way.

- (1) The author's address in the published journal must be the "University of Adelaide"
- (2) The proposed journal should have an ERA ranking of 'A' or 'B' (based on last year's list)
- (3) There should be a positive benefit over the five years
- (4) New authors/emerging scholars should be encouraged
- (5) That the remaining 30% of funding be secured.

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Two aspects of the Digital Library support Open Access. eBooks@Adelaide is a collection of electronic texts in the public domain. Started in 1987, there are now over 1,600 ebooks in the collection, which includes classic works of Literature, Philosophy, Science, and History. Adelaide Research & Scholarship as mentioned previously is the Institutional Repository. <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/library/digital/>



Thank you for viewing.

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