Open Access and Its Social Benefits

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Open Access and Its Social Benefits

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Open Access Day – 20 October 2009
Today’s Talk

- Scholarly publication crisis
- Open access and its social benefits
- Open access in an international context
Scholarly Publication “Crisis”

- Electronic licensing of journals prohibitively expensive for many libraries
- Concentration of academic publishers - monopoly over scholarly knowledge production
- Increasing commodification of knowledge/information
### Scholarly Publishing Context

- Pricing and permissions crisis
- “Vanity factor” in academic publishing
- Social impact of research and knowledge dissemination
- Changes in technology
- Financial incentives in scholarly publishing

“A commitment to the value and quality of research carries with it a responsibility to extend the circulation of this work as far as possible, and ideally to all who are interested in it and all who might profit by it…” (p. 5)
Different Types of OA

- Repositories
- OA journals
- Self-archiving
- Delayed OA
- Policies on publicly-funded research
- Etc.
Benefits of open access?
Drawbacks? Challenges?

• Incompatible with peer review?
• Free to access?
• Free to create?
• Faculty incentives?
• Copyright concerns?
Open Access in an International Context

- Access for scholars and students in the Global South
- Development of new knowledge
- North-South / South-North / South-South knowledge exchanges
- Addressing inequities in both access and scholarly knowledge production
- Majority of scholarly knowledge production in Global North
Some Social Benefits

- Creation of new knowledge
- New discoveries
- Progress in health
- Economic development
- Increased global knowledge sharing and collaboration
- Etc.
Some links…

• Budapest Open Access Initiative:

• Directory of Open Access Journals:
  • [http://www.doaj.org/](http://www.doaj.org/)

• Public Library of Science:
• Electronic Information for Libraries (eIFL.net) - [http://www.eifl.net](http://www.eifl.net)

  • Health and biomedical information

  • Food, agriculture, environmental science
Public Knowledge Project

- Open Journal Systems (OJS) – Electronic journal publishing software
- Worldwide uptake – Latin America, Europe, Africa, Asia
- 250 + electronic journals in Africa using OJS
- “Strengthening African Research Culture and Capacities” project
Mandates for Open Access?

- Federal mandates
- Demand from students and scholars
- University mandates – “Open access universities”
- Leadership
An open access university?

Example of Massachusetts Institute of Technology:

http://info-libraries.mit.edu/scholarly/faculty-and-researchers/mit-faculty-open-access-policy/
An Open Access UWO?

Western