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Building up ~~Maximum~~ Consequence: The Rationality Behind Open Access Gold

Berlin 5 Open Access: From Practice to Impact

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Berlin 5 Open Access: From Practice to Impact: Consequences of Knowledge Dissemination

- The purpose of this talk is
 - to reflect on some of our current practices and
 - to propose a certain shift in our perspective & behavior in order to increase impact & consequence
- I want to suggest that it is time to take some spotlight away – but of course not to depart – from the Green Road and to raise our awareness plus increase our efforts with regard to the Golden Road
 - So I want to pronounce OA Gold without arguing anti-OA Green
- My reflections shall be developed along the following dimensions:
 - Legal: mandates and (copy)right(s)
 - Technical/Services: research infrastructures of the future
 - Financial: reader pays and author pays models.



The Legal Dimension: Mandates and (Copy)Right(s)

- The dominant opinion:
 - „there is the faster, surer and more heavily travelled green road“ (e.g. S. Harnad et al. in Nature Debate 2004)
- Widely known key elements from such debate:
 - Institutional repositories
 - Principle of self-archiving...
 - ...preferably to be made more authoritative with deposit mandate
 - Exploitation of existing publisher self-archiving policies („green“)
 - Advocated as easy, immediate & effective solution to research access problem
- Tendency: Certain claim for dominance, if not absoluteness
- Ironically very often self-portrayed as being in a minority position.



The Legal/IR Dimension Qualified

From perspective of an organization that runs an institutional repository and has labored with the implementation of a deposit mandate for quite some time

- Copyright with many different national expressions
 - What is institution allowed to mandate vis a vis authors?
- Problem of multiple authors with multiple affiliation
 - Is one enough consenting for all? How to document?
- Problem of version as intensified by different research community state-of-the-art practices
 - How big is discrepancy between final author version and published version?
 - What does this mean for reliability and future usage scenarios?

Conclusion: Approach as such not invalid; but perhaps not that simple, immediate & effective after all; need for refining the strategy.



Technical/Services Dimension: Demands from the Research Infrastructures of the Future

- From the Berlin Declaration:
 - “Our mission of disseminating knowledge is only half complete if the information is not made widely and readily available to society.”

- John Taylor’s eScience definition:
 - “eScience is about global collaboration in key areas of science and the next generation of infrastructure that will enable it.”

- Removing tolls & barriers
- Being able & allowed to use information in other contexts
- OA and eScience complement one another.



Technical/Services Dimension: The Repository and the Journal

- Repositories
 - Have received much attention and development work in terms of their advancement, interoperability issues & overlay services
 - So far with limited impact and sustainability
 - Journals
 - Still dominant principle of organizing & bundling subject-specific research output
 - Integral part of overlay services (e.g. A&I databases, search & retrieval services, reference linking)
- Quite a long way to scale up repositories & to build services
- Journals still have strategic & practical advantages for services
- Why not continue with journals while removing the barriers?



Financial Dimension: Reader Pays and Author Pays

- **Reader pays model**
 - Serials crisis (affordability)
 - Toll barrier (access risk)
 - Rights barrier (usage risk)
 - Established business model
 - All parties used to their roles and rituals
 - **Author pays model**
 - Promise of savings (SCOAP³)
 - No toll/access barrier
 - At least softened rights barrier
 - Met with suspicion:
 - Would divert research funds
 - Would lead to excessive cost (John Harnad: 1-2% in some domains; 10-15% in others)
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- Neither fear nor figures seem justified
 - To systematically divert money from research funds would indeed be insane
 - Calculations and administrative/budgetary measures of MPG as example
 - Challenge is to synchronize the library and research budgets and to device communicative and administrative procedures to direct this consolidated budget.



Recapitulation – What we have we seen so far

- 1) Development of institutional repositories important but perhaps not as simple and effective as often suggested
- 2) From the perspective of eScience/cyber infrastructure requirements, the organized content in repositories still cannot compete with the organized content in journals; stronger efforts to better utilize the existing journals are needed
- 3) It would be a caricature to misunderstand the attempts at funding the publication costs of journals as diverting money from research funds. Such approaches do not indicate higher risks; they would “only” require new organizational principles.



Conclusion: A Strategic View on OA Gold

Sijbolt Noorda in his opening keynote: OA Gold only tiny possibility for OA; would not change much; publishers would continue like before

- OA Gold be grander and change more than most people think
- Covering publication charges instead of subscription costs will *build up/increase consequence*:
 - Remove access & rights barriers more effectively while using the money that is already in the game (with even potential savings)
- As it requires new administrative, communicative & budgetary procedures it would help to prepare the research communities & their institutions for the next step of *maximum consequence*:
 - Transforming the publication system altogether
 - Or: Let this car no longer look like a horse carriage (S. Noorda).



Famous Last Word from the Berlin Declaration

“We realize that the process of moving to open access changes the dissemination of knowledge with respect to legal and financial aspects. **Our organizations aim to find solutions** that support further development of the existing legal and financial frameworks in order to facilitate optimal use and access.”

This should still be our call to action!

It is on us and our institutions to find the necessary solutions.



Thank you for your attention!



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