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Open Access and Its Social Benefits

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Open Access and Its Social Benefits

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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

The Access Principle

Willinsky, J. (2006). *The access principle: The case for open access to research and scholarship*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

“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:
 - <http://www.soros.org/openaccess/index.shtml>
- Directory of Open Access Journals:
 - <http://www.doaj.org/>
- Public Library of Science:
 - <http://www.plos.org/>

More links...

- Electronic Information for Libraries (eIFL.net) - <http://www.eifl.net>
- HINARI Program – World Health Organization - <http://www.who.int/hinari/en/>
 - Health and biomedical information
- AGORA (Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture) – UN FAO program - <http://www.aginternetwork.org/en/>
 - 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