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Webinar – Open Access after the Transformation: The Funder Perspective

‘the’ transformation? Really? 😐
There will NOT be a *singular* transformation event, nor a single end point model.

The research ecosystem is complex & diverse.

- Regions / Countries
- Disciplines
- Longform & Shortform scholarship
- Governments / Funders / Institutions
Digital evolves over time anyway.

We cannot ‘transform’ to a fixed version of technologies or fixed version of standards.

e.g. Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (1.0 in 1999, 2.0 in 2008, 3.0 under development)

The future state of scholarly communication online, technologically, is a moving target.
The first networked (pre-Internet!), peer-reviewed journal was operated, with no fees for authors and no fees for readers.

In 1987, the first issue of *New Horizons in Adult Education* came out online, hosted by the Syracuse University Kellogg Project, supported by the Kellogg Foundation. It was accessible via many of the networks of the time including BITNET, CSNET, NSFNET, and NYSERNet, Compuserve, and FidoNet. It used a double-blind review process and accepted submissions electronically… in 1987!

• The very first article published in *New Horizons in Adult Education* was an account of adult education in Nicaragua.

• Subsequent issues also contained articles on functional literacy in Nigeria, women and literacy in Tanzania, and discussions of feminist research methodology.

• *New Horizons in Adult Education* was eventually transferred to Wiley in 2013 and it submerged beneath a paywall – a ‘reverse flip’ *

• It’s now called *New Horizons in Adult Education and Human Resource Development* and is published by Sage (transferred in 2023).

• Electronic access to journals online was born diamond open access (no fees for authors or readers)

• The majority of the early networked “e-journals” were in humanities and social science disciplines e.g.
  - *Surfaces* (comparative literature)
  - *Postmodern Culture*
  - *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* (classical studies)
  - *CTheory* (media theory and culture)
  - *Music Theory Online*
  - *eLaw Journal*
  - *Issues in Science & Technology Librarianship*
  - *Electronic Journal of Communication/La Revue Électronique de Communication*

The Open Access Directory (OAD) has a great listing: [https://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/Early_OA_journals](https://oad.simmons.edu/oadwiki/Early_OA_journals)
• For online journals, the paywall is a *secondary*, derived condition.
  • Open Access is the original, natural state.

• Likewise the author-side fee barrier (e.g. APC’s) is a secondary invention.
  • APC-OA was useful to demonstrate to the Global North that when ‘mainstream’ research was made open access, the sky did not fall.

• Being fee-free for authors and readers is the original state.
THE FUTURE
IS ALREADY HERE.
IT’S JUST NOT EVENLY
DISTRIBUTED YET.

- William Gibson
versus

https://joss.theoj.org/

- Established in 2016
- Publishes >360 articles per year
- No fees for authors or readers 🥰
- Superb, granular peer review & editorial process transparency
- One paper with over 10,000 citations to it: ‘Welcome to the Tidyverse’ (2019)
- Not indexed in Web of Science, because 😞

https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/softwarex

- Established in 2015
- Publishes ~270 articles per year
- OA, but the APC is currently $900 USD 💵
- No peer review transparency. Black box.
- One paper with over 15,000 citations to it ‘GROMACS’ (2015)
- Yet this journal _is_ indexed in Web of Science, because 😞

If we want to see transformation to equitable open access we need to stop giving Web of Science unearned legitimacy.
After the many independent transformations:

- Indexes/catalogues inclusive of scholarship from around the world, including multilingualism will be preferred, to ensure rigor, completeness, and inclusion. Researchers decide on filters for themselves.

- Statistically illiterate, irreproducible, proprietary, container-based metrics will be consigned to the history books.

- Researchers will no longer be posting on social media: “Here’s my new article: ... DM me for the PDF” 😌