

# The Blame Game: Open Access and its Impact for Publishers, Librarians and Academics

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# Roots of scholarly publishing

- Modern scientific enquiry established in 16<sup>th</sup> century
- The Royal Society: practical advances through experimentation
- *Philosophical Transactions*: the first “minutes of science”

# The principles and practice of scholarly journal publishing

- Four principles:
  - Registration
  - Evaluation and certification
  - Dissemination
  - Archiving
- Embedded in scholarly practice

# On to the Twentieth Century

- Volume of information published was an issue in the 18<sup>th</sup> century
- Journals became more specialised
- Disciplines compartmentalised and professionalised

# Technology and rising expectations

- Speed of delivery
- Accessibility anywhere, any time
- Functionality gains: search, locate & link
- Usage data as selection criteria
- Complete journal programmes accessible, e.g. the “Big Deal”
- 75% all journals online: 83% in STM
- Consortia give libraries purchasing clout

# Open Access: a rational response?

- The Open Access concept: information freely available to the reader
- Removes subscription model
- Financed by author or university or funding agency

# Open Access: two forms

## ■ Open Access journals

- Access free to reader worldwide
- Author or institution pays publication fee on acceptance
- Institutional membership covers publication by its authors

## ■ Open Archives

- Personal web page
- Institutional repository
- Subject-based repository

# Open Access journals

- Over 1,000 OA journals
- Only 14% based on author pays –
  - less than 0.25% of all articles published
  - most from two publishers
- 86% grant-funded or free online versions of subscription journals

# O A Journals: impact on scholarly infrastructure

- 25% subscriptions non-academic
- Open Access financed from authors – almost all in academia
- Undermines learned societies
- Information infrastructure still needed: abstracting/indexing, review journals, links etc.

# Do authors really want or care about O A journals?

- Reason to publish: communicate to peers
- Few authors know about it
- Most feel online access improved
- RAE drives papers to existing high impact journals
- Little understanding of publishers' value or costs
- Funding structures not simple or easy to manage

# Open Access journals and Impact Factors

- O A journals at lower end of citation rankings
- Open Access and subscription-based journals indistinguishable
- But peak for citations sooner for Open Access
- Online accessibility is the key

# Open Archives

- Most publishers allow authors to post published papers to subject-based or institutional archive
- Over 400 university repositories worldwide

# Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose

- Authors want to communicate with their peers speedily in high Impact Factor journals with good peer review
- The journal is a brand of value
- The real challenge is to publishers to re-engineer their processes

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