A Very Brief Introduction to Open Access

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http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/brief.htm

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Open-access (OA) literature is digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions. What makes it possible is the internet and the consent of the author or copyright-holder.

OA is entirely compatible with peer review, and all the major OA initiatives for scientific and scholarly literature insist on its importance. Just as authors of journal articles donate their labor, so do most journal editors and referees participating in peer review.

OA literature is not free to produce, even if it is less expensive to produce than conventionally published literature. The question is not whether scholarly literature can be made costless, but whether there are better ways to pay the bills than by charging readers and creating access barriers. Business models for paying the bills depend on how OA is delivered.

What Can You Do to Promote Open Access?

- **Submit your research articles to OA journals**, when there are appropriate OA journals in your field.

- **Deposit your post-prints** in an open-access repository.
  - The "post-print" is the version accepted by the peer-review process of a journal, after some revision;
  - If you transferred copyright to your publisher, then postprint archiving requires the journal's permission. However, many journals --about 80%-- have already consented in advance to postprint archiving by authors.

- **Deposit your data files in an OA archive** along with the articles built on them. Whenever possible, link to the data files from the articles, and vice versa, so that readers of one know where to find the other.

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The access principle:

"…a commitment to the value and quality of research carries with it a responsibility

to extend the circulation of a scholarly work as far as possible, and ideally

to all who are interested in it and all who might profit by it…"

John Willinsky, Open Access Advocate and Stanford Professor