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*Talk delivered at PKP<sup>1</sup>-conference in Berlin September 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>, 2011*

I am delighted to be here, so much energy, so many promising projects – for me it is one of these feel good conferences, where we despite all the problems and challenges we see ahead of us never the less can see significant progress and feel that what we are doing is important and basically good.

I had the opportunity to listen to John Willinsky Monday evening, and I learned a lot, among other things that power-point is out! So I will give that a go. So here is my note book, a pile of paper sheets! The title of my presentation might seem a bit bold. The first part of the title is inspired by a number of presentations by the former executive director of SPARC Europe, David Prosser – the latter is an attempt to give an indication as to what I think should be done now!

At this stage I would like to emphasize that I am standing here as a member of the Board of SPARC Europe. But if you don't like what you hear, blame me and not SPARC Europe.

Talking to the audience here at this conference I will not talk about the many important digitization projects that have been conducted and are under way. They make a very important contribution in making lots of works freely accessible to the public. I will neither go into discussion about Green open access. Subject based repositories and institutional repositories, parallel publishing and self-archiving etc. make as well very important contribution to access to research output, and libraries have been the driving force here (as well).

I will concentrate on Gold Open Access – primary publishing of scholarly works in an Open Access mode, without reader payments and with no embargo, with extensive usage rights etc. with an emphasis on peer reviewed open access journals.

I am aware that a lot of promising things are under way when it comes to peer-reviewed open access

monographs; in fact I am involved in the preparation of one such project

It might be good to look a little bit back in time now. It often gives you an opportunity to put things in perspective. Monday evening John went some 17 centuries back in time; I will only go some 17 years back.

I have my background in academic libraries and I remember very well the discussion that took place on e-mail from summer 1994 and nine months ahead and which eventually was published by Association of Research Libraries (ARL) Office of Scientific and Academic Publishing as a monograph with the title: Scholarly Journals at the Crossroads: A Subversive Proposal for Electronic Publishing.

Among the contributors were Stevan Harnad, Paul Ginsparg, Andrew Odlyzko, James O'Donnell and Ann Okerson.

The editors (Okerson & O'Donnell) wrote in their conclusion of the debate that "This is a book about hope and imagination in one corner of the emerging landscape of cyberspace. It embraces passionate discussion of an idea for taking to the Internet to revolutionize one piece of the world of publishing." It was definitely an eye opener for me. Electronic journals, scholarly skywriting, open peer review etc. A few years earlier Ginsparg and colleagues launched the HEP archive – ArXiv – which is still in operation and by the way – referring to another issue raised by John Monday evening - recently struggling with sustainability issues.

I am not pretending to write the history of open access, but here are some of the milestones in the journey that has brought us to where we are today – the list is incomplete and I probably missed important things, but anyway:

- 1993: BioLine launched,
- 1997: SPARC founded by ARL, SciELO launched,
- 1998: African Journals Online (AJOL) launched,
- 1999: Electronic Information for Libraries

<sup>1</sup> PKP: Public Knowledge Project, Simon Fraser University, Canada





