What's so good about open educational resources?

Steve Wheeler
University of Plymouth, UK

Invited presentation for the UNESCO OER Conference, Windhoek, Namibia. 3 May, 2010.

What's so good about open educational resources?

...and how does OER contribute to quality teaching and learning?

Steve Wheeler
University of Plymouth, UK

Invited presentation for the UNESCO OER Conference, Windhoek, Namibia. 3 May, 2010.

Education...

"...allows children to develop the skills and confidence they need to strengthen their societies, break the cycle of poverty and build peace in their communities."
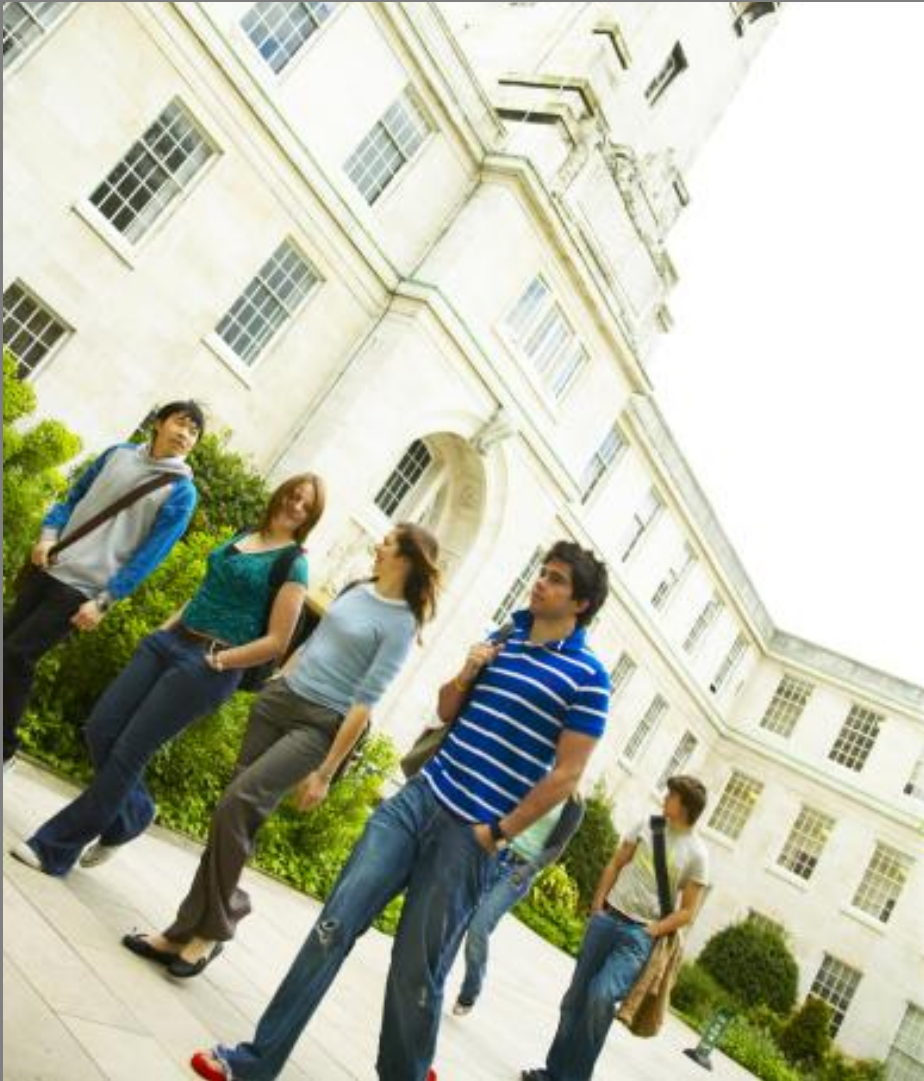
- Save the Children

If you think education is expensive, try ignorance ~ Derek Bok

http://detroityes.com

The problem...

"For the first time we are preparing students for a future we cannot clearly describe."

– David Warlick

Open Educational Resources

"The open provision of educational resources, enabled by information and communication technologies, for consultation, use and adaptation by a community of users for non-commercial purposes"

- UNESCO (2002)

Open Educational Resources

"The open provision of educational resources, enabled by information and communication technologies, for consultation, use and adaptation *by a* community of users *for non-commercial purposes"*

- UNESCO (2002)

"*We need diversity of thought in the world to face the new challenges.*"

~ Sir Tim Berners-Lee

www.topnews.in

cc Steve Wheeler, University of Plymouth, 2010

OER comprises 3 main areas of activity:

Creation of open source software and development tools. To produce, store, share, search, access content. Spaces for communities of learning and practice.

Source: Holotescu, C. (2007) Open Educational Resources and FLOSS

OER comprises 3 main areas of activity:

Creation of open source software and development tools. To produce, store, share, search, access content. Spaces for communities of learning and practice.

Creation and provision of open content. Open courseware, open content projects, free courses, Learning Object repositories.

Source: Holotescu, C. (2007) Open Educational Resources and FLOSS

OER comprises 3 main areas of activity:

Creation of open source software and development tools. To produce, store, share, search, access content. Spaces for communities of learning and practice.

Creation and provision of open content. Open courseware, open content projects, free courses, Learning Object repositories.

Development of Open Standards and licensing tools.

Source: Holotescu, C. (2007) Open Educational Resources and FLOSS

"The present speed of information based on new technologies has undermined traditional expert driven processes of knowledge development and dissemination."

~ Dave Cormier

cc Steve Wheeler, University of Plymouth, 2010
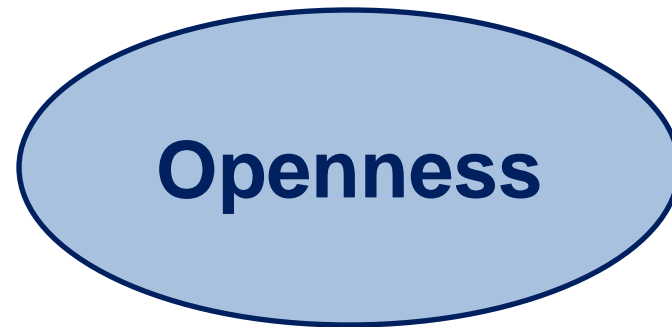
www.aaceconnect.org

What can OER do?

- OER emphasises learning communities and learner engagement
- OER supports development of skills needed for problem solving
- OER creates opportunities for personalised learning
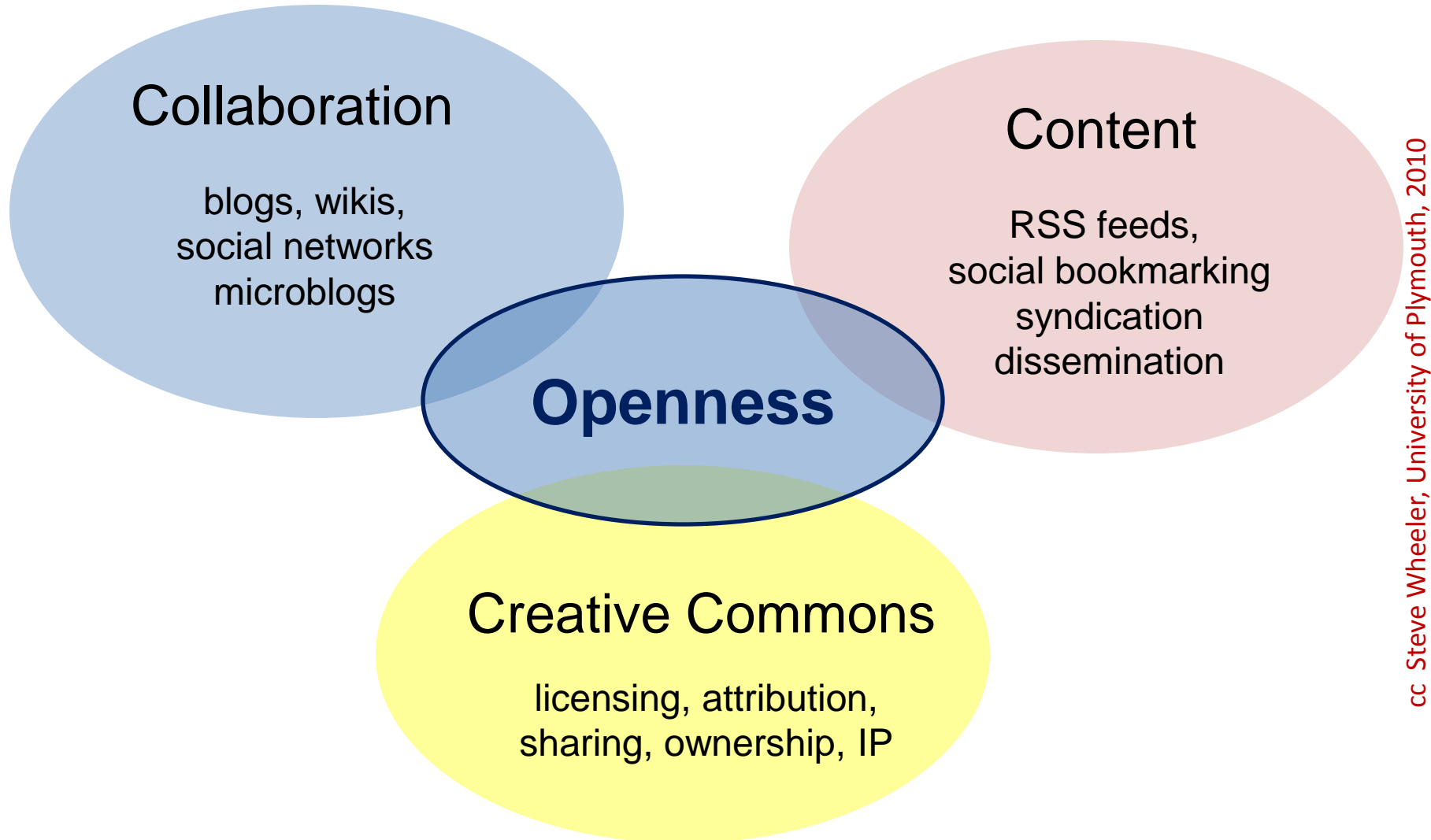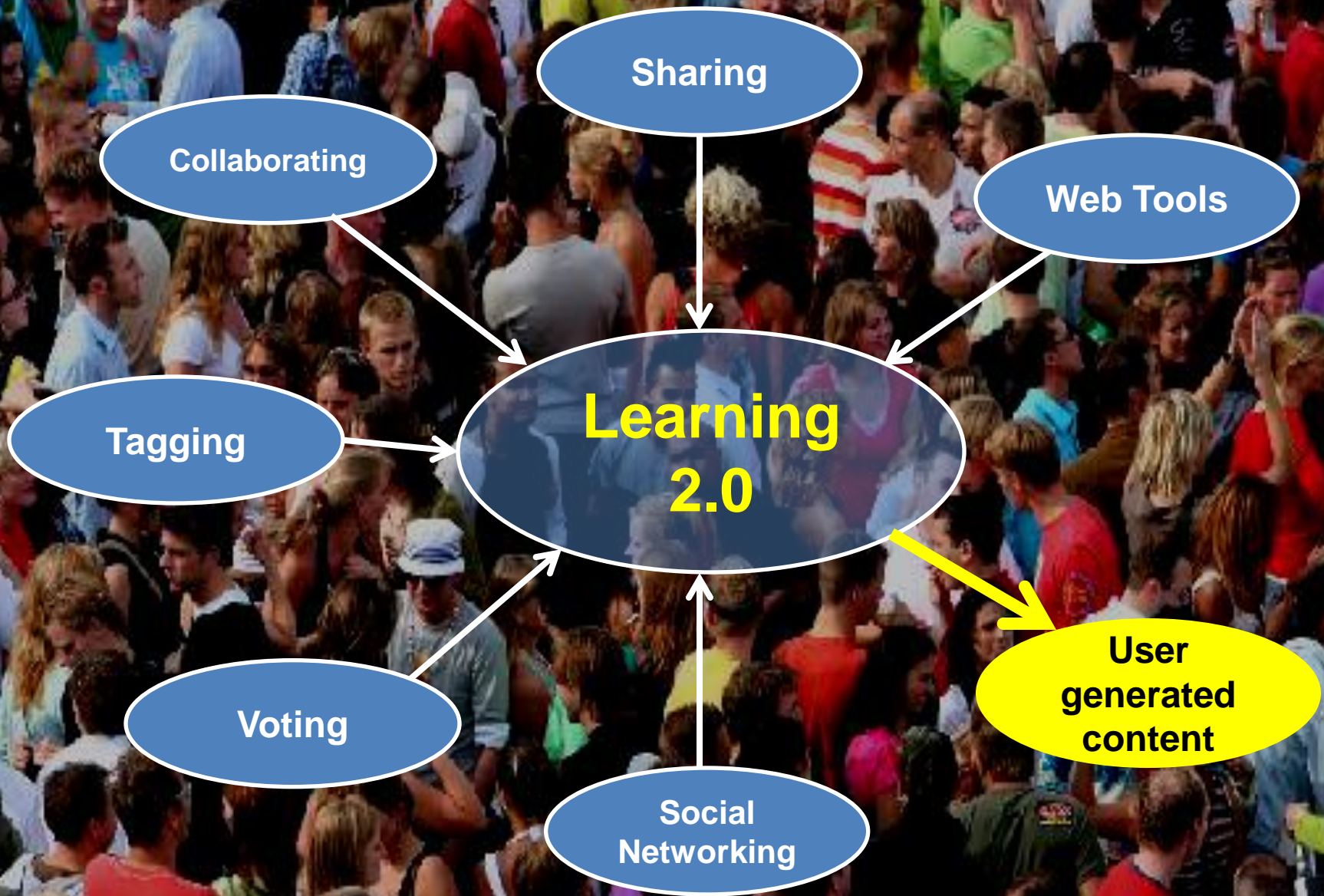- OER allows students to create and share their own content

Adapted from: Holotescu, C. (2007) Open Educational Resources and FLOSS

OER and Web 2.0

The fundamental principles on which Web 2.0 tools are founded in terms of content, tools and services is...

Openness

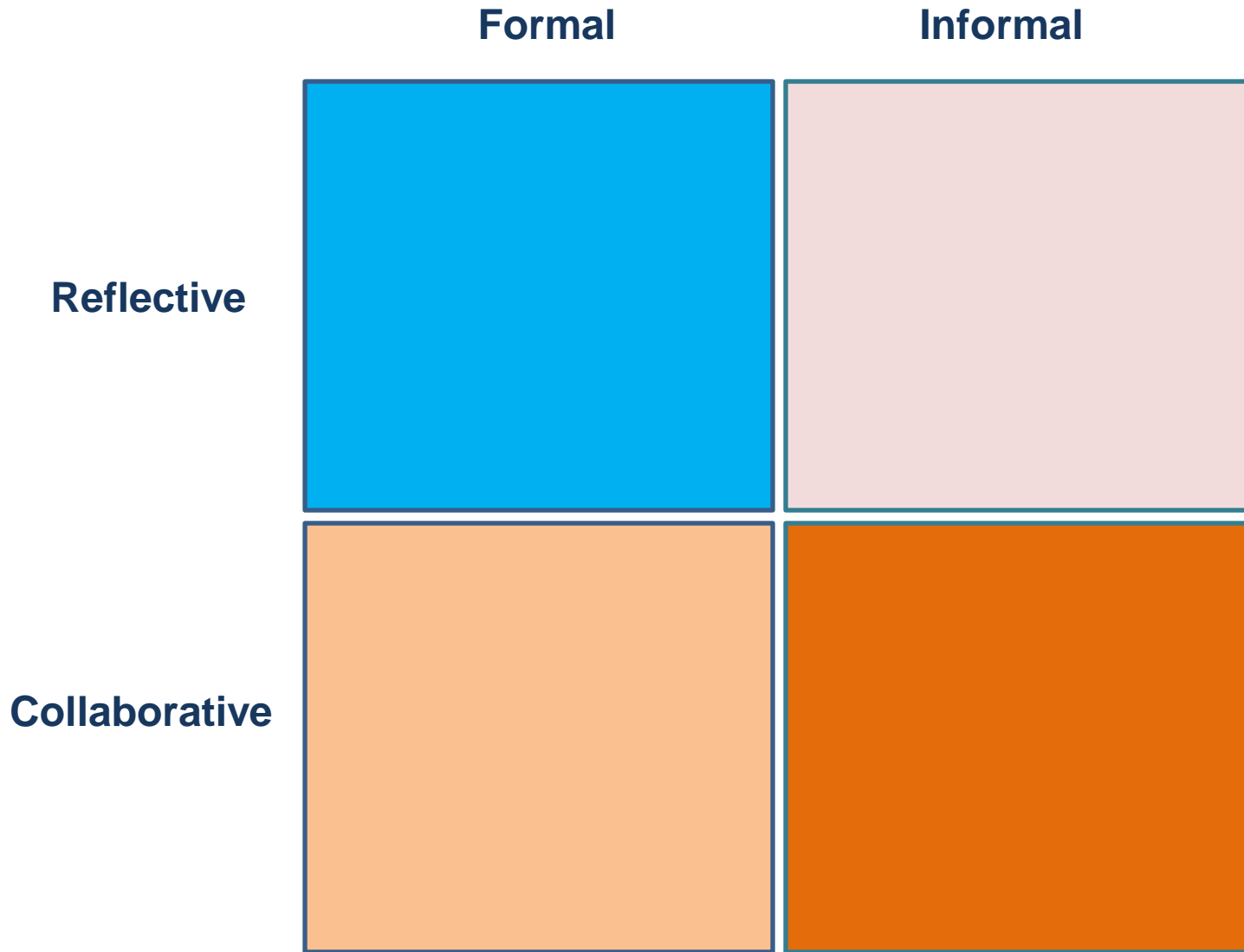Adapted from: Holotescu, C. (2007) Open Educational Resources and FLOSS

OER and Web 2.0

Collaboration

blogs, wikis,
social networks
microblogs

Content

RSS feeds,
social bookmarking
syndication
dissemination

Openness

Creative Commons

licensing, attribution,
sharing, ownership, IP

Adapted from: Holotescu, C. (2007) Open Educational Resources and FLOSS

Modes of learning

Formal **Informal**

Reflective

Collaborative

Modes of learning

	Formal	**Informal**
Reflective	E-portfolios Essay writing	Blogging Microblogging
Collaborative	Group work Co-operative learning Discussion group Wiki	Social networking

Advantages of OER

http://static-p3.fotolia.com

Sharing development costs of learning resources among institutions and professional communities means a better return on public investment

Adapted from: Holotescu, C. (2007) Open Educational Resources and FLOSS

Advantages of OER

Promoting digital competencies for the knowledge society. Tools and content that enable learners to develop their creativity and critical thinking.

http://dyslexicbrian.com

Adapted from: Holotescu, C. (2007) Open Educational Resources and FLOSS

Advantages of OER

Improving the quality of content. Quality control, feedback and improvement across the alliances, communities and networks that share the content.

http://static.squidoo.com

Adapted from: Holotescu, C. (2007) Open Educational Resources and FLOSS

Advantages of OER

Supporting lifelong learning and social inclusion. Accessibility of resources previously unavailable to specific groups of people.

http://www.flaglercomputerclub.com

Adapted from: Holotescu, C. (2007) Open Educational Resources and FLOSS

Advantages of OER

http://www.uh.edu

Offers flexibility in choosing from a broader range of subjects and topics for teaching and learning

cc Steve Wheeler, University of Plymouth, 2010

Adapted from: Holotescu, C. (2007) Open Educational Resources and FLOSS

Advantages of OER

Saves time and effort through the reusing of resources for which IPR/ Copyright issues have already been resolved

http://qbn.com

cc Steve Wheeler, University of Plymouth, 2010

Adapted from: Holotescu, C. (2007) Open Educational Resources and FLOSS

Where are we today?

The current focus in OER Initiatives is mainly on building **more access** to digital content

Too little consideration is given to how this will support educational practices, promote quality and innovation in teaching and learning.

OPAL
OPEN EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INITIATIVE

Opal Background

- OPAL extends the focus beyond 'access' to 'innovative open educational practices' (OEP)

- Open Educational Practices:
  – Practices which support the (re)use and production of high quality OER through institutional policies,
  – promote innovative pedagogical models, and
  – respect and empower learners as co-producers on their lifelong learning path.
  – OEP address the whole OER governance community: policy makers, managers/ administrators of organisations, educational professionals and learners.

- **In short:** OEP is the use of OER to promote quality and innovationin education

Adapted from: Ehlers, U. D. (2010) OPAL Project

OPAL
OPEN EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INITIATIVE

Collective intelligence

"If you put together a big enough and diverse enough group of people [....] that group's decisions will, over time, be intellectually superior to the isolated individual, no matter how smart or well-informed he is"

~ James Surowiecki

http://thekaoseffect.com/

Collective intelligence

Wisdom of crowds?

...or Stupidity of mobs?

cc Steve Wheeler, University of Plymouth, 2010

http://thekaoseffect.com/

CONCEDE Project

CONtent Creation Excellence through Dialogue in Education

- Benchmarking of User Generated Content
- Evaluation of UGC uses in education
- Creation of guidelines for the use of UGC

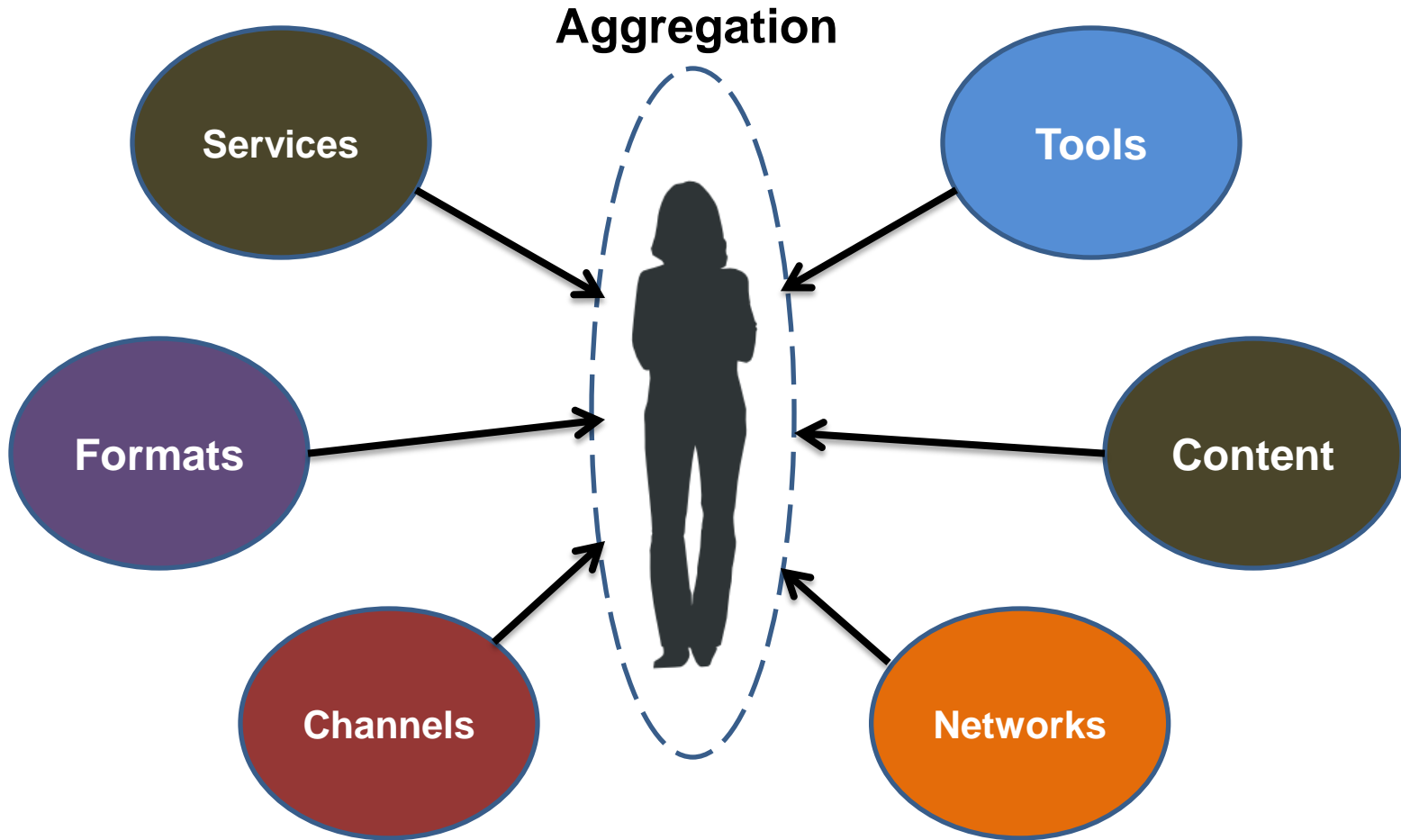"It's not what you know that counts anymore. It's what you can learn."

~ Don Tapscott

www.newmediamusings.com
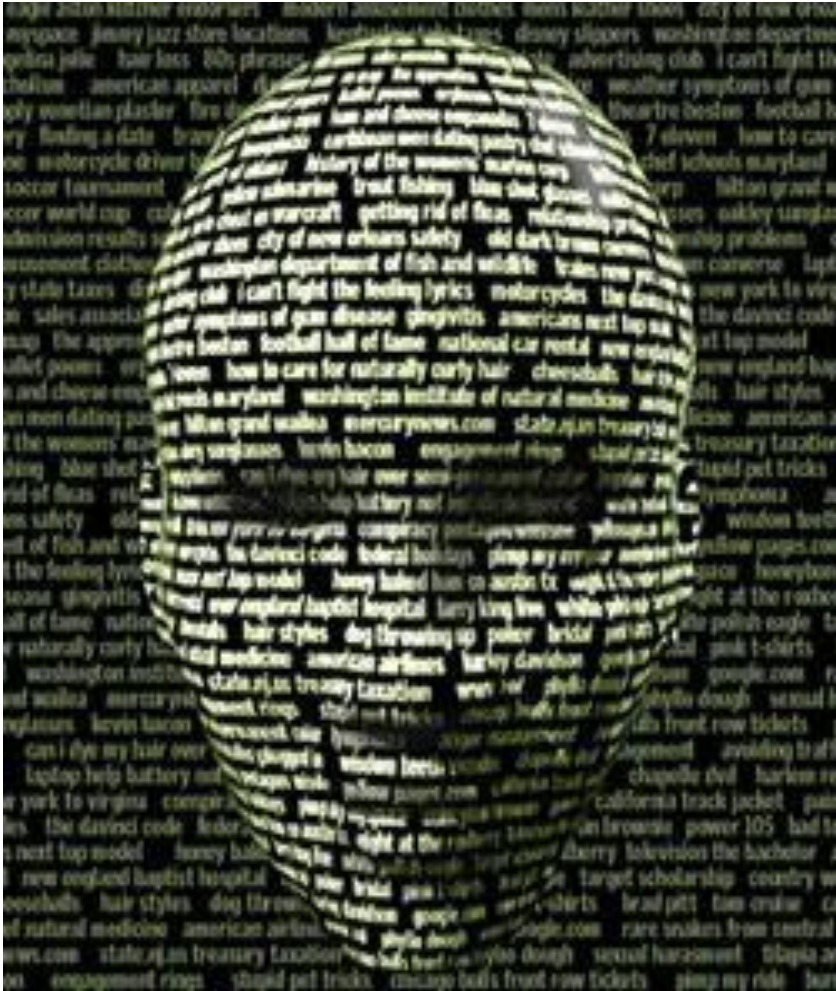
is learning simply about gaining knowledge...?
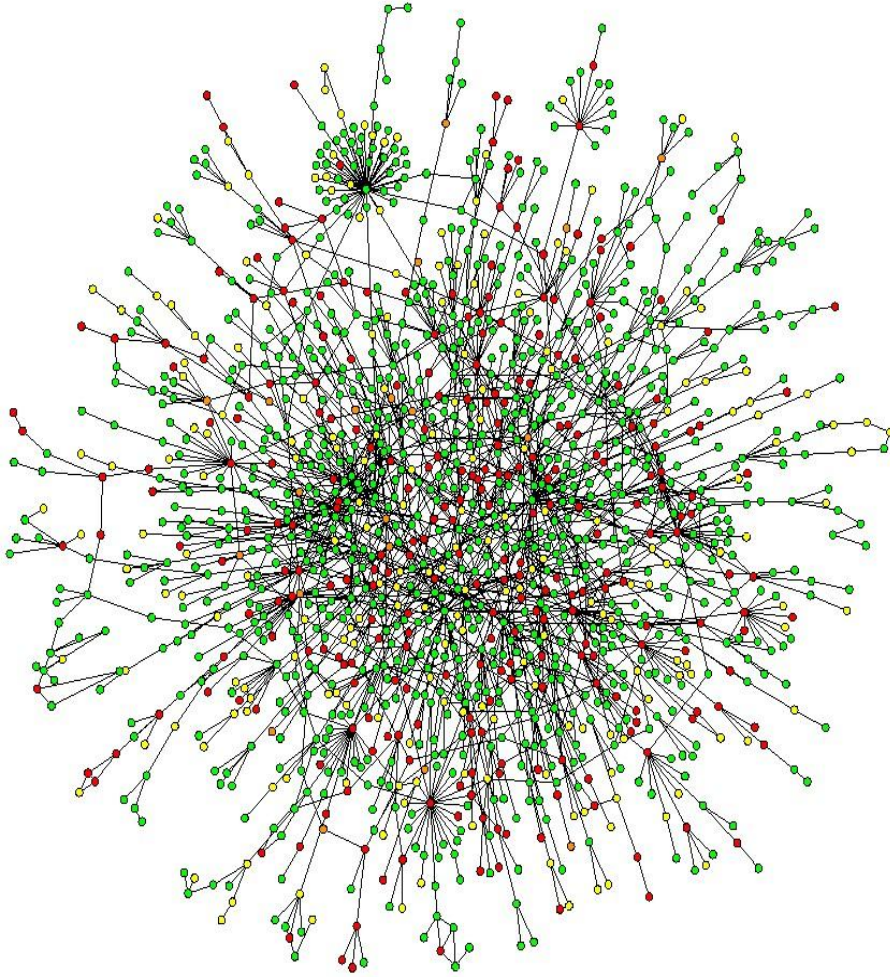
... or making connections?

You are your own 'VLE'

Aggregation

Services

Tools

Formats

Content

Channels

Networks

cc Steve Wheeler, University of Plymouth, 2010

PLEs, PLNs and PWs

Personal Learning Network

Personal Web

Personal Learning Environment

cc Steve Wheeler, University of Plymouth, 2010
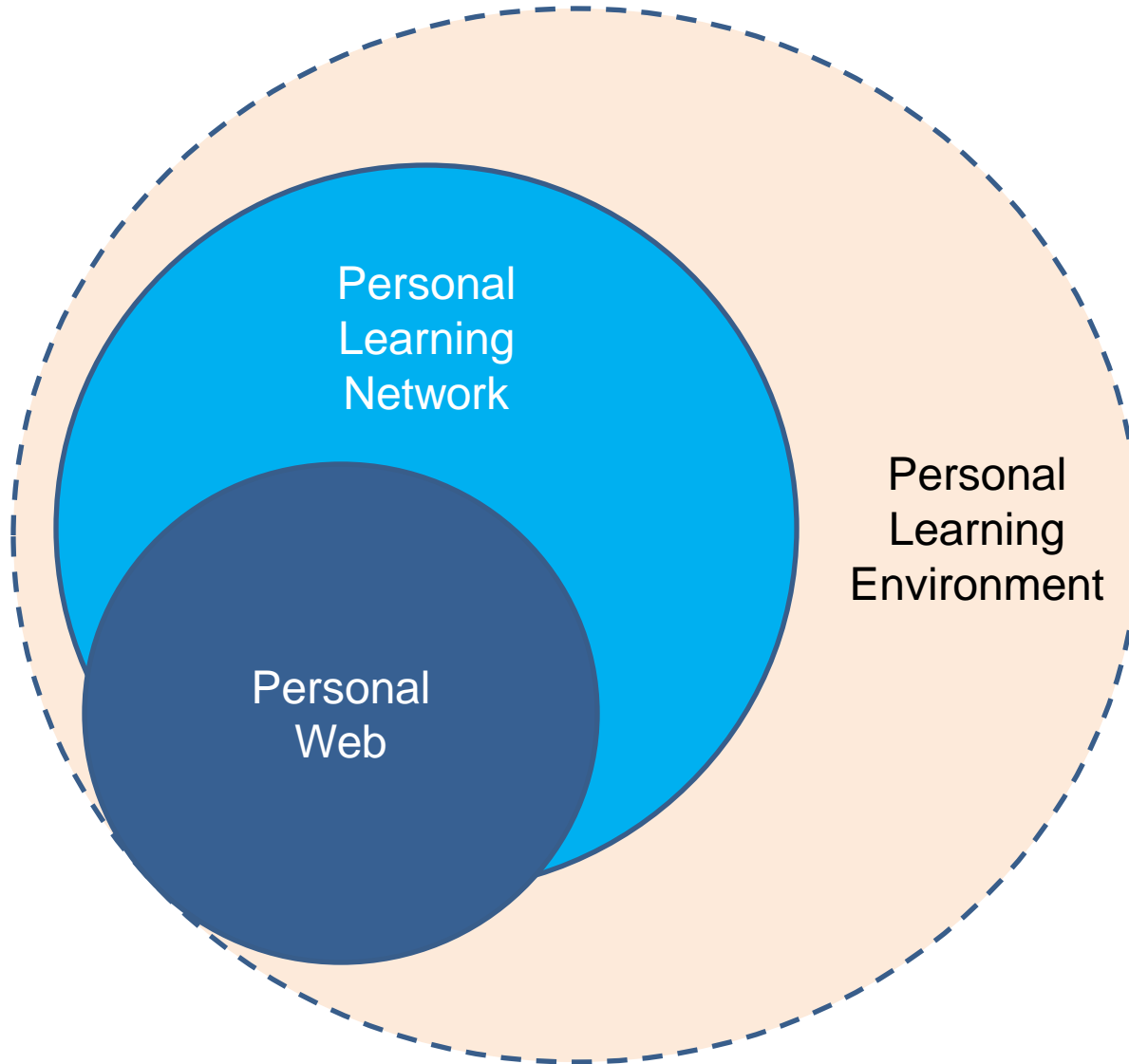
"Wikipedia is different in that it doesn't try to frame the creation of new entries with commissioned beginnings and fixed endpoints. It is open to anyone to initiate an entry on Wikipedia, and no entry is ever formally closed, since it is also open to anyone to keep editing and altering whatever is already there."
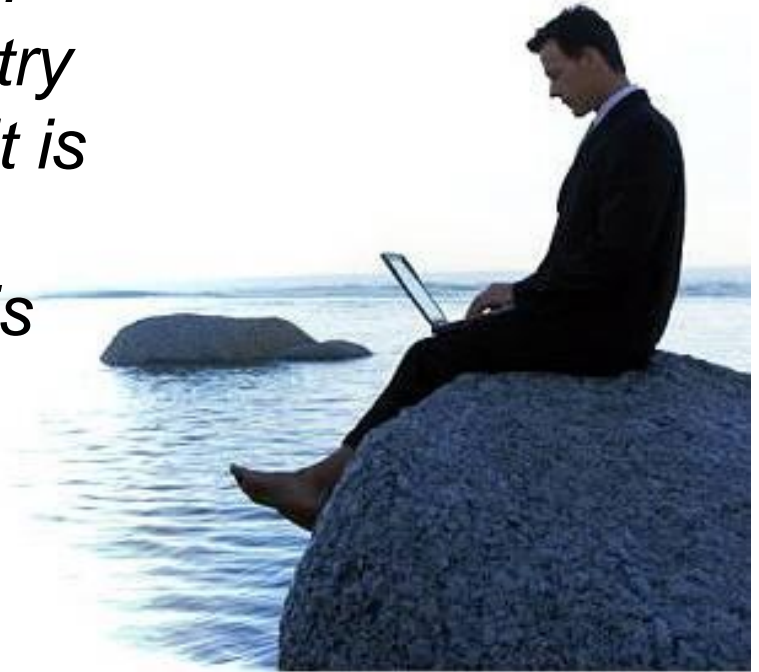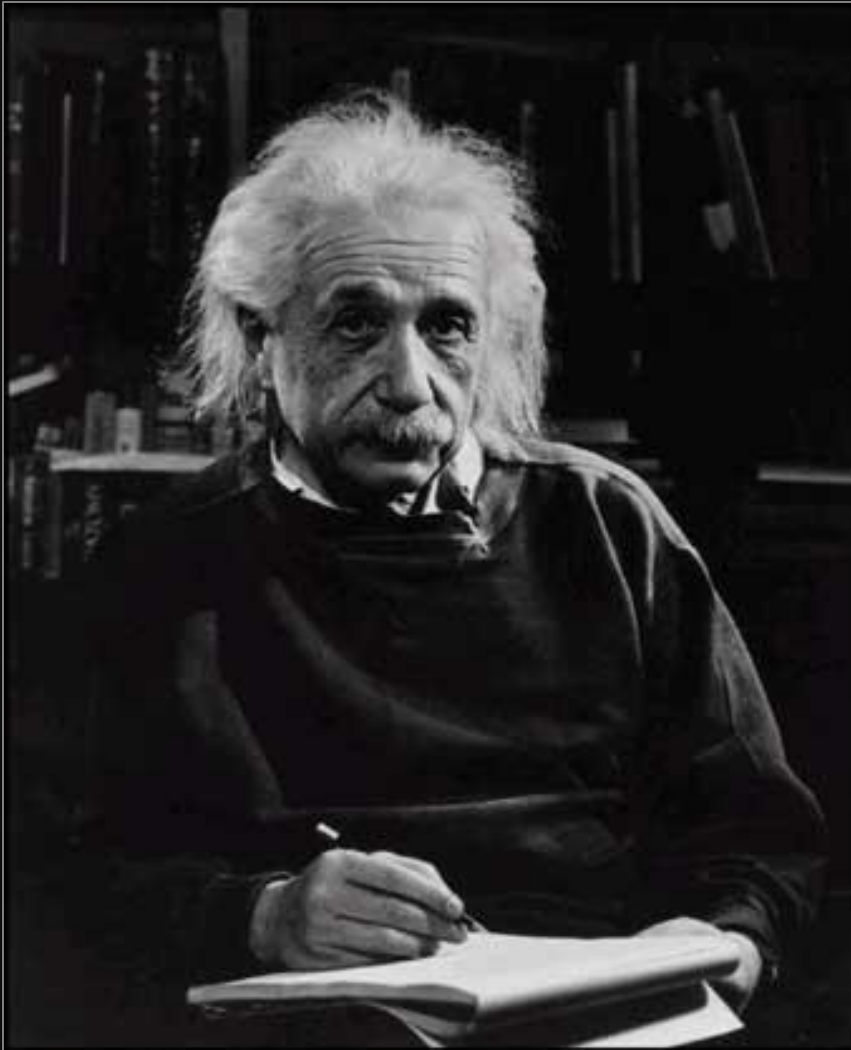
– Andrew Lih, *The Wikipedia Revolution (2009)*

Photo source unknown

Imagination is more important than knowledge

~ Einstein

www.students.ou.edu

cc Steve Wheeler, University of Plymouth, 2010

Thank you

Steve Wheeler

Faculty of Education
University of Plymouth
United Kingdom

W: www2.plymouth.ac.uk/distancelearning
E: swheeler@plymouth.ac.uk
B: steve-wheeler.blogspot.com