Open educational resources in Learning Networks

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Overview

- a bit of personal history
- varieties of being ‘open’
- Learning Networks and open educational resources
History
• Isaac Asimov: The Foundation Trilogy, 1951
• about a psycho-historian, living in about 12,000 AD
• psycho-history is the science that captures societal development in statistical laws
• Sir Karl Popper: The Open Society and its Enemies (1945), The Poverty of Historicism (1957)

• no general laws of historical development at the system level, only laws on interaction between people

• open society: devises rules that minimise the risks of bad rulers
• an open society is an *end in itself*, because it takes the interests of its participants at heart (moral stance)

• openness in society is a *means to the end* of fairness, achieved through ‘tinkering’, piecemeal change (pragmatic stance)

• idea: openness as used by Popper has wider ramifications than political philosophy alone
The ‘Open Movements’
Open Interoperability Standards

• oldest member
• about interoperability
• creates a level playing field for vendors, contra monopolies (moral)
• economic benefits for consumers, more competition, no vendor lock-in (pragmatic)
Open Source Code

- Richard Stallman’s Free Software Foundation: software code as public good (moral)
- make money through services, not code; maintain code jointly (pragmatic)
Open Content (OER)

- ‘knowledge is a public good’, Fred Mulder;
- ‘music should be freely downloadable’, Swedish Pirate party (moral)
- economy of scales; better quality (pragmatic)
Open Learning

- started in the 1970s and 80s (OU '69, OUNL, OUJ '84)
- access to education for all, self-determination (moral)
- fighting the rising cost of education, seizing business opportunities (pragmatic)
• the open movement is characterised by both a moral justification and pragmatic benefits

• they should remain intertwined, just as in Popper’s conception of an open society

• pragmatics without morals degrades into opportunism, morals without pragmatics may turn into ‘zealotism’
Open Learning in Learning Networks
Open Universities

- distance teaching
- second best - no direct interaction among students or teacher and students
- but the advent of fast, affordable networked computers can change all this ..
Learning Networks

- Learning Networks, new bid for open learning or professional development
- distributed: online networks of partially overlapping communities
- collaborative: peers support each other
Learning Networks (2)

- using web 2.0 technologies
- using any resource available, but thriving on open (educational) resources
- using open source-like business model: make money through additional services
- offer room for open innovation
On to my colleagues ...