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Reflection on Open Data as Open Educational Resources: Case Studies of Emerging Practice

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Open Data as Open Educational Resources

Case studies of emerging practice



Edited by Javiera Atenas & Leo Havemann



What follows contains the text of my contribution to the section titled "Prefaces: Reflections from the scientific committee", included in the open access book *Open Data as Open Educational Resources Case studies of emerging practice*, edited by Javiera Atenas and Leo Havemann (Open Knowledge, Open Education Working Group, 2015), published today.

Re-reading my preface I realise how many times I used the noun "effort", and there is a lot to say about that. I consider this both the result and one more step in a longer process of a larger, indeed, *effort* to understand critically and advance the pragmatic and intellectual aspects of open scholarship.

The complete prefaces section contains contributions from Marieke Guy, William Hammonds, Anne-Christin Tannhäuser, Maria Perifanou and myself.

You can download the book under a CC-BY license [here](#). You can also find out more about the book in [this blog post](#) by Javiera and Leo announcing the publication of the book.

I am very grateful to have been part of this project, and I am confident it will inspire discussion and reuse.

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This book, titled *Open Data as Open Educational Resources: Case studies of emerging practice*, is not a 'finished' product in the sense it is not a closed output or the 'outcome' of a project soon to be replaced by something else. This book is an open work in progress, and as such it is both the result of a process and a step in that process. Like all processes, there are here the traces of multiple signatures, both visible and invisible. It is a collective effort, initiated and spurred by the passion and determination of Javiera Atenas and Leo Havemann, who have co-ordinated a complex effort to make something important happen, out in the open, transparently and inclusively.

This book is a digital object, and a series of digital objects at that. Each chapter or 'case study' here is both independent and part of something larger, not just this book, but the whole open education, OER, open data, open source and open access landscape. Each of these terms imply different, distinct phenomena, yet they are all interlinked.

A big driver for my own work is enhancing the potential of information to transform social realities through increased discoverability, access and reusability. The case studies that flesh out this book embody or 'ground' different practices of openness in education. They do this not merely by describing these practices but by reflecting on them and by walking the walk as well as talking the talk; i.e. by sharing this work openly, making it available freely online and licensing it for reuse. Datasets and other work are fully referenced and most of them can be located and accessed by the reader, allowing them to try out the exercises presented.

The process of open peer review has been part of this effort to walk the walk of openness. We used basic, free tools and practised with an awareness of transparency and the need for pragmatic speediness, but also professionalism and respect. Authors and reviewers collaborated as equals, and followed advice promptly and generously. Everyone learned something, and a laborious task became a joy.

This exercise in open peer review meant practising a different culture of collegiality, where hierarchies and power structures are interrogated by doing things differently, on a more levelled, open ground. Expertise becomes thus a performative, fluid act based on sharing, not imposing nor making scarce.

This book has the potential to be useful to many educators, students, academics, researchers, policy makers and members of the public interested in the possibilities of open data and the transformative power of OER. With a commitment to education and social transformation, information becomes knowledge, and knowledge wisdom. This is made possible through conscious and unconscious effort, labour, experience and collective generosity. What is needed is the will, the time, and especially the infrastructural affordances that enable individuals to build on the work of others. What Javiera and Leo started is an act of love, and an act of hard work too.

Let's work hard ourselves so their effort keeps growing and delivering, beyond our own contexts and interests.

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References

Open Data as Open Educational Resources: Case studies of emerging practice, edited by Javiera

Atenas and Leo Havemann. London: Open Knowledge, Open Education Working Group, 2015. DOI:
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Read more about this book at <http://education.okfn.org/open-data-as-open-educational-resources-case-studies-of-emerging-practice/>



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