MOOCS and Social Learning Networks

Stephen Downes

Santiago de Compostela, Spain

July 21, 2015

- In recent years the concept of the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) has been reinterpreted to mean an open course with online videos, activities and tests. But the original formulation of MOOCs assigned a very important role to social learning networks. In this talk, one of the originators of the concept, Stephen Downes, discusses the role of social learning networks in open online learning. In his talk he will describe how social learning networks are used to identify and curate relevant resources supporting the course, which replaces a reliance on centrally produced and hosted videos. He also discusses the need to interactivity and discussion among course participants in order to support the localization of core concepts, the sharing of ideas and perspectives, and the use of the course as a platform to create new ideas and resources. Finally he discusses the role of the MOOC as central to practice in a discipline, and the importance of including practitioners as experts and resources who share their own experiences and lessons with participants.

Why Offer a MOOC?

- Extending the reach of the institution and access to education
- Building and maintaining brand
- Improving economics by lowering costs or increasing revenues
- Improving educational outcomes for both MOOC participants and on-campus students
- Innovation in teaching and learning
- Conducting research on teaching and learning.

MOOCS: Expectations and Reality
Devayani Tirthali, Fiona M. Hollands, Teachers College Columbia University
http://cbcse.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/MOOCs_Expectations_and_Reality.pdf

The ‘Open’ in Open Learning

- In the beginning… Open Archives

  “If governments ignored publisher lobbying and did the arithmetic properly, they would immediately see that the interests of publicly funded research vastly eclipse those of the research publishing industry.” – Stevan Harnad

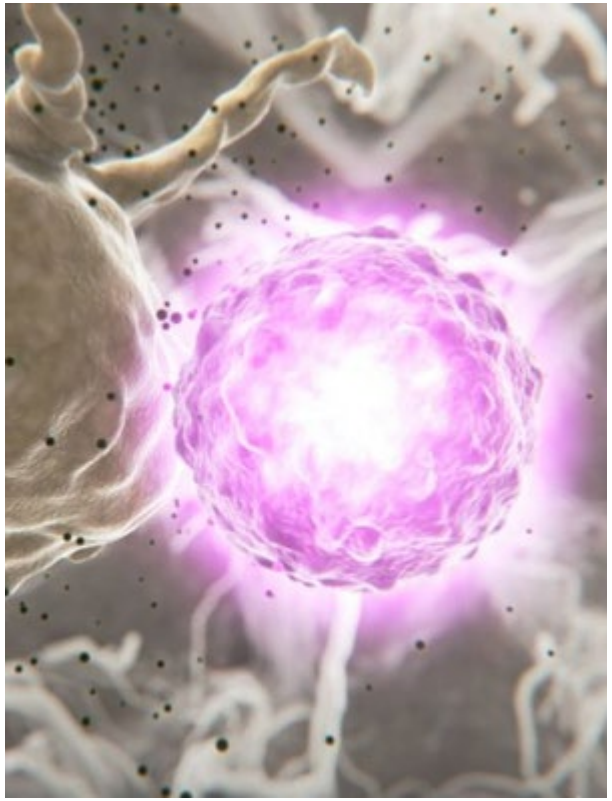
The Subversive Proposal at 20. Richard Poynder, Open and Shut?
http://poynder.blogspot.ca/2014/06/the-subversive-proposal-at-20.html

Budapest Open Access Initiative, 2001
http://www.budapestopenaccessinitiative.org/background

The Open Virus

- Martin Weller:

  “It is no coincidence that many of the MOOC pioneers had also been early adopters of open access, active bloggers, and advocates of open licenses. Creating open courses seemed the next logical step, because they were interested in the possibilities that openness offered and had seen the benefits elsewhere in their practice.”



The Open Virus, Martin Weller, The Ed Techie
http://nogoodreason.typepad.co.uk/no_good_reason/2014/05/the-open-virus.html

The Open Research Network

- Beginnings of a proposal:

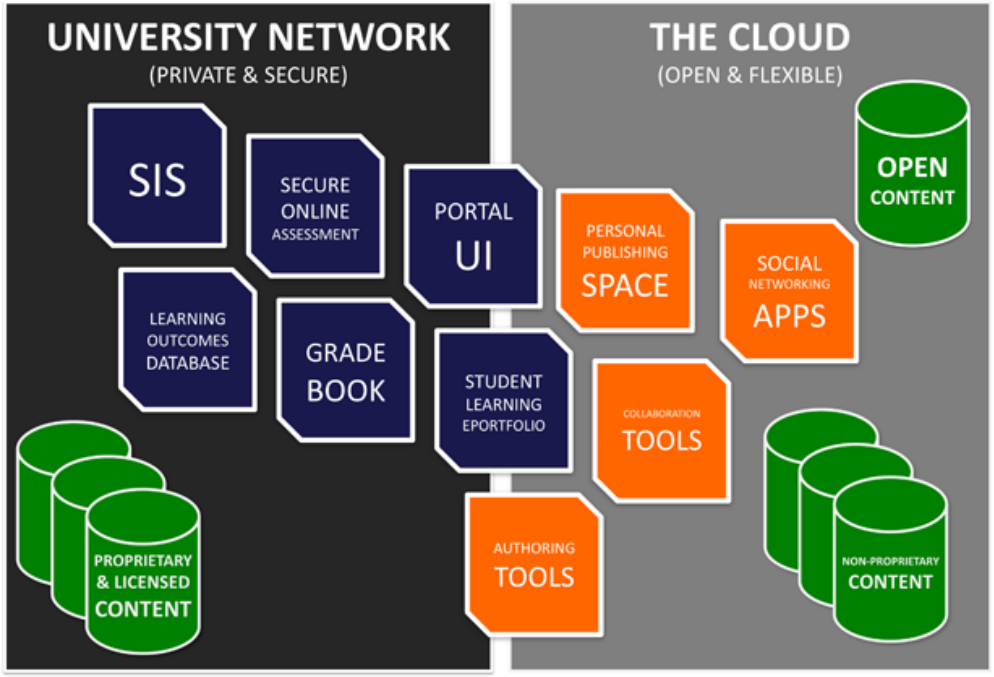
  “Many regions around the world are investing in the development of repository networks. These networks have evolved in their specific local contexts and currently differ in a number of ways. However, the real value of repositories is when they are interconnected to provide unified access to research materials for researchers around the world.”

Aligning Repository Networks Meeting 2014, Confederation of Open Access Repositories (COAR)
https://www.coar-repositories.org/files/Aligning-Repository-Networks-Meeting-Report.pdf

The Open Learning Network

- Bridging the LMS and the PLE:

  "The OLN is built on web services from the ground up. This facilitates authentication federation and data portability. It also allows for granular authentication and rights management within and across OLN modules."

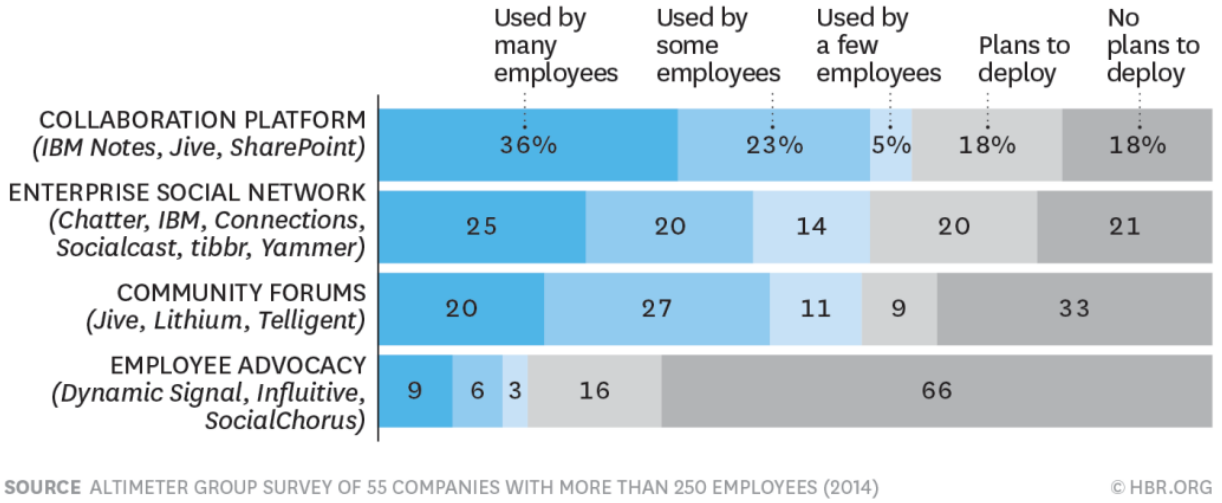


Jon Mott. Envisioning the Post-LMS Era: The Open Learning Network, Educause Review.
http://www.educause.edu/ero/article/envisioning-post-lms-era-open-learning-network

Social Networks

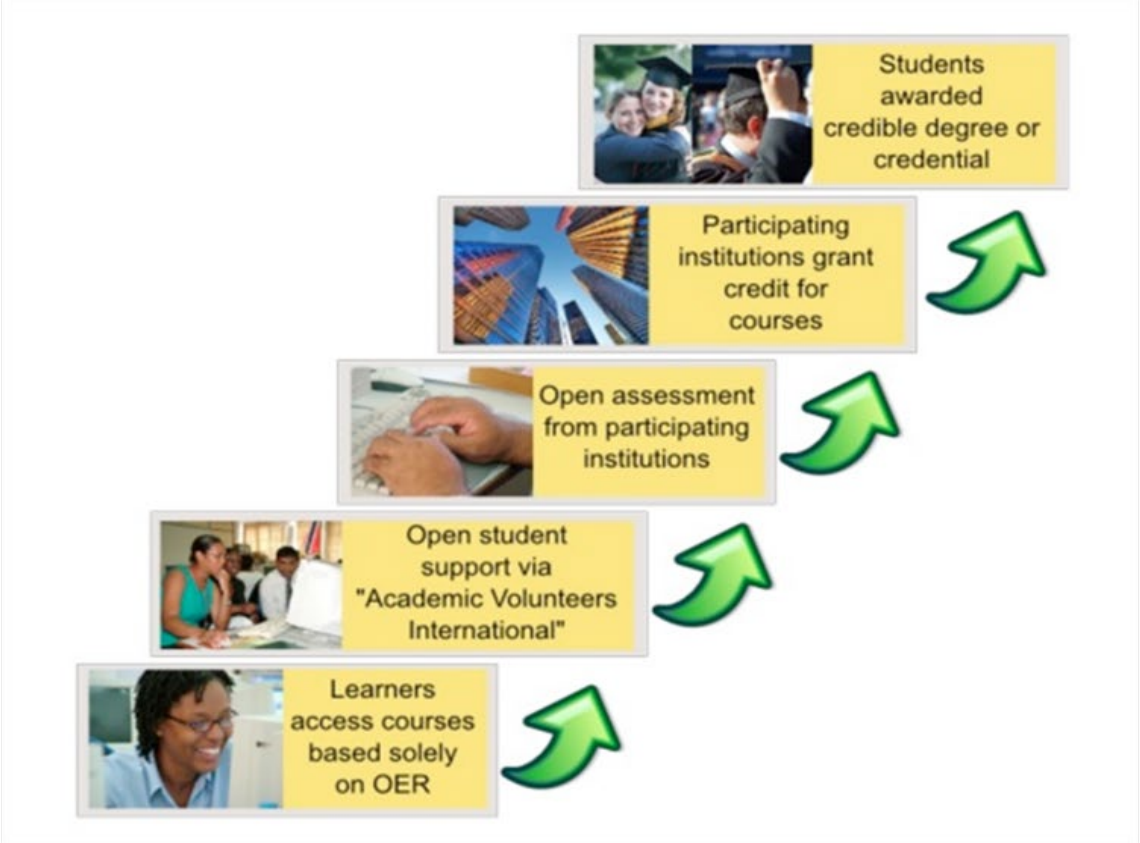
- Why nobody is using the corporate social network

  “Employees are smart—they won’t waste their time on stunts that are purely for show. Think about the types of engagements you want to have in digital channels—with whom, about what, and when.”



Charlene Li, Harvard Business Review
https://hbr.org/2015/04/why-no-one-uses-the-corporate-social-network

The Many Names of Open



Taylor, J.C. 2007. Open courseware futures: Creating a parallel universe. e-Journal of Instructional Science and Technology (e-JIST), Vol 10, No. 1. Online: http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/e-jist/docs/vol10_no1/papers/full_papers/taylorj.htm

Open Access

- Originated in Open University, Athabasca University
- No formal requirements for course admission
- Issues: preparedness, completion

http://www.athabascau.ca/

Open Access Network

- Wikipedia:

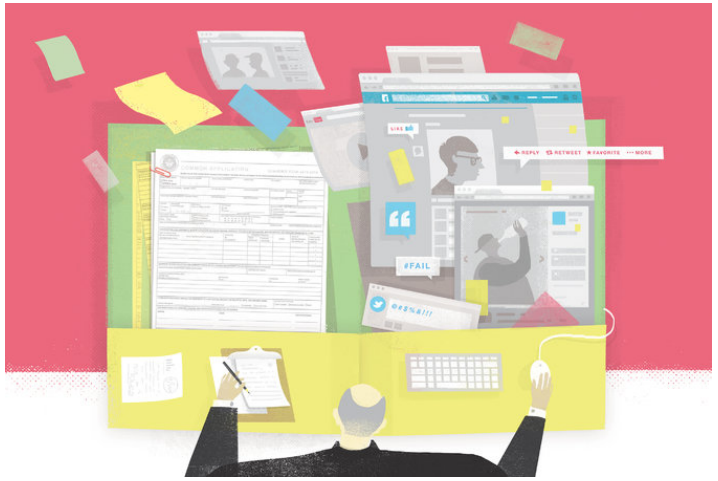
  “…the business model that separates the physical access to the network from the delivery of services. In an OAN, the owner or manager of the network does not supply services for the network; these services must be supplied by separate retail service providers.”

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open-access_network

Open Access Social Network

- They Loved Your G.P.A. Then They Saw Your Tweets

  "Students' social media and digital footprint can sometimes play a role in the admissions process," says Christine Brown, the executive director of K-12 and college prep programs at Kaplan Test Prep. "It's something that is becoming more ubiquitous and less looked down upon."



Natasha Singer, New York Times
http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/10/business/they-loved-your-gpa-then-they-saw-your-tweets.html

Open Source

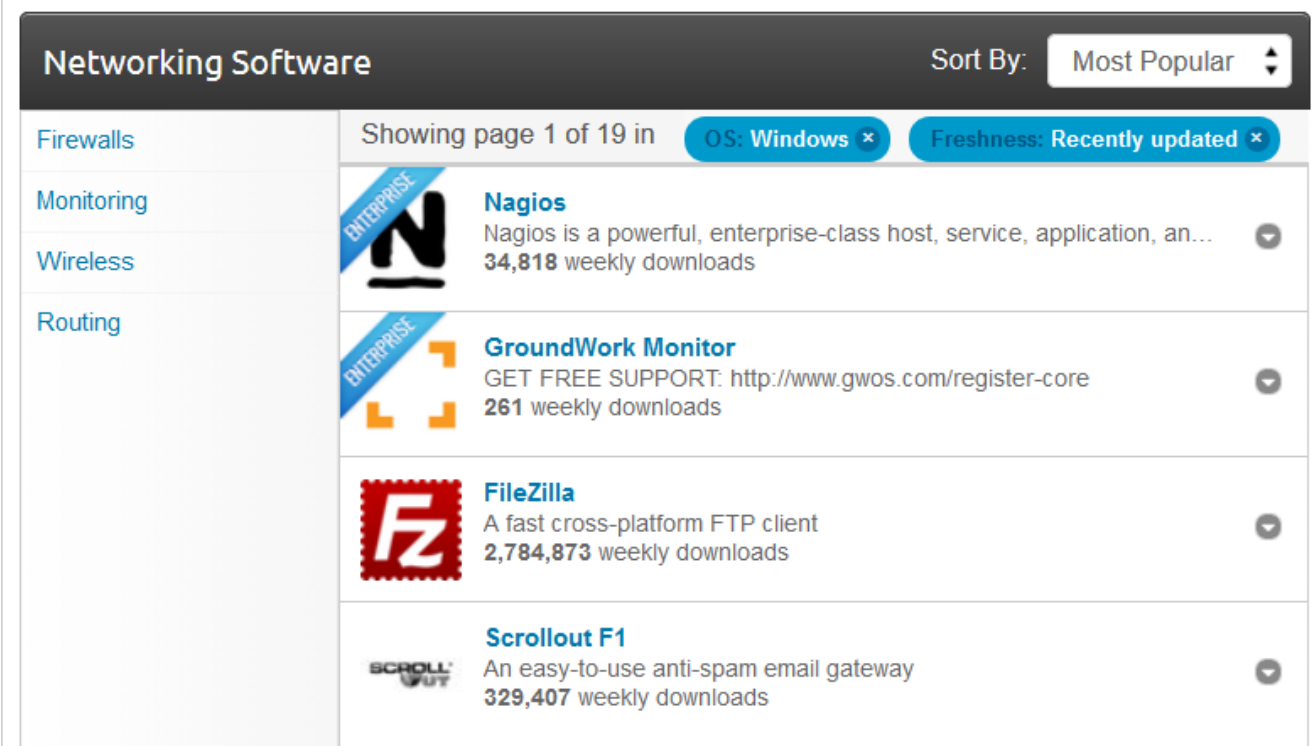
- Open Source Definition

  “Open source software is software that can be freely used, changed, and shared (in modified or unmodified form) by anyone. Open source software is made by many people, and distributed under licenses that comply with the Open Source Definition.”

  http://opensource.org/

Open Source Network

- SourceForge http://sourceforge.net/directory/system-administration/networking/os:windows/freshness:recently-updated/
- GitHub https://github.com/opensource-socialnetwork/opensource-socialnetwork

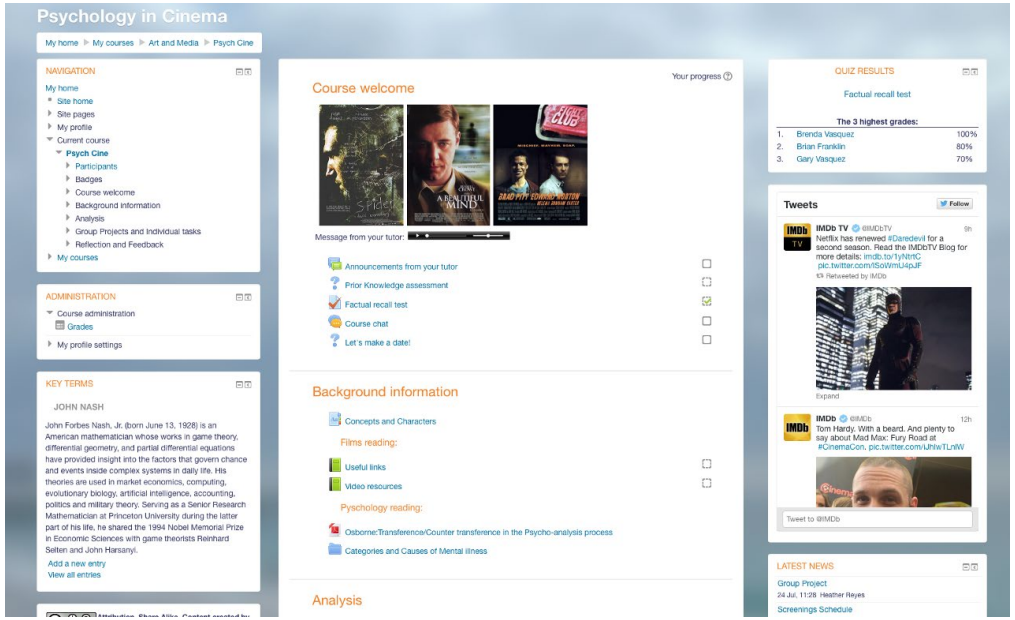


Open Source Social Network

- eXo and Slack

  “eXo Platform is an out-of-the-box social intranet solution. Rich collaboration features such as wikis, forums, calendars and documents are smartly integrated around activity streams, social networking and workspaces.”
  http://www.exoplatform.com/

- Is Slack the new LMS?
  - “Learning is constructed by what activities the students carry out; learning is about what they do, not about what we teachers do.”



Mathias Emrose, Medium | The Synapse
https://medium.com/synapse/is-slack-the-new-lms-7d1c15ff964f

- Elgg - https://elgg.org/

Open Content

- Originally thought of as similar to open source
- Creative Commons licenses – by, nc, sa, nd clauses
- Open access versus open use

Open Content Network

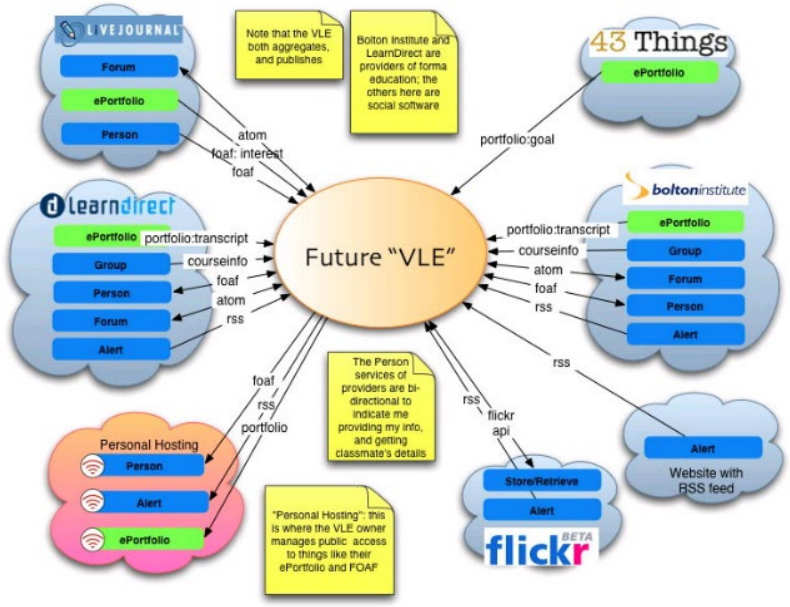
- SAP Community Network

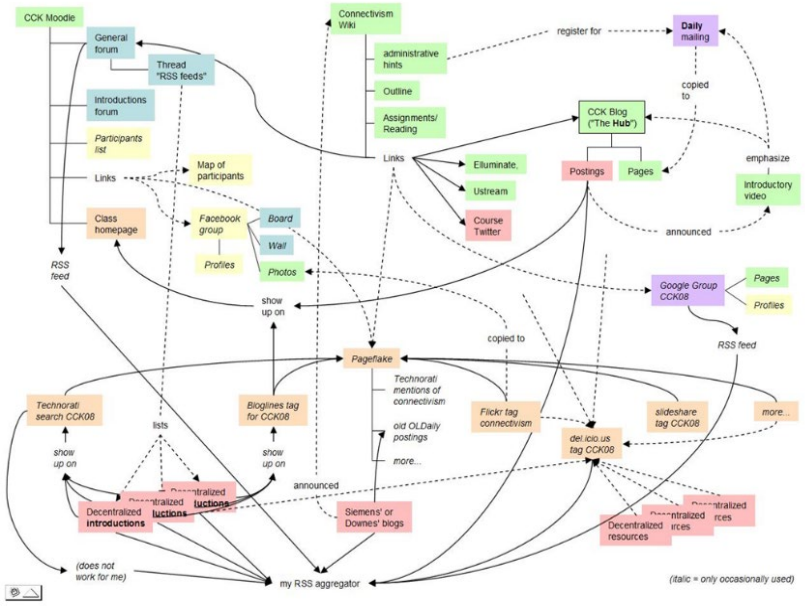
  "In the b1411 release, SuccessFactors introduced the *Open Content Network* for the SuccessFactors Learning product. This extension of the LMS allows for integration with a few select MOOC providers to incorporate a vendor's courses into the organization's LMS. This can allow organizations to present online learning courses from MOOC providers to employees within the LMS directly."

  http://scn.sap.com/community/erp/hcm/blog/2015/03/05/craving-more-content-take-a-bite-out-of-the-open-content-network-in-successfactors-learning

- EMMA – European MOOC Aggregator - http://platform.europeanmoocs.eu/

Open Content Social Network





- Known

https://withknown.com/

Open Educational Resources

- UNESCO Definition

  "Open Educational Resources (**OERs**) are any type of educational materials that are in the public domain or introduced with an open license. The nature of these open materials means that anyone can legally and freely copy, use, adapt and re-share them."

http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/access-to-knowledge/open-educational-resources/what-are-open-educational-resources-oers/

OER Network

- Support for community-based OER process
  - integration of OER development and use within publicly supported curricula
  - use of OERs in public services and programs
- OER Commons https://www.oercommons.org/
- EdWeb - http://home.edweb.net/

- Utopia

  Reading and networking will become one and the same thing

  “for instance, when a document in Utopia is opened, "a sidebar opens up on the right-hand side and fills with relevant data from external databases and services like Mendeley, SHERPA/RoMEO, and Wikipedia.” http://utopiadocs.com

OER Social Network

- "Colearning" - Collaborative networks for creating, sharing and reusing OER through social media… OpenScout

Alexandra Okada,
http://presentations.ocwconsortium.org/uk2012_224_okada_collaborative_networks/

Open Instruction

- “Open Instruction – here we refer to the ‘lecture’ portion of open learning, or rather, the internet analogue of the original lecture described at the top of this post, a series or sequence of activities undertaken by experts…” http://p2pfoundation.net/Open_Instruction
- Early open instruction – the Couros course, the Wiley Wiki
- MOOCs as open instruction
- Elements of open instruction:
  - Resources
  - Lectures
  - Activities and projects

Open Instruction Network

- Open Teaching

  “The Downes-Siemens course has become a landmark in the small but growing push toward ‘open teaching.’”

  Marc Parry, Chronicle of Higher Education
  http://chronicle.com/article/Open-Teaching-When-the/124170/

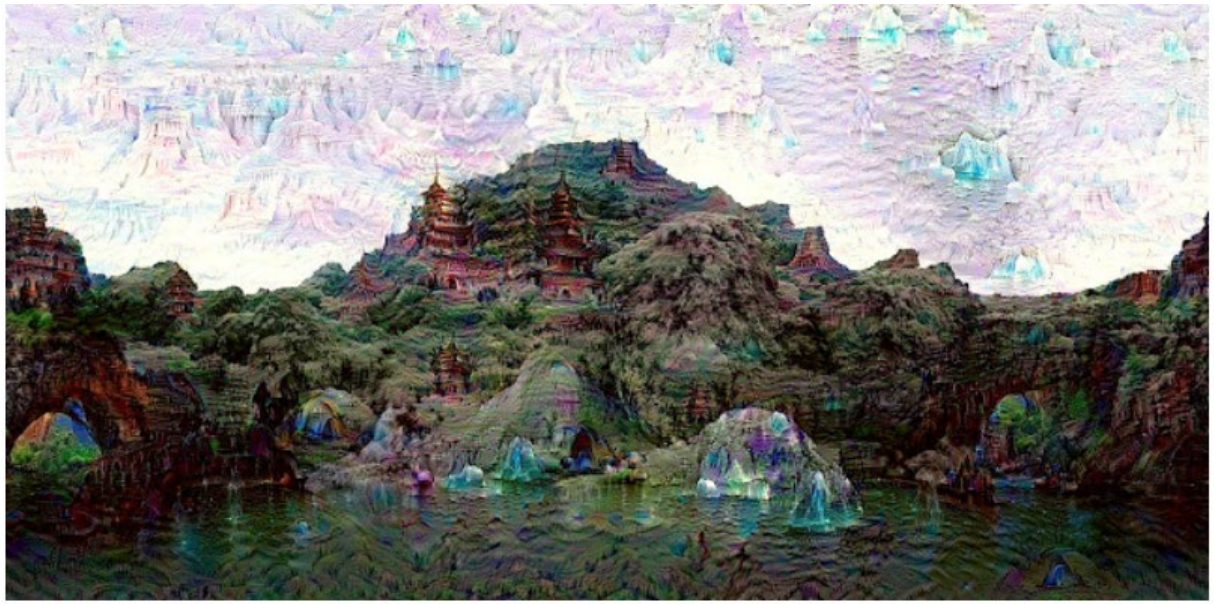
Alec Couros - Open Teaching - Network Sherpa

The concept of "network sherpa" projects the role of teacher as one who knows "the terrain", guides students, but who is also led by student interests, objectives, and knowledge.

https://www.flickr.com/photos/courosa/3293199214/in/photostream/

Sidebar…

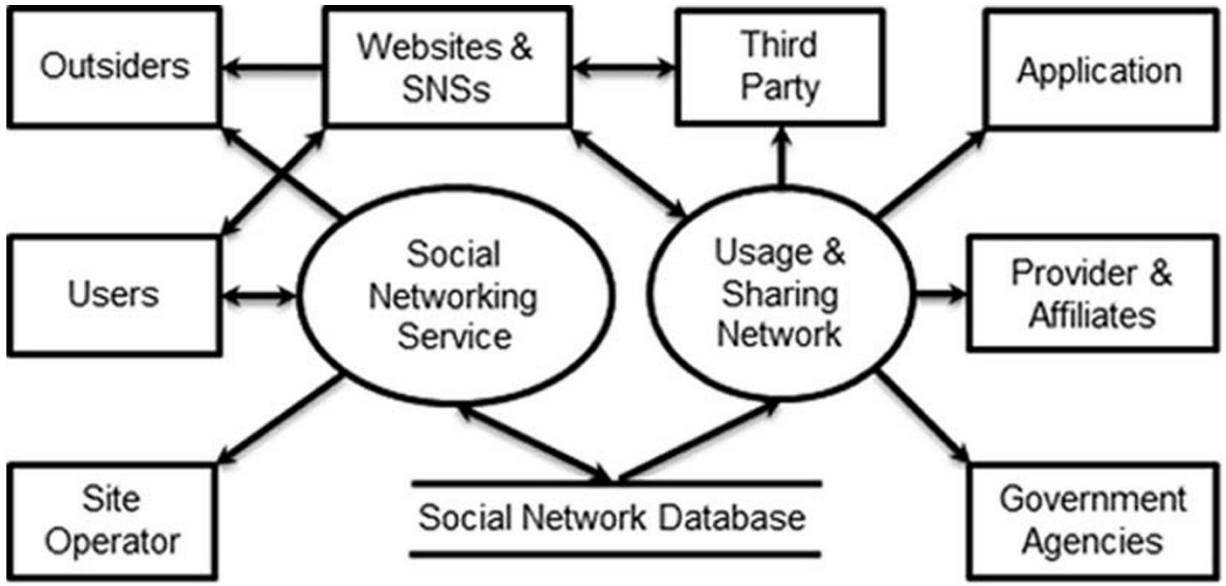
- What I found when searching for “Open Instruction Network”:
- DeepDream - DeepDream - a code example for visualizing Neural Networks



http://googleresearch.blogspot.com.es/2015/07/deepdream-code-example-for-visualizing.html

Open Instruction Social Network?

- Examples are hard to come by
- See, though, this example in health services



Jingquan Li, A Privacy Preservation Model for Health-Related Social Networking Sites
http://www.jmir.org/2015/7/e168/

Open Design

- ‘Learning Design’ = the organization and structure of a course – eg., IMS LD
  - Open design – enabling participants to create their own organization and structure
  - Example: touring a city vs being taken on a tour
  - The course as ‘environment’ rather than ‘book’
  - Open design in MOOCs

Learning Design: A Handbook on Modelling and Delivering Networked Education, By Rob Koper, Colin Tattersall (2005!)
http://jime.open.ac.uk/article/download/2005-18/262/

Open Educational Practices

- ...the Open Educational Practices movement, developed by Germany's Ulf-Daniel Ehlers and the UK's Gráinne Conole...
- Also: Open Educational Practices and Resources

  “It is important to note that current educational practices are decisive in determining whether – and how – digital educational content, tools and services will be deployed and utilised. If the prevailing practice of teacher-centred knowledge transfer remains intact, then OER will have little effect on making a difference in teaching and learning.”

  http://www.olcos.org/cms/upload/docs/olcos_roadmap.pdf

Open Learning Design Network

- Gráinne Conole - Cloudworks: Social networking for learning design
  - “Traditionally design has been an implicit process, how do we shift to a process of design that is more explicit and hence shareable? Different representations of design have different values and purposes, which representations are appropriate and when?”
- Engeström (2005) – “The term 'social networking' makes little sense if we leave out the objects that mediate the ties between people… The fallacy is to think that social networks are just made up of people. They're not; social networks consist of people who are connected by a shared object.”

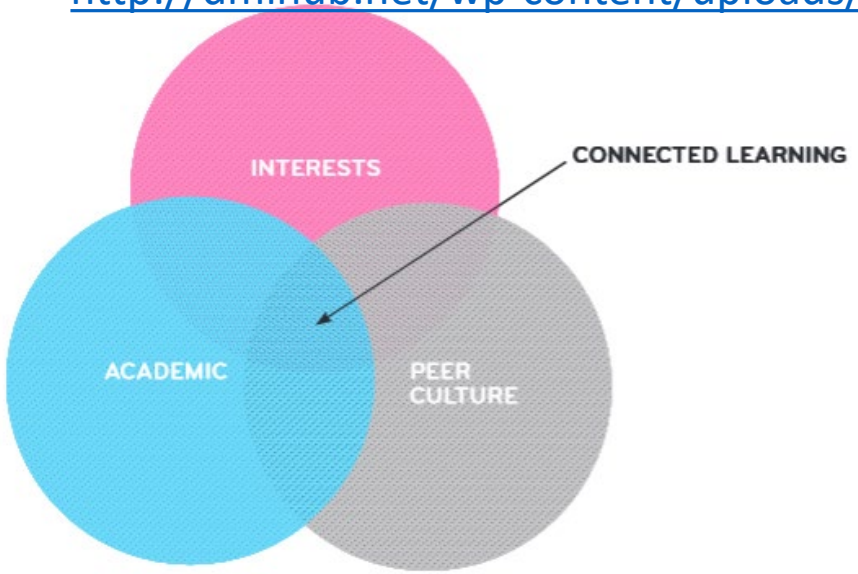
http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/melbourne08/procs/conole.pdf

Open Learning Design Social Network

- Connected Learning Research Network http://clrn.dmlhub.net/

  "This model is based on evidence that the most resilient, adaptive, and effective learning involves individual interest as well as social support to overcome adversity and provide recognition."

  http://dmlhub.net/wp-content/uploads/files/Connected_Learning_report.pdf



"Connected learning centers on an equity agenda of deploying new media to reach and enable youth who otherwise lack access to opportunity."

Open Credentials

- The argument for closed credentials
- Badges?
- ‘You are what you do’
  - Privacy and security considerations

Open Credentials Network

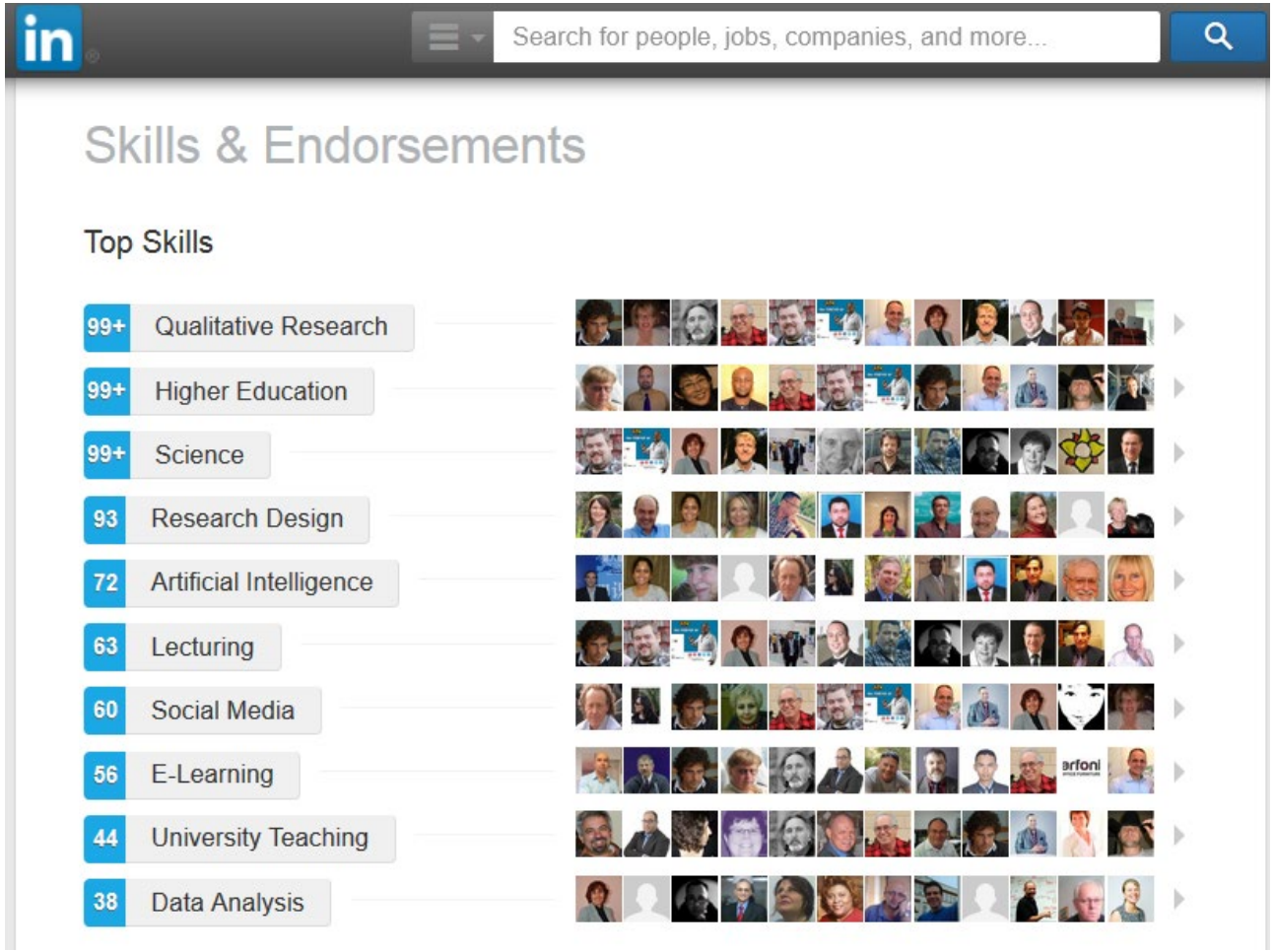
- Open Badges

  “Collect badges from multiple sources, online and off, into a single backpack. Then display your skills and achievements on social networking profiles, job sites, websites and more.”

  “Open Badges are information-rich. Each badge has important data built in that links back to the issuer, criteria and verifying evidence.”

http://openbadges.org/

Open Credentials Social Network?



Stephen also knows about...

37 Statistics | 33 Data Mining | 30 Machine Learning | 24 Computer Science
24 Courses | 19 Web Development | 17 Programming | 17 Proposal Writing
13 Human Computer... | 12 HTML | 10 User Experience | 8 New Media
7 Perl | 6 Digital Media | 6 Survey Design | 5 Epistemology
4 Philosophy of Mind | 3 Web Applications | 2 Program Evaluation
2 Python | 2 Innovation Management | 2 Natural Language... | 2 Pedagogy
2 Software Engineering | 1 Semantic Technologies | 1 Information Retrieval
1 Physics | 1 LaTeX | 1 Bioinformatics | 1 Simulations | 1 SPSS
1 Policy Analysis | 1 Algorithms | 1 Ontologies | 1 Quantitative Research
1 Academic Writing

Open Assessment?

- What is assessment? - Assessment Design Principles

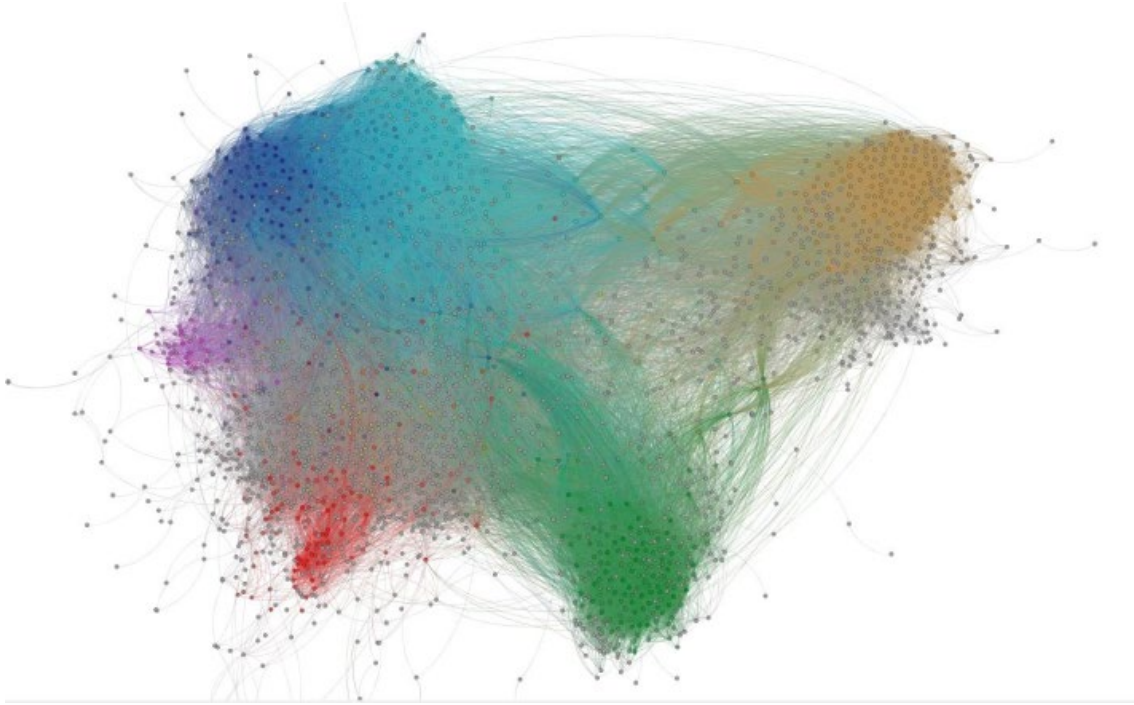
  “Many projects are enhancing the validity of their badges by having some expert other judge work before badges are awarded. This expert other could be a computer or a human. The projects feel that expert judgment gives the badge more weight.”
  http://iudpd.indiana.edu/Assessment+Design+Principles#

- Learning Outcomes Assessment Communities

  “groups, that usually meet in person, that you can join and network about learning outcomes and assessments…”
  http://www.learningoutcomeassessment.org/LOAcommunities.htm

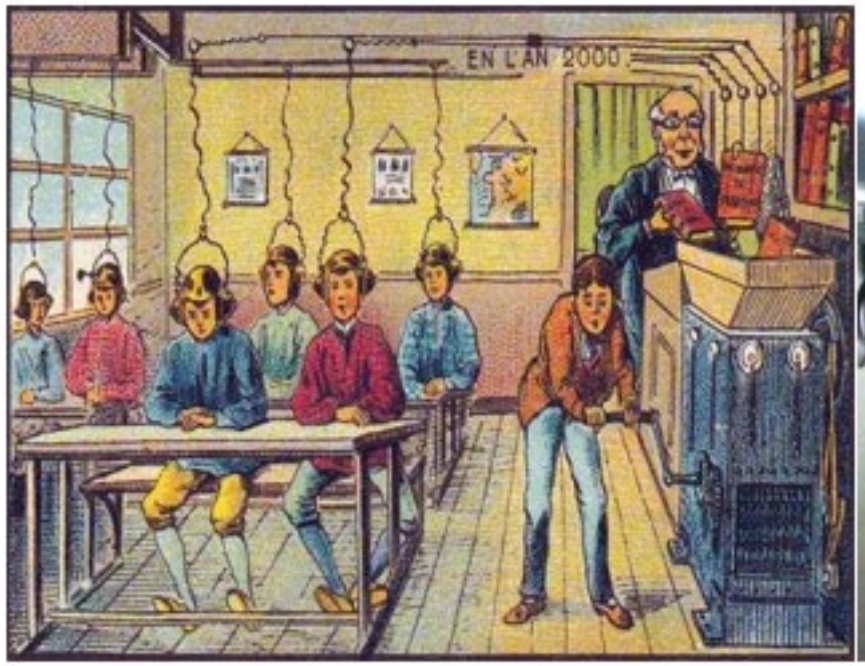
Open Assessment Networks?

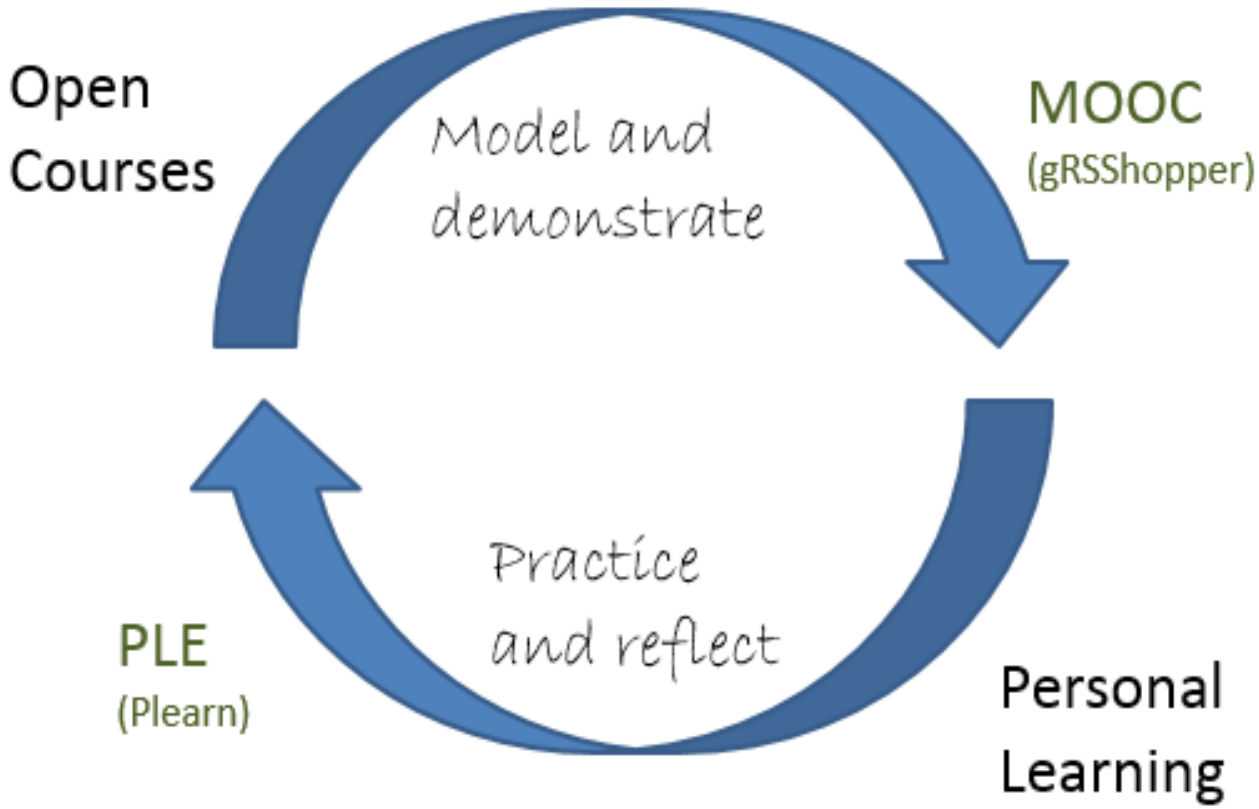
- The paucity of ‘learning contracts’
- Assessment - criteria and metrics
  - Content based – formal learning
  - Task based – informal learning
- “You decide what counts as success”



Open Assessments Social Network?

- Will what we do in social networks become the ‘assessment’ of the 21st century?




Open
Courses
Model and
demonstrate
MOOC
(gRSShopper)
Practice
and reflect
PLE
(Plearn)
Personal
Learning

Stephen Downes
http://www.downes.ca