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Keynote Presentation: Openness and Innovation (Martin Weller)

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Openness is everywhere in education: MOOCs, OERs, open access publishing, open data and nation open policies. In many ways it could be said that the open approach has been victorious. And yet at the same time, many in the open education movement feel that it is being usurped by commercial interests and there is a battle around the direction open education should take. This talk will look at why the open approach has been successful and some of the innovations it has led to, and also at some of the tensions in the area.

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[Dr Simon Ball](#)

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Following the live presentations, we asked each speaker to respond to questions posed by audience members. In the short time available, it was not possible to put all of the questions submitted to the speaker for a response. We asked all speakers if they would respond to the unanswered questions here on Cloudworks. Here are all of the questions asked during the session:

▶ I'm taking part in the International Learning Design Challenge this week using the

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Learning Design Tool which has the aim of sharing designs that teachers can modify and contextualise for their own groups. Do you think that teachers/trainers/educators are now more willing to collaborate and share OERs than previously and do you think that effective online collaboration is a skill that needs to be learnt initially?

- ▶ Do you think the reported low retention rates on MOOCs is a concern, if it is what do you think can be done to increase learner retention?
- ▶ "MOOCs are ultimately about making money". But if the sustainability model of OpenLearn is that it leads to OU enrolments, then isn't OpenLearn ultimately about making money too? It's just that the OU has a different brand, promoted in a different way?
- ▶ Can you tell us more about the OER research hub project. Who is using OER? How much do we know about learners accessing OER and MOOCs?
- ▶ Can communication/research initiatives around OERs benefit from being part of MOOC discourse or should researchers and programmes working in OERs stay away from MOOCs (and the discourse around them) and focus on how they are different?
- ▶ Interesting to hear about open textbooks in the US. Could you tell us a little more about what is happening in the UK? Do you think this would work in schools?
- ▶ Can you tell us more about the OER research hub project. Who is using OER? How much do we know about learners accessing OER and MOOCs?
- ▶ Taking an idea from corporate events I wonder if participants in MOOCs, where a big investment has been made to put the thing on, have to commit to a REFUNDABLE fee which they get back if and when they complete.

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[Jonathan Vernon](#)

10:10pm 19 February 2014 [Permalink](#)

Do please be more upbeat about the humble blog. Far from being the domain of nerds by the time you joined in in 2007, my perspective from a 1999 start is far more of communities of likeminded people finding eachother, from self-help on depression and creative writing, to how to do HTML. These early days, on a platform such as Diaryland, saw everything that we now take for granted invented and trialled: circles, surveys, rings, comments, categories, likes/favourites, stats and much more. Those early blogs were seen as and written as online journals - the personal was far more prevalent. It was highly experimental, more vibrant than today, and collaborative as typically someone who wrote content would pair up with someone who could design the visuals and functionality. This gave rise to galleries of themes. I did screen grabs at the time and have since found pieces of these old blogs by others via waybackthen.com. I gravitated towards writers and writing - one contact from 2001-2003 now an established author. And when Norman Mailer left a comment you felt it really was the man.

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