IS THE DOOR CLOSING ON OPEN KNOWLEDGE?

FINDING HOPE AND OPPORTUNITY IN OUR SHARED PRINCIPLES

THIS IS NOT A TALK ABOUT POLITICS

THIS IS NOT A TALK ABOUT MISINFORMATION

THIS IS NOT A TALK ABOUT FASCISM

THIS IS NOT A TALK ABOUT CLIMATE COLLAPSE

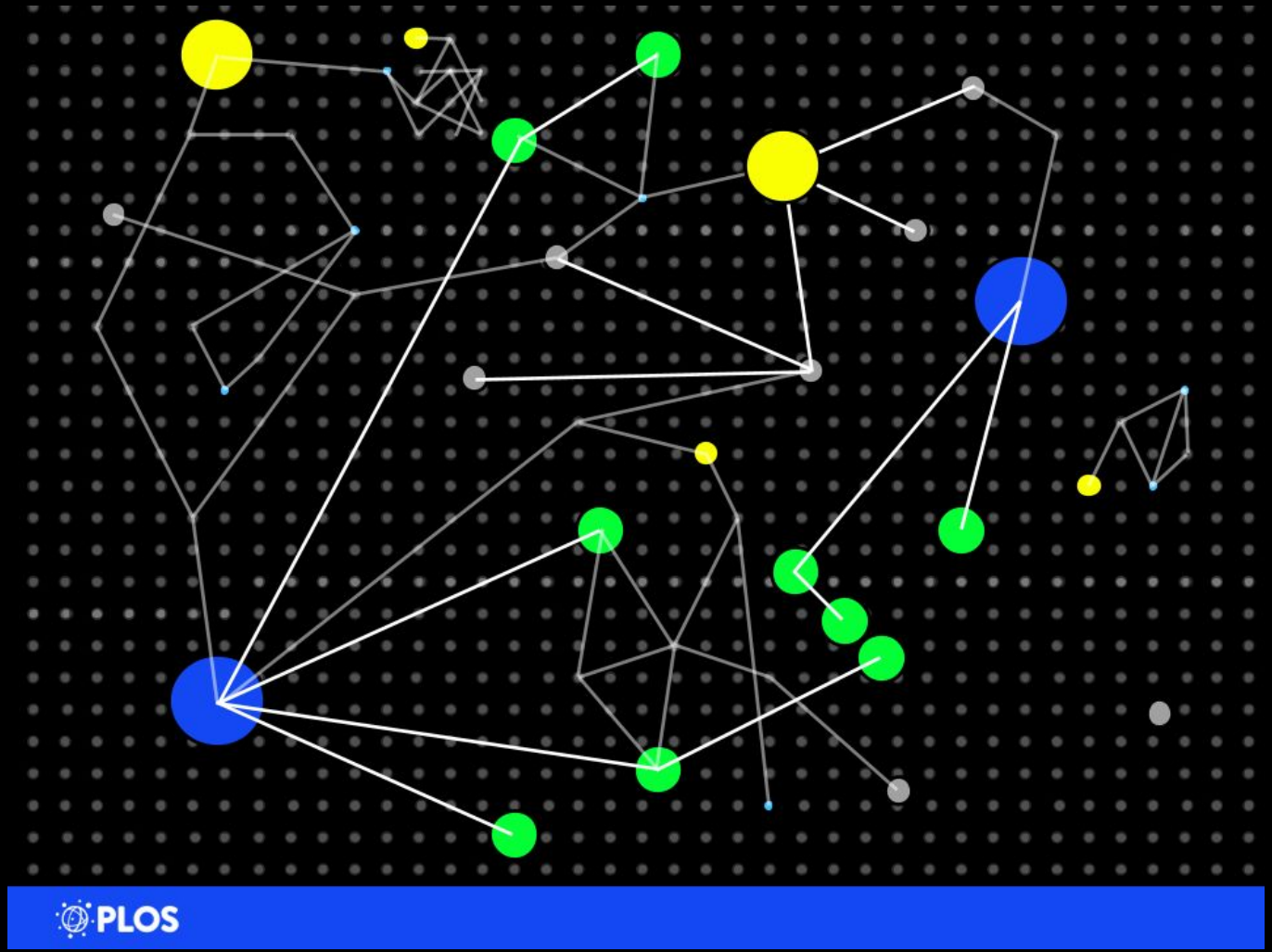
THIS IS NOT A TALK ABOUT TECHNO-SOLUTIONISM

THIS IS NOT A TALK ABOUT WAR

THIS IS NOT A TALK ABOUT CAPITALISM

THIS IS NOT A TALK ABOUT "AI"

(EXCEPT OF COURSE IT IS)


PLOS



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1. PRELUDE

“AN OLD TRADITION AND A NEW TECHNOLOGY HAVE CONVERGED TO MAKE POSSIBLE AN UNPRECEDENTED PUBLIC GOOD…”

"SHARE THE LEARNING OF THE RICH WITH THE POOR AND THE POOR WITH THE RICH…UNITING HUMANITY IN A COMMON INTELLECTUAL CONVERSATION AND QUEST FOR KNOWLEDGE"

BUT DID IT WORK?

1. Take existing scholarly content

1. Take existing scholarly content

2. Make it freely available online

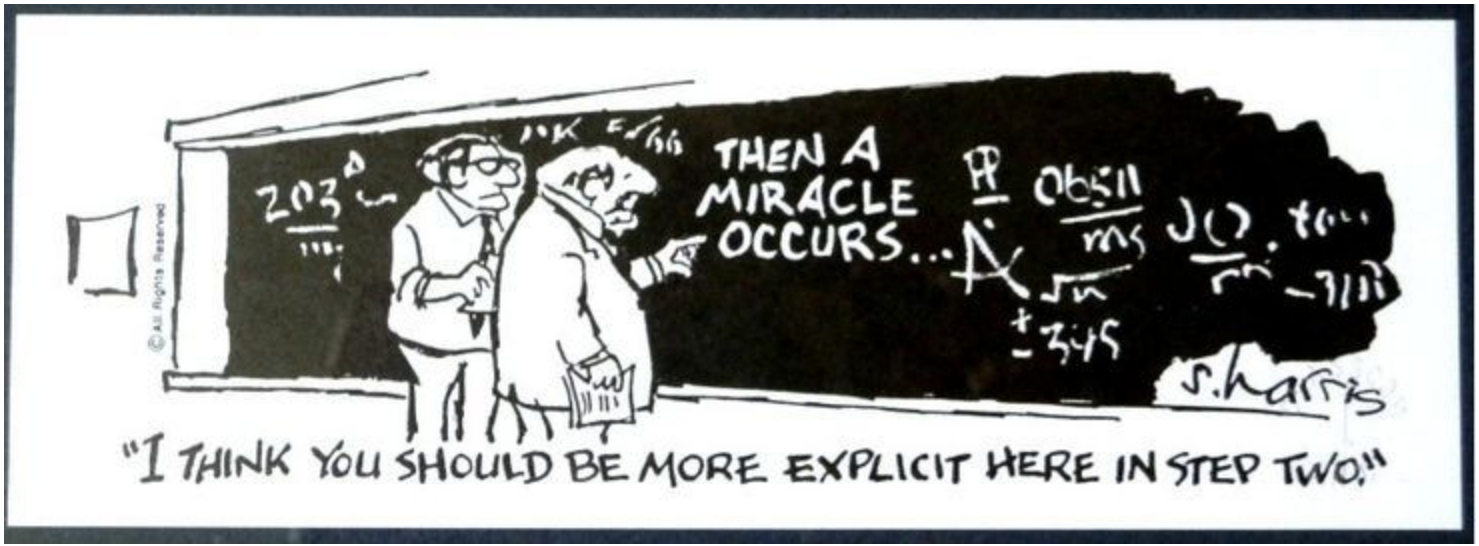
1. Take existing scholarly content

2. Make it freely available online and re-usable

1. Take existing scholarly content

2. Make it freely and re-usable available online

3. ...



Cartoon by Sidney Harris (1984)

1. Take existing scholarly content

2. Make it freely and re-usable available online

3. ...

4. Profit

1. Take existing scholarly content

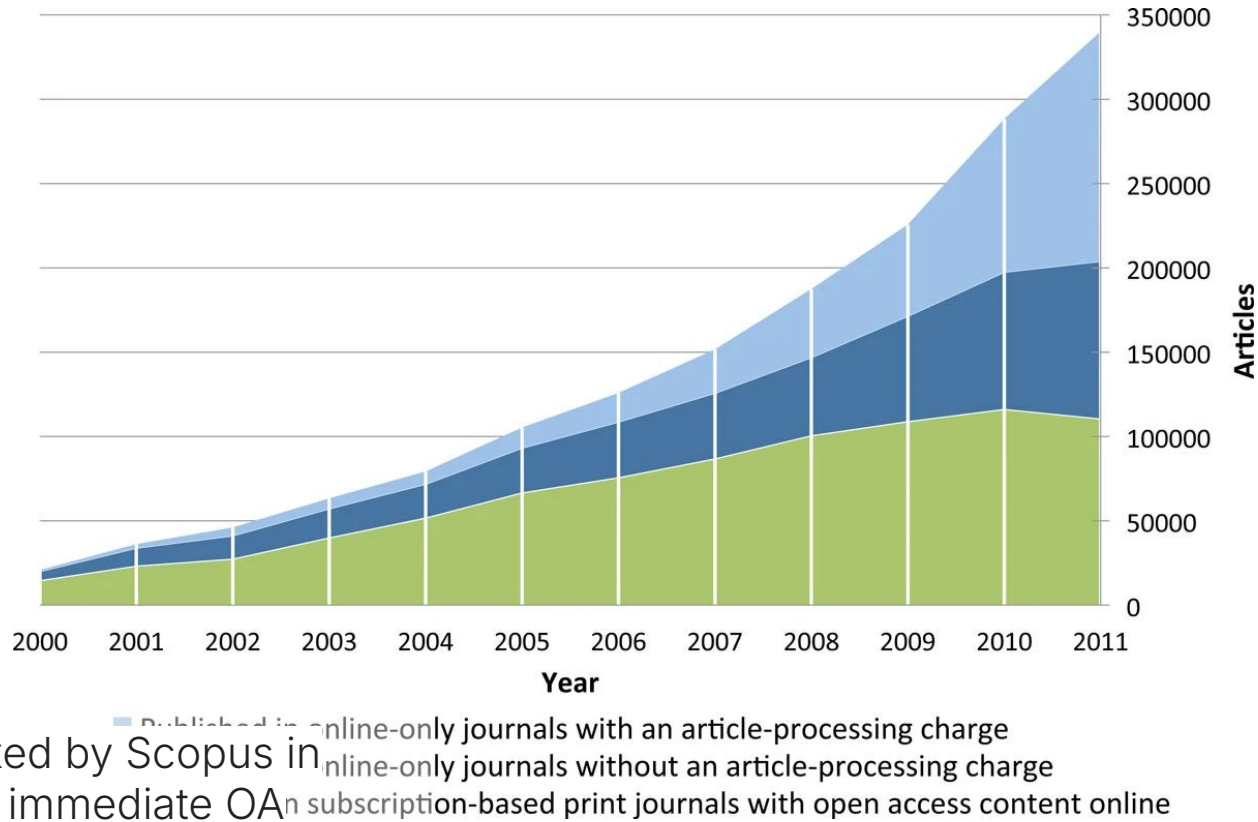
2. Make it freely and re-usable available online

3. ...

4. ~~Profit~~ Knowledge Utopia

AND YET…

2. THE GOOD



Of the 1.66 million articles indexed by Scopus in 2011, 11% were published in full immediate OA journals, 0.7% as hybrid OA and 5.2% in journals that have a maximum OA delay of 12 months. Together, these account for almost 17% of the total article volume in the whole index.

Laakso, M., Björk, BC. Anatomy of open access publishing: a study of longitudinal development and internal structure. *BMC Med* **10**, 124 (2012). https://doi.org/10.1186/1741-7015-10-124

HOME

OPEN ACCESS DASHBOARD

Open Access by country. Showing output counts, number and percentage of accessible outputs published between 2000 and 2025. You can sort and filter by region, subregion, number of publications (default filter is 1000 publications), and open access levels. You may also search for a specific country in the search bar at the top right.

COUNTRY | INSTITUTION

COUNTRY	OPEN↓	BREAKDOWN PUBLISHER OPEN BOTH OTHER PLATFORM OPEN CLOSED	TOTAL PUBLICATIONS	OPEN PUBLICATIONS	
SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE	96%		4,318	4,133	LEARN MORE
TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS	94%		400	374	LEARN MORE
INDONESIA	93%		2,764,051	2,581,385	LEARN MORE
NICARAGUA	87%		12,944	11,237	LEARN MORE
EAST TIMOR	86%		1,626	1,394	LEARN MORE
EL SALVADOR	85%		10,231	8,741	LEARN MORE
PERU	84%		172,419	144,961	LEARN MORE
EQUATORIAL GUINEA	84%		243	204	LEARN MORE
ANGOLA	83%		6,632	5,532	LEARN MORE
AFGHANISTAN	83%		11,240	9,360	LEARN MORE
SOMALIA	83%		9,084	7,524	LEARN MORE
ECUADOR	83%		151,217	124,781	LEARN MORE
SIERRA LEONE	82%		4,304	3,545	LEARN MORE

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KOSOVO	74%		12,951	9,645	LEARN MORE
ALBANIA	73%		21,162	15,525	LEARN MORE
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	71%		39,452	28,143	LEARN MORE
ANDORRA	69%		596	411	LEARN MORE
FAROE ISLANDS	69%		2,029	1,398	LEARN MORE
UKRAINE	69%		531,424	365,273	LEARN MORE
HOLY SEE	68%		876	594	LEARN MORE
LITHUANIA	68%		103,634	70,081	LEARN MORE
SVALBARD AND JAN MAYEN	66%		810	538	LEARN MORE
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LUXEMBOURG	65%		55,124	35,809	LEARN MORE
POLAND	65%		1,217,131	788,260	LEARN MORE
LATVIA	64%		65,970	42,359	LEARN MORE
NORTH MACEDONIA	64%		37,814	24,214	LEARN MORE
SERBIA	64%		205,287	130,938	LEARN MORE

REGION

- AFRICA
- AMERICA
- ASIA
- EUROPE
  - EASTERN
  - NORTHERN
  - SOUTHERN
  - WESTERN
- OCEANIA

PUBLICATIONS

SELECT COUNTRY

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CROATIA

Croatia, officially the Republic of Croatia, is a country in Central and Southeastern Europe, on the coast of the Adriatic Sea. Derived from Wikipedia licensed CC-BY-SA.

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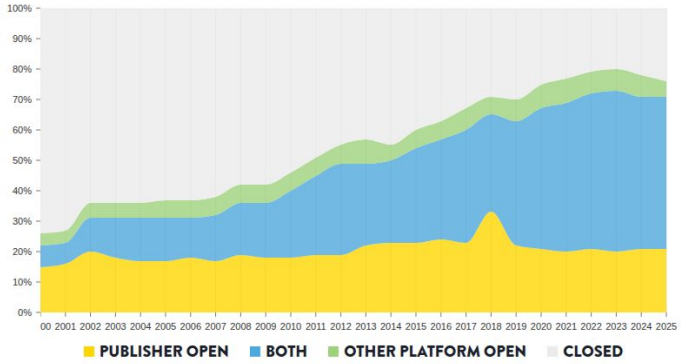
OPEN ACCESS PERCENTAGE	TOTAL PUBLICATIONS	TOTAL OPEN PUBLICATIONS	TOTAL CITATIONS
66%	168K	112K	3M

BREAKDOWN

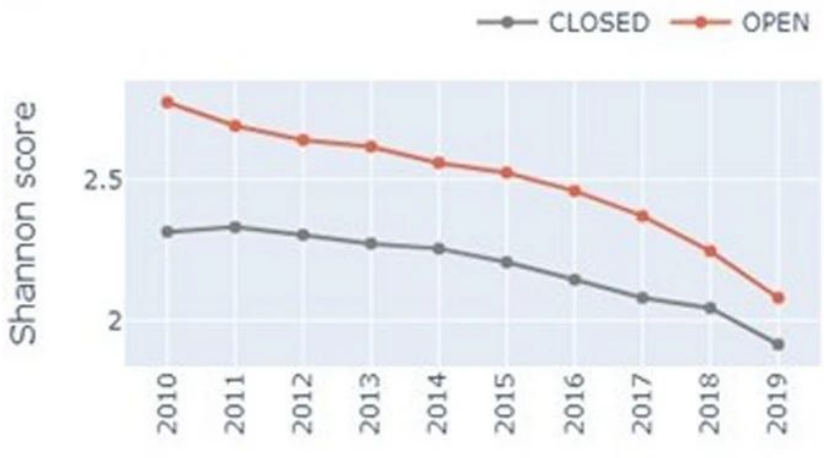


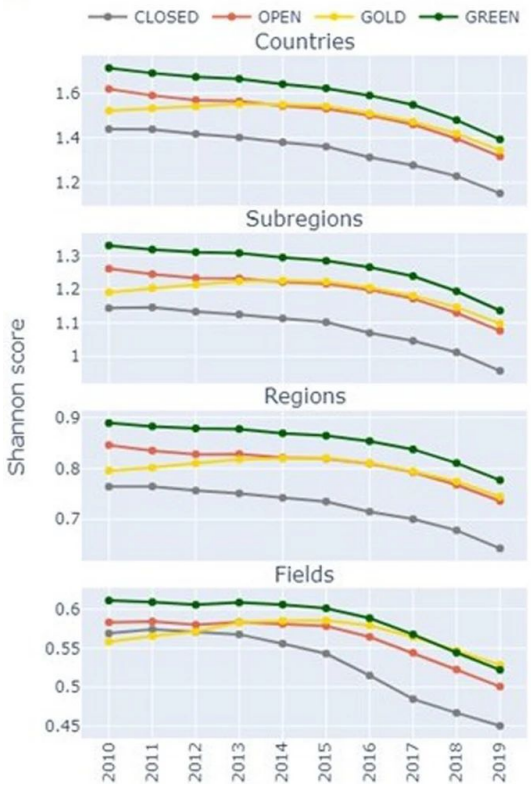
PUBLISHER OPEN	BOTH	OTHER PLATFORM OPEN	CLOSED
21%	38%	7%	34%

PERCENTAGE OF OPEN ACCESS OVER TIME

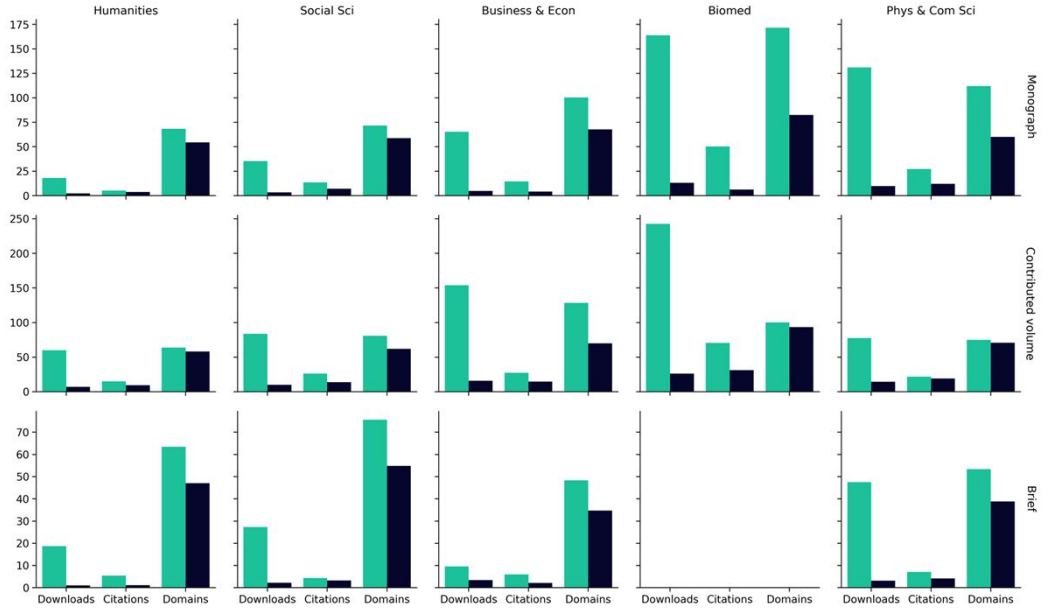


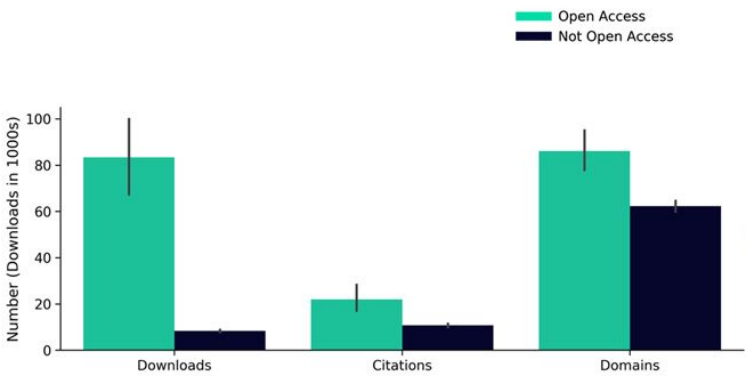
OA OUTPUTS HAVE MORE DIVERSE CITATIONS



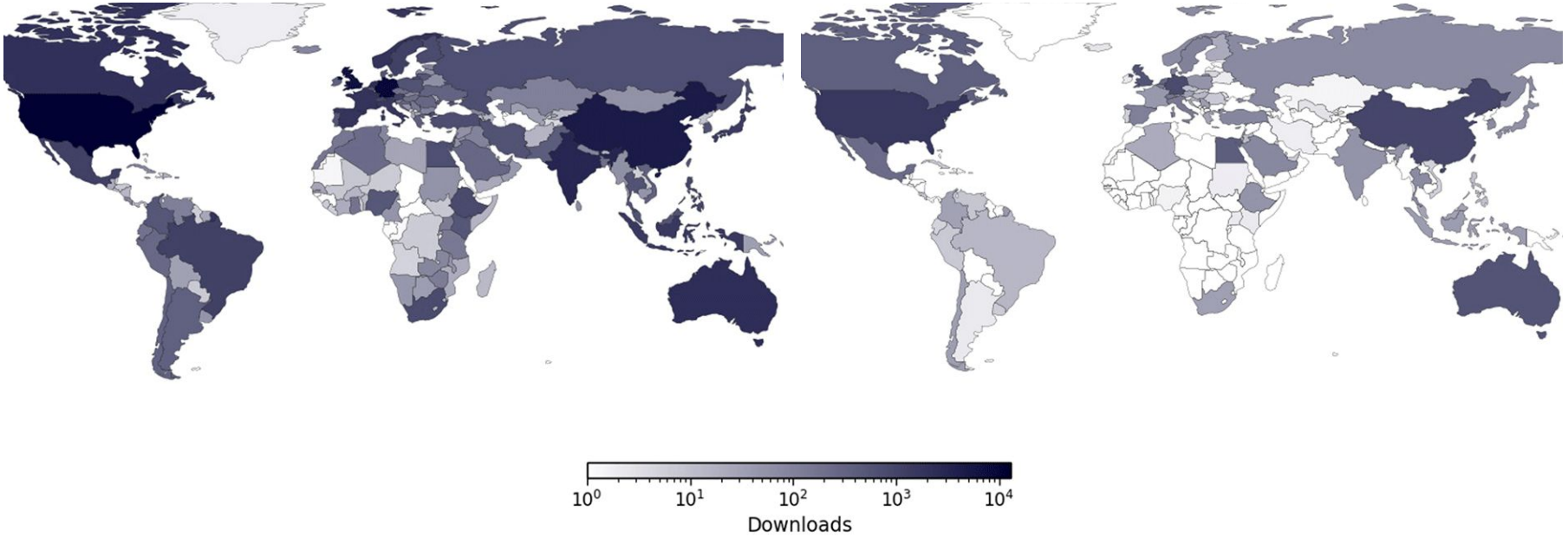


WHAT ABOUT BOOKS?





WHAT ABOUT BOOKS?



2. THE BAD

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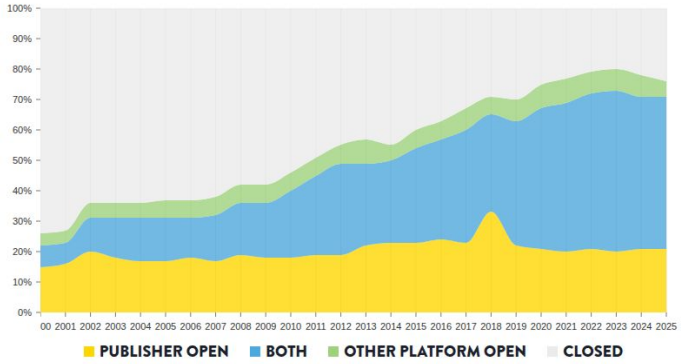
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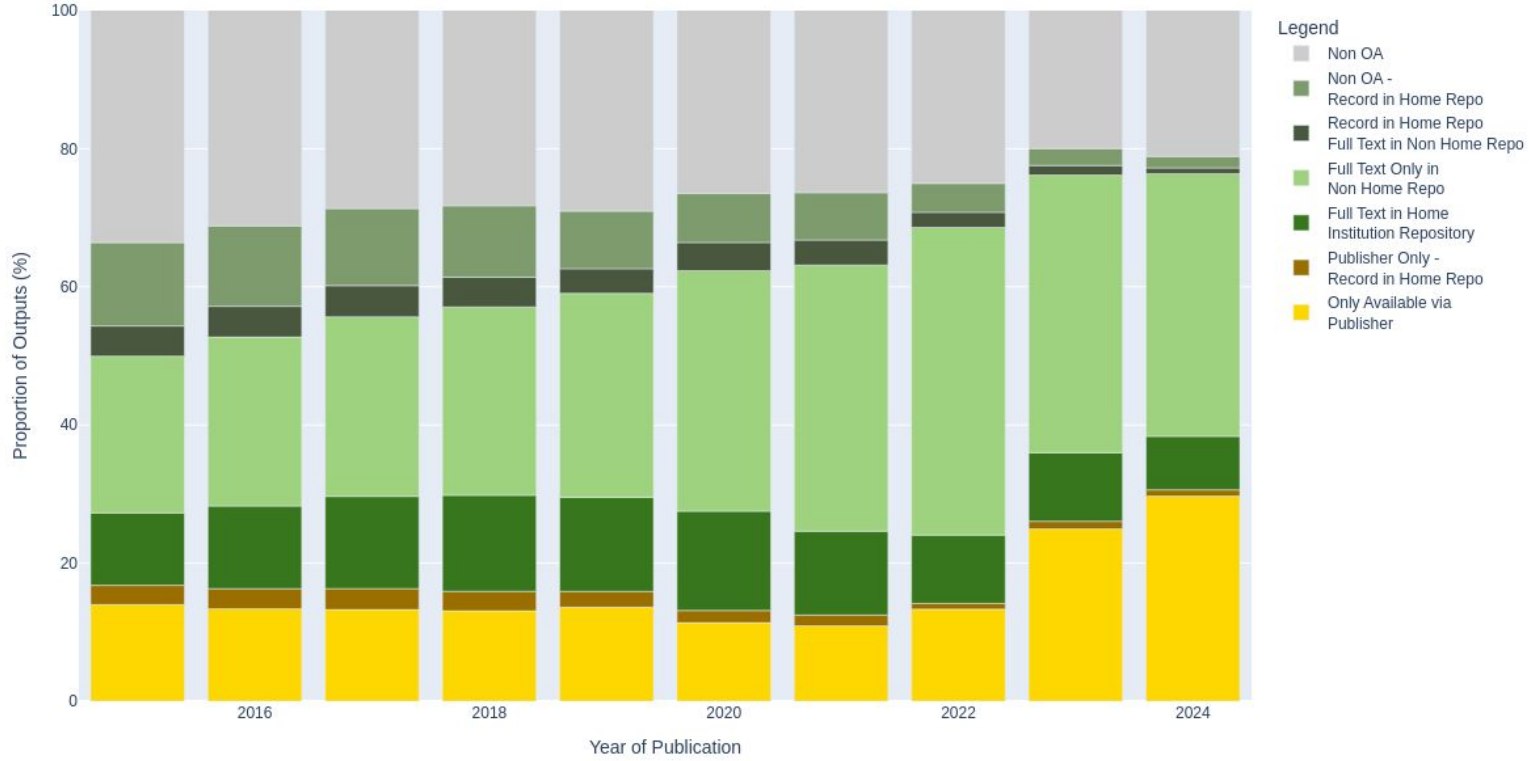
BREAKDOWN



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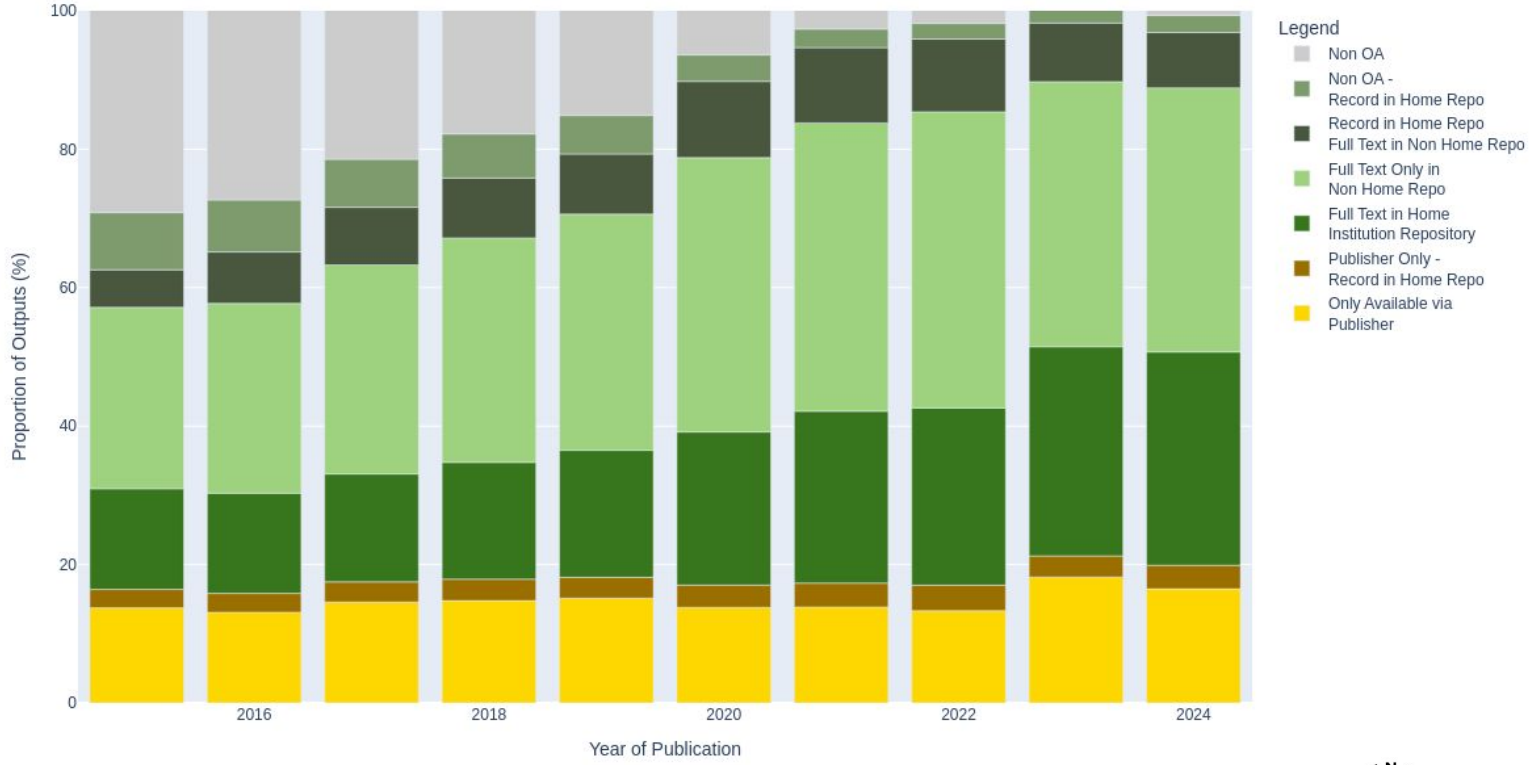
PERCENTAGE OF OPEN ACCESS OVER TIME





Overall home repository coverage

CAUL
Council of Australasian University Librarians



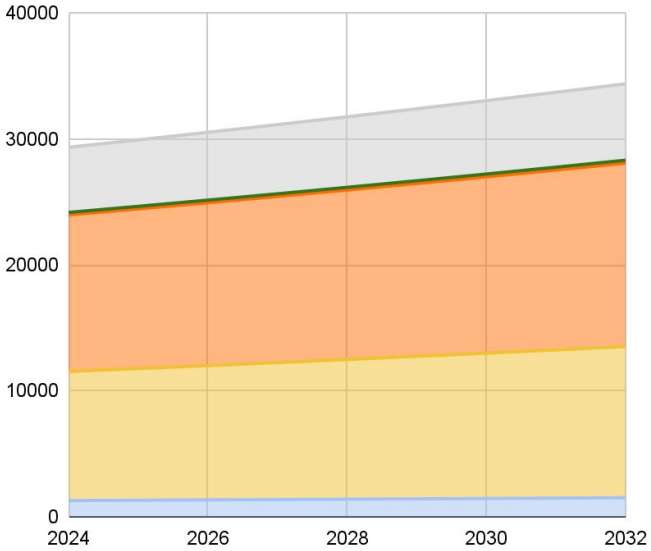
Source overlap for all outputs linked from OpenAIRE and OpenAlex

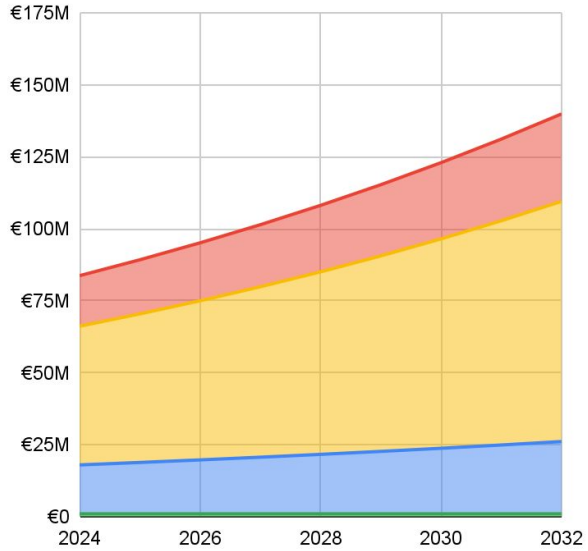
National Library of Sweden

Bibsam Consortium

TRAJECTORY MODELLING

O - Current OA strategy





3. WHAT WENT WRONG?

Getting a lot of tasks done, it can feel exhilarating.

Brett Codes (2026) https://brettcodes.com/im-done-using-ai/

Getting a lot of tasks done, it can feel exhilarating. That is, until I realized I'm basically just a hamster on a wheel, checking boxes, getting tickets done with no real purpose.

Brett Codes (2026) https://brettcodes.com/im-done-using-ai/

Sure, I catch an issue here or there. But it's impossible to review the quantity of code the AI writes[...] So what did this do? Well, it made me lazy. It made me stop caring. It made me a worse programmer.

Brett Codes (2026) https://brettcodes.com/im-done-using-ai/

It made me

stop caring.

“AI” IS NOT THE PROBLEM

(IT IS *A* PROBLEM)

IT IS A SYMPTOM OF A DEEPER ISSUE

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Oligopoly of Academic Publishers in the Digital Era

Vincent Larivière, Stefanie Haustein, Philippe Mongeon

Published: June 10, 2015 • https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0127502

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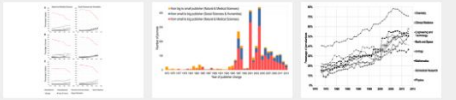
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Abstract

The consolidation of the scientific publishing industry has been the topic of much debate within and outside the scientific community, especially in relation to major publishers' high profit margins. However, the share of scientific output published in the journals of these major publishers, as well as its evolution over time and across various disciplines, has not yet been analyzed. This paper provides such analysis, based on 45 million documents indexed in the Web of Science over the period 1973-2013. It shows that in both natural and medical sciences (NMS) and social sciences and humanities (SSH), Reed-Elsevier, Wiley-Blackwell, Springer, and Taylor & Francis increased their share of the published output, especially since the advent of the digital era (mid-1990s). Combined, the top five most prolific publishers account for more than 50% of all papers published in 2013. Disciplines of the social sciences have the highest level of concentration (70% of papers from the top five publishers), while the humanities have remained relatively independent (20% from top five publishers). NMS disciplines are in between, mainly because of the strength of their scientific societies, such as the ACS in chemistry or APS in physics. The paper also examines the migration of journals between small and big publishing houses and explores the effect of publisher change on citation impact. It concludes with a discussion on the economics of scholarly publishing.

Figures



Subject Areas

Scientific publishing
Medical journals
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Social sciences
Bibliometrics
Libraries
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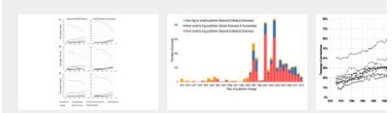
Article | Authors | Metrics | Comments | Media

Abstract
Introduction
Methods
Results
Discussion and Conclusion
Acknowledgments
Author Contributions
References
Reader Comments
Figures

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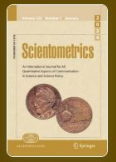
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The oligopoly of open access publishing

Published: 13 December 2023
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Abstract

Open access (OA) publishing is often viewed as a promising solution for the future of scholarly publishing, as it has the potential to reduce global inequalities in access to scientific literature by removing paywalls. However, the adoption of OA publishing may not necessarily lead to a decrease in the overall cost of knowledge dissemination, as Article Processing Charges (APCs) can create an additional financial burden for scholars, particularly those from developing countries. Despite being intended as a way to disrupt the scholarly publishing oligopoly, OA publishing has faced challenges in achieving this goal. These challenges were revealed through a comprehensive analysis of OA publishing from 2008 to 2020, as detailed in this study.

Sections | Figures | References

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Conclusion
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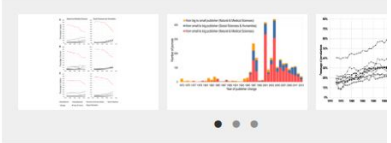
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THE SCHOLARLY kitchen
What's Hot and Cooking In Scholarly Publishing

ABOUT ARCHIVES COLLECTIONS TRANSLATIONS CHEFS PODCAST FOLLOW

2025 Update: Quantifying Consolidation in the Scholarly Journals Market

By DAVID CROTTY | AUG 20, 2025 | 1 COMMENT | TIME TO READ: 7 MINS

BIG DEAL | BUSINESS MODELS | HISTORICAL | METRICS AND ANALYTICS | OPEN ACCESS | POLICY | RESEARCH

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In late 2023, while putting together a large-scale report on scholarly journal market trends, I was struggling to quantify how much the market had consolidated and if there were any periods that showed more rapid consolidation than others. I wrote about those efforts here in *The Scholarly Kitchen*, concluding that there were two main waves of market consolidation: the first aligning with the rise of The Big Deal from roughly 2000 to 2006, and the second beginning around 2018 with the announcement of Plan S.

Nearly two years later, I'm head-down with colleagues writing for this year's market trends update. Another look at more recent data is called for — this time incorporating all of the more recent journals in the market from the Web of Science's Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI).

Bibliometric Databases

As was the case in the 2023 analysis, we start with some explanations of the data sources used. While dynamic bibliometric indexes like Dimensions and OpenAlex are incredibly useful, they are of little value for this type of historic analysis. These indexes are based around each article's DOI (digital object identifier). The great thing about DOIs is that when an identified object moves between publishers, the DOI is updated to point to its new location. Which is what you want if you're trying to find out where that object is now, but not so helpful if you want to find out where it was in the past.

Many of the journals in the market are owned by research societies and institutions. As scale has become an important key to market success, more and more formerly independent journals have now moved to publication via partnerships with larger publishers. When such a partnership contract expires, the journal sometimes moves to a new publishing partner. So the data for a hypothetical Journal X, which was published for its first fifty years as an independent, and then moved to publication with Wiley for ten years, and then currently to publication with Oxford University Press (OUP) should reflect that whole history. Instead DOI-based databases tell you that Journal X has always been published by OUP, because its DOI only reflects its current publisher.

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OBSESSION WITH SCALE AND GROWTH IS TOXIC

On 'scaling up' and being the right size

TUESDAY. AUGUST 18, 2026

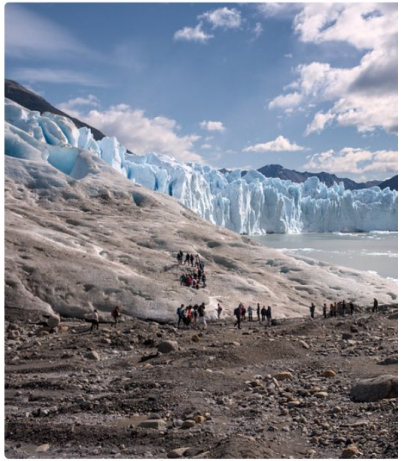


I regularly encounter questions along the lines of *“how do we scale things up?*, in particular around projects related to free knowledge, FLOSS or citizen science. It has basically started from the first citizen science effort and accompanied me through most of my volunteering work. And it’s a question that has always sat wrong with me. Mainly because of its uncritical assumption that *scale* should be wanted, necessary or even ‘*good*’.

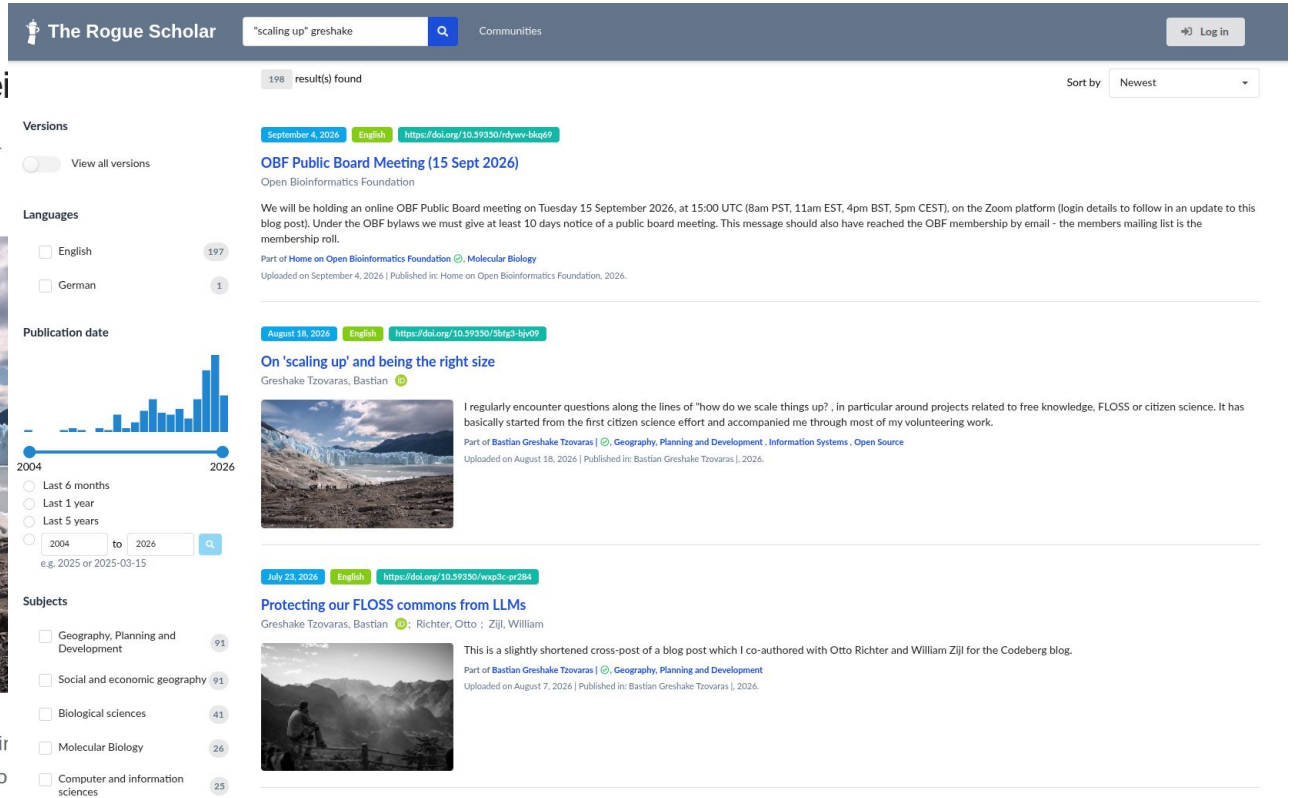
https://doi.org/10.59350/5bfg3-bjv09

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OTHERS…?

WE ARE FAILING TO UNDERSTAND VALUE AND CONNECTION...

POWERFUL FORCES SEEK TO "REINTERMEDIATE" OUR INTERACTIONS FOR THEIR PURPOSES AND BENEFIT

4. WHAT CAN WE DO?

VALUES

CONNECTION

SYSTEMS

"SHARE THE LEARNING OF THE RICH WITH THE POOR AND THE POOR WITH THE RICH…UNITING HUMANITY IN A COMMON INTELLECTUAL CONVERSATION AND QUEST FOR KNOWLEDGE"

"SHARE LEARNING WITH

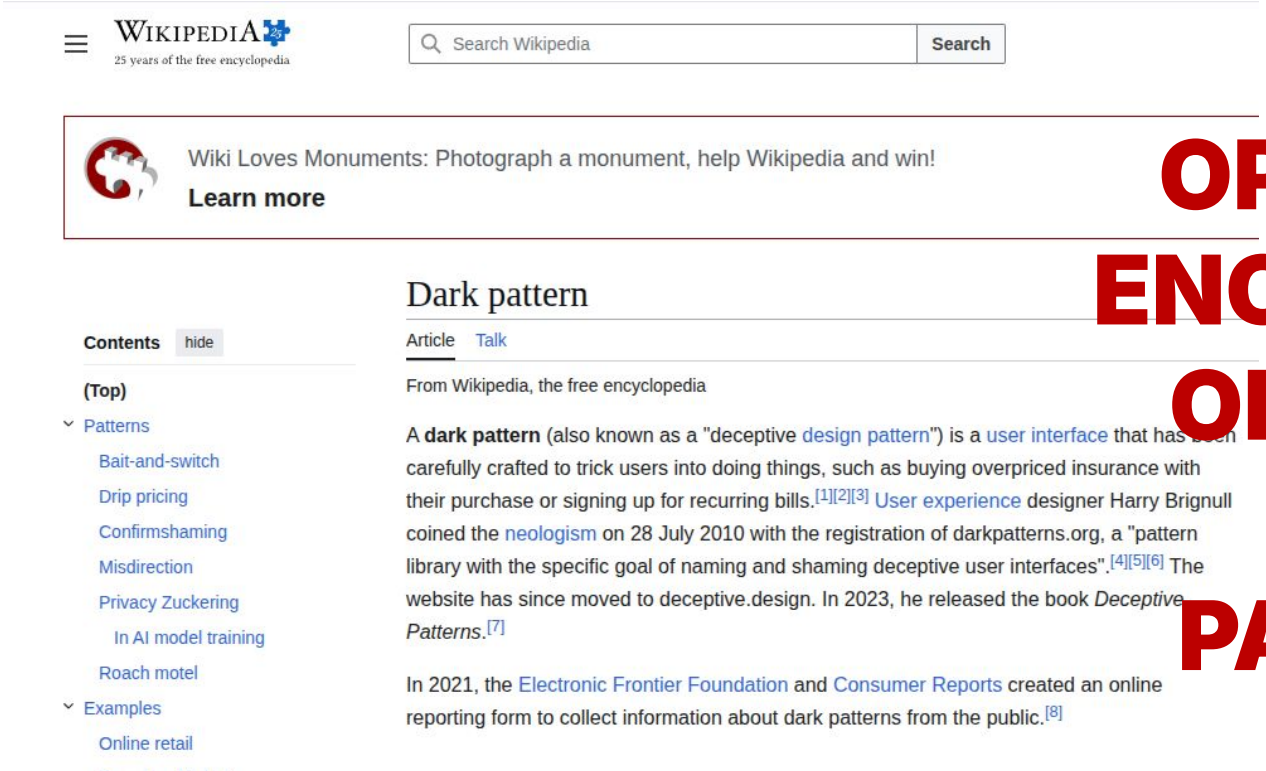
HUMANITY

"SHARE LEARNING WITH

HUMANITY IN A CONVERSATION FOR KNOWLEDGE"

SYSTEMS AND PATTERNS

SYSTEMS AND PATTERNS



OPEN IS NOT ENOUGH TO FIX OR COMBAT "DARK PATTERNS"

A catalog of dark patterns



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DARK PATTERN	WHAT IT DOES
Roach motel	Easy to sign up, painful to leave
Sneaking, hidden costs	Fees appear only at checkout
Confirmshaming	Guilt-trip opt-outs
Preselected opt-ins	Consent boxes pre-ticked
Forced continuity	Free trial silently bills you
Privacy Zuckering	Tricked into oversharing data
Nagging	Endless “are you sure?” prompts
Disguised ads	Ads dressed as content
Fake urgency, scarcity	“Only 2 left!” countdown lies
Trick wording	Confusing double negatives

Two axes and four quadrants



Open ↔ closed

Can it be inspected, forked, carried on? Or is “exit” made impractical.

Dark ↔ light

Whose interest does the easy path serve?.

Open lets in light

Openness makes light possible. It is what lets us check. But It does not make it happen.The axes are independent and we need to fix that.

Practices, mapped

Openness lets you leave. Light patterns give you a reason to stay.



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	DARK PATTERNS	LIGHT PATTERNS
OPEN	**Open + Dark** Open-washing (harvest via hosted service) Open-core bait-and-switch Auditable code, addictive-by-design UX Telemetry funnelled upstream The “open flounce” (maintainer encloses) Permissive licence, hostile governance	**Open + Light — the target** Auditable end-to-end encryption Local-first, no account required Reproducible builds Federated, real data portability Community / foundation governance Transparent roadmap, non-extractive funding Privacy by architecture (can’t surveil)
CLOSED	**Closed + Dark** Surveillance / ad-driven business model Engagement-farming, infinite scroll Roach-motel cancellation “Free” apps trading privacy for access Confirmshaming, preselected opt-ins Hidden costs, fake urgency	**Closed + Light** On-device processing (proprietary) Fair price, no ads, no data resale Clear terms, plain language Symmetric exit, easy cancellation Data minimalism Honest signals, no manipulation

To be specific…



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	DARK PATTERNS	LIGHT PATTERNS
OPEN	**Open + Dark** Android (open core, Google services) Chromium (open, steers the web) HashiCorp / Redis (licence switch) Meta's Llama ("open weights", limited) Many crypto / web3 "open" projects	**Open + Light** Signal Foundation Mozilla / Firefox Wikimedia Matrix / Element Blender Foundation Let's Encrypt, Framework (repairable)
CLOSED	**Closed + Dark** Meta (Facebook, Instagram) TikTok Data brokers (Acxiom, etc.) Ad-tech / adtech-funded "free" apps Many mobile games (engagement loops, loot boxes)	**Closed + Light** Apple (on-device, privacy stance) Proton (paid, some open clients) Fastmail (paid email, no ads) Kagi (paid search, no ads, no data selling) DuckDuckGo (privacy, data control)

A catalog of light patterns

The dark-pattern catalogs describe the negative but rarely propose the positive. Each dark pattern has a counterpart and the counterparts are what give us a specific vision of what we want to see.



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DARK PATTERN	WHAT IT DOES	LIGHT-PATTERN ALTERNATIVE
Roach motel	Easy to sign up, painful to leave	Symmetric exit: cancel in as many clicks as it took to join
Sneaking, hidden costs	Fees appear only at checkout	Full price upfront: total shown before any commitment
Confirmshaming	Guilt-trip opt-outs	Neutral choice: both options plain and equal weight
Preselected opt-ins	Consent boxes pre-ticked	Opt-in off by default: the user actively chooses to share
Forced continuity	Free trial silently bills you	Consent to renew: reminder before charge, easy pause
Privacy Zuckering	Tricked into oversharing data	Data minimalism: ask only for what the feature needs
Nagging	Endless “are you sure?” prompts	Ask once, remember: respect a “no” and stop asking
Disguised ads	Ads dressed as content	Clear labelling: ads visibly marked as ads
Fake urgency, scarcity	“Only 2 left!” countdown lies	Honest signals: real stock, real deadlines, or none
Trick wording	Confusing double negatives	Plain language: the obvious reading is the true one

The common characteristic of “light patterns” is that the easy and obvious path is the user’s interest.

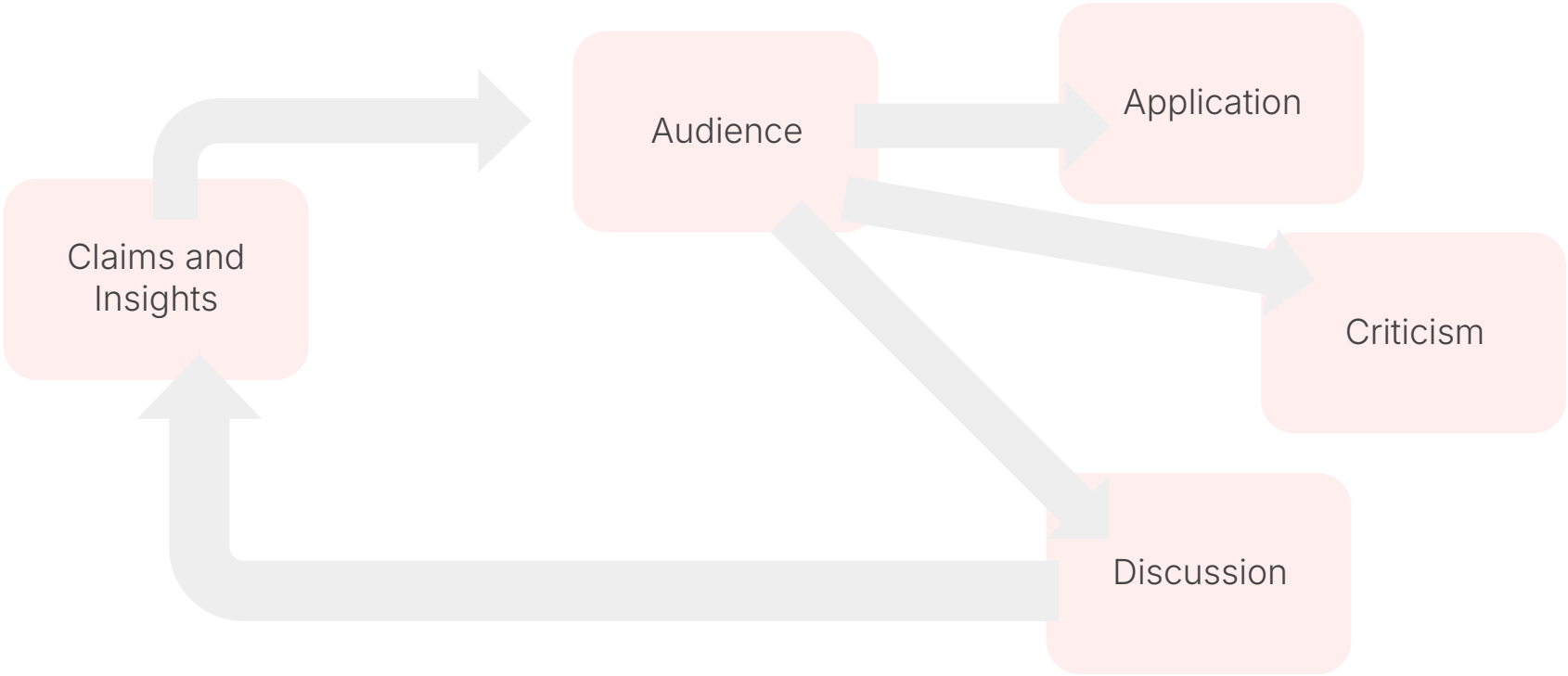
CONVIVIAL SYSTEMS

“CREATE MORE VALUE THAN YOU CAPTURE”

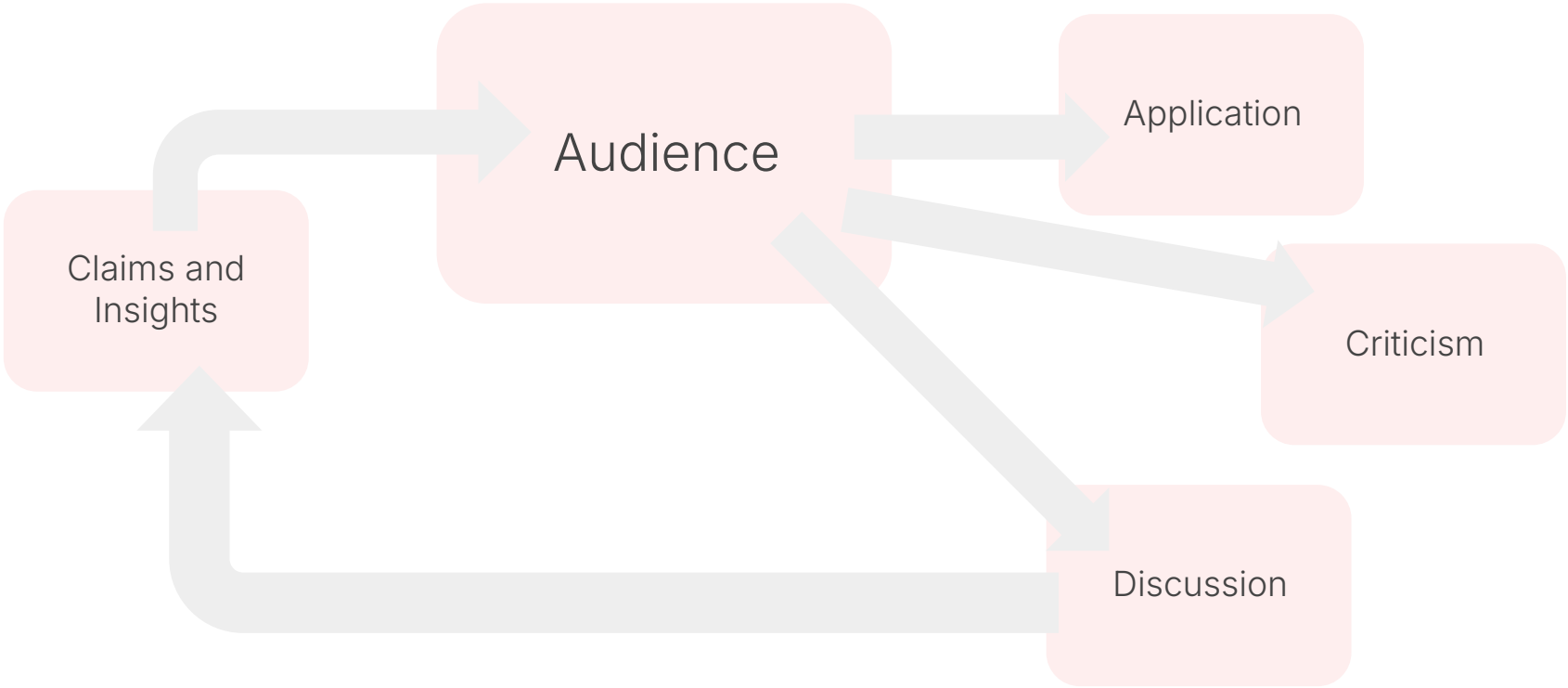
Tim O’Reilly

“LISTEN MORE THAN YOU SPEAK”

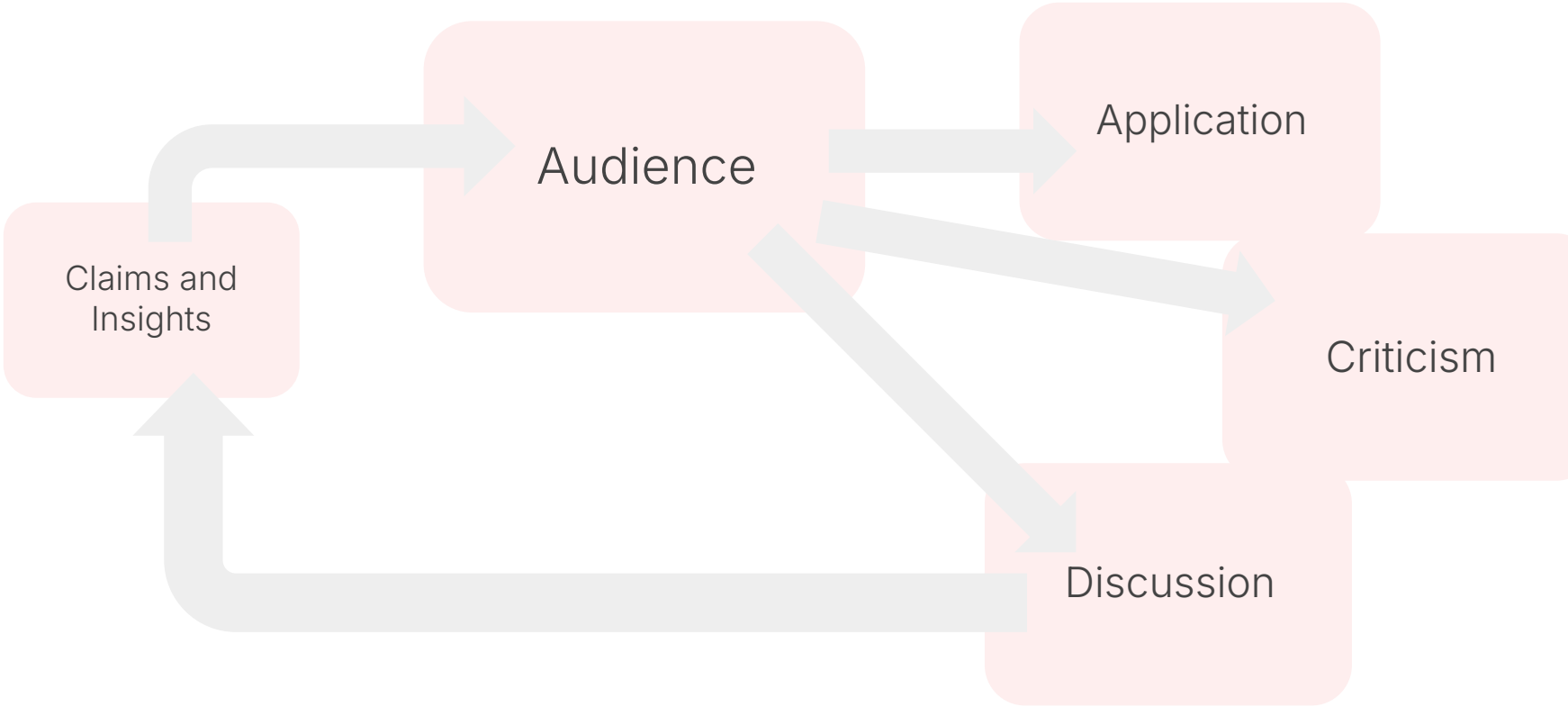
A ROUGH THEORY OF CHANGE



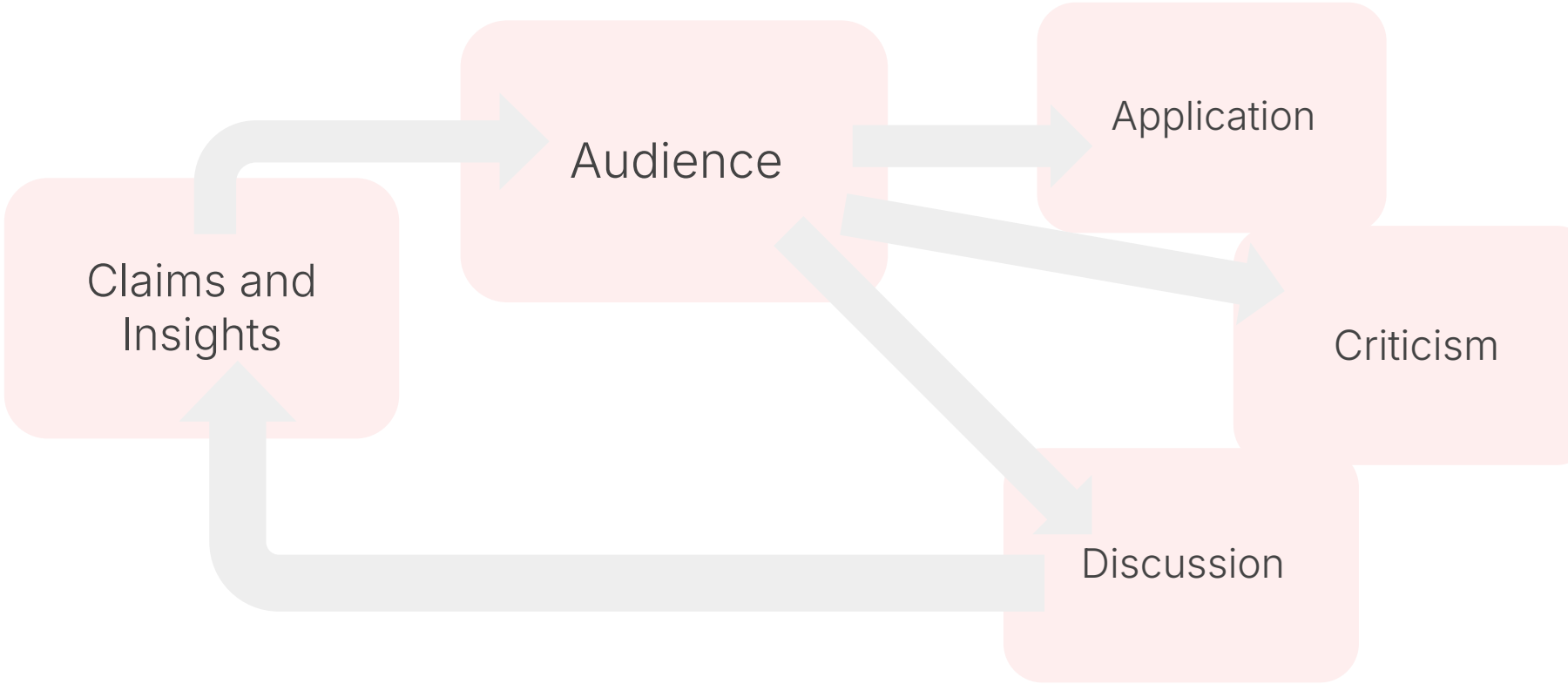
A ROUGH THEORY OF CHANGE



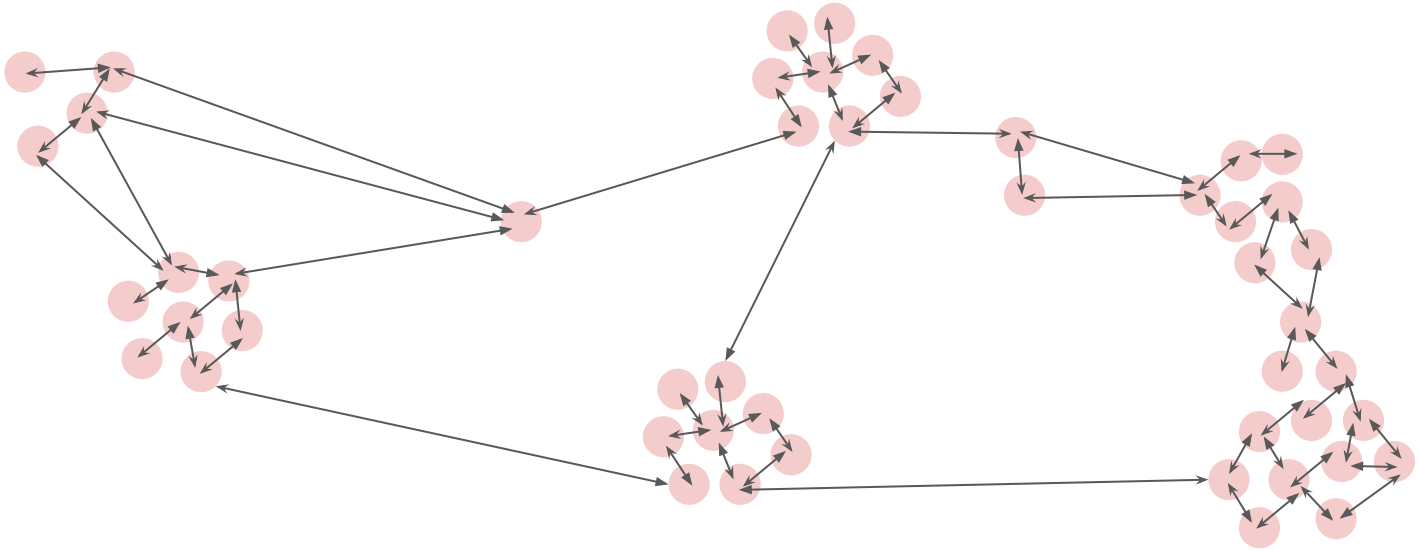
A ROUGH THEORY OF CHANGE



A ROUGH THEORY OF CHANGE



A ROUGH THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE



BUILD COMMUNITY

BUILD COMMUNITY…BUT

DEFINE BOUNDARIES AND EXPECTATIONS BASED ON *OUR* SHARED VALUES