

Notes on open education from the ALA midwinter meeting

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Open Access News

Paula J. Hane, [Open Educational Resources \(OER\) and Libraries](#), *Information Today*, March 2, 2009. Excerpt:

...Another open trend that is growing quickly is the adoption of open source textbooks....But, the more broadly named movement has come to be known as open educational resources (OER). OER focus not only on textbooks, but also on full courses, course materials, modules, journals, streaming videos, tests, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques that are critical in the learning environment.

At the ALA Midwinter meeting in Denver, I attended a forum sponsored by SPARC (the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition) and the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)....Speakers argued that OER are a logical extension of what the library community supports in the Open Access movement, and underscored the need for the larger playing field on which scholarly communication takes place to be made more equitable.

Richard Baraniuk, an architect of the [Cape Town Open Education Declaration](#), which aims to accelerate efforts to promote open resources, technology, and teaching practices in education, is founder of [Connexions](#), an environment for collaboratively developing, freely sharing, and rapidly publishing scholarly content on the Web. He's also professor of electrical & computer engineering at Rice University. He cautioned that publishers are in fact pricing themselves out of business —our current model is unsustainable. He says that OER results in better, faster, stronger education and a more collaborative faculty environment. OER provides outreach to the world and brings welcome "inreach," or give-back from others....

David Wiley, also a leader of the Cape Town Declaration, is "Chief Openness Officer" for [Flat World Knowledge](#) (FWK), a new approach to college textbooks that offers rigorously reviewed textbooks online free of cost to students. He is also associate professor of instructional psychology & technology at Brigham Young University. He explained that the OER movement involves 4 types of permissions... —the "4Rs," which are Reuse, Redistribute, Revise, and Remix....