



Réseau québécois de recherche  
et de mutualisation pour les  
revues scientifiques

# Conceptualizations and Experimentations Around Open Peer Review - State of the Art and Practical Implications

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# Réseau Circé's Research Project on Open Peer Review - Early Developments

- Objective: to explore OPR as a lever for transforming scholarly communication and research assessment practices
- Methodology: a multilingual narrative literature review + a pan-Canadian survey of journal editors
- Deliverable: a comprehensive report (to be published next fall)



# Peer Review - A Cornerstone of Scientific Legitimacy

- **Between Dialogue and Control**
  - Critical, close reading among pairs to clarify, debate, and improve
  - The promise of a collective construction of knowledge
  - Demarcation criteria: what counts as good, solid, publishable science
- **Systematization**
  - Standardization of peer review in response to the explosive growth of publications
  - Hierarchization of knowledges and academic disciplines
- **Historical Contrasts**
  - From collaboration to competitive selection... and back again?
  - Open review aims to re-engage with dialogue



# Limitations of Confidential and Anonymous Peer Review Models

## Single or double blind

Anonymity: to avoid biases related to reputation or personal relationships

Confidentiality: allows for an honest critique, without fear of retaliation

## Biases Persist

- Anonymity does not fully prevent unfair treatment

## Opacity of the Process

- Lack of transparency = little accountability
- Risk of vague, weak, or unconstructive critiques

## Loss for the Community

- Reviews and exchanges remain inaccessible
- Little (to no) recognition of reviewers' labor



# Questioning Tradition: The Movement for Open Science

“Open science is defined as an inclusive construct that combines various movements and practices aiming to make multilingual scientific knowledge openly available, accessible and reusable for everyone, to increase scientific collaborations and sharing of information for the benefits of science and society, and to open the processes of scientific knowledge creation, evaluation and communication to societal actors beyond the traditional scientific community.”

(UNESCO, 2021, p.7)



**Open science  
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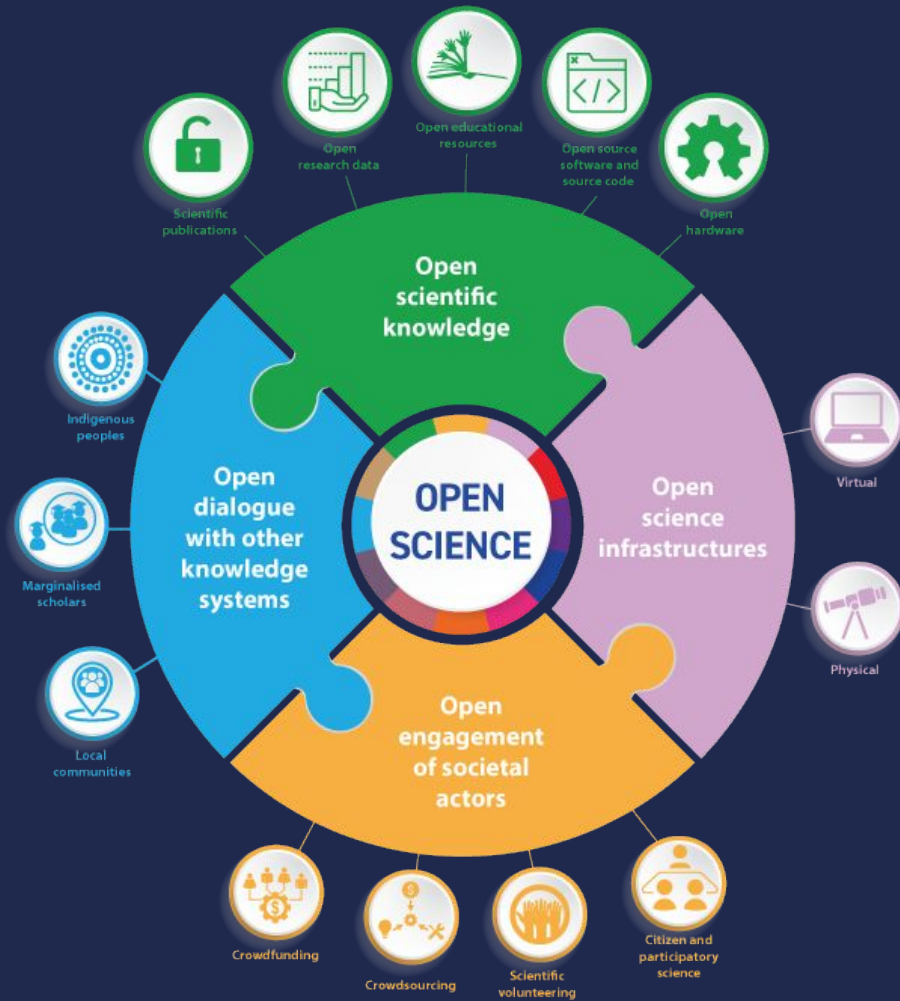
The infographic features a central white circle with the text 'OPEN SCIENCE' in blue. Three curved, colored shapes (green, blue, and purple) radiate from this center. The green shape at the top contains a white icon of two hands shaking. The blue shape at the bottom left contains a white icon of an open padlock. The purple shape at the bottom right contains a white icon of two profiles facing each other with a lightbulb between them. The background is white, and the entire graphic is set against a dark blue background.

## **OPEN SCIENCE**

**makes multilingual scientific  
knowledge openly available,  
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**opens the processes of scientific  
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A decorative graphic in the bottom right corner consists of several overlapping, pointed shapes in shades of orange, red, and white, resembling a stylized sunburst or a cluster of rays.



“Promoting, as appropriate, open peer review evaluation practices including possible disclosure of the identity of the reviewers, publicly available reviews and the possibility for a broader community to provide comments and participate in the assessment process.”

(UNESCO, 2021, p.30)



# OPR: Linguistic Nuances

Research Assessment / Open Peer Review

Évaluation / Révision ouverte par les pairs

Evaluación / Revisión abierta

Avaliação / Revisão aberta

DORA, COARA, FOLEC-CLACSO...



# OPR: Multiple Practices and Definitions

- 1959: *Current Anthropology* publishes reviews and authors' responses
- 1978: *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* adopts *open peer commentary*
- 1982: Steven Harnard coins the concept of *open peer review*
- 2017: Tony Ross-Hellauer collects 122 definitions of OPR and distills a typology of 7 dimensions to classify ongoing practices



| Trait                                    | Description  | Examples  |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Open Pre-Review Manuscripts</b>       | Manuscripts are made immediately available prior to any formal peer review procedures    | Pre-print servers: arXiv, SocArXiv, medRxiv, bioRxiv, OSF, HAL, Zenodo, Scielo Preprints...   |
| <b>Open Reports</b>                      | Review reports are published alongside the corresponding article                         | <i>eLife</i> : Reviews are published, with signing optional for reviewers.<br>PLOS Journals: Reviewers remain anonymous unless they choose to sign their reviews; authors may choose to publish the full evaluation record (editorial verdict, versions, reviews, responses). |
| <b>Open Platforms (Decoupled Review)</b> | Review is facilitated by a different organizational entity than the venue of publication | PeerCommunity In: An independent peer review platform where articles are stored in open archives; verdicts and reports are made public; interactions are possible.  |
| <b>Open Final Version Commenting</b>     | Reviewing or commenting on final “version of record” publications                        | PubPeer: An independent platform where both scholars and the general public can comment on published research articles.   |

| Trait              | Description   | Examples   |
|--------------------|---|--|
| Open Identities    | Authors and reviewers are aware of each other's identities  | <p>F1000Research: Identities of all parties involved in the review process are systematically made public.</p> <p><i>BMJ Open</i>: Reviewers are required to sign their reports with their name, position and institution.</p> |
| Open Interaction   | Direct reciprocal discussion between author(s) and reviewers, and/or among reviewers, is allowed and encouraged | <p><i>VertigO</i>: Experimentation with the annotation tool Hypothesis.</p>  |
| Open Participation | The wider community is able to contribute to the review process   | <p>F1000Research: Any scholar registered on the platform, even if not formally requested.</p> <p>PreReview: Any scholar with an ORCID identifier.</p>  |

# Réseau Circé's Research Project on Open Peer Review - First Results!

~140 journals surveyed, most of which...

...do not disclose information about reviewers to authors

...do not publicly reveal reviewers' identities

...do not publish article reviews

...do not enable any interaction between reviewers and authors



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**But!** ~29% are currently reassessing their peer review process or considering changes to their peer review process





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# Thank you! Merci!

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