

Democratisation of the means of production



freeknowledgeinstitute



3rd project meet
4 February 2016
by Wouter Tebbens



First free / gratis
Computer, given
Away with this
Magazine.

Dec. 2015



Information/ideas: non-rival

If you have an apple and I have an apple and we exchange these apples then you and me will still each have one apple. But if you have an idea and I have an idea and we exchange these ideas, then each of us will have two ideas.



vs.



Attributed to George Bernhard Shaw

Second Enclosure Movement

- 1st + 2nd industrial revolution
- Centralisation of capital, hierarchical control
- Knowledge controlled by patents and copyrights
- State granted monopolies as an incentive to «promote science and the useful arts»

James Boyle (2003): *The Public Domain, Enclosing the Commons of the Mind*

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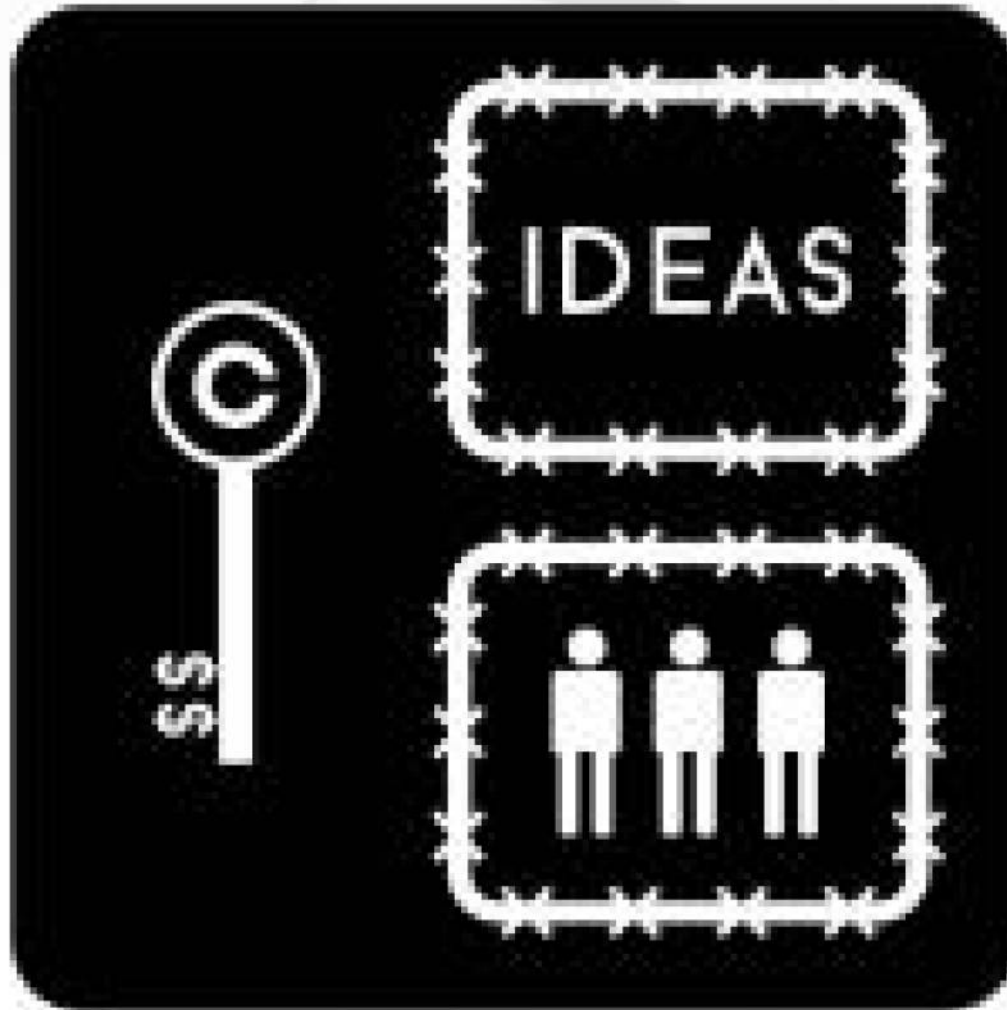


vs.



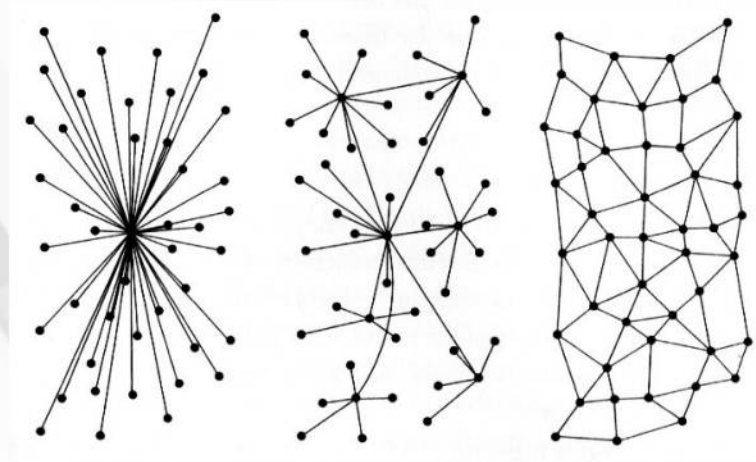
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Permission-based society



Internet & Network Society

- decentralised network
- mostly Open Standards
- infrastructure available as Free Software
- end-to-end / p2p
- all can (or: should be able to) participate
- enables horizontal collaboration



- governance: ISOC, ICANN, W3C, IGF, ...

Free Software a.k.a. O.S.S.*

Four Freedoms assure the right:

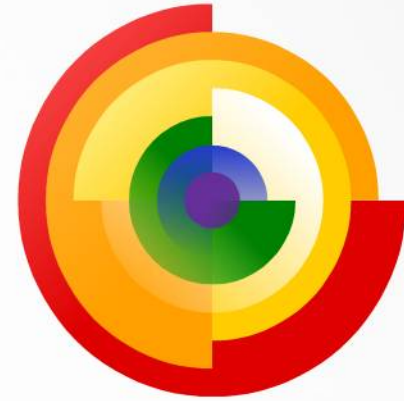
- to use for any purpose
- to adapt to your personal needs
- to copy and share
- to distribute modified versions

* Debian Free Software Guidelines → Open Source Definitions

Free Cultural Works

- Free license:
 - Rights: Four Freedoms
 - Duties: attribute authorship
- Copyleft:
 - Duty: modified works should guarantee the same rights

<http://freedomdefined.org/Definition>



Exchange Value vs. Use Value

- Free Software:
 - *zero* exchange value,
 - but high use value
- Produced & used as a commons, but on the edge complemented with market based value-added services.
- Some observe «when a service is free, you're the product» → Facebook, Google, etc «free» in exchange of...

Market – State – Commons



Commons-Based Peer Production

- Yochai Benkler: *«... a new model of economic production, different from both markets and firms, in which the creative energy of large numbers of people is coordinated (usually with the aid of the Internet) into large, meaningful projects, largely without traditional hierarchical organization or financial compensation.»*

Y. Benkler: Coase's Penguin; Wealth of Networks (2006)

Peer Production

Michel Bauwens (P2P-F):

- Peer production as 3rd mode of production; peers produce «use-value»
- New mode of governance: by the community
- New mode of distribution: universal access

M. Bauwens (2006): [A Political Economy of Peer Production](#)

Information Economy?



J. Rifkin: Zero Marginal Cost Society; Paul Mason: Postcapitalism

Democratisation of means of production

Some trends:

- Digitisation, network society
- Digital fabrication, IoT, ...
- Deregulation, liberalisation
- Move towards commons
- Cultural changes: sharing, access, co-, open, horizontal

Some characteristics:

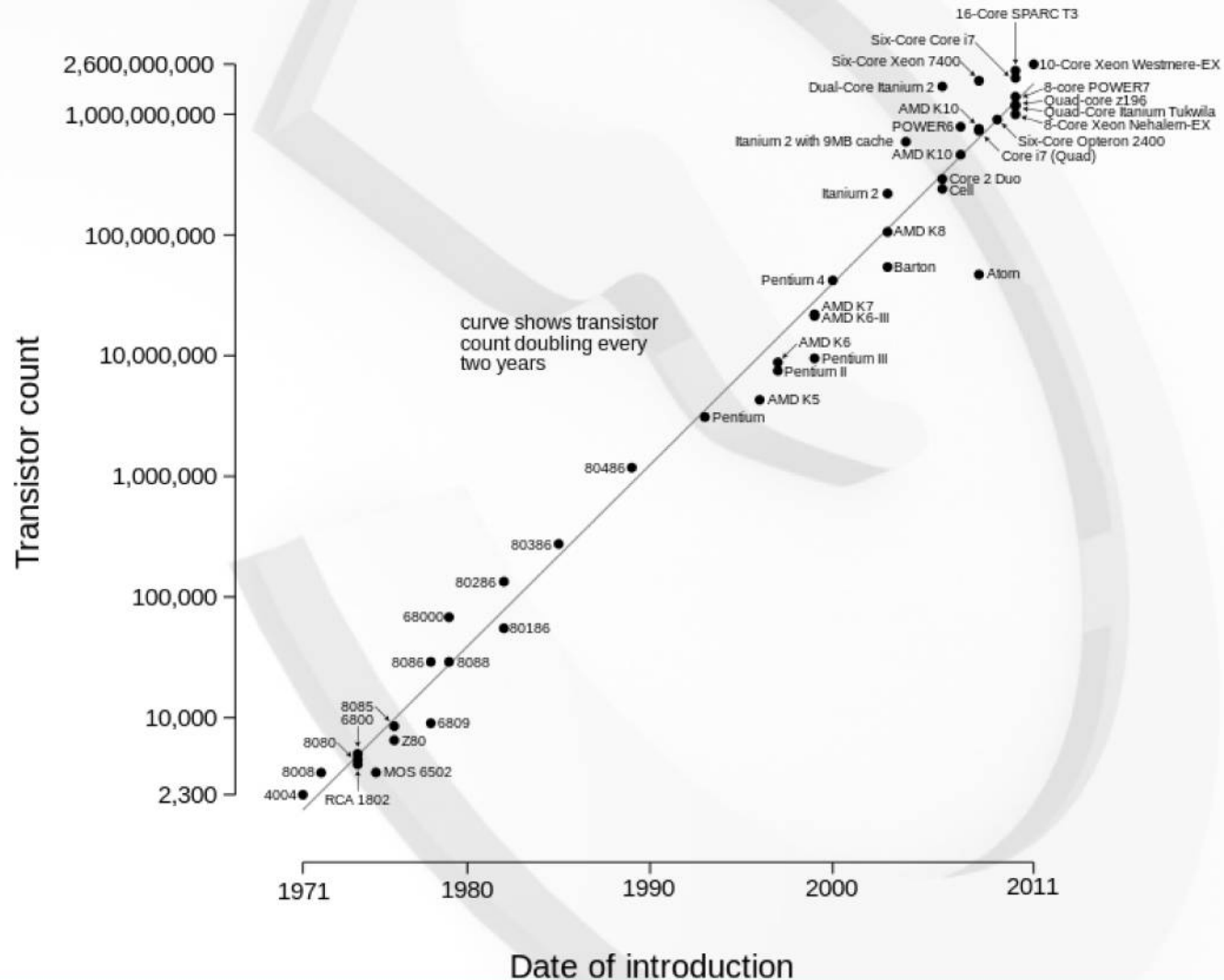
- Moore's law
- Metcalfe's law / network effect
- Long Tail

Transition

- Market economy: assign efficiently scarce resources. vs Digital Commons: non-rival, abundant
- Capitalism transforms seeking new markets, but there's limits to what human activities can be absorbed by markets
- Sustainability and the limits of growth
- Meaningful co-creation and consumption/usage
- But how do people acquire the means for a dignified life? Some options:
 - Performance / gig economy
 - Universal Basic Income
 - Sharing economy
 - (Open) Cooperatives, Platform Coops and Social markets
 - Open Value Networks
- *Rising Commons lowers the need for Market-based resources*

Moore's Law

Microprocessor Transistor Counts 1971-2011 & Moore's Law



Towards a sustainable planet?

- **Disposable products** → repair, extend, reuse
- **Global Supply Chains** → Global knowledge sharing + local production
- **IPR monopolies** → Knowledge / Hardware Commons
- **Corporations** → Cooperative SME/prosumer networks
- **Mass production** → Mass customisation
- **Corporate factories** → Open fablabs, microfactories
- **Polluting materials** → Biodegradable organic materials

Digital DIY

Thanks!

- Questions?
- We need your help!
- <http://www.didiy.eu/>

