

# The New Enlightenment And The Fight To Free Knowledge

Imagine a world where knowledge flows freely and is accessible to all. A world where intellectual curiosity is nurtured and innovation knows no boundaries. This is the vision of the New Enlightenment, a movement that seeks to liberate knowledge from the constraints of traditional institutions and make it available to every individual. In the digital age, this fight to free knowledge has never been more urgent, as the global society faces unprecedented challenges that require collaborative solutions.

## The Evolution of Knowledge

For centuries, knowledge has been predominantly controlled by educational institutions and publishing houses. The gatekeepers of knowledge determined what was considered to be valuable information and who had access to it. This centralized model stifled creativity, diverse perspectives, and marginalized underrepresented voices.

However, the advent of the internet has disrupted this traditional model, enabling the democratization of knowledge. With just a few clicks, anyone can access a vast array of information from all corners of the world. This digital revolution has transformed the way we learn, think, and share ideas, marking the beginning of a new era - the New Enlightenment.

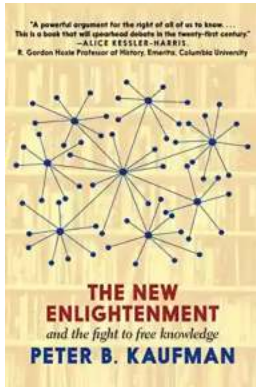
### The New Enlightenment and the Fight to Free Knowledge by Peter B. Kaufman(Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English

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Text-to-Speech : Enabled



Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting: Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 201 pages



## The Fight for Open Access

Central to the New Enlightenment movement is the concept of Open Access. Open Access is the principle that research and scholarly work should be freely available to anyone, without paywalls or restrictions. It asserts that knowledge should be seen as a public good and not a commodity to be bought and sold.

Open Access promotes collaboration, innovation, and equitable access to information, leveling the playing field for researchers, scientists, and students worldwide. It enables the sharing of groundbreaking discoveries and accelerates the pace of scientific advancement. Furthermore, it breaks down the barriers that restrict knowledge access for individuals in developing countries and marginalized communities.

## The Power of Open Educational Resources

One of the driving forces behind the New Enlightenment is the availability of Open Educational Resources (OER). OER is a vast collection of freely accessible educational materials that include textbooks, lectures, videos, and interactive modules. These resources are created and shared by educators, institutions, and learners themselves.

OER has the potential to revolutionize education by providing quality learning materials to those who may not have access to traditional educational resources due to financial, geographical, or social constraints. It empowers learners to take control of their own education, enabling self-directed learning and personalized learning paths. Additionally, OER fosters collaboration between educators and learners, creating a global community of knowledge seekers.

## **The Role of Creative Commons**

In the fight to free knowledge, Creative Commons (CC) licenses play a crucial role. CC licenses are a set of copyright licenses that allow creators to share their work with specific permissions, enabling others to use, remix, and build upon their creative efforts. These licenses provide legal protection for creators while promoting a culture of collaboration and knowledge sharing.

CC licenses ensure that knowledge does not remain locked behind strict copyright laws, allowing for the creation of derivative works that can spark innovation and creativity. They also encourage attribution, giving credit to the original creators and fostering a culture of respect and recognition.

## **Challenges and Resistance**

While the fight to free knowledge is gaining momentum, it is not without its challenges. Traditional publishing houses and educational institutions have often resisted the open access movement, fearing the loss of their control and profitability. They argue that the quality of information may be compromised if it is freely available to everyone.

However, advocates for the New Enlightenment argue that the benefits of open access far outweigh the perceived risks. They emphasize the importance of rigorous peer-reviewed research and quality control mechanisms to ensure the

credibility of information. Open access allows for greater scrutiny and collaboration, leading to a more robust knowledge ecosystem.

## **Building a Future of Free Knowledge**

The fight to free knowledge is not confined to academic circles; it extends to all areas of society. Governments, policymakers, and funding agencies play a vital role in supporting open access initiatives and mandating that publicly funded research be freely accessible to the public.

Furthermore, the New Enlightenment movement requires the participation of individuals who recognize the value of knowledge sharing and open collaboration. By embracing open access resources, advocating for policy changes, and supporting organizations that promote free knowledge, individuals can contribute to the creation of a more inclusive, equitable, and innovative society.

## **The Promise of a New Enlightenment**

The New Enlightenment represents a paradigm shift in the way we view and disseminate knowledge. It envisions a future where knowledge is not a privilege but a fundamental right. By embracing open access principles, harnessing the power of digital technologies, and promoting collaboration, we can unlock the potential of human intellect and tackle the pressing challenges of our time.

As we navigate an increasingly complex and interconnected world, the New Enlightenment offers a beacon of hope, guiding us towards a future where knowledge is truly free and accessible to all. Let us join the fight to free knowledge, and usher in an era of intellectual emancipation and societal progress.



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How do we create a universe of truthful and verifiable information, available to everyone?

In *The New Enlightenment and the Fight to Free Knowledge*, MIT Open Learning's Peter B. Kaufman describes the powerful forces that have purposely crippled our efforts to share knowledge widely and freely.

Popes and their inquisitors, emperors and their hangmen, commissars and their secret police—throughout history, all have sought to stanch the free flow of information. Kaufman writes of times when the Bible could not be translated—you'd be burned for trying; when dictionaries and encyclopedias were forbidden; when literature and science and history books were trashed and pulped—sometimes along with their authors; and when efforts to develop public television and radio networks were quashed by private industry.

In the 21st century, the enemies of free thought have taken on new and different guises—giant corporate behemoths, sprawling national security agencies, gutted regulatory commissions. Bereft of any real moral compass or sense of social

responsibility, their work to surveil and control us are no less nefarious than their 16th- and 18th- and 20th- century predecessors. They are all part of what Kaufman calls the Monsterverse.

The New Enlightenment and the Fight to Free Knowledge maps out the opportunities to mobilize for the fight ahead of us. With the Internet and other means of media production and distribution—video especially—at hand, knowledge institutions like universities, libraries, museums, and archives have a special responsibility now to counter misinformation, disinformation, and fake news—and especially efforts to control the free flow of information.

A film and video producer and former book publisher, Kaufman begins to draft a new social contract for our networked video age. He draws his inspiration from those who fought tooth and nail against earlier incarnations of the Monsterverse—including William Tyndale in the 16th century; Denis Diderot in the 18th; untold numbers of Soviet and Central and East European dissidents in the 20th—many of whom paid the ultimate price. Their successors? Advocates of free knowledge like Aaron Swartz, of free software like Richard Stallman, of an enlightened public television and radio network like James Killian, of a freer Internet like Tim Berners-Lee, of fuller rights and freedoms like Edward Snowden. All have been striving to secure for us a better world, marked by the right balance between state, society, and private gain.

The concluding section of the book, its largest piece, builds on their work, drawing up a progressive agenda for how today's free thinkers can band together now to fight and win. With everything shut and everyone going online, The New Enlightenment and the Fight to Free Knowledge is a rousing call to action that expands the definition of what it means to be a citizen in the 21st century.



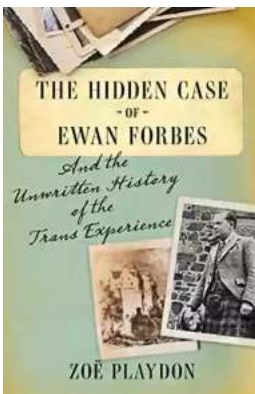
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