

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

Ideally, **science**
should be like
a “**Grand Conversation**”

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

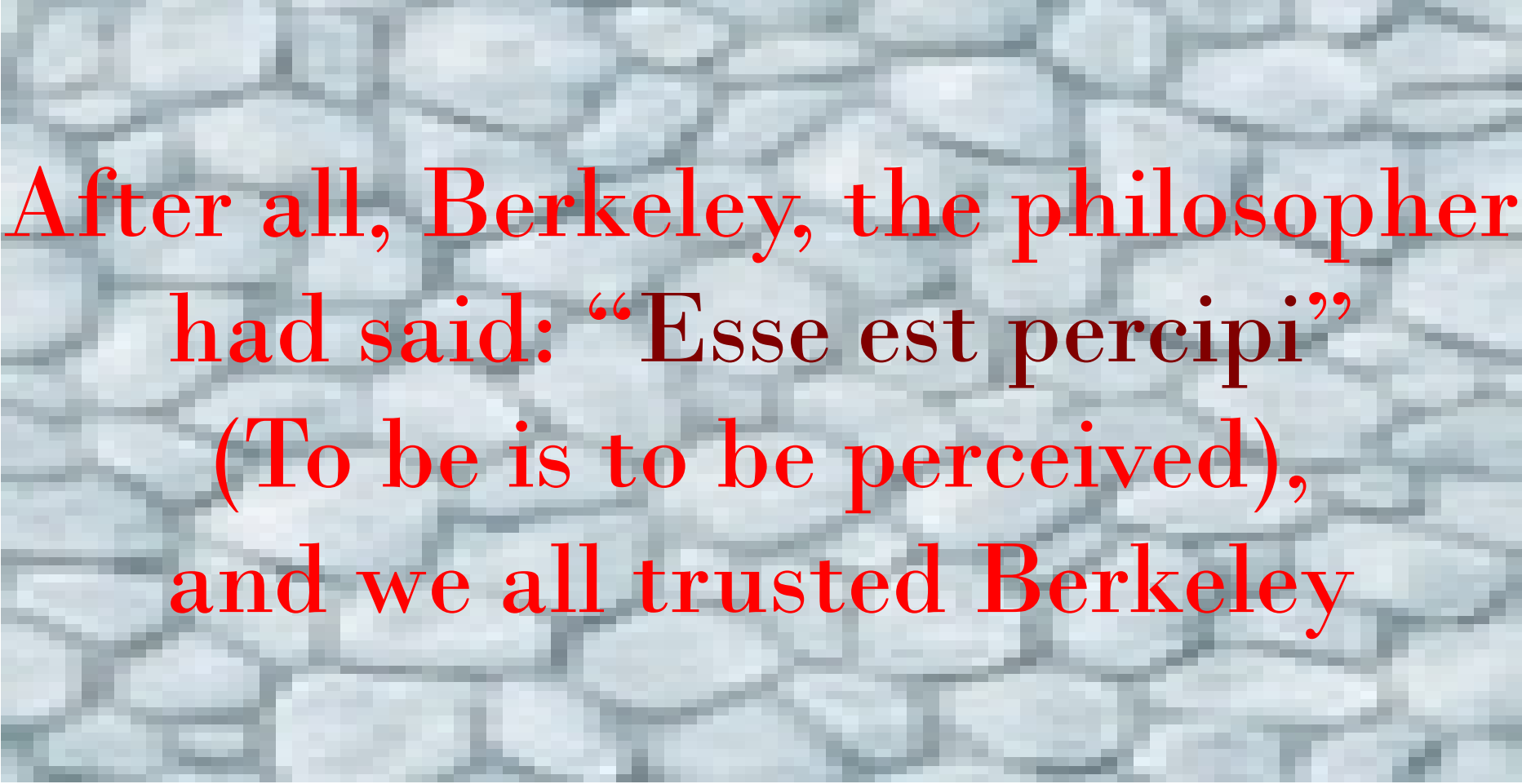
J.-C. Guéron



And Open Access
looked like the
the perfect solution
to all kinds of obstacles
Impeding the “Grand Conversation”

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guéron



After all, Berkeley, the philosopher
had said: “Esse est percipi”
(To be is to be perceived),
and we all trusted Berkeley

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guéron

But is “being perceived”

enough?

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guéron

How is one to be perceived?

For your eyes only?

This is the **James Bond** thesis
(and Google Books)

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

But there are
more fundamental
questions

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guéron

Being visible, perceptible,
it turns out,
is not enough!

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

Some value judgement
has to be added:
What is visible
must also **be good!**

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guéron

Good?

But “good” for what?

And “good” for whom?

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guéron

Here we must make a little detour
and question the
universality of science:

What does it really mean?

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guéron

No one questions the universality
of science

when dealing with:

- observations
- experiments
- concepts
- theories

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guéron

But what about the questions raised
in the course of doing research?

At any point within
the history of the sciences,
some, in fact most, questions
ARE NOT RAISED AT ALL!

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

Who decides?

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

The answer is obviously complex.

It involves **personal curiosity,**
funding policies,
institutional demands,
etc.

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

But a researcher also thinks about
where he/she should or would like to
PUBLISH!

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guéron

Let us focus, therefore,
on **journals**
for a moment:
how do **journals**
select their **content**?

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

QUALITY OF COURSE!!!

Yes, but...

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

Journals exercise their **quality**
judgement within specific
constraints which shape their
EDITORIAL POLICY

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

Journals exercise their **quality**
judgement within specific
constraints which shape their
EDITORIAL POLICY

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

Remember:

they are caught in a **ruthless**
competition system
organized around one variable:

THE IMPACT FACTOR!

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

That is why
the impact factor
is given with three decimals:
no two journals are supposed
to have the same impact factor

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

As a result, journals select papers **also**
on the basis of what they can add to
their **PRESTIGE**:

e. g. are the authors from “**good**”
universities?

Are the authors **well known**?

Do they cite “**good**” journals?

Are the questions **fashionable**?

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

“**esse est percipi**” has now
shifted its meaning:

I “**exist**” ONLY if I am seen
by the “**right**” observers
in the “**right**” places

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

But what are the right places?

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

They are the journals that

- **Are allowed to compete** in the impact factor game
- **Are the winners** in that competition

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

To be allowed to compete,
you must somehow convince
a private company
that you should. “Please”, you beg,
“let me compete; otherwise, I won't
exist”!

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

Once admitted in the “competition club”,
you must win.

HOW?

ANY WAY YOU CAN AND WANT!

Do not worry, it is generally called **MARKETING!**

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

But how was this club originally
formed?

Like any club!

Just ask Eugene Garfield

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guéron

Now that we have the answer
(the old boys' club),
we must proceed
with some

VOCABULARY CHANGES

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

International = OECD countries

Global = sold all over the world

Excellence = OECD-led competitive game

Impact factor = arbitrary and incoherent rule
used to structure the OECD-led game

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

Consequence?

What is presented as **international** and **universal** science is only the set of questions raised by **OECD countries**, i.e. a **particular province** of our planet. It is simply a **regional form of knowledge** disguised as **universal and international**.

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

WHAT ABOUT THE “GRAND CONVERSATION”?

Apparently, little more
than a **CLUBBISH DISCUSSION**
among privileged
“**PEERS**”

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

WHAT ABOUT THE “GRAND CONVERSATION”?

Apparently, little more
than a **CLUBBISH DISCUSSION**
among privileged
“**PEERS**”

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

Now some questions:

Should Latin American researchers
seek to join this club?

If not, why not?

And, if not, what should they do?

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

To these three question, three answers

1. NOT PARTICULARLY!

2. Because this will amount to science without
development

3. The right answer is to seek **quality**, not
excellence, in partnership with all the others also
excluded from the club

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

This will allow to redefine a few terms in healthier
ways:

- quality and not excellence
- globalized knowledge
- international science

PKP2013 – México, D.F.

J.-C. Guédon

THANK YOU!