

## The editor's bookshelf

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### ECONOMICS AND FUNDING

Bosch S, Henderson K. **Steps down the evolutionary road. Periodicals Price Survey 2014.** *Library Journal* April 2014

The article discusses the serials and scholarly publishing industry as of April 2014, focusing on the authors' identification of trends affecting use and pricing in the field according to data from the Periodicals Price Survey 2014. On the basis of the survey the average prices for science, technology, and medical (STM) serials remain the highest, compared with prices for serials in other subject areas.

Carroll MW. **Creative Commons and the openness of open access.** *The New England Journal of Medicine* 2013;368:789-791

The Internet has changed the economics of publication and digital-resource sharing. Copyright law supplies the baseline terms of use for almost all information on the Internet. These terms can be altered if the copyright owner grants a licence or permission to do something that would otherwise infringe copyright. Creative Commons licences are the most widely used of these public licences for all kinds of copyrighted works except software, for which free and open-source licences are most common.

doi: 10.1056/NEJMp1300040

### EDITORIAL PROCESS

Lortie CJ, Allesina S, Aarssen L, *et al.* **With great power comes great responsibility: the importance of rejection, power, and editors in the practice of scientific publishing.** *PLoS One* 2013;8(12):e85382

The authors used data from the

handling service Manuscript Central for 10 mid-tier ecology and evolution journals to test whether number of external reviews completed improved citation rates for all accepted manuscripts. Results showed that citation rates of manuscripts do not correlate with the number of individuals that provided reviews. This study aimed also to explore whether editor-only review is a viable peer review model.  
doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0085382

Nambiar R, Tilak P, Cerejo C. **Quality of author guidelines of journals in the biomedical and physical sciences.** *Learned Publishing* 2014;27(3):201-209

This article aimed to make a quantitative assessment of the completeness and clarity of author guidelines for 80 international English-language journals in the biomedical and physical sciences. No journal scored 100% for completeness and clarity. While author guidelines for many journals adequately address some essential aspects of manuscript preparation and submission, they often do not provide all the information needed as clearly as possible. 'Formatting instructions' was the most complete and clear category, and 'authorship' the least.  
doi: 10.1087/20140306

Patel J. **Why training and specialization is needed for peer review: a case study of peer review for randomized controlled trials.** *BMC Medicine* 2014;12:128

Some types of research, such as randomized controlled trials (RCTs), may lend themselves to a more specialized form of peer review where training and ongoing appraisal and revalidation are provided to individuals who peer review RCTs. Any RCT peer reviewed by such a trained peer reviewer could then have a searchable 'quality assurance' symbol attached to the published articles and any published peer reviewer reports.

doi: 10.1186/s12916-014-0128-z

### ETHICAL ISSUES

Abdollahi M, Gasparian AY, Saeidnia S. **The urge to publish more and its consequences.** *DARU Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences* 2014;22:53  
Uncovered cases of misconduct and violation of publication ethics are increasing at a rapid pace due to the digitization and open access movement. A large amount of funding for research, publishing, and archiving activities comes from pharmaceutical agencies, supporting individuals and their research and academic institutions. These agencies are obliged to educate their authors and to inform them about publishing ethics and the consequences of biased and fraudulent publications. Reviewers and science editors, in turn, should carefully evaluate the correctness of research data and the transparency of authorship, contributorship, and disclosures of ethical approvals, funding, and conflicts of interests.  
doi: 10.1186/2008-2231-22-53

Balhara YP, Mishra A. **Compliance of retraction notices for retracted articles on mental disorders with COPE guidelines on retraction.**

*Current Science* 2014;107(5):757-760  
This study was aimed at assessing the compliance of retraction notices for articles on mental disorders with COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics) guidelines and the impact of open access on post-retraction citation of retracted articles. A bibliometric search was carried out using PubMed. Results showed little impact of COPE guidelines on retractions.

Chaddah P. **Not all plagiarism requires a retraction.** *Nature* 2014;511(7508):127

In this article the author discusses why it is important to appreciate why scientists may indulge in three forms of plagiarism (text, ideas, and results plagiarism). According to the author, papers that plagiarize only text can still contribute to the

literature, but any errors or omissions should be prominently published. Such plagiarism is unethical, but the originality of ideas rather than of language should be valued.  
doi: 10.1038/511127a

Franco A, Malhotra N, Simonovits G. **Publication bias in the social sciences: unlocking the file drawer.**

*Science* 2014;345(6203):1502-1505  
The authors examined every study since 2002 that was funded by TESS (Time-sharing Experiments in the Social Sciences), a national grants programme adopting a rigorous peer review for proposals submitted. They found a strong relationship between the results of a study and whether it was published, a pattern indicative of publication bias. Only 20% of the total studies with null results in the sample appeared in print. In contrast, about 60% of studies with strong results and 50% of those with mixed results were published.  
doi: 10.1126/science.1255484

Madlock-Brown CR, Eichmann D. **The (lack of) impact of retraction on citation networks.** *Science and Engineering Ethics* e-pub March 2014

This paper presents an analysis of recent retraction patterns, with a unique emphasis on the role author self-citations play, to assist the scientific community in creating counter-strategies. The findings indicate that new reasons for retractions have emerged in recent years, and that more editors are penning retractions. The rate of increase of retraction varies by category, and there is a statistically significant difference in average impact factor across categories.  
doi: 10.1007/s11948-014-9532-1

Nylenna M, Fagerbakk F, Kierulf P. **Authorship: attitudes and practice among Norwegian researchers.** *BMC Medical Ethics* 2014;15:53

The authors studied attitudes to, and practice of, authorship among researchers in a university hospital and medical school in Norway. Researchers had knowledge of formal authorship requirements. Most

of them agreed with the criteria, but found it harder to put them into practice, and had experienced breaches. More experienced researchers found it easier to put authorship recommendations into practice than less experienced researchers.  
doi: 10.1186/1472-6939-15-53

Wager E. **Defining and responding to plagiarism.** *Learned Publishing* 2014;27(1):33-42

This article considers plagiarism factors such as the originality of the copied material, its position in the report, the adequacy of referencing, and the intention of the authors as well as the extent of the copying. It proposes possible definitions of major and minor plagiarism in relation to scholarly publications which might be used as the basis for anti-plagiarism policies in conjunction with resources such as the COPE flowcharts.  
doi: 10.1087/20140105

#### INFORMATION RETRIEVAL

Tohidinasab F, Jamali HR. **Why and where Wikipedia is cited in journal articles?** *Journal of Scientometric Research* 2013;2(3):231-238

The use of Wikipedia in articles is increasing both in terms of quantity and diversity. This research aimed to identify the motivations for citation to Wikipedia in scientific papers. Also, the number of citations to Wikipedia, location of citation, type of citing papers, subject of citing and cited articles were determined and compared in different subject fields. Results showed that the most frequent motivations for citing Wikipedia are to provide general information and definition, facts and figures. Citations to Wikipedia often appear in the introductory sections of papers.  
doi: 10.4103/2320-0057.135415

#### LANGUAGE AND WRITING

Hindle A, Tobin SC, Robens J, *et al.* **Working with authors to develop high-quality, ethical clinical manuscripts: guidance for the professional medical writer.** *Medical*

*Writing* 2014;23(3):228-235

This article provides medical writers with advice on how to help researchers prepare high-quality clinical manuscripts for publication in English-language journals, and consider some ethical issues. Authors will then be assisted in preparing a well-structured, ethically sound, and highly readable manuscript that clearly expresses the clinical evidence of their findings.  
doi: 10.1179/2047480614Z.000000000229

Salager-Meyer F. **Origin and development of English for Medical Purposes. Part II: Research on spoken medical English.** *Medical Writing* 2014;23(2):129-131

This second part of the review on English for Medical Purposes (EMP) presents the main results of research on spoken interaction in medical settings. The first group of studies focused on improving the English language skills of non-Anglophone medical students and health professionals; the second consisted of linguistic analysis of medical conference presentations; and the third analyzed the literature on healthcare (doctor-patient) communication.  
doi: 10.1179/2047480614Z.000000000204

#### PUBLISHING

Aldhous P. **The inside track.** *Nature* 2014;510:330-332

Members of the US National Academy of Sciences have an inside track to publication in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* journal as they can submit up to four papers per year. This article examined the contributed track, both to assess its scientific impact and to see which members use it most often and why. Results showed that only a small number of scientists have used the track to the maximum allowable rate while most of them published on average fewer than one paper per year. Direct submissions are much less likely to be accepted than those contributed by academy members.

Gasparyan AY, Ayvazyan L, Gorin SV, *et al.* **Upgrading instructions for authors of scholarly journals.** *Croatian Medical Journal* 2014;55:271-280

Journal instructions are important and need to be properly structured, linked to the available guidelines from editorial associations, and regularly revised and enforced to avoid unethical and erroneous publications. They should inform authors about the journal's scope, priority articles, peer review policy, code of publishing ethics, structure and content of different types of accepted articles, in-house style of editing and formatting, and accompanying documents required for each submission. Properly written, printed, and available online instructions are the keys to successful publishing and indexing in prestigious bibliographic databases.  
doi: 10.3325/cmj.2014.55.271

Nunn E, Pinfield S. **Lay summaries of open access journal articles: engaging with the general public on medical research.** *Learned Publishing* 2014;27(3):173-184

This study investigates attitudes towards the addition of lay summaries to open access (OA) journal articles in the context of engaging the public with medical research. In particular, the perspectives of two stakeholder groups were analysed: employees of organisations with a stake in communicating OA medical research to the public, and members of the public who have experience of accessing online medical research.  
doi: 10.1087/20140303

Smart P. **The big picture: scholarly publishing trends 2014.** *Science Editing* 2014;1(2):52-57

This article considers the changes that have happened recently in the scholarly journal environment, starting with changes in research and development and the influence of the emerging economies. It then considers the financial models and the serials crisis that led to the movement for more open access to research and greater involvement of the academic community. It

looks at the ethical issues that have beset recent years, and the new technologies that promise more efficient and ethical publishing.  
doi: 10.6087/kcse.2014.1.52

## RESEARCH EVALUATION

Casadevall A, Fang FC. **Causes for the persistence of impact factor mania.** *mBio* 2014;5(2):e00064-14  
Science and scientists are currently afflicted by an epidemic of mania manifested by associating the value of research with the journal where the work is published rather than the content of the work itself. One of the reasons for the persistence of impact factor mania is that it confers significant benefits to individual scientists and journals. Various measures to reduce the influence of the impact factor are considered.  
doi: 10.1128/mBio.00064-14

Kim JA, Huh S, Chu MS. **Correlation among the citation indices of Korean scientific journals listed in international databases.** *Science Editing* 2014;1(1):27-36

This article examines the influence of Korean scientific journals by performing a correlation analysis of the indicators of citation indices for 62 Korean scientific journals cross-listed in the Web of Science and Scopus. Journals showed low values in both popularity and prestige-based indicators. The authors suggested to take a strategic approach to improve those values, in particular the impact factor.  
doi: 10.6087/kcse.2014.1.27

## SCIENCE

Thiese MS. **Observational and interventional study design types; an overview.** *Biochemia Medica* 2014;24(2):199-210

The appropriate choice in study design is essential for the quality, execution, and interpretation of biomedical and public health research. Observational study designs, also called epidemiological study designs, are often retrospective and are used to assess potential causation in exposure-outcome relationships

and therefore influence preventive methods. Interventional studies are often prospective and are specifically tailored to evaluate direct impacts of treatment or preventive measures on disease.  
doi: 10.11613/BM.2014.022

## SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Harrison B, Gill J, Jalali A. **Social media etiquette for the modern medical student: a narrative review.** *International Journal of Medical Students* 2014;2(2):64-67

Most medical students worldwide are using various social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) for file sharing, circulation of educational resources and staying connected to peers. This narrative review examines social media use by medical students, with emphasis on online professionalism and how education on the topic is, or should be, integrated into the world-wide medical school curricula. The research shows that there is a potentially dangerous dichotomy between the online social lives of modern medical students and the professional requirements of the medical career for which they are training.

Denegri S, Faure H. **It's plain and simple: transparency is good for science and in the public interest.** *Trials* 2013;14:215

In the past couple of years, there has been a growing focus on the need to make scientific output accessible to a greater number of people, especially in the field of clinical research, and for taking part in clinical trials. There is still a number of challenges in making current research both accessible and understandable by prospective participants. It is necessary to improve 'signposting', to direct the public to the information. Plain English summaries are seen as a good idea but very few people are willing to pay for improved content.  
doi: 10.1186/1745-6215-14-215

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