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ECONOMICS AND FUNDING

Mellon Foundation. **Pay it forward. Investigating a sustainable model of open access article processing charges for large North American research institutions.** 185 p.

A major study conducted by the University of California, Davis, and the California Digital Library, the Pay-It-Forward project, addressed the financial ramifications for the types of research institutions whose affiliated scholars generate a preponderance of the scholarly literature. It investigated the financial sustainability of the OA gold model, in which journal publishers charge authors an article processing charge (APC) to generate revenue instead of subscriptions. The project has collected data on journal budgets and expenditures, publishing costs and APCs, attitudes about Gold OA of publishers and authors at various career stages, and authorship patterns at our institutions.

Jahn N, Tullney M. **A study of institutional spending on open access publication fees in Germany.** *PeerJ* 2016;4:e2323

This study examines how much German universities and research organisations spend on open access publication fees. According to self-reported cost data from the Open APC initiative, this type of support has grown over the years. Comparing this expenditure with that from Austria and the UK, German open access funding is focused primarily on fully open access journals, raising important questions about hybrid open access journals as a publication venue.

doi: 10.7717/peerj.2323

EDITORIAL PROCESS

Paglione LD, Lawrence RN. **Data exchange standards to support and acknowledge peer-review activity.**

Learned Publishing 2015;328:309-316

A Working Group on Peer Review Service, facilitated by CASRAI, was created to develop a data model and citation standard for peer-review activity that can be used to support both existing and new review models. Standardized citation structures for reviews can enable the inclusion of peer-review activity in personal recognition and evaluation.

doi: 10.1087/20150411

Südhof TC. **Truth in science publishing: a personal perspective.**

PLoS Biology 2016;14(8):e1002547

Emerging flaws in the integrity of the peer review system are largely responsible for the validity of published scientific results. Distortions in peer review are driven by economic forces and enabled by a lack of accountability of journals, editors, and authors. One approach to restoring trust may be to establish basic rules that render peer review more transparent, such as publishing the reviews and monitoring not only the track records of authors but also of editors and journals.

doi: 10.1371/journal.pbio.1002547

ETHICAL ISSUES

Beall J. **Best practices for scholarly authors in the age of predatory journals.**

Annals of The Royal College of Surgeons of England 2016;98(2):77-79

The author discusses one recent phenomenon that has arisen from the open access movement: that of 'predatory publishers'. These are individuals or companies that use the open access financial system (author pays, rather than library subscribes) to defraud authors and readers by promising reputable publishing platforms but delivering nothing of the sort. They frequently have

imaginary editorial boards, do not operate any peer review or quality control, are unclear about payment requirements. The author manages a blog site that names publishers and journals that he has identified as predatory, the Beall's lists.

doi: 10.1308/rcsann.2016.0056

Billiones R. **Authorship of clinical trial documents.**

Medical Writing 2016;25(1):33-35

Authorship of clinical trial documents such as clinical study protocols and reports, investigator's brochures and informed consent forms has not yet been given much attention. This article looks at the common practices of authorship attribution and signing off on these documents and examines the ICH guidelines.

Matheson A. **Ghostwriting: the importance of definition and its place in contemporary drug marketing.**

BMJ 2016;354:i4578

During the past decade, the pharmaceutical publications industry has campaigned to persuade medicine, journals, ethicists, and the media that it is opposed to ghostwriting. Yet ghostwriting remains widespread in industry financed medical journal literature. The author describes how this industry seeks to legitimise ghostwriting by changing its definition while deflecting attention from wider marketing practices in academic publishing.

doi: 10.1136/bmj.i4578

LANGUAGE AND WRITING

Hartley J, Cabanac G. **Are two authors better than one? Can writing in pairs affect the readability of academic blogs?** *Scientometrics* 2016

The literature on academic writing suggests that writing in pairs leads to more readable papers than writing alone. The authors wondered whether academic blog posts written alone or in pairs would vary in style: they found no

differences in average sentence length between single- and co-authored posts. However, the posts written in pairs were slightly less readable than the single-authored posts, which challenges the current view on the advantages of writing in pairs.

Kerans ME, Murray A, Sabatè S. **Content and phrasing in titles of original research and review articles in 2015: range of practice in four clinical journals.** *Publications* 2016;4(2):11

This study aimed to learn more about titles in clinical medicine today and to develop an efficient, reliable way to study titles over time and on the fly—for quick application by authors, manuscript editors, translators and instructors. It compared content and form in titles from two general medical journals—the *New England Journal of Medicine* and the *British Medical Journal*—and two anesthesiology journals (the *European Journal of Anaesthesiology* and *Anesthesiology*). Significant content differences were found.
doi: 10.3390/publications402011

Salita JT. **Writing for lay audiences: a challenge for scientists.** *Medical Writing* 2015;424(4):183-189
Writing for lay audiences, especially lay summaries, is needed to increase health and science literacy, but this kind of writing can be difficult for scientists. The article describes why it can be so difficult and gives some advice on how scientists can cope with the challenge and how institutions and organisations can help.
doi: 10.1179/2047480615Z.000000000320

PUBLISHING

Bailey CW, Jr. **Transforming scholarly publishing through open access: a bibliography.** *Digital Scholarship* 2010
This publication with over 1,100 references provides in-depth coverage of published journal articles, books, and other textual works about the open access movement. Many references have links to freely available copies of included works.

Burrough-Boenisch J. **PhD thesis: being more open about PhD papers.** *Nature* 2016;536:274

In the Netherlands, a PhD thesis is published before the *viva voce* exam with an ISBN identifier and is later posted online. Advantages over the traditional monograph thesis include: it is quick and easy to write; feedback from the papers' reviewers can be instructive; and students attain a presence in the international science community before graduation. The author of this Letter also suggests that the thesis itself could contain a statement of all assistance received.
doi: 10.1038/536274b

RESEARCH EVALUATION

Callaway E. **Beat it, impact factor! Publishing elite turns against controversial metric.** *Nature* 2016;535(7611):210-211
Senior staff at societies and leading journals want to end inappropriate use of impact factor. They say that the measure is a broad-brush indicator of a journal's output and it should not be used as a proxy for the quality of any single article or its authors.

Haustein, S. **Grand challenges in altmetrics: heterogeneity, data quality and dependencies.** *Scientometrics* 2016;108(1):413-423
This paper focuses on the current challenges for altmetrics. Heterogeneity, data quality and particular dependencies are identified as the three major issues and discussed in detail. The heterogeneity of altmetrics reflects the diversity of the acts and online events, most of which take place on social media platforms. Data quality issues become apparent in the lack of accuracy, consistency and replicability of various altmetrics, which is largely affected by the dynamic nature of social media events. Furthermore altmetrics are shaped by technical possibilities.
doi: 10.1007/s11192-016-1910-9

Singh Chawla D. **Self-citation rates higher for men.** *Nature* 2016;535:212
Men cite their own papers 56% more than women on average, according

to an analysis of 1.5 million studies published between 1779 and 2011. The analysis looked at papers across disciplines in the digital library JSTOR and found that men's self-citation rate had risen to 70% more than women's over the past two decades, despite an increase of women in academia in recent years. According to the study authors, men view their abilities more positively than women do and face fewer societal penalties for self-promotion than do women.

SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Smalley S. **Staying ahead of the game in the changing arena of ethical medical communications - Viewpoint of a freelance medical writer.** *Medical Writing* 2016;25(2):13-17

Good publication practices as well as guidelines, regulations, codes of practice, and other guidelines governing pharmaceutical-HCP interactions and promotion of medicines play an important role in professional and ethical medical communication. It is essential for those working in the medical communications sector to stay informed of evolving guidance.

Patterson K. **Is photoshopping science universally wrong?** The Conversation, June 1, 2016
Photoshop has become a proprietary eponym for image manipulation, and manipulation of scientific images is universally unethical. Scientists rely on a vast array of technologies to capture, measure, test, display and communicate their research. Raw scientific data needs to be detected or discovered and then the data often needs to be transformed, or manipulated into a comprehensible form. Detailed guidelines are available on what is considered appropriate vs inappropriate image manipulation techniques.

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