

## The Editor's Bookshelf

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### ECONOMICS AND FUNDING

Björk B. Solomon D. Pricing principles used by scholarly open access publishers. *Learned Publishing* 2012;25(2):132-137

The article processing charge (APC) is currently the primary method of funding professionally open access (OA) peer-reviewed journals. In the article the pricing principles of 77 OA publishers publishing over 1000 journals using APCs were studied and classified. The most common pricing method is a single fixed fee that can be either the same for all of a publisher's journals or individually determined for each journal. Among the big OA publishers, individual journal pricing seems to be the dominant mode.  
doi: 10.1087/20120207

Contreras JL. Wait for it... Commons, copyright and the private (re)ordering of scientific publishing. *Social Science Research Network* March 4, 2012

In this paper the author critiques various open access strategies related to copyright protection and assignment, and he proposes an alternative private ordering solution. Under this proposal, research institutions would develop and adopt publication agreements that do not transfer copyright ownership to publishers, but grant publishers a one-year exclusive period in which to publish a work. This limited period of exclusivity should enable publishers to recoup their publishing costs and a profit through subscription revenues.  
**EDITORIAL PROCESS**

Banks M. Rejected manuscripts receiver citation boost. *Physics World* 2012;25(11):8.

Reports a study by Vincent Calcagno which found that rejected papers which are then accepted by another journal pick up more citations than papers that are submitted and published straight into that same journal. He concludes that the process of rejection, where a researcher is forced to rewrite and possibly follow up work to gain better results, actually improves the quality of the paper. He writes, "The most likely explanation to me is that reviewers and editors really do their job and significantly increase the quality of the final paper".

Dance A. Who's on first? *Nature*

2012;489:591-593  
When scientists collaborate on an experiment and a paper, it can be hard to decide who gets the credit and how much. Disagreements often happen when contributors put in similar amounts of effort on different aspects of a project. Journals are increasingly attempting to keep authors in line by asking for details on who did what. Some tips for settling the line-up are provided.  
doi: 10.1038/nj7417-591a

Rohlfing T, Poline JB. Why shared data should not be acknowledged on the author byline. *NeuroImage* 2012;59(4):4189-4195

According to this article, the author byline should not be used to acknowledge shared data. It discusses viable alternatives for crediting non-author contributors, such as citations of papers describing shared data, reference to dataset publications, inclusion in the Acknowledgements section or in an Appendix.

Welch SJ. Selecting the right journal for your submission. *Journal of Thoracic Disease* 2012;4(3):336-338  
One of the key decisions an author must make is where to submit his paper. This article addresses several important criteria to making that decision, including identifying a list of potential journals, topic match, acceptance/rejection rate of the journal, speed of review/publication,

options to solve related problems by authors, reviewers and editors. It also discusses the contributorship criteria, still not well validated.

Many international associations are developing educational materials, guidelines and policy statements, incorporating authorship issues. A global awareness of what constitutes authorship among authors, reviewers, editors and publishers, and the adherence to the editorial policies of learned associations and research institutions should be improved.  
doi: 10.1007/s00296-012-2582-2

Heidart A, Adeli SH, Mehrovaran S, et al. Addressing ethical considerations and authors' conflict of interest disclosure in medical journals in Iran. *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry* 2012;9(4):457-462

This study aims to examine how ethical considerations and competing interests (conflicts of interest, COI) are addressed by medical journals in Iran. The results show that the rate of addressing ethical considerations is not far from ideal, but the requirements for COI disclosure need more attention.  
doi: 10.1007/s11673-012-9393-8

Maina S, Di Napoli M. Duplicate publication and plagiarism: is RHC safe? *Reviews in Health Care* 2012;3(4):225-227

While plagiarism obviously represents scientific misconduct, the so-called "self-plagiarism", or duplicate publication, is more controversial. It can include: same study sample, control data, or study outcomes; the so-called "salami slicing" (a large study sliced into several smaller studies); multiple submission; and republication in another language. Some authors are not aware of copyright rules, nor of publication ethics. Reviewers and editors have certainly an essential role in detecting any scientific misconduct and avoiding plagiarism and duplicate publication. Cooperation between editors and authors, and transparency are needed, too.

Masic I. Plagiarism in scientific publishing. *Acta Informatica Medica* 2012;20(4):208-213  
The author describes his experiences

in discovering plagiarism as editor-in-chief of three indexed medical journals. He also presents several examples of plagiarism recorded in southeastern European countries. According to his opinion, scientific institutions and universities should have established units for monitoring, promoting and developing quality research, in accordance with the principles of Good Scientific Practices (GSP) and Good Laboratory Practices (GLP).  
doi: 10.5455/aim.2012.20.208-213

Roig M. Avoiding unethical writing

practices. *Food and Chemical Toxicology* 2012;50(10):3385-3387  
It has been noted that more articles "plagiarism" in their title since 2005 than were published in all of the years prior to 2004. Plagiarism manifests itself in various ways and it also includes the misappropriation of others' intellectual property, including ideas, images, and methodologies. This editorial cites some common myths about plagiarism and describes self-plagiarism and other forms of redundancy.  
doi: 10.1016/j.fct.2012.06.043

Shamim T. Serious thoughts about

plagiarism in India. *Saudi Journal of Anaesthesia* 2012;6(3):191

It is the prime duty of authors and editors to take strong decisions to tackle plagiarism at the earliest to avoid unethical publishing. The author of this editorial suggests a protocol to report plagiarism in published articles to which authors should adhere.  
doi: 10.4103/1658-354X.101191

### INFORMATION RETRIEVAL

Scott-Lichter D. New journal selection by A&Is - still valuable after all these years. *Learned Publishing* 2012;25:245-246

Well-established and carefully crafted abstracting and indexing (A&I) services are still very important to a new journal's success. Publishers and A&Is have a synergistic relationship: publishers supply their content for indexing, while the A&I index and distribute it. A critical part of the A&I enterprise is represented by the

selection of journals for indexing. As with journals, A&Is have different offerings, strengths and weaknesses. Starting from the author's experience in getting a recently launched journal into A&I databases, some of them (PubMed/MEDLINE, Scopus, Web of Science) are described in this editorial.  
doi: 10.1087/20120401

### PUBLISHING

Guinnessy P. Europe moves closer to open access publishing. *Physics Today* 2012;65(11):22-24. Article discussing how new rules in Europe, especially the UK, may increase rapidly the number of journals offering a form of open access. A histogram shows that in medical and biological journals there are more "gold" (ie free from the point of publication with authors paying a fee) than "green" (ie where no fee is paid and the paper becomes available on a website after a lapse). There is some discussion of the length of the lapse; six months being urged but some journals, eg those published by the Royal Society of Chemistry, preferring 12 months. The effect on US journals is discussed.

Laakso M, Björk B. Anatomy of open access publishing: a study of longitudinal development and internal structure. *BMC Medicine* 2012;10:124

This is the first study to provide comprehensive gold open access (OA) measurement for 2010 and 2011. Its primary aim was to measure the volume of scientific articles published in full immediate OA journals from 2000 to 2011, while observing longitudinal internal shifts in the structure of OA publishing concerning revenue models, publisher types and relative distribution among scientific disciplines. The secondary aim was to measure the share of OA articles of all journal articles.  
doi: 10.1186/1741-7015-10-124

Lankarani KB, Haghdoost A, Smith P. Embargo on publication of scientific papers by Iranian authors. *The Lancet* 2012;380(9842):648-649  
Since the Islamic revolution in 1979, scientists from Iranian institutions

have published joint papers with scientists from 107 other countries, mostly from the USA and UK, and have experienced a rapid increase in the publication of scientific papers in indexed journals. Recently few academic publishers have embargoed scientific publications from Iran, not in accordance with scientific publication ethics.  
doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(12)61369-5

Shamsseer L, Stevens A, Skidmore

**B. et al. Does journal endorsement of reporting guidelines influence the completeness of reporting of health research? A systematic review protocol.** *Systematic Reviews* 2012;1(1):24

Reporting of health research is often inadequate and incomplete. Many guidelines have been developed for reporting a variety of research types and aim at improving the quality of health research reports. In order to increase their uptake, evidence of their effectiveness is important and will provide authors, peer reviewers and editors with an important resource for use and implementation of pertinent guidance. The objective of this study was to assess whether endorsement of reporting guidelines by journals influences the completeness of reporting of health studies.  
doi: 10.1186/2046-4053-1-24

Sipahi H, Durusoy R, Ergin I, et al.

**Publication rates of public health peer-review journals in Turkey.** *Iranian Journal of Public Health* 2012;41(9):31-35

This study investigated the publication rates of Turkish public health doctorate theses and specialization theses in international and Turkish national peer-reviewed journals, and analysed the distribution of research areas. Being rated low, the authors suggest a better understanding of factors affecting this situation, also through a case-control study, in order to find appropriate solutions.

Simondon S. **Medical publishing and the drug industry: is medical science for sale?** *Learned Publishing*

2012;25(1):7-15

doi: 10.1002/asi.v63.11/issuetoc

Smith DR. **Impact factors, scientometrics and the history of citation-based research.** *Scientometrics* 2012;92(2):419-427

This article provides a comprehensive, interesting overview of some key historical events of relevance to the impact factor since Garfield proposed it over half a century ago. In contemporary research and scholarly environments, few inventions have influenced medical publishing as much as the journal impact factor. It is inevitable that the advent of bibliometric indicators was destined to attract criticism, and invite improvement and suggestions of alternatives.  
doi: 10.1007/s11192-012-0685-x

## SCIENCE

Bornmann L. **Measuring the societal impact of research.** *EMBO reports* 2012;13(8):673-676

While research is less and less assessed on scientific impact alone, the increasingly important contributions of science to society should be quantified. The problem begins with defining the "societal impact of research" and how to evaluate societal quality. Research into societal impact is still in the early stages: it is much harder to measure than scientific impact, and there are probably no indicators that can be used across all disciplines and institutions for collation in databases. Societal impact often takes many years to become apparent.  
doi: 10.1038/embor.2012.99

Thanks to John Glen for suggestions of items.

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**Welcome to all members who have recently joined EASE**

A full list of new members can be found on the website  
(www.ease.org.uk)

## Correspondence

### Where does responsibility lie in multi-author papers?

In the Editorial of the August issue of European Science Editing, the Chief Editor, A.Y. Gasparyan stated that authorship in scholarly journals, and its abuses, is one of the key topics in this discipline and shapes its core values.<sup>1</sup> A universally acceptable definition of authorship does not yet exist, even though the accreditation of both credit and responsibility has gained wide recognition through the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) guidelines. According to "Instructions to Authors" provided by many scientific peer-reviewed journals, all authors should have made substantial contributions to all of the following: (1) the conception and design of the study, to acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data, (2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content, (3) final approval of the version to be submitted. This should be enough to guarantee an appropriate authorship in journal submissions. All contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship as defined above should be listed in an acknowledgements section. Examples of those who might be acknowledged include a person who provided purely technical help, writing assistance, or a department chair who provided only general support. Authors should disclose whether they had any writing assistance and identify the entity that paid for this assistance. Again, those who have given technical assistance or moral or financial support or supplied equipment should be recognized in the acknowledgements.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, with the increase of interdisciplinary research it is important to decide on authorship before the research, or at least the drafting of the manuscript, begins.<sup>3</sup>

Traditional authorship models, largely based on the ICMJE guidelines, consider the authors' byline in the papers as the key for attributing credit.<sup>3</sup> However, credit brings but quite complicated for multi-authored publications.<sup>1,4</sup> A model of contributorship<sup>5</sup> was recently favoured since it seems appropriate for the current trends in multi-expert research cooperation and publishing, where contribution and responsibility are to be shared by many.<sup>6</sup> Both models, however, emphasise responsibility as the key of research integrity. Irrespective of the model applied, the principal author should be able to decide the number of co-authors that will appear in a scientific paper. The contributions of each co-author and their respective participation in the study should be explicitly stated, as often required by scientific journals. This should be the principal author's responsibility. It seems rather inappropriate for an editor to question the number of authors listed in a scientific paper on number alone, particularly for interdisciplinary research which implies the contribution of different institutions and of different competencies within the same institution, if the principal author can show clearly that all authors contributed in accordance to the guidelines and he or she

is willing to take responsibility for the choice of co-authors. Editors and reviewers are in a position to spot instances of inappropriate authorship in journal submissions and suggest corrections.<sup>1</sup> Fair and transparent editorial policies supported by guidelines, acceptable criteria in the instructions for authors and authorship statements required by each author improve the authorship issue.<sup>1</sup> However, it is the principal author's responsibility to submit a suitable list of authors and the editor and the reviewer's responsibility to properly check and apply the existing rules and recommendations.

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- 3 EASE Guidelines for authors and translators of scientific articles to be published in English. June 2012. Available at <http://www.ease.org.uk/publications/author-guidelines> (accessed 28 October 2012).
- 4 Rennie D, Yank V, Emanuel L. When authorship fails: a proposal to make contributors accountable. *JAMA* 1997;278:759-585. doi:10.1001/jama.1997.03550070071041
- 5 Smith R. Authorship is dying: long live contributorship. *BMJ* 1997;315(7110):696.
- 6 Habibzadeh F, Marcovitch H. Authorship dispute among the League of Extraordinary Gentlemen. *European Science Editing* 2012;38(2):40-41.

### Authorship problems and the distortion of research performance indicators

Recent essays on inappropriate authorship once again raise the issue of vague criteria of credits in multi-authored articles.<sup>1,2</sup> Concerns over the distortion of bibliometric indicators as a result of widespread honorary authorship are shared by experts, suggesting solutions to the problem. My proposal is to request contributors of multi-author articles to express the degree of their contribution in decimal fractions, and display the fractions in the authors' byline, next to their names.<sup>3</sup> The sum of these decimal fractions should be 1, and a greater credit to any contributor would diminish the credits allocated to others in the bylines. This may serve as a disincentive against