

## The editor's bookshelf

Bookshelf is compiled by Anna Maria Rossi (annamaria.rossi@iss.it). Please contact Anna Maria if you wish to send items or become a member of the EASE journal blog (<http://ese-bookshelf.blogspot.co.uk>) and see your posts published in the journal.

### ECONOMICS AND FUNDING

Kaplan RM, Johnson SB, Kobor PC. **NIH behavioral and social sciences research support: 1980-2016.** *American Psychologist* 2017;72(8):808-821  
Behavioural and social science has often been underfunded at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). In 1990, the Senate Appropriations Committee, recognizing that behaviour may contribute to about half of all premature deaths, recommended that funding for behavioural and social sciences research should be about 10% of the NIH-budget. Data from several sources suggest that this goal has never been realized.  
doi: 10.1037/amp0000222

### EDITORIAL PROCESS

Dambha-Miller H. **An appealing prospect? A survey into the numbers, outcomes, and editorial policies for appeals of rejected biomedical manuscripts.** *Learned Publishing* 2017;30(3):227-231  
This article investigated the number of appeals against rejected biomedical manuscripts, their success rates, and the current editorial processes for managing them. Results showed considerable variations in the appeal processes used amongst journals, with little evidence of any detailed, reproducible, or established appeal policies, that are essential in ensuring that manuscripts are not incorrectly rejected.  
doi: 10.1002/leap.1107

Spencer D. **What makes a strong editorial board? Editors' Update.** *Elsevier Connect* 2017 Nov 21  
The author gives some thoughts about roles and recruitment for editorial board members. The most common function of editorial boards is to provide high-quality reviews, and also act as a third, or trusted "tie-breaker" reviewer. As well as reviewing and suggesting content, the editorial board is also a good source of feedback about the journal's performance, and able to serve as recruiter of good candidates for editorial positions. Comments from some current editors on issues to take into consideration when nominating new editorial board members are provided.

### ETHICAL ISSUES

Amigo I, Pascual-Garcia A. **Conflicts of interest in scientific publishing.** *EMBO reports* 2017:e201745008  
The authors suggest a publishing model that would redistribute funding and the role of different actors - scientists, metric companies, librarians and so on - to maximize the impact of their respective skills for the benefit of science. Research papers and scientific data should be published in several specialized, open and publicly funded storage repositories. Peer review should be self-organized in a centralized and publicly funded peer review platform.  
doi: 10.15252/embr.201745008

Chapman CC, Benedict C, Schiöth HB. **Experimenter gender and replicability in science.** *Science Advances* 2018;4:e1701427  
This paper investigates how the gender of the experimenter may affect experimental findings. Clinical trials are regularly carried out without any report of the experimenter's gender. Significant biases may lead researchers to conclude that therapeutics or other interventions are either overtreating or undertreating a variety of conditions.  
doi: 10.1126/sciadv.1701427

Shaw D, Elger BS. **Publication ethics in public health emergencies.** *Journal of Public Health* 2017;39(3):640-643  
The authors describe and analyze three issues in publication ethics that are raised when conducting research in health emergencies and disasters: reluctance to share data and samples; loss of individual authorship; and death of authors.  
doi: 10.1093/pubmed/fdw067

Sills J. **Not just Salk.** *Science* 2017;357(6356):1105-1106  
Three of four senior women scientists at the US Salk Institute for Biological Studies have filed a lawsuit alleging gender discrimination. Such problems are still relevant, and they are not unique to the Salk Institute. Other women scientists raised questions of similar discrimination at their institutions, and some of them face even greater challenges.  
doi: 10.1126/science.aao6221

Teixeira da Silva JA. **It may be easier to publish than correct or retract faulty biomedical literature.** *Croatian Medical Journal* 2017;58(1):75-79  
Correcting errors in the literature is generally considered to be a positive academic achievement. In contrast, retracting erroneous or fraudulent work is still viewed in a negative light. Corrections might be embraced as a more natural process in science publishing, especially when errors might be truly erroneous. Such a change in mentality will require a total overhaul of peer communities.  
doi: 10.3325/cmj.2017.58.75

### LANGUAGE AND WRITING

Martinson BC. **Give researchers a lifetime word limit.** *Nature* 2017 Oct 17  
Once a researcher's primary role was to share knowledge, now it is to get a publication. The author imagines how rationing the number of publications a scientist could put out might improve the scientific literature. Lifetime limits would create a natural incentive to do research that matters,

and would encourage researchers to ensure that research is conducted with the utmost care. Readers and editors would also be able to give the smaller number of articles more attention.

Rossi A, Benci C, Leventhal P. **Guidelines for disclosing the results from observational trials.** *Medical Writing* 2017;26(3):22-28  
*Strengthening the Reporting of Observational Studies in Epidemiology* (STROBE) was the first guideline developed to identify the minimal information that should be included in articles reporting observational and epidemiological research. More than 50 ancillary guidelines tailored to specific needs are now available to assist authors in preparing successful articles on observational studies.

### INFORMATION RETRIEVAL

Novo LAB, Onishi VC. **Could Sci-Hub become a quicksand for authors?** *Information Development* 2017;33(3):324-325  
Sci-Hub has shaken the pillars of scholarly publishing, providing free access to millions of paywall-protected scientific articles. Along the way, it has also challenged the hegemony of major publishers and a system propelled by scientometrics. Here the authors posit a scenario in which the myriad papers offered by Sci-Hub could trigger a sudden flip to gold open access, dragging authors into an even more restricting paywall.  
doi: 10.1177/0266666917703638

### PUBLISHING

Forrester A, Björk B, Tenopir C. **New web services that help authors choose journals.** *Learned Publishing* 2017;30(4):281-287  
The motivations for an author to choose a journal to submit to are complex. He requires information about multiple characteristics that may be difficult to obtain. This article compares and contrasts the new author-oriented journal comparison tools and services (free and fee-based) that have emerged to help authors find data on journals and publishers.  
doi: 10.1002/leap.1112

Editorial. **Steps towards transparency in research publishing.** *Nature* 2017;549(431)  
Progress in the transparency of both research and editorial processes is gathering pace. But as these processes become increasingly open, scientists and editors need to be proactive and also alert to risks. Transparency may give rise to different sorts of bias. For example, some authors do not want to know who authored a positive peer review, so that they can avoid future positive peer review bias themselves.  
doi: 10.1038/549431a

### RESEARCH EVALUATION

Michalska-Smith MJ, Allesina S. **And, not or: Quality, quantity in scientific publishing.** *PLoS ONE* 2017;12(6):e0178074  
Scientists often perceive a trade-off between quantity and quality in scientific publishing. The authors compared themselves with members of the National Academy of Sciences across years, and used a much larger dataset than previously analyzed. They found that a member's most highly cited paper in a given year has more citations in more productive years than in less productive years. Their lowest cited paper in a year, on the other hand, has fewer citations in more productive years.  
doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0178074

Mingers J, Meyer M. **Normalizing Google Scholar data for use in research evaluation.** *Scientometrics* 2017;112(2):1111-1121  
Bibliometric evaluations across disciplines require that the data are normalized to the field as the fields are very different in their citation processes. This paper tests a method for Google Scholar (GS) normalization developed by Bornmann *et al.* on an alternative set of data involving journal papers, book chapters, and conference papers. The results show that GS normalization is possible although at the moment it requires extensive manual involvement in generating and validating the data.  
doi: 10.1007/s11192-017-2415-x

### SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

Gheorghiu AI, Callan MJ, Skylark WJ. **Facial appearance affects science communication.** *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 2017;114(23):5970-5975  
This article shows that the science communication process is influenced by the facial appearance of the scientist. It identified the traits that engender interest in a scientist's work and the perception that they do high-quality work, and showed that these facial impressions influence both the selection and evaluation of science news, and may bias public attitudes and government actions regarding key scientific issues.  
doi: 10.1073/pnas.1620542114

Teplitskiy M, Lu G, Duede E. **Amplifying the impact of open access: Wikipedia and the diffusion of science.** *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology* 2016;68(9):2116-2117  
To understand whether Wikipedia draws upon the research that scientists value most, the authors identified the 250 most heavily used journals in each of 26 research fields indexed by the Scopus database, and tested whether topic, academic status, and accessibility make articles from these journals more or less likely to be referenced on Wikipedia. They found that a journal's academic status (impact factor) and accessibility (open access policy) both strongly increase the probability of it being referenced on Wikipedia. These findings provide evidence that a major consequence of open access policies is to significantly amplify the diffusion of science, through an intermediary like Wikipedia, to a broad audience.  
doi: 10.1002/asi.23687

Anna Maria Rossi  
Publishing Unit  
Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Rome  
annamaria.rossi@iss.it