

## The Editor's Bookshelf

A big thank you to all those who have been in touch with regard to collaborating to improve and enhance the bookshelf section of ESE. We are still looking for volunteers to find new items for inclusion in the bookshelf or to regularly search just one journal out of a list and work as a team with us.

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### ECONOMICS AND FUNDING

Salager-Meyer F. **Scientific publishing in developing countries: challenges for the future.** *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* 2008;7(2):121–132.

(doi:10.1016/j.jeap.2008.03.009)

Addresses the center-periphery dichotomy in terms of scientific output, placing emphasis upon the relation between science and technology development on the one hand, and social and economic development on the other. Outlines the main problems faced by most peripheral journals, as well as the role nation states play in scientific activities in developing countries. Gives suggestions how to help scientists in periphery countries to become fully integrated members of the worldwide network of science and to contribute to the promotion of scientific multilingualism, a means for science to be truly universal, as it should be.



### EDITORIAL PROCESS

Grozier J. **Yours anonymously.** *Physics World* 2009;22(2):20.

Letter commending *Physics World* for including an edited selection of comments that originally appeared on its website ([physicsworld.com](http://physicsworld.com)) but regretting that the website allows the use of pseudonyms, since anonymity brings out the worst in people. This is not allowed for letters to the editor, so why does a different rule apply to online comments? This is followed by an “Editor’s note” that points out that this is a convention of most websites and to ask for full names and addresses could discourage people from entering a debate. They are retained in the published comments so readers can easily go back and read the original comments in full.

### ETHICAL ISSUES

Fava GA. **Preserving intellectual freedom in clinical medicine.**

*Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics* 2009;78:1–5.

The journal’s editor notes that the drug industry has full control of many scientific societies, journals, and clinical practice guidelines. Members of special interest groups act as editors, reviewers, and consultants to medical journals, scientific meetings, and non-profit research organizations, with the task of systematically preventing the dissemination of data that may be in conflict with their interest. Censorship may be the result of direct prevention of publication and dissemination of findings by the pharmaceutical company itself. The paper provides several suggestions

for preserving intellectual freedom in medicine, based on research evidence.

Lenzer J, Brownlee S.

**Antidepressants: an untold story?** *BMJ* 2008;336:532–534.

(doi:10.1136/bmj.39504.662685.0F)

This story about antidepressants highlights the ongoing problem of how study results are often distorted by a failure to access full datasets. In fact, the analysis of published and unpublished data from studies of antidepressants in adults shows that only a very small subset of patients seemed to benefit. The problem of publication bias is pointed out through the tendency to publish only positive studies and file away negative studies. On the contrary, all data should be made available to both patients and researchers.

Redman BK, Yarandi HN, Merz JF. **Empirical developments in retraction.** *Journal of Medical Ethics* 2008;34:807–809.

(doi:10.1136/jme.2007.023069)

This study confirms that the rate of retractions remains low but is increasing. The most commonly cited reason for retraction was research error or inability to reproduce results; the rate from research misconduct is an underestimate, since some retractions necessitated by research misconduct were reported as being due to inability to reproduce. Retraction by parties other than authors is increasing, especially for research misconduct. Although retractions are on average occurring sooner after publication than in the past, citation analysis shows that they are not being recognized by subsequent users of the work. Findings suggest that editors and institutional officials are taking more responsibility for correcting the scientific record but that reasons published in the retraction notice are not always reliable. More aggressive means of notification to the scientific community appear to be necessary.



## INFORMATION RETRIEVAL

Darnton R. **Google & the future of books.** *New York Review of Books* 2009;56:2.

This article is a valuable piece of history of culture pointing out that the power of Google is now changing the way people approach to information all over the world. It considers the role of libraries, publishers, and new technologies facing copyright issues from different points of view. Google will continue to make books in the public domain available for users to read, download, and print, free of charge, but can we talk of a new monopoly?

Suber P. **Open access in 2008.** *SPARC Open Access Newsletter* 2009 129:2.

Clear and complete review of the open access development in 2008, including open access policies at funding agencies and universities, and data on growth, open access archiving, and open access journals. It also considers books and humanities, and is rich in data, numbers, useful reflections, and links

Tenopir C, King DW, Edwards S, Wu L. **Electronic journals and changes in scholarly article seeking and reading patterns.** *Aslib Proceedings* 2009;61(1):5–32.  
(doi:10.1108/00012530910932267)

By tracking the information-seeking and reading patterns of members of science, technology, medical, and social science faculties from 1977 to the present, this paper seeks to examine how faculty members locate, obtain, read, and use scholarly articles and how this has changed with the widespread availability of electronic journals and journal alternatives. The analysis was based on questionnaires. Results show that the average number of readings per year per science faculty member continues to increase, while the average time spent per

reading is decreasing. Electronic articles now account for the majority of readings, though most items are still printed on paper for final reading.

## LANGUAGE AND WRITING

**Journals aim to improve access for the blind.** *APS News* 2008;17(11):4–7. APS journals are developing ways to improve the journals' accessibility to blind people and others with print disabilities while adding enriched content for all users. The journals currently use XML/MathML formatting for text and equations, with figures in Postscript. They are now working on making equations and images in a universally accessible format (DAISY, Digital Accessible Information SYstem). They hope to offer one of their journals with this option in 2010.

Kekale T, de Weerd-Nederhof P, Cervai S, Borelli M. **The “dos and don'ts” of writing a journal article.** *Journal of Workplace Learning* 2009;21(1):71–80.

(doi:10.1108/13665620910924925) Gives guidelines on typical problems that lead to rejection, and how to avoid these. If authors follow these guidelines the review process of articles will be smoother and the amount of rejects should diminish. Young researchers can find good suggestions about how to write a paper.

Salager-Meyer F, Alcaraz Ariza MA, Pabón Berbesi M. **Backstage solidarity in Spanish- and English-written medical research papers: publication context and the acknowledgment paratext.**

*Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 2009;60(2):307–317.

(doi:10.1002/asi.20981) Analyzes the acknowledgment paratext of medical research articles written in English and Spanish in three geographical contexts: Venezuela, Spain, and the United States of America. 150 research articles from leading medical journals in each country were randomly selected. Results show that

acknowledgments from the English-language corpus are significantly more frequent and longer than those from both the Spanish and Venezuelan samples. The number of persons acknowledged and the number of grants received also were significantly greater in the US sample than in the two Spanish-language corpora. Technical/instrumental assistance was more frequently acknowledged than was peers' ideational input. The communicative and sociocultural conventions of academic contributorship are not only discipline-dependent but also language- and context-dependent.

Uzuner S. **Multilingual scholars' participation in core/global academic communities: a literature review.** *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* 2008;7:250–263.

Reviews 39 empirical studies that investigated multilingual scholars' participation in core/global academic communities through article and research publication. These studies were analyzed in terms of multilingual scholars' reasons for publishing in English, the obstacles that stand in their way of international publication, theoretical assumptions about their socialization and/or participation in core disciplinary communities, and suggested conditions for helping them contribute more to the global intellectual voice. The paper also sets out the conditions under which novice multilingual scholars (graduate students) may best be inducted into the mainstream disciplinary culture and suggests avenues for future research.



## PUBLISHING

Björk B, Hedlund T. **Two scenarios for how scholarly publishers could change their business model to open access.** *Journal of Electronic Publishing* 2009;12:1.  
(doi.org/10.3998/3336451.0012.102)

The internet has made possible the cost-effective dissemination of scientific journals in the form of electronic versions, usually in parallel with the printed versions. At the same time the electronic medium also makes possible totally new open access distribution models. Although more than 2000 new open access journals have been founded in the last 15 years, the uptake of open access has been rather slow, with currently around 5% of all peer-reviewed articles published in open access journals. Established journals and publishers have not had strong enough incentives to change their business models, and the commercial risks in doing so have been high. Two scenarios for how scholarly publishers could change their operating model to open access are presented and discussed: the first is based on an instantaneous change and the second on a gradual change.

Fairlie D. **Debating open access and arXiv.** *Physics World* 2009;22(1):20. Letter suggesting that the enormous numbers of papers posted on arXiv indicates that too many papers are being published and that there is at present little motive for authors to publish their material in peer reviewed journals; arXiv should be regarded as more like a daily newspaper, not a place for final publication.

Fry J, Schroeder R, den Besten M. **Open science in e-science: contingency or policy?** *Journal of Documentation* 2009;65(1):6–32. (doi:10.1108/00220410910926103) Discusses the question of “openness” in e-Science. The study is based on 12 interviews with principal investigators, project managers, and developers involved in UK e-Science projects, together with supporting documentary evidence from project web sites. Although there is a widely shared ethos of openness in everyday research practice, there are many uncertainties and yet-to-be resolved issues, despite strong policy imperatives towards openly shared resources.

Jefferson T, De Fiore L. **BMJ pico: a window into the future?** *BMJ* 2009;338:b392. (doi:10.1136/bmj.b392) Pico is a test publication format (sort of extended abstract) proposed by *BMJ* and reducing the length of printed research papers while retaining the full electronic version. This allows them to accept and publish more articles. One of the foreseeable effects of pico and the publishing of more research would be to decrease the *BMJ*'s impact factor by increasing the denominator. This may or may not be compensated by an increase in readership, circulation, and citation (the impact factor numerator).

Nielsen MA. **The future of science: building a better collective memory.** *APS News* 2008;17(10):8. Discusses the relative failure of science to improve the long-term memory and short-term use of the internet to enhance science communication beyond that of using conventional journals. Most attempts to create comment sites where scientists can share their opinions of scientific papers have failed, while the open scientific culture is struggling to succeed; top-down efforts such as open access may be boosted by the National Institutes of Health insisting that every paper they have supported with grants must eventually be made open access, while bottom-up attempts such as the physics preprint arXiv and the particle physics SIPRES-HIV are producing a small but genuine cultural change. The problem of collaboration with initially unknown collaborators is discussed; what is needed is a collaboration market that would ensure ethical behaviour by participants.

Prentice J. **Debating open access and arXiv.** *Physics World* 2009;22(1):20. Letter pointing out that transferring the cost of publishing to the author may make whether to publish a management decision rather than a scientific one.

Ramlagan N. **APS copyright revision expands author rights.** *APS News* 2009;18(2):8.

A recently revised copyright transfer form for APS journal articles allows authors to make and hold copyright for “derivative works” that contain at least 10% new material and not more than 50% of the published article. Otherwise the author must obtain explicit permission from APS. Articles' ideas and material can be reused in conference proceedings and classroom lectures, but the posting of full articles on open content encyclopedia projects like Wikipedia or Quantiki presents a copyright issue. APS gives authors the right to post and update a paper on their (or their employer's) website and on free e-print servers such as arXiv. Authors are entitled to provide full copies of their paper, for research purposes, to a colleague or third party as long as a fee is not charged. Third parties can use copies for teaching, but incorporation into course notes for more than one semester requires permission from APS.

Taylor RI. **Licence to publish better than copyright transfer.** *APS News* 2008;17(10):4.

Letter advocating the policy of the author's employers, a commercial organization that never transfers copyright but only deals with journals prepared to accept a Licence to Publish agreement, which allows the publisher to print the article in their own format and to distribute electronically, while retaining the copyright on the content allowing future use of the text, pictures, etc.

Wiley S. **No to negative data: why I believe findings that disprove a hypothesis are largely not worth publishing.** *Scientist* 2008;22(4):39. Some scientists have become so concerned about negative data that they have created journals dedicated to publishing negative results. Negative results don't seem to advance science, therefore they are not worth publishing. Science is a set of ideas that can be supported by observations. A negative result does not support any specific idea, but only

tells you what isn't right. Negative results can be biased and misleading in their own way, and they are often the result of experimental errors, rather than true findings.



## RESEARCH EVALUATION

Banks M. **Elsevier challenged over journal operations.** *Physics World* 2009;22(1):10.

Reports concern about the Elsevier journal *Chaos, Solitons and Fractals*, whose editor-in-chief has published 334 papers since 1991, 290 of which appear in his own journal – including 58 papers in the last year, 53 of which are in the journal itself, and whose papers have received 39,540 citations, 35% of which were by himself.

**Experts still needed: there are good reasons to be suspicious of metric-based research assessment [editorial].** *Nature* 2009;457:7–8. (doi:10.1038/457007b)

There are different kinds of metrics for research, but they do not always prove to give robust results. This is the case of the Research Assessment Evaluation in UK. Expert review is far from a problem-free method of assessment, but policy-makers must recognize its indispensable and central role.

Falagas ME, Lerodiakonou V, Alexiou VG. **At what age do biomedical scientists do their best work?** *FASEB Journal* 2008; 22(12):4067–4070.

(doi:10.1096/fj.08-117606)

Several human characteristics that influence scientific research performance, including set goals, mental and physical abilities, education, and experience, may vary considerably during the life cycle of scientists. Is high-quality research productivity is associated with investigator's age? On the basis of a bibliometric analysis, highly cited research productivity plotted a curve that peaked at age 31–35 years and gradually decreased with advancing age. A considerable proportion of this highly cited research was produced by older scientists. High-quality scientific productivity in the biomedical fields as a function of investigator's age plots an inverted U-shaped curve, in which significant decreases take place from around 40 years of age and beyond.

Levitt JM, Thelwall M. **Citation levels and collaboration within library and information science.** *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 2009;60(3):434–442.

Examines the Web of Science subject category of Information Science & Library Science and finds that collaboration varies with citation. Collaboration is clearly associated with higher citation, whereas the collaborative rates and levels of the un-cited articles remained low and stable. Influential information scientists had high collaborative levels, but their more highly cited articles on average are not more highly collaborative than their less highly cited articles, even if, they tend to be published earlier. The article introduces a new indicator of collaborative level: the average partner score, which can be used in other investigations of collaboration.

Van Leeuwen T. **Testing the validity of the Hirsch-index for research**

**assessment purposes.** *Research Evaluation* 2008;17(2):157–160. (doi:10.3152/095820208X319166)

Describes the results of a recent bibliometric study conducted in the Netherlands focusing on the level of the individual researcher, in relation to an academic reward system. The Hirsch index is compared with various bibliometric indicators and other characteristics of researchers, and its usefulness in particularly research assessment procedures is tested. Results show a strong bias towards the research field(s) in which a researcher is active, thereby limiting the validity of this indicator for the specific interest of evaluation practices.

Cassi L, Corrocher N, Malerba F, Vonortas N. **The impact of EU-funded research networks on knowledge diffusion at the regional level.** *Research Evaluation* 2008;17(4):283–293.

(doi:10.3152/095820208X364535) Research networks foster the dissemination of innovation-related knowledge. The structure of collaborative networks and of knowledge transfer between research, innovation, and deployment activities is evaluated in the field of information and communication technology for the European Union as a whole and for several European regions. Results show that research networks complement diffusion networks by increasing the number of links and organizations involved in exchanging knowledge. Two types of actors are key players in these networks: hubs maintain the bulk of ties in the networks also helping the smaller and more isolated members remain connected; gatekeepers bridge research and diffusion networks.

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The next Annual General Meeting of EASE will be held in the Palazzo dei Congressi, Pisa, Italy at 3 pm on Wednesday 16 September