

Irresistible proxies? Peer review and (mainstream or alternative) bibliometric

Maria Chiara Pievatolo

Università di Pisa - Dipartimento di Scienze politiche

pievatolo@dsp.unipi.it

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Summary

The lords of (meta)data

Metadata: a sociological theory of knowledge

"Traditional" bibliometric indices

The research evaluation spell

"Alternative" bibliometric indices' ?

Open access - moderate or radical?

Basic concepts

From the CERN to ArXiv

Open access routes (green, gold - red)

Moderate Open access: let's tame the commercial publishers!

Radical Open Access: let's go past the age of printing!

Overlay Journal: Gowers

SJS: more than an archive, better than a journal

Peer-to-peer review

The very concept of a journal is losing its meaning

OA for the unresolved: open archives and preprints servers

Micro-bibliography

Elsevier presents SciVal

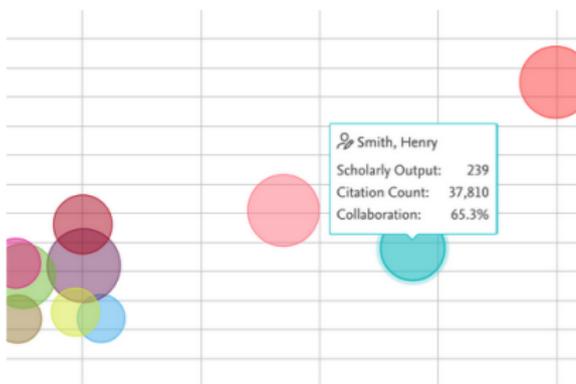


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SPARC Landscape Analysis 2019

Academic publishing is undergoing a major transition as some of its leaders are moving from a content-provision to a data analytics business. This is evidenced by a change in the product mix that they are selling across higher education institutions, which is expanding beyond journals and textbooks to include research assessment systems, productivity tools, online learning management systems – complex infrastructure that is critical to conducting the end-to-end business of the university.

Through the seamless provision of these services, these companies can invisibly and strategically influence, and perhaps exert control, over key university decisions – ranging from student assessment to research integrity to financial planning. Data about students, faculty, research outputs, institutional productivity, and more has, potentially, enormous competitive value. It represents a potential multi-billion-dollar market (perhaps multi-trillion, when the value of intellectual property is factored in), but its capture and use could significantly reduce institutions' and scholars' rights to their data and related intellectual property. A set of companies is moving aggressively to capitalize on this data, often by exploiting the decentralized nature of academic institutions.

Elsevier: the information system supporting research

Four principles of...



...the information system supporting research

B.Brembs: "corporate monopolies controlling our scholarly workflow, owning our data and parasitizing scholarship"

Four principles of...

The Evilsevier Empire



...the information system supporting research

"A huge and unchanged profit margin"



PROFESSIONAL JOBS SUMMITS RANKINGS ST

Elsevier profits near £1 billion despite European disputes

The publisher has reported steady growth and profit margins of more than a third but warned of threat to business from open access

February 22, 2019

Elsevier has shrugged off a breakdown in contracts with German and Swedish universities to swell its profits to nearly £1 billion in 2018, its latest financial results reveal.

The Amsterdam-based publisher reported an all but unchanged profit margin of 37.1 per cent.

It made £942 million in profits on revenues of about £2.5 billion, according to [financial results](#) released on 21 February.

Academic publishers' profit margins have long been a bone of contention for critics, who argue that their control over prestigious journals allows them to charge academics and libraries excessively high prices.

The results, contained in a wider financial report from Elsevier's parent company RELX, appear to show that the publisher has been all but financially unaffected by a series of often acrimonious disputes with universities across Europe, which have sought to negotiate better deals with the publisher on open access.

In spite of some EU and USA cancellations.

Elsevier profits from hybrid Open Access

OPENAPC

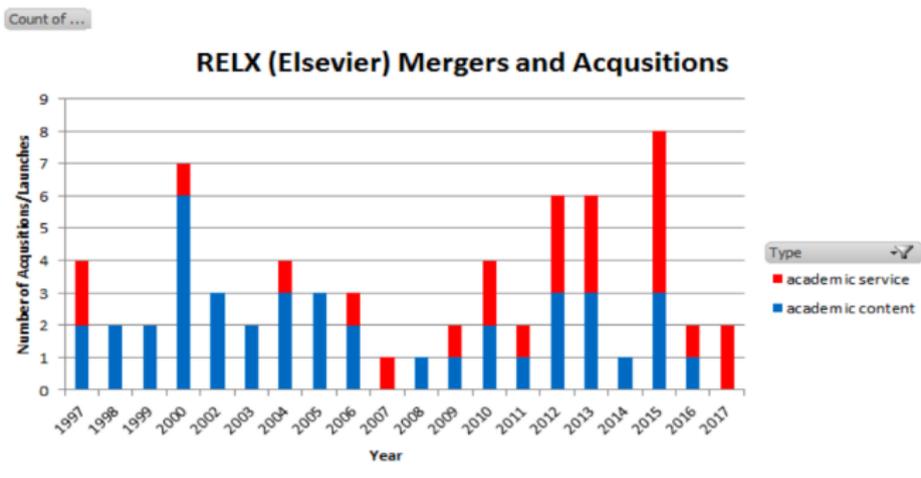


Elsevier earns a *growing* profit from hybrid Open Access

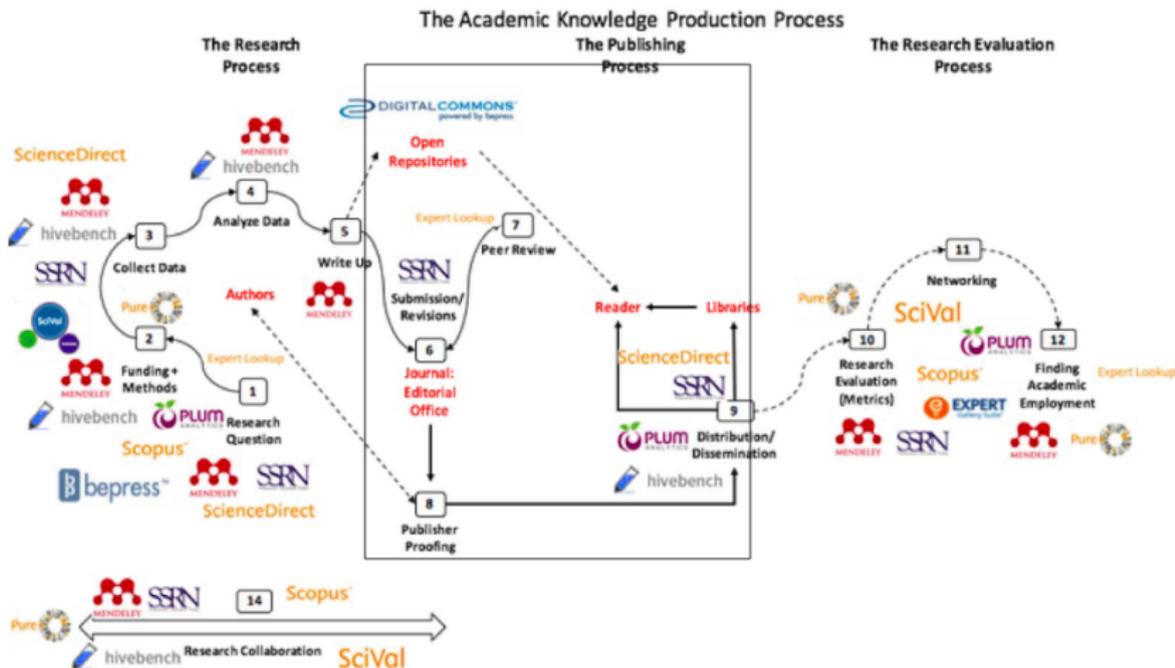
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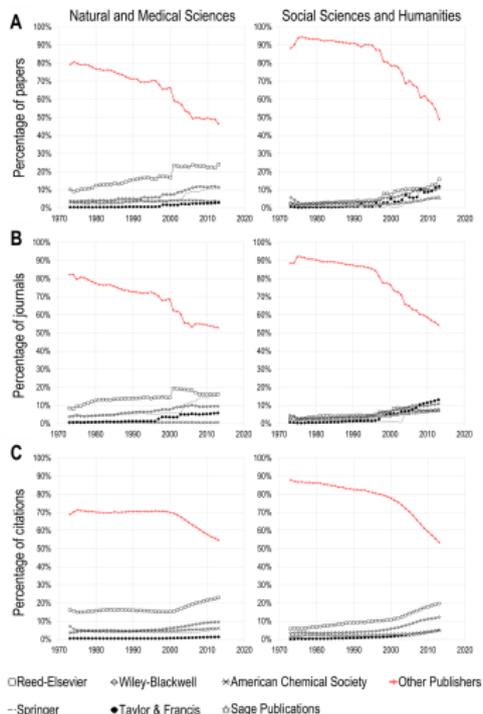
Elsevier is diversifying its supply [Posada-Chen, 2018]



Elsevier is omniscient and ubiquitous [Posada-Chen, 2018]

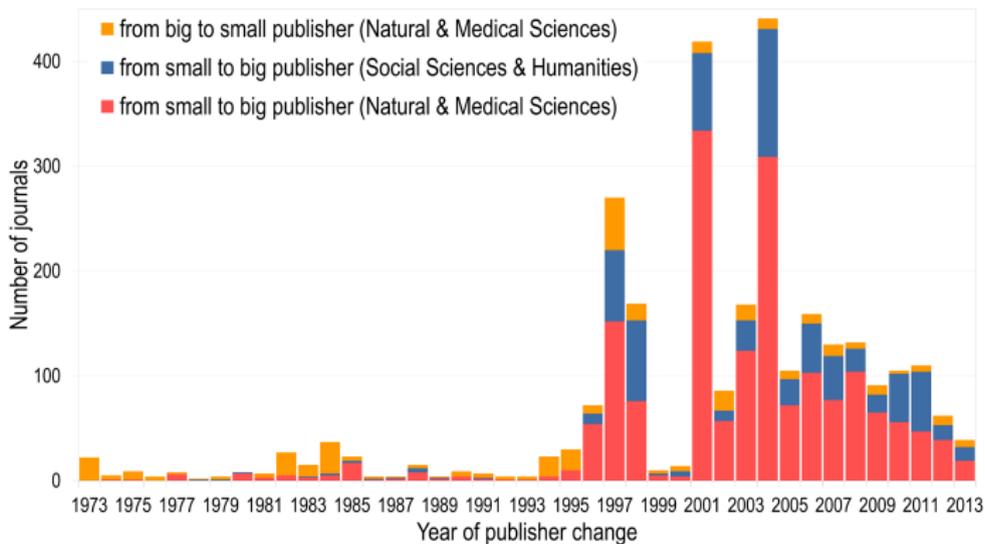


The shift of scientific publishers towards oligopoly [Larivière et al. 2015]



Digital revolution and scientific publishing concentration

[Larivière et al. 2015]



You are a gadget, indeed

Jaron Lanier, *You are not a Gadget*, IV

In the same way, digital Maoism doesn't reject all hierarchy. Instead, it overwhelmingly rewards the one preferred hierarchy of digital metaness, in which **a mashup is more important than the sources that were mashed**. A blog of blogs is more exalted than a mere blog. If you have seized a very high niche in the aggregation of human expression—in the way that Google has with search, for instance—then you can become superpowerful. The same is true for the operator of a hedge fund. “Meta” equals power in the cloud.

For profit: SCI and JIF [Figà Talamanca, 2002]

The former Institute for Scientific Information (currently: Clarivate Analytics) was a commercial enterprise founded by Eugene Garfield. It sells:

- ▶ the Science Citation Index (1964): a bibliography research tool for librarians and science sociologists, on the model of Shepard's Citations (Lexis-Nexis) [Garfield, 1955];
- ▶ from whose data: Journal Impact Factor (1975) assessing the importance of scientific journals from the perspective of librarians

The JIF was **not** meant to evaluate individual researchers (Garfield, 1998)

"In many countries in Europe, I have found that in order to shortcut the work of looking up actual (real) citation counts for investigators the journal impact factor is used as a surrogate to estimate the count. I have always warned against this use. There is wide variation from article to article within a single journal."

Journal Impact Factor

JIF: a ratio between the number of citations, received in a single year, of articles published in a journal during the two preceding years, divided by the total number of "citable papers" published in that journal during the same two years.

JIF = articles cited in the year X / citable articles, published in the years X-1 and X-2

H index (2005), measuring individual researchers' productivity and citation impact

It needs only two pieces of data:

- ▶ the number of published papers
- ▶ the number of citations for each paper

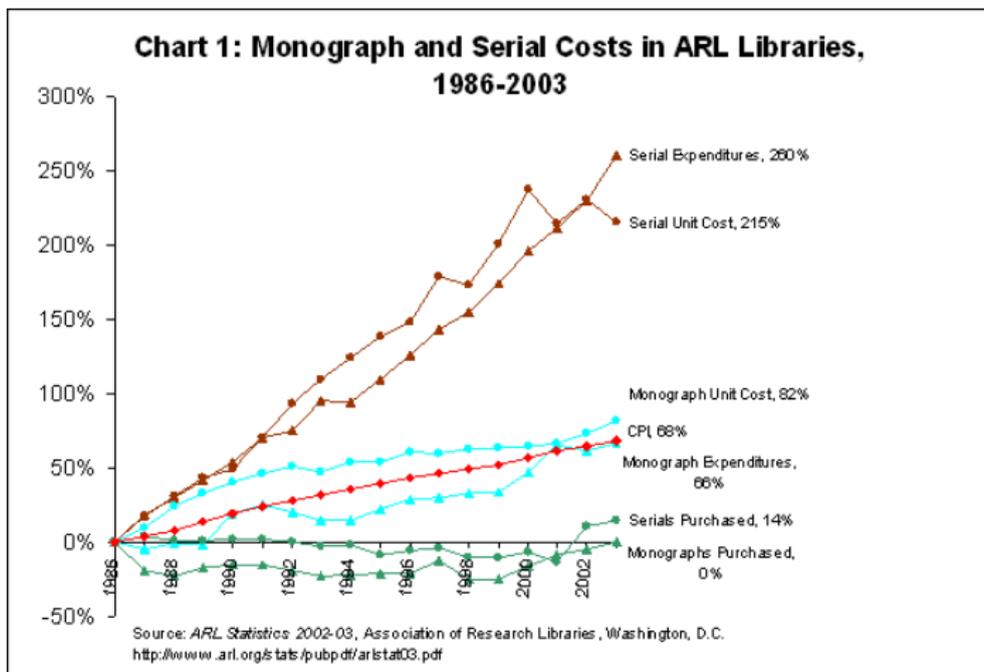
Definition

A scholar with an h index has published h articles each of which received at least h citations

The lords of metadata

- ▶ Bibliometric scores are calculated from closed and proprietary databases (Clarivate Analytics, Scopus)
- ▶ Universities and research institutions using bibliometric for assessment purposes cannot avoid to purchase them and to subscribe to the journals indexed by them,
- ▶ Publishers can raise their subscription prices *ad libitum*

Serials crisis



G. Monbiot, *The lairds of learning*, 2011

Capitalism? Nay: feudalism.

- ▶ The academic publishers get articles, peer reviewing and much of the editing for free
- ▶ Researchers and university libraries must pay them to get their own work back.
- ▶ and/or to have their manuscripts published (APCs) . . .
- ▶ for a symbolic reward, whose meaning depends on the research assessment system

Even if it were true that citations are the currency of science

Future cannot be judged on the basis of the past without blocking any possible progress.

A system of beliefs - or even an ethos - whose justification depends on its partakers' free choice cannot be codified in a coercive norm without cutting the root of its very legitimacy.

Reviewers are blinkered by bibliometrics

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Nature website, including the logo, search bar, and various menu items like Home, News & Comment, Research, etc. Below the navigation is a breadcrumb trail: Archive > Volume 544 > Issue 7651 > Comment > Article. The article title is 'Reviewers are blinkered by bibliometrics' by Paula Stephan, Reinhilde Veugelers, and Jian Wang, dated 26 April 2017. The abstract states: 'Science panels still rely on poor proxies to judge quality and impact. That results in risk-averse research, say Paula Stephan, Reinhilde Veugelers and Jian Wang.' There are buttons for PDF, Rights & Permissions, and subject terms: Research management · Publishing. On the right, there is a 'nature briefing' sidebar with a 'Sign up' button and a 'Listen' section with a headphones icon.

nature International weekly journal of science

Search: [Advanced search](#)

Home | News & Comment | Research | Careers & Jobs | Current Issue | Archive | Audio & Video | For Authors

Archive > Volume 544 > Issue 7651 > Comment > Article

NATURE | COMMENT E-alert RSS Facebook Twitter

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Reviewers are blinkered by bibliometrics

Paula Stephan¹, [Reinhilde Veugelers](#)² & Jian Wang²

26 April 2017

Science panels still rely on poor proxies to judge quality and impact. That results in risk-averse research, say Paula Stephan, Reinhilde Veugelers and Jian Wang.

Subject terms: [Research management](#) · [Publishing](#)

nature briefing

What matters in science — and why — free in your inbox every weekday.

Listen

<https://www.nature.com/news/reviewers-are-blinkered-by-bibliometrics-1.21877>

Outputs, collaboration, usage, social impact [EUA, 2019]

	Measure	Based on	Examples
Conventional metrics	Research output	Number of publications and number of citations, based on bibliometric databases, e.g. Web of Science, Scopus, Google Scholar	Journal Impact Factor (JIF), h-index, field normalised citation index, Eigenfactor, SCImago Journal Rank (SJR), Source Normalized Impact per Paper (SNIP), CiteScore, etc.
	Collaborations	Co-authorship	Leiden Ranking, etc.
Usage-based metrics	Usage, i.e. uptake and attention	Number of views or downloads of an item	Usage Impact Factor (UIF), Libcitations, etc.
Alternative metrics	Social outreach	Social media (Twitter, blogs, etc.) and scientific social networks (ResearchGate, Mendeley, etc.)	Altmetric.com, PLUMx, ImpactStory, Bookmetrix, Datacite, etc.
Next-generation metrics	Yet to be developed "open metrics" going beyond alternative metrics		

Usage based metrics: an example



The screenshot shows the PLOS ONE website header with navigation links (PUBLISH, ABOUT, BROWSE) and a search bar. Below the header, the article title "The Oligopoly of Academic Publishers in the Digital Era" is displayed, along with author names and a red arrow pointing to a metrics table. The table contains four metrics: Save (489), Citation (157), View (150,639), and Share (4,359).

PLOS ONE PUBLISH ABOUT BROWSE SEARCH Q
advanced search

OPEN ACCESS PEER-REVIEWED
RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Oligopoly of Academic Publishers in the Digital Era

Vincent Larivière  Stefanie Haustein, Philippe Mongeon

Published: June 10, 2015 • <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0127502>

489 Save	157 Citation
150,639 View	4,359 Share

EUA: looking for responsible metrics

"What is the point of research evaluation if it doesn't actually leave us with a better research system than the one we started with?"

- ▶ metrics are proxy values measuring research productivity and visibility, but not necessarily its quality
- ▶ the alternative metrics (altmetrics) measure its usage and social impact, but share the limitations of the former (even their data are closed!)
- ▶ the next generation metrics should be open and complementary to human decisions [LERU, 2018]

An example: the proposal of a Journal Transparency Index

TOP GUIDELINES TRANSPARENCY AND OPENNESS PROMOTION

Transparency, open sharing, and reproducibility are core values of science, but not always part of daily practice. Journals, funders, and societies can increase research reproducibility by adopting the TOP Guidelines.

8 MODULAR STANDARDS

CITATION STANDARDS Cite shared data to incentivize their publication	DATA TRANSPARENCY Disclose, require, or verify shared data
ANALYTICAL METHODS TRANSPARENCY Disclose, require, or verify shared code	RESEARCH MATERIALS TRANSPARENCY Disclose, require, or verify shared materials
DESIGN AND ANALYSIS TRANSPARENCY Sets standards for research design disclosures	PREREGISTRATION OF STUDIES Specification of study details before data collection
PREREGISTRATION OF ANALYSIS PLANS Specification of analytical details before data collection	REPLICATION Encourages publication of replication studies

ACROSS 3 TIERS

Open Access

Peter Suber, A definition

Open-access (OA) literature is **digital, online, free of charge**, and **free** of most copyright and licensing restrictions. What makes it possible is the internet and the consent of the author or copyright-holder.

From the CERN to ArXiv, and beyond

- ▶ Cern, 1989: invention of the web (T. Berners-Lee)
- ▶ Los Alamos, 1991: ArXiv (P. Ginsparg)
- ▶ Santa Fe, 1999: Open Archives Initiative
- ▶ OAI-PMH v. 1.0, 2001 e v. 2.0, 2002
- ▶ Budapest 2002: Open Access Initiative
- ▶ Bethesda 2003: Statement on Open Access Publishing
- ▶ Berlino 2003: Berlin declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities

The Berlin Declaration

It was a commitment

1. to open the licenses
2. to set up open archives
3. to encourage researchers to choose the open access way of publishing
4. to advocate that open access publication be recognized in promotion and tenure evaluation.

The ways of Open Access

- ▶ *Self-archiving* (green route): the full text of academic publications is deposited in repositories either institutional (such as Openaire) or disciplinary (such as the ArXiv)
- ▶ *Overlay journals (content curation)*
- ▶ *Open publishing* (golden route): full open access journals (Plos, Directory of Open Access Journals)
- ▶ Red route (predatory OA) - for predatory researchers

Business models: who pays, who don't

Who pays

1. *Readers*
2. *Authors*
3. *Institutions*

Who accesses

1. Closed access
2. Open access
3. Open access

By which route

1. Green route
2. Golden route, red route
3. Platinum route

Plan S

A plan supported by the research institutions (like the INFN) and funders gathered in Coalition S

“With effect from 2021, all scholarly publications on the results from research funded by public or private grants provided by national, regional and international research councils and funding bodies, must be published in Open Access Journals, on Open Access Platforms, or made immediately available through Open Access Repositories without embargo.”

Taking the digital revolution sensuously

- ▶ Printing: filter, then publish \implies closed peer review
- ▶ Internet: publish, then filter \implies open peer review, texts and data curation, TDM

Experimenters

- ▶ T. Gowers: let's cut the cost of knowledge, let's emancipate ourselves from the publishers
- ▶ M. Bon: let's rebuild a science open, transparent and communitarian
- ▶ K. Fitzpatrick: let's reconnect humanities to human beings, by opening their texts
- ▶ M. Eisen: with 30,000 scientific journals, the very idea of journal is losing its meaning

Discrete Analysis



“I want to be aggressively modern. I want to use the internet properly – when you’ve got something, you post it”

- ▶ an ArXiv overlay journal
- ▶ with no charge for authors and readers

Gowers: long-term goals

- ▶ opening all the processes of science, from discovery to debate
- ▶ go beyond commercial journals and publishers: scientist do not need them to criticize (peer-review) their colleagues :-)

Science needs a public reason

Publishing should be public [Bon, 2015]

I suggest that all shortcomings in the current publication system are rooted in the fact that it has drifted away from Science ethics, with **publication – peer review, evaluation and dissemination – being privatized**. A process whose rationale is to be open, transparent, and community-wide has become trapped in editors' mailboxes. The validity and value of a scientific work are both decided once and for all time, by two or three people in a process that is confidential, private, anonymous, undocumented, and with short deadlines. Here, I use the term “privatization” not mean that the process is conducted by private companies, but to imply **it concentrated in a few hands**. Whilst some may consider that private publishers charge exorbitant (and unaffordable) prices for their journals, my arguments still stand if the current system was entirely run by public institutions, learned societies or any non-profit organization.

The Self Journals of Science

The logo for the Self Journals of Science (SJS) consists of the letters 'SJS' in a white, serif font, centered within a solid black rectangular box.

The **Self**-Journal of
Science

An open
non-commercial
repository with
free journal-like
services

Transparent, communitarian, esplorabile

- ▶ an open archive
- ▶ an open peer review
- ▶ a distributed overlay curation

BETA VERSION - RELEASED ON 26 JANUARY 2015

An example

The screenshot shows the SJS website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Log in / Register', 'Tree of Knowledge', 'Search', 'Tutorials', and 'About SJS'. The main content area is divided into a left sidebar and a main article section. The sidebar features a 'Priority 14' badge with a 'Who?' link and a 'Prioritize' button. Below this are options to 'Add to my journal' and 'Follow this article'. A statistics section shows 'Reviews: 13', 'Views: 14866', and 'Curators: 1'. At the bottom of the sidebar are links for 'Download the pdf' and 'Supplemental files'. The main article section displays two voting prompts: 'This article has reached scientific standards' with 4/6 votes and 'This article still needs revisions' with 2/6 votes, each with a 'Who?' link and a 'Vote' button. The article title is 'Principles of the Self-Journal of Science: bringing ethics and freedom to scientific publishing', categorized as 'Essay and Opinion'. The version information at the bottom states 'VERSION 1 Released on 24 January 2015 under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License'.

SJS

Log in / Register Tree of Knowledge Search Tutorials About SJS

Priority
14 Who?
Prioritize

Add to my journal
Follow this article

Reviews 13
Views 14866
Curators 1

Download the pdf
Supplemental files

This article has reached scientific standards 4 /6 Who? Vote

This article still needs revisions 2 /6 Who? Vote

Essay and Opinion

Principles of the Self-Journal of Science: bringing ethics and freedom to scientific publishing

VERSION 1 Released on 24 January 2015 under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License

Commentpress - a Wordpress plugin

about this article

mediacommonspress CommentPress
open scholarship in open formats New (Social) Structures for New (Networked) Texts

Search Register Log in

CONTENTS COMMENTS ACTIVITY

about this article

1 *...there are still many tricks that electronic technology is quite incapable of performing; still many structural, practical, and interpretative problems embedded in the new systems; still many radical and continuing limitations on the supposed electronic management of knowledge." (Donaldson 2)* 0

2 *"If 'digital natives' are the next audience for our scholarly resources, shouldn't we be thinking about new ways to organize, store, and deliver our content?" (Wittenberg)* 0

3 This article, originally submitted for review as a [CommentPress draft](#), was in October 2007 simultaneously published by [MediaCommons](#) and the [Journal of Electronic Publishing](#). 0

4 Thanks are due to Ben Vershbow, Bob Stein, Judith Turner, and Shana Kimball for making this simultaneous publication of the article possible. 0

5 Comments are open and appreciated, but moderated for first-time posters. 0

6 — Kathleen Fitzpatrick 0

about this article
Introduction
codes, not print
documents, e-books, pages
hypertext
anti-hypertext
reading and the communications circuit
scholarly discourse networks
the future of the book
holy of holes
operation: trialogue

K. Fitzpatrick and the academy of the undead [Fitzpatrick, 2009]

We need to go beyond the traditional closed (peer?) review, because

- ▶ it hinders the circulation of ideas
- ▶ excludes authors from the debate

Open, post-publication peer review

- ▶ is transparent, acknowledges the reviewers' work, connects authors to their scholarly community but . . .
- ▶ requires a cooperative community of knowledge

OPR module for D-space, EU funded


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[arvoConsultores](#) / **Open-Peer-Review-Module**

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forked from DSpace/DSpace

0
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This is the site for the Open Peer Review Module. Project financed by OpenAIRE 2020, EU-Horizon2020 Grant ID 643410, with the following partners: Open Scholar CIC, UK DIGITAL-CSIC repository , Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas-Spain; Artificial Intelligence Research Institute, IIIA-CSIC; Department of Computer Science and Artifici...

📄 7,394 commits
🌿 20 branches
📦 85 releases
👤 72 contributors

Branch: **master**

This branch is 104 commits ahead, 1660 commits behind DSpace:master.

Commit	Message	Time
 aroman	Merge branch 'oprm'	Latest commit e25aaa0 on 23 Apr 2016
 dspace-api	Modulo oprm	9 months ago
 dspace-jsui	[maven-release-plugin] prepare release dspace-5.2	2 years ago

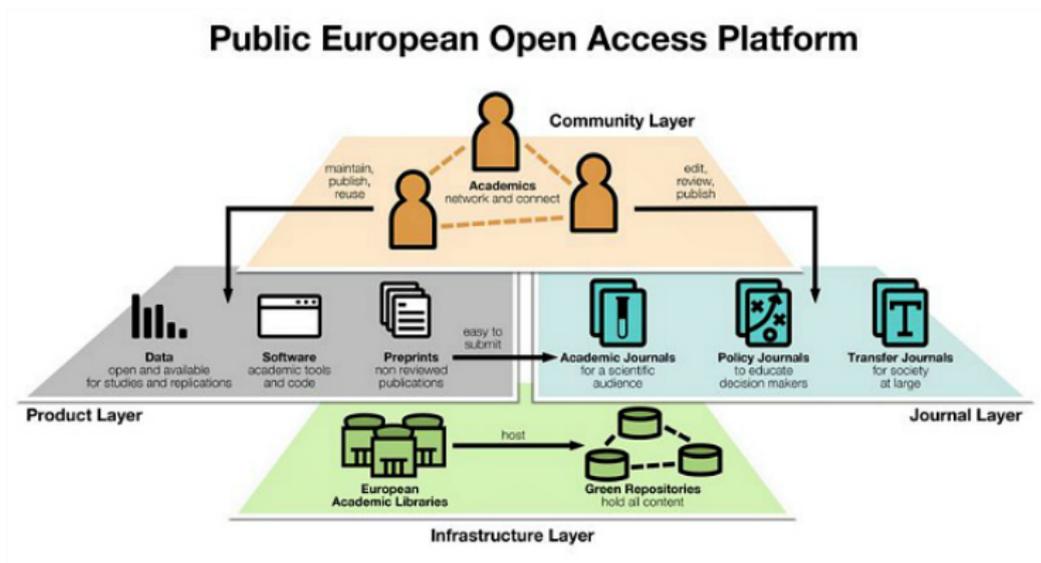
<https://github.com/arvoConsultores/Open-Peer-Review-Module>

"The very existence of a journal as a concept itself is somewhat nonsensical" [Sanders, 2019]

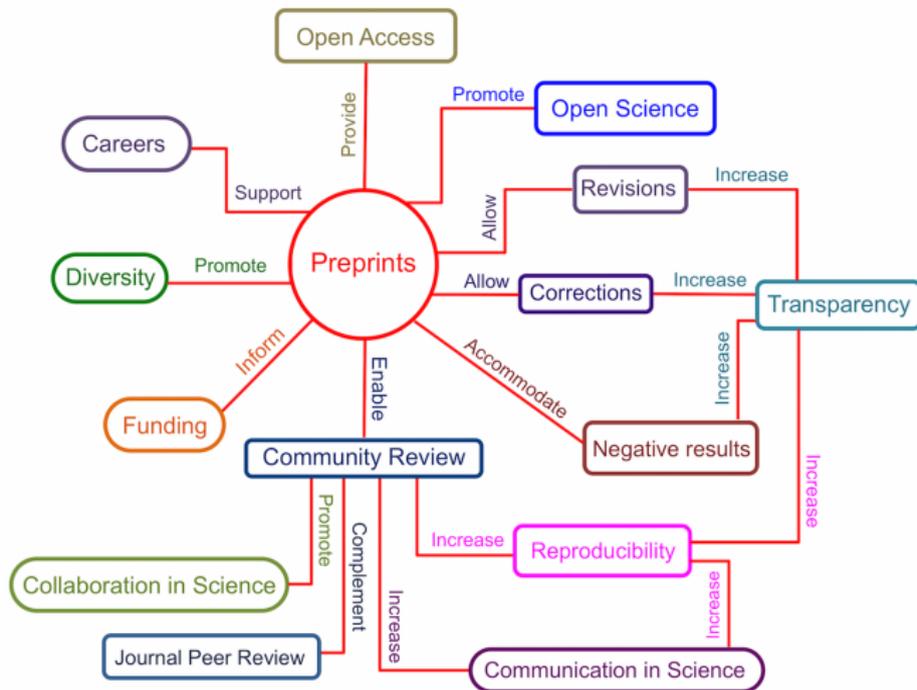
Michael Eisen, co-founder of PLOS and editor of "E-life":

- ▶ closed access is just one among the pathologies of publishing, legacy of the age of printing
- ▶ 30.000 scientific journals are too many to be point-of-references
- ▶ Outsourcing to journals decisions about who academic recruitment and tenures costs us billions of dollars
- ▶ and outsources our research choices to commercial publishers as well

A public European infrastructure for Open Science? [Fecher et al., 2017]



Before "publishing", make your manuscripts *actually* public :-) [Sarabipour et al., 2019]



Institutional and disciplinary archives

- ▶ <https://arpi.unipi.it/>
- ▶ <https://zenodo.org/>
- ▶ <https://www.openaccessrepository.it//>
- ▶ <http://repec.org/>
- ▶ <http://arXiv.org/>
- ▶ <https://osf.io/preprints/>: <https://engrxiv.org>,
<https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv>,
<https://osf.io/preprints/lawarxiv> ...
- ▶ <https://asapbio.org>
- ▶ <http://www.nihms.nih.gov>

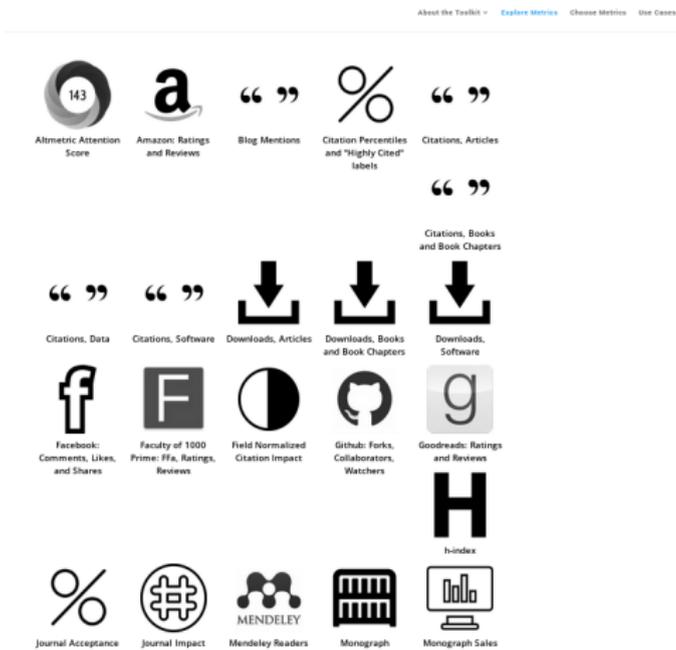
- └ Open access - moderate or radical?
- └ Open archives and preprints servers

ResearchGate and Academia.edu are not open access archives!

	Open access repositories	Academia.edu	ResearchGate
Supports export or harvesting	Yes	No	No
Long-term preservation	Yes	No	No
Business model	Nonprofit (usually)	Commercial. Sells job posting services, hopes to sell data	Commercial. Sells ads, job posting services
Sends you lots of emails (by default)	No	Yes	Yes
Wants your address book	No	Yes	Yes
Fulfills requirements of UC's OA policies	Yes	No	No

 <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/> University of California OSC

Metrics are not magic: use them in a responsible way!



<https://www.metrics-toolkit.org/>



Lindsay Ellis (2019)

Elsevier's Presence on Campuses Spans More Than Journals. That Has Some Scholars Worried.

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/Elsevier-s-Presence-on/246048>



Alejandro Posada, George Chen (2018)

Inequality in Knowledge Production: The Integration of Academic Infrastructure by Big Publishers

<https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-01816707>



Alessandro Figà Talamanca (2002)

The "impact factor" in the evaluation of research

<http://revistes.ub.edu/index.php/bullgirso/article/view/5926>



Larivière V, Haustein S, Mongeon P. (2015)

The Oligopoly of Academic Publishers in the Digital Era

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0127502>



Eugene Garfield (2006)

The History and Meaning of the Journal Impact Factor

<http://www.garfield.library.upenn.edu/papers/jamajif2006.pdf>



Eugene Garfield (2006)

Citation indexes for science. A new dimension in documentation through association of ideas

<https://doi.org/10.1093/ije/dyl189>



R.K. Merton (1942)

The Normative Structure of Science

In The Sociology of Science. Theoretical and Empirical Investigations, 1973

<https://www.panarchy.org/merton/science.html>



Sarabipour S, Debat HJ, Emmott E, Burgess SJ, Schwessinger B, Hensel Z (2019)

On the value of preprints: An early career researcher perspective

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pbio.3000151>



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Reflections on University Research Assessment. Key concepts, issues and actors

<https://eua.eu/downloads/publications/reflections%20on%20university%20research%20assessment.pdf>



LERU (2018)

Open Science and its role in universities: A roadmap for cultural change

<https://www.leru.org/files/LERU-AP24-Open-Science-full-paper.pdf>



Michael Bon (2015)

Principles of the Self Journal of Science: bringing ethics and freedom to scientific publishing

<http://www.sjscience.org/article?id=46>



Kathleen Fitzpatrick (2009)

Planned Obsolescence

<http://mcpres.media-commons.org/plannedobsolescence/>



Robert Sanders (2019)

New eLife editor Michael Eisen wants to shake up scientific publishing

<https://news.berkeley.edu/2019/04/04/new-elife-editor-michael-eisen-wants-to-shake-up-scientific-publishing/>

[//news.berkeley.edu/2019/04/04/new-elife-editor-michael-eisen-wants-to-shake-up-scientific-publishing/](https://news.berkeley.edu/2019/04/04/new-elife-editor-michael-eisen-wants-to-shake-up-scientific-publishing/)



Fecher, Benedikt; Friesike, Sascha; Peters, Isabella; Wagner, Gert G. (2017)

Rather than simply moving from “paying to read” to “paying to publish”, it’s time for a European Open Access Platform

<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2017/04/10/rather-than-simply-moving-from-paying-to-read-to-paying-to-publish-its-time-for-a-european-open-access-platform>

[rather-than-simply-moving-from-paying-to-read-to-paying-to-publish-its-time-for-a-european-open-access-platform](https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2017/04/10/rather-than-simply-moving-from-paying-to-read-to-paying-to-publish-its-time-for-a-european-open-access-platform)