

Use Free Open Access Journals

(This document now refers to a wider range of forms of open access publishing)

Aaron Sloman

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1 Mar 2011; 12 Mar 2011; 13 May 2011; 9 Jul 2011; 29 Sep 2011; 11 Feb 2012; 7 Jun 2012; 5

Oct 2012; 28 Oct 2012; 31 Dec 2012

This file is:

<http://www.cs.bham.ac.uk/research/projects/cogaff/misc/open-access-journals.html>

Also available as <http://tinyurl.com/CogMisc/open-access-journals.html>

A slightly messy, automatically created PDF version is

<http://www.cs.bham.ac.uk/research/projects/cogaff/misc/open-access-journals.pdf>

See also this discussion of advantages of post-publication reviewing:

<http://tinyurl.com/CogMisc/post-publication-review.html>

Additional discussion notes are listed in: <http://tinyurl.com/CogMisc/AREADME.html>

[Jump to Main Contents List](#)

NOTES AND NEWS

NEWS 30 Jan 2013: Anthony Finkelstein's blog on open access is consistent with the viewpoint presented here:

<http://blog.prof.so/2012/08/on-open-access.html>

This is also relevant:

<http://www.the-scientist.com/?articles.view/articleNo/33209/title/Less-Influence-for-High-Impact-Journals/>

The Scientist

Less Influence for High-Impact Journals

A new study reveals that more and more of the world's most-cited articles are published outside of high prestige, high impact factor journals.

By Dan Cossins | November 9, 2012

The influence of high-impact factor journals is declining, according to a study published this week (November 7) in the Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology. The findings raise questions over the relationship between the impact-factor-the current best measure of a publication's influence-and the number of citations subsequently received by papers published in that journal.

NEWS 5 Oct 2012: Interesting discussion - "PLoS ONE: from the Public Library of Sloppiness?"
<http://occamstypewriter.org/scurry/2012/04/01/plos1-public-library-of-sloppiness/>

NEWS 16 Jul 2012: UK Government will require all publicly-funded research to be made freely available to the public from late 2013.

<http://www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/2012-07/16/research-open-access-david-willetts>
Willetts said: "Removing paywalls that surround taxpayer funded research will have real economic and social benefits. It will allow academics and businesses to develop and commercialise their research more easily and herald a new era of academic discovery. This development will provide exciting new opportunities and keep the UK at the forefront of global research to drive innovation and growth."

Professor Doug Kell, RCUK Champion for Research and Information Management said: "Widening access to the outputs of research currently published in journals has the potential to contribute substantially to furthering the progress of scientific and other research, ensuring that the UK continues to be a world leader in these fields. I am delighted that, together, the Research Councils have been able both to harmonise and to make significant changes to their policies, ensuring that more people have access to cutting edge research that can contribute to both economic growth in our knowledge economy and the wider wellbeing of the UK."

24 Feb 2011 [Expanded Feb 2012; June 2012]: My current attitude to non-open-access journals.

I shall not normally knowingly and freely submit articles to **closed-access** journals for publication, or do any reviewing for them.

I am not alone: thousands more have similar attitudes: <http://thecostofknowledge.com>.

If there's anything for which my web site is not a suitable medium I'll try one of the many excellent old and new **open-access** journals. (See examples [below](#).)

One of many reasons for this is that I have increasingly been finding that the subscription charges of traditional journals (e.g. published by Springer, Elsevier, World Scientific, and others, are being used to pay marketing people to spam me with unwanted announcements about new publications, new issues, new offers etc. Our precious, very limited, research funding should not be used to subsidise those processes. These people do not realise that if we want to find out about what has been published in some topic we can use search engines very effectively, and do not need to have already large amounts of incoming spam increased. (Of course, people who want to be informed can ask to be informed.)

Some of these publishers claim that they give authors the option to have open-access publications, but their charges are so extortionate as to deter most researchers from accepting that offer. This is obviously a deliberate policy to deter them from choosing the open-access option. Examples that I have found include Elsevier, Springer, Wiley and others (e.g. the `{\em Topics in Cognitive Science}` journal, to which I refuse to contribute, partly because they also require use of MSWord, not LaTeX.

For this and other reasons indicated below, when asked to review for a NON open access journal I shall normally decline on the grounds that I don't see why I should do unpaid work to benefit the shareholders of the company, and more importantly, I want to make the researchers concerned with the journal think about open access alternatives.

Editorial boards have been known to defect from commercial publishers and start afresh. E.g. see <http://thecostofknowledge.com>.

More researchers should now join the refusers, especially as there is now free software available to do most of the admin required for a journal automatically, as has already been happening for research conferences for several years. (See the excellent [examples](#) listed below.)

Academics should also refuse to collaborate with appointment, tenure, or promotion committees that that use **where** research is published as a criterion of excellence, instead of making strenuous efforts to judge the **quality** of the research (using expert external referees if necessary). The strongest reason for this is that even if publication in a high quality journal is evidence of research quality, rejection by such journals is NOT evidence of poor quality, partly because such journals have limited space available, partly because refereeing can be of variable quality, and partly because in the current research climate it is in the interests of journals to report high rejection rates.

Occasionally colleagues ask me to co-author, or review, or contribute to something involving a closed journal. In some cases, if I think they really need my help I may go along with this while trying hard to encourage them to switch to using open-access options in future. (Harder for young academics when so many appointment and promotion committees pay more attention to where something was published than to its quality -- an intellectually lazy and irresponsible attitude to selection or promotion.)

My policy is provisional and may change.

MAIN CONTENTS

- [NOTES AND NEWS](#)
- [Note on Acceptance Rates](#)
- [Updates and News about Open Access: Journals, Repositories, Blogs, ...](#)
- [My original Discussion Note on Open Access Journals](#)

(With some revisions included from time to time: A benefit of web site over paper.)

Note on Acceptance Rates

Many journal editors boast about how low their acceptance rates are compared with other journals.

What they don't say is that submitting a paper to their journal is a waste of time for the vast majority of authors -- if their main objective is to get their papers published.

Of course the journal may be providing a useful service if all the submitted papers are carefully reviewed and the authors get helpful feedback that will improve their research an future publications.

However, I think that for many researchers the use of pre-publication reviewing is the wrong system. Open access combined with post-publication reviews can, for many purposes provide a superior model, for reasons given in <http://www.cs.bham.ac.uk/research/projects/cogaff/misc/post-publication-review.html>

NOTE: There are now so many new open access journals being announced that I cannot keep up.

I randomly select some to include here, to indicate the sort of thing that's happening.

I normally refuse to contribute to or review for journals that are not open access, or which are open but charge authors extortionate amounts (presumably to discourage them from selecting the open access option, e.g. Springer, Elsevier and others).

The amount of unwanted, unsolicited, advertising spam I get from advertising managers at such companies shows what subscriptions and author charges are being used to pay for.

I would prefer not to use my precious funds to pay for such activities.

Updates and News about Open Access: Journals, Repositories, Blogs,

...

31 Dec 2012

Frontiers in Open Science
<http://www.frontiersin.org/>

Frontiers is an online platform for the scientific community to publish open-access articles and network with colleagues.

Fast, open-access publication

Rigorous peer-review in real-time thanks to our interactive, online interface

Detailed metrics to follow the impact of articles

A networking platform made especially for the scientific community

[Example Article types](#)

[Example Author fees](#)

28 Oct 2012

Constructivist Foundations
<http://www.univie.ac.at/constructivism/journal>

This is an international peer-reviewed academic e-journal dedicated to constructivist issues raised by philosophy as well as the natural, human, and applied sciences. The journal publishes original scholarly work in all areas of constructivist approaches, especially radical constructivism, enaction and enactive cognitive science, second order cybernetics, biology of cognition and the theory of autopoietic systems, non-dualizing philosophy, and first-person research, among others. The readers of the journal will be kept up-to-date with the central issues of the Constructivist Community.

There are no author charges, and access is free, though reading journal articles requires registration.

Volume 7, Number 3 15 July 2012

<http://www.univie.ac.at/constructivism/journal/7/3>

7 Jun 2012

Theoria
<http://www.ehu.es/ojs/index.php/THEORIA/>

Established in 1952 by Miguel Sanchez-Mazas, THEORIA is one of the leading philosophy journals in the Spanish-speaking world and a well-ranked publication in the Europe Science Foundation index (ERIH: INT2). It has also been ranked A by the Spanish ANEP and in the CARHUS plus index of the Generalitat de Catalunya. THEORIA cooperates with two Spanish philosophical societies: SOLOFICI and SEFA.

It is regularly indexed in the following databases: Arts & Humanities Citation Index., ISI Alerting Services, SCOPUS, Current Contents./Arts & Humanities, DOAJ, Bulletin Signaletique 519, ICYT, ISOC, MathSci,

Mathematical Reviews, Current Mathematical Publications, Philosopher's Index, Repertoire bibliographique de la Philosophie. It also features prominently in national databases such as DICE and MIAR.

THEORIA is a non-profit editorial venture. It is published by the University of the Basque Country under a Creative Commons Licence. It is part of the Open Journal System (OJS) and all its papers (from 2003 onwards) are freely available on-line.

Current issue:

<http://www.ehu.es/ojs/index.php/THEORIA/issue/current>

14 Nov 2011

Humanities - Open Access Journal

<http://www.mdpi.com/journal/humanities>

Humanities is an international, peer-reviewed, quick-refereeing open access journal, which publishes works from extensive fields including history, law, literature, philosophy, religion, arts, linguistics and so on. There is no restriction on the length of the papers as we encourage researchers to publish their innovative ideas and results in as much detail as possible. To guarantee a rapid refereeing and editorial process, Humanities follows standard publication practices in the natural sciences.

Subject Areas:

* History

* Law

* Literature

* Philosophy

* Religion

* Arts

* Linguistics

* Other related areas

<http://www.mdpi.com/about/apc/>

Article processing charges (for authors)

1 Oct 2011

The Open Philosophy Journal

<http://www.benthamscience.com/open/tophilj>

The Open Philosophy Journal is an Open Access online journal which publishes peer-reviewed articles and guest edited single topic issues addressing all aspects of philosophy. Research areas covered by the journal: include metaphysics, epistemology, logic, ethics, political philosophy, aesthetics, philosophy of religion, science, psychology, mind, language and law, and ancient philosophy. The emphasis will be on publishing quality articles rapidly and freely available to researchers worldwide.

Articles are licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons

[Attribution non-commercial License](#) which permits

unrestricted, non-commercial use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, providing that the work is properly cited.

PUBLICATION FEES:

Short Articles and Discussion Notes: The publication fee for each published Short Articles and Discussion Notes submitted is US \$250.

Research Articles: The publication fee for each published Research article is US \$300.

Mini-Review Articles: The publication fee for each published Mini-Review article is US \$250.

Review Articles: The publication fee for each published Review article is US \$350.

29 Sep 2011

Rationality, Markets and Morals

<http://www.rmm-journal.de>

Studies at the Intersection of Philosophy and Economics

An open access journal published by Frankfurt School Verlag

17 Sep 2011:

Philosophy and Theory in Biology,

<http://philosophyandtheoryinbiology.org>

Online open-access peer-reviewed journal that aims to bridge

philosophy of science and theoretical biology.

(Alas latex not accepted.)

9 Jul 2011:

Minerva - An Internet Journal of Philosophy
<http://www.mic.ul.ie/stephen/voll3/Own13.html>

Minerva is a refereed electronic journal of philosophy. It is published annually and is available on an open-access basis on the Internet. The journal publishes articles relating to philosophy construed in a broad but scholarly sense, without preference for any particular school or intellectual tradition. Each volume will appear in the month of November. As an electronic journal, Minerva provides swift publication and distribution, while reaction to published articles can be garnered with equal speed. It is intended that the journal will foster debate by publishing considered replies to certain articles and providing a forum for scholarly discourse.

Featured articles and all other materials, unless otherwise indicated, are the copyright of the Journal, under the terms of the Copyright Act 1963. All rights are reserved, but fair and good faith use with full attribution may be made of all contents for educational or scholarly purposes.

EDITOR

Dr. Stephen Thornton

Head, Department of Philosophy, MIC, University of Limerick, Ireland.

15 Apr 2011:

International Journal of Genetics and Molecular Biology
<http://www.academicjournals.org/IJGMB>

Journal of Cell and Animal Biology
<http://www.academicjournals.org/JCAB>

Both committed to free open access, but there's a charge for authors (\$550 when I looked -- much lower than some prestigious journals).

From web site:

Authors may still request (in advance) that the editorial office waive some of the handling fee under special circumstances

10 Apr 2011: The Berlin Journal of Philosophy

<http://www.adrianpiper.com/berlinjphil/>

The Berlin Journal of Philosophy is a blind-submission, double-blind, peer-reviewed, open-access journal that will publish articles on all topics in the four traditional major areas of philosophical specialization, namely

epistemology & metaphysics
logic
value theory
history of philosophy

and their established subspecialties (long list follows).

NOTE: The emphasis on double-blind reviewing prompted me to write some notes on the advantages of post-publication reviewing, here:

<http://www.cs.bham.ac.uk/research/projects/cogaff/misc/post-publication-review.html>

12 Mar 2011: Journal of Interdisciplinary History of Ideas

<http://www.jihi.eu>

A new open-access academic peer-refereed journal, devoted to interdisciplinary history of ideas. Interdisciplinary history of ideas focuses on the bonds that relate more general historical study in the field, and special fields such as the history of philosophy, history of economic thought, history of science, history of art, history of law, and so on, that are usually severed in research works, though connected in the real course of intellectual history.

14 Feb 2011: Praxis (Publisher: University of Manchester)

<http://praxisjp.org/>

Praxis is an online postgraduate journal of philosophy edited by postgraduate students at the University of Manchester.

Our aim is to offer an opportunity for research students, post-doctoral scholars and new academics to publish papers and reviews in an international peer-reviewed journal, providing special support for those in the beginning of their academic career.

- 13 Jan 2011: Journal of the philosophical-interdisciplinary vanguard

<http://www.avant.umk.pl/en/>

Our aim is to spread the idea of modern interdisciplinary philosophy, sciences and humanities, and to propagate the relations between them and art. We are mostly interested in new approaches to human cognition like new trends in cognitive science, modern phenomenology, new approaches in psychology, enactivism, embodied and situated cognition, extended mind, social ontology, sciences of complexity and others. We believe that these conceptions are crucial for development of contemporary anthropology and should be widely introduced to people interested in complex theories of human behaviour.

- 29 Dec 2010: Journal of Cosmology Astronomy - Astrobiology Earth Sciences - Life

<http://journalofcosmology.com/Charges.html>

Open access publishing provides immediate, worldwide, free access to the full-text of all published articles. Open access allows scholars, scientists, government officials, and the general public to view, download, print, and redistribute any article without a subscription. Open access publishing insures a far superior means of distribution compared to the traditional subscription-based publishing model. Because there are no subscription fees, publication costs are paid from an author's research budget, or by their supporting institution, in the form of Article Processing and Publication Fees.

All Processing and Publication Charges Are Waived for Invited Papers. Article Processing Fee: The Journal of Cosmology is a Peer Reviewed Open Access journal and requires the payment of a \$35.00 Article Processing Fee to cover costs for processing and managing the peer review process. Manuscripts will not be processed until all Processing Fees have been paid.

All articles are peer reviewed. This \$35.00 fee is not refundable if the article is rejected.

Article Publication Fee: If the article is accepted, there is a \$150.00 Publication Charge, that will be billed to and must be paid by the submitting author following the acceptance of the article for publication.

Accepted articles will not be published until the publication fee is received.

- 13 Dec 2010: What is the LOCKSS Program? LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe)

<http://lockss.stanford.edu/lockss/Home>

LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe), based at Stanford University Libraries, is an international community initiative that provides libraries with digital preservation tools and support so that they can easily and inexpensively collect and preserve their own copies of authorized e-content. LOCKSS, in its eleventh year, provides libraries with the open-source software and support to preserve today's web-published materials for tomorrow's readers while building their own collections and acquiring a copy of the assets they pay for, instead of simply leasing them. LOCKSS provides 100% post cancellation access.

The ACM award-winning LOCKSS technology is an open source, peer-to-peer, decentralized digital preservation infrastructure. LOCKSS preserves all formats and genres of web-published content. The intellectual content, which includes the historical context (the look and feel), is preserved. LOCKSS is OAI-compliant; the software migrates content forward in time; and the bits and bytes are continually audited and repaired.

- 13 Dec 2010: Journal for the History of Analytical Philosophy (JHAP)

<http://jhaponline.org/>

JHAP aims to promote research in and discussion of the history of analytical philosophy. 'Analytical' is understood broadly and we aim to cover the complete history of analytical philosophy, including the most recent one. JHAP takes the history of analytical philosophy to be part of analytical philosophy. Accordingly, it publishes historical research that interacts with the ongoing concerns of analytical philosophy and with the

history of other twentieth century philosophical traditions. In addition to research articles, JHAP publishes discussion notes and reviews.

The Journal is published in the spirit of the open access movement. Articles will be freely available in electronic form.

Published by New Prairie Press
Open Journal Systems

13 Dec 2010: The Baltic International Yearbook of Cognition, Logic and Communication
<http://thebalticyearbook.org/journals/baltic>

3 Dec 2010: HYLE: International Journal for Philosophy of Chemistry
Free access to all papers available <http://www.hyle.org>
HYLE combines autonomous scientific quality management (double blind peer review) with modern technology of electronic production and distribution. We are committed to the policy of the Budapest Open Access Initiative and, thus, avoid obsolete, costly, time-consuming, and heteronomous procedures of traditional commercial publishers. This enables an up-to-date forum for discussion in the young field of the philosophy of chemistry and brings the international community together, without discriminating scholars from financially less developed countries.

17 Nov 2010: International Journal of Artificial Intelligence and Expert Systems (IJAE)
<http://www.cscjournals.org/csc/description.php?JCode=IJAE>
Publisher: Computer Science Journals
Open Access, but authors pay USD\$160 publication fee.

8 Nov 2010: Journal of Logic and Analysis
<http://www.logicandanalysis.org/>
[No author charges. No reader charges.]
This journal examines the interaction between ideas or techniques from mathematical logic and other areas of mathematics, especially, but not limited to, pure and applied analysis. Journal of Logic and Analysis publishes papers in nonstandard analysis and related areas of applied model theory; papers involving interplay between mathematics and logic (including foundational aspects of such interplay); and mathematical papers using or developing analytical methods having connections to any area of mathematical logic.

3 Nov 2010: Yet another web site about open access in academic disciplines
http://open-access.net/de_en/open_access_in_individual_disciplines/philosophy/
http://open-access.net/de_en/homepage/
The open-access.net platform aims to meet the growing demand for information on the subject of Open Access (OA). Our editorial team gathers information which is scattered across many sources and bundles it thematically for presentation to various target groups.

25 Oct 2010: MIT Faculty Open Access Policy
Policy adopted by unanimous vote of the faculty on 3/18/2009:
<http://info-libraries.mit.edu/scholarly/mit-open-access/open-access-at-mit/mit-open-access-policy/>
(Thanks to Rosalind Picard for information about this.)

3 Oct 2010: <http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/10-02-10.htm>

SPARC Open Access Newsletter, issue #150

October 2, 2010 by Peter Suber

"Self-archiving diary

I have a confession to make. For as long as I've urged scholars to support OA, I've urged them to self-archive. But I wasn't systematic about doing it myself until last year.

....

Note to repository managers: Supporting PDF alongside other formats like HTML and XML is a feature; supporting PDF-only is a bug.

...."

(There's lots more. Well worth reading.)

Personal comment by A.S.: My own work straddles disciplines and topics in ways that make it hard for me to use repositories designed by others. Also I don't believe in 'archival' publishing. There should always be opportunities for authors to update their works if they can improve them (as composers have been doing for centuries. The vast majority of what is published is of little or no value and will hardly ever be read. So the cost of elaborate permanent archiving mechanisms is not justified. Simple permanent archiving allowing edits (perhaps with histories of edits) should suffice for the vast majority of publications.)

3 Oct 2010: OpenDepot.org

<http://opendepot.org/information.html> OpenDepot.org

The purpose of OpenDepot.org is to ensure that all academics worldwide can share in the benefits of making their research output Open Access. For those whose universities and organisations have an online repository, OpenDepot.org makes them easy to find. For those without a local repository, including unaffiliated researchers, the OpenDepot is a place of deposit, available for others to harvest.

We have tried to make OpenDepot.org easy or researchers and authors to use.
(Hosted by Edina: University of Edinburgh)

29 Sep 2010: [International Journal of Artificial Intelligence & Applications \(IJAAIA\)](#)

Open Access, but \$120 author charge, up to 20 pages.

26 Sep 2010: Open Journal Systems

<http://pkp.sfu.ca/ojs-journals>

A sample of the "over 6600" journals using OJS

<http://pkp.sfu.ca/?q=ojs>

"Scholars need the means to launch a new generation of journals committed to open access, and to help existing journals that elect to make the transition to open access..."
Budapest Open Access Initiative, 2002

Open Journal Systems (OJS) is a journal management and publishing system that has been developed by the Public Knowledge Project through its federally funded efforts to expand and improve access to research. OJS assists with every stage of the refereed publishing process, from submissions through to online publication and indexing. Through its management systems, its finely grained indexing of research, and the context it provides for research, OJS seeks to improve both the scholarly and public quality of refereed research.

OJS is open source software made freely available to journals worldwide for the purpose of making open access publishing a viable option for more journals, as open access can increase a journal's readership as well as its contribution to the public good on a global scale (see PKP Publications).

(See also Directory of Open Access Journals, below)

26 Sep 2010: <http://openhumanitiespress.org/>

From the web page

"Making scholarly work available without charge on the internet has offered hope for the natural sciences and now offers hope in the humanities."

Stephen Greenblatt, Harvard University

Open Humanities Press is an international open access publishing collective in critical and cultural theory.

Open Humanities Press journals are fully peer reviewed, scholarly publications that have been chosen by OHP's editorial advisory board for their outstanding contribution to contemporary theory. OHP's journals are independent, published under open access licences and free of charge to readers and authors alike.

Journals include:

- * Cosmos and History
- * Culture Machine
- * Fast Capitalism
- * Fibreculture
- * Film-Philosophy
- * Filozofski vestnik
- * Image and Narrative
- * International Journal of Zizek Studies
- * Parrhesia
- * Postcolonial Text
- * Vectors

26 Sep 2010:

<http://www.publicpraxis.com/speculations/>

Speculations is a journal of speculative realism that hopes to provide a forum for the exploration of speculative realism and

post-continental philosophy. Our aim is to facilitate discussion about ongoing developments within speculative realism. The journal is open access and peer-reviewed. We accept short position papers, full length articles and book reviews.

Inquiries and submissions can be sent to speculationsjournal@gmail.com

26 Sep 2010:

<http://www.openhumanitiesalliance.org/incubator/index.php/thinkingnature/>
Thinking Nature

This journal provides immediate open access to its content on the principle that making research freely available to the public supports a greater global exchange of knowledge.

22 Sep 2010: <http://www.neuroquantology.com/journal/index.php/nq/issue/current/showToc>

The full back archive for NeuroQuantology (from 2003 to 2010) is now FREE. (Registration needed.)

21 Sep 2010: [Omics Publishing Group](#)

Journal of Computer Science & Systems Biology
Journal of Bioequivalence & Bioavailability
Journal of Antivirals & Antiretrovirals
Journal of Bioanalysis & Biomedicine
Journal of Cancer Science & Therapy
Journal of Microbial & Biochemical Technology
[Other Omics Journals](#)

21 Sep 2010: [Kant Studies Online](#)

23 Aug 2010: [Insciences Open Access Journal](#)

18 Aug 2010 (Updated 1 Mar 2011)

The Directory of Open-Access Journals -- <http://www.doaj.org/> -- includes:

Agriculture and Food Sciences	Languages and Literatures
Arts and Architecture	Law and Political Science
Biology and Life Sciences	Mathematics and Statistics
Business and Economics	Philosophy and Religion
Chemistry	Physics and Astronomy
Earth and Environmental Sciences	Science General
General Works	Social Sciences
Health Sciences	Technology and Engineering
History and Archaeology	

Covers free, full text, quality controlled scientific and scholarly journals. Aims to cover all subjects and languages.

Message posted 1 Mar 2011 claims:

There are now 6208 journals in the directory. Currently 2652 journals are searchable at article level. As of today 514357 articles are included in the DOAJ service.

3 Dec 2009:

This statement by the Scholarly Publishing Office of the University of Michigan is very relevant:

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=jep:view=text;rgn=main;idno=3336451.0009.102>

EARLY DRAFT TO BE REORGANISED

Message sent to some discussion lists for computing and philosophy

From Aaron Sloman Wed Aug 12 15:46:41 BST 2009
Subject: Don't review for subscription-only journals

I have just received another of those 'please will you review' requests from a journal whose accepted papers are available only to people (or organisations) who pay a subscription.

I think that from now on I should agree to review ONLY on condition that if the paper is accepted it will be made freely available to

everyone in the world.

I don't see why my work, or the work of researchers paid for by tax-payers in any country should be available only to people who contribute to the profits of publishers.

Is there any reason why all academics shouldn't start doing this?

In any case, people whose papers are accessible only to subscribers will not be read by people in other disciplines who may be interested, or students, intelligent lay people, etc., so they are losing opportunities to communicate (or get feedback).

There are new journals that make all their articles freely available and charge authors only a small amount, or nothing. We should all submit papers ONLY to those.

Aaron

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NOTE:

It is hard for younger researchers to act on this if they know that job selection panels and promotion panels still use the quality of journals (as measured by impact factors) as a basis for assessing *individuals*.

This is highly immoral: as immoral as assessing people on the basis of where they were born, where they studied, the colour of their skin, etc. It should be made illegal and assessment should be based only on the quality of the work as assessed by experts.

Counting publications in high impact journals instead of reading research reports is an *intellectually lazy* way to do selection.

Another point (30 Nov 2009):

Highly rated journals tend to have much longer publication queues than the newer open-access journals that don't get so many submissions.

So for young researchers wanting (a) to get their papers published and (b) wanting their papers to be read it may be that avoidance of delay may be far more important than being visible in a highly rated place.

Remember many people search for things to read on the basis of their content, not where they are published. Several of my informally published web pages come up higher than articles on similar topics in prestigious journals -- possibly because far fewer people can read and link to those papers.

When I post things on www.slideshare.net they seem to be read by more people more quickly than anything I publish in other places. <http://www.slideshare.net/asloman/presentations>

(Of course, that is not even refereed.)

I suspect that academe may move toward relying far more on post-publication reviewing than on pre-publication reviewing, especially as the latter is known to be full of biases and anomalies, as shown by experiments submitting the same paper with different names and addresses for authors. Blind reviewing cannot eliminate all reviewer prejudices. Even world-leading experts can make serious errors of judgment.

=====

INTERDISCIPLINARITY

(Added 17 Aug 2010)

Two consequences of research output going into journals that require subscriptions are (a) that researchers tend to be limited in what they read since they tend to subscribe to a small subset of the journals whose contents are potentially relevant to their research and (b) that each publication tends to be read by a restricted set of researchers for the same reason.

This in effect means that there is often inadequate cross-disciplinary communication between researchers with overlapping interests leading to duplicated research effort time wasted because relevant knowledge is not available when someone is working on a problem and inadequate teaching, because teachers fail to inform their students of some of the important relevant knowledge. I see effects of this often when interviewing job candidates: they have been trained to focus their research vision in such a narrow way that they really don't understand the problems they are working because they are ignorant of aspects other researchers have already explored.

=====

In October 2009 someone wrote to one of those discussion lists pointing out that their university librarian reported that libraries are moving more and more towards open access journals given that they remain peer-reviewed but free. He wondered if there is any sense that such works are of 'lesser quality' because they are free AND how such journals can survive without charging subscriptions...

This provoked the following response (from me):

It looks as if you did not get the answer sent to the list in response to your earlier posting of this question. I copy it below. I agree with the sentiments expressed and have seen open access journals in other disciplines that are thriving, e.g.

<http://www.jair.org/>

among others.

The doubts being raised about quality are, I suspect, mainly stirred up by those with an interest in preserving the older journals (the companies that publish them, their editors, etc.)

The main obstacle to growth of open access journals is an attitude that individuals and departments should be judged not by the quality of their work but by where they publish their papers. This helps to preserve the near monopoly of the expensive journals. Fortunately in philosophy many of the journals are available at low cost. But the fact that articles are not freely available stops non-subscribers all round the world gaining access.

Do philosophers want their work to be read ONLY by professional philosophers, and do they want to learn only from criticisms by professional philosophers? I hope not.

Regarding ads or sponsorship: the best way to answer that is to look at the journals that try either or both. A lot will depend on how they do it. If ads are too obtrusive people will use other journals.

Aaron

<http://www.cs.bham.ac.uk/~axs>

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Here is some other information posted on discussion lists.

A new OpenAccess journal
LOGOS - Freie Zeitschrift fuer wissenschaftliche Philosophie
<http://fzwp.de>

They use the open journal system for the website, LaTeX for the formatting of the PDF files, and tex4ht for transforming TeX files to XHTML.

There is ABSOLUTELY NO reason why an open-access journal should be of lesser quality than one with limited access.

A good introduction to open access:
<http://www.earlham.edu/~7Epeters/fos/overview.htm>

More information:

A discussion about OA in philosophy:
<http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/2009/06/open-access-journals-in-philosophy-why-arent-there-more-and-more-better-ones.html>

An open access web site with lots of information about philosophy and philosophers:
<http://philpapers.org>

(Apparently does not yet use the OAI protocol for metadata harvesting, therefore, despite all its merits, not yet suitable for uploading articles.)

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At one time people were strongly in favour of using journals with large lists of subscribers because that was the only way to be read by many people. That has been changed completely by the internet: if your paper is freely available and is discovered by search engines, or recommended by other academics it could end up being read by far more people around the world than if it were available only to subscribers to any particular journal. (Most subscribers do not have time to read everything in all the journals they subscribe to, anyway.)

OF COURSE, THE SYSTEM WILL WORK AND PROVIDE LONG TERM AVAILABILITY ONLY IF THE OPEN ACCESS SITES INSTEAD OF BEING FUNDED BY SUBSCRIPTIONS (OFTEN FOR THE BENEFIT OF SHAREHOLDERS) ARE INSTEAD FUNDED BY GOVERNMENTS (TAXPAYERS).

The savings in costs to universities and other educational and research institutions could be enormous, thereby probably more than re-couping the extra costs of supporting the archives, which would otherwise include a contribution to shareholders' profits.

Update: 5 Dec 2009

Here is an example of a government funded open-access collection of journals I have just come across

[http://hrcak.srce.hr/index.php?show=toc&id_broj=3613\(=en](http://hrcak.srce.hr/index.php?show=toc&id_broj=3613(=en)
Hrcak
Portal of scientific journals of Croatia

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For me one of the serious disadvantages of normal journal publications is that items are frozen. Nothing I write is finished: I like being able to make corrections additions, improved wording, etc. If a composer can do it to a symphony or string quartet, why shouldn't a researcher do it to research reports/discussions, etc.

I do not know of any journals that accept updates of previously published papers, whereas many open-access self-archiving repositories do. I suspect it is just a matter of time before the practice spreads, since the use of the internet has enormously reduced the cost compared with replacing paper versions.

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Some links

- <http://www.nicta.com.au/people/rrobinson/publications/citemine-paper.html>
On the Design and Implementation of a Market Mechanism for Peer Review and Publishing
Ricky Robinson
- [Open source and Public Funds](#)
- <http://commercialfreephilosophy.org/>
- [Partial index of discussion notes in this directory.](#)

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[School of Computer Science](#)
[The University of Birmingham](#)