

Past and Future

EON's 2009 volume ends with this issue, but it segues into 2010 in this combined December 2009/January 2010 issue. *EON* has had a successful year, publishing 279 pages on a variety of topics. Thank you to all the authors and editors who have contributed to volume 2. I hope all readers will consider contributing to volume 3.

Open Access

This issue includes two articles on open access publishing, a publishing model that may be different from your own but one with which you should be familiar. Thank you to Ira Salkin for recruiting these articles. Additionally, you might view the 5-part video series on the evolution of the open access medical journal, *PLoS Medicine*¹ and read an overview such as the ALPSPs *The Facts About Open Access*.²

Looking Back . . . and Forward

Jason Roberts, ISMTE's first

president, retires on December 31. Jason will remain as a voting member on the Board in the immediate past president role. Elizabeth Blalock will become ISMTE's second president on January 1. (Please see Jason and Elizabeth's *President's Message* columns on pages 2-5.)

The benefits we all enjoy as ISMTE members are the result of the vision, tenacity, and dedication of Jason Roberts, along with countless hours of hard work. Words are not enough to thank him for what he has created. ISMTE provides us all with the community necessary to enhance our daily work experiences and the opportunities to learn new skills to excel at the work we do. Thank you, Jason, for the great work you have done as our president. Elizabeth, welcome to your new role. We all look forward to your leadership and the future that includes a community of talented, involved individuals striving for the next levels of success.

Kristen Overstreet
Editor, *EON*

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¹ <http://speakingofmedicine.plos.org/about/>

² www.alpsp.org/ngen_public/article.asp?id=0&did=0&aid=270&st=the%20ofacts%20about%20open%20access&coaid=0

[id=0&did=0&aid=270&st=the%20ofacts%20about%20open%20access&coaid=0](http://www.alpsp.org/ngen_public/article.asp?id=0&did=0&aid=270&st=the%20ofacts%20about%20open%20access&coaid=0)

Looking Back

It has been a great honor to serve you all as President of ISMTE over the last two years. After a tremendous amount of planning and considerable effort from many volunteers, we were able to launch successfully in January 2008 and have been growing ever since. I certainly never anticipated how much work goes into running a society. Many members have each spent several hundred hours getting us up and running. The commitment and devotion to the society has been nothing short of amazing.

Over the last couple of years ISMTE has gone from a vague idea of peers getting together to a group focused on raising the profile of editorial office staff and ensuring our needs *and* potential are recognized by the publishing industry at large. Organizations such as the Society of Scholarly Publishing, the Committee of Publication Ethics, and EQUATORNetwork have all recognized, or promoted, our contributions in some form or another. I fully expect ISMTE will be able to announce several strategic partnerships over the next 12 months that should lead to additional member-only resources or opportunities to benefit from the expertise of other organizations. This reflects our emerging stature within the industry as the 'go-to' place for editorial office issues.

Our efforts have been rewarded with several commendable achievements. Hosting four meetings on two continents leaps to mind as probably the biggest accomplishment. Regardless of the educational component, having an opportunity to meet with peers has proven most rewarding. More than 200 different individuals have attended one of these first four meetings. Feedback, especially from delegates attending the 2009 meetings, has been most positive. I look forward to meeting

many more of you at our meetings in 2010. In recognition that, for many, travel to meetings is not an option, we will do more to capture presentations and the essence of the meeting and host these in an online environment.

Other highlights have included receiving *Editorial Office News (EON)* once a month – a truly invaluable resource worth the price of membership alone; some engaging debates with peers on our discussion forum, and receiving support from publishers such as Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford University Press, BMJ Group, the American Chemical Society, and companies such as Aries Systems and Thompson Reuters. Each of these highlights speaks to the rapid maturation of the Society and confirms its long-term stability. The support from publishers and other companies related to our line of work reflects their faith in our ability to reflect our community and serve its needs.

Inevitably, there have been setbacks too, none more so than the sudden passing at the start of September of our amazing, and beloved, Executive Director Beverlee Anderson. Her death has hit a number of us hard as we have lost a friend. Many members were just so thankful they had a chance to meet her for the first time at our Baltimore meeting, heartbreakingly just one month before she died. Our thoughts go out to Dr. Bill Schiller, Beverlee's husband.

Beverlee had succeeded in placing ISMTE on a stable footing and was making plans to get our various committees functioning effectively. As my presidency draws to an end, it is my biggest regret that more has not been accomplished toward achieving a fully functioning committee structure. Committee chairs are now working feverishly in areas such

Looking Back

continued

as Resources, Training, and Membership to meet objectives for 2010, and I urge you to support these activities by participating in some manner. If you are interested in helping, even if in just a small way, please do identify yourself. Let Leslie McGeoch, our new Executive Director, know by e-mailing her at ismteoffice@gmail.com.

ISMTE relies upon the selfless dedication of many volunteers to meet member needs. It is not a corporation – people have to fit the Society around their busy day jobs. Therefore, the more engaged the membership, the more we all benefit by learning from one another. I have found the many new friendships and connections made through the Society most rewarding, both personally and professionally. Through ISMTE I have met many talented individuals who have provided lots of priceless advice, offered a support structure, or opened doors to a variety of opportunities. I'm also struck by how small the journal publishing industry can be, and frequently I bump into ISMTE members while attending various publishing or medical meetings. Just three years ago, such a network did not exist.

There are many, many people I should identify that have all contributed in ways big or small to moving the society forward. I would love to single out everyone but fear this article will take over this issue of *EON* if I do. I must reserve the biggest thanks to everyone on the Board, all of whom are the most incredible set of talented individuals, for their tireless efforts. Beyond a couple of superficial professional connections, none of us really knew each other three years ago. It's a miracle that the Board could function as well as it has done under such circumstances. Everyone has, however, worked hard towards a common goal. I would like to also thank a couple of unsung heroes: Wendy Krank, a new Board appointment for 2010, who

spends hours every week extending a welcome to new members, reaching out to those whose membership is about to expire, and answering several individual requests for new information. I would also like to thank Katy Ladbrook who moderates our discussion forum. I am sure that must be a tough assignment, but Katy performs the role flawlessly and without complaint.

As I step down, it is with great anticipation for the year ahead. 2010 promises delivery of two core components of membership:

- An online resource 'book' will be compiled incrementally throughout the year covering all activities from submission through to the point manuscripts are dispatched to production.
- A suite of online training courses that aim to meet our needs for professional development or cement our understanding of certain topics.

I am confident we will be able to deliver these core components of the Society's mission. These efforts will better succeed, however, through the participation of many members rather than the hard work of a select few.

Well, that's all from me. I am thrilled that Elizabeth Blalock will be leading us over the next couple of years. Elizabeth will be outlining her vision for the years ahead in her first column as president. After stepping down I plan to spend time boosting our resource offerings for members. Since its inception, I have felt it critical that ISMTE offers a considerable range of resources from 'how-to' guides to useful links, all of which will facilitate our daily tasks. Having been a member of several professional associations, I honestly believe ISMTE has so far delivered more for less. I hope you all feel the same. However, there is much work still to be done.

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My reading of the future of journal publishing suggests our respective roles in an editorial office are going to be elevated in significance at a time when other constituents in the business are being marginalized through shrinking budgets. We will be asked to do more – we will ask to do more. Journal operational costs will likely be squeezed further, but in most cases editorial offices already represent one of the best returns on investment amongst the various components of a typical journal's balance sheet. That bodes well for our future. Thanks to the rise of ISMTE, that future is now very much in our hands. It's imperative as a community we are prepared to meet new

potential demands. It is now up to us to deliver great professionalism and show the industry what talent lies within editorial offices across the globe.

I wish you all a prosperous 2010.

Jason

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Looking Forward

It is with humility that I assume the position of President of ISMTE, and I want to start with thanks to Jason Roberts for his outstanding leadership in bringing what was once just an idea to successful fruition. ISMTE is Jason's brainchild, the result of untold numbers of hours of cajoling and encouraging its founders and sponsors. Congratulations to Jason and to the founding members and leaders on establishing in two short years an organization that is now recognized as a leader

in academic publishing. No doubt Jason is a tough act to follow, and I am encouraged that he will remain on board as the immediate past president to ensure continuity and maintain those relationships he fostered during his presidency. The importance of each individual's contributions during this initial period cannot be overstated, nor can the importance of the initial and continuing financial support of our sponsors.

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Despite our considerable accomplishments, work remains to be done, not just by officers and those on the Board, but by all ISMTE members. I see this as one of our Society's great strengths – that every member's talents are needed. Engaging members, and ensuring each is involved in a way that is personally meaningful and that will benefit the organization, will be a major push in 2010.

The only way for members to truly benefit from the myriad opportunities ISMTE has to offer is to participate. Meet new contacts by helping Glen Collins to plan our annual meeting. Build your portfolio by writing for our newsletter, *EON*; Kristie Overstreet and her editorial team are always looking for good ideas and writers. Widen your experience by helping Jason Roberts and our resource team develop online and in-person training tools. Enhance your resume by helping us market the organization. By serving, you may gain more than you'd ever imagined, and the benefits you receive will improve your personal job performance and your publications.

Membership growth will be essential to our health as a society. How does this happen? Not through impersonal e-mail blasts, but through individual members inviting others to join. That is why Wendy Krank's efforts on behalf of ISMTE membership are so effective – she personally touches each potential and new member. In 2010, we will extend these efforts and we will ask every member to invite someone to join ISMTE.

How else can you help ISMTE? Post your resume to our job bank. The more robust the portfolio of resumes, the more likely we are to attract job ads; and you never know what opportunities may come your way. Respond to ISMTE's training needs survey. Erin Dubansky

and her team want your ideas about how ISMTE can serve its members, so help us by providing as much detail as possible. Participate in ISMTE's online discussion forum, where you can post questions and suggest answers to other members' issues. It's also a great way to get to know other members.

Be sure to attend the annual meeting – either in the United States or in the United Kingdom. Spending time with other editorial professionals will educate and inspire you. But if you can't make the trip, ISMTE is working toward providing its meeting proceedings online. And, if you get lonely in-between annual meetings, think about starting a local lunch group with members in your area, with support from ISMTE.

There's a great team poised to use your talents, so don't wait – get involved! More participation from all members allows ISMTE to provide more benefits and better serve its members. So, if you haven't already joined a committee or offered your talents, send a message indicating your willingness and interests to our general address: ISMTE@gmail.com

Wishing you happy holidays and a happy new year.

Elizabeth

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Open Access Publishing: Implications and Outlook

by Neil A. R. Gow

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Scientists must publish or perish, but is the way we are publishing likely to affect the sustainability and perishability of the scientific communities that support our research? The currency of science is the information generated and published as manuscripts by the research community. It would seem logical that the way to maximise the yield on the expensive investment in scientific research would be to make the output of that research as freely available to everyone as possible. Yet, science is also a business, and it is not just the major publishing houses of the world that make a living from scientific publications. Many scientific societies depend partly or, in some cases, almost completely on the income derived from their house journals for the support of scientific meetings, travel grants for members, and other forms of grassroots activity.

The Biosciences Federation (BSF) in the United Kingdom is an umbrella organisation that represents 35 biology-based societies with around 40,000 members. A recent BSF survey showed 27 of these societies published some 75 journals and the average income per journal was around £556k (\$923k) per annum.¹ Twenty societies in the survey organised, on average, eight meetings or other training events per annum at an average of £17k (\$28k) per event. On average, these societies returned more than double the revenue they received from UK institutions into direct support of their

scientific constituencies.¹ Therefore income from publications feeds back directly into the sustainability of scientific communities.

Whilst the income from journals clearly supports a lot of science, it is not clear whether the open access (OA) movement is a threat to this activity. On one hand, some of the journals run by societies are specialist publications and could be seen to be prime candidates that could, in cost-cutting exercises, be picked off by highly stressed library budgets. If payment for journals passes from the point of subscription to the point of publication it might be argued OA is a threat to the work of scientific societies. It is likely well-funded labs that can afford OA charges will direct their resources into the higher impact nonspecialist and aspirational journals rather than the niche subscription-based journals run by scientific societies. On the other hand there are many reasons why the OA tradition has become almost an ethical issue – it has multiple direct and collateral advantages for the author and the reader. This article, which is inspired by an invited talk I presented at a recent meeting of the International Society for Human and Animal Mycology (ISHAM), attempts to summarise the arguments and perspectives about OA publishing and then focus these arguments on the specific context of the funding and publication of work on medical mycology as an example of a scientific

¹ Bioscience Federation report of Learned Societies and Open Access: www.bsf.ac.uk/journals/

BSF_survey_report_July_2008_FINAL.pdf

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continued

community supported by a publishing society via the resources accrued from sales of the journal *Medical Mycology*.

Definitions and Conditions of OA Publishing

OA publishing refers to the publication of articles in an electronic form made freely available to everyone on the Internet without the need for payment, or subscription, to any particular journal or publisher. In OA publishing, *Gold Access* refers to an unrestricted, fully OA model while *Green Access* indicates materials or articles are self-archived in a repository – for example on a server in a university, research institute, or other institution. A survey of an estimated 20,000–25,000 peer-reviewed journals showed approximately 10–15% are now OA.² Browsers such as Open-J-Gate have archived literally millions of articles from more than 5,721 OA journals.³ Prominent in the biological sciences are the raft of PLoS (Public Library of Science) journals, several of which publish articles in medical mycology. PLoS only publishes OA articles, while publishing repositories such as BioMedCentral (BMC) also contain articles in subscription-based journals that have been made OA by special arrangement, usually involving the payment of an OA fee. Most OA journals charge a single fee paid by the authors of an article to cover the costs of peer review, publication, and archiving, although some OA journals have other business models. Typical OA charges are currently around 1,000–3,000 USD, which, it must be noted, is often less than the total cost of page charges and other fees for reprints, colour printing, etcetera, in a conventional non-OA journal. Almost all non-

OA journals, including *Medical Mycology*, now have a provision to make an article OA if requested by the authors, and the associated fees provide a variable but valuable increment of revenue for some journals. However, in general, many society journals do not make great sums of money from the revenues of OA manuscripts because normally authors are not inclined to pay the additional OA fees unless compelled to, and sponsored to do so, by their funding bodies.

Insistence that publicly funded research be made available to the public via immediate online OA is an increasingly common condition made by grant-awarding bodies. Many research councils world-wide have adopted at least a Green (self-archiving OA) policy, and in the United Kingdom, The Wellcome Trust, a major funder of biomedical research, requires *all* outputs from Wellcome Trust-funded grants must be made freely available via BMC. In the United Kingdom, five of the seven major science research councils are requiring at least a Green OA policy. The Howard Hughes Foundation and the National Institutes of Health in the United States are also pushing hard for articles from their research programmes to be made available via PubMed Central. These organizations often make full (in the case of The Wellcome Trust) or partial financial provision for their grant holders to meet the expenses of making their work available by OA. Therefore OA is gathering momentum and credence as a philosophy and work practice in biomedical research.

History of Open Access Publishing

The history of the OA movement can be traced back into the 1940s (see Wikipedia on

² Research Information Network, Research Councils UK, & the Department of Trade & Industry, in association. 2006. UK

Scholarly Journals: 2006 Baseline Report. Electronic Publishing Services & Charles Oppenheim & LISU.

³ Open J-Gate portal: <http://www.openj-gate.com>

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'Open Access [Publishing]' for a comprehensive historical account), although the fruition of the germ ideas has only emerged in more recent years. In 2001, 34,000 scholars around the world signed 'An Open Letter to Scientific Publishers,' calling for 'the establishment of an online public library that would provide the full contents of the published record of research and scholarly discourse in medicine and the life sciences in a freely accessible, fully searchable, interlinked form'.⁴ The signatories to this letter were true campaigners, pledging not to publish in, or to act as a referee for, non-OA journals. This movement led to the establishment of the PLoS. The first major international statement on OA was the Budapest Open Access Initiative in February 2002.^{5,6} It can be argued that many traditional publication and media formats such as radio, television, and the World Wide Web can be considered OA, and the OA format has been highly successful for the publication and exploitation of genome databases and other large data sets generated by genome sequencing centres, for example. It is evident OA is here to stay, and the OA tradition may even eventually replace subscription-based models for the publication of scientific articles.

Rationale and Impact of OA Publishing

There is a simple and persuasive rationale for OA publishing. Immediate access to new research must, almost by definition, increase its impact. Science is by and large paid for through taxation of the general public and that investment flows to the bench scientist via peer-reviewed grants and government-supported universities and research institutions. So it

seems reasonable the reporting of scientific progress should be an open process so its output can be examined, checked, audited, and used by the tax payers who funded it, as well as by other scientists in the field. There are also obvious benefits to researchers to own the right to make their work available to anyone and to know their career will be advantaged by a system that maximizes the ability of anyone, in any place, to use and cite their work. In an OA model the newest research cannot only be scrutinized by those with privileged access to the best and most expensive journals in the most comprehensive libraries, but also by anyone with casual or professional interest in the topic and access to the Internet. Such people would include school students and their teachers, journalists, politicians, people suffering from special ailments researching available treatments and new breakthroughs, and by scientists in developing countries who often have highly restricted library budgets. It is self-evident the rate of scientific progress is proportional to the efficiency by which new information can be assimilated on a global scale. Therefore, OA has the advantages of side-stepping the economic and temporal barriers to the literature, whilst simultaneously increasing public confidence in the transparency, utility, and influence of research and the fame and notoriety of individual scientists. In one analysis of comparative OA and non-OA papers published in Proceedings of the National Academies of Sciences USA, it was reported immediate OA papers enjoyed three times as many citations as non-OA papers appearing in the same issue of that journal.⁷ Such advantages of OA in terms of citations have been verified elsewhere.⁸

⁴ Public Library of Science – open letter: www.plos.org/about/letter.html

⁵ Budapest Open Access Initiative: www.soros.org/openaccess/read.shtml.

⁶ Willinsky, J. 2006. *The access principle: the case for open access to*

research and scholarship. MIT press.

⁷ Eysenbach G. Citation advantage of Open Access articles. *PLoS Biol* 2006; **4**: e157.

⁸ Lawrence S. Free on-line availability substantially increases a paper's impact. *Nature* 2001 **411**: 521.

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However, advocacy of OA is by no means universal. There is a concern pay-for-access publishers, including ISHAM, may become casualties of a world in which the funding of scientific publication migrates away from journals that depend on library subscriptions. Certain types of medical science publications, including clinical case reports and systematic mycology for example, are not always backed by generous research grants and are, therefore, unlikely to find their way into expensive OA journals. For all its egalitarian principles, OA tends to favour the well-funded laboratory even if the output can be read by the financially disadvantaged. There are also practical issues to wrestle with, such as determining the onus of responsibility for payment of work that is the product of joint and collaborative research papers and the possible consequences of OA on the peer-review process that is a guardian of research integrity and strength. Also, there are some challenges to the axiom that accessibility inevitably translates into citability. In a randomised controlled trial experiment published in the *British Medical Journal*, some articles published via the American Physiological Society flotilla of journals were made freely available within a study period, whilst others were obtainable only by subscription.⁹ After the first year in which the papers were published, this analysis again showed a strong positive correlation between being OA and the numbers of article downloads. However the enhancement to the number of downloads did not translate into more citations compared to the subscription-based articles – at least within this timeframe.

Perspectives and Conclusions

The OA tradition is now firmly established

and gaining ground in the scientific arena and is increasingly being adopted as a tenet of the funding mechanism operated by many grant awarding government and private bodies. Thus far OA has not impacted negatively on the financial model of publishing scientific societies, who can gain income from OA fees from specifically resourced research groups. In the future there is a possible scenario in which OA could destabilise the income stream of publishing societies, which can be demonstrated to be a vital component of the research culture and mechanism through which quality research is delivered, supported, and reported. Perhaps the greatest concern would be for the types of research not supported by block funding via major research grants and niche topics that do not enjoy the degree of patronage of the big topics in medicine – this might be seen to include medical mycology. Nonetheless, in the meantime, OA has many advantages individually to the active researcher and collectively to an online world community of specialists and non-specialists alike.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Mark Walport of The Wellcome Trust and Ron Fraser of the Society for General Microbiology for sharing information related to Open Access publishing. My own group's research is supported by The Wellcome Trust, BBSRC, MRC, and EC and has been published by Open Access arrangements since 2007.



⁹ Davis PM, Lewenstein BV, Simon DH, Booth JB, Connolly MJL. Open access publishing, article downloads and

citations: randomised controlled trial. *Brit Med J* 2008; **337**:a568, doi:10.1136/bmj.a568.

Open Access: The Views of an Established Print Publisher

by **Kristina Munn**

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The continuing debate around Open Access (OA) is complex and controversial. The individual stakeholders (the academic world, the publishing industry, the public, governments) have many of the same goals but have contrasting views on how these should be achieved due to different pressures and influencing factors. In terms of visibility and availability, the benefits of OA are clear. However, these come at a price that must be taken into consideration by commercial publishers when considering which strategy(ies) to employ.

As an established commercial publisher, we have been invited to express our views on the impact of OA on our business model(s) and outline how we are attempting to cope with the increasing requests from authors for OA.

Who Are We?

Informa plc (www.informa.com), an FTSE-250 company with offices in 40+ countries, 150 businesses, and over 10,000 employees worldwide, is a leading media organisation with activities spanning across a number of specialist market sectors, including science, technology, and medicine (STM).

Informa Healthcare (www.informahealthcare.com) publishes 180 original research and review journals covering basic science,

pharmaceutical research and development, and Phase IV/post-marketing studies, and aims to serve the advancement of drug discovery and development, as well as clinical medicine and life sciences by enhancing communication among pharmaceutical and medicine researchers and decision-makers, and by providing innovative solutions to their information needs.

The Benefits of Open Access

As I mentioned above, the benefits of OA are clear in that it makes articles more visible, discoverable, and retrievable, and in so doing, it enhances the availability of information and research data¹. OA may increase the usage of a paper and its wide dissemination to all areas of the world, to those in and out of the direct field of research presented. Although it has been suggested making papers OA leads to increased citations, the extent of its direct and/or indirect impact on the citability of reports is under discussion. In brief, past investigations concluded OA can lead to huge increases in citations (the so-called 'OA citation advantage')². However, since the publication of this and other research, further studies have concluded that although OA does have an impact, there are other influencing factors that must be taken into consideration³.

¹ Open Access Overview. Peter Suber. Available at: www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/overview.htm

² Hajjem, C., Harnad, S., and Gingras, Y. (2005) Ten-year Cross-Disciplinary Comparison of the Growth of Open Access and How it Increases Research Citation Impact. Bulletin of the IEEE Computer Society Technical Committee

on Data Engineering 28:4 39-46. Available at: http://sites.computer.org/debull/bull_issues.html

³ Craig I.D., *et al.* (2007) Do Open Access Articles Have Greater Citation Impact?: A critical review of the literature. *Journal of Informetrics* 1:3 239-248. Authors' version available online at www.publishingresearch.net/Citations-SummaryPaper3_000.pdf

Publisher's Views on OA

continued

Another investigation concluded:

A journal receives a modest increase in citations when it comes online freely, but the jump is larger when it first comes online through commercial sources. This effect reverses for poor countries where free-access articles are much more likely to be cited⁴.

The debate continues.

All that said, OA does come at a cost because while it may be free for the reader, the publication of information is not free. The infrastructure costs related to editorial management, production, access, and storage are still present in OA journals.

Who pays?

There are two widely recognised OA models:

- Green – articles are deposited in freely available private or institutional repositories either at the point of submission, after peer review and acceptance, or after publication. In theory this model would be supported by subscription revenue of the journals in which the papers were originally published. However, in the long term this model is potentially unsustainable. It not only undermines the value added by peer review if deposited at the point of submission but also reduces important sources of revenue (*e.g.*, subscriptions and the sale of rights to the use articles). A survey found librarians are likely to cancel

subscriptions if self-archiving becomes commonplace⁵.

- Gold – articles are made OA in the journal where they were originally published, in fully OA journals or as individual papers in subscription-based journals. Since this model may also create a loss in revenues, other methods of financing must be found. These include the author-pays model, where per-article and/or per-page charges are incurred by the author/funding body/academic institution.

The gold model is potentially more sustainable in terms of recovering costs. However, as a business model for a commercial publisher, the sustainability is being questioned in terms of both profitability and long-term quality of the product. While free of charge for the end user, who ensures the quality of the end product?

Quality and Profitability

Very few of the pay-to-publish OA journals make a profit or break even. How will these journals be maintained? By OA enthusiasts/philanthropists? By increasing charges? Will assessing author fees encourage publishers to lower their peer-review and acceptance standards in order to maximize revenues? There is some evidence this has occurred in full OA journals⁶. Are authors therefore taking a risk when paying to publish in these journals? Are the scientific rigour and reputation of the journals reliable?

⁴ Open Access and Global Participation in Science. James A. Evans and Jacob Reimer. *Science* 20 February 2009: 1025.

⁵ Beckett, Chris & Simon Inger, 'Self-Archiving and Journal Subscriptions: Co-existence or Competition? An International Survey of Librarians' Preferences' PRC [Publishing Research

Consortium] Summary Papers 2 (2007).

⁶ Shepherd, J. 'Editor quits after journal accepts bogus science article' (Thursday 18 June 2009). Available at: www.guardian.co.uk/education/2009/jun/18/science-editor-resigns-hoax-article

Publisher's Views on OA

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Barriers

Are the author-pays OA journals replacing the information access barrier with barriers to publication? Do all researchers have the funds available to support the OA charge (which ranges from \$500 to \$4,500 per paper)? Would an author pay to publish in an OA journal when the individual may publish the work for free in an equally or more prestigious journal? Will this pay-to-publish model exclude authors from developing countries who are now increasingly contributing to the literature?

Submissions

Complete OA is a viable option for new journals as an author-pays model can be introduced without jeopardising potential submissions from regular authors. However, for existing journals, submission numbers may fall if a fee is introduced for publication when authors previously could have their work published for free. From experience, Informa is not losing submissions as a result of not offering complete OA in all our journals. In our Scandinavian portfolio, a region with an OA-positive attitude, the number of submissions from research groups has remained the same, or increased a little, since making some of the journals OA. The ranking (Impact Factor and other metrics) of the journal is still the deciding factor for authors in selecting where to submit their papers.

It is important to note the two models, green and gold, can co-exist as a hybrid model; and whilst we establish which business model(s) works to satisfy all parties, we aim to utilise this hybrid model, as well as experimenting with new ideas to move forward to provide innovative solutions to the question of OA.

Open Access Options at Informa Healthcare

Across the 180 journals published by Informa Healthcare, we are currently employing the following OA options:

- Gold OA – optional author-pays OA for all journals.
- Three fully OA journals – financial support is provided by either publication charges or society grants.
- OA after 2 years – a selection of journal content is OA two years after publication and thus these journals are still supported by subscription revenue.
- HINARI – all our journals are available through HINARI (www.who.int/hinari/en/); a public-private partnership sponsored by the WHO, providing free or very low cost online access to the major journals in biomedical and related social sciences to local, not-for-profit institutions in developing countries.
- NIH/Wellcome Trust policy – to ensure authors comply with the NIH and Wellcome Trust 'Public Access Policy' and 'Open Access Policy', respectively, we will deposit in PubMed Central and UK PubMed Central papers of authors who are reporting NIH or Wellcome Trust funded research (full policy available at: www.informahhealthcare.com/page/resources/authors).
- Selected OA in certain journals:
 - one OA issue per volume is deposited in PubMed Central;
 - selected papers of high interest are made OA.

The most notable effect of these options has been the increase in Impact Factor of the OA journals. We have not seen a notable increase in

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submissions or selection of the Gold model and, therefore, we continue to see ourselves first and foremost as a subscription-driven company.

In Conclusion

For the commercial publisher, OA provides a challenge. We continue to work with our editors, authors, and societies to develop innovative ways of increasing the visibility of papers and journals to ensure the advancement of science through

the widest possible dissemination of research. The question remains: is there a business model to support OA as a sustainable revenue stream? Nothing is free and we need to find a balance to satisfy the requests for OA and the demands of a commercial business.



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Involvement of Professional Medical Writers in Manuscripts - A Blessing or a Curse?

by Karen L. Woolley, PhD

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If your journal receives a manuscript where assistance from a professional medical writer has been declared, do you:

- a. Decline to review the manuscript as your journal bans manuscripts that have been prepared with medical writing assistance?
- b. Become concerned about the credibility of the manuscript, fearful that the manuscript may not be presenting the data in a fair and objective manner?
- c. Anticipate that at least somebody has read your 'Instructions to Authors' and that the manuscript would have been prepared in an ethical manner, will meet your submission requirements, be easy for your voluntary peer-reviewers to read and understand, and be quick for your staff to edit?

I have encountered answers a, b, and c during the last ten years in my organization, where our PhD-qualified medical writers have assisted more than 1,000 authors from around the world. I believe (as you might expect) answer c should be the most appropriate response.

In this brief article, my aim is to convince you that involving professional medical writers in manuscripts should be a blessing, not a curse. To achieve this aim, I will need to:

- (1) differentiate professional medical writers from ghostwriters;
- (2) reinforce the legitimate role of professional medical writers; and
- (3) direct you to a practical tool that will allow you to evaluate whether authors have used medical writing assistance appropriately.

Professional Medical Writers Are a Blessing (Ghostwriters Are a Curse)

Whether medical writing assistance is a blessing or a curse for your journal depends on whether the assistance has been provided by a professional medical writer or a ghostwriter. The two are not the same¹. Whereas professional medical writers are aware of, and abide by, guidelines for ethical medical writing practices, ghostwriters are not aware of these guidelines or deliberately choose to ignore them². Professional medical writers declare their involvement and funding source, and ensure authors control content³. In contrast,

¹ Woolley KL (2005) Letter to the Editor. AMWA Journal 20(4): 184.

² Götzsche PC, Kassirer JP, Woolley KL, Wager E, Jacobs A et al (2009) What should be done to tackle ghostwriting in the

medical literature? PLoS Med 6(2): e23.

³ Woolley KL (2006) Goodbye Ghostwriters! How to work ethically and efficiently with professional medical writers. Chest 130(3): 921-923.

ghostwriters hide their involvement and funding source, and may try to control content³. Ghostwriting is an unethical practice and should be eradicated².

The good news for editorial staff is there are signs professional medical writers may be winning the war against ghostwriters. Professional medical writing associations in North America (American Medical Writers Association; www.amwa.org), Europe (European Medical Writers Association; www.emwa.org), and the Asia-Pacific region (ARCS; www.arcs.com.au) have a vested interest in ridding ghostwriters from the medical writing profession. These associations reinforce ethical medical writing practices through their position statements, membership criteria, and continuing professional education programs. Reassuringly, surveys of medical writers in 2005 and 2008 indicate more medical writers are becoming familiar with guidelines for ethical medical writing practices and more medical writers are declaring their involvement⁴. Be under no illusion...there is still much work to be done, but these results suggest the prevalence of declared medical writing assistance may increase; currently, approximately 6% of publications in high-ranking, international,

peer-reviewed journals have declared medical writing assistance⁵. In the future, editorial staff are likely to become increasingly exposed to declared medical writing assistance – they will need to decide whether such assistance is legitimate.

Legitimate Role for Professional Medical Writers

Academics and journal editors from around the world have reinforced that professional medical writers can have a legitimate role in helping authors prepare manuscripts, providing appropriate disclosures are made^{2,6}. There is the belief, although limited empirical evidence, that professional medical writers can help authors prepare high quality manuscripts in a timely manner^{7,8}. Professional medical writers may also help authors edit previously rejected manuscripts to enhance the probability of publication success⁹. Authors tend to seek professional medical writing assistance when they are limited by time, language, or manuscript preparation experience³. Rather than be frowned upon, such assistance may help address the ethical and scientific problems of nonpublication, given that almost half of the

4 Jacobs A, Hamilton C (2009) Decreased evidence of ghostwriting in a 2008 vs 2005 survey of medical writers. *The Write Stuff* 18(2):118-123.

5 Woolley KL, Ely JA, Woolley MJ, Findlay L, Lynch FA et al (2006) Declaration of medical writing assistance in international peer-reviewed publications. *JAMA* 296(8): 932-934.

6 Hirsch LJ (2009) Conflicts of interest, authorship, and disclosures in industry-related scientific publications: the tort bar and editorial oversight of medical journals. *Mayo Clinic Proc* 84(9): 811-821.

7 Phillips SG (2009) Authorship and writing practices in the health care industry. *AMWA Journal* 24(1): 4-8.

8 Woolley KL, Ely J, Woolley MJ, Lynch F, McDonald J et al (2005) Declaration of Medical Writing Assistance in International, Peer-Reviewed Publications and Effect of Pharmaceutical Sponsorship. Abstract presented at the 5th International Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication. Available: www.ama-assn.org/public/peer/program.html. Accessed 1 September 2009.

9 Woolley KL, Barron JP (2009) Handling manuscript rejection: insights from evidence and experience. *Chest* 135(2): 573-577.

medical research results presented at conferences are never published in full¹⁰.

Professional medical writers may also have a legitimate role in minimizing the risk of misconduct. This statement may be surprising to some, particularly those who confuse professional medical writers with ghostwriters. However, evidence from the largest study conducted to date on retracted publications shows publications with declared medical writer involvement have rarely had to be retracted from the literature due to misconduct¹¹. The same cannot be said of publications without declared medical writing assistance. In practical terms, this research suggests that if editors do receive manuscripts with declared medical writing assistance, they are unlikely to have to go through the emotional and financial minefield of issuing a retraction for misconduct.

Although some journal editors may contemplate banning any manuscripts with medical writing assistance, this strategy, when implemented, has been short-lived¹² and has not been embraced by many other editors. Indeed, this strategy may exacerbate the problem of nonpublication and cause more work for editorial staff if they have to manage an increasing number of poorly written manuscripts that do not comply with journal requirements. This latter prospect is unlikely to be welcomed by busy editorial staff¹³.

Evaluating the Appropriateness of Medical Writing Assistance

If you accept that professional medical writers can have a legitimate role in preparing manuscripts and you receive a manuscript with declared medical writing assistance, then you will no doubt want to know whether the authors have used medical writing assistance appropriately. This is where a practical tool could help you. With input from journal editors and professional medical writers from around the world, my colleagues and I developed a five-question, structured instructional checklist; authors complete this checklist to show they have used medical writing assistance appropriately (Table 1)². This checklist is freely available and can be downloaded from the PLoS Medicine (www.plosmedicine.org) or the EQUATOR network (www.equator-network.org) websites. Journal editors are encouraged to require authors who use medical writing assistance to complete and submit this checklist with their manuscript.

The first question in the checklist, which prompts authors to ensure medical writer involvement is appropriately acknowledged, could help raise awareness of authorship criteria and reduce poor authorship attribution practices. The second question reinforces the need for transparency and

¹⁰ Scherer RW, Langenberg P, von Elm E (2007) Full publication of results initially presented in abstracts. *Cochrane Database Syst Rev*: MR000005.

¹¹ Woolley KL, Woolley MJ, Lew R, Bramich N, Ely J et al (2009) Round Up the Usual Suspects? Involvement of Medical Writers and the Pharmaceutical Industry in Retracted Publications. Abstract presented at the 6th International

Congress on Peer Review and Biomedical Publication. Available: www.ama-assn.org/public/peer/program_2009.pdf. Accessed 1 September 2009.

¹² Mayer DK, Mahon SM, Eaby B (2009) Writing for hire: advice for authors (and readers). *Clin J Oncol Nurs* 13(2): 131-132.

¹³ Salkin I (2009) Editing a biomedical journal: a personal view. *Editorial Office News* January 2(1): 5-10.

Professional Medical Writers

continued

disclosure in relation to the source of funding for medical writing services. The third and fourth questions focus on author control over the manuscript. The third question reinforces that the author(s) should make the final decision about the main points communicated in the manuscript. The fourth question reinforces that the author(s) should make the final decision about the outcomes and data to include in the manuscript. This question also reinforces to authors that they should not hide relevant, nonsupportive data. Confirmation of author control over the main points, outcomes, and data should provide a level of reassurance to editorial staff and reviewers and, ultimately, to readers. The fifth question, which requires the authors to confirm ethical medical writing practices were followed during the manuscript preparation process, provides the checklist with some ‘teeth’. This question

alerts authors and medical writers that the journal editor may probe into the medical writing practices used. Even if a journal’s limited resources mean the risk of an audit is low, this question reinforces to authors and writers that ethical medical writing guidelines are readily available and they should be followed.

In conclusion, the involvement of professional medical writers in manuscripts can be a blessing, not a curse. Professional medical writers, but not ghostwriters, can have a legitimate role in helping authors prepare manuscripts. Editorial staff now have free access to a practical tool that can help them evaluate whether authors have used such assistance appropriately.



Table 1. Checklist for Authors Using Medical Writers: A Practical Tool to Discourage Ghostwriting*

Professional medical writers can be legitimate contributors to manuscripts, but ghostwriting is dishonest and unacceptable.

Authors: If a medical writer contributed to the preparation of your manuscript, you must answer the questions below.

Question		Answer	
		No	Yes
1	(a) Did the medical writer meet the three criteria for authorship, as specified by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors?		
	(b) If not, has the writer been identified in the acknowledgments or as directed by the journal?		

Table 1. continued

	Question	Answer	
		No	Yes
2	Has the source of funding for the medical writer’s services been identified in the acknowledgments or as directed by the journal?		
3	Did the author(s) make the final decision on the main points to be communicated in the manuscript, particularly in the conclusion?		
4	Did the author(s) make the final decision on the primary and secondary outcomes and relevant data to be reported in the manuscript?		
5	If requested by the journal, can the medical writer provide evidence that the manuscript was prepared in accordance with international guidelines for ethical medical writing (e.g., Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals; Good Publication Practice for Pharmaceutical Companies; Position Statements from the European or American Medical Writers Associations, or the International Society for Medical Publication Professionals)?		

* This checklist was first published in PLoS Medicine² and is available for use under the Creative Commons Attribution License.

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*A note on English: ISMTE aims to be a truly international society. English will represent our lingua franca, but we would like to stress that in materials published in *EON* or online that variations in idiomatic usage and spelling should reflect the origins of the author. No one version of English is preferred over the other.*

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From Author to Editor: It's the Insider Knowledge That Helps

by Holly Slater

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I entered the world of scientific publishing in March 2003, still slightly in shock that I was actually embarking on such a career change. With a PhD and four years of postdoctoral research behind me, I had considerable experience in publishing, but from an author's point of view; therein lay the source of my astonishment. Although I have a publication list of research articles and reviews that I am proud of, I always found the process of writing a manuscript stressful. This was not because I found writing difficult, but because it was all bound up with the anxiety associated with proving your worth as a scientist and ultimately one's future career. Not surprisingly then, when I decided to look for work away from the 'lab bench', a career in publishing had already been scored off the list without much thought. I still remember to this day sitting on the sofa reading and rereading the job description for the new role of 'Deputy Editorial & Development Manager' for the plant science journal *New Phytologist* and wondering how it could possibly have 'my name written all over it.' It even fitted geographically, as my partner was being relocated to the northwest of England where the *New Phytologist* central office was based. What was I waiting for? Well after a bit of a push from my partner, here I am nearly seven years later and couldn't dream of a more suitable career. My understanding of academic

publishing from an author's, and reader's, point of view has been invaluable to me in making contributions to the work of *New Phytologist*; you might say I have insider knowledge.

New Phytologist is slightly unusual in that it is not owned by a large learned society or publishing house; instead it is owned by the New Phytologist Trust, a charitable not-for-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of plant science. The main charitable activity of the Trust is to publish *New Phytologist*, but, in addition, any excess revenue from sales of the journal is used to facilitate research and scholarship in plant science, in particular through the organization of symposia. The trustees are a subset of the editorial board, which means they have an in-depth understanding of how the journal operates and what it requires in order to develop further. The editorial board of 23 members is relatively small, and with an annual submission rate in excess of 1,200 regular manuscripts (yes there are other manuscript types on top of this), this means they are working incredibly hard. I believe their outstanding commitment comes from providing them with ownership of the journal; we all meet once a year to review performance, discuss development opportunities, and plan the year ahead. We do, of course, also have fun when we meet, and being a small board really helps to generate a family feeling.

With such a small board and ambitious aims to publish as high quality a publication as possible (our 2008 Impact Factor was 5.128, and we currently rank fourth amongst other primary research journals in the plant sciences) within our rapid schedule (our average processing time from submission to first decision is just 26 days), it is therefore imperative the *New Phytologist* editorial office provides the editors with the support they need. There are now six of us in the office: myself (managing editor), Helen Pinfield-Wells (deputy managing editor), Nichola Hetherington (assistant editor), Michael Murfin (editorial assistant – intern), and two administration assistants, Helen Hitchings and Jill Brooke.

So what is a typical day at *New Phytologist* central office? Tasks associated with manuscript submissions form the core of the work in our office. In the first instance, Jill will check in the manuscripts. (There is always a large batch on a Monday morning, and you can feel the blood, sweat, and tears, and late nights that have gone into finalizing the submission of those papers!) We use the online manuscript handling system ScholarOne™ Manuscripts, and so once Jill has checked the articles are complete, all the correct information is there, and has sorted out any problems the authors might have had, she then sends them through to my *Managing Editor Centre*. The beauty of the online database is that wherever I am, I can pick these manuscripts up; on the train heading to a meeting in London, attending a conference on the other side of the Atlantic, or tucked up in bed late at night with the laptop (yes – I can become a bit obsessed in maintaining our processing times, but usually only if I have been out of the office for one

reason or another). So then comes the first editorial check; I may turn manuscripts away at this stage because they are out of scope and don't meet the criteria of a *New Phytologist* paper. Most papers, however, are sent on to a relevant member of the editorial board, and here comes the second check: to review or not to review? If an editor concludes a manuscript is not suitable for *New Phytologist* then they will return it to me with some advice as to why it shouldn't proceed to external review, and I have the onerous task of explaining this to the authors. One of the reasons I write these letters, rather than the editors, is it enables me to ensure consistency across the board, but it also facilitates the process and allows the editors to handle more papers more quickly. It was very nerve racking writing my first such rejection letter, but, more often than not, the feedback from authors is positive as they are appreciative of receiving the news sooner rather than later (we make every effort to do this within seven days) so they are able to move on without delay.

Once a manuscript makes it through to review, it enters the *Select Referee Queue*. Helen H, with additional help from Jill two mornings a week, performs the day-to-day operations associated with peer review. Inviting referees on behalf of the editors, ensuring a sufficient number are assigned and they are all going to report in a timely fashion, etc. We make good use of the automatic reminder system on ScholarOne™ Manuscripts, but we also overlay this with a strong personal touch. (Convincing busy people to do work for no remuneration requires considerable tact that is not necessarily achievable with a series of automated e-mails generated by a machine!) Helen PW oversees this process – acting as a

point of authority for the administration assistants, sometimes assisting the editors in selecting referees, and generally ensuring we are coming in on target. Helen also takes control of any issues with the ScholarOne™ Manuscripts database and ensures we are taking full advantage of all the features and functions available (which has gotten more sophisticated and hence complicated over the years). Whilst the manuscripts are in peer review, I tend to sit back and forget about them for a bit – if only that were true! There is always problem solving to do, the worst kind being ethical misconduct. But dealing with such difficult situations also has its rewards; we are, of course, the gate-keepers of scientific research, and it is, therefore, our responsibility as publishers to ensure the published record is correct and our honor-based system of peer review is not abused. This fact that publishing is at the very heart of academic research is what motivates me in my role as managing editor, and I couldn't be more pleased to be putting all my scientific training to good use whilst also drawing on, and developing, other skills I never knew I had.

At the decision stage, I also reappear. So, I am seeing the papers when they first arrive and I am seeing them when they leave; with our editors located all around the world, this is important for making sure we are all working to the same standards. If a paper makes it successfully through peer review, then Nichola and our latest recruit, Michael, step in to prepare the articles for production. The typesetting and copyediting are all done by Wiley-Blackwell, who has a contract to publish and distribute the journal for us. As papers are accepted, I start thinking about the front matter of the journal, our Forum, and consider

which papers might be worthy of additional highlighting through a Commentary. As we get toward issue compilation day, I will order the articles into the four different sections of the journal and will discuss the front cover options with Nichola. While most of our readers access *New Phytologist* via the online version of the journal, we are particularly renowned for our impressive, and somewhat arty, front covers; and of course it's great for an author to have their work featured on the cover (it's also a fun part of the process). Nichola and Michael continue our high quality service to authors even after papers have been published, helping them to disseminate their work, for example, through our author-nominated offprints scheme.

Aside from the continual loop of new submissions, peer review, and compiling the published issues, what else is going on in the office? Why do I need four full-time and two 80%-time people? Well, there is the promotion to do. Wiley-Blackwell is great at marketing the journal, but with our insider knowledge of the plant science community, we can really help to enhance this. Helen PW, my deputy who also has a PhD in plant science, coordinates the promotion of the journal (from the fun things like give-aways to organizing our attendance at pertinent conferences). There are also our charitable activities to coordinate such as the New Phytologist Symposia. Helen PW, with administrative assistance from Jill, organizes these, and we usually run two per year. The symposia complement the work of the journal as they often nurture emerging (or re-emerging) fields that lend themselves to some form of publication, be it a position paper setting out the way forward or a full-blown

special issue. So here I step back in again with my commissioning hat on. Lastly, and most importantly, there is the development of the journal. There are two trustee board meetings per year and it is my role to report to and advise the trustees on both publication and charitable matters. I have to ensure the journal is managed effectively, it comes in on budget both in terms of page numbers and financially, and my central office team (and editors) are sufficiently trained for the tasks required of them. The run-up to the annual editorial meeting is undoubtedly the busiest time of

year for me, but this is the culmination of a hard year's work in an intense 1.5-day meeting that shapes the agenda for the year ahead. Once the editorial meeting is over, there is a brief opportunity to reflect on, and be proud of, the work we achieve at *New Phytologist* in promoting plant science; a pleasurable interlude before knuckling down to the next wave of new papers and implementing the action points for the year ahead.



Calendar of Events

Editorial Manager User Group Meeting

4 December 2009

London, UK

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ALPSP Seminar: Know Your Rights. Opportunities and Pitfalls in Content Licensing

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