Help! I’m an author – get me out of here:
A wish list for better research dissemination

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Introduction

• Open access to research outputs
• Not dataset outputs
• Research intensive university
• From author perspective
• Wish list of solutions
Authors’ comments, gripes and problems
1. Time wasting and automation

“Do not waste my time asking me to complete separate details of all authors for submission – even before the paper has been accepted.”

Member of professorial staff, University of Oxford
An old complaint but it still stands

“You'd think the advent of electronic submission would make life easier, but in fact it can just open up a whole new world of tiny, fiddly things that you are required to do before your paper is submitted. Each individual thing is usually fairly trivial, but they do add up. So, for instance, if you'd like your authors to suggest referees, please allow them to paste in a list. DO NOT require them to cut and paste title, forename, initial, surname, email and institution into your horrible little boxes for each of six potential referees. It all takes TIME. And we have more important things in life to be getting on with. Including doing the science that allows us to get the point of writing a paper.”

http://deevybee.blogspot.co.uk/2014/01/a-new-years-letter-to-academic.html
Interpreting the comments

- I don’t like:
  - Manually entering (and re-entering) data
  - That free text typing is required for many fields which is prone to errors and inconsistencies
  - That systems don’t talk to each other
2. Lack of author control

As an author:

“I want more control over the publication and dissemination process. We are giving content free. I’m the customer, not the workman .... Publishers have prayed on academics. They should be doing a job for us”

Member of professorial staff, University of Oxford
“There is an underlying problem of management and ownership of information. It’s a chaotic transition – fraught because so much rides on it, for example, funding”

Member of professorial staff, University of Oxford

Photo credit Francis Rumsey
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Add public full-text  Not now
“We want to share our work with anyone and everybody”

Medical science researchers, University of Oxford
“Speed of publication is very important because it affects metrics and funding”

Medical science researchers,
University of Oxford
“We are in the death throes of journal publishing. None of us knows where it’s going. We are excited, energized and threatened. All are jockeying for position in a landscape where we don’t know where it’s going. It’s a symptom of chaos”
“There is still a role for traditional journals for well-researched, carefully evaluated manuscripts, but not as the core hub of dissemination in this day and age.”

Article – “need for definitive version at some point. Until then can be fluid”

Member of professorial staff, University of Oxford

Researcher, University of Oxford

Member of professorial staff, University of Oxford

Researcher, University of Oxford
“Hybrid will not last. We are trying to save a failing model”

Member of professorial staff, University of Oxford
The traditional model of publishing is being challenged

The writing is on the wall

Image link

Rembrandt, ‘Belshazzar's Feast’, about 1636–8
Photo © The National Gallery, London
What’s on offer to authors?
Pre-print servers like BioArxiv are at a tipping point. I would use it”

Member of professorial staff, University of Oxford
Rights & Dissemination
The conundrum

Two mutually contradictory points are being promoted at the same time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>On the one hand...</th>
<th>...and on the other</th>
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<td>We’ll disseminate your work to the widest possible audience</td>
<td>You can only share your work with certain people using certain channels at a certain time</td>
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"Although it may feel like the end of the process, getting your article published is the beginning of a new journey. **Ensuring that your work is read (and ultimately cited) by as many researchers as possible** is at the very center of what we do at Taylor & Francis. Here are just a few of the ways we’re maximizing the reach of your work, and some ideas on how you can help too.

http://author.services.taylorandfrancis.com/5-ways-taylor-and-francis-maximize-reach-research/
“Step 5 - Dissemination

When you allow the public to work closely with you in shaping important, emotive research findings, disseminating the final project is often organic. Organisations that you consulted and shared your public engagement plans with early on, or who’ve put you in touch with others, will often be curious about what you’ve produced, and will be keen to show it to others. Make sure you explore the sharing options for your published work as thoroughly as possible.”

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http://www.cell.com/trends/editorial-policies
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....

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www.emwa.org/documents/journal/MEW_2012_Copyright_Assignment_Form.pdf
What’s wrong with this?

Wiley CTA

- “In order to expedite the editing and publishing process and enable the Owner to disseminate your Contribution to the fullest extent, we need to have this Copyright Transfer Agreement executed.... The Contributor assigns to the Owner... all copyright...”

6 pages long!

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Mu suppression — A good measure of the human mirror neuron system?

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Mu suppression has been proposed as a signature of the activity of the human mirror system ([1, 2, 3]; however, see [4, 5, 6]). Here, we report MEG recordings with the alpha frequency band, which is sensitive to interhemispheric synchronization, and show that suppression could potentially be confounded by changes in motoric engagement. The specific baseline against which mu suppression is measured may be critical, yet there is little consensus in how this is achieved. We measured mu suppression in 62 typical adults, the largest mu suppression study so far conducted. We compared different methods of baseline- and movement-corrected activity of recorded and unrecorded stimuli, in both biological (hand) and non-biological (hand-drag) mirroring stimuli, to investigate the involvement of motor and alpha activity in mu suppression. We also measured changes in the power, another candidate index of MNS engagement. We observed strong mu suppression restricted to central electrodes when participants performed mirror movements, suggesting that this is related to activation of the motor cortex. However, when we tested a similar signature of mu suppression to previously observed brain activity using a different method for computing the baseline, we observed that mu suppression was not related to alpha oscillation only when we used a single trial baseline based on a static stimulus. This method greatly reduced the reliability compared to the waves were recorded from electrodes in the posterior temporal region with electroencephalography only when we used a single trial baseline based on a static stimulus. This method greatly reduced the reliability compared to the waves recorded from electrodes in the posterior temporal region with electroencephalography. We argue that mu suppression can be used to study the human MNS, but the effect is weak and unreliable and can be confounded with alpha suppression in vivo. For authors: Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).
• Nov 2017 (eventually)
• Bowman et al commentary on article published
• Same journal
• Behind paywall
• https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cortex.2017.03.025

• Nov 2017
• Hobson & Bishop
• Reply to commentary published
• Behind paywall – queried
• https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cortex.2017.06.012
Outcome

- Authors complained – having paid an APC for the original, would like ongoing discussion OA as well
- Publisher offered to make authors’ response OA
- Odd if Bowman commentary not OA if both Hobson & Bishop pieces OA
- Publisher did not make response fully OA
- ...made authors’ response OA – but only for 50 days
- Disgruntled authors
Embargo inconsistencies: example

- Student whose research was funded by EPSRC
- The student included an article, for which they are an author, as part of their thesis
- Thesis permission: The publisher permits the article VoR to be used in the thesis and made OA immediately electronically
- OA permission: The publisher does not permit the VoR to be made available in the institutional repository
- OA permission: the publisher requires a 24 month embargo for the AAM
- The AAM permission is not compliant with the funder
“I’m disappointed that RCUK and Wellcome Trust have backed the gold model.”

Member of professorial staff,
University of Oxford
What the previous commenter went on to say

“I want more control over the publication and dissemination process. We are giving content free. I’m the customer, not the workman .... Publishers have prayed on academics. They should be doing a job for us....I resent paying high prices to [publisher name]”

Member of professorial staff, University of Oxford
Money worries

- Limited pot
- Non-APC publication charges
- Costs for a research-intensive university
- Rising prices
- Competitive market economy?
- Authors can be shielded from costs
- Prefer payment models that actually reduce overall prices
- Charging model limiting discussion of science
• More hybrid than fully OA
• “The mean average APC payment rose from £1,699 in 2013 to £1,969 in 2016, a rise of 16%”
• Subscription costs are still rising
• “the total amount being paid by institutions is still rising”

What I want from a publisher as a reader:

“Easy access without embargo. To be able to get hold of stuff easily.”

“Barrier free access to research findings is becoming the norm for researchers globally.”

Researchers, University of Oxford
Quality control

“Quality control is important and not always evident. There is uneven refereeing. I would like to be assured of always respected people in their field such as those from scholarly societies – people who know their subject area.”

“Open review and comments can help to reduce bias and discrimination including age, professional standing, gender, reputation of institutions and countries, and social groups.”

Open data. “Currently there is poor reproducibility. The whole pipeline should be open: research methods; data; code.”

Researchers, University of Oxford
"I’d like to publish information that is of value to the community but not high impact, and have it peer reviewed for sense. Assign a DOI. Like original aim of PLoSOne."

"I’d like TripAdvisor type ‘thumbs-up like’ to indicate quality of methods to support reproducibility."

"Things tend to get published that are newsworthy or novel. What we need is good replication – we very seldom get this. Therefore I often have no confidence in the literature. There is a danger of public suspicion of science."

Researchers, University of Oxford
The first step is to acknowledge there is a problem
# Mass trespass

## What was it?
- April 1932
- People from Manchester and Sheffield
- Kinder Scout, Peak District

## Context
- Landowners rarely used the moorland ~ 12 days p.a.
- Of 150,000 acres, only 1,200 acres (<1%) was available for public access
- There were only 12 legal paths
- Around 15,000 working class ramblers wanted to enjoy the land each Sunday
The demands

Open a public path across Kinder Scout to allow ramblers through when the land was not in use

The result

- A scuffle with police
- 5 men from Manchester were jailed
Outcomes

• The arrests and imprisonment ignited public sympathy and united the ramblers cause
• Result: National Parks legislation; Pennine Way; Walkers rights over open country and common land; right to roam (CROW act, 2000)

“The shift in the pattern of land ownership caught us largely unawares in the last century”
Roly Smith
http://kindertrespass.com/index.asp?ID=141

Countryside & rights of way Act, 2000
http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1378
If we (i.e. libraries and publishers) don’t do something about authors’ freedom to disseminate and access research outputs, researchers will take (are taking) the matter into their own hands, and not necessarily legally.
“ASNs [Academic Social Networks] have for many become the primary way to provide access to one’s research output, outpacing all other types of online locations such as personal websites and repositories.”

https://theideal.is/research-output-availability-on-academic-social-networks-implications-for-stakeholders-in-publishing/

“If the free distribution of VoRs on Sci-hub for years has not killed subscriptions, why is anyone worried about a very limited set of AAMs [in repositories]? Now that is an argument I would be very interested in hearing a sensible reply to!”

[Scholarly publisher]
The easy access genie is out of the internet bottle
“One of the key issues is whether different methods to increase availability should be seen as competing or complementary to each other, and where researcher’s priorities should lie if maximum benefits from disseminating one’s work are to be achieved.”

http://mikaellaakso.com/Laakso_et_al_2017_ASN.pdf
Embargo: “A stoppage, prohibition, impediment” (OED)

Embargo = access barrier

Budapest OA declaration uses the following terms:
• ‘unrestricted access’
• ‘Removing access barriers’
• ‘free and unrestricted online availability’
• ‘remove the barriers’

http://www.budapestopenaccessinitiative.org/read
What are we trying to do?

- Open access ≠ compliance
- Green open access is complementary to formal publication
- Green OA ≠ embargo
Wish list
Integration and interoperability

1. Adopt interoperable and open standards and practices
2. Automation
3. Require/encourage ORCIDs for all authors
4. Direct authors to their institution to obtain a verified affiliation ORCID
5. Assign DOIs on acceptance
6. Include funder information in metadata
7. Include licence info for gold items in metadata
8. Adopt common taxonomies
9. Participate fully in Jisc Publications Router
Help HEIs to help authors

• Keep libraries in the loop
• Resolve the conflict between widest dissemination & limited sharing
• Help us to help authors stop breaking the law and your terms
• Many HEIs want to manage their own digital assets
• Interoperate with national and similar independent services
• Simplify & automate
  – Things are complex now
  – BUT we do not want processes taken out of our hands
  – CHORUS is not the solution we want
  – Individual publishers’ direct input to IRs is not the answer
• Digital preservation
Cost wishlist

• Encourage authors to check money is available for publication charges before committing
• Remove outrageous publication charges
• Be transparent
• Rising prices are a problem
• Currently maintaining a scholarly publishing system that is outdated
Author control / changing model, access, embargo

1. All authors retain copyright with no restrictions
2. Don’t limit sharing to groups or individuals
3. Don’t limit sharing by system, service or type of repository
4. Zero embargo for AAMs
5. If an APC paid for OA to an article – all subsequent responses/discussions to that article to be open
6. Leave choice of licence for AAMs to author
7. Attach a licence to all gold OA articles to ensure they stay open for the long term
8. Avoid higher fees for less restrictive open licenses
9. Get rid of ‘open for a limited period’ - once it’s open, it’s open
10. Do away with long complex terms & conditions documents
11. Permit theses to be disseminated online prior to publishing other type of publication emanating from the thesis.
A final thought

Two mutually contradictory points are being promoted at the same time

Resolve the conundrum

Instead of trying to change culture and practice, change the rules
Thank you

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