Researchers are horrible business people

…but we don’t have to be

Dr Corina Logan
University of Cambridge
cl417@cam.ac.uk
www.CorinaLogan.com
Twitter: @LoganCorina

Slides: http://tinyurl.com/zob9xbq
Slides w notes: http://tinyurl.com/juhrmc4
The cost of publishing a paper

£0.90-220 = actual (depending on how automated)

£3,777 (avg) = global academic community pays

“the Big Four academic publishers have profit-margins between 32.4% and 42%. [A] typical profit margin of 37% [...] means that 37% [...] of an average paywalled article’s subscription money is pure profit. So [£1397] is leaving academia every time a paper is “published” behind a paywall.”

Big four = Elsevier, Springer, Wiley, Informa

Bogich et al. On the marginal cost of scholarly communication. https://research.science.ai/article/on-the-marginal-cost-of-scholarly-communication ($1.30-318 = £0.90-220)

“The annual revenues generated from English-language STM journal publishing are estimated at about $8 billion in 2008, up by 6-7% compared to 2007, within a broader STM publishing market worth some $16 billion. [...] There were about 25,400 active scholarly peer-reviewed journals in early 2009, collectively publishing about 1.5 million articles a year.
8 billion dollars divided by 1.5 million articles yields a per-article revenue to the STM industry of $5333. And since publisher revenue is the same as academia’s expenditure on publishing, that is the per-article cost to Academia.”
“each paywalled article costs the world as much as four PLoS ONE articles. In other worlds, if we all stopped submitted to paywalled journals today and sent all our work to PLoS ONE instead, the total scholarly publishing bill would fall by 75%, from $8 billion to $2 billion.”
Exploitative publishers

Who is exploited?
Researchers
Scientific societies
Universities/libraries
Public

Who benefits?
Publisher
Stockholders

RELX Group Total market capitalisation (as at 24 March 2016) £25.8bn / $36.4bn
### Life cycle analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Paper published</th>
<th>Profits go to</th>
<th>Available to read by</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exploitative</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>Shareholders</td>
<td>Subscribers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academia</td>
<td>£3777</td>
<td>(goal=maximize profits)</td>
<td>-indirect discrimination -WHO &amp; UN</td>
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| **Ethical**     |                 | Academia      | Everyone             |
| Researcher/Funder | £150-2042   | (goal=share science) | + readers + citations + h-index + prestige(?) |


academia=aggregate of those who pay subscription fees: universities, HINARI, etc.

HINARI = Health InterNetwork Access to Research Initiative ([http://www.healthinternetwork.org](http://www.healthinternetwork.org)) created by WHO to subsidize(?) get publishers to provide low cost or free access(?) online journal access for health and medical institutions in 69 of the poorest countries for free and to 44 poor countries at low cost (not clear how paid from the statement of intent: [http://www.who.int/hinari/statementofintent/en/](http://www.who.int/hinari/statementofintent/en/)). WHO and UN (AGORA=Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture) are wasting valuable human resources on getting free access to read OUR research papers - human resources that could instead be used to feed starving people. There is backlash against HINARI as big publishers pull out (Perez Koehlmoos & Smith 2011 *The Lancet* [http://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736(11)60067-6.pdf](http://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736(11)60067-6.pdf)).

Ethical: publishers charge what they need to do their job and are not publicly traded so their goal is not to maximize profits. Societies can charge what they like to make profits.

£150=PeerJ subscription, £2042=PLOS Biology APC

Ethical COSTS LESS!!! And in the future libraries can cancel their subscriptions and instead invest this money in APCs.

If you look at the numbers, ethical = more prestigious. Exploitative completely relies on journal names and not data.
What can YOU do?

- Submit articles only to 100% OA journals at ethical publishers
- Make reviews open
- Publish data
- Evaluate research quality not metrics
- Encourage your scientific societies to switch their journals to 100% OA at an ethical publisher
- Make ethical publishing an essential requirement in job descriptions
Like Copernicus better bc they don’t outsource and are LLC owned by NGO.
I had a look at a recent Animal Behaviour volume, which had 32 articles in it and multiplied that by 12 volumes/yr (384 articles/yr), and then calculated how much you would need to charge per article to make £400k/yr, which works out to £1042/article on top of the per page charge from Copernicus (which would probably on average per article be about £500-600). That is similar to what PLOS ONE charges so it doesn’t seem outrageous. The nice part is that you can control how much the society makes by changing article prices as needed. Also, my hope is that in the long run, universities won’t need to keep up their expensive subscriptions so that they could instead use that money to fund open access fees for their scientists. That way universities only pay once and it (almost) all goes to back to the scientists.
Scholastica = smart software to power your peer-reviewed journal. Hosts journal Discrete Analysis (founded by a UCAM maths prof), £10/article, but fee waived bc grants. Link to preprints on arXiv
Funding bodies increasingly require that the research they fund is open access. Non-compliance is punished. A track record of a commitment to OA should be attractive for funders when deciding who to fund.