



SUSTAINING THE KNOWLEDGE COMMONS: OPEN ACCESS SCHOLARSHIP

A SSHRC Insight Development Project

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Alexis Calvé-Genest & Tony Horava**

CASRAI RECONNECT 2014 Ottawa, ON

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OPEN ACCESS (OA) IS...

- scholarly literature that is digital, online, free of charge and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions



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AN UNPRECEDENTED PUBLIC GOOD

“Removing access barriers to this literature will accelerate research, enrich education, share the learning of the rich with the poor and the poor with the rich, make this literature as useful as it can be, and lay the foundation for uniting humanity in a common intellectual conversation and quest for knowledge”.
(BOAI 2002)



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OA PUBLISHING & ARCHIVING

- OA archiving (green)
 - preservation
 - ensuring ongoing OA
 - sole focus of good OA policy
- OA publishing (gold)
 - sustainable economics for publishing



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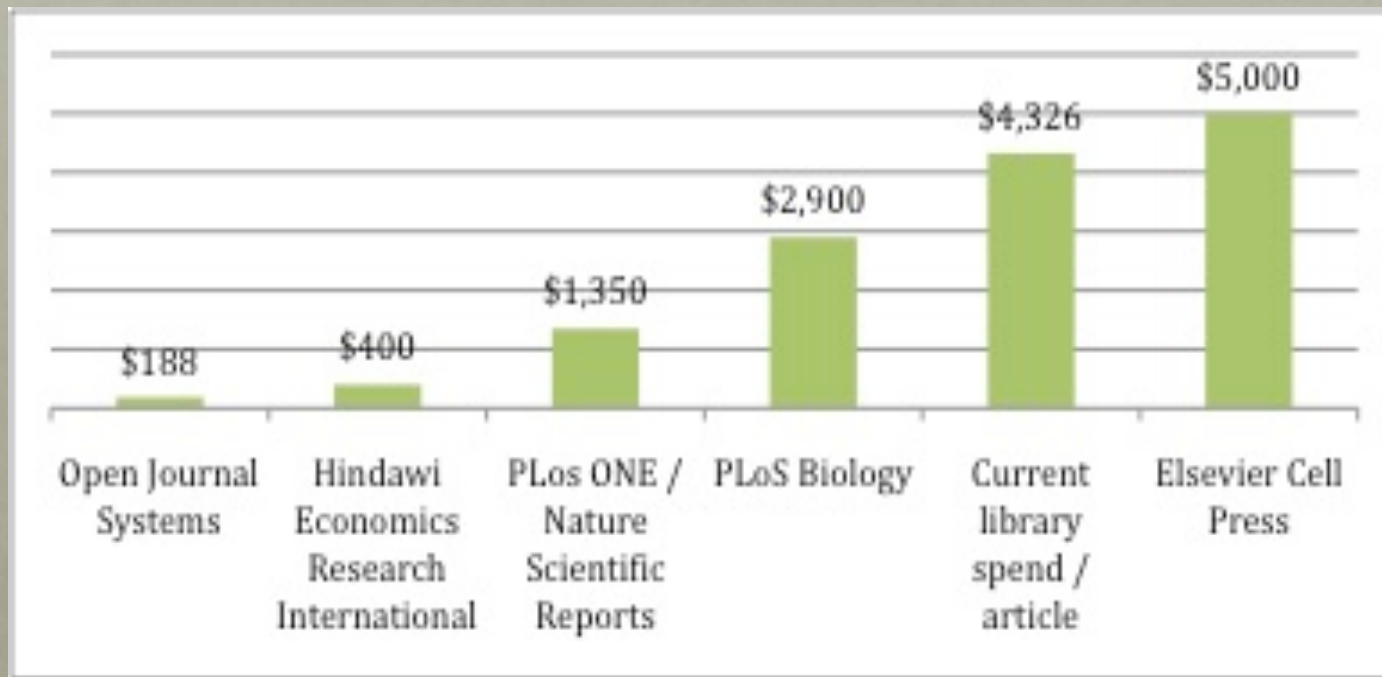
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WE CAN HAVE OUR OPEN ACCESS CAKE AND EAT IT, TOO...



SOURCE: MORRISON (2013)



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BUT HOW?

- Necessary costs
 - OA APCs
 - resource requirements for small scholar-led publishing
 - library / university hosting services
- Commons theory & research
- Library consortia



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DOAJ MAY 2014

Publication charges information	Number of journals	Percentage of journals
No charges	6,470	67%
Has charges	2,567	26%
Conditional charges	520	5%
No information available	145	1%
Total	9,702*	



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METHODS CHALLENGES

- DOAJ missing metadata
- Title not found
- Titles on publisher website not in DOAJ
- No APC found
- Page charges rather than APC?



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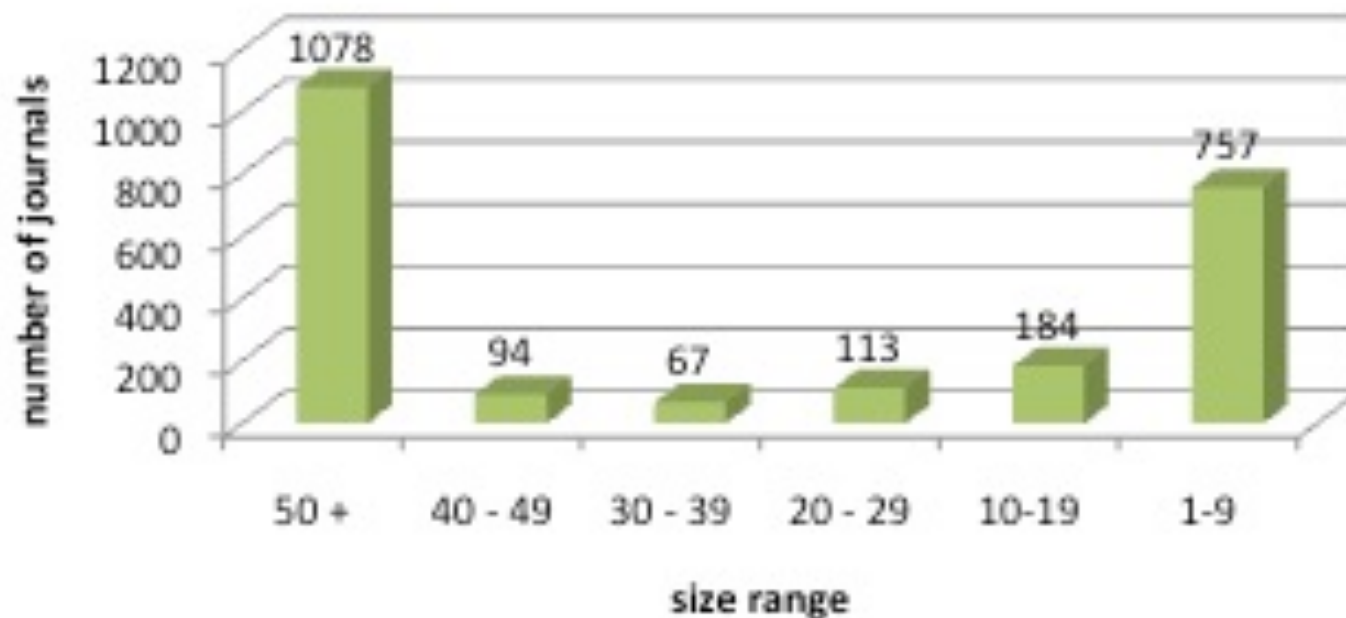
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BIG & SMALL

APC Journals in DOAJ by publisher size 2014 05



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PUBLISHERS BY TYPE

Pub type	%
Commercial	61%
University	11%
Unknown	8%
.com	7%
Society	4%
.org	4%
Not-for-profit	2%
Other	3%



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AMOUNT OF APC

Article processing charges in USD	
Lowest	\$0
Highest	\$4,114
Average (mean)	\$964
Median	\$800
Mode	\$0



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VARIATIONS

Variations		
Yes	1,238	90%
No	99	7%
Not mentioned	36	3%
Total	1,373	100%



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CONTINUITY IN CHANGE

- Participatory research
- Inductive method



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CONTINUITY IN CHANGE

What constitutes a commons?

1. Clearly defined boundaries
2. Congruence between appropriation and provision rules and local conditions
3. Collective-choice arrangements
4. Monitoring
5. Graduated sanctions
6. Conflict-resolution mechanism
7. Minimal recognition of right to organize
8. Nested enterprises



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CONTINUITY IN CHANGE

- “While scholars who have focused primarily on natural-resources commons will be amused to encounter a problem of underuse, it is an inefficient use of resources to make a major investment in a university repository when it is not used and the knowledge in it is not made available to those who need it. Others outside that community who browse, search, read, download, or print out documents in the repository are *not* free riding. In fact, they enhance the quality of the resource by using it.” (Hess & Ostrom, 2007, p. 58)



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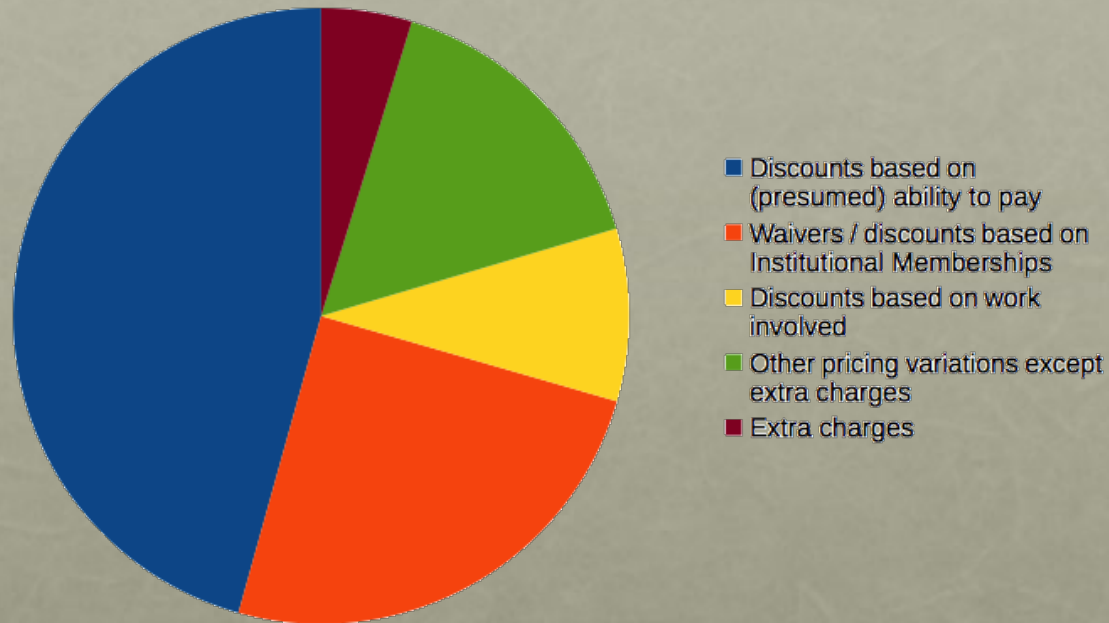
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CONTINUITY IN CHANGE

- What can we learn from what we have already?

All variations, all sampled journals



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CONTINUITY IN CHANGE

- What can we learn from what we have already?

Variations sub-types (1,238 journals)

Discounts based on (presumed) ability to pay

Waivers / discounts based on Institutional Memberships

Discounts based on work involved

Other pricing variations except extra charges

Extra charges



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CONTINUITY IN CHANGE

More work needed to determine if characteristics of commons are sufficiently present in open access journals



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CONTINUITY IN CHANGE

- Quantitative
 - Break down sub-types
- Qualitative
 - Look into language used to describe variations



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LIBRARY CONSORTIA AND APCs: A NEW FRONTIER

- Consortia play a major role in negotiating licensed digital scholarship for academic institutions
- In the disruptive scholarly communication ecosystem , negotiating for APCs can be seen as a logical extension of this negotiating power and leveraging existing relationships
- Key goals - advancing Open Access; ensuring sustainability; and obtaining best value in relation to price



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LIBRARY CONSORTIA

(CONT'D)

- Negotiating for APCs can assume several forms:
 - Discounting APC charges ;
 - Prepaid membership discounts (eg BMC, Springer) ;
 - Negotiating target APC rates



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LIBRARY CONSORTIA

Challenges:

- Obtaining comprehensive APC and publication data at the institutional level;
- Avoiding 'double dipping' (hybrid journals)
- Factoring APCs into overall negotiations objectives; determining what is 'reasonable' from a market and systemic perspective; cultural asymmetries
- Would this have a transformative impact on the scholarly publishing ecosystem? Favouring Gold over Green..



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SUMMARY

- OA APCs: volatile sector, largely commercial in nature
- Limitation: hybrids not included
- Commons research may yield keys to ongoing sustainability
- Libraries working together to effect the transition
- Lots more work and research needed!



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NEXT STEPS

- Resource requirements interviews & focus groups
- OA APCs: longitudinal & comparative studies
- Library / university hosting costs
- Macro
- Keep up! Open research via project blog:
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FINAL THOUGHT

Humankind has some significant, global challenges at this moment at time – and 7 billion minds. When we put our resources together to figure out the human genome we solved the puzzle in 13 years. Why not follow this model of open sharing to figure out how to address climate change, or how to live together in peace?



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