

Alexis graduated this spring from the University of Ottawa's Master of Information Studies (MIS) program. He followed the policy branch of the program before it was phased out. He previously completed a masters degree in anthropology at the same university, using political ecology to interpret results from his fieldwork. Through a course in political economy in the MIS program, he came to participate in the Sustaining Knowledge Commons project, headed by Heather Morrison, primarily for his interest in theory. Reciprocity and prestige are recurring themes in cultural anthropology and he has kept those notions in mind through a year's worth of participation to the project.

Canadian Association of Professional Academic Librarians annual conference
Ottawa, June 2nd 2015, 9h, room FTX147A
Presentation by Alexis Calvé-Genest, University of Ottawa



Digging into DOAJ

You never go so far as when you don't know where you are going

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Caveats for:

Nature of Open Access, Methodological individualism, convenience sampling, incomplete ecologies, typos, formatting, self-citing, comparing the incomparable, the weather...

Respect of the Integrity of the journal and publishers is to be assumed.
Individual cases are for academic discussion only.

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Sustaining the Knowledge Commons and the Directory of Open Access Journals

Merits of the presented approach



Why Commons theory?

- How do human groups function when using a common pool resource?
 - Ostrom and the free rider problem
- Reciprocity and gift economies
 - Mauss



Free riding the digital world

If copying is costless, what is free riding?



What I looked for

- Are Commons characteristics present?
- Are the journals exhibiting would-be Commons characteristics different than others?



What I looked for

Communities,

as based on small scale society studies



Sample consulted

- Open Access as a concept
- Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)
- Subset using Article Processing Charges (APC)
- Subset of APC charging journals with variations
- Subset of APC charging journals with variations that provide waivers or discounts for contribution of work to the journal



Previous study

APC based journals in numbers



Waivers for work 2014

12 publishers, 310 journals sampled

(randomization and weight factor)



Waivers for work 2014

Table 7. Frequency of sub-types of variations.

Variations Sub-Types	# of Journals	Percentage of Journals
Number and Percentage of 1238 Journals with Variations Indicating Particular Sub-Type		
Discounts based on (presumed) ability to pay		
Waivers/discounts for low/medium income countries	990	80%
Waivers/discounts based on income	602	49%
Discounts for Students	1	0%
Waivers/discounts based on Institutional Memberships	867	70%
Discounts based on work involved		
Waivers/discounts based on contributions of work to journal (editing/reviewing)	310	25%
Discounts for high quality	1	0%
Discounts for manuscript/review transfer	5	0%
Other pricing variations except extra charges		
Differential pricing by article type	481	39%
Waivers/discounts based on individual membership in society or association	24	2%
Differential pricing for local authors	8	1%
Temporary discounts	5	0%
Using publisher's template	13	1%
Differential pricing by format Latex/Word/PDF	15	1%
Extra charges		
Language editing	122	10%
Extra charge based on number of pages	13	1%
Premium price for fast track	19	2%
Extra charge for repository deposit	3	0%
Extra charge for CC-BY (or varies by license type)	3	0%
APC only if there is no author fund	3	0%
Submission fee	3	0%

Source: Morrison, H., Salhab, J., Calvé-Genest, A., & Horava, T. (2015). Open Access Article Processing Charges: DOAJ Survey May 2014. Publications, 3(1), 1–16. doi:10.3390/publications3010001



Waivers for work 2015

- Working for a different APC, a qualitative look at the same journals in 2015
- Resampling (10 publishers, all journals (305) of 2014 sample surveyed individually, looked at every waiver schemes)



Working for a partial waiver of APCs Quantitative

Table 4. Article processing charges in USD: range and measures of average.

Article Processing Charges in USD		
	with \$0s	\$0s Removed
Lowest	\$0	\$1
Highest	\$4,114	\$4,114
Average (mean)	\$964	\$1,221
Median	\$800	\$1,145
Mode	\$0	\$800
Standard deviation	\$864	\$795

Article Processing Charges in USD – Waiver for work in journal subset				
	2014		2015	
	With \$0s	\$0s Removed	With \$0s	\$0s Removed
Lowest	\$0	\$100	\$0	\$100
Highest	\$2,194	\$2,194	\$2,080	\$2,080
Average (mean)	\$928	\$1,081	\$972	\$1,090
Median	\$800	\$800	\$900	\$900
Mode	\$800	\$800	\$900	\$900
Std. Dev.	\$702	\$639	\$637	\$571

Source: Morrison, H., Salhab, J., Calvé-Genest, A., & Horava, T. (2015). Open Access Article Processing Charges: DOAJ Survey May 2014. *Publications*, 3(1), 1–16.
doi:10.3390/publications3010001



Working for a partial waiver of APCs Quantitative

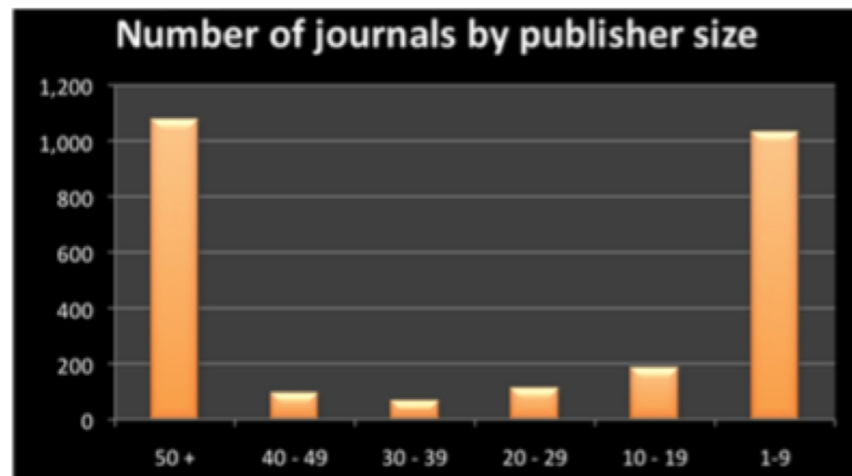


Figure 1. Article processing charge (APC) journals in DOAJ by publisher size.

Source: Morrison, H., Salhab, J., Calvé-Genest, A., & Horava, T. (2015). Open Access Article Processing Charges: DOAJ Survey May 2014. *Publications*, 3(1), 1–16. doi:10.3390/publications3010001

Journal with waivers for work by publisher size (grouping & listing)

50+	40-49	30-39	20-29	10-19	1-9
2	1	1		1	7

- 101 Bentham open
- 1 Bioflux Society
- 2 Bioinfo Publications
- 30 Frontiers Media
- 1 Institute of Physics (IoP)
- 1 International Journal of Engineering Research and Applications
- 48 Libertas Academica
- 2 Macrothink Institute
- 104 MDPI AG
- 3 Pensoft Publishers
- 14 SCIENCEDOMAIN International
- 1 University of Georgia



Working for a partial waiver of APCs

Quantitative

Single publisher with only work for waiver journal sampled

2014 MDPI AG: journals with APC non-zero & author correspondence delays (with or without Impact Factor)

	Step 1	Step 2	APC USD	N
AVG	30.08	11.39	757.27	55

2014 MDPI AG: journals with APC non-zero, author correspondence delays & Impact Factor (2013)

	Step 1	Step 2	APC USD	N
AVG	31.47	10.60	1342.64	15

Notes:

Step 1: Manuscripts are peer-reviewed and a first decision provided to authors approximately X days after submission (median)

Step 2: Acceptance to publication is undertaken in X days (median)

APC USD: XE website, May 28 2015



Working for a partial waiver of APCs

Qualitative

- Vast majority of waivers for work to journal are based on peer-review or board membership
- Waivers are often presented as a reward system, where it contrasts with merit, or charity (for lack of a better word, I am biased here)
- Language of fees and waivers is telling of the assumption about research funding



Working for a partial waiver of APCs Qualitative

Peer-review or board membership

“When the manuscript's first author is a member of the Editorial Board Expanded (ABAH Bioflux), there is no fee for publication.”

Animal Biology & Animal Husbandry - International Journal of the Bioflux Society
(<http://www.abah.bioflux.com.ro/>)

“Waiver Policy is only applied for reviewers of this journal. The reviewer can get free publication for one article per year.”

Journal of Studies in Education (<http://www.macrothink.org/journal/index.php/jse/index>)

“Bentham Science offers 40% discount on open access fees to their Editors, Board members and those authors who have contributed more than two articles in Bentham Science publications.”

<http://benthamscience.com/index.php>

“Reviewers who submit substantial comments within a timely manner will receive a voucher entitling them to a discount on the APC of their next paper accepted for publication in an MDPI journal.”

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



Working for a partial waiver of APCs Qualitative

Waivers as a reward system, contrasting with charity

“Tremendous amount of hard work, dedication, sacrifice, etc. of the authors are required to publish any paper from world’s top most journals, which are having very high impact factor. In order to recognize this effort of the authors, SCIENCEDOMAIN international has started this program of author recognition. In EARP, established authors get a flat 50% discount on the publication fee.”

-<http://www.sciencedomain.org/index.php>

“Up to 100% waivers are available for corresponding authors from “low income” countries, as defined by the World Bank Country Classification table calculated using the “Atlas method” (GNI per capita less than US\$ 664 - see this reference).”

-Aging Neuroscience (<http://journal.frontiersin.org/journal/aging-neuroscience#>)



Working for a partial waiver of APCs Qualitative

Waivers as a reward system, contrasting with charity

“The fee is waived for invited publications, authors from economically disadvantaged countries, and any individuals not currently employed by an institution that can pay the publication fees. The members of the MCFNS Editorial Board get fee waiver for one publication per year and 50% discount for any additional publication fees.

Furthermore, if you do not have funds to pay such fees, you will have an opportunity to have the publication fee waived. We do not want fees to prevent the publication of worthy work.”

*-Mathematical and Computational Forestry & Natural-Resource Sciences
(<http://mcfns.com/index.php/Journal/index>)*



Working for a partial waiver of APCs Qualitative

Language of fees and waivers is telling of the
assumption about research funding:

“Note that many national and private research funding organizations and universities explicitly cover such fees for articles originated in funded research projects. Discounts are available for authors from institutes that participate with MDPI's membership program.”

-<http://www.mdpi.com/>



Working for a partial waiver of APCs Comments

What are we encouraging?



Qualitative interpretation

Too soon to tell if reciprocity characteristics can have long term effect on article processing charge

Language can be telling of community fostering

Commons might be better found in the peer-review system



Extra case for discussion

Nature Conservation

Open Access Publication Fees are usually covered by institutional funds and grants. We understand, however, that many scientists work either privately, or under harsh financial conditions, or continue enjoying their work after retirement. Therefore, this journal offers the following discount and waiver options:

Discount of 10 % is offered to:

Scientists working privately

Members of institutions who have subscribed for the print version of this journal

Graduate and PhD students, if they are first authors

Scientists living and working in lower-middle-income countries

(<http://www.worldbank.org/data/countryclass/classgroups.htm>), if they are sole authors of a manuscript.

Discount of 15 % is offered to:

The journal's editors and active reviewers (3 or more reviewed manuscripts during the previous and present calendar year)

Waivers (once per year per (co-) author, for manuscripts not larger than 10 printed pages, or for the first 10 pages of a larger manuscript) are offered to:

Retired scientists, if they are editors or active reviewers in the journal

Scientists living and working in low-income countries

(<http://www.worldbank.org/data/countryclass/classgroups.htm>), if they are sole authors of a manuscript.

In cases when more than one discount options are eligible, only one of them (allowing the highest discount) will be considered.



Out of study example Co-Action publishing

Language of fees and waivers is telling of the assumption about research funding:

“WAIVERS We offer a complete or partial fee waiver on a case-by-case basis for individual authors or author groups affiliated with a university or institute in Low-income or Lower-middle-income economies as defined by the World Bank. Please check the list here. If the author group includes researchers from universities or institutes in high-income economies, the publication fee will likely not be waived. If a project has been funded but no money has been reserved for publication, i.e. funds have been exhausted prior to the publication process, requests will be declined.”

-<http://co-action.net/>



Thank you

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