

Introducing the Proceedings of the Natural Institute of Science (PNIS): Come with us!

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1 - Editor, PNIS

In 1665, the first scientific journal was published: the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* in London, England. In 2014, it is estimated that there are now 29,147 active scientific journals (Fraser and Dunstan 2010), publishing roughly 700,000 papers every year (Hull 2010), contributing to the estimated 55 million papers to ever have been published (Jinha 2010). Yet all of them suck (Michel 2014). Not one of these papers has ever saved a life, cured cancer, or unlocked the secret of life, and in fact some of them have even been harmful (e.g., Wakefield et al. 1998, since retracted).

Here at the Natural Institute of Science (NIS), we have found a solution to this problem of academic journal overload: to publish a scientific journal, the Proceedings of the Natural Institute of Science (PNIS). However, we do not envision PNIS to be just the 29,148th journal (partly because another journal was probably created in the time it took to write this sentence). Rather, we see PNIS as the one journal that will finally end this overpopulation of academic tomfoolery and completely revolutionize the way that scientific papers are published. So, please allow us to introduce the greatest creation of mankind: the PNIS.

REVOLUTION #1: WE'VE JUST EXPANDED OUR NUMBER OF JOURNALS!

Science is commonly divided into two different types: hard sciences (like chemistry and physics) and soft sciences (like psychology and social sciences). To reflect this traditional distinction, we are proud

to announce that PNIS will be split into two different journals: PNIS-HARD and PNIS-SOFD. PNIS-HARD (Honest and Real Data) will publish papers that use actual data that have been either generated or gathered by the authors themselves, much like most of the hard sciences. In contrast, PNIS-SOFD (Satirical or Fake Data) will use fake data to satirize and make fun of anything and everything dealing with the occupation of being a scientist. We invite readers to read the current examples of PNIS-HARD and PNIS-SOFD papers on our website to clarify this distinction.

We also would like to note that it took the prestigious scientific journal *Nature* over 100 years and *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* over 200 years before they expanded their number of journals, while, at PNIS, it only took us about 30 seconds. But, don't worry, we're not done yet (maybe, we'll see how tired we are).

REVOLUTION #2: EVERYBODY CAN GET IN ON THE FUN!

Most, if not all, of the authors of scientific papers in mainstream journals are affiliated with a university or government institution, suggesting that such an affiliation is required in order to publish a paper. Dmitri Rabounski, editor-in-chief of *Progress in Physics*, has noted that "It is often the policy of editorial boards that persons without an academic or commercial affiliation will not be published" (p. 59). We feel that this discriminatory practice by academic journals severely limits the progress of science, for

these journals are effectively silencing the ideas of the vast majority of people who are not academically affiliated. At PNIS, we recognize that many revolutionary scientific discoveries in the past have come from non-academics, including Nicolaus Copernicus, Gregor Mendel, and Mary Anning, and wonder if journals today would publish the work of these great scientists. Notably, the journal that actually published Mendel's work, as well as the journal that provided an English translation of the paper, no longer exists. Way to suppress academic freedom, mainstream academic fascists!

Here, at PNIS, we have no standards for our authors: we will accept publications by anybody, from anywhere, on any subject. Thus, we would like to announce our new motto: "We'll publish anything!"

REVOLUTION #3: PEER REVIEW: WE'RE NOT HERE TO MAKE FRIENDS!

When a paper is submitted to an academic journal, it is reviewed by other scientists for its accuracy and merit, a process called peer review. Some journals use single-blind review, in which the identity of the author is made known to the reviewers, but the reviewers remain anonymous. Others use double-blind review, in which the identities of both the authors and reviewers are anonymous. At PNIS, we take this review process one step further and introduce the concept of triple-blind review. When we receive a paper to be reviewed, not only we will remove the names of the authors but also random sentences and paragraphs to completely ensure the authors' anonymity. In addition, to ensure fairness in the review process, we will take the reviews of one paper and randomly assign them to other submitted papers. So, now it's quadruple-blind review! In fact, we may not even have a peer review process at all! It doesn't get much fairer than that!

REVOLUTION #4: THE IMPACT FACTOR OF PNIS IS ANYTHING YOU WANT IT TO BE!

Journals are usually ranked by their impact factor, which is calculated as A_C/A_P , where A_C is the number of times that the articles of one journal have been cited by other articles, and A_P is the total number of papers that that journal has published and are citable. In the academic community, it is perceived that a high impact factor denotes a high quality journal.

The impact factor of PNIS is specifically struc-

tured to beat that of any other journal at any time. The policy of PNIS is to never allow any of our papers to be cited (see Michel 2014). Thus, our value of A_C will always be 0. Plus, because PNIS does not have any citable papers (again, see Michel 2014), our value of A_P must also be 0, giving our impact factor as 0/0. In mathematics, 0/0 is known as an indeterminate form and can conceivably be equal to anything (Numberphile 2012). Thus, if you want our impact factor to be 2 billion, then it is 2 billion. I see that the impact factor for the journal *Science* is 31. Thus, the impact factor of PNIS is 31.1. Oh, I see that the impact factor for *Nature* is 38.597. Well, the impact factor for PNIS is now 38.598. When you publish your paper in PNIS, you will always have the highest impact factor. That is a guarantee that no other academic journal can make!

REVOLUTION #5: DID I JUST HEAR SOMEBODY SAY "FREE PNIS"?

We perfervidly believe that everyone should have access to PNIS. This access will include both the contribution of papers to be published as well as the ability to read these papers. Other journals charge authors thousands of dollars to publish a paper, and then require a subscription fee in order to actually read the paper. And, if authors want their paper to be available to anyone ("open access"), that can cost them up to \$3,000 (Solomon and Björk 2012).

Well, at PNIS, excuse us if we believe that science should not be about the money*. All of our articles are free of charge for authors and all of our articles are open access*. This means that anyone, anywhere can submit and subscribe to PNIS freely*. How can we get away with not charging an article processing fee or a subscription fee*? We're not sure, but our accountants are working overtime (unpaid) to figure out how. However it works out, we're confident that the Invisible Hand of the Free Market will somehow guide PNIS towards whatever it is the Free Market is supposed to guide you to.

(* - Note that PNIS, Inc. reserves the right to change its open access policy and article processing fees at any time without notice, because, oh my god, [look at these profit margins of other academic publishing companies.](#))

THE EXPECTED GROWTH OF PNIS

Here at PNIS, we know that we are starting off very small, but we also know that we can only expand

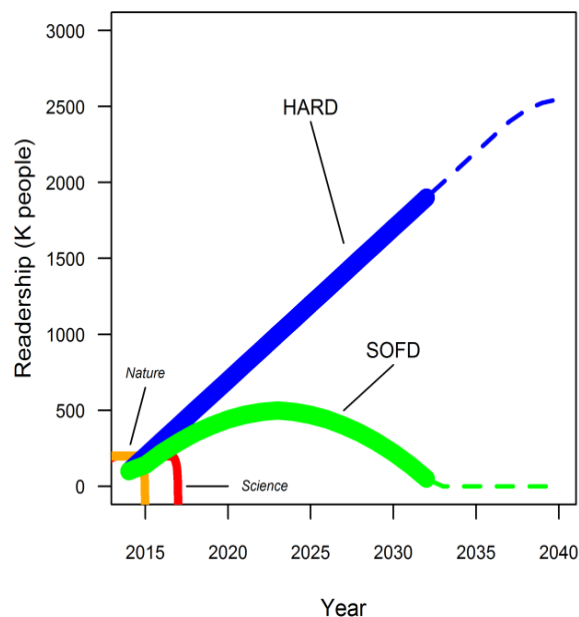


Figure 1. The expected growth of PNIS-HARD, PNIS-SOFD, *Nature*, and *Science*

from here. Our statistics team has recently finished a mathematical model that projects the growth of PNIS-HARD and PNIS-SOFD, and two competitor journals (*Nature* and *Science*) from now until the year 2040, and we present the results in Figure 1.

There are a few things of interest in this graph. First, we expect that both our journals (HARD and SOFD) will experience rapid growth in the first 10 years. HARD will continue this growth for the remaining future, while the readership at SOFD is expected to decline after 10 years. In addition, we expect that rising popularity in PNIS will cause the readership of both *Nature* and *Science* to shrivel quite quickly and ultimately diminish completely in about 2 years. Our model also predicts that, starting in 2032, we will publish our journals every other year (denoted by the dotted lines in Fig. 1), no doubt to replenish our resources after starting the first 20 years so strong.

THE REVOLUTION HAS ALREADY BEGUN

In reading this editorial, you have helped start the revolution on academic publishing, and are now bounded to its progression and outcome. We realize that academic publishing is an extremely competitive market, and that they are not likely to welcome us with open arms (especially if they find out about this whole “revolution” thing) Thus, we need you. We need you to submit papers to PNIS, we need you to read PNIS, we need you to share PNIS, we basically need you to be thinking about PNIS at all times. You’ve already joined [*Lanyer’s note: you are not bound in any way to PNIS, inc.*], now help us make this something bigger.

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