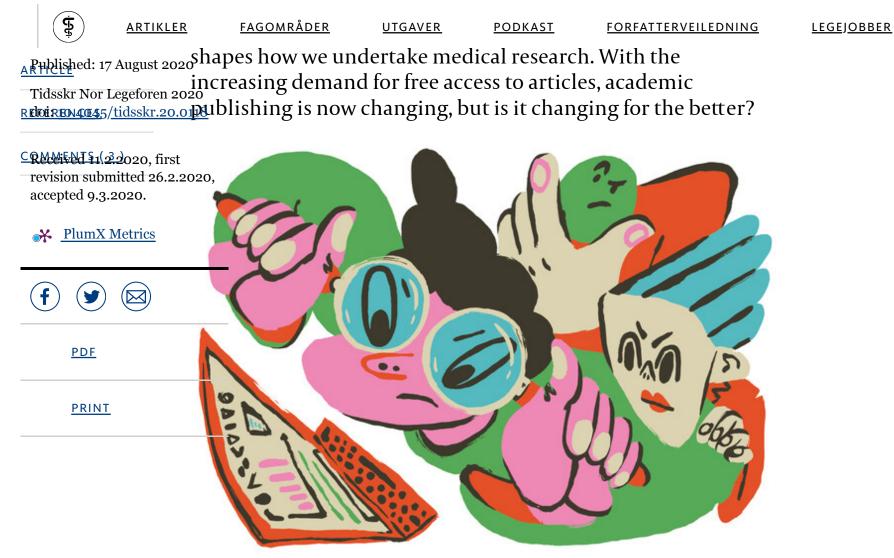
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The money behind academic publishing							
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Martin Hagve About the author

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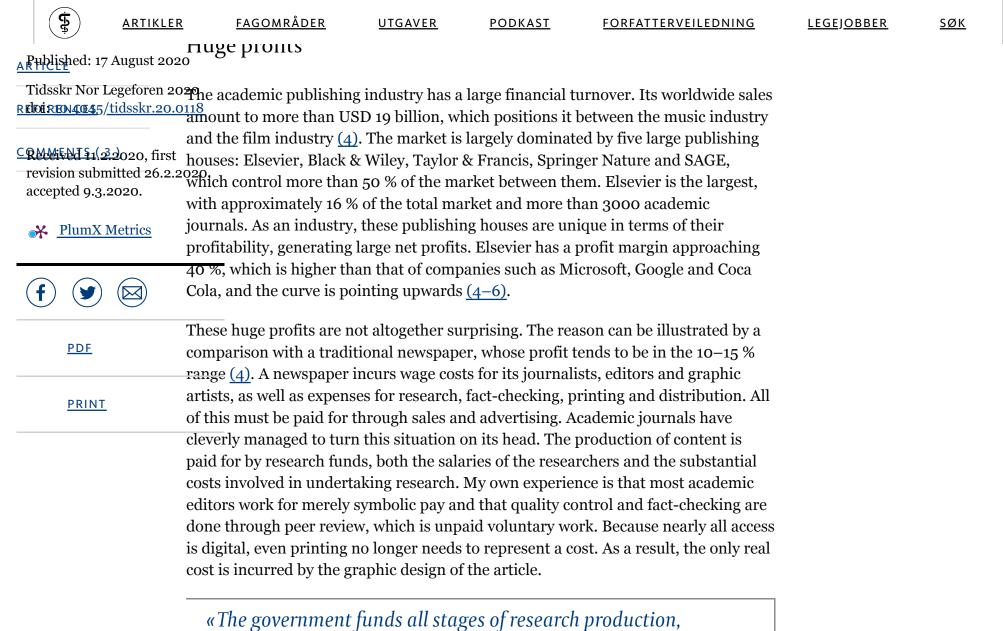


## Illustration: Helene Brox

Most doctors relate to the pharmaceutical industry with a healthy dose of scepticism. Academic publications are also something that all doctors and researchers need to relate to on a daily basis, but knowledge of and scepticism about



<u>PRINT</u>



«The government funds all stages of research production, but must then pay again to have access to the research results»

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<u>C</u> R	Tidsskr Nor Legeforen 20 To earn money, the publishing houses depend on selling a product. How well this <b>REDIRENADE45</b> /tidsskr.20.0118 product sells, depends on its quality. Traditionally, the quality of academic journals has been measured in terms of their 'impact factor', a measure that the journals trumpet loudly to attract good studies and more subscribers. The impact factor is accepted 9.3.2020. calculated according to the number of citations of the journal's articles over a two- year period.										
	<mark>⊁ <u>PlumX</u> №</mark>	<u>Metrics</u>				marily, it accepts that the					
(	f) 🎔		number of citations also	o varies consider	ably between dis	major assumption. The sciplines. For example, the ogy is more than twice as					
	PDF high as for journals in surgery, even though one discipline cannot be weighted as   more important than the other. Another problem is that self-citations by the author   him-/herself or by the journal are included.										
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	Through the so-called DORA declaration, many have chosen to disregard the impact factor completely when evaluating research quality, and Norwegian research institutions have endorsed this (11). The idea is good, but it leaves us with the problem of having no method for assessing the quality of research. Failing to recognise that we need an objective quality assessment is naive. Although the impact factor has obvious flaws, it has utility value. So far, none of the critics has proposed a better alternative. The problem is not the impact factor per se; it is how it is interpreted and used.										

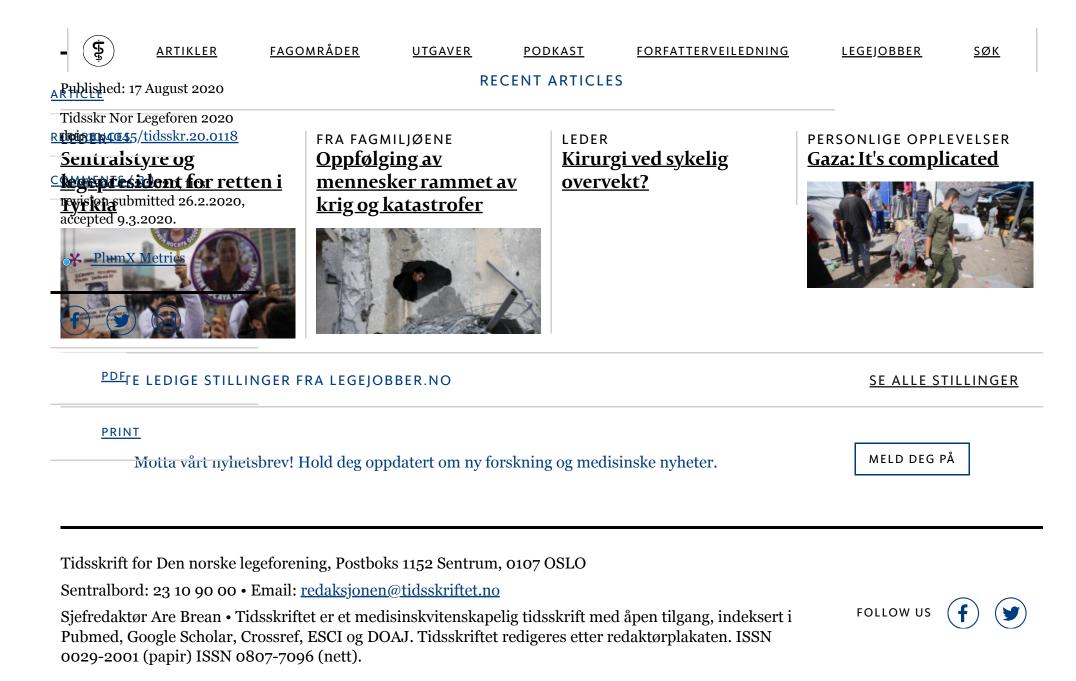
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CRMMENT \$1(2,2020	kr.20.0118 imp but 0, first neg 26.2.2020 put	oortant that its article is unfortunately not ative studies and rep blished research are o	es are frequently consistent with olication studies crucial for furthe	v cited. This influ what benefits re that test the rest er development.	ccess, and it is hence ences what is published, search. For example, ılts from previously Such studies have less news y for publication in high-			
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survive as researchers. Few of us can afford to pursue negative findings, positive results are often published quickly and uncritically, and too few replication studies are undertaken. This has consequences; in a study published in <i>Nature</i> , more than 70 % of all medical and biological researchers report having failed to confirm other researchers' results (12). The most important reasons were selective publishing of data, pressure to publish and poor statistical and analytical assessment.								

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Tidsskr Nor Legefore	en 2029nei	n access emerged in	the early 2000	s and has been p	romoted as the solution to					
R thoi RENAGE 45/tidsskr.20.018 Unese problems, in terms of access, funding and distribution of research results.   With open access, the articles are openly available and the publishing costs are covered by the researcher. The publishing of results will not be limited by the revision submitted 26.2.2020, first accepted 9.3.2020.   Reteived 9.3.2020. Impact factor to the same extent as before. It will be easier to get negative studies and replication studies published. Purely open-access journals exist, but some										
PlumX Metrics	tradi	tional subscription	journals also of	ffer open access f	or an extra charge.					
<b>f y</b> 🖂	a pro	ofit. This change also	o means that th	e journal will no	completely new way to earn t necessarily have any r quality control – or relate					
PDF	of pu	to their impact factor at all – as long as they can make the researchers pay. This type of publishing also comes at a cost. In a purely open-access journal, the price is often in the range of USD 1500–3000, but for traditional subscription-based journals, it								
PRINT	can 1	each USD 6000 <u>(5</u> )	<u>.</u>							
	poin	ted to the core prob	lem <u>(13)</u> . He wi	rote a study in wl	raid of peer review?', which nich he generated fake ning and with obvious					
	and	errors and omissions. This study was sent to more than 300 open-access journals, and more than 150 of them accepted it for publication with virtually no signs of quality control or peer review. Half of these journals were registered in the Directory								
	of Oj is to	of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), which is worrisome. The objective of this registry is to list quality-assured open-access journals to distinguish them from unscrupulous operators (so-called 'predatory journals') ( <u>14</u> ).								
			· •		cess journals is now d hospitals have established					

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RECEIREN4@4	22020, first mitted 26.2.20 3.2020.	which will entail radical Council of Norway has en publicly funded research has now started, by way publishers. For example, which ensures open acce were excluded from this Norwegian researchers h	change to our p ndorsed Plan S should be pub of establishmer Norway recent ss and publicat agreement, son ave criticised F	ublishing practic the intention bellished in open-active to of collective age ly entered into an ion in their journ ne of which are his lan S, though not	hind which is that all cess channels. This reform reements with the n agreement with Elsevier, als <u>(16)</u> . Many journals		
		relevant channels (17).	in may perman	entry exclude reso	careners nom publishing in		
PDF		«Although uncriti					
PRIN	<u>T</u> .	solution, objective	quality crite	ria are require	d »		

Although the access will now be open, there is no evidence to suggest that the price paid by the government will in fact decline. In my opinion, this goal should be as important or even more important. Many have also been critical of the new agreements and Plan S because of its lack of focus on cost reduction (3), and it is naive to believe that Elsevier and others will give up their golden goose without a fight. Despite the increasing pressure on the industry and the demands from the public sector for open access in recent years, the profit rates of the publishing houses are growing (5, 6). Nor does Plan S in its present form include a good solution to the problems referred to above, that open access potentially may increase the quantity, lower the quality and entail insufficient peer review. Sweden, Denmark and the United States have already rejected Plan S fully or partly because

https://tidsskriftet.no/en/2020/08/kronikk/money-behind-academic-publishing



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accepted 9.3.2020.

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