

Editorial

The Future of Scientific Publishing

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Just as our transmittal of knowledge has begun rapidly transitioning away from live lectures, textbooks, and encyclopedias in place of online and digital resources, so too are we witnessing the transition of scientific publishing.

Although scientific reports have been in print across the world since the invention of the printing press, the 1800s witnessed the broadest expansion and adoption of scientific journals for compilation. In the west, the *New England Journal of Medicine & Surgery & the Collateral Branches of Science* was founded in Boston in 1812,¹ and the *Lancet* in London in 1823,² and are considered among the oldest actively printed medical journals. With time, journal subspecializing began. The *American Journal of Surgery & Gynecology* was founded in 1890 (later transitioned to simply the *American Journal of Surgery* in 1905) and represented the first scientific journal in America focusing on surgery.³ The 1900s subsequently delivered the greatest expansion of medical and scientific print journals in history. However, with changing technology and evolving marketplaces, the 21st century is already heralding a rapid transition away from the ever-increasing library of print journals.



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Traditional print scientific publishing has stumbled upon several challenges, including increasing costs, decreasing rates of manuscript acceptance, longer lag times from submission to publication in print, and equity limitations in access to scientific knowledge to those individuals, societies, schools, and regions that can afford its subscription. Moreover, traditional publishing platforms require transferring ownership rights of the intellectual work performed by researchers, which are often paid for by private, academic, or governmental bodies. In turn, traditional print publishers sell that work via subscription for their own profits that are not shared by researchers or their grantors. From a financial fairness perspective, the discrepancy is obvious. From a societal equity perspective, the limited dissemination of knowledge secured from researchers, who have transferred the rights to their research to traditional print journals and their fee-based subscription models, limits the utilization and implementation of researcher findings across the healthcare spectrum worldwide.

Open-access publishing has laid the groundwork to flip the scientific publishing paradigm by addressing these structural inefficiencies, expenses, restrictions, and inequities.⁴ Open-access publishing harnesses the time, cost, and technological efficiencies of online-only publishing while empowering authors and research grantors to maintain ownership of their scientific findings while maximizing its dissemination. Only internet access is needed to learn and utilize the published findings. Yet, open-access publishing will also face its own challenges, including maintaining the quality of the peer-reviewed process, appropriately rewarding reviewers for their expertise, and keeping costs under control.

SurgiColl has emerged from this paradigm shift in scientific publishing. This new journal is committed to the open-access model for publishing scientific articles focused on surgical specialties. Moreover, *SurgiColl* has embraced the opportunity to lead in this new era of scientific publishing by serving as a paragon of quality, efficiency, and equity in the open-access publishing of surgical knowledge.

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