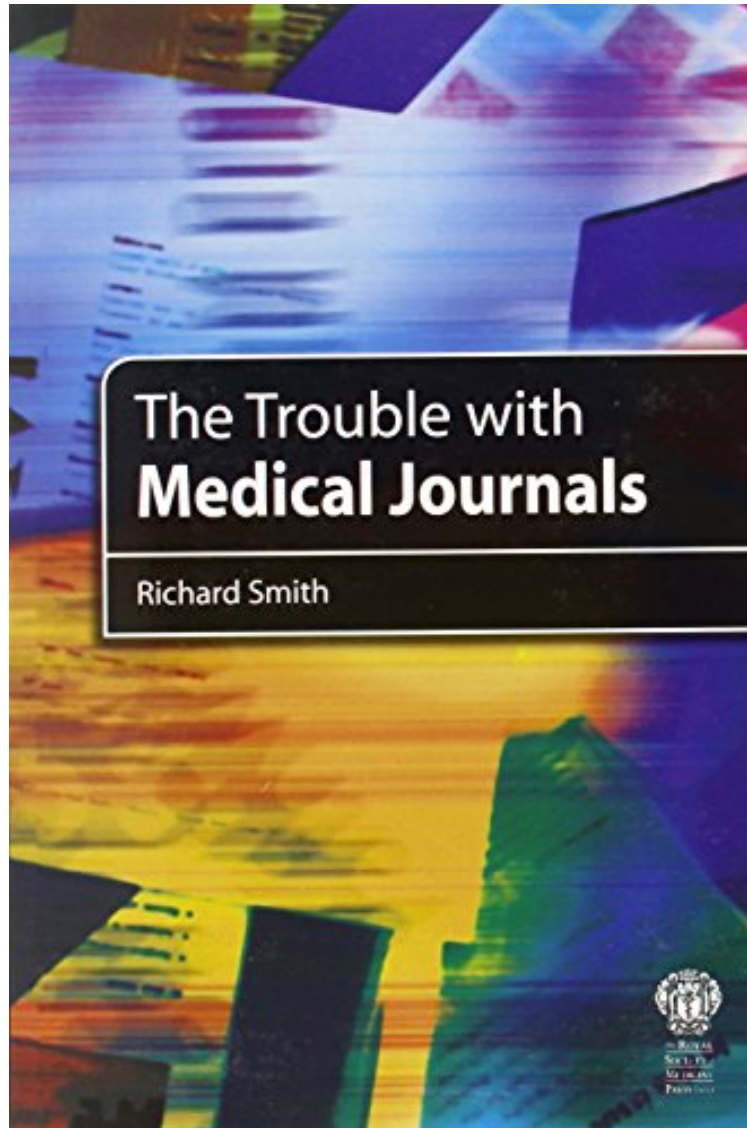


(Download pdf ebook) The Trouble with Medical Journals

The Trouble with Medical Journals

Richard Smith

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Richard Smith : The Trouble with Medical Journals before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Trouble with Medical Journals:

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Engaging and Thoughtful By R. Albin This is well written, engaging, and thoughtful book about the role of biomedical journals. The author was for many years the editor of the widely read British Medical Journal (BMJ) and head of the publishing group that puts out the BMJ and a number other journals. Smith presents a thorough discussion of major issues facing biomedical journals. This book has a personal

flavor because Smith draws on his extensive personal experience as an editor and because he was personally involved a number of controversies related to biomedical journals. Smith's experience, however, is a bit atypical in 2 ways. As a general journal, the BMJ is somewhat different and more journalistically oriented than the majority of biomedical journals. The BMJ, unlike the great majority of journals, has full time professional editors where most journals are essentially run by volunteer academics. Smith has a thoughtful discussions of a broad range of important topics such as the need to balance the demands of public interest with scientific issues defined narrowly, the variety of ethical problems facing journals, the tangled relationships between editors and publishers, and between industry and journals, and the changing nature of biomedical publishing. I found the section on the economics of biomedical publishing to be the most interesting. Smith cites some remarkable data. The dominant biomedical publisher, Reed Elsevier, had profits of approximately 2 billion dollars with an impressively high margin. The largest fraction of these profits come from biomedical publishing. Smith points out the actually stunningly obvious reasons for these remarkable figures. The raw material of journals is submitted manuscripts for which journals have to pay nothing. Most journals are run by volunteer editors and editorial boards. From a publisher's point of view, this is a remarkably low over head business model. Smith points also to an almost complete lack of competition, a really impressive example of market failure. Smith has a thoughtful discussion of alternatives, which may come to fruition with some of the ongoing open publishing initiatives. 10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. A new classic By Dr. A. K. Donald This book is a must read for anyone who practices medicine or conducts, peer reviews or publishes research. While the subject matter is extremely serious, with profound and unavoidable lessons for doctors, researchers, editors, reviewers and publishers, it is also highly entertaining thanks to Smith's wry story telling which makes each chapter a joy to read. The book has a broader remit than its title would suggest. It is as much about the state of medical research as it is about publishing. I predict it will become a classic in medicine. Highly recommended.

It is a turbulent time for STM publishing. With moves towards open access to scientific literature, the future of medical journals is uncertain and unpredictable. This is the only book of its kind to address this problematic issue. Richard Smith, a previous editor of the British Medical Journal for twenty five years and one of the most influential people within medical journals and medicine depicts a compelling picture of medical publishing. Drawn from the author's own extensive and unrivalled experience in medical publishing, Smith provides a refreshingly honest analysis of current and future trends in journal publishing including peer review, ethics in medical publishing, the influence of the pharmaceutical industry as well as that of the mass media, and the risk that money can cloud objectivity in publishing. Full of personal anecdotes and amusing tales, this is a book for everyone, from researcher to patient, author to publisher and editor to reader. The controversial and highly topical nature of this book, will make uncomfortable reading for publishers, researchers, funding bodies and pharmaceutical companies alike making this useful resource for anyone with an interest in medicine or medical journals. Topic covered include: Libel and medical journals; Patients and medical journals; Medical journals and the mass media; Medical journals and pharmaceutical companies: uneasy bedfellows; Editorial independence; misconduct; and accountability; Ethical support and accountability for journals; Peer review: a flawed process and Conflicts of interest: how money clouds objectivity. This is a unique offering by the former BMJ editor- challenging, comprehensive and controversial. This must be the most controversial medical book of the 21st Century John Illman, MJA News Lively, full of anecdote and he [Smith] is brutally honest British Journal of Hospital

Medicine*****

note that the reference to Arup Banerjee on page 100 of this book should be to Anjan Banerjee. We apologise to Professor Arup Banerjee for this

oversight.*****

5 Stars: This book is important to the general reader I enjoyed the book - a real page turner! customer review, Oct 2006
5 Stars: Editors unaccountable as kings! A stonking good read ... Wonderful stuff! customer review, Oct 2006
5 Stars: A new classic This book is a must read for anyone who practices medicine or conducts, peer reviews or publishes research. While the subject matter is extremely serious, with profound and unavoidable lessons for doctors, researchers, editors, reviewers and publishers, it is also highly entertaining thanks to Smith's story telling which makes each chapter a joy to read. The book has a broader remit than its title would suggest. It is as much about the state of medical research as a whole and its consequences for medicine, as it is about publishing. A new classic - highly recommended - 5 stars customer review, Oct 2006
Lively, full of anecdote and he [Smith] is scrupulously honest British Journal of Hospital Medicine A punchy book that deserves to be read... All human life is in this book, which makes plenty of pertinent points... It is a real page-turner, and I recommend it. Oldie Richard Smith, a former editor of the British Medical Journal, has written a witty, readable and provocative account of the current and future role of scholarly medical journals... I suggest you drop heavy hints for this book to be added to your birthday present list. Learned Publishing I read Smith's book with interest and was concerned greatly by some of the accusations he made within its pages. Pharmaceutical Marketing Amusing ... The Times This is an absolute must read book. It is

beautifully written, but the content is quite devastating. I read it from end to end in one sitting and was riveted throughout. Any illusions one might have had about the integrity of scientific research, the veracity of papers, and the altruism of journals are shattered forever. But the demolition is done with such a lovely blend of logic, humour, anecdote, and evidence that it really does make a cracking good read. It should be a standard text for all courses in scientific subjects, never mind medicine, as it would open students' eyes to the dangers of taking published work for granted. If you buy no other book this year, buy this one, and then reflect on which of your colleagues most need a copy too, and either a) give them your copy or b) buy some more.

Evidence-Based Medicine: Primary Care and Internal Medicine, BMJ, August 2008

The Trouble with Medical Journals is truly an eye opening book. Smith is able to lend instant credibility to his claims as a former insider of that world. This book is highly recommended for all medical libraries. With its clear conversational tone and broad coverage of research and publishing, it will be useful for doctors, researchers, and librarians, as well as consumers and patients.

Medical Reference Services Quarterly, Vol 26, 4, 2007

This must be the most controversial medical book of the 21st century, with the same kind of explosive impact as Ivan Illich's critique of the limits of medicine, Medical Nemesis (1976).

Medical Journalists' Association News, Feb/Mar 2007

A valuable educational resource for editors and reviewers, and a gold mine of data for journalologists.

The Journal of the European Medical Writers Association, Vol. 16, No. 2, 2007

About the Author

Richard Smith, Chief Executive, United Healthcare Europe. Former Editor of BMJ and Chief Executive of BMJ Publishing Group