

(from Urs Hartl, Muenster. Please distribute further as widely as possible:)

>

> Dear Colleagues,

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> I would like to inform you about current developments in the boycott against Elsevier.

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> On January 21, 2012 the fields medalist Timothy Gowers (Cambridge, UK) announced that he will no longer work for Elsevier as an author, or editor, or referee. He justifies this on

> <http://gowers.wordpress.com/2012/01/21/elsevier-my-part-in-its-downfall/>

> and asks all scientists to do the same. One can join this boycott on

> <http://thecostofknowledge.com/> .

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> Elsevier answered to the criticism in an open letter and promised changes

> http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/intro.cws_home/elsevieropenletter ,

> which many find insufficient

> <http://gowers.wordpress.com/2012/02/26/elseviers-open-letter-point-by-point-and-some-further-arguments/>

> . A central point criticized is (quoted from

> http://old.lms.ac.uk/newsletter/412/412_issue.pdf)

> ``Elsevier's harvesting of the value of our and our colleagues' work''

> (p.26 middle)

> by

> ``exploit[ing] our volunteer labor to extract very large profits from

> the academic community'' (p.23 bottom)

> where in contrast

> ``non-profit entities such as professional societies (e.g., the American

> Mathematical Society, the London Mathematical Society, and the Société

> Mathématique de France, all of which already publish a number of

> journals) or university presses'' allow that ``the value generated by

> the work of authors, referees, and editors would be returned to the

> academic and scientific community.'' (p.26 bottom)

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> To this issue Elsevier has not replied so far, although they boast

> exactly about this to please their stake holders: According to

> <http://www.nasdaq.com/article/reed-elsevier-2011-profit-increases-quick-facts-20120216-00057>

> the profit in 2011 of Reed-Elsevier was 760 million GBP ``largely driven

> by strong performances from the company's core electronic subscription''.

>

> In several editorial boards of Elsevier journals the consequences of

> this boycott are discussed. I am an associate editor of the Elsevier

> journal "Journal of Number Theory" (JNT). Elsevier has invited our

> editorial board to a meeting on Saturday, March 24, 2012 because of

> criticism also voiced by us. We request from Elsevier much more

> far-reaching changes and consider to leave Elsevier otherwise

> [http://www.math.uni-](http://www.math.uni-muenster.de/u/urs.hartl/Elsevier/Br_Elsevier_120320.pdf)

> [muenster.de/u/urs.hartl/Elsevier/Br_Elsevier_120320.pdf](http://www.math.uni-muenster.de/u/urs.hartl/Elsevier/Br_Elsevier_120320.pdf)

> . We hope that Elsevier reconsiders its policy and reroutes for the

> benefit of science in consideration for the miserable public budgets

> worldwide.

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> To reinforce this position, I would like to invite you to join the

> boycott <http://thecostofknowledge.com/> . I have signed it myself,

> although I have not yet quit from the editorial board of JNT, because I

> hope to force Elsevier into further changes.

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> In case you are an editor of an Elsevier journal yourself, I would like

> to ask you to also apply pressure with your editorial board on Elsevier.
> So far Elsevier is applying the approved method "divide and conquer".
> There will be meetings with editorial boards and on an individual basis
> in familiar atmosphere editors will be convinced that there's no need to
> desert Elsevier. There should be attempts to coordinate action among the
> editorial boards of all Elsevier journals.

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> Thank you very much,
> Urs Hartl

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