Verfassungsblog
ON MATTERS CONSTITUTIONAL

Delisted

Verfassungsblog and the Politics of Inclusion in Open Access Infrastructures

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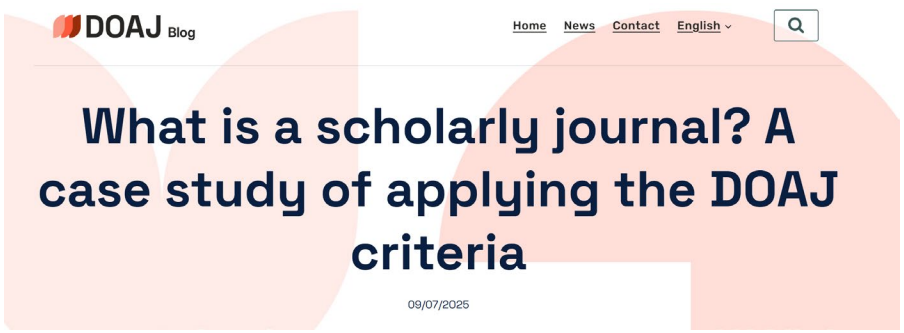
What is Verfassungsblog?

*Verfassungsblog is a **global forum of scholarly debate** at the interface of academy and society. We open up debates in public law – internationally, interdisciplinary and open access. We are **independent and community-led**. We offer innovative, academic publication formats for **reviewed content**. Our goal is to ensure maximum speed in our publication process, meeting public demand for academic expertise at its peak – without compromising on quality. As a **non-profit organization**, we are committed to transparency and fairness.*

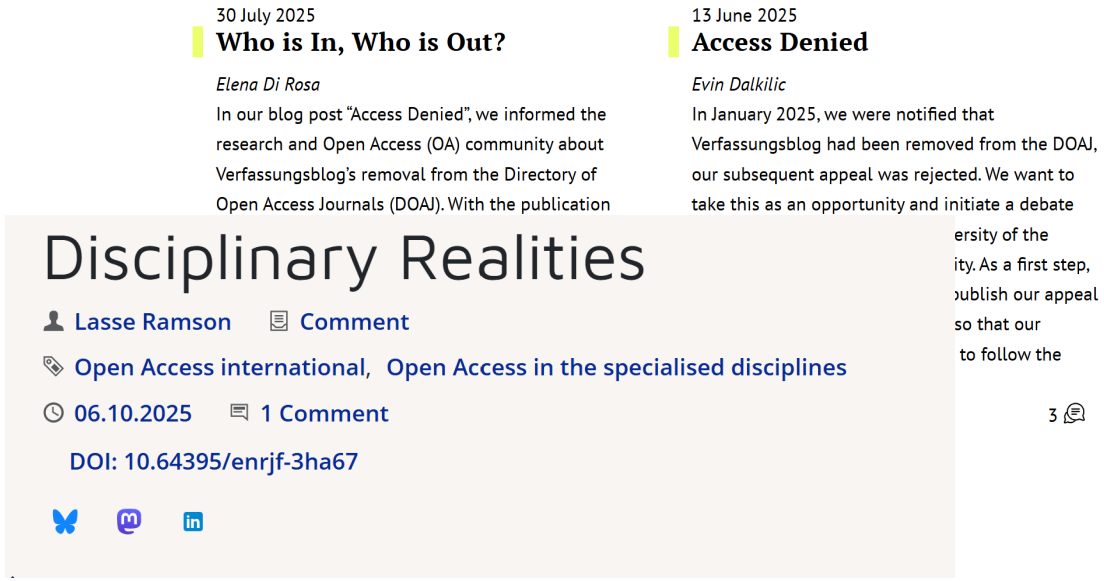
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Verfassungsblog's removal from DOAJ

1. The Directory of Open Access Journals included Verfassungsblog in 2023
2. A reevaluation of Verfassungsblog occured in 2024 followed by a delisting in 2025
3. After contestation via E-Mail, Verfassungsblog and DOAJ decided to conduct the debate in public



Matt Hodgkinson, Head of Editorial, DOAJ



How technical questions become a question of power

- Who defines the criteria?
- Which publishing practices do the criteria recognize?
- Which practices become marginal?

How standards produce boundaries I

1. FORMAT

What does a scholarly publication look like?

- article vs. short intervention
- issue-based publication vs. rapid response
- conventional journal vs. blog

*„Not a research journal“**

*Quotes taken from the Blogpost of Matt Hodgkinson

How standards produce boundaries II

2. REGISTER & AUDIENCE

Who is scholarly writing supposed to speak to?

- Highly specialized academic language vs. accessible, journalistic language
- Communication within the academic community vs. engagement with broader publics

→ Accessibility can be mistaken for a lack of scholarly rigor

„Primary target audience of researchers or practitioners“

How standards produce boundaries III

3. DISCIPLINARY NORMS

Which model of scholarship becomes the default?

- criteria developed around particular journal traditions
- assumptions about peer review
- assumptions about publication frequency
- assumptions about editorial structures

„We allow an exception to peer review for arts and humanities journals, for which editorial review is allowed. However, law is not considered an arts and humanities field by the UNESCO definitions we follow“

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Infrastructures and their functions

- Indexing → recognition → funding eligibility → institutional resources
- Delisting is not simply a reputational issue, they can have material consequences
- In case of Verfassungsblog: At least 29 of Institutions that have many pubilshing authors on Verfassungsblog have a DOAJ-listing as a criteria for paying APCs
- Some of them still support Verfassungsblog (Verfassungsblog has a membership-model and doesn‘t have APCs)

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The paradox of institutionalized Open Access

Diamond OA promises	Institutionalization can produce
• Openness • Diversity • Inclusion • Alternatives • Decentralization	• Standardization • Homogenization • New boundaries • New gatekeeping • Centralized evaluation

Open Access can challenge the old gatekeepers of scholarly publishing while simultaneously creating new gatekeepers around the definition of legitimate scholarship.

What would inclusive evaluation look like?

1. Disciplinary sensitivity
   Evaluation criteria need to account for different scholarly cultures and practices.

2. Accessibility and linguistic register
   Scholarly legitimacy should not depend on highly specialized language; accessible and journalistic forms can also constitute meaningful scholarly communication.

3. Plurality of formats and practices
   Short-form scholarship, alternative review models, and scholar-led platforms should be evaluated according to their scholarly function rather than their similarity to conventional journals.

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Thank you!

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DOAJ-delisting of Verfassungsblog - debate

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