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## From the Editors' Desks

### President's message

First, as you will see on p123, we are sad to lose Margaret Cooter as our Production Editor. Margaret has done sterling work putting together issues of ESE but feels the time has come to enjoy her retirement from editing, which includes handing on the baton that is our Journal. We are very pleased that Lynne Rowland has agreed to act as Production Editor; however, Lynne is not an editor and is doing this purely as a "job". If any member of EASE would be interested in taking on this position in the future, we would welcome enquiries. Please contact the Secretary.

We also thank Diana Epstein for her work as Advertising Manager for the past 12 months. This role will now be managed by the Secretary. It is very hard to find advertisers in this current climate, and we are most grateful to Aries and ScholarOne for their continued support of the Journal.

The build-up to Tallinn continues. You will find the Final Circular enclosed with this issue. The parallel sessions are all developing well: speakers are mentioned in the Circular and abstracts of their talks

will be posted on the website. Which brings me to what might be our most exciting news: we are going to rebuild the website, at last. The current site has become increasingly cumbersome to use recently, such that Silvia is unable to post certain information. We will invest in a new site that should be much easier to keep updated and enable us to communicate more efficiently with our members and editors around the world. We are also going to install a new database for managing the membership which will enable us to manage registration for the Tallinn Congress ourselves: for the past two Congresses we have used external organizers which has added substantially to the costs. Mare-Anne Laane is using FRENS to help with some local issues in Tallinn, but otherwise the Programme Committee and the Secretary are covering everything, which will help to keep the conference affordable. Please show the Circular to your friends and encourage them to attend. Pdf copies are available from the Secretary, or encourage colleagues to visit the website.

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## Editorial

### Combining science editors' and clinicians' efforts to advance writing and editing skills

Science writing and editing is evolving as a unique scientific discipline, and there are currently a few positive examples of how teaching research methodology and reporting at the undergraduate level can improve prospects of future researchers' performance.<sup>1</sup> Skilled journal editors, particularly those from the small professional communities, are in a position to share experience with contributors to their journals by arranging small-group discussions and publishing guidelines on study design, literature search strategy, structuring manuscripts, avoiding common writing mistakes, and surviving the peer-review.<sup>1,2</sup> Editors are also responsible for adopting good editorial practice standards and monitoring adherence of authors to the guidelines and policy papers published by science editors' organisations such as the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), the Council of Science Editors (CSE) and the European Association of Science Editors (EASE).<sup>3</sup> Resources of these and other leading learned societies represent valuable tools for advancing knowledge and skills of all the contributors to science writing and editing, namely authors, peer-reviewers, editors, and publishers.

Familiarity with traditional and new international and regional editorial societies and their activities may substantially improve the quality of publications and their visibility. EASE and its members pay attention to this task and frequently reflect on the achievements of the learned societies on the pages of *European Science Editing*,<sup>4,5</sup> one of the leading scientific periodicals in the field of science communication. The journal serves as a forum supporting editors from Europe and many other parts of the world in their attempts to meet the standards of selective indexing databases.<sup>6</sup> A variety of high-rank meetings of scientific and technical editors are regularly discussed in the journal, thus providing guidance for novice and senior fellows in science editing. This issue also contains reports of interest to editors struggling to advance their editors' skills and educate them.<sup>7,8</sup>

Like many organisations aiming to expand the network of editors, EASE periodically arranges congresses, where many hot topics are discussed and numerous problems find their solutions. The next triennial congress of EASE, which will be held on 8–10 June 2012 in Tallinn, Estonia, is going to become a major meeting point for editors from around the world concerned with the digitalization of their journals and improving authors' writing skills. It is expected to gather specialists from different backgrounds and stimulate dialogue between authors, peer reviewers, editors, and publishers. Based on its highly educational programme, the congress will be attractive for many editors from the scientific periphery and countries seeking better editorial practices.

As an editor, I have recently had the opportunity to

attend several workshops on editing and biomedical congresses, where the basics of writing, editing, and peer-reviewing were on top of the agenda. Interestingly, the important trend in arranging meetings for biomedical specialists, at least based on personal experience, is to incorporate topics on writing in the programmes of highly specialised biomedical meetings. The rationale for this trend stems from the importance of writing skills for every discipline and for biomedicine in particular. In fact, the European League Against Rheumatism (EULAR) annual rheumatology congress, held on 25–28 May 2011 in London and which I had a privilege to attend, was a remarkable event in that it arranged a special session on composing articles, submitting them to the most suitable journals, and peer-review in rheumatology journals. The session was well attended by junior clinicians, researchers, and editors of the leading journals in the field of rheumatology. It included presentations by editors of *Arthritis and Rheumatism* (Joan M. Bathon), *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases* (Tore K. Kvien), and *Rheumatology* (Robert J. Moots). The presentations were not overburdened with too much specialised information and, in a simple and attractive way, addressed the principles of writing original articles, choosing a target journal, and satisfying the requirements of demanding reviewers. All the presenting editors unanimously agreed on the need to publish articles representing sufficiently high level of evidence, ie original papers, reports of large trials, and systematic reviews. The editors of the journals, with annual submission rates well above 1000, gave unsurprisingly low priority to clinical case reports, small and preliminary reports. The session was a unique opportunity to learn the presenter's attitude towards the editors' credentials, which ideally should encompass outstanding clinical experience, managerial, and editorial skills. Importantly, the famous 2-day course "How to be a successful journal editor", run by PSP consulting in Oxford, UK and elsewhere in Europe,<sup>9</sup> was mentioned by the chief editor of *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*, Prof. Tore K. Kvien who attended it, as helpful for getting valuable skills and editing the most impacting journal in rheumatology.

Definitely, the successful example of the EULAR congress, incorporating an editors and authors meeting into the highly saturated clinical science programme, is not the only one. However, it once again emphasises the importance of paying more attention to the clinicians' scholarly writing and editing skills. Inspired by this example many clinical meetings worldwide have arranged similar sessions, and, hopefully, it will pave the way for a tradition.

Another remarkable feature of the EULAR 2011 congress was its international representation. I was particularly fortunate to meet many clinicians from developed and developing countries, editors of top- and middle-rank

journals in rheumatology, and to discuss the prospects for research and science editing in rheumatology. Despite his numerous commitments, presentations, meetings with specialists and shortage of time, Prof. Tore K. Kvien kindly responded to my request discuss editorial policy and workflow in *Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases*. He was very proud of having distinguished European and American rheumatologists in the editorial board of the journal. Members of the editorial board are selected to represent almost all branches of current rheumatology, common and rare rheumatic diseases; most editors are involved in large multicentre randomized trials and frequently submit reports on these trials to the journal. Importantly, the journal ascribes to the principles of publishing ethics and research reporting of the COPE and the EQUATOR Network.

The quality of journals, traditional and alternative impact factors were the main topics discussed at an informal meeting with the publishing editor at the Springer Verlag London Ltd, Dr Ross Hildrew, responsible for clinical journals such as *Rheumatology International*, *Osteoporosis International*, *Clinical Rheumatology*, *Calcified Tissue International*, etc. Dr Hildrew shared his thoughts on the possibilities of improving the impact of the middle-rank rheumatological journals by limiting the number of case reports. The restructuring of editorial boards, hiring of new editors, and the internationalisation were also considered as potentially helpful strategies.

The congress was an excellent opportunity to get visibility for middle- and low-rank rheumatological journals and magazines. *Clinical Rheumatology* and *Scandinavian Journal of Rheumatology* had their well-attended, well-designed and informative booths standing next to the booths of top-rank rheumatological journals. Interestingly, there was also the booth of the *Turkish Journal of Rheumatology*, a relatively new journal indexed by Science Citation Index Expanded and listed in the Journal Citation Report. Representatives of the journal impressed with their Mediterranean hospitality; Turkish pastry sweetened the hospitality. The booth also displayed information on the Turkish national rheumatology congress, which many visitors would be tempted to attend.

In conclusion, the EULAR 2011 congress in London was a successful clinical and scientific meeting of interest to the global community of rheumatologists, internologists and science editors. It was a good example of how clinicians and science editors can cooperate and advance science communication.

**Armen Yuri Gasparyan**

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**Editors of the leading journals in rheumatology at the EULAR 2011 session on science writing and peer review. From left to right: Stefano Bombardieri, David S. Pisetsky, Tore K. Kvien, Robert J. Moots, and Joan M. Bathon**



**Robert J. Moots presenting the peer review process in Rheumatology (Oxford)**

## Viewpoints

### Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence: encouraging gender analyses in scholarly publications

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**Abstract** Sex and gender differences influence health risks, disease progression and treatment outcomes. Owing to the underrepresentation of females as subjects in medical research, current clinical management of women is less evidence-based than for men. Gender analysis is also underrepresented in the scientific literature. The dissemination of sex-specific results is critical for ensuring that women and men equally attain the highest standards of health. Editors and publishers can play a major role in making the paradigm of scientific publishing more comprehensive. Guidelines on manuscript preparation, instructions for authors and peer reviewers set the bar for good standards of reporting, and inclusion of a policy on sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis should not be amiss here.

**Keywords** Gender analysis; sex differences; editorial policies; peer reviewers; editors' role; publishers' responsibility.

#### Sex matters in health

Differences between men and women affect health risks, disease progression and treatment outcomes that span the breadth of human physiology. For example, HIV-infected women are reported to progress at lower viral load compared with men, and present higher CD4+ T-cell counts at seroconversion, AIDS diagnosis and AIDS-related death.<sup>1,2</sup> Variations also exist in treatment response. A systematic review and meta-analysis of studies into the effects of aspirin on the risk of myocardial infarction supported the concept that women are less responsive to aspirin than men and that sex influences the efficacy of aspirin in reducing myocardial infarction rate.<sup>3</sup> Many of the drug-related differences can be explained by differences in pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics. In practice, however, treatment strategies and drug-dose adjustments often neglect sex differences.<sup>4</sup>

#### The social realm of wellbeing

Many of the observed differences are a result of not only sex-specific physiological and biological differences, but also social and behavioural factors. "Sex" is often used to differentiate males and females based on specific biological characteristics. "Gender", on the other hand, refers to the social determinants associated with acquired identity of femininity and masculinity, which are shaped by the cultural and social environment.<sup>4</sup>

Several studies suggest an impact of gender on health. In a study from Nigeria, gender affected access to HIV treatment. The study showed how women's ability to make

health-related decisions was shaped by structures of financial inequality, authority relations and social norms.

Gender analysis is of particular importance to the settings and populations with marked gender differences. Extrapolation and generalization of study results obtained from male-dominated cohorts to women as well as the absence of gender analysis may lead to suboptimal clinical management and potentially less favourable health outcomes. Medicine as it is practised today is less evidence-based when applied to women than to men.

#### Data analysis and reporting

The scientific literature is marked by the low inclusion of gender analyses in published studies. An analysis of randomized controlled clinical trials published in nine leading medical journals in 2004 showed that roughly 13% of the articles presented sex-disaggregated data or included sex as a covariate in multivariable statistical models.<sup>6</sup> A follow-up study in 2009 revealed that this trend had improved marginally: 75% of the analyzed articles still failed to report data disaggregated by sex.<sup>7</sup> Similar trends have been reported in specialist fields, such as cardiovascular medicine, where sex differences have a profound effect.<sup>3,8</sup> In fact, of 645 cardiovascular trials published in 2004, only 24% reported sex-specific results. Interestingly, those studies funded by the National Institutes of Health, which have a clear mandate on gender inclusion and reporting, were significantly more likely to report outcomes disaggregated by sex.<sup>8</sup> The same lack of gender analysis is observed in reports presented as conference abstracts. For example, of 34,000 abstracts submitted to 17 HIV/AIDS conferences between 2003 and 2009, only 13.7% were specifically related to women.<sup>9</sup> It is, however, encouraging to see an increase of abstracts addressing the needs of women and girls for the International AIDS Society and International AIDS Conferences from 15% to 33.5% between 2009 and 2011, possibly due to the implementation of a gender policy and a women's research award (personal communication, International AIDS Society 2011).

One of the underlying factors for the lack of reporting on sex and gender differences is the underrepresentation of women in clinical trials, and the fact that most studies are not sufficiently powered from the outset to allow significant sex differences to be detected. Historically, a common reason for excluding women from clinical trials has been a risk of potential harm to the foetus and avoiding menstrual hormonal variations, thereby minimizing heterogeneity of the study population, which affects the size and complexity of a study impacting on cost and time requirements.<sup>10</sup> A study

of phase I trial data for new molecular entities approved by the US Food and Drug Administration in 2006 and 2007 confirmed that women remain underrepresented.<sup>11</sup>

Despite increasing efforts to encourage women's participation in clinical trials, investigators either fail to carry out gender analysis or do not report available data. Moreover, international guidelines and instructions for authors of scholarly publications do not specify how gender differences should be reflected in the submissions. Manuscript preparation guidelines can serve as a vital source of support for this cause. As d'Arminio Monforte and colleagues emphasize in their recent opinion piece in AIDS "the incorporation of a recommendation for including women in clinical trials and reporting female subanalyses in the CONSORT guidelines would encourage the transparent reporting of clinical trials... CONSORT should also recommend that a minimum percentage of female participants be included in studies that are not related to sex-specific problems"<sup>12</sup>

#### Time for editorial action

Investigators, ethical review boards, funding bodies, the pharmaceutical industry, regulators, peer reviewers and journal editors should facilitate equality for subpopulations involved in research studies. An active commitment in this direction is needed at all stages of research, from study design to the development of guidelines and reporting. Editors and publishers can play a major role through professional leadership.

Guidelines on manuscript preparation, instructions for authors and peer reviewers set the bar for high standards of reporting and inclusion of a policy on sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis is overdue. As a first step, the *Journal of the International AIDS Society* has adopted an editorial policy strongly encouraging provision of data disaggregated by sex (and race if applicable) and gender analysis.<sup>13</sup> Nature Publishing Group also considers sex and gender information mandatory for its scholarly publications.<sup>14</sup> In addition, a recent Gender Summit held in Brussels highlighted gender issues in scientific research and publications, including how editorial policies can improve gender equality by increasing our knowledge of the impact of sex and gender on health.<sup>15</sup>

#### Conclusion

Both men and women are entitled to benefit equally from the highest attainable standards of healthcare. Collection, analysis and reporting of clinical data that takes differences between subpopulations into account are an integral part of ensuring this fundamental human right for all. Comparable inclusion and publication of relevant results remain an urgent health priority. Scholarly journals now exist that are entirely devoted to these issues, eg *Biology of Sex Differences* and *Gender Medicine*. However, gender mainstreaming throughout the scholarly literature is required.

Peer reviewers, editors and publishers are encouraged to put more effort into implementing changes to increase reporting of differences between subpopulations in peer-reviewed publications. Learned associations may facilitate improvements in editorial policies and move from discussions to actions.

**Competing interests** SH is an employee of the International AIDS Society and her salary is provided partly by unrestricted educational grants from the following pharmaceutical companies: Abbott, Boehringer Ingelheim, Gilead, Merck, Pfizer, Roche, Tibotec and ViiV Healthcare. MJC has no competing interests to declare.

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## Editing around the World

### Scientific publishing in a small country: an Estonian perspective

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**Abstract** This article gives a brief overview of the history and present situation in the field of scientific publishing in Estonia, one of the smallest countries in the European Union. Two streams of scientific publishing in Estonia can be distinguished: (i) scientific and scholarly journals with high quality requirements striving to excellence (mostly in English) and (ii) scholarly publications reflecting the studies on national heritage and nature (mostly in Estonian). The publications of the first group are all listed in international databases, as are many but not all of the second group. The high-level peer reviewed publications demonstrate the potential of a country's research and highlight the achievements of its research centres. These publications are also a part of quality requirements for public funding decisions. Thus, the journals of the first group reflect new scientific knowledge, while the second group, which is mostly meant for the Estonian community, has, beside its scientific value, also an important cultural aspect.

**Keywords:** national journals, cultural aspect of research, national funding decisions

#### Introduction

Scientific journals are the major resource for reporting and disseminating scientific information. Initially, around the 17th century, academies started to report new scientific results. Later the professional societies and unions joined in and now there is an enormous number of scientific journals around the world. Although there are journals in many languages, the lingua franca is English. Some journals have gained a very high reputation through history, now generally supported by bibliometric indicators. The crucial factor for all the journals is that in principle a manuscript undergoes a strict peer review before it is published. It might be said that the reputation of a journal depends very much on how the process of peer review is organized but surely this is not all. The reputation of a journal or, in other words, its importance as a leading source of information, is also related to the reputation of its publisher, the pool of authors, management of the work, visibility and certainly also the language. However, new knowledge belongs to the whole of mankind, research is not the prerogative of larger countries (what is large?) and the diversity of the world must be supported. That is why questions about the importance of scientific journals in smaller countries (what is small?) are asked.

This paper describes the situation in Estonia, one of the smallest countries in the EU. It is quite clear that with its 1.35 million inhabitants, Estonia really is a small country. First a brief overview of how scientific research started in this part of Europe is given, followed by a brief description of the modern research structures. Then scientific publishing in Estonia is described and finally, its importance is discussed.

#### Brief historical overview

Formal scientific activities in Estonia began with the establishment of the University of Tartu by the King of Sweden, Gustavus II Adolphus, in 1632. After hectic changes in the 18th century due to several wars, which passed over the territory of contemporary Estonia, the University of Tartu gained an international reputation in the 19th century. Astronomer Wilhelm von Struve, the embryologist Karl Ernst von Baer, chemist Wilhelm Friedrich Ostwald and others who worked at the University are known for fundamental contributions in their fields. Learned societies, the forerunners of the present Academy of Sciences, were formed during this period, as they were throughout Europe. In Estonia, these included the Estonian Learned Society (1838), the Literary Society of Estonia (1872) and the Estonian Naturalists' Society (1853). The earliest scientific periodical published in Estonia was the *Astronomische Beyträge* (1806–1807). From the 19th century, the periodicals of Learned Societies are known, like *Verhandlungen der Gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft* (1840–1943, 34 vols); *Sitzungsberichte der Gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft* (1861–1938, 72 vols). As it was easily understood, the language of publications of that time was German.

In 1919, after Estonia became independent, professors of Tartu University started teaching in Estonian. Scientific terminology in Estonian and the education of the Estonian people in their native language was developed. At the same time, scientific and scholarly research prospered in several fields. In the 1920s and 1930s Estonian research in astronomy, medicine, geobotany and oil shale chemistry gained worldwide recognition. The periodical published by L.Puusepp, a neurosurgeon with an international reputation, *Folia Neuropathologica Estoniana* (1923–1939) was an excellent scientific publication of that time. Actually this was the first journal in the world for this field of science.

The period of World War II and the Soviet annexation until 1991 was characterized by ideological pressure and therefore the publications of that time have a historical significance rather than showing the normal developmental progression of publications.

#### Present situation

The leading research centres in Estonia are the University of Tartu, Tallinn University of Technology, the Estonian University of Life Sciences and other public universities (six altogether) and several specific research institutes like the Tartu Observatory, the Institute of the Estonian Language, and the National Institute of Chemical and Biological Physics. Research funding comprised 1.42% of the GDP in 2009 (from Statistics Estonia); the public part was distributed mostly using peer review and quality requirements.<sup>1,2</sup> Estonian researchers have been rather successful in the EU's Framework Programmes and other international programmes, including

the highly competitive Wellcome Trust grant scheme. The number of scientific papers authored by Estonian researchers and published in highly valued journals is constantly increasing.<sup>3</sup> The research highlights are described in a special overview.<sup>4</sup>

#### Scientific publishing

The brief overview above shows that there is a tradition of scientific publishing in Estonia and nowadays this tradition is continuing.

The main publisher of scientific journals is the Estonian Academy Publisher (www.kirj.ee) which acts under the aegis of the Estonian Academy of Sciences. The Publisher is funded from the State budget through the Academy and publishes: *Acta Historica Tallinnensia*; *Estonian Journal of Archeology*; *Estonian Journal of Earth Sciences*; *Estonian Journal of Ecology*; *Estonian Journal Engineering*; *Linguistica Uralica*; *Oil Shale*; *Proceedings of the Estonian Academy of Sciences*; *Trames*, *A Journal for Humanities and Social Sciences*.

This list is the result of several changes of publication policy in the Estonian Academy of Sciences during the 1990s when from the previous journals only the best were preserved and their profiles restructured, some with the cooperation of public universities. One of the essential changes was launching *Trames* in 1997 by merging *Acta et Commentationes Universitatis Tartuensium* (1893) and *Proceedings of the Estonian Academy of Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences* (1952). All of the journals, except *Proceedings of the Estonian Academy of Sciences*, are published together with main Estonian public universities. The predominant language is English but the journals of humanities and social sciences also accept papers in German; *Linguistica Uralica* also accepts papers in Russian in order to offer possibilities for smaller Finno-Ugric language groups from Russia to publish their papers in linguistics. Short summaries in Estonian are added to papers; for authors from abroad these are written by technical editors. All journals have international editorial boards, the papers are internationally peer reviewed and they are indexed and abstracted in international databases and reviews. Strict peer reviewing for Academy journals was introduced as early as the 1980s. The editors are appointed by the Estonian Academy of Sciences and the editorial boards are regularly renewed. Characteristically, most of the science journals publish special issues collecting the papers from international conferences organized in Estonia but also in other countries. Naturally, the reviewing process for manuscripts is just the same as for regular papers, only guest editors are invited to help with the process.

Seven of the journals mentioned above are indexed by the ISI Web of Science, seven by Scopus, and three journals of humanities and social sciences by ERIH. In addition, they are indexed in many other specific databases, depending on the profile of the journal. All texts are also available electronically at the homepage of the Publisher and from EBSCO.

The Estonian Literary Museum publishes the journal *Folklore: An Electronic Journal of Folklore* which is also indexed by the ISI Web of Science. There are other scholarly publications like *Journal of Ethnology and Folkloristics*. One journal published by Tartu University Press is the oldest semiotics journal worldwide – *Sign Systems Studies* established in 1964 in Russian, and since 1998 in English. In addition, many societies publish their yearbooks in Estonian, usually

with English abstracts. The Estonian Naturalists' Society, for example, started to issue *Sitzungsberichte der Naturforschergesellschaft zu Dorpat* in 1853 and nowadays the Yearbooks of the Society are thematic (vol 83 was published in 2011). *The Yearbook of the Estonian National Museum* has been published since 1925, while several universities publish their results either in some series or as single publications like *Acta Universitatis Tallinnensis*.

It must be mentioned that some journals in Estonian that are aimed at professionals also use a peer review system like the *Estonian Medical Journal* for research papers. *The Journal Language and Literature* published by the Estonian Writers Union (predecessor of the journal from 1908, under the present name since 1958) is also peer reviewed and indexed in international databases like Modern Language Association, Central and Eastern European Online Library, and Linguistics and Language Behaviour Abstracts.

#### Final remarks

In most European countries, large or small, scientific publishing started after the founding of academies or societies for fostering research. Beside scientific research, the intention was often to publish the results of studies on national heritage. Estonia followed the same track – periodicals of societies have been published since the mid-19th century. Now, in the 21st century, two streams of publishing can clearly be distinguished: (i) scientific and scholarly journals with high quality requirements striving for excellence (mostly in English) and (ii) scholarly publications reflecting the studies on national heritage and nature (mostly in Estonian). The publications of the first group are all listed in international databases and many but not all of the second group follow the same mode. The high-level peer reviewed publications demonstrate the potential of a country's research and highlight the achievements of its research centres. These publications are also a part of quality requirements for funding decisions. In general, beside the journals of the first group which reflect the new scientific knowledge, the second group is needed because of its cultural aspect. Taken together, all scientific and scholarly publications contribute to the enhancement of a vernacular terminology which in its turn is a basis for education of both scientists and non-scientists. It depends very much on the community how all these aspects (excellence in research, culture and heritage, terminology and education) are interwoven into a whole – knowledge.

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## Scientific Editing in Bosnia and Herzegovina: a personal journey

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The most encouraging aspects of being an editor are respect and honour, which can be achieved by devoted and highly professional or qualified work. Qualification in scientific editing is a life-long achievement and a result of the struggle for objectivity and clarity of publications. On the road towards qualification, an editor might find many supportive friends and “foes”. The latter is inevitable when a journal editor reaches a certain level of proficiency and becomes more selective about what is published.

During my lifetime, editorial work has been an inseparable part of my professional activities on many occasions. Surprisingly for most, I learned how to edit in elementary school, then improved my editorial skills after high school, back in the early 1970s. I was involved in editing a school newspaper in grammar and high school, and, as a result, became one of the state's leading experts on standards of writing in my mother tongue.

In every young person's life there comes a moment when he/she must make a crucial decision. For me it was the choice of undergraduate studies at Sarajevo University. Despite my parents' advice to choose only one course, I was thinking about studying medicine, political sciences and journalism, without giving up writing, my “true love”. In the end, I opted for medicine and writing. As a student, I paid much attention to rare and unique medical cases, trying to produce case reports. Luckily, I was given a chance to edit a newsletter for students in 1974. It was a popular and highly informative newspaper *Voice of medics* (Glas medicinara) founded by my beloved University tutors back in 1961. Many similar editions are still published by other medical faculties of the former Yugoslavia: *Medicinar* (Zagreb), *Medicinski podmladak* (Belgrade), *Medicinski razgledi* (Ljubljana), *Naučni podmladak* (Nis), etc.

Publication of the student medical journal suffered interruptions, but despite all difficulties, I “revived” it several times. Unfortunately, it is no longer published, and perhaps awaits fresh enthusiasts with an understanding of its importance to students, future physicians, researchers and academics. Notably, most medical educators from Sarajevo and other parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina published something in this newsletter, which became a starting point for their later academic career. Undoubtedly, all these authors feel bound to the first, and possibly key publications of their lives.

Later on, being passionate about editorial work and having a certain amount of experience, I founded a new journal, *Acta medica et stomatologica studentorum Iugoslavica*, for 15 medical and dental faculties of the former Yugoslavia. The journal was successful for a long while, and continued to be published for four years after my term as editor. It was highly reputed among students and academic professionals all over Yugoslavia.

Upon graduation from the Medical faculty in 1978, I was offered a post as editor of *Materia Socio Medica Iugoslavica*. I was responsible for editing this highly prestigious European journal, from paper submission to sending issues to print. I am still editing this journal along with two other scientific journals, now as chief editor.

Editing has inspired me over the past decades and given me the knowledge and skills for running scientific journals, indexing them, and providing a forum for science communication. Some of the obstacles to successful science editing have been discussed in my previous publications<sup>1-4</sup>.

As a rule, most successful editors are those born to become editors. Only a gifted, multi-talented person with a good knowledge of science and advanced linguistic skills will succeed and survive in the highly competitive field of scientific writing, editing and indexing. An editor must have the motivation to persist and a clear vision of where his/her journal is heading. Everything should be done to maintain and improve the quality of articles in the interest of the global scientific community; to ensure reliance on strong evidence and scientific facts, not fiction, and to improve the visibility and impact of publications. In my opinion, based on my decades-long experience, the quality and longevity of a journal result from the proper selection of editorial team members who will support their colleagues and authors in an unbiased way. Luckily, I've been surrounded by well-trained and motivated associates over the past 20 years.

The efforts of an editor should be encouraged and supported by proper funding. Lack of funding ended the publication of numerous journals in Bosnia and Herzegovina. For the same reason, many motivated and skilled editors who started new journals were frustrated and forced to give up after just a few issues.

For most local journals, the quality of the peer review and availability of highly skilled referees have been a major problem for decades. It has been an uphill struggle for most editors to find unbiased experts, both local and international, who are willing to accept responsibility and stand behind the quality of journal articles. Local reviewers, as well as editors from the small scientific community, have always faced the dilemma of being objective and criticizing poor papers, or “harming” their friends and making “enemies”. In a small country, local authors and reviewers easily recognize each other, even when their identity is hidden. For our journals, most locally submitted articles are in Bosnian, Croatian or Serbian, which means that we cannot use reviewers from outside the country owing to the language barrier. Local submissions in English are still not up to a high standard, which also makes it difficult to use international reviewers.

A separate and significant issue is the qualification of local editors. Most editors have improved their knowledge and skills through trial and error; a few have joined international professional associations such as the World Association of

## Scientific medical journals in Turkey: current state and goals

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Medical Editors (WAME) and the European Association of Science Editors (EASE). Networking among local scientific editors is gradually increasing but there is still a lack of scientific and academic collaboration with colleagues from the mainstream science countries. More educational programs are needed for both novice and senior science editors.

I have been editing three indexed journals out of the 14 medical journals published in my country<sup>5</sup>, namely *Medicinski arhiv/Medical Archives* (founded in 1947), *Materia Socio Medica* (founded in 1978) and *Acta Informatica Medica* (founded in 1993). Based on my experience, an article quality evaluation scale was developed and this template is now available on the website of AvicenaPublisher. Reviewers of these three journals are asked to assess submissions using the scale which includes the following five components:

1. Scientific merit of a submission
2. International importance and potential impact
3. Originality of methodology and results
4. Technical quality
5. Quality of language

A major achievement was the adoption of an electronic editorial management system, which has been used to coordinate the submission, peer review and editing of these three journals. However, some other local journals still do not use such a system, putting the journal production at a disadvantage.

Unfortunately, most authors do not follow the instructions for authors and available guidelines, such as the recently published EASE guidelines for authors and translators<sup>6</sup>. As a result, nearly 40% of the submissions are rejected. The remaining 60% of the submissions are accepted. A large proportion of these (40%) undergo extensive technical and linguistic editing by the editor and a few of his associates.

I am confident that most of the problems mentioned can be overcome by devoted editorial work. Here I would like to remind the readers that we did not give up editing in Sarajevo even during the 1479 days of the siege in the 1990s. At that time, we were working in darkness, without electricity, water, gas or a food supply. Printing materials were scarce and expensive (A4 size paper package of 500 sheets was 25 Euros) but we managed to survive, to continue publishing *Medical Archives*, and even to launch *Acta Informatica Medica*, known as “the Sarajevo war miracles”. But more about that on some other occasion...

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**Abstract** This article evaluates Turkish indexed journals and their impact factors, based on data from local and international databases. Fifty five medical journals are now indexed in Science Citation Index Expanded, with the highest 2-year Journal Impact Factor being 0.873. The medical journals with high impact factors are those published in English. Though the number of articles is increasing, the impact factors for most Turkish medical journals is still low, presumably mainly due to the language of publication. Increasing the number of articles published both in Turkish and English along with training of science editors and authors, and wider indexing of journals in international databases may improve the quality of Turkish journals.

**Keywords** Periodicals as topic; impact factors; biomedical journals; Turkey.

Proper medical writing is encouraged by academic societies in Turkey. As a result, the number of articles and scholarly journals in Turkey is increasing rapidly, e.g. from 500 articles in 2000 to nearly 30,000 in 2010.<sup>1</sup> Despite this impressive rise in productivity, Turkey's share of global research output is just 1.9%. The relative citation impact, compared to the global value, is 0.5, and there are only a few highly cited articles (0.37% according to output in all subject categories).

Approximately 300 medical scientific journals are currently published in Turkey, most belonging to universities, training hospitals and professional societies. A variety of national indexing databases have been launched to improve the visibility of local journals and evaluate their scientific impact. The Turkish Medical Index affiliated to the Turkish Academic Network and Information Center (ULAKBIM) and the Turkey Citation Index provide the most detailed information. ULAKBIM was launched in 1996 as an institute affiliated to the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK).<sup>2</sup> TUBITAK publishes 12 peer-reviewed scientific journals indexed by various international databases.

ULAKBIM Cahit Arf Knowledge Centre provides information on local scientists and builds databases of Turkish periodicals. It also offers counselling services to Web of Science candidate journals. Web of Science indexes journals covered by the ULAKBIM database, generally peer-reviewed, regularly published journals, adhering to the high standards of scholarly publications.

Importantly, 108 local medical scientific journals are now indexed by Turkish Medical Index. *Turkiye Klinikleri (Turkish Clinics)* is a set of journals that has been published by Turkish medical doctors since 1980.<sup>3</sup> Currently, it includes more

than 30 medical journals in various fields, special issues and translated journals. Turkey Citation Index is a large database built on *Türkiye Klinikleri* periodicals, designed to improve the quality and visibility of local publications. Since 2008, the archived issues of these periodicals feature 146 indexed medical journals.

Indicators such as “national impact factor” and “contribution value” are currently available. National impact factor reflects the impact factor in indexed journals. Contribution value evaluates citations of an indexed article to other indexed articles. To join the Turkey Citation Index, journals must be published regularly, i.e. at least twice a year. In addition, keywords and references must be formatted according to the standard regulations. Turkey Citation Index also conducts studies on standardisation; e.g., Turkey Scientific Terms aims to develop a nomenclature of keywords based on the Medical Subject Headings vocabulary of the US National Library of Medicine. Medical journals indexed by Turkey Citation Index each published, on average, 44 articles (range 5-350) in 2010. Nearly half of these were research articles (range 15-100%).

*Hacettepe Bulletin of Social Sciences and Humanity* was the first journal indexed by the Institute for Scientific Information back in 1970.<sup>4</sup> but it lasted only two years. Twelve years later, the *Turkish Journal of Pediatrics* was accepted for indexing by SCI-E, and remained the only Turkish journal listed in SCI-E until 1994. From 2006 - 2009 the number of local medical journals indexed by this prestigious database rose from 8 to 69.

Currently, 75 Turkish journals are listed in Thomson Scientific databases,<sup>5</sup> with *Energy Education Science and Technology* having the highest 2-year JIF (9.333). SCI-E lists 56 medical journals, of which 34 are published in English. Journal Citation Report (JCR®) 2010 listed 49 Turkish journals, of which 23 are medical journals, with *Experimental and Clinical Transplantation* having the highest 2-year JIF (0.873).

The SCOPUS database includes 27 Turkish publishers.<sup>6</sup> The number of Turkish medical journals in SCImago Journal and Country Rank (SJR) database is 74<sup>7</sup>: the leading ones are shown in the Table. The majority of these journals are published in English.

English is the predominant language in scientific publishing.<sup>8</sup> Current trends of publishing high-quality and well-edited articles in international journals may adversely affect the prestige and productivity of local journals. At the same time, publishing local journals in Turkish may decrease the chances of their being indexed in international databases and attracting citations. In order to increase a journal's quality, it is recommended to publish in English or in Turkish and English simultaneously. In any case, editors should encourage more submission of articles in either language to local journals.

Publication of articles in international journals is the prerequisite for academic promotion in Turkey unfortunately, it has a devastating impact on local publications. It is hoped that national indexing services will increase the visibility and prestige of Turkish journals. More extensive journal indexing in both national and international databases should be encouraged.

An important factor influencing the rank and quality of local journals is the credentials of the Editors, who are mainly from universities. Strengthening ties with international publishers and professional associations, as well as regularly organising training for editors, may become a powerful tool for improving a journal's quality.

To increase the number and quality of research articles, local learned societies and science editors should cooperate and adopt international standards of scientific writing. More incentives should be offered to Turkish researchers to publish their best articles in local journals. Editors and publishers should also arrange more training. Editors should improve the design and readability of journals. English language editing should be done by native English-speaking experts. Internationalisation of authors, reviewers and editors pool should also be encouraged.<sup>9</sup> Finally, the criteria for academic promotion need to be revised to credit publications in local journals.

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## Impact factors of some of the Web of Science-indexed Turkish medical journals

Journal title	2-year JIF	SJR	h-index	Language
Experimental and Clinical Transplantation	0.832	0.099	9	English
Diagnostic and Interventional Radiology	0.712	0.092	14	English
Journal of Sports Science and Medicine	0.676	0.058	16	English
Turkish Journal of Gastroenterology	0.642	0.070	12	English
Turkish Neurosurgery	0.473	0.051	5	English
Anadolu Kardiyoloji Dergisi	0.407	0.042	11	Turkish
Eklemler Hastalıkları ve Cerrahisi	0.404	0.028	3	Turkish
Mikrobiyoloji Bulteni	0.354	0.046	8	Turkish
Turkish Journal of Pediatrics	0.340	0.051	19	English
Anadolu Psikiyatri Dergisi	0.310	0.028	4	Turkish

SJR: SCImago Journal Rank. SJR and h-index values obtained from the SCImago Journal and Country Rank database

## Reports of Meetings

### Hot topics in medical journalism: Shiraz University of Medical Sciences hosts another successful seminar

Continuous professional development of researchers and those involved in science writing and editing is of importance, especially for non-anglophone communities striving to advance in medical journalism. Though countries of mainstream research offer numerous academic courses and degree programmes on biomedical writing and editing, these are still not accessible for most novice researchers and editors from developing countries. Besides, there is still lack of scholarly communication between experts in science editing from developed and developing countries. Information on current standards on biomedical writing and successful editing is scarce and is not properly distributed and interpreted. With that in mind, a group of medical editors, supported by Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, arranged a seminar on hot topics in medical journalism.

The seminar took place in the University Education Development Centre on 25 June 2011. It was well attended by academics, researchers from Haematology and Cardiovascular Research Centres, Publication Centre of the University, editors of the *Iranian Cardiovascular Research Journal*, *Iranian Journal of Radiology*, *Archives of Iranian Medicine*, *Journal of Dentistry of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences*, *International Journal of Organ Transplantation Medicine*, and *The International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*.



Editors of *The International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, *European Science Editing* and *Iranian Cardiovascular Research Journal* at the Shiraz seminar (from left: A. Simi, M. Yadollahie, F. Habibzadeh, A.Y. Gasparyan, M. Ghods)

One of the invited lecturers, Prof. Armen Yuri Gasparyan, member of editorial boards of several high-rank Iranian journals and the chief editor of *European Science Editing*, gave a talk “Current Principles of High Impact Science Editing and Indexing Biomedical Journals”, outlining the issues of funding, improving the qualifications of editors, networking with colleagues from the European Association

of Science Editors and other professional associations, and widening visibility of journals. The indexing criteria of different databases and their relevance to the local community of editors were also highlighted. Most issues touched on during the talk were of interest to the editors of small journals, struggling to get indexed by prestigious indexing services and library catalogues. The talk was full of examples from the lecturer's own editorial practice. Many points of the talk are elegantly presented in the recently published essay on journal editing.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Karim Vessal, one of the eminent radiologists, founder of medical journalism in Iran, Editor-in-Chief of *Iranian Journal of Radiology* and member of the Iranian Academy of Medical Sciences, presented a history of medical journalism in Iran and challenges with establishing and indexing journals in the Middle East. He was fascinated by the growth of science publishing and digitization in Iran and quite optimistic over the fate of local journals, some of which were indexed and succeeded under his guidance. Main points of his talk were discussed in an essay in *European Science Editing*.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Farrokh Habibzadeh, Vice-President of the World Association of Medical Editors and founding editor of *The International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, delivered highly educational lectures on peer review, plagiarism and impact factors. A large part of his lecture was based on his own publications.<sup>3-10</sup> He described in detail the main steps in reviewing manuscripts, elements of success in the peer review and reporting the review results. The issue of plagiarism of words and ideas was also thoroughly discussed, and options to avoid this type of scientific misconduct, particularly by improving English language skills, were touched upon. In his final presentation Dr. Habibzadeh explained the meaning, advantages and limitations, uses and misuses of bibliometric parameters, journal and individual impact factors, including the journal weighted impact factor proposed by him and me,<sup>8</sup> and popular h-index and its variants.

The lecture session of the seminar was followed by a panel discussion on authorship criteria chaired by Dr. Mohammad Javad Zibaenezhad, the Editor-in-Chief of *Iranian Cardiovascular Research Journal* and the seminar moderator. The discussion was interactive. It addressed ethical concerns over “gift” authorship.

The seminar was a real success. Its scientific programme was quite saturated and targeted the needs of Iranian medical editors. It was also a good opportunity for networking with local colleagues and forging friendship with Dr. Armen Gasparyan, who has visited Shiraz before and tasted traditional Persian hospitality.

It should be mentioned that Shiraz University of Medical Sciences (the former Pahlavi University School of Medicine, a sister association to the University of Pennsylvania, USA) is one

of the leading academic centres in the Eastern Mediterranean region. For decades, the University used English as its institutional language and accepted numerous visiting professors from top world universities. Most of its current faculty members are world-renowned specialists, who contributed to medical education and science growth in Iran and in the region.<sup>11</sup> The University is also famous for its high standards in education and journal publishing. One of the oldest English-language publications, *Iranian Journal of Medical Sciences* (formerly *Pahlavi Medical Journal*) was launched by the University, edited by Dr. Karim Vessal and was indexed on MedLine.<sup>2</sup>

After the seminar, Dr. Gasparyan attended a meeting at the editorial office of *The International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, where Dr. Habibzadeh and Dr. Vessal presented several newly launched Iranian journals and discussed current trends in digitization, h-index and its variants, indexing and readability of medical journals. Dr. Gasparyan shared his experience of editing *European Science Editing*, *Archives of Medical Science* and several other journals, where he holds editorial posts. The atmosphere of the meeting was informal. The guest was surrounded by old and new friends, who, apart from scientific discussions, taught him a few Persian words and expressions, proudly shared thoughts on Iranian culture and presented brilliant pictures of Iranian nature, landscapes and architecture.

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## Summer School of Scientific Communication: where research is one and not polarised into science or humanities

When I started editing a small journal in a small country 20 years ago, I soon realized that our authors often had good data but little knowledge and few skills in presenting and writing about them.<sup>1</sup> Our work with authors naturally developed into teaching critical reading and science communication to medical students in a mandatory second year course.<sup>1</sup> Working with students proved to be the most effective way of creating a critical mass of (future) successful researchers and research-minded physicians.<sup>2</sup> The next move was rather obvious – step outside medicine and teach research methods and writing to a multidisciplinary group, where research is usually performed in contemporary science.

The Croatian National Science Foundation recognized the importance of such training and has so far funded three Summer Schools of Scientific Communication at the University of Split in Croatia. Our main argument for getting the funding, despite comments that scientific writing is a part of every doctoral programme in Croatia, was the finding from a study of our colleagues from the University of Rijeka that only around 30% of all masters theses and 15% of all doctoral theses produced at medical schools in Croatia ended up as publications in journals indexed in PubMed.<sup>3</sup>

The Summer School of Scientific Communication in Split has developed over the years into an international and multidisciplinary forum for young researchers – not only to improve their writing and publication skills but to understand the specificities of other disciplines and experience collaboration across research fields. We started with an initial teaching team of experienced editors and methodologists and invited colleagues from other research areas to join us. This year from the 22<sup>nd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> August, three outstanding lecturers joined Professor Elizabeth Wager of SideView, the chair of COPE, UK; Professor Christopher Palmer from the Centre for Applied Medical Statistics at Cambridge University, UK; Dr Darko Hren, researcher in psychology from the Faculty of Humanities, University of Split, and me. They were Professor Les Olson, moving back from Europe to Australia, where he did research in pharmacology and medical humanities; Professor Ida Raffaelli, editor in chief of *Contemporary Linguistics* and professor of linguistics at the Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, Croatia; and Professor Dejan Vinković, astrophysicist from the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics at the University of Split.

We worked with 20 exceptional students from all over Europe—from the Ukraine and Sweden to Hungary, the Czech Republic, Montenegro, and, of course, Croatia. Their range of research disciplines was even greater: clinical medicine and public health, psychology, mathematical modelling of chemical reactions, law, phonetics,

information sciences, philosophy, medical publishing, kinesiology, medieval glass archaeology, and pre-Romanesque sculptures. Indeed, Anglo-Saxon colleagues might be surprised by the inclusion of humanities in our science school, but we follow the continental, middle European tradition of not distinguishing between research and science.



Participants and teachers at the 2011 Summer School of Scientific Communication.

#### Writing in an interdisciplinary team

The focus of the summer school was learning about writing in your own discipline by exploring the differences and similarities with other research fields. Although we may find great differences in the content and form of research presentation between clinical medicine and the history of art, the rigour of scientific thinking, exploration, and presentation of ideas and findings is similar. While we explored the basic structure of the scientific article and data presentation, we also constantly challenged the differences across the disciplines and tried to understand why they were necessary and how they enriched research communication. We learned from our colleagues from the humanities and social sciences about the special way they structured the introduction section (much longer than in biomedicine), how they differentiated between the abstract and the summary, and why their manuscripts were often longer than ours in biomedicine and natural sciences. Professor Vinković described his experience as an astrophysicist collaborating with social science researchers – sharing with us some of his frustrations but also the many benefits in novel research and great publications.

Perhaps the best evidence for the success of the summer school's interdisciplinary approach comes from a comment by one of the participants in the evaluation questionnaire: "The main benefit of the workshop for me was new knowledge about the publication process. The second great benefit was making contacts with other young scientists from different areas. I have made a deal with four participants for future collaboration!"

#### "Paper clinic" and responsible publishing

After morning sessions, which covered the theoretical and practical aspects of manuscript writing and data presentation, afternoons were reserved for the "paper clinic" – work on manuscripts that participants had been asked to bring to the summer school. Each lecturer had his or her own team of students with manuscripts covering the topics of

their expertise. Here was the opportunity for students to focus on the specific requirements in their research field as they worked individually and in small groups on revising their manuscripts. They also read their colleagues' manuscripts and made comments—similar to journal peer review.

The participants appreciated learning details about peer review and editorial process in journals: knowing what happened to their manuscripts gave them greater confidence in the publication process and increased their hopes for future publication. Liz Wager introduced them to research integrity issues in publishing. Real cases of publication and research misconduct and not so clear-cut misbehaviour in

research and publishing stimulated a very heated discussion, in which the participants shared their own experiences and appreciated expert advice.

Last, but not least, we all had great fun, not only because of the warm Adriatic (for a morning dip before classes) but because of the discussions and activities related to publishing and understanding other disciplines, which continued after formal class work. Topics ranged from open access to the treasures of the Diocletian palace and the city of Split. There was an amusing raffle (with quite difficult entry tests) of writing apps such as superglue to keep IMRAD in order, and a magic ball with ready answers to all questions about publishing.

We hope you will join us next summer. The Croatian Science Foundation has discontinued its programme of summer schools for doctoral fellows, but we hope to find (multidisciplinary) funding for the next year – your help is greatly appreciated.

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## Science as a public enterprise

Public meeting organized by the Royal Society's Science Policy Centre, London, 8 June 2011

Earlier in 2011 the Royal Society established a working group on the use of scientific information in ways that reflect public values.<sup>1</sup> Some members of the working group discussed some of the issues behind this policy study in a *Lancet* article published in May,<sup>2</sup> and others were among the speakers at "An Open Meeting on Open Science" organized by the Royal Society's Science Policy Centre on 8 June.

After the meeting had been opened by Sir Paul Nurse, Secretary of the Royal Society, Sir Mark Walport, Director of the Wellcome Trust, addressed the question "Why should science be open?" He noted that it is a characteristic of a free and enlightened society that knowledge should be available to all. He drew a parallel between campaigns to translate the bible from Latin into vernacular languages and some of the reactions from a powerful church that these provoked, with promotion of open access publishing and the reaction of a publisher giving evidence to a House of Commons Select Committee on Science and Technology:

"Speak to people in the medical profession, and they will say that the last thing they want are people who may have illness reading this information, marching into surgeries and asking things. We need to be careful with this very high level information." (Hansard 1 March 2004)<sup>3</sup>

Sir Mark went on to discuss two forms of openness: first, that the results of scientific research should be published; and, second, that the actual data generated by researchers should be made openly available. As the Wellcome Trust has already taken some important initiatives to promote openness – notably, by requiring public registration of the clinical trials it supports and by supporting "open access" publishing – it came as no surprise that Sir Mark supported greater openness in both these respects, for the following reasons:

- (i) The very process of science demands that results and data are made available, and contestable
- (ii) Part of the scientific process involves attempts to replicate experiments, so experimental details must be available
- (iii) When policy decisions follow scientific discovery the evidence must be transparent to all – whether in research in health, climate, or any other field
- (iv) When the public purse pays for research, accountability demands the availability of all of the results
- (v) The outcomes of expensive research are maximized by allowing everyone access to the data.

He then considered arguments against greater openness. He viewed some arguments as having little merit – for example, that researchers should be allowed to hang on to data for their own benefit; that making data available would add huge opportunity and financial costs; and that allowing the "unqualified" access to it would sow confusion. However, Sir Mark recognized that other arguments did have some merit – namely, that:

- (i) No academic credit results from the effort needed to make data publicly accessible
- (ii) Scientists in the developed world could expropriate data generated by researchers in the developing world
- (iii) The confidentiality of participants may be compromised

(iv) Private investors in science are entitled to keep the results private to preserve their commercial interests

(v) Some research has the capability of abuse, for example, a simple method for weaponising a biological toxin

(vi) Countries that make data available will lose out scientifically and economically to those countries that do not

(vii) We don't yet have well worked out ways of overcoming the challenges in sharing data.

Sir Mark concluded by noting, however, that some of these arguments against open access are contestable, giving as an example the principle that our duty of care to human volunteers in drug trials and patients demands that the results should be published, whether studies are privately or publicly funded.

Following Sir Mark's presentation, Professor Geoffrey Boulton (Regius Professor of Geology Emeritus at the University of Edinburgh, and Chair of the Royal Society's Working Group) chaired a panel discussion involving Stephen Emmott (Microsoft Research), William Dutton (Oxford Internet Institute), David Dobbs (freelance science writer), and members of an audience of about 50 people. A theme that was reinforced repeatedly was that science is "organized skepticism," and that falsifiability and replicability were key features of science, so openness was essential for science to function efficiently.

Philip Campbell, Editor of *Nature*, suggested that action to promote greater openness needs to come from the funders of research. He noted that people should not be under any illusion that, once data had been made publicly available, that it would be possible to control the way that they were used.

In a final session chaired by Professor Charlotte Waelde (Professor of Intellectual Property Law at the University of Exeter), Cameron Neylon (Science and Technology Facilities Council), and Timo Hannay (Digital Science) spoke about the need to go beyond the traditional metrics used to assign credit in academia, and noted the opportunity to learn from the experience of introducing the Creative Commons models of ownership.

The report of the Royal Society's Working Party on Science as a Public Enterprise is expected to be issued by summer 2012.

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## EASE-Forum Digest: June to September 2011

You can join the forum by sending the one-line message "subscribe ease-forum" (without the quotation marks) to [majordomo@helsinki.fi](mailto:majordomo@helsinki.fi). Be sure to send messages in plain text format.

### Acknowledgements in PhD theses

The literature provides plenty of advice on how to structure a PhD thesis but John Taylor had not been able to find anything on what was expected in the acknowledgements. The acknowledgements in a thesis he was editing were long and amounted to a hyperbolic eulogy of the student's professors and lecturers. He wanted to know if there was anything he could do about the 'sickly slush'. The response from the forum made it clear that such acknowledgements are common in theses world-wide and the general feeling was that editors should only correct obvious language errors. Mary Ellen Kerans pointed to research in applied linguistics (e.g. by Ken Hyland) which showed that students followed their own whims when writing acknowledgements as well as local departmental 'rules'. Françoise Salager-Meyer added that Mohammed Nahar Al-Ali (University of Jordan) had written a paper on acknowledgements in PhD dissertations written in English by Arab writers where, she commented, Allah was frequently acknowledged as well [*Academic and socio-cultural identities in English dissertations acknowledgements of Arab writers* In ESP (English for Specific Purposes) Across Cultures. vol 6. 2009. p. 7-29].

Sylwia Ufnalska had also recently edited a paper (written by a Polish author) where about 30 people were mentioned in the acknowledgements, many she thought without good reason. She had explained to the author that when publishing results in English they would need to follow English rules of science writing and advised them to correct this section in accordance with the <http://www.ease.org.uk/guidelines/index.shtml>. As a result the authors had greatly shortened the acknowledgements. Mary Ellen thought that while those guidelines worked for articles,



acknowledgments in PhD theses typically had personal touches and a sincere, not-very-academic tone to them. Although Sylwia agreed that some flowery thanks may be acceptable, she considered a whole page unacceptable. Students should confine their thanks to those for which there was a good reason. However, from Carol Norris' experience, which she illustrated with a photo of one of the stacks of theses she had edited from students in Finland, one to four pages of detailed and personal acknowledgements are normal. She commented that

many people contribute much during one's half a dozen years of research.

Joy Burrough, who edits theses by Dutch students, fervently defended long and emotional acknowledgements as a venue for young scientists to speak in their own words. She found the acknowledgements were often very personal. God may be mentioned and thanked, but also supervisors who have provided hospitality to foreign PhD students far from home, friends and colleagues who had been encouraging, or had cooked nice meals, friends who had gone on long walks during which the problems of research/the world etc. had been discussed...

James Hartley agreed with Mary Ellen that there is a distinction between acknowledgements in theses and acknowledgements in papers. He commented that the inclusion of an acknowledgement section in scientific articles has increased from about 60% in the 1960s until it is now almost 100%. There were also disciplinary differences between papers in the arts, social sciences and sciences in the kinds of things acknowledged – funding, technical support, conceptual issues, and editorial help. Blaise Cronin had researched the topic and more details could be read in pages 53-55 of Hartley, J. (2008) *Academic Writing and Publishing* published by Routledge.

### Placement of table and figure captions

"Does anyone know why the captions for tables appear above the tables and the captions for figures below the figures?" James Hartley asked this interesting question and Tom Lang replied that William Playfair, who had created the concept of graphs, put the captions above the figures but he suspected that the location of captions had been determined by some aspect of early typesetting. Mary Ellen found that positioning varied depending on a journal's house style. *The British Journal of Anaesthesia*, for example, puts what other journals would call table 'foot' notes up at the top, immediately after the title and some IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) journals put table 'titles' at the bottom.

Yateen had explored the topic some years previously and suggested that Laurence Penney had provided the answer to Tom's questions in the quote "In general, it is good practice and polite to introduce things before shoving them in the reader's face. Tables, like sections in a book, particularly need an introduction since they are symbolic – language and numbers abstracted away from their subject. A glance through a table is even less profitable than a glance through a block of text of that size. So tables need an introduction, hence a caption above them. By contrast figures and pictures usually serve as their own introduction. They are analogous to what they represent, there's no change of mode. So it could be a tiny bit patronizing to 'introduce' them, more respectful to use a caption below, which does not demand to be read." Yateen added that what applies to the entire table (i.e. introduces it) goes into the headnote and what is specific to particular cells goes into the footnote.

### Ammunition for going Open Access

With a view to persuading her journal to become fully Open Access (OA), Aleksandra Golebiowska asked which organizations required studies they had sponsored to be Open Access. She discovered that projects within the European Union's 7th Framework Programme had to be available free-of-charge after 6 months (a year at most) and Reme Melero provided the URL of a publication about OA in south European countries (<http://www.acesoabierto.net/sites/acesoabierto.net/files/OASouthEurope.pdf>), published as a result of a workshop held in Granada, Spain, to debate the OA landscape in those countries. She also gave two other sources: DRIVER wiki: <http://www.driver-support.eu/pmwiki/index.php?n=Main.HomePage> and COAR (Confederation of Open Access repositories, <http://coar-repositories.org/>). With this information Aleksandra hopes to be able to succeed in her mission.

### Strengths of the study section

Tom Lang had encountered a section titled 'Strengths of the Study' before the usual 'Limitations of the Study', in an article he had edited and wondered if anyone else had come across this heading. He thought the title was a valuable addition to the discussion, especially for large studies and systematic reviews, and asked if forum participants thought there was any value in promoting the use of such a heading throughout the biomedical literature.

Kersti Wagstaff had also come across the heading and thought it was a good idea and Norman Grossblatt had edited book-length reviews that, in summarizing published studies, used both a 'strengths' and 'what the studied added' headings in parallel sections. He thought the heading could also be valuable in a single paper. Joan Marsh added that *The British Journal of Psychiatry* sometimes had a section called 'Strengths and Limitations' or 'Strengths and Weaknesses' (somewhat inconsistent editing) and also one called 'Implications'.

Liz Wager had not encountered the 'strengths' heading but liked the *BMJ (British Medical Journal)* style of having a short box stating 'what this study adds'. She thought such a box would be more useful than a heading on strengths. Tom countered that the strength of the study is not the same as the value of the research question. A study with more dropouts would be weaker than a study with fewer dropouts. Larger samples, better control over bias, and so on could be mentioned. A 'strengths' heading would prompt authors to consider these issues.

A linguistics note was introduced by Mary Ellen who pointed out that in English, where subjects are required, there is enough 'signposting' of paragraphs like strengths and limitations because they typically start with phrases like "A strength of this study..." or "Limitations of this study...". Therefore she thought a reader of an IMRD article would not have any trouble finding the strengths and limitations paragraph. Unless the discussion was very long, providing subheads would chop up the section too much. Furthermore ordering of types of information is relatively standardized, increasingly so with the advent of guidelines (CONSORT, STROBE, etc.). But here Mary Ellen had noted a recent

shift. Whereas the strengths-and-weaknesses (limitations) paragraph/section used to appear as the second-to-last in the Discussion it now usually appears as the second paragraph of the discussion. She thought this shift might have resulted from authors' interpretation of the STROBE guidelines.

### Beware of conference scams

Karen Shashok was flattered to receive an email invitation to speak about one of her publications (the title was mentioned) until she noticed that it did not fit into the topic of the event. The invitation was from a 'consulting agency' in a country distant from the event's location. The agency had been 'authorized by the organizing committee to co-organize'. She checked the agency's online information about the event through a URL link provided in the email but found that although the event was only 6 weeks away no information was given about the programme or the programme committee. She emailed the person who had contacted her to ask for more details about the event and the participants but never received a reply. A little later she found that the agency's website no longer listed the event but did list another event in the same city on a different area of medicine, on almost the same dates. The links to information (Programme committee, Venue and hotel, Visa information, Programme, Registration, Sponsors, Well-known speakers etc) were all empty. Karen found this suspicious and wanted to know if anyone else had had such an experience. Tom Lang had received the same approach for an event in a city in China. His Chinese friends from the city had indicated probable fraud.

Christiaan Sterken had also received such invitations but had experienced the opposite situation too. When he had organized an astronomy workshop he had received emails from companies asking to register several people whom he could not find in any bibliometric database in astronomy. He googled a complete sentence taken from such an email and found the same phrase in several other locations, finally tracing it to a travel agent in a country in middle Africa. It seemed the agency were offering money (registration fee) and expected to receive an invitation (for visa) in return.

John Taylor related his experience when he had organized a congress for an international professional association to be held in Rio. Unknown to him a number of registered participants received a letter from the hotel informing them that payment had to be made in advance direct to the hotel. They paid by bank transfer as instructed. Upon arrival in Rio the hotel informed them that it had not received any payment. It proved impossible to trace the account holder, even though the hotel name had been used, as the account had been closed (and emptied).

Karen's further investigations revealed that the company that had contacted her was involved in spamming and scamming the people it contacted. People should be beware of unexpected invitations that address you as Dr Surname, A.B., mention one of your publications, contain a generic-sounding description of the event, and are signed by Yao Lu, MD, PhD, President of EPS Global Medical Development Inc in Montreal, Canada. See: <http://rmm257.blogspot.com/>

[http://blog.lib.umn.edu/denis036/thisweekinevolution/2011/05/fake\\_scientific\\_conferences\\_in.htm](http://blog.lib.umn.edu/denis036/thisweekinevolution/2011/05/fake_scientific_conferences_in.htm)  
<http://biospam.wikidot.com/>  
<http://www.ripoffreport.com/event-planners-sites/eps-global-medical-d/eps-global-medical-development-5ae30.htm>

### How to edit mixtures of American and British English

What should a good editor do when editing a book in which parts are written in American English and parts in British English? The same problem applies to articles in journals. Some journal style manuals specify either British or American English while others allow authors to make the choice, although one or the other should be used consistently within a single article. As Mary Ellen Kerans pointed out, articles in which the languages are mixed raise suspicions of textual plagiarism.

Sylwia Ufnalska was copyediting a medical book written by many authors. Its editor had written in American English but one of the authors mentioned the latest WHO classification using British spelling. She was wondering if she could simply change the spelling to American to be consistent with the other parts of the book. The editor had suggested leaving the British spelling but Sylwia was concerned that this could look like sloppy editing.

Suggestions varied from adding a footnote that spelling is like in the original document to adding the American spelling in brackets after each word that differed between the languages.

Tricia Reichert thought that the use of two spellings side-by-side throughout a document would be distracting and perhaps patronizing, implying that the reader is not expected to know, for example, that the word 'organize' in American English is the same word as 'organise' in British English. She

considered annotation of the spelling was not needed and advocated consistency throughout the book.

Tricia's journal is American and uses American English but British spellings are retained for proper names and official names of organizations, congresses, institutions, agencies, grants, etc., as well as for official names of classification systems. However, for the specific items within a given classification system, they use American spellings. If there is some reason to quote an item from a classification system in which British spelling was used, they quoted the item verbatim, including the spelling. As such an item is enclosed in quotation marks, its special nature is indicated, making explanation for the different spelling unnecessary.

The EASE guidelines include a short list of spelling differences at [http://www.ease.org.uk/Guidelines\\_AppendixSpelling/index.shtml](http://www.ease.org.uk/Guidelines_AppendixSpelling/index.shtml)

Although the forum discussion concentrated on spelling, it's worth noting that there are also differences in grammar between the languages, e.g. the first word after a colon starts with a lowercase letter in British English and a capital letter in American English.

*Elise Langdon-Neuner (compiler)*

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## ANNOUNCING

### The 2011 SCRIPT Award

The SCRIPT Award is for creative writing by scientists and health care professionals. Any topic is acceptable, especially non-scientific.

**The task:** to write a "Mini Epic" in exactly 100 words

**The prize:** \$1000 (Cdn)

**The closing date:** December 21, 2011

Further details available at: [www.scriptmedical.com/script-award.html](http://www.scriptmedical.com/script-award.html)

Details of the award are available online at [www.scriptmedical.com/script-award.html](http://www.scriptmedical.com/script-award.html). Please feel free to circulate to any eligible writer

SCRIPT was founded in 1998 by Helen Leask. Since then, it has grown to a full-service communications agency that provides world-class medical communications to international and Canadian clients.

### Marking 30 years of EASE: call for memorabilia

The year 2012 marks the 30th anniversary of EASE's founding (Pau, 1982). We would like to document these first three decades with a history of major events in the life of our Association and with stories and a display of physical artefacts that tell the EASE story. Please send us:

- Photos of EASE events (with legend and names if possible)
- Names of people who should be honoured with an anniversary diploma because of their work for EASE (please add a few sentences of explanation)
- Conference newsletters
- Posters of EASE events
- Short anecdotes about memorable moments (good, bad, sad, funny)
- Souvenirs of any kind

plus - any ideas for special anniversary events in connection with our Tallinn conference. Contributions and ideas should be sent to: Sylwia Ufnalska ([sylwia.ufnalska@gmail.com](mailto:sylwia.ufnalska@gmail.com)) or Alison Clayson ([alison@clayson.org](mailto:alison@clayson.org))

## News Notes

News Notes are taken from the EASE Journal Blog (<http://ese-bookshelf.blogspot.com>). Please email items for inclusion to John Hilton ([hilton.john@gmail.com](mailto:hilton.john@gmail.com)) or Lionel Browne ([lionel.browne@ssep.net](mailto:lionel.browne@ssep.net)), with "News Notes" as the subject.

TinyURLs may be given to save space and aid reading; full URLs (clickable links) can be found on the EASE Journal Blog.

### Data centres as curators

There is much debate about mandatory versus optional policies for self-archiving or repository deposition. A new report from Research Information Network ([www.rin.ac.uk](http://www.rin.ac.uk)) and JISC ([www.jisc.ac.uk](http://www.jisc.ac.uk)) takes a step back and looks at the usage and impact of data centres in the UK. Data centres supply research data to the academic community, and may also collect, store and/or curate the data. The report focuses on the curatorial role, with its benefits of quality assurance, preservation and applicability. The full report is available on the RIN website ([tinyurl.com/RIN-data](http://tinyurl.com/RIN-data)).

### Interoperability options

The number of open access institutional repositories has been rising steadily, but the real value lies in the potential to create a linked network of these repositories. The Confederation of Open Access Repositories ([www.coar-repositories.org](http://www.coar-repositories.org)) is addressing the inevitable technical and organisational challenges that may prevent interoperability, defined as "the ability for systems to communicate with each other and pass information back and forth in a usable format." COAR has published a paper ([tinyurl.com/COARpaper](http://tinyurl.com/COARpaper)) and is inviting stakeholders to contribute ideas.

### ALPSP Awards

The Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers (ALPSP)'s Award for Contribution to Scholarly Publishing has gone this year to Cliff Morgan of John Wiley & Sons, in recognition of his long-standing contributions to digital preservation, article metrics, article versioning, and many other projects. The best new journal award went to *Chemical Science*, published by RSC Publishing ([pubs.rsc.org](http://pubs.rsc.org)), with a highly-commended certificate going to *Bioanalysis*, published by Future Science ([www.future-science.com](http://www.future-science.com)). Publishing innovation was recognised with an award for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Better Life Index ([www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org](http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org)), an elegant, interactive tool that has increased accessibility of OECD's data sets.

### From MathML to MathJax

Presenting mathematical formulae correctly has always been tricky for publishers, whatever the medium. It's especially difficult when you are delivering a range of mathematical content via multiple online platforms. An article in the October/November issue of *Research Information* ([www.researchinformation.info](http://www.researchinformation.info)) reports on the development and progress of MathJax, a universal standard for online display of mathematical formulae. It enables all web browsers to display Mathematical Markup Language (MathML) more easily. Future plans include an enhanced interface and line wrapping of equations, as well as third-party contributions and integration with other software.

### Edited news is good news

Another boost for editors: readers prefer news articles that have been professionally edited. The research, sponsored by the American Copy Editors Society (ACES; [www.copydesk.org](http://www.copydesk.org)), also found that readers were more concerned about

professionalism and grammar than style or structure. Fred Vultee of Wayne State University, USA, presented the findings at the ACES annual conference and indicated that his future work will address the question of whether readers would stop visiting a website because of poor editing.

### DOI as URL

CrossRef ([www.crossref.org](http://www.crossref.org)) has announced a new format for the display of digital object identifiers (DOIs). All organisations are now encouraged to use the URL format <http://dx.doi.org/doi> wherever a DOI appears. This makes DOIs more user-friendly, more appropriate for mobile devices and more easily machine-readable. To address concerns that the URL string is longer than the previous format, CrossRef also recommends that publishers consider using the ShortDOI service ([shortdoi.org](http://shortdoi.org)) to shorten existing DOIs.

### How to measure OA

There's no shortage of facts and figures about the growth (or lack of growth, depending how you read the numbers) of open access publishing. A recent post (30 Sep 2011) on the Imaginary Journal of Poetic Economics blog ([poeticeconomics.blogspot.com](http://poeticeconomics.blogspot.com)) presents an impressive array of data and milestones. But the European Commission is looking for a more sustainable way of measuring OA. It has published a call for proposals for a study to develop a set of indicators to measure open access. The aim is for monitoring of the growth of open access literature from 2000 onwards within the European Research Area (ERA) and beyond. The EC sees OA as a key part of the "single market for research and innovation in which researchers, scientific knowledge and technology circulate freely."

### OA search engine

JISC, the UK organisation that promotes information technologies in academia, has developed a search

engine for open access content. The engine, developed by the Open University's Knowledge Media Institute, enables users to navigate papers held in British open access repositories. You can try the search at [core.kmi.open.ac.uk](http://core.kmi.open.ac.uk). The system stores downloads of previous searches, enabling access even if the originating source is offline.

### Twitter styles

Increasingly, the traditional journal article is only part of the mosaic of outputs that can relate to a research project. Researchers also blog, talk at conferences, share data online, contribute to guidelines or networks, and so on. All of these can be disseminated via Twitter. The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)'s Impact of Social Sciences blog ([blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences](http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences)) includes useful guides to using Twitter for research projects and the different styles of tweeting.

### EMWA Journal changes

The European Medical Writers Association's quarterly journal *The Write Stuff* will be re-launched in 2012 as *Medical Writing*. The newly branded journal will be published by Maney Publishing ([www.maney.co.uk](http://www.maney.co.uk)) and will be available online via IngentaConnect.

### More calls for access to data

An article in *PLoS ONE* (2011;6:e24357) by John Ioannidis and colleagues noted that not enough journals have policies on data availability, and that authors don't adhere to policies that are in place. The article was the focus of a news story in *Nature* (14 September 2011), which also addressed the need for better standards and incentives to share, both of which could address the question of why scientists don't share more. Focusing on clinical data, The Cochrane Collaboration ([www.cochrane.org](http://www.cochrane.org)) issued a statement calling for free access to all data from clinical trials, to avoid selective reporting and ultimately reducing risks for patients.

### Apps for Libraries

The Apps for Library Ideas Challenge was set up by Elsevier under the banner "Know what your users need but not how to build it?" and sought innovative application ideas from libraries using Elsevier's SciVerse platform. Ten finalists were selected, including determining the number of authors, vocabulary mapping, journal abbreviation translation, and supported search. You can find out more about these ideas at [www.appsforlibrary.com](http://www.appsforlibrary.com).

### Journal Ranking

Faculty of 1000, the post-publication peer review service, has been looking at a new alternative to the journal impact factor. The F1000 Journal Rankings ([f1000.com/rankings](http://f1000.com/rankings)) are based on the evaluations provided by the site's contributors. The approach is based on qualitative judgements and uses an algorithm developed collaboratively. The biggest problem seems to be whether to permit evaluations by editors of articles in their own journals.

### Proofreading tips

The *New York Times* reports that it seems to be getting plenty of feedback from its readers about typos and gaffes, and its Times Topics blog presents a handy list of proofreading tips, "culled from years of journalism tip sheets." ([topics.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/10/04/the-readers-lament](http://topics.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/10/04/the-readers-lament))

### EC consults on scientific information

In September, the European Commission completed a consultation on scientific information in the digital age. The EC will then set out its plans for open access to publications and data in the context of research projects funded by the Union budget, including detail specific actions for individual member states. You can follow progress on the EC website ([tinyurl.com/64lu2ny](http://tinyurl.com/64lu2ny)).

### ORCID progress

The ORCID (open researcher and contributor ID; [www.orcid.org](http://www.orcid.org)) project has raised sufficient funds

from its 44 founding organisations to start the first phase of development, under the interim leadership of CrossRef's Geoffrey Bilder. The project will use Thomson Reuters' ResearcherID code under a royalty-free perpetual license, and further funds are being sought.

### Guiding the guidelines

At the 2011 Strategic MedComms Forum, held in London on 14 September, there was a session devoted to the various guidelines used by the pharmaceutical industry and the medical communications community to improve standards, transparency and trust in their publication strategies. Part of the discussion focused on the role of journals in ensuring compliance with guidelines, and raised the question of whether journals should be more active in unearthing bad practice, and whether they should focus less on fraud and plagiarism, which are less common in industry-funded research. You can read more in the conference report at [www.medcommsforum.com](http://www.medcommsforum.com).

John Hilton

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## EASE GUIDELINES IN TRANSLATION

The EASE Guidelines for Authors and Translators are now available also in Czech and Hungarian. Thus they have now been translated into 17 languages from the original English. The Bosnian and German translations are underway, so the total number of language versions will soon reach 20. A definite success story for EASE.

### List your publications

Are you aware that the EASE website has a page where members can list their publications - either recent or not-so-recent? Your contributions are welcome - [www.ease.org.uk](http://www.ease.org.uk)

## The Editor's Bookshelf

Please write to [annamaria.rossi@iss.it](mailto:annamaria.rossi@iss.it) if you wish to send new items or become a member of the EASE journal blog (<http://ese-bookshelf.blogspot.com>) and see your postings published in the journal.

### ECONOMICS

Frantsvag JE. **The size distribution of open access publishers.** *First Monday* 15(12) - 6 December 2010. This study highlights the fact that a large number of small publishers publish the majority of OA journals, and that 90% of these publishers publish only a single journal. These data are compared to similar data about toll access publishing, and suggest that small-scale operation of OA publishing is economically inefficient and that it should be best organized in larger publishing institutions.

Houghton JW, Oppenheim C. **The economic implications of alternative publishing models.** *Prometheus* 2010;28(1):41-54. This article focuses on the costs and potential benefits of three alternative models for scholarly publishing: subscription publishing, open access publishing and self-archiving. It summarizes the findings of a study undertaken for the UK Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) and concludes that more open access to findings from publicly funded research would have substantial benefits for research communication. doi: 10.1080/08109021003676359

### EDITORIAL PROCESS

Editorial. **Crafting a revision.** *Nature Neuroscience* 2011;14:941. A thoughtful revision of a paper based on editorial and referee feedback does improve its quality. Authors should be open to referees' criticisms and should go through their comments point by

point responding constructively and diplomatically to each point. Despite noting that a referee has made critical mistakes or has requested unnecessary extensions, nonetheless authors should make any effort to improve the paper. Authors, editors and referees all benefit from a collaborative and collegial peer review process. doi: 10.1038/n0811-941

Harris A, Reeder R, Hyun J. **Survey of editors and reviewers of high-impact psychology journals: statistical and research design problems in submitted manuscripts.** *The Journal of Psychology* 2011;145(3):195-209. The authors surveyed 21 editors and reviewers from major psychology journals to identify and describe the statistical and design errors they encounter most often and to gather their advice to prevent them. The three major areas identified were problems with research design and reporting, inappropriate data analysis, and misinterpretation of results. Researchers should attend to these common issues to improve the scientific quality of their submitted manuscripts.

Marušić A. **Problems of editors with authorship in small medical journals.** *The International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine* 2011;2(3):130-132. Authorship is a serious problem in smaller scientific communities. Many authors do not qualify for the standard authorship criteria set by the ICMJE, and some editors as well may not be familiar with them. A study carried out by the *Croatian Medical Journal (CMJ)* showed that contribution declaration forms should be considered unreliable as a means of assessing authorship. For this reason, the CMJ decided to ask each author a single open-ended question: "Why do you think you deserve to be the author of this manuscript?" and to publish the author's answer to this question without editing it.

O'Dowd A. **Peer review system needs thorough evaluation, MPs hear.** *BMJ* 2011;342:d3046. The UK parliamentary science and technology committee carried out an inquiry into the peer review process in science. Several medical and scientific journal editors appearing before the committee last May spoke of the many merits of the peer review system, but they raised some concerns about the variability of its quality and a lack of adequate evaluation to confirm its value. They agreed that the process should be improved. doi: 10.1136/bmj.d3046

Sprouse G. **Editorial: Redefining length.** *Physical Review Special Topics-Physics Education Research* 2011;7(020001). The APS Editor in Chief announces that in an effort to streamline the calculation of length, the APS journals will no longer use the printed page as the determining factor. Instead the journals will use word counts to determine length. This new method will be easier for authors to calculate in advance, maintaining the quality of concise communication that is a virtue of letters and short papers. doi: 10.1103/PhysRevSTPER.7.020001

### ETHICAL ISSUES

Brybaert M, Smith S. **Self-enhancement in scientific research: the self-citation bias.** *Psychologica Belgica* 2011;5(2):129-137. Self-enhancement and self-citation biases are well-documented phenomena in the social psychology field. This article examines the number of self-citations in articles published by four journals and the reasons why authors cite themselves. Such citations in articles are sometimes included because authors wish to promote and praise themselves and their findings. Then, self-citations have more to do with self-promotion than with the advancement of science.

Fang FC, Casadevall A. **Retracted science and the retraction index.** *Infection and Immunity* 2011;79(10). Overall, manuscript retraction appears to be occurring more frequently, although it is uncertain whether this is a result of an increase in misconduct or simply in detection due to enhanced vigilance. The authors developed a novel measure, the "retraction index", by dividing the number of retractions by the total number of articles published by 17 journals ranging in impact factor from 2.00 to 53.484 in the years 2001 to 2010. They found that the frequency of retraction varied among journals and showed a strong correlation with journal impact factor. doi: 10.1128/IAI.05661-11

Harmon K. **Impact factor: can a scientific retraction change public opinion?** *Scientific American* March 4, 2010. This article discusses the effect that scientific retractions have on public opinion. After initial findings are published, some of the readers will not change their mind even if the paper is retracted. The recent retraction of a key paper proposing a link between childhood vaccines and autism has widened the societal divide on this issue. The number of retractions has been increasing, but they are just the tip of the iceberg: one study showed that about 2% of scientists admitted to fabricating, falsifying, or modifying data or results at least once.

Kesselheim AS, Lee JL, Avorn J *et al.* **Conflict of interest in oncology publications. A survey of disclosure policies and statements.** *Cancer* 2011, epub 29 June. The authors examined disclosures related to conflict of interest that accompanied papers published in major oncology journals in order to compare the nature of the information requested with the information provided. This analysis revealed a wide range of disclosure policies and practices: most but not all of the journals required some disclosure of potential conflicts of

interest, but relevant standards and definitions varied considerably. doi: 10.1002/cncr.26237

Tarnow E. **Ethics authors don't follow guidelines.** *APS News* 2011;20(7):4. Ethics training at least in medical publication seems to lead to worse behaviour. Young researchers find out just how they are expected to behave, which turns out to be... unethically.

### INFORMATION RETRIEVAL

Piwowar HA. **Who shares? Who doesn't? Factors associated with openly archiving raw research data.** *PLoS ONE* 2011;6(7):e18657. This article aims at investigating who openly shares raw research data, who does not, and which initiatives are correlated with high rates of data sharing. Regarding one particular type of data - biological gene expression microarray intensity values - in a field with mature policies, repositories, and standards, research data-sharing levels are low and increasing only slowly. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0018657

Priti J. **New trends and future applications/directions of institutional repositories in academic institutions.** *Library Review* 2011;60(2):125-141. This review of recently published literature on current trends and future applications of institutional repositories (IRs) includes the benefits and obstacles of setting up an IR. This report can serve to persuade different stakeholders at institutions, including management, as to the value of open access (OA) and the importance of establishing OA institutional policies. doi: 10.1108/0024531111113078

### LANGUAGE AND WRITING

Gasparyan AY, Ayvazyan L, Blackmore H *et al.* **Writing a narrative biomedical review: considerations for authors, peer reviewers, and editors.** *Rheumatology*

*International* 2011 July 29. Writing and properly structuring a review article requires the author's deep knowledge and expertise in a specific field of science. The aim of this review is to analyze the main steps in writing a narrative biomedical review and to consider points that may enhance its chances of successful publication and future impact, points related to authorship, title, abstract and keywords, introductory notes, search methodology, conclusions, acknowledgments, references, and places to submit a review manuscript. These steps can also be applicable to editorials and commentaries. doi: 10.1007/s00296-011-1999-3

Masic I. **How to search, write, prepare and publish the scientific papers in the biomedical journals.** *Acta Informatica Medica* 2011;19(2):68-79. This article focuses on the methodology of preparation, writing, and publishing scientific papers in biomedical journals, in particular on those published in Bosnia and Herzegovina and indexed in Medline. It provides a comparative review of the number and structure of papers. The author believes that it is necessary to raise quality standards in the review and acceptance of papers. doi: 10.5455/aim.2011.19.68-79

### PUBLISHING

André F, Creppy R, Barthelet E *et al.* **OA report in 2010.** Madrid: FECYT. This report arises from the activities of the Southern European Libraries Link (SELL), which represents library consortia of six countries (France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and Turkey). One of its main goals is "to draw common policies towards information acquirement and provision." Experts in each country provided reports on the situation of open access to move towards common policies for open access to science.

Cambon-Thomsen A, Thorisson GA, Mabile L. for the BRIF workshop group. **The role of a bioscience research impact factor**

as an incentive to share human bioresources. *Nature Genetics* 2011;43(6):503-504. doi: 10.1038/ng.831  
Bioresources need to be easily accessible to facilitate advancement of research. A Bioresource Research Impact Factor (BRIF) could promote the sharing of bioresources by creating a link between their initiators or implementers and the impact of the scientific research using them. A BRIF would make it possible to trace the quantitative use of a bioresource, the kind of research using it, and the efforts behind establishing and maintaining it. Specific requirements for citing bioresources are lacking in the *Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals* (URM). A BRIF working group has been recently established.

Creaser C, Fry J, Greenwood H *et al.* **Authors' awareness and attitudes toward open access repositories.** *New Review of Academic Librarianship* 2010;16(S1):145-161  
This article investigates the awareness of scholarly authors toward open access repositories and the factors that motivate their use. The findings indicate that despite good understanding and appreciation of the ethos of open access in general, differences arose between authors from differing disciplinary backgrounds in understanding the validity of open access repositories and their subsequent motivations for depositing articles in them. doi: 10.1080/13614533.2010.518851

Davis PM, Walters WH. **The impact of free access to the scientific literature: a review of recent research.** *Journal of the Medical Library Association* 2011;99(3):208-217. This paper reviews recent studies evaluating the impact of free access (open access) on scholars, clinicians, and the general public in developed and developing countries. It assesses impact in terms of reading, citation, and related forms of use. The authors consider factors such as journal reputation

and the absence of publication fees when submitting their work, but free access is not a significant factor. There is clear evidence that free access leads to an increase in article downloads, although its impact on article citations is unclear and needs further research. doi: 10.3163/1536-5050.99.3.008

Laakso M, Welling P, Bukvova H *et al.* **The development of Open Access Journal Publishing from 1993 to 2009.** *PLoS ONE* 2011;6(6):e20961. Results of a study on the development of open access (OA) journals registered in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) showed very rapid growth in the period 1993-2009. Since 2000, the average annual growth rate in the number of journals has been 18%, and for the number of articles it has been 30%. Three major phases of OA development suggested are the Pioneering years (1993-1999), the Innovation years (2000-2004), and the Consolidation years (2005-2009). doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0020961

Moher D, Weeks L, Ocampo M *et al.* **Describing reporting guidelines for health research: a systematic review.** *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 2011;64(7):718-742. This review includes 81 reporting guidelines, most of which have been developed in the last 10 years, classifying 58% of them as new guidance. The authors believe that a more rigorous approach is necessary for developing reporting guidelines. The findings indicate that guideline developers provide little information about the guideline development process that would be useful to assess the robustness of the recommendations made. An assessment tool could be developed to help authors and editors create and evaluate specific reporting guidelines. doi: 10.1016/j.clinepi.2010.09.013

Nariani R, Fernandez L. **Open access publishing: what authors want.** *College & Research Libraries* (accepted: June 5, 2011; anticipated publication date: March 2012).

Results of this study indicate that authors are increasingly publishing in open access (OA) journals, and they appreciate library funding initiatives and believe that impact factor and readership are strong motivators for OA publishing. Specific recommendations for publishers include timely indexing in PubMed and other databases, promotion of OA articles through press releases, and access to statistics on a regular basis.

Tagler J. **Biomedical Publishing 101: an overview from the Chicago Collaborative.** *The Serials Librarian* 2011; 60(1-4):114-123. Challenges and opportunities posed by the migration from print to digital are addressed. The author explores the role of publishers in the scholarly communication process, and the various roles and responsibilities of the key players in the scientific publishing chain.

#### RESEARCH EVALUATION

Molinié A, Bodenhausen G. **The kinship or *k*-index as an antidote against the toxic effects of *h*-index.** *CHEMIA International Journal for Chemistry* 2011;65(6):433-436. According to the authors, the current fashion of ranking people, papers, and journals is anything but harmless. They suggest measuring the "fertility" of individual researchers - with respect to their ability to foster quality - in terms of kinship (the *k*-index) rather than measurement through personalized indices (the *h*-index). A chart of elective kinship, produced through the transmission of scientific theory, methodology, know-how, competence, and even culture, could then be realized. doi: 10.2533/chimia.2011.433

Thanks to John Glen, James Hartley and Penny Hubbard

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## EASE Business

### EASE luncheon in Paris strikes a perfect balance

Taking advantage of EASE President Joan Marsh's attendance at a psychiatrist congress in Paris, EASE members in France gathered at Porte Maillot for an informal lunch on 5 September, as they have done regularly for several years. The date coincided with back-to-school for the kids, so a few members were unable to join us. We were eight and had a nice discussion around diverse editing topics.

Two new participants were welcomed: Catherine Mary, who is a freelance science journalist and works for prestigious journals, and Philippe Chatelet, from INRA, Montpellier, working in plant biology and editing papers. They presented their activities to the other participants (Rachel Carol, Frances Sheppard, Alex Edelman, Eric Lichtfouse), and to Joan who shared the latest EASE news and encouraged everyone to "spread the word" about EASE's big conference in Tallinn, Estonia, in June 2012, on the theme of "Publishing in a Digital Age". It looks as if most of us will attend.

*Hervé Maisonneuve*



From left to right: C Mary, J Marsh, A Edelman, P Chatelet, E Lichtfouse, R Carol, F Sheppard. The participants came for the lunch from cities far from the Porte Maillot Conference Centre: Montpellier, Besançon, Dijon, Lyon, Malakoff, Juvisy and London! And, astonishing for a French event, all of us arrived in advance or on time!

### ESE: what do you like (or dislike) about the Journal?

We are conducting a poll of what you, the readers and members of EASE, think about the Journal. Over the past year, you will have noticed various changes. We think they are improvements but would like to know whether you agree. There are 10 questions and we would really appreciate your taking the time to complete them. We will send an e-mail alert and put details on the EASE website. If anyone would like a paper copy, please contact the Secretary. If anyone would like to help analyse the responses, please contact the Secretary - all assistance gratefully received!

### Publications Committee

We are sad to report that Margaret Cooter has retired from her position as Production Editor of ESE. Margaret has done a fantastic job over the years, chasing copy, laying out the pages, editing where necessary and managing a team of proof readers to ensure a journal fit for an Editors' Association. She is now going to devote more time to her other projects, including a Masters in Visual Art at Camberwell College of Art. Unfortunately, no one from the membership was willing to take on the job at this time, so we have appointed Lynne Rowland, a colleague of Mary Hodgson's, who is not an editor but does have experience in page layout and design.

We also regret that Dario Sambunjak has resigned from the Publications Committee, following his resignation from the Editorial Board of the *Croatian Medical Journal*. Dario is now Director of the Croatian Branch of the Cochrane Collaboration, and his career is taking him away from editing, so he felt it was no longer appropriate to be on the Publications Committee. Dario has been responsible for the "Editing around the world" section, and we are grateful for both the interesting articles he has commissioned for this section and his overall contribution to the journal. Anyone interested in joining the Publications Committee should contact Armen Gasparyan or Joan Marsh.

### Nominations for EASE Council 2012-2015

At the AGM in Tallinn in June 2012, a new Council will be elected. The following members of the existing Council are standing down:

**Vice Presidents:** Alison Clayson; Reme Melero

**Ordinary members:** Petter Oscarsson; Edward Towpik  
Below is a list of nominees who have accepted. Other names may be added, and the full list will be published on the EASE website in November. Members of EASE may also, not less than 90 days before the General Meeting, nominate in writing to the Secretary any eligible member of the Association for each office or position. Such nominations must be made in writing by two members for each nomination, and should enclose a signed letter from the nominee agreeing to his/her nomination, and a brief curriculum vitae of the nominee. These nominees shall be added to the list drawn up by the nominations committee. If the nominations committee accepts more nominations than there are places to be filled, a ballot of members will take place. Ballot papers would be circulated with the February 2012 issue of ESE. Details of the procedure may be found in the Statutes and Bye-Laws of EASE, available on the About EASE section of the website.

**Vice Presidents:** Eva Baranyiova; Ana Marusic  
**Ordinary members:** Paola DeCastro; Alex Edelman; Shirin Heidari; Richard Hurley; Moira Johnson; Ana Marusic; Pippa Smart; Christian Sterken; Sylwia Ufnalska

## Forthcoming Meetings, Courses, and BELS Examinations

**Science as a Public Enterprise: Why and How Should Science Be Open? Public meeting organized by Royal Society's Working Group**  
21 November 2011; Edinburgh, UK  
<http://www.royalsoced.org.uk/events/event.php?id=252>

**STM E-Production Seminar**  
1 December; London, UK  
<http://www.stm-assoc.org/events/>

**STM Innovations Seminar**  
**Enriching Content: deeper, smarter, better**  
2 December; London, UK  
<http://www.stm-assoc.org/events/2012>

**7th International Digital Curation Conference**  
5-7 December 2011; Bristol, UK  
<http://www.dcc.ac.uk/events/idcc11>

**American Association for the Advancement of Science: Annual meeting**  
16-20 February 2012; Vancouver, Canada  
<http://www.aaas.org/meetings>

**STM Annual Spring Conference**  
1-3 May 2012; Washington DC, USA  
<http://www.stm-assoc.org/events/stm-spring-conference-2012/>

**11th EASE General Assembly and Conference**  
**Editing in the Digital World**  
8-10 June 2012; Tallinn, Estonia  
<http://www.ease.org.uk>

**Council of Science Editors Annual Meeting**  
18-21 May 2012; Seattle, USA  
<http://www.councilscienceeditors.org/>

**11th International Symposium on Landslides and Engineered Slopes**  
2-8 June 2012; Banff, Alberta, Canada  
<http://www.isl-nasl2012.ca/>

**European Association for Health Information and Libraries**  
**Health information without frontiers**  
4-6 July 2012; Brussels, Belgium  
<http://www.eahil2012.be/>

**31st IUBS General Assembly and Conference on Biological Sciences and Bio-industry**  
5-9 July 2012; Suzhou, China  
<http://www.iubs.org/iubs/nextGA.html>

### COURSES

**ALPSP training courses, briefings and technology updates**  
*Half-day and one-day courses and updates.*  
Contact Amanda Whiting, Training Coordinator, Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers, Tel: +44 (0)1865 247776; [training@alpsp.org](mailto:training@alpsp.org); [www.alpsp-training.org](http://www.alpsp-training.org)

**Publishing Training Centre at Book House, London**  
Contact: The Publishing Training Centre at Book House, 45 East Hill, Wandsworth, London SW18 2QZ, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 8874 2718; fax +44 (0)20 8870 8985, publishing. [training@bookhouse.co.uk](mailto:training@bookhouse.co.uk) [www.train4publishing.co.uk](http://www.train4publishing.co.uk)

**Society for Editors and Proofreaders**  
*SfEP runs one-day workshops in London and occasionally elsewhere in the UK on copy-editing, proofreading, grammar, and much else.*  
Training enquiries: tel: +44 (0)20 8785 5617; [trainingenquiries@sfep.org.uk](mailto:trainingenquiries@sfep.org.uk)  
Other enquiries: SfEP, Erico House, 93-99 Upper Richmond Road, Putney, London SW15 2TG, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 8785 5617; [administration@sfep.org.uk](mailto:administration@sfep.org.uk); [www.sfep.org.uk](http://www.sfep.org.uk)

**Society of Indexers workshops**  
*The Society of Indexers runs workshops for beginners and more experienced indexers in various cities in the UK.*  
Details and booking at [www.indexers.org.uk](http://www.indexers.org.uk); [admin@indexers.org.uk](mailto:admin@indexers.org.uk)

**University of Chicago**  
*Medical writing, editing, and ethics are among the many courses available.*  
Graham School of General Studies, The University of Chicago, 1427 E. 60th Street, Chicago, IL 60637, USA. Fax +1 773 702 6814.  
<http://grahamschool.uchicago.edu>

**University of Oxford, Department for Continuing Education**  
*Courses on effective writing for biomedical professionals and on presenting in biomedicine, science, and technology.*  
Contact Leanne Banns, CPD Centre, Department for Continuing Education, University of Oxford, Littlegate House, 16/17 St Ebbs Street, Oxford OX1 1PT, UK  
Tel: +44 (0)1865 286953; [leanne.banns@conted.ox.ac.uk](mailto:leanne.banns@conted.ox.ac.uk)  
[www.conted.ox.ac.uk/cpd/personaldev](http://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/cpd/personaldev)

**BELS - Board of Editors in the Life Sciences examination schedule**  
([www.bels.org/becomeeditor/exam-schedule.htm](http://www.bels.org/becomeeditor/exam-schedule.htm))

**SfEP AGM and 23rd Annual Conference Vanbrugh College, University of York**  
**September 8-10, 2012**

For more information, visit the website:  
[http://www.sfep.org.uk/pub/confs/conf12/conf2012\\_advance.asp](http://www.sfep.org.uk/pub/confs/conf12/conf2012_advance.asp)

### EASE MEMBERSHIP NEWS

**New individual members**  
Professor Mohammad Abdollahi  
Tehran, Iran

Dr Anna Maria Rossi, Rome, Italy  
[annamaria.rossi@iss.it](mailto:annamaria.rossi@iss.it)

Cristina Hagmann, Bonn, Germany  
[amparo.hagmann@gmail.com](mailto:amparo.hagmann@gmail.com)

Prof. Izet Masic, Sarajevo, Bosnia  
[imasic@lol.ba](mailto:imasic@lol.ba)

Mr Andrew Mulley, Tallinn, Estonia  
[amulley@acedit.eu](mailto:amulley@acedit.eu)

Mrs Sara Nash, St Albans, UK  
[sara.nash@sciencereviews.co.uk](mailto:sara.nash@sciencereviews.co.uk)

Ms Frances L Gardiner, Shrewsbury, UK  
[powersgardiner@googlemail.com](mailto:powersgardiner@googlemail.com)

**New corporate members**  
Taylor & Francis Ltd - Katie Chandler  
[katie.chandler@tandf.co.uk](mailto:katie.chandler@tandf.co.uk)



## European Association of Science Editors

**Tallinn, Estonia**  
**8 - 10 June 2012**

## ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND CONFERENCE

### Editing in the Digital World

#### Plenary sessions

National journals in an international context  
Open access and digital models  
Social media tools and academic publishing  
The editorial office

#### Parallel Sessions

From national to international: benefits of the digital era for regional journals  
Publishing data  
Science translation, editing and readability  
Digital tools for detecting misconduct  
Improving peer review management reporting  
Local assistance of scientists and institutes by journal editors

#### Workshops

Writing a scientific paper and getting published  
How to be a successful journal editor

Effective computer-aided translation software: memoQ

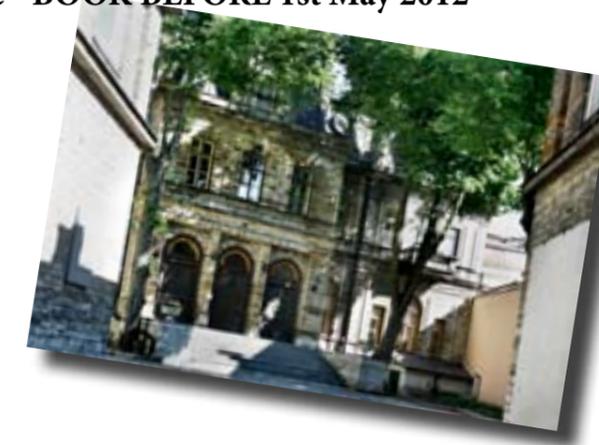
Readability: 10 strategies for improving flow in translated or non-English speakers' texts

Abstracts for presentations related to the sessions listed above will be considered for either short talks, if there is time in the session, or posters. These should be about 200 words and should be submitted by 1st March 2012 at the latest. Abstracts for posters only may be submitted up to 1st April 2012.

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