ISMTE
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF MANAGING AND TECHNICAL EDITORS

EON
Editorial Office News

November 2008

COLUMN: *President's Message*

Beverlee Anderson Named New Executive Director of ISMTE

From the Vice President - Taylor Bowen

The Board of Directors is pleased to announce they have approved a contract with Beverlee Anderson to serve as ISMTE's executive director. Beverlee brings to ISMTE more than 15 years of association management experience with organizations whose international members are healthcare professionals. Her specialty is building infrastructures for new organizations.

Although recently retired as executive director of the Society for Simulation in Healthcare, she remains their journal's managing editor, so she understands the roles and needs of our membership. We look to her to provide strong management, leadership, and direction; membership service; meeting planning; and Board of Director and committee development.

The new office will be in Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA where she lives with her retired surgeon husband and old black dog. Locally Beverlee is an active docent at the New Mexico Art Museum and Santa Fe Opera and on the Board of Directors of the Santa Fe Council for International Relations as the chair of the Program Coordinating Committee.

Please welcome Beverlee to the team as we work together to move ISMTE forward.

Taylor Bowen
ISMTE Vice President

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In this issue . . .

The Future of Journal Publishing

Robert Campbell, Senior Publisher, Wiley-Blackwell

Liz Ferguson, Associate Publishing Director, Wiley-Blackwell

As publishers that work with around 750 societies and similar organisations, we are asked regularly for our view on the future for journals and whether a society can continue to rely on publishing to provide most of their income. Several societies with declining memberships have even suggested that publishing a journal and distributing profits might be all they do eventually.

The simple answer is that Wiley would not have acquired Blackwell Publishing in early 2007 if it were not convinced that journal publishing, and in our case working with societies, has a long future. We have recently won four major new contracts with societies in the life sciences while existing partners have continued to renew their publishing agreements with us: these societies certainly see us as the right partner to take them into the future. Our own confidence in the future of publishing is demonstrated through our continued program of new journals and the launch of new, innovative serial publications.

Our market is ultimately driven by global funding of research and development (R&D). This has increased outside North America by above inflation rates over the last five years, helping stimulate the increase in submissions many journals have experienced. With the current dive into recession, it is difficult to predict whether investing in R&D will still be seen as a way of lifting an economy, but it is likely. The publishing system will need to handle yet more papers for at least the next few years as the output of the increased investment of the past few years is submitted to journals. In Europe, for example, the target is to reach 3% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) spent on R&D if the Lisbon accord is to be implemented. This converts to an extra 700,000 research workers. If we assume 0.75 papers per active researcher per annum then the scholarly communication system will need to produce another 525,000 articles per annum from Europe alone.

The basic question, therefore, is whether the publishing system will be sufficiently well funded to meet this challenge or if library budgets will be cut, perhaps on the grounds that an increasing amount of content is available free of charge on subject and institutional repositories. If such an argument is used, this contradicts the claim made by research funders pushing public access that such policies (e.g., mandating self-archiving by grantees – the 'Green Road' to Open Access) do not undermine the economic base of journals.

If research funders set up robust systems for funding author-pays Open Access (the 'Gold Road' to Open Access) then publishers can adapt with the so-called hybrid model or even launch new Gold Road titles. Given pressure on budgets and the important conclusion of the Research Information Network (RIN) report that Open Access does not introduce any net savings[1], it is more likely that the Green Road will be preferred by most funders.

Journal publishing could be in for two or three difficult years as some compromise is established with funding agencies and some library

[1] Research Information Network. 2008. *Activities, costs and funding flows in the scholarly communications system in the UK.* Available at: www.rin.ac.uk/costs-funding-flows.

ARTICLE

Future *continued*

budgets are cut as part of a general response to the economic climate, but we have survived recession before and thrived on technical change that has enabled us to enhance the value we add. If the current global economic downturn results in slower growth or even reduced R&D funding, we will need to become even more innovative to ensure our journals attract the best possible papers. High standards of author service during both the review and publication processes will become more important than ever before. The role of the managing editor will remain central: the launch of the ISMTE was timely.

In conclusion, the basic four functions of journals will remain as first described in correspondence by Henry Oldenburg (the Secretary of the Royal Society): registration, dissemination, archiving, and certification. The means may change and more will be asked of us (e.g., publish yet more content more quickly, improved discoverability, links to the original data). This may require further restructuring of publishing making it tougher for smaller independent publishers, but the market will be larger and more complex. Change will generate opportunities for all.

Do you have public relations or marketing skills?

The ISMTE Board of Directors is preparing promotional material for marketing the Society in 2009 and would appreciate advice from someone with these skills and experiences. If you can help, please contact ISMTE President Jason Roberts at journal@ahsnet.org or Beverlee Anderson at ISMTE@hughes.net.

Making Connections: European Association of Science Editors

The **European Association of Science Editors (EASE)** was formed 25 years ago from the amalgamation of the European Life Science Editors' Association and the European Association of Earth Science Editors. Despite the name, our membership is worldwide, coming from around 50 countries at present, and cuts across many disciplines and trades, including journal editors, commissioning and authors' editors, academics, translators, publishers, Web and multi-media staff, indexers, science writers, and technical illustrators.

EASE publishes a quarterly journal, *European Science Editing*, which features articles related to science and editing, book and Web reviews, regional and country news and resources. It also publishes the *Science Editors' Handbook*, which contains chapters on topics specifically relevant to science editing, as well as covering everything from on-screen editing to office management, peer review, and dealing with the media. In the form of a loose-leaf binder, it is constantly added to and updated.

EASE's triennial conference provides a stimulating forum for discussion and networking. The next one will be held in Pisa, Italy from 16 – 19 September 2009 on *Integrity in Science Communication*.

Do visit our website www.ease.org.uk to find out more about our activities, including our active Forum, which is open to non-members.

Joan Marsh
Vice-President
EASE

ARTICLE

Madness, Moby Dick, and Dickens: a Novice Editor's Guide to Interdisciplinary Academic Publishing

by Debbie Kirklin
Editor-in-Chief, **Medical Humanities**
rmjldlv@ucl.ac.uk

A few months ago I was appointed editor-in-chief (EIC) of the BMJ journal *Medical Humanities,* and just two days ago I submitted my editorial for the first issue for which I will bear responsibility. I am, in other words, a novice editor. As such, I wonder, even as I write, at my audacity in sharing my thoughts with the experienced readership of this newsletter. Nevertheless, that's the task I've been set, and so, like all newly appointed enthusiasts, I'll do my energetic best.

Energy and enthusiasm are perhaps two of the most important prerequisites for any novice editor, especially if the appointment is in addition to an already busy schedule, and especially if the journal is still in its evolutionary phase. So I'm fortunate, my supply of both is constantly fuelled by the stimulating, entertaining, and sometimes surprising papers that form the core of our submissions. Because unlike most academic journals, *Medical Humanities* attempts to draw together a broad range of academic scholars from across the arts and humanities as they seek to inform understanding of the social, political, historical, cultural, economic, and personal context within which illness is experienced and healthcare delivered. And so, as the EIC, you never, quite literally, know what's going to hit your 'newly submitted papers' queue, and you can be pretty sure those submissions will both challenge and add to your way of thinking about the world. Not a bad benefit when you come to think of it.

Amongst others, the papers we receive come from scholars of literature, history, anthropology, sociology, philosophy, film and television studies, fine art and art history, as well as from healthcare professionals and educators. One of the key challenges raised by an ambitious project like this inevitably relates to the expertise and knowledge of the editorial team and the gaps therein. Perhaps this is best illustrated by describing to you the sorts of papers the editorial team is asked to both peer-review and then publish. So, in no particular order, included amongst the papers currently accepted for publication we have: a paper about Goya and madness, which includes over twenty of his drawings; another about Rubens and the physical signs of aging; an historical paper that includes detailed extracts from the diary entries of two Georgian fathers along with growth charts for their children; several papers with structured abstracts and several for which this format would be meaningless; a paper examining the public's fascination with television's *House MD*, a doctor who believes all patients to be lying idiots and who acts accordingly; a paper in which a professor of psychiatric nursing

Madness *continued*

brands members of his profession as celebrity-obsessed narcissists; papers about educational initiatives with undergraduate medical students; and literary studies papers about madness, as evidenced in Melville's *Moby Dick* and *Bartleby the Scrivener*, and also in very many of the works by Charles Dickens.

So problem, sorry, challenge number one: how to ensure the editor, associate editors, editorial advisory board, reviewers, and publishing team have, among them, the expertise and confidence required to sort the wheat from the chaff. Or to make this more personal, and to start at the beginning: how on earth, faced with such a stunning range and depth of papers, does a novice EIC - whose background is in medicine, ethics, and education - work out what should be reviewed and what shouldn't, let alone what to publish?

The first thing of course is to bring together a team you trust and to ensure they provide as broad a disciplinary and geographical reach as possible. Doing so is hard work, an on-going evolutionary process that took up considerable amounts of my time even before I was in post. It depends on being able to call on longstanding relationships built on mutual respect for the person and their work, as well as on the willingness to ask for recommendations and introductions to academics from long-established disciplines who may never have heard of the medical humanities, let alone of this newly appointed EIC. So lesson number one for those entering the world of interdisciplinary publishing: just because you think this ranks as one of most important intellectual adventures ever undertaken doesn't mean anyone else, other than the usual suspects, will have even heard of it. A large dose of humility, coupled with unshakeable confidence and resolute determination, will therefore prove invaluable as you seek to convert leading scholars across the fields you wish to bring together to your noble cause.

Then of course there's the problem of expectations. In medical and scientific publishing, no matter how ambitious and optimistic authors try to be, their expectations - of how many words/references/illustrations/etc. - are tempered by familiarity with the often rigidly imposed guidelines of the mainstream publishers. But

Madness

continued

where to begin working out, let alone imposing, word counts and structure on authors already accustomed to such widely different publishing norms? How to accommodate a 12,000 word, 22-image art history paper within a journal that recommends 3,500 word counts when budgeting for thirteen papers an issue? How to publish an historical paper based on primary sources without allowing readers access to reproductions of, at least part of, those materials? How to restrict an enthused educator to 3,500 words when other authors seem to get much more? And how, at the end of the day, to make sure the papers you publish are accessible to the entire readership of the journal, and not just to a subset of specialist readers, whilst at the same time not compromising the academic standards of the respective disciplines?

All of which is, of course, where teamwork comes in, and open-mindedness and flexibility. In this I've been extremely fortunate at the British Medical Journal Group in having a team of people willing to discuss and think creatively about the rather unusual set of challenges publishing *Medical Humanities* poses. Working with editors and authors, solutions can be found and alternative options explored. For example, the facility to locate some or all of the images and references online means the constraints of hard copy budgets need not place unnecessary restraints on what is made available to readers. Whilst this option is attractive to publishers, there's still a way to go to convince authors that three pages in print plus seven more online is a good deal. Their academic bosses and paymasters still tally in-print pages of publication, giving little or no credit for online equivalents. This reminds us a deeper cultural shift within academe is needed if we're to take full advantage of the benefits offered by online publishing.

Because in the end, no matter how rational we try to be, as editors and publishers we need to recognise that the disciplinary and institutional worlds in which authors need to compete to survive do not necessarily think as we think. Nor do they necessarily recognise the benefits of publishing innovations, let alone acknowledge the need to accommodate them within their systems. In the mad world in which many academics have to work, the ground rules are still, all too often, set by anonymous and unaccountable groups of people working within outdated and self-interested paradigms. In this Orwellian world, scholars are exhorted to interdisciplinary collaboration and publication and then penalised, in terms of resource allocation, for doing so. So isn't it wonderful so many of them are not only working across interdisciplinary boundaries but sending us their publications? You'd have to be mad to think otherwise.

Section Editors Needed

EON needs editors for several new sections debuting in 2009. These sections will publish six to eight times each year, and each will cover a different topic such as ethics, publisher and society relationships, technology, editorial office issues, and portraits of an editorial office.

Section editors will be responsible for recruiting content for their columns. *EON's* editorial staff will offer ideas and potential author contacts as needed.

If you are interested in giving a small amount of time to help *EON* grow, please contact the Editor, Kristie Overstreet, at kristen.overstreet@mac.com.

Controlling Submission Data: What You Can Do and Why You Should Care

by Jason Roberts, PhD
ISMTE President
Managing Editor, Headache
Managing Editor, The Journal of Sexual Medicine
Journal @ahsnet.org

Data submission problems

It is commonly presumed in the journal business, regardless of subject matter, that when authors submit a manuscript for publication they are guaranteeing the highest standards, ethical and work quality alike, have been met. Of course we all know willful manipulation of the publication process, most obviously in the falsification of data, plagiarism, and failure to ensure co-author consent, does happen. More typically, editorial offices uncover minor transgressions that nearly always stem from administrative errors or plain ignorance. For example, though a failure to disclose conflicts of interest is a serious offence if a journal specifically requests a declaration, experience suggests simple errors in supplying data rather than a deliberate attempt at obfuscation are behind this problem.

At issue, however, is the *omission or erroneous supply of submission data* required to accompany an article submission. All journals have submission requirements and no doubt experience cases where these are not met. Most likely this stems from a failure to read the instructions for authors. Most titles follow up vigorously or take hard line tactics such as not sending a manuscript to peer review until all requirements for submission are met (cf the instructions for *Diabetes*).[1] Following up with authors is, of course, a major time consumer, and it seems somewhat disrespectful of authors to think they can run roughshod over your carefully devised submission requirements.

Evidently, the problem is not solely an ethical issue as exemplified by the failure to include cover letters, incorrect spelling, or ordering of authors, and insensitivity to the variance between journals in what information is requested (and the formatting of that information).

The root cause of the variance in information received is undoubtedly a failure of authors to take responsibility for their actions. Great attention to detail is paid to research design and data collection. In certain fields, especially in science, medicine, and select professions/trades, there are several ethical principals that must have already been adhered to in the undertaking of the research studies (the Declaration of Helsinki, for example, for conducting experiments on humans).[2]

1 *Diabetes* Instructions for Authors. http://diabetes.diabetesjournals.org/misc/ifora.shtml (Accessed 28th October, 2008).

2 World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki. Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects. www.wma.net/e/policy/b3.htm (Accessed 28th October, 2008).

Controlling Submission Data *continued*

Considerably less attention to detail is paid to the publication submission process as evidenced by missing materials such as tables and figures and the omission of data requested by a journal. Presumably this is because it is seen as a bothersome administrative task somewhere in between the completion of writing the article and seeing the work published.

So what can a journal do? More specifically, what can you as an editorial office staff member do? Before we look at those questions it might be useful to examine typical submission data and what do we use it for.

What is submission data? Why do we need it?

Submission data is typically information a journal collects to: identify the contributors, provide background on the research presented, define the nature of the paper (article type) and its intended location in the body of literature (keywords, search terms), and provide a context for the manuscript submitted. Essentially, this information is ancillary to the main text of a submission though many journals do ask for its inclusion, especially in methodology sections. An example, from medical journals, is highlighting the institutional review board that approved the study. Requests for data are often called out explicitly in the submission process for the purposes of transparency, otherwise important contextualizing information can be buried in the manuscript text where it might be missed. Unfortunately, it appears some authors interpret the supplementary nature of some of this information to mean 'optional' or clearly by being careless do not understand the importance this information holds for editors during the peer-review process.

Trying to list all submission requirements is impossible given the number of titles and the subject matter covered. There are, however, some almost universal elements. These include a title (and perhaps sub-heading), author bylines, a reference section, an abstract, acknowledgements, and a cover letter. Even these fundamentals can apparently trip authors up. A problem I have grown more cognizant of in these days of electronic editorial offices and multi-author papers is the submitting author solely including their own name in the author byline in the online submission system. The problem is evident if they include a title page that features several additional co-authors; however, omitting co-authors during the submission process creates several problems, unless detected and corrected. The most obvious problem is facing the embarrassing situation of inviting an unidentified co-author to review his or her own paper. I suspect an author not knowing their co-authors' details causes this problem. Each co-author has to be entered into the system, and either the submitting author does not have the required demographic information to hand or is simply too lazy to complete the task.

By failing to adequately supply submission data, several problems emerge. Firstly, time is wasted by editorial staff having to follow up (quite possibly the single most annoying task undertaken in an editorial office). Secondly it gradually undermines journal metadata when its time to run reports on submissions. Most seriously, it can impair peer review by providing insufficient context for the material under evaluation. For example, editors and reviewers

Controlling Submission Data *continued*

alike clearly need to be aware of any potential conflicts of interest or study sponsorship, as they must raise their sensitivity to bias yet further. With double-blinded manuscripts this submission data is the only clue, for example, that the origin of an article might be from a company with a vested interest in said article being published.

In a sense, total omission of data is less of a problem than incomplete or erroneous submission. It is obvious if data is missing. What is harder to police is how complete the information received is. Returning again to conflict of interest statements, I have seen cases where authors who are practicing physicians declare their competing interests but co-authors at a pharmaceutical company do not (obviously being an employee is a major conflict). Noting the place of employment in the author institution information alone is not sufficient. So, what is the solution in a situation like this?

How can journals better regulate the input of submission data?

Assuming that authors are going to ignore your journal's instructions for authors, there clearly are some small steps that can be undertaken. These should not be perceived as simply being introduced to make your life easier – authors will most likely appreciate the direction they provide.

The most obvious place to start is to make submission data requests compulsory questions that must be answered before submission is allowed. Clearly, the submission process should not be tortuous, but if the information is required, for whatever reason, then the author should recognize this is a precondition of the journal to which they have chosen to submit their work.

You may wish to back up your submission requirements and any forms/questions used to collect that data with a clearly defined set of publication guidelines. A publication guideline sets forth a journal's policy on all matters associated with submission and publication. In particular, guidelines pay attention to standards of behavior and expectations placed on authors and may explain possible retribution in the event of a transgression. Publication guidelines may also explain in detail why submission requirements are requested. Instructions for authors tend to typically just state the requirements without context.

Such guidelines, that might cover everything from mundane tasks such as ensuring all figures must be accompanied by a legend through to your journal's policy on describing access to data during the completion of a clinical trial, offer clarity to the expectations you place on authors at submission. They also provide you with the authority you need to pursue an author that has failed to meet the requirements.

Guidelines can also add specificity to simple requests, which will alleviate the more serious problem of partial submission, rather than complete omission, of required data. For example, guidelines might be referenced to direct authors through the completion of the conflict of interest disclosure, stating what information is relevant and how it must be recorded.

More journals are following the lead of organizations like the American Chemical Society and implementing guidelines. The

Controlling Submission Data

continued

American Chemical Society explicitly states all journals in their portfolio will do precisely that:

"Every editor of a Society journal has the responsibility to establish and maintain guidelines for selecting and accepting papers submitted to that journal."[3]

Many guidelines are very similar and openly borrow from other sources. For example, the American Institute of Physics (AIP) in its *Statement of ethics and responsibilities of authors submitting to AIP Journals* acknowledges it has based its statement upon those prepared previously by the American Physical Society and the American Geophysical Union.[4] Some fields have commonly used templates that form the basis of specifically tailored policy statements. One such example would be the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors' *Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Writing and Editing for Biomedical Publication*.[5]

Another strategy is to implement a simple checklist that could be provided to authors at the point of submission (for example, at an online submission site) or via your journal homepage. A short and simple document that enables the author to check off each completed requirement may achieve greater success than the densely-packed 8pt font instructions for authors at the back of the journal. Many fields also have subject, rather than submission oriented guidelines or checklists (e.g. CONSORT for randomized controlled trials), and though these really control the inclusion of data within the manuscript, they too can force authors to slow down and consider what information they are providing to help journals through the peer-review process.[6]

Why authors need to take responsibility

Of course, checklists and guidelines may become the new instructions for authors destined to be neglected. Reinforcement may be required in the form of an author declaration form that requests authors guarantee they have adhered to all your requirements. Additionally, such a declaration forces authors to take responsibility for their work. And this is critical. If some authors are not prepared to respect the submission and review process, then tough enforcement is required. An author disclosure explains what an author is vouching for when they sign it, and if a set of journal publication policies or guidelines exist that explain what happens when unacceptable behavior is unearthed, the disclosure can refer to the consequences should a transgression or failure to comply transpire.

My intent from the start of this article was as much about encouraging us, as a community of editorial offices, to think about how authors treat the submission process as it was about adopting a simple practical enhancement.

3 American Chemical Society. Ethical Guidelines to Publication of Chemical Research. http://pubs.acs.org/ethics/ethics.html. (Accessed 28th October, 2008).

4 American Institute of Physics. Statement of ethics and responsibilities of authors submitting to AIP Journals. www.aip.org/pubservs/ethics.html (Accessed 28th October, 2008).

5 International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Writing and Editing for Biomedical Publication. www.icmje.org (Accessed 28th October, 2008).

6 CONSORT Group. Consort Statement. www.consort-statement.org/ (Accessed 28th October, 2008).

Controlling Submission Data

continued

Failure to provide data is clearly an aggravation for editorial offices, but more important, it is a disservice to journals and their readers. The publication process, just like any field of research, is based upon trust. A blasé attitude to following journal requirements, ultimately if not policed effectively by journals, undermines the published record by making a reader question whether they can trust what they read.

Should we care?

Judging by the growing number of journal policy guidelines and author declarations/ guarantee statements, more journals are now addressing these issues head on. Perhaps ISMTE needs to take a stand and insist our practical requirements are considered alongside weighty issues such as stating falsification is not acceptable behavior, with penalties such as delayed peer review for non-compliance. If your journal does not have a set of submission policies defining the expectations you place on authors, get involved in drafting some statements. If such policies exist, see if you can refine them to suit your needs. Any submission requirements you have were implemented for a reason. Policies that state clearly what an author must do and clarify the consequences if they don't represent the best approach to controlling submission data.

ISMTE will look to develop in 2009 some template checklists and suggested statements that address the issue of controlling the quality of submission data received. This will be a collaborative effort – use the discussion forum to talk about this more with your peers.

Appendix A. Example of an Author Disclosure Statement

Author Guarantee Statement

By signing this form you guarantee that:

- The manuscript contains original material that will not be submitted elsewhere concurrently.
- All authors have contributed to the work and are familiar with the primary data; each has read the final manuscript and approved its contents.
- All authors have agreed to have their name added to the paper.
- The manuscript is free of falsification, fabrication, plagiarism, and self-plagiarism. All applicable principles of scientific integrity, including ethical treatment of human subjects and humane treatment of animals, have been followed. In signing this form you testify that an appropriate institutional or public board approved the protocols for human or animal subject use.
- All funding sources that supported the work are acknowledged. Any conflicts of interest on the part of any authors have been supplied as part of the submission process. By signing this form you agree you will examine typeset proofs as supplied by the publisher prior to publication to ensure all relevant financial disclosures have been accurately included in the manuscript.
- You have followed all the requirements for submission as requested in the Instructions for Authors.

Controlling Submission Data *continued*

Appendix B. Example of a Submission Checklist

Journal Title Submission Checklist

Please read this Checklist carefully to ensure you have addressed all requirements. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the review of your manuscript or even immediate rejection. Please ensure you are familiar with the *Journal Title* Instructions for Authors.

Title Page

○ If your manuscript does not already contain a Title Page, please upload a Word document as a Supplementary File containing the following information:

- Article Title
- Authors (in the order you wish to see the names published)
  - Author names to be written as First (Given) Name, middle initials, Last (Family) Name
  - Highest Degrees (e.g. MD, PhD)
  - Author affiliations (institution, city, country)
- Conflict of Interest Statement (provide full disclosure for each author or state 'No conflict'). **Manuscripts without any Conflict of Interest Statement will be rejected before peer review.**
- Acknowledgements

○ Failure to supply a Title Page at submission will result in a delay in the peer review process until the Title Page is eventually supplied. The Title Page, if supplied after submission, must be in an electronic format. Faxed or mailed title pages are not acceptable.

Manuscript Preparation

○ The Abstract must be formatted as specified in the *Journal Title* Instructions for Authors.

○ Please check all tables and figures have been submitted (including title and legend).

○ All figures should be of a high resolution:

- Line art images must be 1200 DPI/PPI resolution
- Halftone images must be at least 300 DPI/PPI resolution

○ All figure titles and legends *should not be embedded* in the submitted image – please supply this information separately (such as figure legends in the main manuscript file).

○ All tables are required to be in Word or Excel formats. No image files of tables please.

Controlling Submission Data *continued*

- ○ All extraneous use of color must be removed from figures and tables.
- ○ Figures and Tables must be cited in the text and numbered in the order cited.
- ○ All manuscripts, with the exception of Letters to the Editor, must contain a conclusion.
- ○ All references must be formatted according to *Journal Title* style (references arranged by citation order).
- ○ References must be checked for bibliographic accuracy.
- ○ The manuscript should be spell-checked before submission. It must also use consistently US English spelling (e.g. color not colour).
- ○ The manuscript text must be double-spaced.

File Formats

- ○ The manuscript must be uploaded as a .doc or .rtf file. A PDF file cannot be accepted.
- ○ Graphic file formats preferred are JPEG, TIFF or EPS. PowerPoint may be acceptable but the figure must not be lifted directly from a PowerPoint presentation – background colors and non-essential graphic design must be removed.
- ○ To ensure the highest possible image quality we prefer you supply graphics in one of the above-referenced file formats rather than embed the image directly into a Word document. As a rule of thumb, if your image appears blurred on screen, print reproduction will likely be even more inferior.

Ethics

Before submission, authors are expected to be fully cognizant of all ethical requirements associated with submission to *Journal Title*. These requirements are summarized in the Instruction for Authors and explained in full in the *Journal Title* Journal Publication Guidelines.

Legalities

- ○ Any required permissions (such as for image reproduction) must be detailed in the article.
- ○ Please fax or mail to the *Journal Title* Editorial Office a copy of the Copyright Assignment Form after you have submitted your manuscript. A copy of the form will be attached to a confirmation e-mail sent to you upon submission of your manuscript.

Please address any queries or concerns to the Journal Title *Editorial Office:*

Address here

ISMTE Blog

It's free to access, it's free to read, it may also be free to RSS feed. **Blogs** are fun, modern, and sexy. Everyone in the world seems to be **blogging**. Well, almost everybody. Here at the ISMTE we have created a **blog;** it will have content that will be posted each week and the content will be on the lines of publishing, peer review, policies and trends, editorial offices, technology, publishing stories, and ISMTE and publishing activities. If anybody has any ideas they would like to see each week then let us know and we will try our best to accommodate. Watch the ISMTE website for more information about the **blog.**

Gary Bryan, ISMTE Director, GBryan@bmj.com

How to be a successful journal editor - short course

ALPSP (http://www.alpsp.org, the Association of Learned, Professional and Society Publishers) is running a course for Editors-in-Chief, Editorial Board members, and managing editors on the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to run a successful publication.

Most editors edit a journal on a part-time basis, out of dedication to their discipline rather than as a career – and there is little support or training to help them. This course is one of very few that provides an opportunity to review the overall editorial operation in an increasingly difficult environment.

Based on an existing course, which has run successfully for 12 years, this course will be run in **Oxford, UK, 29-30 January 2009.**

The highly participatory programme includes how to attract the best authors, how to deliver what readers want, and how to make a journal successful. The course gives editors the opportunity to discuss best practice with peers, and by the end of the 1.5 days, all participants will have an action plan to take back to the office.

The course is being trained by Pippa Smart (PSP Consulting), and Mike Jackson (Annals of Botany). For more information, see the course website: http://www.pspconsulting.org/journals.shtml, or http://www.alpsp.org/ngen_public/article.asp?aid=7669 or contact Pippa Smart directly: pippa.smart@gmail.com.

Wearing Many Hats

by Peter Binfield, Managing Editor, *PLoS ONE*

I am the managing editor of PLoS ONE (the peer-reviewed online-only journal for all of science and medicine, at www.plosone.org), and we are part of the Public Library of Science (www.plos.org), a non-profit publisher of seven Open Access journals. The managing editor position is a somewhat new one for me; however, as you will see, the role I fill is probably not a 'typical' managing editor position.

I started my editorial career in book publishing at Institute of Physics Publishing (IoPP) in Bristol, UK. From there I moved to the Netherlands, to join Kluwer Academic Publishers (KAP), just as they were purchasing Chapman and Hall (the original publishers of Charles Dickens!) and just before they purchased Plenum. KAP, itself, is now part of Springer—which just goes to show the kind of consolidation the industry has seen in recent years. At KAP I started their European reference work program (large multi-volume dictionaries, encyclopedias, and handbooks) and also spent time in charge of their physical sciences group (managing a group who published books and journals in physics, chemistry, materials science, and astrophysics) before becoming the publishing director of the Earth & Environmental Sciences and Plant Sciences division (with an annual output of about 70 journals and 150 books per year).

It was at KAP that I met a lovely lady who is now my wife, who was a marketing manager at Elsevier. Since I am British and she is from San Diego, many people ask us where we met. We met at the All Publishers Open Ten Pin Bowling Tournament in a casino in Reno, Nevada during an earth sciences conference (!) — an informal get-together among some of the earth sciences publishers who all attended the same conferences. Whoever said publishing wasn't a way to get out and meet people?

After awhile, we decided we would relocate to the United States, preferably California. As many of you will know, there are very few publishers on the West Coast, and so it was a great opportunity when the position of publishing director of the US Journals Program of SAGE Publications came up. SAGE is based just north of Los Angeles and is the fifth largest academic publisher (by number of journal titles). While there, I managed the group that ran the editorial side of approximately 230 social sciences and STM journals, as well as managing the acquisition of new titles (mostly via competitive bidding on contracts for society titles). It was at SAGE where I first came into contact with the ISMTE and where I was able to make a donation to help get the society started (SAGE's logo is still displayed on the ISMTE homepage as a founding sponsor)—so it is only fitting that after I left SAGE, I actually became a member!

Finally (and this is where PLoS comes in) I moved to San Francisco to work in Open Access journals in April 2008. At PLoS, I am the managing editor of PLoS ONE, a huge journal by any measure: PLoS ONE will publish 2,600 articles in 2008; we receive approximately 4,000 submissions per year (a number which is constantly increasing); we have an editorial board of over 530; we publish on a daily schedule; we are online only; and we

Many Hats *continued*

publish articles of any length (when justified by the content).

As I mentioned, the managing editor position at PLoS is probably somewhat different from the role as other ISMTE members may understand it. Effectively I am a combination of publisher, editorial director, and managing editor, but for this one title (PLoS publishes six other titles, which are run by other editors). I manage a group of ten publishing managers and publication assistants who administer the peer-review process of the journal; I set the journal policies; I work closely with our production and marketing departments (in fact I share an office with the PLoS marketing director); I am responsible for all interaction with the editorial board; and I am ultimately responsible for the content that the journal publishes.

PLoS ONE is a unique publication in many respects—it has a remit to publish in all areas of science (from archeology to zoology); it is fully Open Access; it is Web 2.0 enabled; it is run by its editorial board; and it publishes content based on merit (i.e., is the study correctly performed and the results adequately presented and interpreted?) and not on perceived impact or relevance. This last point is vitally important—most journals reject content that is entirely publishable (and then goes on to be published elsewhere) but which does not reach some subjective level of 'quality' or 'impact' or 'relevance' for that journal. PLoS ONE does away with this system, and will publish everything that is rigorous and scientifically sound, and then allows the community to decide which articles are the most important to them. We are fully peer reviewed, and all articles pass through a rigorous quality control and peer-review process.

One aspect of our organizational set-up that will be of interest to other ISMTE members is our editorial board discussion forum. PLoS ONE's attitude toward innovation and openness extends to our interactions with our editorial board as well. As such, we have established a lively online forum in which board members can start and engage in discussions, can download relevant materials and documents, announce events to the group, and generally interact in a virtual space. We use a free service from www.CollectiveX.com, and I would recommend this service to anyone who needs to interact with a large editorial board.

Workdays for me are rather long and intense — PLoS is a small not-for-profit, and we do not have a great deal of internal resources; therefore, I often have to do tasks that are outside my normal remit, or that other publishers may have staff for. Also, because of the location of our offices (the head office is in San Francisco, but several of my direct reports are in Cambridge, UK, as is my boss), I have an 8-hour time difference to contend with and only a limited number of hours I can interact with the UK office.

I live across the bay from downtown San Francisco, and so a typical day starts at 6:50 am, with a ferry ride to work (civilized in every respect, except the time of day). Before leaving the house, I download my e-mail (usually about 70 e-mails by that time of the day) and start working on them on the boat over a cup of coffee. I prioritize by trying to respond to

Many Hats *continued*

my UK colleagues first, so they can get responses before they leave their offices for the day, and then as soon as I get to the office my day starts in earnest, with 8:00 am conference calls with the UK office.

We normally start the day with about 20 new submissions and about 100 e-mails in our shared inbox. PLoS ONE operates an entirely Web-enabled publication system — all submissions are handled electronically using our Journal Management System (JMS); all reviews, correspondence, and revisions are handled in this system; production is managed through the system; and the final articles are published online-only under an Open Access Creative Commons license, in PDF, HTML, and XML formats using our Topaz e-journal platform (which is, itself, an open-source platform anyone can use). This platform allows users to rate articles, leave notes directly on the text, and to start discussion threads. All of our content is simultaneously posted to PubMedCentral, as well as being available free of charge for anyone to use, read, download, and reuse in any way they want.

With about ten articles publishing every day, we receive substantial media or blog coverage pretty much constantly; in part because of the huge range of topics we publish, but also because all our content is Open Access (journalists prefer to write about articles their readers can actually access). In addition, PLoS is probably unique in employing an on-staff blogger — Bora Zivkovic, who is our community manager and 'blogger in residence,' as well as being a highly respected science blogger in his own right.

The average office day ends by about 6:00 pm, but I usually end up doing e-mail later in the night, and occasionally I manage to catch my UK colleagues starting their work day just as I am going to bed. Truly a global working environment! And then the average work week finishes on a Friday afternoon with a fine PLoS tradition — WiFri — which involves cracking open some beer and wine in the office, turning up an iPod, and relaxing with our colleagues at the end of a long week!

Membership Renewal

The membership committee is in the final stages of planning our first membership-renewal campaign. The good news is that we intend to freeze the price for our second year of business at US $135. Compared to other professional organizations in the publishing world, this rate represents a clear bargain. With a whole suite of new features to be offered plus the ability to take advantage of discounted member rates to attend the ISMTE 2009 meetings in Oxford and Baltimore, a 2009 membership subscription to ISMTE will represent even greater **value for money.**

Renewal letters will be dispatched toward mid November. Please consider renewing as soon as possible to ensure continued access to the many benefits and resources that contribute to your professional success.

If you have any questions regarding membership, do contact Wendy Krank, ISMTE's volunteer membership coordinator at headachecurrents@qwest.net or the ISMTE Executive Office at ismte@hughes.net.

Calendar of Events

ISMTE European Conference
August 25, 2009
Oxford, UK
www.ismte.org

Society of Editors Conference
9-11 November 2008
Bristol, UK
www.societyofeditors.co.uk

ALPSP - How To Be a Successful Editor
29-30 January 2009
Oxford, UK
www.alpsp.org

Council of Science Editors
1-5 May 2009
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA
www.councilscienceeditors.org/events/annualmeeting09/index.cfm

International Academy of Nursing Editors
26-28 July 2009
Chicago, Illinois, USA
www.nursingeditors.org

6th International Congress on Peer Review & Biomedical Publication
10-12 September 2009
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada
www.ama-assn.org/public/peer/peerhome.htm

European Association of Science Editors
10th EASE General Assembly and Conference
16-19 September 2009
Pisa, Italy
http://www.ease.org.uk/easeconfdocs/1stCircular-2009.pdf

ISMTE *EON*

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