

The Editors' WebWatch

The Editors' WebWatch is intended to be a membership-driven resource of web sites for editors and writers in the sciences.

Evaluating web sites

www.library.ualberta.ca/guides_fr/criticalevaluation/index.cfm, and www.library.ualberta.ca/guides/criticalevaluation/index.cfm

Have you ever needed to assess the quality and reliability of a web site, either as part of your own work or because someone asked your opinion about their creation? The University of Alberta Library has a site on just this topic, in French and English; it won't do the job for you but it will tell you what questions you should be asking. This resource is, essentially, a list of things to look for when assessing a web site, covering areas such as Subject Matter (who? what? where? when? and why?), Authority (the credentials of those responsible, credentials of the host institute, presence of any commercial bias, and even how carefully has the site been edited and checked?), Currency and Completeness (how old is the site, how often is it updated, is it complete in terms of the availability of graphics?) and Design and Ease of Use (how user-friendly is the site?). Also on this page are links to other internet evaluation sites, most of them run by the University of Alberta.

A similar site, in French, is at http://ccfd.crosemont.qc.ca/cours/trousse/guide/analyse_eva.html

www.library.ualberta.ca/guides

Going one step back from the evaluation site described above, the University of Alberta Guides page has a list of research guides, including titles on how to do library research, a collection of writing and citation style guides, and a guide to plagiarism and cyber-plagiarism.

Instructional guide for peer reviewers of biomedical manuscripts CD-ROM

www3.us.elsevierhealth.com/extractor/graphics/em-acep/index.html

Originally presented at the 2001 Peer Review Congress in Barcelona, the content of the *Instructional guide for peer reviewers of biomedical manuscripts* CD-ROM is now available free for non-commercial use. It is designed to orient and educate peer reviewers on how to perform their tasks, and even though it was developed for a medical audience it is broadly applicable to the

review of all biomedical manuscripts. However, to view the presentation you have to install Macromedia Flash player, which you may not want to do..

Project Gutenberg

www.gutenberg.org

According to the "about us" section Michael Hart, founder of Project Gutenberg, invented eBooks in 1971. This is now a collection of some 16 000 ebooks which can be downloaded for personal use at no charge. Sounds too good to be true? Well, almost; some of the texts are incredibly obscure, while others are fascinating. Most of them are in English, but over 40 other languages are represented (some by only a few entries). Most of the books here fall into the literature/fiction category, and all the contributions are the work of volunteers so the content necessarily reflects the preferences of those gallant souls. You may find something there that you want to read, but you won't find the latest bestseller.

Plagiarism, and how to avoid it

<http://facpub.stjohns.edu/~roigm/plagiarism/>

Avoiding plagiarism, self-plagiarism and other questionable writing practices: a guide to ethical writing is the work of Miguel Roig PhD, and is one result of the Office of Research Integrity's (<http://ori.dhhs.gov>) sponsorship of resources to meet the need for education about the responsible conduct of research. This document, at present in a draft form, can be downloaded and stored or printed. It is 54 pages long, and is packed with information and anecdotes about all kinds of plagiarism, with examples, including redundant publication, data fragmentation, and copyright issues, plus some "lesser crimes of writing", and a host of resources. The author is inviting comments on his draft, so if you like what you see or have suggestions for improvements why not e-mail him via the web link?

Learning English as a second language

www.UsingEnglish.com

Useful for those who speak English as either their first or second language, this is a list of resources about the construction and use of the English language. Examples include glossaries, discussion forums and

teacher resources, information about irregular verbs, phrasal verbs and idioms. Membership is free, and once registered you are entitled to download and print the information sheets.

Information Technology Guru?

www.techweb.com/encyclopedia

Techweb is a useful guide to all those new technical terms you need to know to stand any chance of keeping up with your five-year-old. Listing 20 000 IT terms, most of which you will never need, it's a useful thing to have bookmarked.

Fun sites

Changing the world one gift at a time

www.freecycle.org

OK, so you have a working lawnmower and no grass, and it snows for four months of the year where you live so you would just love to trade that for a snow-blower with someone who lives somewhere warm, right? (Sounds like someone we know?) Well, now you can (maybe). The Freecycle Network™ is a global, local swap shop for all your unwanted stuff, which you can exchange for someone else's unwanted stuff. Similar in spirit to BookCrossing.com, the idea is to reduce waste and the amount of junk that goes into landfill.

Interesting (though useless) fact of the day

With the advent of e-mails, has our copy paper usage gone up, down or stayed the same? Answer: it has gone up by 40%! And it's increasing a further 10% a year. So much for the paperless society. The desire to print out all that extra information, coupled with cheap printers at every desk, have led to this overwhelming increase. (From www.freecyde.org)

Something to contribute?

Moirá Vekony (compiler) welcomes interesting or useful links for this section (DunaScriptsEdit@aol.com). Sites in European languages other than English are of interest (with a short description in English). Contributions relating to areas of science other than biology and medicine will be very welcome.

Contributions for this issue came from Pierre Dagnelie, David Vekony, Moira Vekony, Liz Wager.

News Notes

AAP/PSP release NIH statement

The Association of American Publishers/Professional and Scholarly Publishing Division (AAP/PSP) has released a statement on the National Institute of Health's public access policy which welcomes the aims but says that the initiative should complement existing publishers' existing services and investment and calls on the NIH to cooperate with publishers. It asks the NIH to advance, not undermine, the scholarly value created by publishers, and to ensure the NIH working group is truly diverse, inclusive and independent, and that it balances legitimate needs of researchers, authors, and publishers along with those of other stakeholders. (*UKSG Serials e-News*, 24 March; www.biblio-tech.com/uksg/SI_PD.cfm?AC=7120&PID=10&ZID=1803)

ACS access rules change

The American Chemical Society is introducing two policies that define how readers can view free digital versions of ACS articles. In response to public access guidelines recently released by the NIH, ACS will post, for public accessibility 12 months after publication, the peer-reviewed version of authors' manuscripts on the National Library of Medicine's PubMed Central. Also, it will make the full-text version of all research articles published in ACS journals available at no charge via an author-directed web link 12 months after final publication. (www.biblio-tech.com/uksg/SI_PD.cfm?AC=7120&PID=10&ZID=1801)

"Professionalizing" online information

The UK Publishers Association has written to Google about potential copyright infringements, as trade and academic publishers take sides on the Google Print project. The PA had invited Google to its AGM in April, and it became clear that there were misunderstandings on both sides (see www.thebookseller.com/?pid=330&did=15705). Google's mission statement is to "organise the world's information" and make it "universally accessible"; but this doesn't take into account publishers' real, important, commercial concerns. On 22 June, *Business Week* reported that the American Association of Publishers has asked Google to agree to a six-month moratorium while issues are clarified. And a privacy-interest group, GoogleWatch.org, is on the case. Some publishers, though,

see Google's initiative as the most exciting development for years — for little cost, they have the ability to place texts where the searching millions can quickly get hold of them. The move will "professionalize" information provided online, this faction claims.

Science publishing impact of EU expansion

Scientists from new EU member states are already seeing better opportunities, reports *The Scientist*. With more funding and research opportunities, especially collaboration, opening up, journal editors could or should think about how this will affect their journals — will they be inundated by an influx of articles? (www.the-scientist.com/news/20050503/02)

Digitization go-ahead

French President Jacques Chirac asked the Bibliothèque Nationale de France to draw up plans for a digitization program comparable to the Google library project. This is a direct response to the January editorial in *Le Monde* by Jean-Noël Jeanneney, President of the BNF, criticizing the Google project for Anglo-American bias. At the same time, Chirac asked Germany, Spain, and Russia to launch similar projects. This wave of digitization projects could be cooperative instead of competitive, but it's good for research, scholarship, education, digital culture, and open access. It's also seen as countering "the crushing domination of the US in shaping the worldview of future generations". (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4358871.stm>)

Artificial intelligence

Now that libraries are on the way to being digitized, Google proposes a new method of ranking the articles it finds (see, for example, www.webworkshop.net/pagerank.html — this is the "I'm feeling lucky" site obtained on googling the topic). The ranking will make the items from reliable sources, rather than most recently viewed sources, come highest in the list. But, points out a correspondent to *New Scientist* (28 May, p. 26), "the whole point of using a search engine is to find multiple related articles regardless of the source. It is not the engine's job to make judgments, merely to report what is out there and enable readers to make up their own minds." For the original *New Scientist* article, see

www.newscientist.com/channel/info-tech/mg18624975.900.

Business models for open access journals

The "author pays" model isn't the only model for open access journals, according to a study which found that only 47% of OA journals charge author-side fees. It looked at 357 journals that responded to an extensive survey. Of these, 248 were OA. The survey was sent to DOAJ journals, HighWire Press journals, and journals published by the Association of American Medical Colleges. The study was sponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Association of American Medical Colleges, the Association of Learned and Professional Publishers, and HighWire Press. (www.alppsp.org/2005pppts/OAstudyresults_rev1.ppt)

Better international exposure for African journals

The African information and research community is set to receive a major boost as the National Inquiry Services Centre (NISC) South Africa takes over management of African Journals OnLine (AJOL; www.ajol.info). Launched in 1998, the online aggregation of published African academic research now includes almost 200 journals from 21 countries. It has been run by the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP) in the United Kingdom, but will now move to African management. The primary aim of AJOL is to increase the visibility of African journals among the global research and librarian community by providing an online catalogue and current awareness service for members. AJOL is non-commercial and exists to benefit participating journals, editors and publishers.

Elsevier augments Pakistan's digital library

In May Elsevier signed an agreement with the Higher Education Commission of the Government of Pakistan to enable 30 premier universities in Pakistan to receive access to its ScienceDirect database of full text and bibliographic information. The agreement is part of the country's recent focus on growth and development of its science and technology research sector. Elsevier will offer a comprehensive training program on the ScienceDirect platform to librarians and researchers country-wide. (www.elsevier.com/)

wps/find/authored_newsitem.
cws_home/companynews05_00257)

New look for *Nature*

With the 19 May issue, *Nature* has a fresh new look. Contents pages and the “this issue” section contain the same categories as before, but are more accessible and appealing; the layout for news and news features is more diverse. There are two pages of (anonymous) editorials instead of one, followed by two pages of Research Highlights and an expanded News and News Features section. There’s a new Business section — “to explore the ever growing impacts of science on business and business on science.” Correspondence has gone up to two pages. Some of the “News and Views” comment on the topics of the articles and “letters” (short articles), and are cross-linked on the contents pages. The articles have longer introductions to make them somewhat accessible to people outside the field. Articles previously started on a fresh page; now Letters do, too. And the “Futures” section has been revived — written by science fiction writers, scientists, editors, and others, it gives a fictional look 50 years into the future to examine the way we’ll be living, conducting research, etc.

What do we know about plagiarism?

There’s little in the way of hard data about the extent of plagiarism, says *Nature* (19 May, p. 259). A study of notices of retraction in biomedical literature put the incidence of “recognizable fraudulent material” at less than 0.02% of all papers; another, of 1234 articles on anaesthesia and analgesia, found that 1 in 20 were duplicates that didn’t reference the original. In surgical journals, nearly a quarter of articles published in 2001 had some form of redundancy, and a ninth were suspected of being dual publications. Rigorous studies haven’t been performed on papers reporting basic research. And overall, it’s impossible to know how many cases evade detection.

Journal prints rejected paper — as advertisement

A frustrated author, having had his paper rejected, bought two pages of advertising space in the journal — and used it to publish the paper. Drummond Rennie is quoted by *The Scientist* as saying, “the incident raises a number of issues, such as only the ‘haves’ being able to publish their work.” (www.the-scientist.com/news/20050429/02; in the article, the writer got the explanation of the

advertising/ editorial firewall wrong — the rebuttal is at www.the-scientist.com/news/20050512/01)

New journal — *Globalization and Health*

An international network of public health practitioners and policy-makers have come together to launch *Globalization and Health*. This will be an open access, peer-reviewed, online journal providing a forum for debate and discussion on the topic of globalization and its impact on public health. The editors hope the journal will be a catalyst for a more informed health discourse, allowing health professionals and policy-makers to see health decisions as part of a much wider and more volatile social matrix. The journal can be viewed at www.globalizationandhealth.com. (hif-net, 13 June)

Vancouver group’s new guidance on trial registration

The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) has announced further guidance on the registration of clinical trials. To be considered for publication in the journals edited by members of the committee, trials that begin enrolling patients from 1 July 2005 must be registered in a public trials registry before enrolment is started. Trials that began enrolling patients before 1 July 2005 must register before 13 September 2005 to be considered for publication. Investigators will need to make 20 categories of information available to the public — and pharmaceutical companies regard some of this information as commercially sensitive. Journal editors are given discretion by the ICMJE to consider trials for publication that are in this category and unregistered. (<http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/293.23.jed50037v1>)

What makes a good workplace?

Industry scientists ranked Genentech in San Francisco as first among large companies and Tec Laboratories in Albany, Oregon, as first among smaller companies in *The Scientist*’s third annual Best Places to Work in Industry survey, which was completed by nearly 1600 scientists working in biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies in the USA, Canada, and western Europe. GlaxoSmithKline was the only UK company to rank — it came 10th in the large company section. Satisfying work was the most important factor to scientists [as it might be for anyone!]. Employees also said that companies that made them feel appreciated and had high ethical standards were important, as were

colleagues that do their jobs with integrity and professionalism. (*UKSG Serials-eNews* 17 June)

Ethics of manipulated images

Referring to the *Journal of Cell Biology*’s adoption of a code of image-manipulation ethics (www.jcb.org/cgi/content/full/158/7/1151), a letter in *Nature* (16 June, p. 881) urges journals to adopt similar codes. Untrained in producing quality images, scientists are using software manipulation to improve the suboptimal image they obtained. Also, principal investigators are requiring trainees to produce images consistent with expectations — and these unambiguous images lose data and may be misleading. Better training and maintenance of ethical standards are both required, says the author.

Ghostbusters

The WAME statement on ghost writing initiated by commercial companies, revised in June (see Authorship on p. 98–99), lists actions that would increase transparency and public accountability about ghost writing. Ghost authorship would be avoided if corresponding authors listed everyone else who participated in the work; stated explicitly how the work was paid for; and fully disclosed any further potential competing interests. But responsibility for ghost written manuscripts goes beyond individual authors. (<http://www.wame.org/wamestmt.htm#ghost>)

There’s a lesson here somewhere . . .

A computer-generated piece of gibberish has been accepted as a genuine scientific paper. Students at Massachusetts Institute of Technology wrote a program to generate a nonsense paper entitled “Router: a methodology for the typical unification of access points and redundancy” and submitted it to the 2005 World Multi-Conference on Systemics, Cybernetics and Informatics. Conference organizers say that the paper was sent to human reviewers, but because they never commented on it, the paper was automatically accepted. (*New Scientist*, 23 April, p. 6)

Contributions to News Notes

Please send items for this section to Margaret Cooter, BMJ Editorial, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London, WC1H 9JR, UK; mcooter@bmj.com.

Thanks to: Marie-Louise Desbarats-Schönbaum, Pippa Smart, Jane Sykes, Graham Easton, Jocalyn Clark.

News from editing societies

AMWA

The American Medical Writers Association (www.amwa.org) offers a student membership to students enrolled fulltime at an institute of higher learning, preferably in a medical writing, technical writing, or journalism course. This year it is providing two scholarships, sponsored by Cubist Pharmaceuticals, to cover the cost of attending the 65th Annual AMWA Conference in Pittsburgh (29 September to 1 October 2005). Is this the first time that a pharmaceutical company has sponsored people "to learn more about the dynamic and growing field of medical communication"?

Apebi

The Association des Professionnels des Technologies de l'Information (www.apebi.org.ma) was founded in 1989 with several aims, one of which is to "promote the usage of information technology in Morocco and to promote collaboration between universities and the IT industry". Its "Action plan 2004-2005" is available on its site.

EFA

The Editorial Freelancers Association (www.the-efa.org) is a US-based, non-profit professional organization of self-employed workers in the publishing and communications industry. Freelance members of EASE may be interested in the Code of Fair Practice that the Association has drawn up, which defines ethical standards and contract guidelines for editorial freelancers and clients. The Association also runs a couple of online courses ("Grammar for writers and editors" and "Pricing strategies for freelancers").

ALPSP

The Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers (ALPSP; www.alpssp.org) has recently published a research report on "Online submission and peer review systems" (ISBN 0-907341-29-2; available as a paperback, €220/£95, or, for members, as a PDF file, €70/£30). The report gives an objective account of the current state of online peer review systems and provides an overview of available online submission systems, describing their features and offering a framework for analysing and choosing among them. It may be of particular interest to learned societies and journal editors

who are thinking of introducing an online system.

AAUP

Three members of the Association of American University Presses (<http://aaupnet.org>), an organization of not-for-profit scholarly publishers, have assembled a document called "The value of university presses". It consists of 24 simple, single-sentence statements under the headings "University presses and society", "University presses and scholarship" and "University presses in the university community". The document provides a set of talking points highlighting the new roles that scholarly publishers have assumed in recent years. The Association has also written to Google, outlining questions and areas of concern that scholarly publishers have about the Google Library Project, particularly with regard to the systematic infringement of copyright that may happen when the copyrighted collections of university libraries are digitized to allow internet access when Google is used as search engine.

PA

The Publishers Association (www.publishers.org.uk), the leading trade organization serving book, journal, and electronic publishers in the UK, has recently issued a position statement on "Innovation in the learned journals market". Members of EASE may also like to know of some of the interesting guidelines available at this site, such as "Copyright in Europe", "Copyright in the digital age", and "Digital rights". ALPSP also has guidelines on different aspects of "Publishing procedures" and "Good practice". The guidelines on "Other issues" include aspects such as "Electronic solutions to the problems of monograph publishing", "Human Rights Act", and "Rating and filtering for internet content".

CELJ

The Council of Editors of Learned Journals (www.celj.org) recently reported on the results of its e-survey of learned journals and e-publications, performed to determine members' use of and plans to use electronic accessibility for journal publications. They received answers from 105 journals. To summarize the main findings, print-only journals appear to be

fiscally robust and to enjoy a stable or increasing circulation; among the responding journals there appears to be no compulsion to add an electronic version or change to one; electronic access does not affect print sales negatively; and most of the journals that reported decreased sales were available in both print and electronic format (83%). For many of the smaller learned journals, the cost of digitization appeared to be a major stumbling block to electronic publishing. The report makes for interesting reading for editors working on smaller journals.

ISO

The International Organization for Standardization (www.iso.org) has launched a free e-mail newsletter, called *IMS Alerts*, providing information on ISO 9000 and ISO 14000 developments worldwide and on other new developments. Also just published, on one CD-ROM, the new edition of the ISO catalogue, containing bibliographic information of all currently valid ISO standards (ISO CataloguePlus 2005: ISBN 92-67-01151-X).

TCeurope

TCeurope, the European umbrella organization for technical communicators, has published guidelines for professional education and training for technical communicators. "Professional education and training of technical communicators in Europe — guidelines" can be obtained from www.tceurope.org.

Australian Society of Authors

The Australian Society of Authors (www.asauthors.org) is running a mentorship programme for young and emerging writers and picture book illustrators, offering them practical and effective support. The ten successful applicants have the opportunity of working closely with a mentor of their choice for 20 hours over a period of 12 months.

WAME

The World Association of Medical Editors (www.wame.org) has recently issued a policy statement on "Ghost writing initiated by commercial companies" (see p. 94).

Jane Sykes (j.sykes@xws.nl), welcomes news from societies and national bodies concerned with editing, writing or publishing in the sciences.

Forthcoming meetings, courses and BELS examinations

5th international congress on peer review and biomedical publication
16–18 September 2005 Chicago, IL
(Contact: Annette Flanagan, jama-peer@jama-assn.org, or Jane Smith, jsmith@bmj.com; or see www.jama-peer.org)

One step beyond

16th annual conference of SfEP
26–27 September 2005 Carlisle, UK
Workshops, seminars and surgeries will concentrate on widening horizons by learning new skills, finding new markets and acquiring new clients, with a mixture of sessions suitable for all stages of expertise. (Contact: Jane Ward, tel. +44 (0)131 337 4380, e-mail conference@sfe.org.uk, or see www.sfe.org.uk)

Going global: how small publishers can operate internationally

ALPSP seminar
22 September 2005 London, UK
(Contact: Lesley Ogg, Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers, tel. +44 (0)1245 260 571, events@alpsp.org, or see www.alpsp.org/events.htm)

Editing in context

National Editors Conference
13–15 October 2005 Melbourne, Vic.
The Society of Editors (Vic.) Inc. will host the second national CASE (Council of Australian Editors) conference which will focus on editing as a profession and explore issues such as the public perception of editors, how editors promote themselves, keeping up to date, financial and legal issues, and health and wellbeing. The Melbourne International Arts Festival and Spring Racing Carnival will be on at around these dates. (Contact: Convenor, Lan Wang, editingincontext@optushome.com.au or see www.socedvic.org/editingincontext for regular updates.)

Interdisciplinary collaboration – international communication

Mediterranean Editors' and Translators' Meeting
4–5 November 2005 Barcelona, Spain
(Contact for information and call for papers: ME Kerans, Universitat Internacional de Catalunya, Health Sciences Faculty, Carrer Josep Trueta s/n, 08195 Sant Cugat del Valles (Barcelona), Spain; metameeting@telefonica.net and mekerans@csc.unica.edu; www.metmeetings.org/index.htm).

Making your content pay: tailoring your business strategies to new markets

ALPSP seminar
18 November 2005 London, UK
(Contact: Lesley Ogg, Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers, tel. +44 (0)1245 260 571, events@alpsp.org; www.alpsp.org/events.htm)

Preprint repositories and their impact on publishing

ALPSP/SSP joint seminar
28 November 2005 London, UK
Provisional date. (Contact: Lesley Ogg, Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers, tel. +44 (0)1245 260 571, events@alpsp.org; www.alpsp.org/events.htm)

The essential medical editor

SfEP professional development day
30 November 2005; London, UK
A rerun of the very popular May conference on updating medical/biological editing skills. (Contact/more details: Jane Ward, conference@sfe.org.uk; www.sfe.org.uk)

2006

Journal publishers' forum

ALPSP meeting
January 2006 London, UK
Date to be announced. (Contact: Lesley Ogg, Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers, tel. +44 (0)1245 260 571, events@alpsp.org; www.alpsp.org)

The new publishers

22nd International Learned Journals Seminar (ALPSP seminar)
31 March 2006 London, UK
(Contact: Lesley Ogg, Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers, tel. +44 (0)1245 260 571, events@alpsp.org; www.alpsp.org)

CSE 49th annual meeting

19–23 May 2006 New Orleans, LA
(Contact: CSE@councilscienceeditors.org or see www.CouncilScienceEditors.org)

The culture of science editing

9th EASE Conference and General Assembly
15–18 June 2006 Kraków
The first circular for this meeting in Poland was distributed to members and subscribers with the February issue of ESE. (Contact: Georgianna Oja, ease@pp.inet.fi; www.ease.org.uk)

COURSES

ALPSP training courses, briefings and technology updates

ALPSP offers half-day and one-day courses and updates on the role of the managing editor, electronic publishing and marketing, journal marketing, production, fulfilment and finance, copyright, and related topics. (Contact: Amanda Whiting, Training Coordinator, Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers, tel. +44 (0)1865 247776, training@alpsp.org; www.alpsp-training.org)

Style for reports and papers in medical and life-science journals

John Kirkman Communication Consultancy courses
London, UK
One-day seminars devoted to discussion of style — tactics for producing accurate and readable texts, not structure or format. Cost: £148 + 17.5% VAT. (Contact: Gill Ward, JKCC, PO Box 106, Marlborough, Wilts, SN8 2RU, UK; tel. +44 (0)1672 520429, fax +44 (0)1672 521008; kirkman.ramsbury@btinternet.com)

Publishing Training Centre at Book House

(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; www.train4publishing.co.uk)

Society for Editors and Proofreaders workshops

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 7736 0901, trainingenquiries@sfe.org.uk. For other enquiries see www.sfe.org.uk, or contact SfEP, Riverbank House, 1 Putney Bridge Approach, London SW6 3JD, UK; tel. +44 (0)20 7736 3278; administration@sfe.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 downloadable booking forms can be found at www.indexers.org.uk; admin@indexers.org.uk)

Tim Albert Training

Courses on writing, science writing and setting up publications (for dates

etc. see www.timalbert.co.uk/courses.htm). (Contact Tim Albert Training, 5 Cobham Road, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 9AU, UK; tel. +44 (0)1372 377848, tim@timalbert.co.uk)

University of Chicago

Medical writing and editing certificate programmes are among the many courses available at the: Graham School of General Studies (5835 S. Kimbark Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637-1608, USA; fax +1 773 702 6814, <http://grahamschool.uchicago.edu>).

University of Oxford, Dept for Continuing Education

Courses on effective writing for biomedical professionals and on presenting in biomedicine, science and technology. (Contact: Gaye Walker, CPD Centre, Department for Continuing Education, University of Oxford, Suite 5, Littlegate House, 16/17 St Ebbses Street, Oxford OX1 1PT, UK; tel. +44 (0)1865-286953, fax +44 (0)1865 286934, gaye.walker@continuing-education.ox.ac.uk, www.conted.ox.ac.uk/cpd/personaldev)

Board of Editors in the Life Sciences (BELS) examination schedule

28 September 2005, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (AMWA)
22 October, 2005, Washington, DC
20 May 2006, Miami, FL (CSE)
25 October 2006, Albuquerque, NM (AMWA)
10 October 2007, Atlanta, GA (AMWA)
See www.bels.org, or contact Leslie Neistadt (Hughston Sports Medicine Foundation, Inc, 6262 Veterans Parkway, Columbus, GA 31909, USA; neistadt@hughston.com, fax: +1 706 576 3348).

The Editor's Bookshelf

The bookshelf is compiled by Jane Moody, 12A Salisbury Road, Bromley, BR2 9PU, UK; e-mail jmoody@rcog.org.uk, **putting EASE in the subject line** (e-mails that are not easily identifiable are likely to be deleted unread). Please send Jane details of articles or books of interest to editors.

Contributions in European languages other than English are welcome. Entries are arranged by topic under each heading. Suggestions for additional coverage would be welcome. We regret that photocopies of the material referred to in these entries cannot be supplied.

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this issue. We particularly appreciate any non-medical references.

SCIENCE

Bozeman B, Corley E. 2004. **Scientists' collaboration strategies: implications for scientific and technical human capital**. Research Policy 33:599–616.
Human capital is the sum of researchers' professional network ties and their technical skills and resources. Data on research collaboration from 451 scientists and engineers at academic research centres in the USA.

Brumfiel G. 2005. **Academics stress licence threat to US science**. Nature (5 May) 435:4.
Proposed changes to an obscure set of export rules could derail US research, say academic and industrial groups, who are now trying to raise the alarm among scientists. The modified rules would require academic researchers from countries, including China and India, to obtain a government licence before operating a wide range of laboratory equipment in the United States.

Godlee F. 2005. **Say no to the free lunch**. BMJ (16 April)

doi:10.1136/bmj.330.7496.0-g.

The power of drug companies to buy influence over every key group in health care should give pause for thought.

Hewitt C, Hahn S, Torgerson DJ, Watson J, Bland MJ. 2005. **Adequacy and reporting of allocation concealment: review of recent trials published in four general medical journals**. BMJ (7 May) 330:1057–1058.
Despite researchers' acceptance that adequate allocation concealment is important, almost one-fifth of trials recently published in major medical journals used inadequate concealment and one-quarter failed to describe how the allocation was concealed.

Kaiser J. 2005. **Scientists, societies blast NIH ethics rules**. Science (8 April) 308:175–176.
New ethics rules at the US National Institutes of Health unfairly punish all employees for the sins of a few and will isolate NIH researchers from the scientific community.

Lenzer J. 2005. **New era of public access to federally funded trials begins**. BMJ (30 April) 330:988.
The US National Institutes of Health policy of asking all investigators who receive federal funds to make their results freely available is coming into effect.

Pildal J, Chan A-W, Hróbjartsson A, Forfang E, Altman D, Gøtzsche PC. 2005. **Comparison of descriptions of allocation concealment in trial protocols and the published reports: cohort study**. BMJ (7 May) 330:1049.
Most randomized clinical trials have unclear allocation concealment on the basis of the trial publication alone. Most of these trials also have unclear allocation concealment according to their protocol. Protocols should be publicly accessible to enhance critical appraisal of trials.

Van der Sanden MCA, Meijman FJ. 2005. **Evidence-based science communication**. Science Communication 25(3):272–287.
Use of the literature review in scientific publications is often poorly thought out and unsystematic. The reader has no insight into the quality of the conclusions that were drawn from the literature used. The authors argue for a system for evidence-based science communication based on the principles of evidence-based medicine.

Vogel G. 2005. **A framework for change?** Science (15 April) 308:342–344.

The European Union has proposed a €73 billion, 7-year funding programme for science, with money for individual grants and promises of less red tape: Framework 7.

POLITICS OF PUBLISHING

Altman DG for the CONSORT Group. 2005. **Endorsement of the CONSORT statement by high impact medical journals: survey of instructions for authors**. BMJ (7 May) 330:1056–1057.

In 2003, about 20% of high-impact medical journals referred to CONSORT in their advice to authors, but many used ambiguous language about what was expected, or failed to cite CONSORT appropriately. Journals should be more explicit in their expectations of authors and ensure the accuracy of their instructions to authors.

Daniel H-D. 2005. **Publications as a measure of scientific advancement and of scientists' productivity**. Learned Publishing 18(2):143–148.
Critique of the norm of publishing research findings in peer-reviewed journals. Summarizes research on reliability, fairness and predictive value of journal peer review and concludes that it is valid and does function as a quality filter. But as

there is much ambiguity in the literature, pre-publication peer review should be supplemented with post-publication evaluation to find out which publications and scientists have contributed most to scientific advancement.

Davies G. 2005. **Training for publishing.** Learned Publishing April;18(2):152–156. Training is important and publishers need to invest in it.

Delamothe T. 2005. **Initiative could give free access to UK medical research.** BMJ (7 May) 330:1043. Most of the UK's new biomedical research could be freely available in 2006 in a consortium led by the Wellcome Trust. The archive would allow use of local peer-reviewed articles arising from research funded by the consortium partners: potentially the Medical Research Council, Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, Department of Health, Cancer Research UK and the British Heart Foundation.

Druss BG, Marcus SC. 2005. **Tracking publication outcomes of National Institutes of Health grants.** American Journal of Medicine 118(6):658–663. Peer-reviewed literature is the primary medium for funded research findings to be evaluated by and disseminated to the broader scientific community. This study examines when and how grants funded by the National Institutes of Health lead to publications. The findings support the feasibility and potential utility of efforts to study the link between grant funding and research findings, an early step in the process by which funded science leads to improved clinical and public health.

Elliott R. 2005. **Who owns scientific data? The impact of intellectual property rights on the scientific publication chain.** Learned Publishing 18(2):91–94. Intellectual property rights have become increasingly important in scientific research. As the legal regime has been tightened and attitudes of funders, employers and researchers have changed, serious challenges are emerging to the free flow of ideas and information on which the scientific enterprise rests. Individual scientists must become aware of their rights and use them in the public good.

Feder T. 2005. **Publishing restrictions eased, but not rescinded.** Physics Today 58(2):26. The US Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control has ruled

that US publishers may conduct normal publishing activities with private citizens in Cuba, Iran and Sudan, but its implications for dealing with papers from, for example, the National Institutes of Health are unclear.

Lenzer J. 2005. **Medical societies react against public access to findings.** BMJ (14 May) 330:1104–1105.

An initiative of the US National Institutes of Health to make the results of publicly funded research freely accessible to the public has triggered a backlash from societies.

Modlin IM, Adler G, Alexander K, Arnold R, Brenner DA, Corazziari E, et al. 2005. **Information assimilation and distribution challenges and goals for real and virtual journals.** Journal of Clinical Gastroenterology 39(3):181–188.

Journal editors, research scientists, and publishing executives met in Constance, Germany, on 26 June 2004, to discuss issues concerning intellectual property and formulate strategies and recommendations for the future of biomedical publishing. A summary of the proceedings and a consensus opinion are provided.

Shah RV, Albert TJ, Bruegel-Sanchez VBS, Vaccaro AR, Hilibrand AS, Grauer JN. 2005. **Industry support and correlation to study outcome for papers published in Spine.** Spine 30(9):1099–1104.

Industry-funded studies showed a statistically greater likelihood to report positive results than studies with other funding sources.

Smith R. 2005. **Medical journals are an extension of the marketing arm of pharmaceuticals.** PLoS Medicine 2(5):e138.

Readers see randomized controlled trials as one of the highest forms of evidence. A large trial published in a major journal has the journal's stamp of approval and may well receive global media coverage. For drug companies, a favourable trial is worth a huge amount. These trials rarely produce results that are unfavourable to the companies' products.

Authorship

Clark C. 2005. **The author who never was: Nicolas Bouraki.** Science Editor 28(3):82–86.

Description of a small group of mathematicians in the 1930s who published as a group under one name.

Eaton L. 2005. **Medical editors issue guidance on ghost writing.** BMJ (30 April) 330:998.

The World Association of Medical

Editors has tightened its policy on ghost writing of medical research papers after a US journal highlighted what it alleges were illegitimate ghost writing practices, although it has been denied that the paper in question was an example of the practice.

Fugh-Berman A. 2005. **The corporate coauthor.** Journal of General Internal Medicine 20:1–3.

Drug marketing techniques include sponsorship of articles signed by academic physicians or researchers and submitted to peer-reviewed medical journals. Some articles are co-authored by ghostwriters working for pharmaceutical companies or medical education companies hired by pharmaceutical companies. Conflicts of interest may be difficult to detect. The current voluntary standards for declaring conflicts of interests are inadequate. A public database of conflicts of interest of physicians and researchers would be useful.

Giacomin AJ. 2005. **Publish or perish postscripts.** Physics Today 58(3):12–13.

Comment on an opinion piece by Mohamed Gad-el-Haq (*Physics Today* 2004;57(3):61–62), suggesting that applied scientists read and use papers on useful applications but do not publish or cite them, so authors of such papers may be undervalued if impact factors are used to assess them.

Loc V-Q. 2005. **Publish or perish postscripts.** Physics Today 58(3):14. Another comment on the piece by Mohamed Gad-el-Haq, suggesting a better formula for evaluating a researcher's publication record based on author impact factor (defined as the average of the equivalent single-author annual citation and the author's average journal impact factor).

Tierney WM, Gerrity MS. 2005. **Scientific discourse, corporate ghostwriting, journal policy and public trust.** Journal of General Internal Medicine 20:1–2.

Editorial illuminating the article by Fugh-Berman, describing how the unethical practice described in the article was discovered by the journal.

Relationship with libraries

Bose H, Harnad S. **In a paperless world a new role for academic libraries: providing open access.** Learned Publishing April;18(2):95–99. Academic libraries should be considered research tools, co-evolving with technology. The internet has changed the way science is communicated and hence also the role of libraries. It has made it possible for researchers to provide open access to their peer-reviewed

journal articles in two different ways: by publishing them in open-access journals and by publishing them in non-open-access journals but also self-archiving them in their institutional open-access archives. Librarians are the researchers' best allies in both of these strategies.

Chillingworth M. 2005. **Librarians demand digitisation answers.**

Information World Review April;(212):12.

Concerns grows over lack of details about Google's well-publicized library digitization programme.

ECONOMICS AND FUNDING

Harris S. 2005. **Weighing up the cost of journals.** Research Information March/April;(16):1–3. www.researchinformation.info/rimarapr05pricing.html.

Yearly increases in journal prices vary greatly between publishers. In 2004, Oxford University Press commissioned independent research to discover some of the facts behind journal pricing. Little evidence was found of a relationship between the two for biomedical journals, although the few correlations that exist suggest that higher prices tend to be associated with higher impact factors.

Jeon-Slaughter H, Herkovic AC, Keller MA. 2005. **Economics of scientific and biomedical journals: where do scholars stand in the debate of online journal pricing and site license ownership between libraries and publishers?** First Monday 10(3):1–14. [http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue10_3/jeon/index.html].

The importance of scholars' behaviour in the pricing of scientific journals has been largely ignored in the debate between libraries and publishers over site licence practices and pricing schemes.

Mayor S. 2005. **Research councils' requirements could bankrupt academic journals.** BMJ (23 April) 330:923.

Journal publishers are concerned that a new proposal that requires all researchers who receive public research funding to post their results on publicly accessible electronic databases will lead to the financial collapse of many academic journals.

Morris S. 2005. **The true costs of scholarly publishing.** Learned Publishing 18(2):115–126. Publication of an article in a journal is only one part of the cost of research communication. Other costs include research and writing, then peer review, editing and publication, and

finally the costs of acquisition by the library, and of management, storage, reading by the end user and long-term preservation. The results of several studies of these different costs are summarized and the potential impact, on both costs and sources of funds, of moving to an alternative, "author-funded" open access model is considered.

Simoni RD. 2005. **Serving science while paying the bills: the history of the Journal of Biological Chemistry Online.** Learned Publishing 18(2): 127–130.

Developments in the publication of the *Journal of Biological Chemistry* are discussed, particularly the development of *JBC Online*, and the opportunities and challenges that this mode of publication has presented to its publisher.

White S, Creaser C. 2004. **Scholarly journal prices: selected trends and comparisons.** LISU Occasional Paper No. 34. Loughborough:

Loughborough University. 119 pages. ISBN 1901786838. [www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/dis/lisu/pages/publications/oup.html] [Free on web; full-colour paper copy GBP50]. This study, commissioned by OUP, offers an objective analysis of various features of journal pricing based on the best information available.

PRACTICE OF PUBLISHING

Babor TF, Stenius K, Sawa S (eds). 2004. **Publishing addiction sciences: a guide for the perplexed.**

International Society of Addiction Journal Editors. Published online at: www-users.york.ac.uk/~sjp22/isaje/isajebook/isajewebbook.htm.

Advises potential authors of the opportunities for publishing work in scholarly journals, especially addiction specialty journals. The guide should be particularly helpful for graduate students, younger investigators, professional researchers and authors whose first language is not English. A broader purpose is to improve the quality of addiction publishing by educating authors about the ethical and professional issues that affect scientific integrity: authorship disagreements, scientific misconduct, and ethical decision-making.

Bavdekar SB, Sahu DR. 2005. **Path of progress: report of an eventful year for the Journal of Postgraduate Medicine.** Journal of Postgraduate Medicine 51(1):5–8.

A review of the journal's progress.

Bennett JT. 2005. **Twenty-five years before the masthead: confessions of a journal editor.** Science Editor

28(3):77–81.

An experienced editor shares his thinking about academic research, journal editing and publishing.

Montonen C. 2005. **The European physics publications scene: avant-garde and traditionalism.**

Learned Publishing 18(2):149–151. The background to current developments in the publication of research in physics, the current position and likely developments.

Olivieri R. 2005. **Learned society publishing: opinion.** Research Information January/February: www.researchinformation.info/rijanfeb05rene_olivieri.html.

Learned societies have always played a major role in scholarly publishing but changes in business models threaten to destabilize this. Scholarly journals are important, both qualitatively and quantitatively, to scientific and scholarly research, and represent exceptionally good value for money.

Sack J. 2005. **HighWire Press: ten years of publisher-driven innovation.** Learned Publishing 18(2):131–142.

Account of the beginnings and development of HighWire Press at Stanford University and the philosophy that sustains it.

Santiago-Blay JA. 2005. **Keeping those bugs in check, or my first year as editor of Entomological News: a personal perspective.** Science Editor 28(3):75–76.

Entomological News had not been published for nearly a year when Jorge Santiago-Blay took over. The journal was needed strong leadership to revive its fortunes.

Sim F, Mackie P. 2005. **Authors, reviewers, readers and editors: reflections on a partnership.** Public Health 119(7):559–560.

Torgeson DJ, Adamson J, Cockayne S, Dumville J, Petherick E. 2005.

Submission to multiple journals: a method of reducing time to publication? BMJ (5 February) 330:305–307.

Most medical journals do not allow simultaneous submission to more than one journal. Allowing multiple submissions could encourage greater competition among journals and shorten publication delay.

Models of publishing

Allen Press. 2005. **The gathering storm: a debate on the merits of open access. The pros and cons of open access and how it affects the STM publishing community.** JP The Newsletter for Journal Publishers

(1):1–30.

US national industry authorities were invited to debate open access in STM publishing at the 2004 Allen Press Emerging Trends seminar. This is an edited transcript of the debate between Dr Hemai Parthasarathy, Public Library of Science, Peter Banks, American Diabetes Association, and Joseph Esposito, the Potable CEO.

Aronson JK. 2005. **Commentary: Open access publishing: too much oxygen?** BMJ (2 April) 330:759. Advocating a mixed model rather than pure open access.

Chalmers I. 2005. **Restore true open access to bmj.com.** BMJ (16 April) 330:904. [Letter]. Uncompromising opposition to the BMJ's decision to restrict access to its online journal, which was freely available to all prior to 2005.

Charleton R. 2005. **Enable accessibility and avoid formation of two tier journal.** BMJ (16 April) 330:904. Another letter opposing the BMJ's decision to restrict access to bmj.com.

Check E. 2005. **NIH open-access plans draw fire from both sides.** Nature 10 February) 433:561. The US National Institutes of Health (NIH) has unveiled its plan for open access to research findings. Elias Zerhouni, NIH director, has claimed that the plan could "change the landscape" of biomedical publishing. The policy requests that authors whose research was funded by the NIH submit copies of their papers to the National Library of Medicine after they are accepted for publication. The papers will then be placed in an online archive. Authors can decide when their papers are made available to the public, but the NIH would like this to happen as soon as possible, and in any case within 12 months of publication.

Check E. 2005. **All parties on edge as NIH delays open-access briefing.** Nature (20 January) 433:182. The US National Institutes of Health (NIH) has cancelled a briefing on the final version of its new policy for open access to scientific literature, leaving the plan's supporters and opponents anxious about what happens next.

Fleischer EL. 2005. **Perspectives on open access.** Science Editor 28(3): 103–104. Introduction to open access in scientific publishing.

Godlee F. 2005. **Open access, and proud of it.** BMJ (2 April) 330.

doi:10.1136/bmj.330.7494.0-g. BMJ's policy on open access.

Harris E. 2005. **Institutional repositories: is the open access door half open or half closed?** Learned Publishing 18(2):85–89. The response of the UK government to the report on science publishing by the Science and Technology Select Committee of the House of Commons is criticized for failing to take the necessary action to research or help catalyse a change in the publishing model. The initiatives of NIH and the Wellcome Foundation in setting up central archives are examined and their utility questioned. The evidence for a change to open access is explored.

Mayor S. 2005. **UK and US groups announce new initiatives on open access publishing.** BMJ (14 May) 330:1104. Oxford journals and the Berkeley branch of the Academic Senate of the University of California have plans to encourage new OA publishing practices, offering an optional author-pays model.

Mohammad A. 2005. **List of countries with free access seems incomplete.** BMJ (16 April) 330:904. [Letter]. The list of countries to which the BMJ has granted free access to the online journal is taken from WHO's HINARI project. This is insufficient to ensure that all genuinely poor countries can benefit.

Pickering B. 2005. **ALPSP survey blasts OA myths.** Information World Review (April) (212):11. Results of a new ALPSP survey of open access journals have blasted some of the misconceptions surrounding the open access model.

Schroter S, Tite L, Smith R. 2005. **Perceptions of open access publishing: interviews with journal authors.** BMJ (2 April) 330:756–759. Authors consider perceived journal quality as more important than open access when deciding where to submit papers. New journals with open access may need to do more to reassure authors of the quality of their journals.

Suber P. 2005. **Open access, impact and demand.** BMJ (14 May) 330: 1097–1098. Why some authors self-archive their articles.

Waltham M. 2005. **Open access: the impact of legislative developments.** Learned Publishing 18(2):101–114. A comprehensive account of the development of the idea of open access for the results of STM research from 1999 to 2005, with particular

attention to PubMed Central and to the initiatives of the legislatures in the USA and the UK in 2004. Stakeholder responses to open access are briefly reviewed and possible future developments are outlined. Wren JD. 2005. **Open access and openly accessible: a study of scientific publications shared via the internet.** BMJ (14 May) 330:1128. Decentralized sharing of scientific reprints through the internet creates a degree of de facto open access that, although highly incomplete in its coverage, is nonetheless biased towards publications of higher popular demand.

Peer review

Ibison M. 2005. **Publish or perish postscripts.** Physics Today 58(3):13. Comment on opinion piece by Mohamed Gad-el-Haq (*Physics Today* 2004; 57(3):61–62), suggesting that rewarding referees may help to address the problem of excess publications.

Kliwer MA, Freed KS, Delong DM, Pickhardt PJ, Provenzale JM. 2005. **Reviewing the reviewers: comparison of review quality and reviewer characteristics at the American Journal of Roentgenology.** AJR American Journal of Roentgenology 184(6):1731–1735. The study set out to determine which manuscript reviewer characteristics were most strongly associated with reviewer performance as judged by editors of the *American Journal of Roentgenology*. The highest-rated AJR reviewers tended to be young and from academic institutions. The quality of peer review did not correlate with the sex, academic rank, or subspecialty of the reviewer.

ETHICAL ISSUES

Barbour V, Cohen B, Yarney G. **How does PLoS manage competing interests?** PLoS Medicine 2(3):171–172. Describes how PLoS (Public Library of Science) promotes transparency in the face of competing interests.

Berlin JA. 2005. **Commentary: Why industry should register and disclose results of clinical studies – perspective of a recovering academic.** BMJ (23 April) 330:959. Personal perspective from an employee of a large pharmaceutical research and development group, who moved across the divide after 15 years in university research.

Clark C. 2005. **Conflict of interest and scientific publication: a synopsis of the CSE retreat.** Science Editor 28(2):39–43.

A retreat by the Council of Science Editors to discuss the effects of financial conflicts on scientific research and editorial and publication decisions, and to review and debate current strategies for managing conflicts of interests in scientific publication.

Corson SL, Decherney AH. 2005. **Duplicate editorial on duplicate publication.** *Fertility and Sterility* 3(4):855-856.

The authors define and discuss the various forms taken by duplicate publications, and provide suggested remedies to help authors, editors, reviewers, and readers avoid this form of internal plagiarism.

[Editorial] 2005. **Taking a hard line on conflicts.** *Nature* (10 February) 433:557.

A clampdown on conflicts of interest at the US National Institutes of Health need not stifle quality research at the agency and it might indicate the shape of things to come elsewhere.

[Editorial] 2005. **Not so fast.** *Nature* (10 February) 433:557.

Anyone thinking of collaborations with emerging biomedical powers should test the ethical waters before jumping in.

[Editorial] 2005. **Policing integrity.** *Nature* (19 May) 435:248.

Plagiarism allegations should serve as reminders that universities cannot police misconduct on their own.

[Editorial] 2005. **Too much, too soon.** *Nature* (2 June) 435:538.

The premature release of incomplete information, without making it clear to journalists that it has not been refereed, is contrary to good scientific practice.

Freda MC, Kearney MH. 2005. **Ethical issues faced by nursing editors.** *Western Journal of Nursing Research* 27(4):487-499.

A survey of 88 nursing editors was conducted via e-mail. Eight categories of ethical issues emerged from the answers received: problems with society/association/publisher; decisions about inflammatory submissions; informed consent or IRB issues; conflicts of interest; advertising pressures; duplicate publications and/or plagiarism; difficult interactions with authors; and authorship. Some issues were similar to those published about medical editors, but others were unique to nurses.

Giles J. 2005. **Journals lack explicit policies for separating eds from ads.** *Nature* (31 March) 434:549.

Two in five biomedical journals have no declared policy on how to separate editorial and commercial matters, according to the preliminary results of a survey by COPE.

Giles J. 2005. **Taking on the cheats.** *Nature* (19 May) 435:258-259. The true extent of plagiarism is unknown, but rising cases of suspect submissions are forcing editors to take action.

Giles J. 2005. **UK research councils claim success for open-access publishing plan.** *Nature* (2 June) 435:543.

Despite apparent agreement, some publishers fear that small journals will go out of business, which could put scientific societies at risk.

Karmela-Krlezja J, Chan A-W, Dickersin K, Sim I, Grimshaw J, Gluud C, et al. 2005. **Principles for international registration of protocol information and results from human trials of health related interventions: Ottawa statement (part 1).** *BMJ* (23 April) 330:956-958.

Registration and early public release of accurate information about all trials is necessary to fulfil an ethical obligation to participants. Although protection of commercial and other interests is important, the social contract with participants should take precedence. All trial results should be registered and publicly available, together with sufficient protocol information to enable critical assessment of their validity.

Mannino DM; Tobin MJ. 2005. **Impact factor, impact, and smoke and mirrors.** *American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine* 171:417-418.

Letter querying the ethical behaviour of the journal in raising its impact factor, and a reply refuting the allegations from the author of the original editorial.

Sevinc A. 2004. **Manipulating impact factor: an unethical issue or an editor's choice?** *Swiss Medical Weekly* (10 July) 134:410.

The abuse of the impact factor should be discussed in the scientific arena or some journals might lose out in the impact factor league table. Impact factors can be recalculated to adjust for the number of self-citations and "clean" impact factors can be obtained.

White C. 2005. **UK agency to combat research misconduct.** *BMJ* (19 March) 330:616.

Plans for a new agency, the UK Panel for Health and Biomedical Research Integrity, to combat biomedical research misconduct, have been

announced.

EDITING AND EDITORIAL PROCESS

Gastel B. 2005. **Editing across the sciences: physics.** *Science Editor* 28(2):60.

Information about the basics of editing in physics.

Johnson B. 2005. **The word hawk.** *Science Editor* 28(2):59.

Column about editing; the topic this time is enhancing readability.

Johnson B. 2005. **Bulletproof: how to armor-plate your work.** *Science Editor* 28(3):99.

Hints on how to achieve error-free proof-reading and quality control.

Kasdorf WE (ed.). 2003. **The Columbia guide to digital publishing.** New York: Columbia University Press. ISBN 0-231-12498-8. Reviewed in *Science Editor* 2005; 28(2):51-52.

Moon N. 2004. **The case for shareware.** *Editing Matters* November/December:3.

Computer software can be cheaply or freely available as "shareware" to be downloaded from the internet. Some guidelines on choosing and using shareware are offered.

LANGUAGE AND WRITING

Jacobs A, Wager E. 2005. **European Medical Writers Association (EMWA) guidelines on the role of medical writers in developing peer-reviewed publications.** *Current Medical Research and Opinion* 21(2):317-322..

The guidelines stress the importance of respecting widely recognized authorship criteria, and in particular of ensuring that those listed as named authors have full control of the content of papers. The role of medical writers must be transparent, which normally means a mention in the acknowledgements section, together with a statement about funding. Writers and authors must have access to relevant data while writing papers. Medical writers have professional responsibilities to ensure that the papers they write are scientifically valid and are written in accordance with generally accepted ethical standards.

Daskalopoulou SS, Mikhailidis DP. 2005. **The involvement of professional medical writers in medical publications.** *Current Medical Research and Opinion* 21(2):307-310.

Comment on the European Medical Writers Association (EMWA) guidelines and the accompanying

Delphi study. These articles deal with "ghost writing" and the role of professional writers. This editorial proposes that the interaction between professional writers and authors is defined along the principles that form the word "GATE", so they are called the "GATE principles". Suggestions are made for the accreditation of professional writers in specific fields. Professional writers play a useful role but this has to be clearly defined so that high ethical and scientific standards can be achieved.

Geller G, Bernhardt BA, Gardner M, Rodgers J, Holtzman NA. 2005. **Scientists' and science writers' experiences reporting genetic discoveries: toward an ethic of trust in science journalism.** *Genetics in Medicine* 7(3):198–205.

To the degree that trust facilitates the access that science writers have to scientists, as well as facilitating higher quality interviews between scientists and science writers, this aspect might also contribute to higher quality media reporting. Therefore, scientists and science writers have an ethical obligation to foster trusting relationships with each other. Future research should systematically explore ways to cultivate such relationships and assess their impact on the quality of science journalism.

Haggan M. 2004. **Research paper titles in literature, linguistics and science: dimensions of attraction.** *Journal of Pragmatics* 36:293–317. Three basic types of titles in the three disciplines were analysed: full sentence, compound and a remaining group made up largely of noun phrases with or without post-modification. Very clear-cut differences in frequency and form of titles were found across the three disciplines.

Hartley J. 2005. **Is this chapter any use? Methods for evaluating text.** In: Wilson JR, Corlett N (eds) *Evaluation of human work*, 3rd ed. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press. p. 335–356. Discusses the content of a text and the way it is presented, the way it is supported by illustrative materials, and its suitability for its intended purpose.

Lewison G, Hartley J. 2005. **What's in a title? Numbers of words and the presence of colons.** *Scientometrics* 63(2):341–356.

Statistical analyses were made of 216 500 UK papers from science journals and 133 200 international oncology papers. Factors examined included title length, the use of colons in the title and numbers of authors.

All of these factors increased over time for both sets of papers, although there were some disciplinary differences in the findings. In both studies, titles with colons occurred more frequently with single than with multiple authors, except when the numbers of co-authors were large. Certain features of titles can be related to different disciplines, different journals, the numbers of authors and their nationalities.

Tooth L, Ware R, Bain C, Purdie DM, Dobson A. 2005. **Quality of reporting of observational longitudinal research.** *American Journal of Epidemiology* 161(3):280–288. Observational longitudinal research is particularly useful for assessing aetiology and prognosis and for providing evidence for clinical decision-making. However, there are no structured reporting requirements for studies of this design to assist authors, editors, and readers. The authors developed and tested a checklist of criteria related to threats to the internal and external validity of observational longitudinal studies. The checklist criteria concerned recruitment, data collection, biases, and data analysis and descriptive issues relevant to study rationale, study population and generalizability. A flow diagram for summarizing participant flow through a study was developed. Editors and authors should consider using a checklist and flow diagram when reporting on observational longitudinal research.

REFERENCE AND ARCHIVING

[Editorial] 2005. **Nature respects preprint servers . . . despite false rumours to the contrary.** *Nature* (17 March) 434:257.

If scientists wish to display drafts of their papers on an established preprint server before or during submission to *Nature* or any other *Nature* journal, that's fine by them.

Hansen P, Järvelin K. 2005. **Collaborative information retrieval in an information-intensive domain.** *Information Processing and Management* 41:1101–1119. The assumption that information retrieval performance is purely individual needs to be reconsidered.

INFORMATION

Clark C. 2005. **Pliable or viable statistics?** *Science Editor* 28(2):56–57. Review of some web sites that can help the user gain a better understanding of basic statistical concepts.

Clark C. 2005. **Statistical savvy.** *Science Editor* 28(2):55.

Review of articles to help science editors to increase their awareness of statistical quality.

Kurtz MJ, Eichhorn G, Accomazzi A, Grant C, Demleitner M, Murray SS, et al. 2005. **The bibliometric properties of article readership information.** *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 56(2):111–128.

Digital libraries are able to record detailed information on the readership of individual articles: who accessed what article, and when. These data can provide a new and powerful source for bibliometric measurement. This article examines the properties of the electronic accesses themselves and compares and contrasts their properties with those of citations.

Kurtz MJ, Eichhorn G, Accomazzi A, Grant C, Demleitner M, Murray SS, et al. 2005. **Worldwide use and impact of the NASA Astrophysics Data System Digital Library.** *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 56(1):36–45. Describes the system, notes some of its features and discusses a power set of collaborative filters that makes use of the new information to achieve improved information retrieval.

Weingart P. 2005. **Impact of bibliometrics upon the science system: inadvertent consequences.** *Scientometrics* 62(1):117–131. Rankings are supposed to identify excellence in institutions and among researchers. Unintended effects may be "oversteering", either by forcing less competitive institutions to be closed down or by creating oligopolies whose position of supremacy, once achieved, cannot be challenged by competitors. On the individual level, the emergence of a kind of "chart" of highly cited "stars" in science can already be observed. With the spread of rankings the business administration paradigm and culture is diffused through the academic system.

ABOUT EDITORS

Allen T. 2005. **Of mice and men.** *Editing Matters* May/June:5–6. A look at the problems that overuse of a computer mouse can cause.

Twiss M. 2005. **Does your workstation fit you?** *Editing Matters* May/June:3–4, 6.

How to avoid suffering from upper-limb disorders, backache and eye strain when you are at work at your desk.

Membership list additions and changes

NEW AND REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Corporate members

Annals of Botany

Dr David Frost
University of Bristol
School of Biological Sciences
Woodland Road
Bristol, BS8 1UG, UK
Tel: +44 (0)117 331 6770
Fax: +44 (0)177 926 9757
Professor Pat
Heslop-Harrison
University of Leicester
Department of Biology
University Road
Leicester, LE1 7RH, UK
Tel: +44 (0)116 252 3381
Fax: +44 (0)116 252 3330

Bahrain Medical Bulletin

Dr Fayek Al Hilli
Dr Hussein Al Mukharraq
PO Box 32159
Kingdom of Bahrain
Tel: +973 17 239 798
Fax: +973 17 277 036

BMJ

Ms Sally Carter
Dr Fiona Godlee
Mr Richard Hurley
Dr Birte Twisselmann
BMJ
BMA House
Tavistock Square
London, WC1H 9JR, UK

ISAJE

Dr Kerstin Stenius
Nordisk Alkohol - och
Narkotikatidskrift
STAKES
PO Box 220
FI-00531 Helsinki, Finland
Tel: +358 9 3967 2197
Fax: +358 9 3967 2191

Lancet

Stephanie Bartlette
Robert Brierley
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David Collingridge
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Edward Morrison
Oda Riska
Lidia Siemaszkiewicz
Bill Summerskill

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Claire Tilstone
32 Jamestown Road
London, NW1 7BY, UK

Portland Press Ltd

George Banting
Anna Dominiczak
David Richardson
Third Floor
Eagle House
16 Procter Street
London, WC1V 6NX, UK
Society for Endocrinology
Ailsa Bailey
Richard Foulsham
22 Apex Court
Woodlands,
Bradley Stoke
Bristol, BS32 4NQ, UK

Individual members

Dr John S. Dowden

Australian Prescriber
3/2 Phipps Close
Deakin Act 2600
Australia
Tel: +61 2 6282 6755
Fax: +61 2 6282 6855
Australian Prescriber

Professor George TH Ellison

St George's Hospital Medical School
University of London
Cranmer Terrace
London, SW17 0RE, UK
Tel: +44 (0)20 8725 5140
Fax: +44 (0)20 8725 0146

Critical Public Health

Harriet G MacLehose

Cochrane Infectious Diseases Group
International Health Research Group
Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine
Liverpool L3 5QA, UK
Tel: +44 (0)151-705 3259
Fax: +44 (0)151-705 3364

Christine Moller

APMIS
Editorial Office
Blegdamsvej 28C
DK-2200 Copenhagen N
Denmark
Tel: +45 3393 7566
Fax: +45 3393 8566
APMIS Acta Pathologica, Microbiologica et Immunologica

Anita E. Somner

R111, Royal London House
Christchurch Road
Bournemouth
Dorset, BH1 3LT, UK
Tel: +44(0)1201 962 194
Fax: +44 (0)1202 962 784

CHANGES

Corporate

Annals of Botany

Professor Mike Jackson
University of Bristol
School of Biological Sciences
Woodland Road
Bristol, BS8 1UG, UK

Individual members

Heliane Campanatti-Ostiz

Rua Gêmeos, 22
Condominio Conde Comercial
Barueri - São Paulo
CEO: 06473-020, Brasil

Susan Eastwood-Berry

BEA-Biomedical Editors Associates
Publications & Grant Writing
1021 53rd Street
Emeryville, CA 94608, USA

Miss Caroline Black

120 Fishpool Street
St Albans, AL3 4RX, UK

Arieh Bomzon

Apartment #10
29 A Klebanov Street
Haifa, Israel 32800

Professor Tao Dan

Chinese Association of Science & Technology Communication
College of Hebei University of China
Compound 96 Enji Zhuang
Haidian District
Beijing 100036
China (P.R.)

Sue Hainsworth

Chaucer House
Mill Lane
Othery
Somerset, TA7 0QT, UK
Tel: +44(0)1823 698 848

Dr C.H.M. Kramer

Redactiesecretariat
Huisarts en Wetenschap
PO Box 3231
NL-3502 Utrecht GE
Netherlands

Dr Vivienne Mawson

11 Balemo Street
South Arm TAS 7022
Australia
Fax: +61 3 6239 9935

Mrs Lorna O'Brien

lorna@authorsof.com

Dr VMS Oh

Annals, Acad Medicine,
Singapore
142 Niel Road
Singapore 08871
Republic of Singapore

Masaaki Osanai

osanai@mac.com

Dr Denise Parent

NJC-Bâtiment 17
Université Montpellier II
Place Eugène Bataillon,
cc 014
34095 Montpellier Cedex 5
France

Richard Raper

Indexing Specialists (UK)
Ltd
Regent House, Hove Street
Hove, East Sussex
BN3 2DW, UK

Kate Sutton

443 Clove Road, Apt 2
Monroe, NY 10950
USA

David H. Thompson

Le Polmoad
29700 Plomelin, France

Peter Thorpe

Mews Cottage
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