

mation its researchers require, and their libraries cannot satisfy the demands. Furthermore, results are not disseminated adequately. What is needed is free, unrestricted access to the primary literature, using existing funds to pay for its dissemination.

SPARCE comprises eight journal partners who cover a wide variety of subjects, plus the Public Library of Science, 11 journals from the Indian Academy of Science, and the Lund Directory of Open Access Journals. Making the transition from subscriptions to web access will require several stages. Access will be open to authors who pay a publication charge, and also to subscribers. As the proportion of authors who pay increases, the subscription charge will fall, leading nevertheless to an increase in publication revenue. As the benefits of the system become clear, authors will pressure funding bodies to pay for open access. Academics can support open access by submitting, reading and citing articles on the web, by launching new open-access journals, by discussing the initiative with publishers to ensure that authors are not penalized for participating, and by lobbying funding bodies to provide money for publication, keeping in mind that publication costs represent only 1–2% of the expense of a research project. Another advantage of the system is that it allows authors to retain their publishing rights.

Colm Doyle from the Lund University libraries presented the Directory of Open Access Journals. This is an interoperable system for the selection, collection, organization, access to, presentation and management of information. It contains information on 350 open access journals, and the data are classified in such a way as to increase visibility, thus encouraging increased use and therefore increased revenue. The Directory lists only journals that don't charge the user, whether the user is an individual or an institution. The Directory can be accessed by other networks; because the design is simple, it can be accessed rapidly even by slow networks.

Substantive editing and ethics: some do and some don't

(M7, moderator Ana Marusic)

While speakers agreed that mechanical editing of scientific manuscripts before publication is necessary (grammar, spelling, consistency, etc.), there were diverse views concerning substantive editing. Brian Harrison mentioned that, due to the lack of specificity in the Japanese language, manuscripts by non-native English-speaking authors receive a great deal of attention with regard to writing for nuance, degree of emphasis, mother tongue interference, vagueness of prepositions in Japanese ("ni" means at, on, in, under, to, and toward!), and adding background information (including geographical references and defining terms with no equivalent word in English). Thus, substantial rewriting is necessary.

Jean-Claude Guédon, Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Montreal, addressed the role of editors in the new electronic environment. He recalled that editors, the stewards of the symbolic currency of science, are involved in ensuring quality, yet quality can only truly be appreciated from the usage that is made of a scientific paper. A great advantage of open access is that actual usage can be monitored. Editors could have a more dynamic relationship with authors, according to the number of hits made on a paper. The monitoring would also help them to recognize which are the really interesting articles in their journals. He said that there is fierce competition among the "core" journals but that the distribution pattern of research results is now largely skewed by financial factors. The only way to fight that trend is open access.

In the ensuing discussion, a representative of the World Health Organization drew attention to the SCIELO project, which provides access to about 200 journals covering a wide range of subjects. Journals in Latin America have benefited especially from open access. As scientific and technical information is a global public good and is for the most part publicly funded, it should be publicly available, without charge.

To the comment by David Prosser that small publishers are in danger of becoming extinct, as large publishers command larger numbers of journals, Sally Morris suggested that packages of journals should be created to overcome that danger. When Mr Prosser was asked to give an idea of the amount that authors might be charged for publication, he cited sums of between USD500 and USD4000, although payment is waived for authors from developing countries.

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Anna York stated that, at *The Lancet*, extensive substantive editing is used on some papers to assure clarity and accuracy, incorporation of responses to reviewers' queries and suggestions, etc. Authors are usually grateful for all manuscript help provided. Mike Grace at the *British Dental Journal*, by contrast, discovered that authors of manuscripts in odontology regard substantive editing as "dumbing down". His journal aims to prepare an in-brief page for each article that includes a brief summary of the full article — published in the issue — with three to four bullet-like points and commentary by an expert in the area of the author's choice.

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Annual committee on publication ethics (COPE) seminar 2003

24 October 2003; BMA House, London, UK

At this year's COPE seminar in London in October a code of conduct (see below) was issued for editors of scientific journals, to help them regulate their own conduct and prevent abuses of editorial power. The first of the day's two sessions was chaired by Professor Michael Farthing, COPE's chairman, and was dedicated to discussing how a council for research integrity could be delivered in the UK. Farthing set the scene by listing the meetings and decisions preceding the day's events, but whatever hope might have been gleaned from these facts was extinguished instantly by a speech by a former *BMJ* editor, Stephen Lock, who blamed arrogance and a "fundamental smugness and complacency of the nation" for the UK's failure to establish a regulatory body such as those in other countries. His call for a "medical Mandela, not Mbeki" resulted in an animated discussion. Several representatives from academic and regulatory institutions were present and reported their organizations' positions.

Mary Manning, executive director of the Academy of Medical Sciences, delivered an update on the academy's thinking, and Eve Jagusiewicz, policy adviser for health at Universities UK, pointed out that research fraud has fallen between two committees and that investigations are hampered by a lack of knowledge about the scale of the problem. Marc Taylor, head of NHS R&D Policy, explained NHS research governance and the various NHS agencies that monitored adverse events and quality systems and that provided reviews, investigations, and inspections. The implementation of the NHS framework for research governance over 2001–2004 was intended to converge with the onset of the EU Clinical Trials Directive, which includes only trials of medicines for human use and outlines legal duties for sponsors, investors, etc. and makes the provision of false information a criminal offence.

Jane O'Brien, head of the General Medical Council's standards section, reported that the GMC followed its own guidance and standards of good practice. The GMC has eliminated its backlog of cases so that delays are no longer an issue. It will continue to deal with employers, universities, and whistleblowers. A total of 16 cases had been heard since 2000 by the Professional Conduct Committee.

A code of conduct for medical editors

Preamble

1. This is very much a first draft and "work in progress".
2. To produce this first draft I [Richard Smith, author of this draft] have used the code of the Press Complaints Commission, the statement on responsibilities of editors from the World Association of Medical Editors, and my own ideas.
3. We will need feedback and "real cases" in order to arrive at a useful and workable code.
4. The code will continue to evolve.
5. I've deliberately made the statements positive rather than negative.

In the lively discussion that ensued many examples of misconduct were given. The participation of and efforts undertaken by the bodies represented were received positively. The need for a distinction between fraud and misconduct was brought up, practical solutions to setting up a council were suggested, and obstacles were discussed. The possible involvement of the Department of Health was raised, and some felt more depressed after this session than first thing in the morning.

The afternoon's session was chaired by the *BMJ*'s current editor, Richard Smith, and the overall theme was that of editorial accountability. Again, a slew of examples was presented and lively discussion took place. The following taxonomy of examples of editorial misconduct was given:

1. Misrepresenting authors.
2. Publishing a paper that is known to be bad science.
3. Discriminating for or against a group of authors.
4. Failing to be impartial.
5. Failing to investigate allegations of research misconduct.
6. Publishing a sponsored supplement as if it was proper, peer-reviewed material.
7. Using non-scientific criteria.
8. Suppressing criticism of published papers.

Journals and publishers might publicly sign up to a press council scheme or by omission become known as not accepting it. This decision should be part of the credibility of a journal. It might mean more than the impact factor.

The draft code of conduct constitutes COPE's effort to set "its own house in order". It is derived from the code of conduct of the UK Press Complaints Commission and the statement of the World Association of Medical Editors on editorial responsibility. All editors in COPE should sign up and agree to abide by this code, which will be sent out for wide consultation and is expected to become official committee policy next year. With these prospects outlined, Professor Farthing ended the seminar on a cautiously positive note.

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6. This very much a "lower common denominator" document—because it would seem to be pointless to propose a code that only a handful of editors currently meet.
7. I've tried to begin with an aspirational — but necessarily non-specific — statement.
8. It's been an odd experience to write a book of rules. I'm more into breaking rules than creating them.
9. I think that I have a high chance of being the first editor to be complained about.

Code of conduct

Editors of medical journals are responsible for all their journals contain. They should strive to meet the needs of readers and authors, constantly improve the journal, ensure the accuracy of the material they publish, maintain the integrity of the scientific record, ensure that business needs do not compromise intellectual standards, and always be willing to publish corrections, clarifications, retractions, and apologies when needed.

Any deviation from this code of conduct may be misconduct and could be reported to the Committee on Publication Ethics.

Accuracy and correcting the record

Editors should take all reasonable steps to ensure the accuracy of the material they publish.

Peer review processes should be described, and editors should be ready to explain any important deviation from the described processes.

Whenever it is recognized that a significant inaccuracy, misleading statement or distorted report has been published, it must be corrected promptly and with due prominence.

An apology must be published whenever appropriate.

If articles prove to be fraudulent or contain major errors that are not apparent from the text then they should be retracted — and the word retraction should be used in the title of the retraction (to ensure that it is picked up by indexing systems).

Cogent critical responses to published material should be published unless editors have convincing reasons why they cannot be. (Journals are advised to create electronic means of responding so that “lack of space” is no longer a convincing reason for not publishing a response.)

Ethics committee approval

Editors should ensure that research material they publish has been approved by an ethics committee. They should satisfy themselves that the research is ethical as they can be held responsible for publishing “unethical” research even if it has been approved by an ethics committee.

Protecting the confidentiality of human subjects

Editors must protect the confidentiality of information on patients obtained through the doctor–patient relationship. As ensuring anonymity is almost impossible this must usually be done through obtaining written consent for publication from patients.

Pursuing misconduct

Editors are often the first recipients of studies that may involve some element of misconduct. If editors encounter misconduct on the part of authors, their staff, or other editors then they have a duty to take action. If the misconduct is by authors or other editors then editors will need to ask their employers or some other appropriate body (perhaps a regulatory body) to investigate. The editors have a duty to ensure that a

proper investigation is conducted, and if this doesn't happen for whatever reason the editors must persist in obtaining a resolution to the problem and a correction of the record if it is needed. This is an onerous but important duty.

Relationship to publishers and owners, and the economics of journals

The relationship of editors to publishers and owners is often complex and should pay attention to the tradition of editorial independence. Editors clearly have to accept the economic realities of their journals, but decisions on which articles to publish should be based on grounds of quality and suitability for readers rather than for immediate financial gain.

Conflict of interest

Editors should have systems for managing the conflicts of interest of themselves, their staff, authors, and reviewers.

Ways to complain

Editors should respond promptly to all complaints and should ensure that there is a way for complainants who are dissatisfied with the response to take complaints further. Ideally this mechanism should be made clear in the journal.

Living by the code

1. All editors who are members of COPE will be expected to abide by the code, tell their readers that they do so, and provide readers with access to copies of the code.
2. COPE will consider complaints from anybody about editors who are members of COPE breaching the code. Such complaints should be made in writing with supporting evidence to the chairman of COPE.
3. The editors who are complained about will be asked to respond to the complaint in writing. The chairman of COPE will attempt to resolve the complaint.
4. If this is not possible, then the council of COPE will consider the case on paper. Both the editor and the complainant will see all the correspondence and have a chance to respond in writing.
5. Both the complainant and the editor will be informed of the judgement in writing.
6. If the council of COPE finds that the editor has breached the code then the editor will be required to publish the adjudication in full in the journal. The editor will have the opportunity to respond to the facts of the adjudication, and the council of COPE may correct the piece to be published. The complainant will see the adjudication before publication and will also be given a chance to correct any factual errors.
7. In the cases of serious breaches of the code then the council of COPE may decide to notify the owners of the journal, expel the editor from COPE, or both.

First regional conference on medical journalism in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region

7–9 October 2003; Cairo, Egypt

After spending several hours in the transit zones of two airports, I finally arrived in Cairo, Egypt — the land of pyramids and pharaohs — where this conference was held, sponsored by the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) and the *Saudi Medical Journal*. The conference was preceded by a one-day workshop on 6 October at which some aspects of journal dissemination, editorship craft and the peer-review process were discussed for selected participants.

Currently, in the 23 countries of EMRO, over 400 medical journals are published. During this conference the participants — mainly editors — tried to outline the current status of biomedical journalism in the region, declare problems and constraints in medical journal publishing, and discuss the quality of the medical journals published in the region. Almost all of the problems mentioned were similar for different countries, regardless of their social, cultural, political and economical status. The problems of these small journals were, as expected, different from those facing many mainstream journals. The mainstream journals primarily have problems with authorship versus contributorship, conflict of interests, ethical issues in conducting research and publication, redundant publication, etc. The problems of these small journals are more fundamental and include lack of an infrastructure for running a journal, insufficient funding, lack of expertise in desktop publishing, editors having little knowledge of their craft, difficulties in dissemination of publications, low visibility, problems with absorbing high quality research articles, etc.

The solutions proposed included the establishment of training courses for editors; the creation of an association, the so-called the Eastern Mediterranean Association of Medical Editors (EMAME), to act as a

sister association to WAME; emphasis on electronic journalism and online dissemination of data using the internet; exchange of experience by the formation of regional committees; and regular conferences such as the present one. It was agreed by both the *Saudi Medical Journal* and the other participants that next year the conference will be held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

This conference, for the first time, provided a good forum for editors and all who work in the editorial field in this region to meet each other and to appreciate problems that they have in common. In my opinion, an important consequence of this conference was that most participants learned that editors working in other countries in the region face problems very similar to the obstacles they had once thought unique to themselves. Although I believe that this gathering should have been held earlier, it should certainly be a good starting point for further activities in the region. Much good work has in fact been done in the region. For example, some Iraqi medical journals continue their job under very difficult circumstances. The WHO Regional Office is also going to improve its database, the Index Medicus for the Eastern Mediterranean Region, to cover more journals in the region and to provide more information for each indexed publication.

Empowering of biomedical journalism in this region, which, because of its different climates, religious beliefs, cultural habits and level of health standards has a somewhat different disease epidemiology and spectrum of medical practices, can be beneficial to the promotion of health in this region in particular, and also to global health at large.

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EASE-Forum digest: September 2003 to December 2003

Curate's egg

This issue's report from the forum starts with a bit of fun. Judy Baggot asked, "What is a curate's egg?" Fowler says it's a hackneyed expression but doesn't explain its origins. Norman Grossblatt confirmed from his reading of the online *American Heritage* and *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate* dictionaries that it's "chiefly British" and means something with both good and bad qualities. A full explanation provided by Liz Wager and John Glen is that it originates from a cartoon in *Punch* on 9th November 1895 (www.punch.co.uk/Caroon_History/CaroonHis_3.html) that showed a curate having breakfast in his bishop's home. The bishop is saying, "I'm afraid you've got a bad egg", to which the curate replies, eager not to give offence, "Oh, no, my Lord, I assure

you that parts of it are excellent". Authorities for this explanation were given as *Brewer's Dictionary of Modern Phrase and Fable* (Cassell & Co., 2000, page 187), Michael Quinion (www.worldwidewords.org/) and <http://phrases.shu.ac.uk/meanings/>. As an epilogue Norman told us that both his online American dictionaries had given incorrect origins. American Heritage stated that it originated from a story and Merriam-Webster gave the date of its origin as 1905. We return to internet inaccuracies later.

Use of possessive form of eponyms and italics

Jane Sykes raised two interesting questions. The first related to the use of the possessive form of eponyms. Although some style guides, such as that of the

American Medical Association, recommend dropping the possessive form of eponyms (e.g. Down syndrome instead of Down's syndrome; Alzheimer disease instead of Alzheimer's disease), she had noticed that several journals continue to use the possessive form. The second question related to the use of italics. She asked if italics are falling into disuse now that more and more information can be obtained and downloaded from Internet, which doesn't allow for typographical variation. Although she realized that using italics for Latin words/terms (e.g. *in vivo*, *in situ*) is old-fashioned, she was interested in views about the use of italics to distinguish between genes (in italics) and gene products (in Roman) with the same abbreviation.

Moira Vekony confessed that she italicizes Latin terms unless the publisher's style guide is against it. She then added "Long live Latin". Very brave of her, in view of how Latin has fallen out of grace. [I have noticed recently that in manuscripts I have submitted to journals Latin words have been edited out by the journal's copy editors (for example, "i.e." has been changed to "such as", "including" or "that is").] Moira also pointed out that genes must be italicized to distinguish them from protein products (www.gene.ucl.ac.uk/nomenclature/). Perhaps, as Moira added as a postscript, her 20+-year-old degree is starting to make her feel dated but the wisdom that comes with age was evident in her warning: "The Internet is a useful place to visit, but everyone should be aware that the information therein (thereon?) cannot be relied upon to be 100% accurate 100% of the time". I can only add that for my non-native English-speaking authors the internet is the language bible, not Fowler, Gowers or any other old fool, and certainly not me.

Lost in cyberspace

Extending the effects of typographical conventions, Liz Wager expressed her concern that some electronic systems for submitting abstracts do not allow familiar symbols such as ">" for "greater than" and won't accept accents, umlauts or tildes, which might lead Spanish and Scandinavian authors to think she did not appreciate the correct spelling of their names. Another good point she made was the unfairness in demanding a tight word limit and insisting that "per cent" and "greater than" be spelled out. The spelling out rule can also cause problems with the Greek mu for micrograms, which sometimes gets converted into an "m" (i.e. milligram) with potentially lethal consequences for drug doses. Margaret Cooter of the *BMJ* said that the *British National Formulary* in its guidance on prescription writing says that micrograms and nanograms should not be abbreviated, obviously to avoid this potentially dangerous confusion. One correspondent to the *BMJ* had said that if the journal changed to writing these out, doctors would surely follow. Opinion at the *BMJ* had been divided as to whether it was necessary or desirable to write out these abbreviations. They stuck with using abbreviations but were careful with news stories, where house style is to spell out where confusion is possible. Margaret advised that if something mentioning drug doses comes via email and has

"mg" in it, that should wave the flag of suspicion for an editor! Jane Moody wrote that her journal (*The Obstetrician & Gynaecologist*) drops the possessive form of eponyms, although some authors didn't much like it. The journal also italicizes foreign and Latin words. She considered that the internet should not be allowed to dictate journal style and not using italics is simply sloppy. [Hear, hear! Another recruit for the anti-Internet Language Bible Society I might find one day.]

Searching for the "'s"

Jenny Gretton was surprised that eponyms were still used other than for "journalistic" reports for non-scientists. She thought that if they were used the possessive form should apply, otherwise problems would arise with old reference bases leading to a split list, i.e. with and without the 's. Margaret Cooter pointed out that some eponymous syndromes have an easy scientific term, e.g. Epstein's syndrome is nephrotic syndrome, but others don't, e.g. Ehlers-Danlos syndrome. Margaret asked whether searching for Down syndrome would also pick up Down's syndrome or should searching be for separate words rather than the phrase? This gauntlet was picked up by Tricia Reichert, who searched PubMed for "Down syndrome", which returned 14 308 references with both "Down syndrome" and "Down's syndrome". She then searched for "Down's syndrome", which returned 14 486 references with both variations. This showed that at least one important database returns both forms no matter which search term you use. She hoped to be pardoned for not checking to see which 178 articles were not returned in the search for "Down syndrome". Margaret searched Google with a different result: "Down syndrome" got about 298 000 hits (with some Down's among them) and "Down's syndrome" returned about 68 800.

Transatlantic differences

Liz Wager had noted a US/British distinction in the use of the possessive form of eponymic terms. The Council of Biology Editor's Style Guide recommends eliminating the possessive to avoid confusion with real possessives. A Medline search (e.g. for Alzheimer's disease) showed that many UK and European journals use the possessive and she could not think when its use could cause confusion except if an article was being written about, e.g. Mr Parkinson and his ailments. Hugh de Glanville rounded off the discussion by commenting that depossessivization can go too far. A British journalist who was perhaps, he thought, trying to follow American Medical Association advice, converted Sir William Gowers ('s) syndrome to "Gower syndrome".

Redirecting ownership of intellectual property

Marie-Louise Desbarats-Schöbaum referred to the EASE president's question in her editorial in the August 2003 issue (*ESE* 29(3)) about how ownership

of intellectual property could be redirected back to the academic community and general public. She asked if anyone would be keeping an eye on the discussions at a conference on intellectual property rights to be held in Luxembourg.

Jenny Gretton pointed out that many submissions for grants and original articles were sent to reviewers electronically, increasing the opportunity for theft of ideas and data. Editors need to be aware of the potential for theft of ideas by reviewers and others, and perhaps take a proactive role in trying to prevent it. She suggested that the names of reviewers and expert advisers should be made available to disgruntled authors who feel their ideas have been stolen. [Unfortunately there was no reaction on the forum to this suggestion, which goes to the heart of blinded review. Opening up the review process is less problematic for large journals, e.g. the *BMJ*, which requires reviewers to reveal their identity to authors, than for specialty journals operating in a small academic community, where academic friendships could be jeopardized and rivalries inflamed.]

Forum moderator/commentator

I made an announcement that I would be acting as a moderator of the forum and asked to receive comments or suggestions. Markku Löytönen of the University of Helsinki which hosts the forum informed me that the university's policy was that such authorization would only be granted to university staff. My choice of the word "moderator" was confusing and needed clarification. "Moderator" has a specific meaning in the context of such a forum, involving the ability to select messages from those sent by participants and decide which messages should be passed on to the forum for general distribution. This was not the function I had envisaged. A better choice of word is "commentator", because my aim is to guide exchanges already on the forum when these become too unwieldy, go off the point, become personal or touch on topics that could upset sensibilities. This is to forestall problems that have been experienced on other forums. I would also like to take this opportunity again to ask subscribers to please be aware of and adhere to the NLM Netiquette when

using the Forum (www.nlm.nih.gov/listserv/netiquette.html). In my message I also enlisted your help — and I do so again here — in passing on instructions for joining the forum to any subscribers who might have been disconnected in January 2003 (instructions on how to join are repeated below). Another issue I mentioned was that some subscribers have not been able to post messages because the forum identified them as spam. Any colleagues who have had this problem are welcome to send the messages to me (langdoe@baxter.com) or ask a colleague to post for them.

Joining the forum

You can join the Forum by sending the one-line message "subscribe ease-forum" (without the quotation marks) to majordomo@helsinki.fi. Do not include a subject line or signature or any text. To stop receiving messages from the forum, send the message "unsubscribe ease-forum" to majordomo@helsinki.fi. Once you have joined, you should send messages for the forum to ease.forum@helsinki.fi. Please keep messages short. If you reply to someone else's message, make sure to delete those parts of the original message that are not essential for understanding your response. To keep other forum participants informed, check that your reply (or a copy of it) is sent to ease.forum@helsinki.fi. If your e-mail software has a "reply to all" possibility, this will probably do the job. Do not use the "reply to" or "reply to sender" facility unless your message is intended for the original sender only.

Anyone who loses contact with the forum, or is unable to establish a new subscription, will be able to find information on the EASE Web site (www.ease.org.uk).

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From the literature

This section comments on articles containing new information about peer review, conflict of interest, journal financing, research misconduct, electronic publishing, copyright — in fact, anything that editors need to know about. Items from any science discipline may be featured, and we welcome contributions or suggestions for articles to highlight (please send these to Liz Wager: liz@sideview.demon.co.uk).

Peer review journals and controversial science

Newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic have recently covered stories about the shortcomings of peer review. The most recent interest arose from the retraction of a study from *Science*. This work had apparently shown that a single dose of Ecstasy could cause irreversible brain damage and even death in monkeys. Unfortunately, it turned out that the monkeys had received not Ecstasy but methamphetamine. The labelling error was discovered only when

the researchers tried to repeat the experiments. To their credit, they contacted *Science*, explained the error, and requested a retraction (published in *Science* 2003;301:1479). This might have gone almost unremarked, had their findings not been enthusiastically taken up by anti-drug lobbyists, keen to highlight the dangers of Ecstasy and the fact that the US Congress was, at the time, debating a bill known as the "Anti-Rave Act" which would punish nightclub

owners who knowingly allowed the sale of Ecstasy on their premises.

The political debate was intensified by the fact that the Chief Executive Officer of the American Academy for the Advancement of Science, which publishes *Science*, is the former head of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, and had testified before Congress on the dangers of Ecstasy. The *New York Times* reported that he had been criticized for “rushing [the] results into print”, but the study’s author strongly denied this charge. Several newspapers commented that the review process had failed to spot this flawed study, and other journals appeared to enjoy the spectacle of one of the world’s most respected science journals publishing a retraction. However, as far as I am aware, there were no allegations about the way in which the paper was peer-reviewed and, if reviewers judge a study by its reported methods, it is hard to see how they could be expected to spot the problem. Science proceeds only when innovative researchers produce results that challenge the current orthodoxies. If peer review consistently rejected findings that were out of line with other research, it would surely be a barrier rather than an aid to scientific communication.

Earlier in 2003, a much smaller journal found itself at the dangerous interface between science and politics. *Climate Research* published a paper by Soon & Baliunas that cast doubt on theories of global warming. These authors claimed that the 20th century has not been the warmest period in the last millennium and suggested that we need to look for other explanations for climate change. Like the Ecstasy study, this paper would probably have been cause for discussion only among fellow climate researchers had it not been cited in a report to the US Environmental Protection Agency and had the US Senate not been debating limits on carbon dioxide emissions. A further complication was that the study had been partly funded by the American Petroleum Institute.

The controversy has led to the resignation of *Climate Research*’s Editor-in-Chief, Dr Hans von Storch. He had written an editorial highlighting the weakness of the journal’s peer review system and proposing modifications. He, and two other editors, resigned when the journal’s publisher, Otto Kinne, asked him not to publish the editorial in its current form because it did not represent the views of the entire editorial board. Like

the Ecstasy study, there were no allegations about the peer review process. In fact, compared with normal practice at biomedical journals, the paper appears to have been very thoroughly reviewed, since Dr von Storch reports that “four different reviewers were involved”. However, Dr von Storch felt that “the review process . . . failed to confront the authors with necessary and legitimate methodological questions” and he therefore proposed a more centralized system, overseen by the Editor-in-Chief, to replace *Climate Research*’s current system in which “several editors operate independently”. In his unpublished editorial, Dr von Storch also raises one of the underlying problems of scientific publishing. He notes that “When assessing manuscripts we have to balance two objectives, namely to block flawed material from entering the scientific arena, and at the same time to prevent an overly conservative approach blocking innovative ideas and concepts”. He concludes, rather pessimistically, that “None of the objectives will be achieved in a fully satisfactory manner”, implying that the selection of papers for publication will always be a compromise. He also comments that authors “must be allowed to present in addition to their hard and reproducible facts a certain amount of creative speculation”. His criticism of the Soon & Baliunas paper was not that they proposed a new theory, but that they were not “explicit where facts end and such speculation begins”. Otto Kinne has also issued a thoughtful statement regretting the resignation of Dr von Storch and outlining the journal’s peer review policy. (See www.davidappell.com/archives/00000186.htm for useful links to articles about the *Climate Research* controversy, including Dr von Storch’s unpublished editorial.)

So what can journal editors learn from these episodes? It is hard to draw clear lessons, except about the need for vigilance in peer review, and perhaps about acceptance that the system will never be perfect. The press coverage might also remind editors of the need for an effective policy for handling media enquiries, should they find themselves embroiled in controversial science, especially if it has political ramifications.

Liz Wager

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Book reviews

R M Ritter. 2002. **The Oxford guide to style.** Oxford: Oxford University Press. 623 p. Hardback. GBP16.99, USD\$25. ISBN 0-19-869175- 0.

The Oxford Guide to Style is the revised and enlarged edition of Horace Hart’s *Rules for compositors and readers at the University Press, Oxford*, which was first published in 1893 and has run through 39 editions. Ritter’s book, however, is three times as long as Hart’s, in larger format, and is no longer aimed just at compositors and readers. The jacket of this guide introduces it as “The Style Bible for all writers, editors, and publish-

ers”. I consider that an excessive claim: most people concerned with the preparation and production of texts will find something to help them in the guidance Ritter provides, but most will be unlikely to read a large proportion of the guide.

Discussion focuses almost entirely on the preparation and production of books, and has a mainly general and literary flavour. The chapters on abbre-

viations, capitalization, punctuation, numbers, quotations, tables, and illustrations all offer advice that would be relevant to scientific and medical texts, including not only books but also papers, articles, and theses. However, the subject-matter of the examples is mainly general, so scientific writers and editors might not easily recognize guidance that could be directly relevant to their contexts. The text is mainly concerned with publishers' house style: writing style — handling language aptly, accurately, and readably — is not discussed in this guide.

Most readers of *ESE* would, I suspect, have little interest in roughly half the guide. That is not an adverse comment. I am simply assuming that most readers of *ESE* will not be concerned with the 20% of the book that gives guidelines on the editing and presentation of foreign languages (including Catalan, Galician, and Hebrew), and of Old and Middle English. In allocating so much space to the setting of foreign languages, Ritter is simply following Hart's example: *Hart's Rules* gives almost 30% of its space to those topics; but most *ESE* readers are likely to be helped more by the advice Ritter provides separately on the proper display and punctuation of foreign quotations in English text, or translation of those quotations. The guidelines do include a few pages of

general discussion of the principal differences between US and British English, but I guess they would be of background interest rather than of immediate use to *ESE* readers.

Fifteen per cent of the guide is devoted to the setting of specialist subjects: collections of correspondence, law, linguistics, logic, music, plays, poetry, sacred works, social science (one page), textual editions, and translations. Twelve per cent is given up to a lengthy discourse on the setting of references and notes. Just five per cent of the guide refers specifically to science and mathematics, with short sections on astronomy, biological and medical nomenclature, chemistry, computing, and mathematics. Those sections contain little that could not be found in appropriate *Instruction for Authors*.

This is a thorough and well-organized book, full of wise advice, with a good index to help readers dip into the sections relevant to their work. It is excellent value for its price. My feeling is, though, that *ESE* readers who buy the book will find that they do not make much use of many of its sections.

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Michele Sabto. 2003. **The on-screen editing handbook**. Tertiary Press, Croydon, VIC 3136, Australia. AUD22.50. 89 p. ISBN 0-86458-310-9.



This little book is aimed at would-be on-screen editors, but would also make useful reading for authors who want to know how best to present material, academics editing multi-contributor works, journal editors or managing editors who want to set up sensible procedures for on-screen editing.

It starts with a chapter on how to manage files sensibly,

rather than just plunging straight in and keeping everything in an undifferentiated "My Documents" folder. The author rightly points out the need to keep an unedited version of original files, for backup and reference.

The description of cleaning up a document is limited to removing redundant spacing. Other important clean-up procedures, such as removing frames or text boxes, embedded artwork, unwanted headers and footers, fields or other formatting features are not mentioned.

Throughout the book the author emphasizes the use of paragraph styles. There are good explanations of what styles are, how they work and how to use them to ensure that a document has a correct hierarchy of headings, and to produce a table of contents. The section on the styles list and design brief gives good insight into how an editor can and should influence the design of a document — an important part of the

editorial process that is sometimes overlooked by inexperienced editors. Until quite a late stage in the book, however, the assumption is that new styles created for editing are all saved in the Normal template. I wouldn't recommend this.

Adapting Word's default setup, e.g. turning off many of its automatic features, is important. I have found that the use of automatic bulleted lists, as advocated here, can cause as many problems as automatic numbering. Nevertheless, the author's advice on keeping business documents clean and simple, avoiding "bells and whistles", is generally good.

The use of Word's "Track Changes" feature is described in detail, although there is hardly a mention of the problems it can cause (macros go wrong; searches may not find things because of intervening "hidden text"). If you are required to use this feature, it's best to clean up the document first and then turn on Track Changes to record the substantive editing. There is a clear and tactful sample letter, telling an author how to respond to the editorial queries using Track Changes; nevertheless, I much prefer not to encourage authors to modify edited text directly, as it's so easy to introduce inconsistencies in this way.

The use of a clean-up macro is mentioned early on, but there is only a brief further mention of macros near the end of the book — perhaps for simplicity, but it seems like a lost opportunity to provide a simple insight into this vital aspect of on-screen editing. But, overall, this is a useful introduction to the subject.

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Paul Pedley. 2003. **Copyright & the internet – myth and reality**. Free Pint Limited, 4–6 Station Approach, Ashford (Middlesex), TW15 2QN, United Kingdom. 29 p. To be ordered online as a PDF file (www.freepint.com/shop/report/copyrightmyths/). GBP15.00/EUR22.00/USD25.00 for single use; GBP95.00, €135.00, USD155.00 for multi-use. ISBN 1-904769-00-4.

Copyrights are almost as clear as mud, and this is without doubt why Pedley starts with a quote from Mark Twain's notebook (23 May 1903): "Only one thing is impossible for God: to find any sense in any copyright law on the planet." Mark Twain had not been confronted with the electronic revolution and all the confusion that it raises about copyrights. Even experts express different views, and this must be why the first page of the work reviewed here not only quotes Mark Twain but also contains a disclaimer: "Paul Pedley is not a lawyer and is not able to give legal advice. The contents of this document do not constitute legal advice and should not be relied upon in that way."

Such a statement at the very beginning of a work on copyright is not very reassuring, especially when one realizes that the author has worked in the information departments of a law firm, a property developer, and a number of government departments. So he must be considered an expert, and in addition he has written a number of important works on copyright, often with a focus on internet copyright.

The larger part of the work is devoted to 10 widespread myths, and Pedley provides sound arguments *why* they are myths that are nevertheless commonly accepted as reality, particularly in the scientific/academic community. These 10 myths are the following.

"1. Its alright to copy 5% of a copyright work without breaching copyright.

"2. The information is accessible to anyone on the world wide web. It is therefore in the public domain and internet users have an implied license to copy the material.

"3. My whole site was designed by a professional website designer. I paid them for the work, and therefore they will have checked that it is alright to use the clip art, pictures, and other material.

"4. I have acknowledged the source from which I got the information, therefore copyright has not been breached.

"5. There is no copyright symbol on the work, so it can't be protected by copyright.

"6. The database is on the web and it just consists of a list of names and addresses so it can't be protected by copyright, and it must be alright to copy.

"7. The full text of the journal article was posted to a discussion list. The person who posted it to the list will have obtained copyright clearance.

"8. Anyone can copy material on the web using fair dealing for research as a defence.

"9. I am entitled to make a copy of the work on my web site because I am not charging people for the material.

"10. I have only created a link to the document rather than making copies of it. There are no potential legal problems with doing that."

Pedley not only exposes these myths as such but also refers to literature, organizations and databases that can provide additional information. This makes this work most valuable, even though most of these sources — like Pedley's work itself — refer almost exclusively to the UK situation. The majority of developed countries have, however, signed the Berne Convention (on copyrights), and their legislation is in most respects comparable. This makes the work, which is written in an easily understandable way, of interest for everyone who is either involved in the writing, editing or publishing of copyrighted works or uses copyrighted works for his or her personal or professional activities.

In my opinion, all EASE members belong to at least one of these two categories, and I can only advise them to take advantage of this work, which has to be downloaded as a PDF file. Considering this type of presentation, the price is quite high, especially as all 10 myths and the (summarized) "real truth" can be seen without charge on www.freepint.com/issues/100703.htm#tips

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Andrew L Ternay, Jr. **The language of nightmares**. Denver, Colorado: Simpler Life Press. 75 pages (not numbered). Paperback. USD15.95. ISBN 0-9619806-4-8.

Question: What do the following words or names have in common? Acetylcholine. Activated charcoal. Aerosol. Agent. Antidote. Autoinjector. Sir Frederick Banting. Castor oil. Central nervous system. Culture. Depot. Dose. Flanders. Georgi Markov. Gram. Half-life. Host. Kilogram. MOU. Mustard. Nanometer. NGO. Rift Valley fever. Spore. Syndrome. Thermal radiation. Transgenic. Vapor. Volatility.

Answer: According to Andrew Ternay, these 30 words, with 283 others, make up "the language of

nightmares", described as "buzz words that strike terror in our hearts" in his book's foreword by Harry Salem, editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Applied Technology*.

Dr Ternay, in his preface, puts forward a rationale for compiling and publishing such a glossary. Claiming that the events of 11 September 2001 have "influenced our [American] language", he states: "In this work I have tried to introduce you to the language that we are liable to encounter as we learn

more about terrorism. Terrorism takes advantage of fear and fear feeds on ignorance, confusion and misinformation. My goal is to reduce terror levels by helping us to understand 'the language of nightmares'."

On the surface, such an aim is a noble one if the idea is to eradicate fear through knowledge. However, after two careful readings of this short glossary (75 pages, including appendices), I'm fairly certain that Dr Ternay (described on the web site of the Rocky Mountain Center for Homeland Defense as a former "contractor for the (US) Department of Defense for twenty years, developing medical countermeasures to both nuclear and chemical threats") comes nowhere near achieving his ambitious goal.

The Language of Nightmares is simply a list of definitions, most of which could have been put together by anyone with access to the internet or a dictionary. And, in many cases, the often minimal descriptions don't really help the reader understand why the author thinks these words might stimulate terror or, given his premise for producing this publication, how his explanations might help reduce such fear.

For instance, there is the unravelling of the mysterious acronyms, whose meanings are meant to clear up the terror that mystery always suggests:

"FTO: Foreign Terrorist Organization.

"NGO: Non-Governmental Organization.

"PHS: Public Health Service."

And strange (to American readers only) weights and measures:

"Kilogram: One thousand grams, about 2.2 pounds."

"Gram: . . . A paper clip weighs about one gram. In the traditional U.S. system, one ounce is equal to about 28 grams."

And technical, medical and scientific words:

"Plastic explosive: An explosive substance with the consistency of dough. It is normally stored moist in order to reduce the chance of it exploding." "Radioisotope: An isotope that is radioactive. A particular radioisotope may occur in nature or may be synthetic, i.e., man made. The half-lives of some radioisotopes are very short while others may extend for years. A number of radioisotopes are used commercially or in medicine."

"Turpenite: An explosive used by the French in W.W.I that the Germans initially mistook for a chemical weapon."

Only three personal names made it into the list, and I wondered why knowing their biographical data would shield me from panic:

"Banting, Sir Fredrick [sic]: (1891-1941) He shared the Noble [sic] Prize (1923) for the discovery of insulin and was a key figure in Canadian non-traditional warfare activities leading up to World War II."

"Markov, Georgi: A Bulgarian exile who was assassinated in London in 1978. The weapon used was a gun disguised to look like an umbrella and loaded with ricin."

"Schrader, Gerhard: (1903-1990) A German chemist who led a research group that synthesized the class of nerve agents now termed G-agents. Included in this group are sarin, soman and tabun. Much of this work was done in the mid-to-late 1930's at the I. G. Farbon [sic] Company."

Nor could I understand how the following information would help me keep a clear head and not succumb to fear:

"Flanders: A medieval country that was located on the coast of northwest Europe. It included northern Belgium and small portions of the Netherlands and France. Its more famous cities include Ghent, Antwerp, Ypres and Bruges."

The book ends with five appendices:

1. Indicators of a chemical attack — including "a lack of insect life".

2. Indicators of a biological attack — including 'an unexpected increase in the number of sick or dying people or animals' and 'hand-held spraying devices that have been abandoned'.

3. Indicators of a nuclear attack — including "materials that seem to glow".

4. What do you say when you call 911 — the emergency phone number in the United States.

5. Chemical structures of the chemicals listed in the glossary — illegible, and thus useless, to non-chemists.

The amazing effect of such a little book was to daze me with an overload of words, an even greater "underload" of their meaning, or of their context, and context is surely the defining factor in how words can create or diffuse panic. However, memorizing these terms might help us to know what to do if we ever encounter these "buzz words that strike terror in our hearts":

"Hey, Bob! Look out, the invaders are spraying us with SEB!"

"That's okay, honey, I've read Ternay's book and I know that SEB is Staphylococcal enterotoxin B, so I don't feel any terror at all."

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The Editors' WebWatch

The Editors' WebWatch is intended to be a membership-driven resource of web sites for editors and writers in the sciences (contributions should be sent to Moira Vekony at DunaScripts@editors.ca).

Never-ending URLs

Have you ever had to dictate to someone on the telephone the URL for a specific page on your web site, and realized just how long it is (and hence how easy it would be to get it wrong). Even worse, have you ever sat deliberating where to break a long URL in a printed document, and then spent time wondering whether others will be able to type it into their browser without errors? Long Web addresses (URLs) are tricky to remember and dictate to others and they often break across more than one line when being sent by e-mail, which stops the recipient copying and pasting into the browser. URL shortening services claim to overcome this problem by shortening cumbersome URLs, and giving you a much shorter and easy to remember alternative.

With one such service, for example, this long URL (152 characters) www.multimap.com/map/browse.cgi?client=public&db=pc&addr1=&client=public&addr2=&advanced=&addr3=&pc=SW1A1AA&quicksearch=SW1A+1AA&cidr_client=none can be shortened to just 22 characters: <http://digbig.com/3bbd>

When your contacts enter this shortened version of the URL into their web browser they are automatically redirected to the correct site. URL-shortening services are a relatively new invention; most claim to be free, but one supposes that they make money by paid advertising (after all, there really is No Free Lunch . . .). It is too early to tell how permanent or reliable these shortened URLs are, when and how they expire, and what happens when they do expire (i.e. presumably they can then be reallocated to other users). A useful site to visit, which explains these issues and more, is <http://notlong.com/links/>, and a list of URL-shortening services can be found at .

Public Library of Science: Biology

www.publibofscience.org
This is one mainly for the biologists among us, but other disciplines are billed as "coming soon to a website near you". (PLoS Medicine will be launched in 2004, and PLoS Chemistry, PLoS Computer Science, PLoS Genetics and PLoS Oncology are in the planning stages.)

The Public Library of Science was founded three years ago with the aim

of making scientific information freely available to the community — especially to those without access to a research library or the funds to pay for journal subscriptions. Initially PLoS was a "grassroots organization of scientists, advocating the establishment and growth of online public libraries of science, such as the National Institutes of Health's PubMed Central, to provide free and unrestricted access to the scientific literature". With the launch of PLoS Biology, PLoS has now become a publisher. The aim is to demonstrate that high quality journals can flourish without having to charge for access. "If we succeed, everyone who has access to a computer and an Internet connection will be a keystroke away from our living treasury of scientific and medical knowledge."

So, how are these publications to be funded? Instead of the subscription method of payment, where it is the end-user who ultimately foots the publication bill, the authors themselves will pay a fee when their manuscript is accepted (the fee is currently 1500 US dollars). The aim of PLoS is to have this fee incorporated into the cost of doing the research itself, so funding bodies will be the ones paying.

The logic is sound; now we have to wait for the authors to start using this service, and in disciplines other than biology and medicine. (For the full version of this editorial, which appeared in the first issue of PLoS Biology, go to the web site www.plosbiology.org/plosonline/.)

PLoS Biology is now in its third issue (one issue per month, starting in October 2003). I spent some time browsing around the three issues, and I have to say that I am impressed. I cannot comment on the quality of the original research in most of the papers but the presentation of the text, the quality of the editorial work and the figures (particularly the figures — I was looking at immunocytochemistry and electron microscopy images) are excellent. Articles are available as a synopsis, full text, print PDF and screen PDF. No registration is required to browse and read/print, but there is an optional e-mail alert service which will send you a list of contents for the current issue as it becomes available.

PLoS is a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation with headquarters in San Francisco, California, and is governed

by a ten-member Board of Directors, with PLoS co-founder Harold Varmus as Chairman.

Encyclopedia of Typography and Electronic Communication

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/profirst/encycl2.htm#index>
This site is exactly what it claims to be. It has an interesting search page featuring alphabet soup, and contains hundreds of the more obscure typography terms. Terms found in standard dictionaries are not generally included unless the creators (Production First Software) think a better definition is needed. A good site to bookmark for when you have a typography or electronic communication term that you are not familiar with.

The Electronic Mathematical Archiving Network Initiative (EMANI)

www.emani.org/index.htm
Hosted by Springer-Verlag in Heidelberg, Germany, this site had not — at the time of writing — been updated since May 2003. On the home page is the statement "The aim of the Electronic Mathematics Archives Network Initiative (EMANI) is to provide long-term preservation and access to mathematics literature. A network of reference libraries will provide the infrastructure. Born digital content will be supplemented with retrospectively digitised material." These "retrodigitized journals" are provided by Cornell University Library, SUB Gottingen, MathDoc and Tsinghua University Library (China). Fortunately there are lots of direct links to journal web sites via these institutes, the contents of which have been updated rather more recently (one of the more useful links is one to the European Mathematical Information Service). Although nowhere near the vastness of PubMed, and as yet without any of its search facilities (or advertising or the necessity to register, fortunately), this has the potential to develop into a useful resource for editors of mathematics and related subjects. We will need to watch it carefully to see the direction in which it develops.

PUBLIST

www.publist.com
PubList.com is a privately funded enterprise based in Rockland,

Massachusetts. It claims to be the only internet-based reference for more than 150 000 domestic and international print and electronic publications including magazines, journals, e-journals, newsletters, and monographs. If you need to find detailed publication information (for example titles, formats, publishers' addresses, editor contacts and ISSN) this is a good site to use, and access to the database is free. It is possible to search or browse on title, publisher, subject, or combinations of these by using the advanced search feature. What seems to be a particularly useful facility is the means to search on the unique eight-digit ISSN, and in the event that the ISSN you search for is not in the PubList.com database, they will generate the same search in the Library of Congress online catalogue on your behalf. It is possible to order copies of journal articles via Infotrieve's online document delivery service which gives access to the complete text of most journal articles; these can be purchased as either PDFs (delivered electronically) or photocopies.

The search facility itself is very easy to use, but the degree of immediate success depends on the title you are searching for. For example, I entered "AIDS" with the intention of looking up the journal of the same name. I got a list of more than 160 titles that include the word AIDS: inspection of the list showed some duplication and the list itself was organized alphabetically, which meant that the acronym itself was 80th on the list. However, searching on a rather more unusual string (*European Journal of Biochemistry*) turned up the one item I wanted.

In addition to academic journals, "check-out rack" titles are also listed. So if you want to know who publishes your favourite "living" magazine, how many issues are published per year, languages available, and how to contact the editor, you can use PubList.

More WAME

www.wame.org/

The discussions on the WAME Listserv are topical and extensive and in recent months there have been several excellent ones. The WAME Webmasters have now posted four of these at <http://wame.org/listservdis.htm> (they have also been announced on the WAME home page):

- Free Access to Medical Research (posted December 16, 2003)
- Impact Factor (posted December 16, 2003)
- Indigenous: To Capitalize or Not (posted December 16, 2003)

- Pictures of Patients (posted December 16, 2003)

These WAME Listserv discussions have been compiled as resources for WAME members; they have been lightly edited and include links to articles referenced within the discussion (some articles are freely available). To learn more about the WAME Listserv, go to www.wame.org/wametalk.htm

Newsletter Editors' Resource List

www.tedgoff.com/erlist.html
The Newsletter Editors' Resource List is a US-oriented collection of resources covering virtually all aspects of editing, writing and publishing. It includes, in addition to the usual collection of style and grammar guides, links to resources giving guidance on creating online publications, associations (although I note that EASE is not amongst those listed), libraries, photography and journalism resources, publications (including legal aspects, eZines, newspapers, and even a collection of cartoons that (with payment of course) you may use in your newsletters. There is so much information that it is impossible to give a detailed description here, and I can only suggest that you take a look at it for yourself. However, be prepared to be "lost in cyberspace" for some time

The Lancet Backfiles

www.info.sciencedirect.com/backfiles/collections/lancet/index.shtml

Here we have a prime candidate for the DigBig treatment [see above]! But no matter, The Lancet Backfiles are now available on ScienceDirect as fully searchable PDFs, supported by citations, abstracts and references. This is good news indeed for those of you who work for institutions whose libraries subscribe to ScienceDirect. However, for the individual user access is rather limited (i.e. limited to the table of contents, although one can purchase access to individual articles at 30 US dollars each by using a credit card). That said, there is now "a historical archive of over 340,000 articles dating from *The Lancet's* inception in 1823". *The Lancet* has published some of the first reports on such groundbreaking medical research as Lister's antiseptic principle, *Helicobacter pylori*, HIV transmission, in vitro fertilization, mad cow disease and SARS as a coronavirus.

For your leisure time

Here are two sites that you may find interesting when you have some spare time on your hands, but don't

want to "waste" it in the Just for Fun section.

Bookcrossing

<http://bookcrossing.com/>

The act of freeing books: "It's a global *book club* that crosses time and space. It's a *reading group* that knows no geographical boundaries."

The concept of this one is interesting and I must admit to more than a little scepticism when I first looked at the site. Would it work? Why do it? Would I (for whom happiness is an overflowing bookshelf) find myself able to do it? The concept is simple, liberate a book that you've read (but first register it with the Bookcrossing site) and let someone else find it and read it, and then send it out "into the wild" again to repeat the cycle. When I looked at the web site I discovered that one can hunt for books in one's own area. According to the site there are 12 books "in the wild" in my city of 300,000 people. The site lists where and when the books were liberated (and also the titles) so I climbed into the car and went hunting. I came up empty — the one book that had been liberated at a local shopping mall had disappeared and the one that was supposedly in the video rental store near to the university had been and gone (i.e. it had been "caught" but not yet registered as such). However, my favourite shopping mall apparently is the host to one more "in the wild" Bookcrossing book — so I'll be there tomorrow looking for it. Meanwhile I'm going to liberate a book of my own, I just need to choose a good place to let it go

Darwin Centre

www.nhm.ac.uk/darwincentre/

The Natural History Museum in London, UK, has just opened its Darwin Centre, which contains world-class storage facilities for precious collections and new laboratories for the Museum's scientists, and allows access behind the scenes for visitors. A part of this new centre — Darwin Centre Live — is a varied programme of free events where one can meet Museum curators and researchers to find out about their work, recent scientific discoveries and the Museum's vast collections. All well and good if you live in London, I hear you say. But the Darwin Centre Live events will also be regularly broadcast live on the web site, and each presentation will be shown on several different days and at different times, thus allowing access to many viewers. Take a look at the upcoming programme for the next two weeks and you are sure to

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find something of interest. In order to view the video streams you will need Windows Media Player (most newer PCs are supplied with this, but it is offered as a free download on the Darwin Centre site) and some of the presentations require Quicktime (also offered as a free download). Am I impressed? You bet! Phase Two of the Darwin Centre is scheduled to open in 2007.

Just for fun

This issue's coffee break (or other break — read on . . .) sites are:

Ethnovetweb

www.ethnovetweb.com/

This is a site about ethnoveterinary medicine, or how people around the world keep their animals healthy and productive. A site with a serious message, it also has a lighter side: in the publications section there is a title *A field manual of camel diseases*; click on the "humour" link on the left of the page. Enjoy.

The Chronicle of Higher Education

<http://chronicle.com/>

This readable collection of news,

views, articles and career advice is aimed at those working in higher education in the USA (published in Washington DC). There is an amusing article on textbook writing at <http://chronicle.com/free/v49/i43/43b00501.htm>. But don't let it put you off writing that next great guide to science editing

Contributors to this issue's WebWatch were Margaret Cooter, Marie-Louise Desbarats-Schonbaum, Paola del Castro, Jane Sykes.

News Notes

Making links

CrossRef, the publisher linking service, has dropped its DOI retrieval fees for members and affiliates. DOI links from citations and bibliographic databases to full text are expected to increase greatly as a result. Smaller publishers, in particular, are seeing gains from participating in a global interlinking network, with increased traffic to their journal websites, meaning that the articles published in such journal are more accessible than before. (www.crossref.org/01company/pr/press20031113.html)

Open access developments

October was one of the richest months for open access in memory, according to the SPARC Open Access Newsletter: "We saw the first PLoS journal, the Berlin Declaration on open access, an open-access journal series from the University of California, a \$12 million grant from the Australian government to a handful of open-access repository projects, news from the ambitious journal scanning project from PubMed Central, an agreement between Oxford University Press and Oxford University filling the institutional archive with the OUP

articles by OU authors, an OA-friendly statement from ALPSP, an OA-friendly communiqué from UNESCO, Amazon's free search service for full-text books, the AGORA Project, the Ptolemy Project, a call for a worldwide boycott of Cell Price journals to protest their high prices, signs of the spread of the boycott to all Elsevier journals" — and more. Read about developments on www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/11-02-03.htm

Is it war?

A war of publishing models has begun between traditional journal

publishers and advocates of the new "open access" approach, says theBookseller.com (28 November). At a meeting organized by consultancy EPS in November, Jan Velterop of BioMed Central, representing the new breed of publisher, said: "I've done my stint as a traditional publisher, and have come to the conclusion that open access is a good model and potentially nicely profitable." BioMed Central has turned the old model on its head. It charges authors \$500 to publish their articles, but makes the research material available free to readers.

And October saw the launch of PLoS Biology, a new publishing model for journals (see WebWatch, this issue). Available free online (www.plos.org), the journal charges authors \$1500 per published paper and is the first of dozens such journals the Public Library of Science intends to launch in the next five years. They aim "to overturn an obsolete system that no longer serves the best interests of science or scientists." (*Science* 24 October 2003)

It's good to talk?

If you're worried about radiation risk from using your mobile phone, consider listening more and talking less. It seems that a system called DTX (discontinuous transmission) saves battery power in digital cell phones by drastically cutting the power of the signal the phone transmits when the user stops talking — from 240 milliwatts to 28.8 milliwatts. (*New Scientist*, 13 September)

Now it's a crime to spam

Under a new British law, spammers face a £5000 fine if convicted in a magistrates court. The fine from a jury trial would be unlimited. Spammers will not face prison, according to the new law, introduced on 18 September (less than 24 hours after Australia introduced its anti-spamming law). Britain's Office of the Information Commissioner enforces the regulations. The law does not, however, cover workplace e-mail addresses. All EU countries were required to implement the directive on privacy and electronic communications by 31 October 2003 (see www.iointechnologies.com/media/emarketing_whitepaper.pdf). Italian lawmakers have imposed tough new regulations to fine spammers up to €80,000 and impose a maximum prison term of three years. (www.wired.com/news/politics/0,1283,60491,00.html)

Code for teleworkers

The British government has launched a code to help the estimated 2 million people who use IT to work away from the traditional environment. It lays out voluntary guidelines and covers data security, privacy, equipment, organization of work, taxation, and health and safety information of which home workers should be aware. Teleworkers are told they have the same collective rights as workers at the employer's premises. The code also looks at what training and career progression advice should be made available to workers based away from the office (see www.dti.gov.uk/). (*Sunday Times*, 31 August)

Soften up those authors

Copy editors will find *Communicating in style* particularly useful in "breaking authors" into having their writing copy-edited because the book is, to quote John le Carré, "Courteous, unfrighting and essential. A perfect companion to Fowler's *A dictionary of modern english usage* for today's communicators." The main text deals with different forms of text — headings, lists, abbreviations, tables, references, etc — supported by 90 examples, nearly 150 quotes (from printed sources and web pages), and useful resources (web sites, software, and templates). Annexes cover fonts, formats for postal addresses and telephone numbers, and alternative spellings. More details available at www.teriin.org/pub/books/cs.htm

Don't lose the plot

One r or two in "forest plot"? There is a story making the rounds that these diagrams, used to show the results of meta-analyses, are named after Pat Forrest, a breast cancer researcher. Perhaps this is one of those urban myths? The alternative creation myth is that they resemble the branches of trees, hence "forest". In some places, however, they are known as caterpillar plots, and a paper that is making the rounds of journals that publish statistical articles is entitled "Should caterpillar plots be mothballed?"

A matter of survival

Publishers of small journals hoping to turn a profit need to keep their eyes on "the big guys" and keep thinking of the best way to respond. Elsevier are under international attack for their business model, which is seen as "greedy". Coverage of this is widely available (see The Editor's Bookshelf); for example, Cornell University

Library is cancelling several hundred Elsevier journals and has explained the reasons why in a public letter. www.library.cornell.edu/scholarlycomm/elsevier.html

Virtual statistics

According to a recent survey by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Germany tops the nations with 84.7 web sites per 1000 people. Denmark and Norway follow with 71.7 and 66.4, while the US, UK, and Canada all have about 60. Mexico, Turkey, Greece and Japan all had less than three web sites per 1000 population. "OECD Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard" is available at www.oecd.org/ and is a goldmine for the statistics-conscious editor (or pub quiz participant) — for instance: On average, 28.2% of employed persons in OECD countries have a tertiary-level degree. The United States (36.8%) and Japan (36.5%) rank far ahead of the European Union (24.0%), which also has large cross-country disparities. Furthermore: In 2001, China had the second highest number of researchers in the world (743 000), behind the United States (1.3 million), but ahead of Japan (648 000) and Russia (505 000).

Competition winners

The "book of the year" in the BMA Medical Book Competition is *Palliative care: an Oxford core text* by Christina Faull and Richard Woolf (OUP 2002). The patient information award went to 222.cancernorth.nhs.uk, the web site of the Northern Cancer Network, and Sarah Boseley of the *Guardian* was chosen as medical journalist of the year. Publishers wishing to submit titles for the 2004 competition should contact Lorna McLaughlin, competition administrator, at BMA Library, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JP, UK, tel +44 (0)20 7383 6698, fax +44 (0)20 7383 2544, email lmclaughlin@bma.org.uk

Did their editors know?

Did any of the publishers of the books submitted, because of their high standards, to the BMA Medical Book Competition (above) let their freelance editors and proofreaders know? Apparently not, according to an unofficial survey conducted on the SfEPMedical e-group. Publishers (and project managers) please remember: it's these bits of positive feedback that make it all worthwhile for freelancers.

Using Microsoft Word for typesetting

A free article titled "Books, typography, and Microsoft Word" by Aaron Shepard (www.aaronshp.com/publishing) explains how Word can be used to set type of a quality high enough to be used in desktop book publishing. Aaron also offers an expanded version of the article in e-book form — typeset in Word, of course.

... and PowerPoint for — art?

You never know where run-of-the-mill technology will take you. Intending to spoof PowerPoint as a dumbed-down form of expression, David Byrne, best known as the lead singer of Talking Heads, decided to experiment with PowerPoint as an artistic medium — and ponder whether it shapes how we talk and think. The ensuing book and DVD compilation, *Envisioning emotional epistemological information*, quickly sold out its initial printing run. The book includes mostly lucid musings on how PowerPoint has ushered in "the end of reason," with pictures of bar charts gone hideously astray, fields of curved arrows that point at nothing, disturbing close-ups of wax hands and eyebrows, and a photo of Dolly the cloned sheep enclosed by punctuation brackets. [Rather more interesting than the usual presentation, then?] (<http://australianit.news.com.au/>

articles/0,7204,8277291%5E15397%5E%5Enbv%5E,00.html)

Digital deposit

The UK has created an open-access national archive and adopted a new "legal deposit" law requiring UK creators of new digital content to put copies into the archive. There are nearly 3 million web sites with ".uk" in their titles and although many are of merely passing interest, many will be fascinating to future historians. The legal deposit libraries (the British Library, the National Library of Scotland and the National Library of Wales; the University Library, Cambridge; the Bodleian Library, Oxford; and Trinity College Library, Dublin) will have to use their judgment in "harvesting" web sites and electronic publications. (<http://education.guardian.co.uk/elearning/story/0,10577,1077610,00.html>)

From abbé to zigzag

The Guardian now has its style book online — a facsimile of the 1928 version, that is (<http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-file/Guardian/documents/2003/10/22/1928Styleguide.pdf>). In addition to a list of "adopted spellings" which runs from abbé to zigzag, it's full of historical tidbits: the abbreviations ult., inst., and prox. were barred from letters to the editor, for example, and titles of foreign and Welsh publications were to be preceded by

"the" outside the inverted commas (surrounding the title) or by its foreign equivalent inside. It's a slim volume, just 22 pages.

Research results worth waiting for

EASE editors who suffer from chocolate cravings will be interested to learn that a diet rich in cocoa beans helps to reduce stress, put off ageing, and protect cells from disease. The bad news is that the research for this was carried out in rats (and sponsored by a chocolate manufacturer) — but volunteers in France and Canada are even now seeing whether these results can be replicated in humans. The effects seem to be due to polyphenols, a form of antioxidants — which are also found in red wine and green tea but are particularly concentrated and active in chocolate. "Scientists warn," says the *Financial Times* (23 December 2003) "that the anti-thrombotic effects or antioxidant aspects of the cocoa bean should be balanced against the fact that chocolate is no dietary substitute for fresh fruit and vegetables."

Contributions to News Notes

Please send items for News Notes to Margaret Cooter, BMJ, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London, WC1H 9JR; mcooter@bmj.com.
Thanks to: Marie-Louise Desbarats-Schönbaum, Jane Smith, Jane Sykes, Robert Genn, Yateendra Joshi, Kathleen Lyle, Richard Hurley.

Forthcoming meetings and courses

2nd journal publishers forum

PA/ALPSP seminar
28 January 2004 London, UK
An annual discussion forum and dinner for senior journal publishers. (Contact: Harriet Lawrence at the Publishers Association, tel. +44 (0)20 7691 9191, hlawrence@publishers.org.uk)

Managing risk in a publishing environment

ALPSP seminar
17 February 2004 London, UK
(Contact ALPSP, tel. +44 (0)1865 247776, events@alpsp.org, web site www.alpsp.org/events.htm)

Asilomar Conference

American Medical Writers Association meeting
7–10 March 2004 Berkeley, CA, USA
Open sessions include Good Publication Practice for Pharmaceutical Companies: The Authorship Issue; Pharmaceutical

Advertising; The Art of Paragraphing; Public Library of Science (PloS); and Practical Medical Illustration. See http://amwancal.org/Asilomar_conf.htm.

Preserving the archives of science

ALPSP seminar
March 2004 London, UK
(Contact ALPSP, tel. +44 (0)1865 247776, events@alpsp.org, web site www.alpsp.org/events.htm)

Scholarship-friendly publishing

20th International learned journals seminar (ALPSP)
26 March 2004 London, UK
(Contact: ALPSP, tel. +44 (0)1245 260571, events@alpsp.org, web site www.alpsp.org/events.htm)

Indexing — marching forwards

Society of Indexers conference
2–4 April 2004 Chester, UK
The conference will provide a wide-ranging programme around the

themes of new skills for indexers and new areas in which to apply them. (See web site, www.socind.demon.co.uk/confern/conf04.htm.)

How libraries work

ALPSP seminar
21 April 2004 London, UK
(Contact ALPSP, tel. +44 (0)1865 247776, events@alpsp.org, web site www.alpsp.org/events.htm)

Scientific information in a digital age

EASE seminar, with the collaboration of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans
7 May 2004 Barcelona, Spain
A half-day seminar to be held before the annual general meeting of EASE. Details in the leaflet distributed with this issue. Cost: free to EASE members who join/rejoin before 1 April 2004, €80 for non-members, €20 for students. Enquiries to Reme Melero, bibrem@iata.csic.es. (Contact: Georgianna Oja, Secretary of EASE,

Nyyrikintie 14 A 1, FIN-33540
Tampere, Finland, e-mail
secretary@ease.org.uk; web site
www.ease.org.uk/)

Preprints and accelerated publishing on the web

ALPSP seminar
May 2004 London, UK
(Contact ALPSP, tel. +44 (0)1865
247776, e-mail events@alpsp.org,
web site www.alpsp.org/events.htm)

CSE 47th annual meeting

14-18 May 2004 Vancouver, BC
(Contact: Council of Science Editors,
Inc., 12100 Sunset Hills Road, Suite
130, Reston VA 20190, USA; tel. +1
703 437 4377, fax +1 703 435 4390,
e-mail CSE@CouncilScienceEditors.
org, web www.
CouncilScienceEditors.org)

Effective outsourcing

ALPSP seminar
June 2004 London, UK
(Contact ALPSP, tel. +44 (0)1865
247776, e-mail events@alpsp.org,
web site www.alpsp.org/events.htm)

Meeting of minds

15th Annual SfEP conference
12-14 Sept 2004 Egham, Surrey, UK
Meeting to be held at Royal Holloway
College, close to the Savill Garden,
Virginia Water, Windsor and
Runnymede. There will be a
programme of talks, workshops,
special interest groups/forums, and a
keynote speaker. Training courses
will be held either side of the
conference. (Contact: Society for
Editors and Proofreaders, General
Secretary, e-mail admin@sfep.org.uk,
web site www.sfep.org.uk)

Future trends in science editing and publishing: bringing science to society

IFSE-12
10-12 October 2004 Merida, Mexico
The 12th meeting of the International
Federation of Science Editors will
take place in Merida, Yucatan. Details
on web site, [http://bvs.insp.mx/ifse/
index.htm](http://bvs.insp.mx/ifse/index.htm)

2005

CSE 48th annual meeting

20-24 May 2005 Atlanta, GA, USA
(Contact: Council of Science Editors,
Inc., 12100 Sunset Hills Road, Suite
130, Reston VA 20190, USA; tel. +1
703 437 4377, fax +1 703 435 4390,
e-mail CSE@CouncilScienceEditors.
org, web www.

CouncilScienceEditors.org)

5th international congress on peer review and biomedical publication

15-17 Sept 2005 Chicago, Illinois
(Contact: jama-peer@jama-archives.
org or see web site, www.jama-peer.
org)

COURSES

ALPSP training courses, briefings and technology updates

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: events@alpsp.org, web
www.alpsp.org/events.htm.
Association of Learned and
Professional Society Publishers Ltd,
47 Vicarage Road, Chelmsford, Essex,
CM2 9BS, UK; tel. +44 (0)1245-260
571, fax +44 (0)1245-260 935.)

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, e-mail 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, e-mail publishing.
training@bookhouse.co.uk, web site
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. (Contact:
SfEP, Riverbank House, 1 Putney
Bridge Approach, London SW6 3JD,
UK; tel. +44 (0)20 7736 0901, e-mail
trainingenquiries@sfep.org.uk, web
site, www.sfep.org.uk)

Society of Indexers workshops

The Society of Indexers runs
workshops for beginners and more
experienced indexers in various cities
in the UK. Details and booking forms

are on their web site (www.indexers.org.uk); e-mail admin@indexers.org.uk or contact jane.henley@britishlibrary.net.

Tim Albert Training

Courses on writing, science writing
and setting up publications. (Contact:
Tim Albert Training, Paper Mews
Court, 284 High Street, Dorking, RH4
1QT, UK; tel. +44 (0)1306 877993, fax
+44 (0)1306 877929, e-mail
tatraining@compuserve.com, web site
www.timalbert.co.uk)

University of Chicago Publishing Program

(Contact: Publishing Program,
Graham School of General Studies,
5835 S. Kimbark Avenue, Chicago, IL
60637-1608, USA; fax +1 773 702 6814,
web [www.grahamschool.
uchicago.edu/contact.shtml](http://www.grahamschool.uchicago.edu/contact.shtml))

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 Ebbes Street, Oxford OX1
1PT, UK; tel. +44 (0)1865-286953, fax
+44 (0)1865-286934, e-mail
[gaye.walker@continuing-education.
ox.ac.uk](mailto:gaye.walker@continuing-education.ox.ac.uk), web site [www.conted.ox.ac.
uk/cpd/personaldev](http://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/cpd/personaldev))

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

20 March 2004, Princeton, New Jersey
20 March 2004, Chicago, Illinois
13 May 2004, Vancouver, British
Columbia (CSE meeting)
20 October 2004, St Louis, Missouri
(AMWA meeting)
March 2005, University of California
San Francisco (Asilomar)
March 2005, Boston, Massachusetts
19 May 2005, Atlanta, Georgia (CSE)
28 September 2005, Pittsburgh,
Pennsylvania (AMWA)

For more information on taking a
BELS examination to certify your
editing skills and add ELS (editor in
the life sciences) to your
qualifications, visit the web site at
www.bels.org to obtain the
application form and a complete
schedule of upcoming examinations,
or contact Leslie Neistadt (e-mail:
neistadt@hughston.com, fax: +1 706
576 3348, mailing address: Hughston
Sports Medicine Foundation, Inc,
6262 Veterans Parkway, Columbus,
GA 31909, USA).

The Editor's Bookshelf

SCIENCE

Check E. 2003. **Task force set up to combat threat of political interference.** *Nature* 20 November 218; doi:10.1038/426218a

Drazen JD, Ingelfinger JR. 2003. **Grants, politics, and the NIH.** *New England Journal of Medicine* 4 December 349:2259–2261. Investigator-initiated grant funding is vital to biomedical research. The selection of research for funding should be based solely on merit; there is no place for politics in the system. The authors question the motivation behind numerous requests from members of the US Congress for details of specific grants given by the US National Institutes of Health.

Hermanowicz JC. 2003. **Scientists and satisfaction.** *Social Studies of Science* 33(1):45–73. Explores satisfaction as a developmental process in which people learn how to narrate their careers in the socially accepted formats that their given world of academic work prescribes. Based on a national study of academic physicists' careers; detailed accounts of their experience in academe are presented.

McKee M, Coker R. 2003. **Politics and science.** *The Lancet* 4 October 362:1159. Letter justifying publication of commentary. Politics affects health fundamentally and often interferes with health policy by imposing its own agenda.

McNay I. 2003. **Assessing the assessment: an analysis of the UK Research Assessment Exercise, 2001, and its outcomes, with special reference to research in education.** *Science and Public Policy* 30(1). The primary purpose of the RAE in the UK is to produce ratings of research quality. This study found that there were issues of clarity and consistency in the assignment of points for research quality among the various disciplines.

Rier DA. 2003. **Gender, lifecourse and publication decisions in toxic-exposure epidemiology.** *Social Studies of Science* 33(1):269–300. Examines gender differences in how scientists approach publication decisions for research bearing potential societal implications. Men started out in publishing potentially controversial papers in visible journals likely to attract media and public attention but grew more

cautious with age, rank and experience. Among women, the situation was less homogenous, with some following this pattern and others a reverse pattern.

Wray KB. 2003. **Is science really a young man's game?** *Social Studies of Science* 33(1):137–149. Middle-aged scientists are responsible for initiating more scientific revolutions than young scientists, given the proportion of each group in the total population of scientists.

Zwanziger LL. 2003. **Biology, ethics, and public policy: deliberations at an unstable intersection.** *The Anatomical Record* November 275B(1):185–189.

Biology, ethics, and politics intersect in many public policy issues. The unique features of the meeting point in each case are affected by changes in scientific and technological knowledge, moral analysis in a pluralistic society, and political relations. No one of the three can be ignored without repercussions. The ethical dimension must allow for genuine differences in fundamental moral stance, which always persist alongside scientific developments. Two scientific/medical issues with considerable ethical and political implications are discussed: the application of human embryonic stem cell research in regenerative medicine, and neuroscientific reductionism in the context of behavioural research and moral responsibility. Public advisory committees and other governmental structures for pursuing public policy should not rely merely on cost-benefit analysis to form policy, as if it were uniquely objective, but should also recognize the necessity of considering science and ethics together as two separate yet complementary foundations of policy. Minimizing the distinctness of the biological and ethical dimensions will make any conclusions unstable and their later implementation more difficult.

PUBLISHING

Adomi EE, Mordi C. 2003. **Publication in foreign journals and promotion of academics in Nigeria.** *Learned Publishing* 16(4):259–263. Nigerian universities insist on their academics seeking publication in foreign (non-Nigerian)-based journals. This is seen as a form of placement assessment: the job of an academic is not localized so any

academics worthy of their calling should publish not only in home-based journals but also in those published abroad. This policy may weaken Nigerian journals but if the priority is to support and encourage Nigerian academics and to raise their general standards, this may result in an improvement in the position of indigenous journals.

Beckwith K. 2003. **Googled: the quest for visibility on the Internet.** *Learned Publishing* 16(4):277–283. Small publishing-related businesses find it hard to publicize their services and products to the scholarly and STM market. Getting listed on search engine results pages is difficult, due to the way that the most popular search engines rank sites. Galayaa, a small STM publishing services business based in The Netherlands, tried Google's AdWords service as a means of getting noticed and attracting new customers.

Morselli-Labate AM. 2003. **The availability of original data and statistics: an improvement in good publication practice.** *Journal of the Pancreas* November 4(6):193–199. Highlights aspects of good publication practice, with particular reference to data analysis, and proposes an innovative initiative for improving the quality of scientific information in this field. The initiative proposed here is aimed at making the original data and the statistical reports available to the scientific community together with the actual paper. The author argues that such a practice would be an improvement in the quality of publication, permitting verification of the results as well as allowing for further elaboration of the same data.

POLITICS OF PUBLISHING

[Letters] 2003. **Communicating risk.** *BMJ* 13 December 327:1403–1404. Correspondence relating to articles in *BMJ* of 27 September (327:691–694) concerning how doctors communicate risk to the general public and journal editors' responsibilities in this regard.

Tadmouri GO, Bissar-Tadmouri N. 2003. **Biomedical publications in an unstable region: the Arab world, 1988–2002.** *The Lancet* 362:1766. Arabs produce less than 1% of the biomedical citations in the world, despite the available wealth and human resources. Military spending by Arabs amounts to around US\$60 billion of the \$600 billion GDP per

year, whereas only \$0.9 billion is allocated to research and development. Regional conflicts have been the major reasons for the deterioration of biomedical output in the Arab world.

Authorship

Butler D. 2003. **Open-access row leads paper to shed authors.** *Nature* 25 September; 425:334.

An argument between the *New England Journal of Medicine* and one of the leaders of a movement for open access to the scientific literature has resulted in the journal rejecting a paper at the last minute and immediately reaccepting it without the names of four of the original authors.

Kennedy D. 2003. **Multiple authors, multiple problems.** *Science* 301:733. Authors should define their roles in and responsibility for research papers to avoid problems with accountability.

Rogers P. 2003. **Do's and don'ts for authors.** *Physics World* 16(11):13. Editorial discussing the task now facing the IUPAP working group on communications in physics in formulating guidelines. Includes a discussion of co-authorship and the suggestion that journals should send the acknowledgements to all authors.

Copyright

Davison P. 2003. **Reprographic rights in Singapore: the story of CLASS.** *Learned Publishing* 16(4):243–247. Describes the establishment and work of the Copyright Licensing and Administration Society of Singapore. The organization is supported by a majority of the local and international publishing communities on the island.

Gadd E, Oppenheim C, Probeta S. 2003. **RoMEO studies 4: an analysis of journal publishers' copyright agreements.** *Learned Publishing* 16(4):293–308.

An analysis of 80 copyright agreements from scholarly journal publishers, looking particularly at their effect on author self-archiving.

Harvey J. 2003. **What does ZWOLLE stand for?** *Learned Publishing* 16(4):290–292.

Seven principles outlining best practice in copyright management were agreed at the conference on copyright and universities, held in Zwolle in The Netherlands in December 2002.

[News] 2003. **EC announces copyright non-implementation**

procedures. *Managing Information* 10(7):6–7.

Examines the implications of the EC Directives on copyright and their delayed implementation by several EC countries.

Relationship with libraries

[No author listed] 2003. **Fire-fighting needed: publisher librarian relations, and the role of government in stimulating conflict.** *Managing Information* 10(7):4–5, 11. Publishers and librarians need each other and should avoid conflict, much of which is caused by government aims and expectations that are not adequately funded or thought through.

ECONOMICS AND FUNDING

Eaton J. 2003. **Dial out.** *Managing Information* 10(7):18. Distribution and access to research has become one of the most persistent and frequently debated topics in the information world, not least because so many different participants believe they have a stake.

Horton R. 2003. **21st-century biomedical journals: failures and futures.** *The Lancet* 362(9395):1510–1502.

The present market structure in journal publishing does not work to the advantage of scientists. Publishers provide a high-quality service but prices have risen well above inflation. Useful exposition of the current dilemmas in biomedical publishing.

Leopold SS, Warne WJ, Fritz Braunlich E, Shott S. 2003.

Association between funding source and study outcome in orthopaedic research. *Clinical Orthopaedics* October (415):293–301.

Tests the hypothesis that commercial funding, country of origin, and presence of a co-investigator with training in statistics are related to the likelihood of a published orthopaedic study arriving at a positive conclusion. All articles from the *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery* (American), the *Journal of Arthroplasty* and the *American Journal of Sports Medicine* published in one year were reviewed. Published studies that received funding from commercial parties were significantly more likely to report a positive outcome than studies that received no such funding. This does not imply the presence of a corrupting or causative influence of industry sponsorship on research outcomes; additional research is needed to determine whether such non-scientific factors actually affect study outcome or

likelihood of publication.

Melkin AD. 2003. **Personal View: Now that we're online: where's the "value added"?** *Learned Publishing* 16(4):314–315.

Will the value of your content — both editorially and online — be worth the price you charge for it in the eyes of your customers?

Wellcome Trust. 2003. **Economic analysis of scientific research publishing.** London: Wellcome Trust. Report commissioned from economic and management consultants. The current market did not help the long-term interests of the research community and electronic publishing is not currently challenging the dominance of commercial publishers. Various scenarios for the future are proposed.

PRACTICE OF PUBLISHING

Models of publishing

Crawford BD. 2003. **Open-access publishing: where is the value?** *The Lancet* 362:1578–1580.

Evaluation of the value of the open-access model of publication.

Dryburgh A. 2003. **Alternative futures for academic and professional publishing.** *Learned Publishing* 16(4):265–270.

Four generic models of publishing are proposed: 1) "business as usual", the traditional model; 2) database publishing, breaking publication into small units — article, chapter, table, figure; 3) author pays; 4) value added. The future is likely to be a mix of all four.

Lundberg GD. 2003. **The "omnipotent" Science Citation Index impact factor.** *MJA* 178:253–254.

Impact factors are limited in their usefulness and other methods of assessment should be found.

Tamber PS, Godlee F, Newmark P. 2003. **Open access to peer-reviewed research: making it happen.** *The Lancet* 362:1575–1577.

Evaluation of the business model of open-access publication, from BioMed Central authors.

Tananbaum G. 2003. **Of wolves and boys: the scholarly communication crisis.** *Learned Publishing* 16(4):285–289.

The case for self-publishing by academic institutions of scholarly research as a response to the 'serials crisis' is made against the background of the experience of Berkeley Electronic Press.

Peer review

Ammenwerth E, Wolff AC, Knaup P, et al. 2003. **Developing and evaluating criteria to help reviewers of biomedical informatics manuscripts.** Journal of the American Medical Information Association Sep–Oct;10(5):512–514. Epub 2003 Jun 04.

The authors have annually reviewed a large heterogeneous set of papers to produce the International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA) Yearbook of Medical Informatics. To support an objective and high-quality review process, they attempted to provide reviewers with a set of refined quality criteria, comprising 80 general criteria and an additional 60 criteria for specific types of manuscripts. A randomized controlled trial was done to evaluate application of the refined criteria on review outcomes. Reviewers applied the criteria-graded papers more strictly (lower overall scores), and junior reviewers appreciated the availability of the criteria, but there was no overall change in the inter-rater variability in reviewing the manuscripts.

Arnau C, Cobo E, Ribera JM, Cardellach F, Selva A, Urrutia A. 2003. **[Effect of statistical review on manuscript quality in Medicina Clinica (Barcelona): a randomized study.]** [Spanish] *Medicina Clinica (Barcelona)* 22;121(18):690–694. The statistical review of biomedical articles should result in an improved quality. The objective of this study was to compare the effects of clinical review and joint clinical and statistical review on manuscript quality, in articles submitted to *Medicina Clinica* (Barcelona), a Spanish weekly journal of internal medicine. Original papers arriving between May 2000 and February 2001 were randomized either to a clinical review group or a clinical and statistical review group. Two evaluators, blinded to the paper's group, assessed the quality improvement in both groups from submission to publication, using a modified version of the Goodman et al. scale. The inclusion of a statistical expert in the peer review process improves manuscript quality, although in the intention to treat analysis the improvement was not statistically significant.

[Editorial.] 2003. **Coping with peer rejection.** *Nature* 16 October 425:645. Accounts of rejected Nobel-winning discoveries highlight the conservatism in science. Despite their historical misjudgements, journal

editors can help but, above all, visionaries will need sheer persistence.

Jasko JJ, Wood JH, Schwartz HS. 2003. **Publication rates of abstracts presented at annual musculoskeletal tumor society meetings.** *Clinical Orthopaedics* (415):98–103. Beware of the unpublished abstract! 336 podium presentations from six annual meetings of the Musculoskeletal Tumor Society were identified and their publication was searched at a minimum of three years after the event. An effort was made to determine what percentage of these abstracts were eventually published in a peer-reviewed journal: 137 abstracts were published; a publication rate of 41%. Changes to the cohort, title, or authors occurred in approximately a third of the published articles. These results suggest that for various reasons the majority of presented material at meetings may not survive peer review and may not be scientifically valid.

Kljakovic-Gaspic M, Hren D, Marusic A, Marusic M. 2003. **Peer review time: how late is late in a small medical journal?** *Archives of Medical Research* 34(5):439–443. The review time in a small medical journal outside mainstream science was evaluated, looking at 1346 editorial requests for manuscript peer review sent from the *Croatian Medical Journal* to 690 reviewers from February 1998 to December 2001. There was no difference in delay for Croatian- and non-Croatian-authored manuscripts, but more reviews of articles on clinical medicine were delayed than those on public health. More reviews from non-Croatian or male reviewers were never returned to the editors. For reviews that arrived late, those from male reviewers were more delayed than those from female reviewers. Peer review time in such a journal may be comparable to review times in larger and more prestigious journals.

Ludbrook J. 2003. **Peer review of biomedical manuscripts: an update.** *Journal of Clinical Neuroscience* 10(5):540–542. At least two major sets of contributions to the matter of peer review of manuscripts have been published since the author's last article on this topic. In one, the merits of truly open peer review, in which the names of authors and their affiliations are revealed to reviewers, and the names of reviewers to authors, are extolled. The other contribution is not so original, in that

it exhorts biomedical investigators and authors to consult professional statisticians. The author is strongly in favour of open peer review for all biomedical journals, but has warned investigators and authors that statisticians often do not agree and, sometimes, violently disagree. A prospective comparative study of statistical reviewers and their reviews is suggested.

Mira-Perez, J. 2003. **Ideas for improving peer review.** *Physics Today* 56(11):11. Letter advocating reviewing without revealing authors' names and the publication of referees' reports online. It objects to late submission dates for papers transferred from one journal to another and suggests journals should have a section where authors can call attention to papers that do not properly cite their work.

Skorka P. **How do impact factors relate to the real world?** *Nature* 16 October 425:661.

Wagner AK, Boninger ML, Levy C, Chan L, Gater D, Kirby RL. 2003. **Peer review: issues in physical medicine and rehabilitation.** *American Journal of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation* 82(10):790–802. Peer reviewers have been shown to be inconsistent and to miss major strengths and deficiencies in studies. Both reviewer and author biases, including conflicts of interest and positive outcome publication biases, are frequent topics of study and debate. Additional concerns have been raised regarding inappropriate authorship and inadequate reporting of the ethical process involving human and animal experimentation. Despite these issues, a good peer review can improve the quality of the research reported in medical journals.

Wets K, Weedon D, Velterop J. 2003. **Post-publication filtering and evaluation: Faculty of 1000.** *Learned Publishing* 16(4):249–258. Faculty of 1000 (www.facultyof1000.com) is a new online literature awareness and assessment service of research papers, on the basis of selections by 1400 of the world's top biologists, that combines metrics with judgement. The service offers a systematic and comprehensive form of post-publication peer review that focuses on the best papers regardless of the journal in which they are published. This new service has been widely acclaimed and is perceived as a positive force for redressing the balance in favour of a paper rather than the forum in which it is published.

Young SN. 2003. **Peer review of manuscripts: theory and practice.** *Journal of Psychiatry and Neuroscience* 28(5):327–330. Discusses the specific process in this journal in the context of wider practice and policy.

ETHICAL ISSUES

Durrani, Matin. 2003. **Konstanz clears Schön.** *Physics World* 16(11):9. A commission set up by the University of Konstanz to investigate alleged misconduct in the reporting of scientific results concluded that the technical errors, which are undoubtedly present, are not on their own enough to substantiate the accusation of negligence.

Agres T. 2003. **NIH to launch ethics review.** *The Scientist* 10 December. [www.biomedcentral.com/news/2003/1210/06]

The US National Institutes of Health (NIH), stung by recent allegations of financial wrongdoing on the part of some present and former senior officials, plans to announce a major review of how the agency handles conflict-of-interest matters when top agency employees receive lucrative consulting contracts from private companies. NIH Director Elias A. Zerhouni will announce the creation of a panel of advisory committee members and outside experts "to review how NIH addresses outside consulting activity in order to identify systemic solutions for improvement".

Bridson J, Hammond C, Leach A, Chester MR. **Making consent patient centred.** *BMJ* 15 November 327:1159–1161.

To make consent properly patient centred, clinicians need to ask patients what they want from treatment before they discuss treatment strategies.

Calleigh AS. 2003. **Roles for scientific societies in promoting integrity in publication ethics.** *Science and Engineering Ethics* 9(2):221–241.

Scientific societies can have a powerful influence on the professional lives of scientists. Using this influence, they have a responsibility to make long-term commitments and investments in promoting integrity in publication, just as in other areas of research ethics. Concepts that can inform the thinking and activities of scientific societies with regard to publication ethics are: the "hidden curriculum" (the message of actions rather than formal statements), a fresh look at the components of acting with integrity,

deviancy as a normally occurring phenomenon in human society, and the scientific community as an actual community. A society's first step is to decide what values it will promote, within the framework of present-day standards of good conduct of science and given the society's history and traditions. The society then must create educational programmes that serve members across their careers. Scientific societies must take seriously the implications of the problem; set policies and standards for publication ethics for their members; educate about and enforce the standards; bring the issues before the members early and often; and maintain continuing dialogue with editors.

Chodos A. 2003. **Ask the ethicist.** *APS News* 12(10)3,6.

Editor's note about a new section addressing ethical issues. The first column includes a question about authorship: "My former collaborators recently included me as co-author on a paper that I never laid eyes on prior to its publication. What should I do to correct the record?" A reply is given by 'Jordan Moiers' — a nom-de-plume.

Conn VS, Valentine JC, Cooper HM, Rantz MJ. 2003. **Grey literature in meta-analyses.** *Nursing Research* 52(4):256–261.

Because grey literature (unpublished studies and studies published outside widely available journals) is a source of data that might not involve peer review, critics have questioned the validity of its data and the results of meta-analyses that include it. The most consistent and robust difference between published and grey literature is that published research is more likely to contain results that are statistically significant. Effect size estimates of published research are about one-third larger than those of unpublished studies. Unfunded and small sample studies are less likely to be published. Yet methodological rigor does not differ between published and grey literature. Meta-analyses that exclude grey literature probably (a) over-represent studies with statistically significant findings, (b) inflate effect size estimates, and (c) provide less precise effect size estimates than meta-analyses that include grey literature. To fully reflect the existing evidential base, meta-analyses should include grey literature and should assess the impact of methodological variations through moderator analysis.

Coulehan, Hawkins AH. 2003.

Keeping faith: ethics and the physician writer. *Annals of Internal Medicine* 139(4):307–311.

Balancing the need to keep faith with the patients one is writing about with the needs of the reader.

Davis RM, Neale AV, Monsur C. 2003. **Medical journals' conflicts of interest in the publication of book reviews.** *Science and Engineering Ethics* 9(4):471–483.

Book reviews published in 1999–2001 in five leading medical journals were analysed. Outcome measures were publication of reviews of books that had been published by the journal's own publisher, that had been edited or written by a lead editor of the journal or that posed another conflict of interest. The editors-in-chief of the five journals were surveyed about their policies on these conflicts of interests. During the study period, four of the five journals published 30 book reviews presenting a conflict of interest, representing 5.8%, 2.7%, 0.7%, and 0.7%, respectively, of all book reviews published by the journals. These four journals, respectively, published reviews of 11.9%, 25.0%, 0.9%, and 1.0% of all medical books published by the journals' publishers. Only one of the 30 book reviews included a disclosure statement addressing the conflict of interest. None of the journals had a written policy pertaining to the conflicts of interest assessed in this study, although four reported having unwritten policies.

Iverson M, Frankel MS, Siang S. **Scientific societies and research integrity: what are they doing and how well are they doing it?** *Science and Engineering Ethics* 9(2):141–158.

Scientific societies can play an important role in promoting ethical research practices among their members, and over the past two decades several studies have addressed how societies perform this role. This survey examines current efforts by scientific societies to promote research integrity among their members. The data indicate that although many of the societies are working to promote research integrity through ethics codes and activities, they lack rigorous assessment methods to determine the effectiveness of their efforts.

Mann H. 2003. **Ethics of research involving vulnerable populations.** [Letter and reply.] *The Lancet* 29 November 362:1857–1858.

Clinical research among vulnerable populations should be subject to heightened ethical scrutiny and these

measures should be reported in any publication of such studies.

Myles PS, Tan N. 2003. **Reporting of ethical approval and informed consent in clinical research published in leading anaesthesia journals.** *Anesthesiology* 99(5):1209–1213.

In this study of all human subjects in six leading anaesthesia journals for 2001, significant differences were found in rates of ethics committee or institutional review board approval and informed consent. Evidence of these was lacking in many published papers.

Schrag B, Ferrell G, Weil V, Fiedler T. 2003. **Barking up the wrong tree? Industry funding of academic research, a case study with commentaries.** *Science and Engineering Ethics* 9(4):569–582. Raises ethical issues involving conflicts of interest arising from industrial funding of academic research; ethical responsibilities of laboratories to funding agencies; ethical responsibilities in the management of a research lab; ethical considerations in appropriate research design; communication in a research group; communication between adviser and graduate student; responsibilities of researchers for the environment; misrepresentation or withholding of scientific results.

Schrag B, Love-Gregory L, Muskavitch KMT, McCafferty J. **Forbidden knowledge: a case with commentaries exploring ethical issues and genetic research.** *Science and Engineering Ethics* 9(3):409–418. This case involves research on genetic birth defects in a culturally distinct, closed religious community in which elders speak for the community. The case raises ethical issues of informed consent in such a setting; of collaboration with the community; of conflicts between the researchers' responsibilities to the community as a whole and to individual subjects; of the impact of the researcher's findings on the practices and values of the community and issues regarding how the researchers share findings with subjects and how the findings are stored.

EDITORIAL PROCESS

Black B. 2003. **Indexing the names of authors from Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries.** *Science Editor* July–August 26(4):118–121. Explanation of the construction and correct citation of Spanish and Portuguese names.

Dunton S. 2003. **Personal View: Are copy editors an endangered species?** *Learned Publishing* 16(4):309–313. Copy editors form the vanguard in upholding standards of literacy in society and the last line of defence against meaningless publication. Publishers should not be content with the current lack of professional organization of editing.

Grando SA, Bernhard JD. 2003. **"First author, second author, et Int, and last author": a proposed citation system for biomedical papers.** *Science Editor* July–August 26(4):122–123.

Listing the first, second and last authors would be a fairer way of listing multiple authors, to ensure that the person chiefly responsible for each component of the cited research can be identified.

Smith J. 2003. **Online firsts.** *BMJ* 6 December 327:1302.

The *BMJ* is about to start posting its original research articles on *bmj.com* before they appear in print.

LANGUAGE AND WRITING

Butterly P. 2003 **A particular use of words.** *Physics World* 16(10):64. Discusses whether scientists and poets use words in the same way.

Gogi N. 2003. **How to write a case report.** *BMJ* 15 November 327:s153–s154.

Advice and practical details on how to write a medical case report.

Hartley J, Kostoff RN. 2003. **How useful are "key words" in scientific journals?** *Journal of Information Science* 29(5):433–438.

Key words are valuable for authors, readers, indexers, abstractors and people who search for related information on the web and in research databases. Use of standard terms and categories would aid retrieval. Guidelines for selecting key words should be provided.

Locutura Ruperez J, Ledesma Martin-Pintado F. 2003. **[The active and passive voice in the medical literature in Spain and in the United States. A comparative study.]** [Spanish] *Revista Clinica Española* 203(9):423–425.

The majority of the manuals on style and scientific writing recommend limiting the use of the passive, preferring the active forms. Analysis of a sample of articles in Spanish and US journals published in 1989 and 2001 showed that the use of the active voice is declining in Spain but increasing in the USA. In both periods, the American authors used the active voice more than the

Spanish authors did. Possible reasons are discussed and solutions are suggested.

Menand L. 2003. **The end matter: the nightmare of citation.** *The New Yorker* 6 October; 120–126.

This article should come with a health warning: do not read it in a public place — you may receive some very odd looks from those around you. It is a cleverly disguised review of the latest (15th) edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*. The author's highly amusing description of preparing a paper in the days before computers, the intricacies and idiocies of reference citation styles and of the MS Word program will leave you with some sympathy for authors and a smile on your face.

Nicolaisen J. 2003. **The scholarliness of published peer reviews: a bibliometric study of book reviews in selected social science fields.**

Research Evaluation 11(3):129–140. A bibliometric technique is proposed for determining the scholarliness of book reviews. The technique rests on central insights gained from related research materials and genre analysis.

REFERENCE AND ARCHIVING

Deming S. 2003. **The science editor's bookshelf: some favourite resources of CSE members.** *Science Editor* July–August 26(4):111–117.

Useful collection of books that are considered by members of the Council of Science Editors to be most useful in their work. Full bibliographic details of each book are given, together with a description of its contents.

Lindquist MG. 2003. **Organization and technology for the recording of science.** *Learned Publishing* 16(4):271–276.

Scientific research requires access to earlier research results. Over time, a system supporting scientific exchange has evolved where publishers, libraries and archives each have well-defined institutional roles. New information and communication technologies are challenging the established order for the recording of science and alternative systems are evolving. These need to encompass a means for identifying and preserving electronic information and the scientific information that is available solely electronically.

INFORMATION

McEwen K. 2003. Alley M. **The craft of scientific presentations: critical steps to succeed and critical errors to avoid.** [Book review]. *Physics World*

16(10):47–48.

[See also review in *ESE* 2003; 29(4):118–119.]

Beveridge M, Howard A, Burton K, Holder W. 2003. **The Ptolemy project: a scalable model for delivering health information in Africa.** *BMJ* 4 October; 327:790–793. African research communities are starved of access to journals and texts. Isolation, the burden of practice and resource limitations make education and research difficult, but the rapid spread of internet access reduces these obstacles. The Ptolemy project links four institutions in a partnership to provide educational resources and build a research community, and to investigate

whether access to medical literature has a positive effect on surgical research, teaching and practice in East Africa.

Dellavalle RP, et al. 2003.

Information science. Going, going, gone: lost Internet references. *Science*. 31 Oct 302(5646):787–788. Internet references are frequently inaccessible. The extent of internet referencing in medical or scientific publications was systematically examined in more than 1000 articles published between 2000 and 2003 in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, *JAMA* and *Science*. Internet references accounted for 2.6% of all references (672/25548) and in articles 27 months old, 13% of internet references were

inactive. Publishers, librarians, and readers need to reassess policies, archiving systems, and other resources for addressing internet reference attrition to prevent further information loss.

Woloshin S, Schwartz LM, Ellner A. 2003. **Making sense of risk information on the web: don't forget the basics.** *BMJ* 27 September; 327:695–696.

Web-based risk calculators are among the newest information resources available to people who want to understand the health risks they face. Their usefulness depends on their accuracy but there is no simple way to judge the quality of risk information.

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ESE index, 2002–2003

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