European Science Editing

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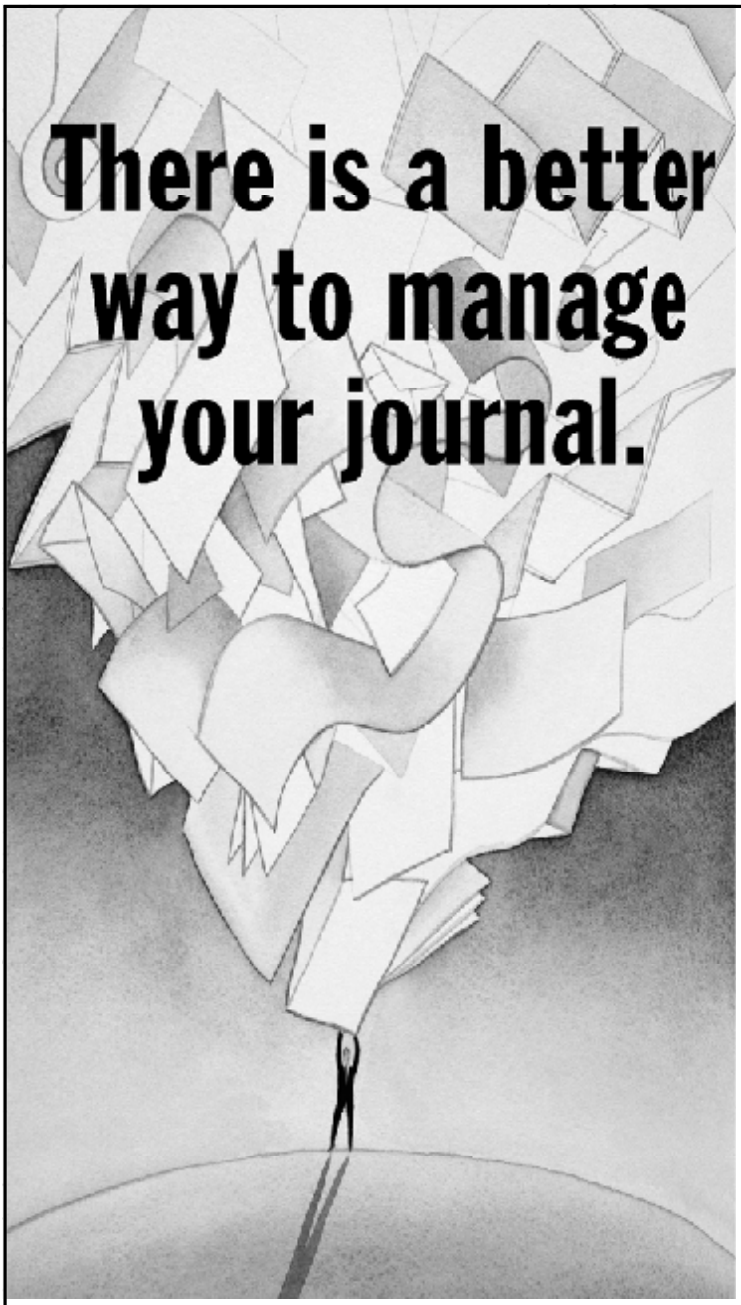
European Association of Science Editors



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The price of change

Council decided in May that subscriptions, the membership database and finances will be handled completely in-house as soon as possible. However, the transition has proved to be more complicated than expected. We again ask you all to be patient during the interim. For example, the processing of credit cards and invoices cannot continue until some unexpected problems have been solved.

Membership matters

Have you forgotten to inform the Secretary of a change in address or other contact information? Invoices for 2004 will be going out shortly, and this information is vital. Also, anyone who thought they had supplied this information in the spring or summer but finds they have not been listed in "Membership list additions and changes" at the end of this or the previous issue (vol. 30, August 2004) should contact the Secretary now (ease@pp.inet.fi). The transition from our former subscription agent to the Secretary may have caused some interference.

Secretary's change in contact information

The Secretary has a new telephone number (+358 30 474 8644) and a new fax number (+358 30 474 8606). In addition, although the previous e-mail address still operates, her direct e-mail address is ease@pp.inet.fi. You may find this useful if you have trouble contacting her.

New approach to be used in the Kraków conference

The Programme Committee has decided on a new approach for EASE's forthcoming conference in Kraków, "The Culture of Science Editing", 15–18 June 2006. See the report in "News from the Programme Committee" (p. 138, this issue) to find out more about it and to read a discussion of why this approach has been adopted.

Second EASE seminar and next AGM

Don't forget to reserve 29 April 2005 for a day in Barcelona. Remedios (Reme) Melero (rmelero@iata.csic.es) is busy planning the Second Annual EASE Seminar around the theme of information-seeking habits in the world of science. Keep an eye on the EASE web page for more developments. More information will also be available in the February issue of *European Science Editing*. In addition, Reme would welcome any suggestions you may have for topics for future seminars. You can contact her directly using the e-mail address above.

Contributions for the February issue

Contributions for the next issue of *European Science Editing* are invited and should be sent to the appropriate member of the Publications Committee (see left, and see instructions to authors on the EASE web site: www.ease.org.uk/). The deadline for the February issue is **15 December 2004** (but **15 November 2004** for articles).

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Editorial

Who will pay for open access?

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In 1991, the *BMJ* marked its 150th anniversary with a meeting of leading editors and published the proceedings as a book with 17 chapters contributed by the participants [1]. At that time, there were neither speculations nor predictions regarding the changes to be expected in the coming decade. The new electronic world of publishing emerged towards the end of this period and now, more than ten years later, it is likely that no one knows precisely how many scientific e-journals there are. The many forms and possibilities presented by publishers, librarians, and information specialists were described and discussed at the EASE seminar in May 2004 [2]. Among these developments are many that are customized, for example for a given country or even continent. The Virtual Health Library for Latin America is an example.

Speculations and debates are rife whenever authors, editors, librarians and publishers give their often divergent views on the future, whether at joint meetings or separate ones. No one can realistically predict the future. If access to information and its use and handling of that information continue to evolve at this rate, or if it accelerates, can we predict how information will be spread or used by 2010? Will mere humans cope with what technical progress yields? The response is probably yes, but how?

Before any more speculations on this point are launched, an overview of the present situation is needed. According to a report commissioned by the Wellcome Trust [3] the costs of publishing have decreased by 30%, thanks to the new technologies. New publishers compete successfully with established publishers and part of the workload has been transferred to developing countries. It is speculated, amongst other things, that access to information could be free to anybody anywhere [4] and an unlimited volume of information will be generated with less quality control.

Other questions have been formulated for which no answers are yet forthcoming. Among these are: Who pays for the open access? Will users' behaviour evolve to match the technical developments? How about the generation gap? Will we still distinguish between the "developed" and the "developing" world if information truly becomes universally available? What will be the fate of publishers and libraries?

Whatever the answers to all these questions, there will be costs, or in other words money will be needed. No matter how sympathetic or benevolent publishers are, "they still are in business to make at least a modest surplus, and someone has to pay somewhere along the line. What are the possible options?" [5]. Will the authors help to meet the costs? Will publishers help, or the society to which an author belongs? The possibility of open access and its consequences for all aspects of publishing is the thread connecting the questions regarding the future. To quote again: "open access will come at a cost."[5].

To return to the opening thought of this editorial, the progress, and quality, of scientific communication and publishing are ultimately a function of economic aspects, not only national but worldwide.

Acknowledgement
Many thanks to Marie-Louise Desbarats-Schonbaum for her help in preparing this editorial.

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Article

New models for publishing and academic initiatives from a librarian's point of view*

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> *As it is the part of a mineralist, both to discover new mines, and to work those that are already discovered … so I esteem, that it becomes a naturalist, not only to advise hypotheses and experiments, but to examine and improve those that are already found out.* [1]

The notion that scientific results must be published and available for public examination and criticism has become self-evident and part of the very idea of science — but "Between the idea and the reality . . . falls the shadow."[2]

This shadow is well known to the library community but is still little known or recognized by university chancellors, provosts and researchers. The main issues are the following:

Today, a few very large companies dominate the market for scholarly communication. New and complicated conditions for ownership and licensing of e-content have been introduced, together with elaborate and very expensive pricing models. One of the consequences has been a growing gap between price and ability to pay, causing even large and well-funded university libraries to reconsider their deals with publishers. A yearly subscription to a journal in the STM area may well cost more than a new Toyota. There seems to be no obvious reason for the very high prices charged, as many studies have been able to show a lack of correlation between price, quality as perceived by researchers, and cost [3].

Another phenomenon distorting the scientific communication market is related to "branding". Branding permeates our modern society, and cars, clothing and scientific journals are marketed according to the same principles. For journal branding, impact factors are of central importance. A strong brand inspires consumer confidence regardless of the actual quality of the particular products. Likewise, a publication in a leading high-impact journal may routinely be regarded as more important than a similar article published in a less prominent forum. At the same time, it is well known that the scientific impact of individual articles correlates very weakly with the impact of the journal [4]. Apart from inspiring confidence, branding is used to establish consumer loyalty. Publishers have been trying hard to tie customers to their respective journal packages, which could obviously create barriers to the flow of information.

Finally, while they greatly increase the possibilities for scientific communication, recent developments in publication technology have also, paradoxically, created new potential obstacles. It seems that profitability in the publishing business increases with the amount of feedback and control of usage available to publishers. Thus, not only copying but also things like reading or searching might be charged for.

We appear to have reached a situation where we have high prices versus high ideals and control versus traditional academic freedom. What would serve society best: scientific information treated as a common good or as a commodity priced per Least Profitable Unit? Would we want to summon up the communalism ethos of science, as Robert K Merton called it in his CUDOS norms ("universalism, communalism, disinterestedness, and organized skepticism") in 1942 [5]?

It has been argued that we are faced with another example of the tragedy of the commons: individual interests are in conflict with what might in a longer perspective be considered a public or common good. Can the library community take on a role as a guardian of the scholarly commons, and will it do so [6]? Librarians have always had the responsibility for providing access to scholarly information and knowledge and they can be regarded as "consumer ombudsmen" working for the interests of researchers, teachers, students, and the general public.

Awareness initiatives in Sweden

The Nordic Conference on Scholarly Communication series

From its creation in May 2001 the Head Office at Lund University Libraries (HO-LUB) has been engaged in the development of scholarly communication. In October 2002 the Nordic Conference on Scholarly Communication was arranged, the first in a biannual series. The second was held in April 2004 and the next, NCSC2006, will be held in Lund on 24–25 April 2006 (www.lub.lu.se/ncsc2006/).

ScieCom — a Swedish Resource Centre for Scientific Communication

The crisis in scientific communication and the ongoing intense discussions about new publishing

*Article based on a presentation given at the EASE seminar, *Scientific publications in a digital age*, in Barcelona, 7 May 2004.

models cried for some definite actions. HO-LUB launched later in the same year as NCSC the idea of establishing ScieCom, a Swedish Resource Centre for Scientific Communication (www.sciecom.org).

National funding was granted by BIBSAM — the Royal Library's Department for National Co-ordination and Development. ScieCom is working with a network of representatives from all Swedish university and college libraries and from university administrations and funding organizations. It is co-funded by Lund University Libraries (LUB) and has its administrative and coordinating base at HO-LUB.

ScieCom provides structured information about new developments in scholarly publishing and strives to stimulate discussion and debate and inspire new strategic plans for Swedish higher education libraries to work more actively together with their universities on alternative publishing models.

The three key areas for ScieCom are:

- Open access: business models, costs, developments;
- Intellectual property rights: model copyright licenses, national and international law, content control, licenses and contracts;
- Quality control and evaluation: peer review, impact factors in a new publishing environment, bibliometric analyses, financing of results.

In March 2004 ScieCom launched its own open access publication, *ScieCom info* (ISSN 1652-3202; www.sciecom.org/sciecominfo/), with the aim of disseminating information about open access and other important developments to a broad audience. *ScieCom info* intends to publish six issues per year in both English and Swedish (with abstracts in English). Articles need to be short enough to be easily read on screen. Each issue presents at least four invited articles plus news, commentaries and interviews. Authors retain their copyright but grant all users permission to download, copy, print, distribute and display the material, on condition that author attribution is clearly stated. The integrity of the text is inviolable and contributions cannot be used in an edited form without permission being obtained from the author.

Report from the Association of Swedish Universities and University Colleges

In September 2003 a report commissioned by the Association of Swedish Universities and University Colleges (SUHF) was published: "Roads for knowledge – the need for a new strategy for universities and their libraries" (translated title) [7]. This report made several recommendations on the development of strategies for scholarly communication and the roles of universities and their libraries. These recommendations are in many respects similar to those made by the UK House of Commons Science and Technology Committee in its report of 20 July 2004 [8].

The SUHF report recommends the creation of professional publishing services within universities and university colleges (Budapest Open Access Initiative 1). Libraries are seen as the natural choice for that service; there is a need to investigate and evaluate current research assessment and evaluation systems, and universities are recommended to draft and implement new agreements on intellectual property rights to secure the rights of researchers to publish and archive publications on university servers.

Open access

The fundamental principle in traditional copyright law has been the balancing of interests between rights holders and information users. This balance is now moving in favour of rights holders. In the digital environment the Principle of First Sale has been lost and strong business interests have managed to bring about much legislative change. All of the six relevant directives adopted by the EU since the 1990s have strengthened the positions of the rights holders and weakened those of the users. "Open access publishing is just about the only hope users have if they want to escape from this trap" [9].

The open access movement has defined two roads to open access: self-archiving in institutional or subject repositories and publishing in open access journals.

Institutional repositories

It is strategically important for universities to increase the visibility and thereby the impact of their research output. Comprehensive listings of their scholarly productions are required for evaluative purposes. Ideally the full text of the articles should be available and authors should retain their copyright, or at least get permission to archive or post their refereed post-prints on university servers.

To support researchers in their contacts with publishers and journals a task force at Lund University, with representatives from the Law Faculty, the University Legal Department and the Library Head Office, has proposed two model licenses for the university: one between authors and publishers and the other between authors and the university (for publishing in the university repository) (see www.lu.se/jurenh/INTERN/avtal.html).

The License to Publish states that authors should retain their copyright and have the right to publish or archive their refereed articles on the university domains or in a publicly accessible subject repository such as arXiv.org and in a future doctoral thesis or dissertation, provided that the author acknowledges the original publication in standard bibliographic citation form. No alteration to the article can be made without consulting the author.

The JISC Project RoMEO (Rights Metadata for Open Archiving) web site at www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo.php maintains a constantly updated list of publishers' and journals' attitudes to pre- and post-print publication. Currently 91% of journals (n=8860) are "green", i.e. allow either pre- or post-print; 69% allow post-print and 22% pre-print publication by authors.

Lund University has built an open access initiative-compliant institutional repository, LU:research, a single entry point for research produced by researchers affiliated to Lund (http://lu-research.lub.lu.se/).

One spin-off has been the monthly *Lund Virtual Medical Journal* (http://lvmj.medfak.lu.se). This started as a response to the need to increase the visibility of ongoing research at the Faculty of Medicine. The journal has an editorial group which each month highlights an article of scientific interest. The organization of the bibliographic information and of the open access full-text articles in the journal is based on bibliographic registration and self-archiving in the institutional electronic archive of Lund University, LU:research.

Open access journals

The other road to open access is publishing in open access journals. But what are they, how do they work and, most important, how can they be found? In May 2003 a one-stop shop for open access journals was launched by HO-LUB. DOAJ — the Directory of Open Access Journals (www.doaj.org/) — provides a comprehensive database of open access scientific and scholarly journals. DOAJ has strict selection criteria for inclusion of journals. They must offer open access to all content from the day of publication, have scientific or scholarly content, and use peer review or other editorial quality control. DOAJ, using what is known as a Budapest-Bethesda-Berlin definition, defines open access journals as those using a funding model that does not charge readers or their institutions for access. User permission to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles (compliance with the Budapest Open Access Initiative is mandatory for journals included in DOAJ).

DOAJ is Open URL-compliant and covers all languages and all subjects. Searching at article level was introduced this spring. At present 330 of the 1300 journals from around 800 publishers have delivered metadata for around 60 000 articles. DOAJ does not host the content itself but provides basic information and metadata: the title, authors' names, abstract, key words, and so on. The index is available for OAI harvesting by service providers, thus making wider dissemination possible. Our long-term plan is to help all these smaller publishers to be more visible and to train and assist them to operate professionally.

Responses from the DOAJ journals have been very positive — they have experienced increased usage. In July 2004 the service was accessed by 40 000 distinct hosts from about 140 countries. Academic library catalogues have integrated the DOAJ database into their own catalogues so that all open access journals can be found in one place.

There is a need for a similar Directory of Open Archives with similar strict selection criteria and HO-LUB is currently working on that. In the Lund ELIN@ service, open access journals and archives and information from different sources are integrated in the same search interface, so the ground is already prepared.

ELIN@ — integrating end-user access and efficient management resources

The Electronic Library Information Navigator (ELIN@) was created by HO-LUB in 2001 to provide user-friendly integrated cross-searchable access to multiple e-resources and thus increase their visibility. Table of contents alerts, selective dissemination of information and other services are provided. Article-level metadata, including abstracts, come from publishers. Initially some publishers were reluctant to deliver metadata, but they have now come to realize the considerably increased usage that results from their inclusion in ELIN@ searches that cover the whole gamut of publisher content — and all the large publishers are included. ELIN@ is a product-neutral presentation of resources. Most of the content is licensed but the number of open access resources is increasing. All the journals in the DOAJ are included, together with articles from such open archives as arXiv.org and Cogprints.

ELIN@ has a built-in Open URL-based interlinking functionality that ensures dynamic linking between the metadata and the URL of the full text at the publisher or aggregator site, but the system also works with other brands of Open URL-linking (see http://pluto.lub.lu.se/about/one.html).

Nordic cooperation

As with all small language groups, Nordic language journals have problems in reaching a wider audience. The standards and levels of journal indexing vary considerably, and national article indices lack selection criteria and accepted methods of practice. The total number of publications cannot be ascertained and national research documentation systems are based on self-reporting. International indices such as ISI cover less than 50% of Nordic articles in the humanities and social sciences and coverage of pan-Nordic journals is inadequate. These problems have led to the conclusion that Nordic research needs more efficient means in order to become more visible. A joint Nordic information resource might be the answer. Can Nordic research be promoted via open access journals?

The Councils for Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences in Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden had appointed a joint board, the Nordic Board for Publishing in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NOP-HS), for the purpose of allocating grants to Nordic periodicals in the humanities and social sciences. In 2003 NOP-HS published a report on scholarly publishing [10] as a result of which NOP-HS appointed a task force charged with preparing a proposal to the Nordic Council for funding. The four Nordic countries were represented by one representative each: the Danish Library Authority (Copenhagen), the Norwegian Institute for Studies in Research and Higher Education-NIFU (Oslo), the Swedish School of Economics and Business

(Helsinki), and HO-LUB (Sweden).

The final project proposal was named "NOP-e.net: a Nordic cooperation", and its main objective is to create a common Nordic portal for scholarly articles published by national and Nordic scholarly networks, societies and publishers in the humanities and social sciences. The proposal also recommends the creation of a Nordic knowledge network based on cooperation with National Knowledge Centres. Another important goal is to provide more reliable data for research evaluation and financing.

Other goals are to offer publication tools, to contribute to the development of networks for quality control and peer review, to preserve the Nordic languages as research languages where relevant, to make Nordic research accessible via abstract services, to find new models for cooperation between learned societies and research libraries, to find new models for cooperation between learned societies and national libraries for retro-digitization and archiving, and, finally, to create open access to scholarly information. The funding application is making its rounds; it has obtained preliminary approval and is currently waiting for a final decision.

Summary

The new publishing environment presents considerable challenges for the research and library communities. In the Nordic countries a number of initiatives have been undertaken, or are under way, aimed at overcoming various barriers to scientific communication. This work has required new forms of cooperation between active researchers and information professionals. ScieCom, the Swedish Resource Centre for Scientific Communication, was established in Lund to provide structured information on the main aspects of scholarly publishing and to inspire new initiatives from universities and their libraries. Open access, intellectual property issues, quality control and evaluation are key areas. Strategic and technical planning for institutional repositories at Swedish institutions is well under way. DOAJ, the Directory of Open Access Journals, has been a tremendous success and has led to the integration of open access journals in library catalogues all over the world. Integration, publisher neutrality and increased visibility for open access resources are key issues behind the development of the ELIN@ service. To improve visibility and access is also a driving force behind the NOP-e.net project for establishing a joint Nordic information resource.

There is nothing more difficult to plan, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage, than a creation of a new order of things. [11]

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Correspondence

What kind of editorials do we want?

What is an editorial? There is the official kind, the noun as defined by the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* ("a newspaper article written by or on behalf of an editor, esp. one giving an opinion on a topical issue"). There is also the editor's personal look at the contents of the journal issue in question. The first sort is a relatively new part of *ESE*, with the section "From the editors' desks" providing an extra means of communication between readers and Council.

In the first or classical type of editorial the reader is plunged into a thinking exercise instead of first going for a look around. This kind of editorial is not necessarily written by the editor but may have guest contributors. Is this why newspapers place their editorial columns in the middle of the paper, to be read once the reader has become involved and is ready for exposure to someone's musings, as opposed to yet another collection of facts?

In the other sort of editorial, the reader is taken on a tour of items the editor found worthy of mention. It is a welcome-mat for prospective readers. The assumption is that the reader picks up the journal, has a quick look at the contents list, then goes on to what could be seen as a conversation with the editor. You are invited to come and have a look, see what the editor truly thinks about a certain point, or what the editor somehow reacted to. The result is a bit like walking through a house with the owner: there is familiarity, but with surprises along the way.

Is the presence of an "official" editorial a sign that EASE and hence the readers of *ESE* have reached a stage where we seek not only strictly editor-related information but are open to and even enjoy reading and thinking about slightly peripheral issues?

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A new mechanism for peer review

Perhaps it is not quite proper to advertise one's own work, but I think readers of *European Science Editing* are interested in alternative scholarly publication models like the one I proposed recently (Mizzaro 2003).

My proposal starts from an analysis of peer review, on which scholarly communication is based. In my opinion, although peer review is a satisfactory solution it is far from perfect, and the arrival of the internet opens up new possibilities. My paper describes a novel mechanism that improves or replaces peer review by exploiting a usually neglected resource: the knowledge readers have of the papers they read.

I propose a novel mechanism in which papers, authors, and readers are assigned a numerical score expressing their quality: good papers (positively judged by the readers), authors (who write good papers), and readers (who express good judgments) have a higher score than bad ones. Several mechanisms based on "democracy" — letting the reader decide what to read — have been proposed in the past. The novel aspect in my proposal is that readers' judgments are evaluated and this feedback is exploited both to weight readers' judgments — judgments by good readers are more important than judgments by bad readers — and to induce the readers to express correct judgments, since being a good reader (judge) is an index of a good reputation.

As described in the paper, the results of a first experimental evaluation based on software simulations are positive: the system is robust and resists malicious strategies. However, no user study has been performed yet; this is left for future work, together with further theoretical analyses and understanding of social acceptance.

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Reference

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From the literature

Use of author-nominated reviewers: an informal survey

Some editors ask authors to nominate individuals who might be suitable to review their submission or, alternatively, to identify any who should *not* review it. However, journals rarely reveal what they do with this information and, if reviews are anonymous, authors may never discover whether their suggestions were adopted. Prompted by questions from participants at publication workshops, I decided to look into this practice. Two aspects seemed of particular concern to potential authors. Some wondered if author-nominated reviewers were used in addition to those chosen by the editor and might, therefore, delay a decision on their paper. Others were concerned that editors would not honour their request to avoid certain reviewers but might, in fact, approach these people in the hope of obtaining a particularly tough review. I therefore posted questions on the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME) and EASE bulletin boards.

I received replies from 16 medical and 8 non-medical (mainly biology) journals. Of these, 14 permit authors to nominate reviewers. However, this is not a reliable guide to the proportion of journals that ask authors to suggest reviewers, since, because of the nature of my questions, such journals were more likely to respond.

My questions revealed enormous variation in how journals handle authors' suggestions for reviewers. Approaches ranged from one set of biomedical journals that require suggestions about reviewers as a condition for electronic submission, to editors who do not ask for suggestions and had never come across occasions when authors had ever nominated or excluded reviewers spontaneously.

If journals did receive suggestions (either prompted or spontaneous), policies varied from including one reviewer from the author's list most of the time, to editors who viewed such suggestions with suspicion

and would never consider using them. Of the journals that ask authors for suggestions, six used author-nominated reviewers for more than 50% of submissions and the others used them for 25–50% of submissions. Two editors stated that they used authors' suggestions primarily to increase their reviewer database rather than in reviewing the paper the suggestions accompany.

According to the responses, use of author-nominated reviewers does not increase the number of reviewers per paper. However, most editors commented that they would never use only reviewers nominated by authors. Several editors also mentioned that authors often suggested reviewers who were unsuitable because they were close collaborators or worked at the same institution.

Most editors always honour authors' requests to avoid using a particular reviewer, but a few mentioned exceptions such as when the reviewer was clearly the one person most qualified to review the paper, or deserved a right of reply. One commented that when he had checked the reasons for requesting exclusion, they had always proved well-founded.

Only one journal has studied the characteristics of author-nominated reviewers systematically, although other studies are under way in at least two journals. Earnshaw and colleagues at the *British Journal of Surgery (BJS)* asked authors to nominate reviewers, but informed authors that this was part of a trial and that these reviews would not affect the fate of their submission [1]. They compared 98 pairs of reviews from author-nominated and editor-selected reviewers. All used the journal's standard evaluation form which rates the paper's originality, clinical/scientific importance, clarity of presentation and data analysis on 4-point scales ranging from excellent (1) to poor (4). Reviewers were also asked to state whether the paper should be accepted without modification (which was assigned a score of 1), accepted with minor changes (2), required major changes (3) or rejected (which scored 4).

Author-nominated reviewers tended to assess papers slightly more favourably than those chosen by the editors, but only the difference in ratings for scientific importance reached statistical significance (mean score 2.34 versus 2.56, P=0.009). Author-nominated reviewers were also significantly more likely to recommend acceptance (mean score 2.51 versus 2.75 out of 4, P=0.029). From this, the *BJS* editors concluded that "reports produced by referees selected by *BJS* editors were more critical than those chosen by authors of the papers" and used the results to justify their policy of not asking authors to suggest reviewers. An alternative interpretation is that there was very little difference between the two types of reviewer, since it is arguable whether a difference of 0.22 on a 4-point rating scale is really meaningful and the differences were statistically significant for only one of four aspects.

Clearly, further research is needed to answer the question of whether using author-nominated reviewers affects the quality or tone of reviews, and it is possible that the answers may differ across disciplines and between journals. In the meantime, editors' views on the merits of author-nominated reviews are polarized, as illustrated by the following responses:

"I never would use an author's suggestion for referees — in fact, the suggestion of potential referee names from authors makes me suspicious that the paper may have some problems, indicating that they want a less rigorous referee."

"Without exception, the reviews submitted by these [author-]recommended reviewers were far more critical than those of the others . . . Not one of these reviews was overly positive."

So, no clear picture emerges that applies to all, or even most, scientific journals. However, at least when I tell my workshop participants that editors' views and practices on author-nominated reviewers vary widely, I can now say this with authority!

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Reference

1. Earnshaw JJ, Farndon JR, Guillou PJ et al. 2000. A comparison of reports from referees chosen by authors or journal editors in the peer review process. *Annals of the Royal College of Surgeons of England* 82 (Suppl 4):133-135.

Reports of meetings

The essential editor — bridging the in-house–freelance divide*

SfEP conference for its corporate associates
10 May 2004; London, UK

It is a truism to say "most people in publishing are freelance". In fact it may be an untruism. It is certainly true that increasing amounts of work are put out to freelances, and this work needs more management than a simple phone call and a wodge of stamps to ensure the parcel gets to its destination the next day.

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Managing freelances

Certainly there are potential difficulties for publishers in employing freelancers, and Anne Waddingham, who gave the first presentation of the day, began by running through them. Freelances can be an unknown quantity, maybe not available exactly when you want them; there may be issues about ensuring consistency on a range of publications worked on by a variety of editors. Freelances need managing, talking to and instruction, and some administration is involved when doing business with them. On the other hand, freelances offer specialist skills that publishers cannot afford to keep on the books full-time, there are no overheads to be paid for them, and no tiresome staff appraisals need to be held for them. Freelances are not part of the company culture and this can be a strength, bringing fresh thinking to an organization.

Before picking up the telephone, in-house staff need to decide what aspects of a job to send out of house, and how much control of the project they wish to retain. At one end of the spectrum they might give the whole job to a project manager; at the other they might manage it entirely themselves; and there are stages in between.

Publishers are well advised to have an "A team" of tried, tested and reliable freelances and a "B team" of new talent to be nurtured and encouraged (that is, given work and feedback) against the day one of the A team departs for better pay or a hacienda in Spain.

There was some discussion about how to find freelances. Of course the *SfEP Directory* is immensely useful. No one present at the conference had a positive experience of using an agency, and indeed very few had used one. There are the dozens of CVs that cross every editor's desk weekly to sift through as well. The consensus about tests seemed to be that they weeded out hopeless cases well, but are time-consuming to administer and keep up to date, and references and experience are a better indicator of a freelance's true competence. If you want a quick way to gauge competence in on-screen editing, ask about macros: anything other than an convincing version of "Yes, I know what they are, use them and write them" should disqualify an applicant. We were also reminded that SfEP members boast a wide range of skills in addition to proofreading and editing: rewriting, design, project management, research, translation and so on.

Managing freelances effectively means paying some attention to quality, budgeting and scheduling (QBS, pronounced "cubes"). Anne Waddingham examined the relationship of these three interdependent factors and gave some valuable insights as to the best ways of checking quality.

Getting the brief right

Of great importance in ensuring a satisfying relationship between in-house staff and freelance is the brief. As Penny Poole, who led the second workshop, reminded us, the briefing process begins at the first contact. The job must be explained clearly and expectations on both sides should be clearly understood and confirmed in writing. Sometimes it is helpful to have a meeting face to face, but this is by no means essential. A straw poll of those present suggested that most initial approaches to a freelance are made by e-mail nowadays.

A good brief must be clear, concise and complete and any supplementary materials must be included and explained. Various briefing materials were handed round. It is always so instructive to see examples of best and worst practice. One sample was an exhaustive but disorganized checklist; the consensus was that checklists were good, but organization was important, perhaps with an indication as to how many of the boxes needed to be ticked by the end of the job — not all categories would be relevant for every job. The wordy, chatty brief got the thumbs-down: it was impossible to see at a glance what was required. The one that won universal acclaim was organized and thorough; the navigation was clear and it was concise: no unnecessary verbiage at all.

Maintaining and updating house styles is a matter that causes some angst, it seems. One of those present had the problem of amalgamating various house styles, a result of various amalgamations and take-overs.

Friend or foe?

By way of light relief, or a change of tempo at any rate, the afternoon session focused on electronic artwork. David Macdonald flung at his audience a raft of technical terms that he then proceeded to demystify.

Electronic illustrations fall into two main categories, bitmaps — scanned images and photos, most commonly — which when printed are called "half-tones", and vector artwork — typically line artwork such as graphs, medical illustrations and organization charts. Vector artwork does not contain the image, but rather a series of instructions as to how to construct the image; this means that the image can be enlarged indefinitely and not lose quality, and the file size stays relatively small. However, problems can occur with typefaces. Bitmaps will not enlarge too much without losing definition and they are easy to edit with the appropriate software. A problem common to both types of artwork is the amateur production with strange typefaces much beloved by some authors — but fixing *that* problem was outside David's remit.

What pitfalls should the in-house editor be aware of? Misorientation, a lack of conformity with the legend, incorrect capitalization, misspelling of labels and missing typefaces can occur. As with editors, so with artists: giving a good brief as soon as possible will help to avoid mistakes later on, and it is crucial to insist on a hard copy of an image as well.

Resolution is all, so checking that an image will reproduce at the size you want is crucial. Resolution depends on dots per inch (dpi); printed output is measured in dots per inch and computer monitors used pixels per inch (ppi). Pixels are synonymous with dots when dealing with images — the crucial factor is that a computer or web site needs around 72

to 96 dpi, whereas a good quality printed image needs 300 dpi. If an image is, say, 1200 dots wide, then if it is much bigger than four inches across (i.e. 300 dpi) it will lose definition; at eight inches across, it will have only 150 dpi.

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Access now and into the future

47th Annual Meeting of the Council of Science Editors (CSE)
Vancouver, BC, Canada; 15–18 May 2004

Pristine Vancouver, British Columbia, was again the location of the CSE conference. Thirty concurrent sessions, a keynote address, two plenary sessions, and five short courses were offered to attendees at the conference. Most sessions focused on the various means of access to the scientific literature, databases, standards, and resources, and ways that these are evolving. In-depth reports on most of the conference sessions will be published in future issues of *Science Editor*, but below are some highlights.

Plenary: To sail beyond the sunset: navigating the uncharted waters of bioethics

Linda MacDonald Glenn discussed the promises and perils of new developments in science and their ethical and legal implications. New technologies have been classified as nanoscience and nanotechnology (manipulation of matter on an atomic scale); biotechnology and biomedicine, including genetic engineering and transgenics; information technology, including computing and communications; and cognitive science, including cognitive neuroscience, neurotechnology, and psychopharmaceuticals, or NBIC (i.e. nano-bio-info-cogno). When these converge, both good and questionable results can occur. For example, NBIC convergence results in neural interfaces for enhancing memory and the senses and human technogenics (cyborgs). From an ethical standpoint, Glenn said, we must question what it means to be human or a person. Legally, except for the distinction between person and property, no definition of the person exists, so new technology brings into legal question the nature of humankind. If spare human parts were used to create cyborgs, would it matter which parts or how much of one person was used? Glenn predicted that as new intelligent life forms are created through the genius of converging technologies, the courts will need to determine where they fit on a continuum from property (inanimate objects that cannot suffer) to the full rights and responsibilities of personhood.

Style manuals: update on the new editions

Changes in the primary style manuals in use today were discussed at this session by Cheryl Iverson, Peggy Robinson, and Anita Samen. Peggy Robinson gave an update on the 7th edition of CSE's *Scientific style and format* (SSF7). Although the style manual subcommittee is making headway, SSF7 is not ready yet. The publications committee is considering options for electronic publication.

References will be handled differently in SSF7. They will be listed in alphabetical order in the reference list and given sequential numbers in the text. Issue numbers will be required for journal references to help with retrieval. More information about citing electronic sources will be included. For electronic citations, the URL and the date of access will be required. Also, the URL within a web site, not just the home page URL, will be required. In the section on special scientific conventions, the new edition will summarize the genetic nomenclature rules for all organisms for which such rules have been developed.

The 10th edition of the *AMA manual of style* should be available in late 2005. The process of revising a style manual is "long, slow, frustrating, and rewarding", said Cheryl Iverson, chair of the AMA style manual committee. The manual will contain 25 chapters: eight are complete, five are near completion, two are in progress, and ten have not yet been revised.

The 15th edition of *The Chicago manual of style* came out in 2003 and 100 000 copies have already been sold. New to the latest edition is a chapter on grammar and usage. The mathematics chapter was completely revised because it was outdated. The book was completely redesigned and useful descriptive phrases were added after each section number to make navigation easier for the reader.

Other items

Other topics covered at the meeting included the history and economics of open access; what is new regarding the standards of reporting biomedical research; the effect of journal changes made by primary publishers on secondary publishers; international standards and how to harmonize terminology; the challenges of HIPAA (the US Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, 1996) and other privacy laws for journals; the evolving roles in access of researchers, librarians, secondary publishers and users; lessons learned from innovations in scientific communication; and much more.

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EASE-Forum digest: July–September 2004

A wake-up call for science publication

Is anyone awake out there? I had been wondering if all EASE members had fallen asleep. But there have been recent murmurings, indeed signs of unease. Be warned, because while we have been sleeping a quiet revolution has been pulling the rug from under our feet and threatening our very existence. Prince Charmings are not as reliable as they used to be. If you have not been following the discussions in the forum recently you should wake up and do so, before it is too late.

Some of the questions are old hat, chewed upon since editing a scientific text was first thought of. Others are new and lead onto more questions that need asking. Timothy DeVinney started the ball rolling with the question, "What can be done to combat publishers outsourcing editing?" And it might have ended there with the conclusion — allowing all to go back to sleep again — that poetic justice was being done because those who have had it good in Western countries for so long are now having to compete with lower charges offered in developing countries.

What do publishers care?

Then came the questions we have heard before. Can a non-native speaker edit as well as a native speaker? Who is the best person to edit a manuscript: a scientist or a linguist? But eventually we got to, "Do the readers of scientific journals care about the standard of editing?" Unobtrusively the questions were taking a thought-provoking twist, the logical progression of which is: if readers do not care, why bother to edit at all, and who, if anyone, reads or wants to read scientific journals? We have been told that journal editors care most about their readers [1] and we know authors need journals as a career ticket, but what about publishers? Do their interests extend beyond the advertisers? Whose is the ultimate control: the altruistic scientific societies or their commercial publishers? Is science giving way to commerce?

When Timothy Vinney raised the initial question he wrote that Springer-Verlag in Germany are outsourcing nearly all editorial and production services for their STM journals to a low-cost service provider in India. He asked whether there was anything freelance editors in Europe and the United States could offer that companies such as Springer could not get for €2.50/h in Asia.

Karen Shashok felt that if publishers claim they are providing added value in the form of professional copy-editing when in fact they are not, the subscribers are not getting their money's worth. But would subscribers notice if the quality dropped? Would they cancel their subscriptions? Will Hughes retorted that he could not agree with the implication that people who live in India are incapable of providing a professional service. He did not think people in the developed world had an exclusive right to highly paid work. "We have already lost most of our manufacturing base to the developing world . . . We are now beginning to see the spread of professional and service work." He saw this as an excellent development, adding, "The world is everybody's oyster, not just ours." Pretty soon we would be seeing China following India into these professions and he hoped to see Africa enter into the market one day. Will felt strongly that protectionism, for which the biggest price is paid by those in developing countries, has got to stop.

Karen, however, had not meant to imply that all work done in Asia is substandard. This was an assumption people would make from the lower charges made by people in countries where the cost of living is low. Editors in countries with a high cost of living will not be able to compete with colleagues who offer the same service from places with a low cost of living. It remained to be seen whether the quality of editing services provided from Asia would be similar to the quality provide by some (not all) people in Europe and North America.

Editing, or — ?

Margaret Cooter would be interested to see examples of the kind of editing the outsourcing actually provided. She thought that as clarity of language is important in science editing, non-native speakers of English, however well trained and intelligent, are likely to miss nuances and might not be up-to-date with idioms. Such dilemmas were less likely in highly technical papers than in "softer" stuff.

In Mary Ellen Kerans' view, publishers regularly use as copy-editors people who know little about the field. Scientists for the most part want to act as scientists, not relatively poorly paid and poorly regarded copy-editors or translators. A modern publishing strategy, on the erroneous assumption that only subject-matter specialists can read a manuscript for sense, is that of allowing copy-editors to ignore the sense, correct only grammar and spelling, and apply a veneer of journal style. "If it's been peer reviewed and accepted, they say, the science and sense need not be further questioned." She concluded that if there is a quality problem it is the publisher's fault. And I think she's right. Some journals do care about the written quality of their papers and readability; how many publishers do? Mary Ellen pointed out that, theoretically, journal editors go to publishers rather than printers because the publisher oversees quality. If the publisher outsources to India it is no problem for journal editors, provided that the publisher continues to answer for quality, but many seem to be washing their hands of quality assurance.

Terry Clayton pointed out that many Indians are well educated, some in the West. Trying to pretend that native English copy-editors have an advantage by virtue of being born with the language was missing the issue because — supporting Mary Ellen's point — the quality would at least be close enough not to worry the publishers.

Timothy returned to report his experience of finding egregious errors introduced into nearly every medical research paper copy-edited by a low-cost outsourcing agency. What is more, the agency's remit had been restricted to only the mere formatting of numbers and units, editing the reference lists, and doing the tagging. Angela Turner added that she had also been less than satisfied with copy-editors in India. She found they were good at basic things such as checking inconsistent spelling and editing references but did not seem to understand everything they read and made errors in rewriting text. They seemed not to be highly trained in the subject they were editing. Although she did not doubt that there were excellent editors in India, they were not necessarily found in the sort of agencies publishers are using.

Niches

Returning to the original question about what freelances could offer, Terry Clayton suggested we look at what people in other outsourced industries had done. They had either retooled with better technology to reduce the cost advantage of editors who can afford to charge lower prices or had looked for niche markets. He asked if anyone knew of any examples of niche markets for freelance copy-editors. Judy Baggott responded with a bitter tale of an assistant, procured by her publisher, whom she took on when her publisher doubled her workload. After revising this "editor's" adequate but uninspired work for a few months Judy found herself unexpectedly unemployed. The assistant had offered to work for the publisher for half the price Judy had been charging (and had been sharing equally with the assistant).

Mary Ellen Kerans' suggestion for a niche was to be strongly bilingual or trilingual, which also allows one to work as a translator. This would be an advantage where the English text written by a non-English native speaker was not 100% comprehensible. Editors with an intimate knowledge of the author's native language would be able to imagine what these authors had meant in their own tongue. Diversifying your client base was another tip. Work for publishers as little as possible, she advised. Publishers might argue that the volume they provide should entitle them to a discount but freelances should not be lulled into thinking they were secure with publishers. Not even the publisher's [salaried] employees are secure. The freelance should argue back that handling the publisher's work is a risk worthy of a surcharge.

Mary Ellen argued strongly that quality is the publisher's responsibility. Otherwise journal editors might as well go to the local printer and cut production costs, just as the publishers are doing by outsourcing to India. (I am involved with a journal that uses a publisher in Slovenia. Although I send edited text to the publisher and they are not required to edit, they do pick up errors. I would advise freelance editors to approach society journals direct, looking to act as their managing editors and outsource the printing themselves, thus bringing in their editing expertise and avoiding the big international publishers, some of which we are told are making profits like those of pharmaceutical companies [2].)

(Coincidentally — or not — while this forum debate was in full flow I received an unsolicited e-mail at the pharmaceutical company where I work urging me to, "Join India CRO+Testing Consortium". The message said that well-managed and aggressive CRO+Testing firms in India are growing at 50–80% a year. It maintained that India presents unique advantages unavailable in other countries and, "In a nutshell, a very high ROI/cashflow is absolutely attainable with a reasonable period of time." "CRO" is an abbreviation for "clinical research organization" And it is to such organizations that pharmaceutical companies turn when they outsource their clinical research. CROs are usually based in Western countries. The CROs in turn employ medical writers, often the scientists that Mary Ellen Kerans mentioned who prefer to act as scientists. They write the reports that are needed to support drug licence applications. The information from these reports is sometimes the subject matter of manuscripts submitted to journals. These manuscripts might be written by the medical writers or by writers in medical communications agencies that employ writers who may have originally been educated in advertising, science or possibly even linguistics. To return to Timothy's question: freelancers could shift into these spheres, but perhaps they should be prepared to move to India too.)

Copyright

Sarah Novak was interested in finding out if there are any restrictions on editing or rewriting copyright material for which permission to republish had been obtained. Jenny Gretton thought that if all or parts of published texts are edited or rewritten, the republished work should be accompanied by a statement saying it had been adapted from the original. Mary Ellen Kerans said that in this case she as a reader would want to be assured that the copyright-holder had approved the new presentation or that the editor was trusted by the copyright-holder to make an accurate adaptation. Patricia Reichert provided some URLs for the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (www.law.cornell.edu/treaties/berne/overview.html) and US copyright law (www.copyright.gov/circs/circ1.html). Copyright seems to be an area that mystifies most writers and editors, the very people who need to know about it. (I would be grateful if anybody who would like to enlighten us on copyright could contact me (langdoe@baxter.com) because I am preparing a publication on the topic.)

Slashes and en dashes

If this heading sounds like a route to be forged through the jungle then it is an accurate reflection of how much easier the path would be if these punctuation marks were understood and used correctly. The belief that they might be interchangeable could be enough to drive you crazy. Consider the following text which I encountered recently: "The AscI-PshAI fragment was ligated into plasmid pR7W/P618A/A732V (pW-A-V) to create pR7W/Q448E/P618A/A732V/R1336W (pW-A-V-W)".

The marks are so simple. A slash means "or" (except in a unit of measurement) and a dash means "and". Thank you, Yateendra Joshi, for your question about whether it is customary to use the en dash in academic years, e.g. which one would you use to indicate an academic year that runs from August 2004 to July 2005, "2004–05" or "2004/05"? The use of the slash has, of course, been excellently explained in an article by Stephen de Looze [3], a scientist who has been active as a medical writer for the past 20 years and currently heads a medical writing department at a CRO.

Scientific publication language outside English-speaking countries

Mary Ellen Kerans posed two questions about scientific journals published in English in countries in which English is a foreign language. She posted a summary of the answers she received on the forum on 5 September 2004, also referring in it to the "Editing in . . ." series in *ESE* covering France (27[4]:109–110), Croatia (30[1]: 10–11), Italy (30[3]: 84-87) and the Czech Republic (30[3]: 87–88). Mary Ellen can send you this summary if you missed it.

The first question was, how many journals are published in English from countries whose first language is not English? Ignoring all the journals published by international houses like Springer and Elsevier, the answers ranged from nearly half of the 88 Italian journals (in Medline) being in English, to 4 out of 27 in Thailand, to the discovery that Dutch has traditionally been used relatively little for scientific communication in Holland. Dutch scientific communication, Mary Ellen concluded, is mostly monolingual — but it is not in Dutch.

Mary Ellen also asked if there are any scientific journals published in fully bilingual form (whole articles, not just abstracts), one language being English. The answer was that there are only a few, but there is a third type of journal which publishes some articles completely in the country's language and other articles completely in English.

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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Book reviews

Pam Peters. 2004. **The Cambridge guide to English usage**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 608 +xii p. Hardback. GBP25.00. ISBN 0-521-62181-X.

What is the target audience for a guide to English usage? Putting the question another way, who is likely to turn to it for help? Pam Peters says this guide is "written for English-users [hyphen: bravo] in the twenty-first century", is "designed to support both global and local communicators", and "empowers readers (as writers, editors, teachers, students) to choose and develop their own style, for their particular purposes." For a reviewer, those claims create a difficult task, because the readership implied is just about anyone who chooses to look into the pages, and the suitability and accessibility of the content should be judged against that readership.

Inevitably, this guide fails that stern test. Terms such as *ligature, digraph, postpositively, predicatively, homophobic, pejoratively, vis-à-vis,* and *ditransitive verbs* call for a well-educated reader who understands grammatical matters and has a good general vocabulary. Use of *ditransitive verbs* appears in the entry on *instill/instil*, and it is followed by a cross-reference to an explanation in the section on *predicate;* but that cross-reference is unlikely to be helpful — may even be rather daunting — to someone who lacks a background command of vocabulary but has looked at the entry on *instill/instil* to find out what spelling is recommended.

Perhaps in an effort to be reader-friendly and all-inclusive by writing in informal language ("relaxed easy-going language and ordinary colloquialisms, rather than scholarly or academic words"), Pam Peters sprinkles her text with contractions such as *it's*, *let's say you're seeking*, *there's no need*, and *often reflect what's said*. This contrasts strangely with the scholarly and academic tone of much of the text. I suspect scholars and academics will find it patronizing. She also uses colloquial idioms such as "Today's vogue words are likely to be old hat within the decade" and "With TB largely scotched, we may think twice about . . .". Overall, I think readers for whom English is a foreign language will find much of the text difficult.

Having voiced those criticisms, I hasten to say that I think the book's strengths far outweigh its weaknesses, and it is well worth GBP25.00. Its 4000+ entries are thoroughly informative, and give well-balanced, up-to-date accounts of different opinions about English usage in the UK, the USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The cross-references between allied discussions are valuable, but will mean that language enthusiasts will be unable to resist the temptation to read many more entries than they intended to consult when they opened the book! The entries are arranged alphabetically, and the discussions helpfully recognize the need to explain points in terms from "old-fashioned" grammar and more modern linguistic accounts of structure and functions (for example, *mood* and *modality*, *predicate* and *verb phrase*).

After some entries, Peters goes beyond explanation and provides a small box advising which of two or more possibilities she recommends as an "International English selection". For example: "The widespread use of *fulfill* [rather than *fulfil*], especially among younger people, its consistency with inflected forms, and transparency in terms of derivation, all make it preferable for use in international communication." Most of the boxes refer only to spelling, but it is good to see special focus on the problems of addressing international audiences in English, and I would encourage her to go further in the next edition to offer guidance on difficulties such as the different uses of *alternate* and *alternative* in British English and US English. Her discussion of those two terms is detailed and comprehensive, but it leaves enquirers to make up their own minds about which, if either, to use. That is disappointing if you have turned to the *Guide* for guidance. I recognize, however, that moving from explanation to suggestion, let alone to prescription, is hazardous, but careful wording should enable Peters to justify her recommendations.

After the A–Z entries, nine appendices offer help on topics such as International Phonetic Alphabet symbols, selected proofreading marks, and formats and styles for letters, memos, and e-mails. There is also one on Geological Eras, perhaps to help reviewers recognize the period in which their views on usage were formed.

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Fiona Godlee, Tom Jefferson (eds). 2003. **Peer review in health sciences**, 2nd ed. London: BMJ Books. 367 pages. GBP50.00. ISBN 0-7279-1685-8.

This volume consists of an introduction, 24 chapters and three appendices by 34 different authors. Each chapter starts with a short overview, a useful aid for readers who do not want to read the whole chapter. A better title would have been "Peer review in clinical medicine". Peer review is not only about publishing research; it also includes review of research grants, highly important to many. Yet only one chapter is devoted solely to peer review of grants. Health Sciences should cover the whole spectrum of medical research from the Basic Medical Sciences (Preclinical Medicine) to Clinical Medicine but most of these authors hardly mention preclinical sciences, where peer review is probably at its strongest, but restrict themselves to clinical research.

Some chapters warrant special attention:

Chapter 1, "Editorial peer review: its development and rationale", gives a historical introduction to the subject, the problems, the good points and the bad points. If one were to keep just one chapter in this volume it would be this one; all the others are in effect an extension of this chapter, which is lucid and well written.

Chapter 5, "Innovation and peer review", deals with the problems of getting innovative research recognized and published. As a cautionary tale, the author cites the case of cold-fusion and what can happen when peer review is abandoned.

In Chapter 8, "Peer review and the pharmaceutical industry", Wager and Herxheimer point out that pharmaceutical companies have a duty to their shareholders to maximize profit. How can reviewers and editors best ensure that what is published represents the facts, and that unpleasant results are not omitted? With the tight controls exercised by the pharmaceutical industry, misconduct is probably less common than in other research. Sponsorship and advertising, e.g. results from a sponsored congress, are considered, and there is a list of recommendations for peer-reviewed journals in relation to the pharmaceutical industry.

Chapter 9, "Small journals and non-English language journals", deals with two entities: small journals published in English, mainly dealing with highly specialized subjects, and journals from both large and small countries published in the national language. Small journals have difficulty in finding enough reviewers with the necessary expertise to review manuscripts, and there are language difficulties for journals published in English in non-English speaking countries. Also, many authors will only submit a paper to a smaller journal if the paper has been rejected by a large, prestigious journal.

Two "How to" chapters, 10 and 11, "How to set up a peer review system", and "The evaluation and training of peer reviewers", are presumably aimed at editors of new journals or editors curious about the subject of peer review.

Chapter 13, "Statistical peer review", is one of the most important chapters in the book, being mainly about clinical research, particularly clinical trials. Statisticians should be involved throughout the process of clinical trials, from the original design of the experiments and during the conduct of the experiments, the assessment of results, and peer review when the paper has been submitted to a journal. Statisticians should speak in an understandable language. (In this chapter they use words which I suspect the non-statisticians among us would not understand.) Editors should make sure at least one of the referees of a clinical paper understands the statistics of the results. A useful point is made in Chapter 19, "Peer review on the internet", that electronic publishing will increase readership: countries that cannot afford printed journals can access the net at little or no cost.

Chapter 20, "The use of systematic reviews for editorial peer reviewing: a population approach", is one of the most interesting in this book. According to the authors, "Systematic reviews are collections of published and unpublished evidence relating to some aspects of a topic, assembled using explicit methods, with the aim of minimising and generalising conclusions." The authors suggest that reviewers when evaluating a paper should look at it not as a separate entity but in the perspective of other papers published in that same field. This would detect originality, or duplication, and might pick up discrepancies of methods or conclusions, particularly important in clinical trials and epidemiological studies; examples are given.

The two chapters (21, 22) on alternatives to peer review speculate on the changes that may or may not appear.

The same points are made over and over again throughout the book: the merits and demerits of peer review, the role of reviewers, bias, changes in peer review, electronic publishing and the World Wide Web, etc. This is not only very irritating but also contributes to the over-inflated length of this book.

Duplication also extends to the duplication of references, with some of the same references appearing in chapter after chapter. The numbering system used makes it difficult to check or cross-check a reference.

If one were to read only one chapter in this book, apart from chapter 1, it should be the penultimate one, "Peer review: some questions from Socrates". The final chapter ends: "In conclusion, after centuries of gradual change peer review may be about to embark on a period of radical change. Or then again, it may not be. The future is unknown and unknowable." When I first received this book, my immediate thought was "Why on earth should anyone want to spend £50 on a book on peer review?" Having read the book, I still think the same.

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Peter Griffiths. 2003. **Managing your internet and intranet services: the information professional's guide to strategy**, 2nd ed. London: Facet Publishing. 256 p. Paperback. GBP29.95. ISBN 1-85604-483-1.

I enjoyed reading this book by an experienced author. Many of the stratagems and errors involved in developing an effective web site are well described, and many small details, including an impressive list of web sites, with addresses, are included that should help the novice.

Developing a web site is not so difficult if you allow enough time, follow advice from an expert, and correctly manage your budget. This book aims to help library and information science (LIS) professionals whose responsibilities include the management of a site. But much of the good advice applies to non-scientists and to others who want to build their own web site, though it is not a technical guide on how to build one and you will need to look for further guidance on technical matters. Rather it is a compilation of all aspects that need to be considered when building a good internet strategy and making the necessary decisions. A broad view of the internet world and how to approach this field is presented: why do you need a web site, what is it for, who will be the users, who are the players in this "new world", and what are the mistakes to avoid. LIS professionals have the right skills and managing a web site seems an obvious role for them. Many corporate organizations and communities, however, do not understand the contributions that librarians and information scientists can make to the effective management of their web sites.

Before considering the web, the author guides the reader through the questions that must be answered. A business plan is essential. Too many sites collapse because of lack of funding, poor content, complicated navigation, etc. Editorial activities are important and usability should be tested before anyone gets too enthusiastic.

If going on the web presents risks, there are also many opportunities for all organizations. If you decide to outsource any or all of your web site operations, reaching a good agreement with a supplier is important. The chapter on this topic shows the exceptional experience of the author and will save readers from many errors. Careful selection of a supplier, negotiating all the arrangements and reaching agreement on these will ensure that a site survives without trouble. Dealing with an internet

service provider means that all aspects of the cooperation should be assessed: can you be sure that the site is running 24 hours a day, seven days a week? If you have to move to another service provider, do you own scripts and other codes that have been created for your site? I learned about the hazards of domain name registration, the tricks needed to please search engines, and some information on web impostors, image thieves, etc. There are only a few paragraphs on writing on the web (be short and clear!) and on style guides: this information may be obvious to editors, but most web sites really need to improve this aspect.

I was surprised by the paragraphs on "Publishing a site in languages other than English", as I was expecting to find advice and policies regarding translation into languages such as Spanish, French, German, etc. Instead there were three sub-headings: Celtic languages (Welsh), ethnic minority languages (Greek, Russian, Arabic, Korean), and using non-roman scripts.

This book is sometimes too UK-oriented, considering that the internet is a worldwide tool. You can now manage from Europe, edit in Asian countries, and run technical matters from the Americas.

I tested some of the links provided and they were fine: none of the sites I tried were unobtainable. And I was happy to be able to connect successfully to www.llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwllllantysiliogogogoch.com and discover the limits of some domains (63 characters, plus the dot com bit). The second edition confirms the success of this book but the next edition should be free on the web!

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Sally Bigwood and Melissa Spore. 2003. **Presenting numbers, tables, and charts.** New York: Oxford University Press. 144 p. Paperback. GBP7.99. ISBN 0-19-860722-9.

This book, part of the "OneStepAhead" series published by Oxford University Press, is a step-by-step guide to using data effectively. Anyone who works with numbers during the course of their writing and/or editing would do well to look at it. Although the level is sometimes rather elementary, the book is thorough and understandable at the high school level but is useful also for those with a post-secondary education (as many of the things in it are not taught in university).

Of the two major parts, the second is essentially a list of resources, including two useful checklists (one for presenting tables, one for graphs), a case study and some exercises. The first or main part is divided into eight chapters. Some advice from the authors in the introductory Chapter 1 states that the book should be used like one would use a cookbook — by dipping in as needed.

Chapter 2 describes how to handle numbers so that they become meaningful and how to organize data so that the arrangement serves the purpose. The use of averages, rounding (and the rules for it) and the exploitation of blank space in tables are covered.

Chapter 3 deals with tables, how to organize the data in them, how to write a useful and succinct title, and how to choose column labels and headings.

Chapter 4, "Introducing graphs", does precisely that: it tells how to determine what the message about the data is — and then how to make the most of the message by choosing an appropriate and informative title and the correct type of graph. This chapter includes an interesting section on "chart junk" — the decoration that interferes with meaning, usually the result of an author just having learned how to use the "format" features in a computer program. Examples of chart junk are grid lines, patterned bars or slices, backgrounds, borders, and numbers and values. The message here is to stick to the KISS principle, and use as few embellishments as possible.

Chapter 5 describes the different types of graphs and gives some guidance on which graph to choose for the data. Bar graphs (paired, component, negative), line graphs (simple, layered), pie charts, scattergrams, superimposed graphs and pictographs are covered.

Chapter 6 considers the "table or graph" dilemma, and essentially states that the choice should be based on both the data and the purpose, and on the needs and expectations of the audience. There are checklists and useful tips (given more fully in the second section of the book).

Chapter 7 shows the importance of the intended audience — how one should consider the recipients of the information before selecting the data and organizing it into a presentation. Determining the message to be delivered to that particular audience is key — only then can one select appropriate data and determine how best to present it.

Chapter 8 deals with using technology — in computer programs — to create the tables and graphs. Much of the advice in this chapter centres around turning off features of the software that unnecessarily clutter a succinct table or poignant figure. Also considered are the particular problems of presenting data on screen as opposed to on paper, for web sites or for distance education purposes. Even slide presentations are given some attention — useful for those of us who present data verbally.

To sum up, although much of the advice given in this book could be said to be stating the obvious, that is the very reason we should all at least turn the pages, if not add a copy to our reference shelves. Sometimes it is the obvious that gets overlooked.

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