

GRADUATE STUDENT WRITING WORKSHOP

HOW TO PICK A JOURNAL

March 21 2013

Prepared by Jean E. Wallace

TIP-Topics: The Who, What, When, Where, and Why of Publishing (Poncheri et al. 2007) (p. 79-83)

How to Choose an Academic Journal for Publishing (p. 1- 2)

Some Advice from Editors (p. 2-3)

Instructions for Authors (p. 4)

How to Publish your Journal Paper (Hewlett, 2002) (p. 5-7)

Preparation Checklist for ASA Manuscripts (p. 8-9)

**Reanna Poncheri, Jane Vignovic, Tara Behrend,
Amy DuVernet, Clara Hess, Jenn Lindberg**

With the SIOP submission rush behind us, we turn to a topic that is relevant for everyone—publishing. Publishing can be an intimidating process, but there are ways to make the process easier and increase one’s likelihood of success. This column is a brief introduction to the publication process and is intended to be a guide for unpublished students and students who wish to continue sharpening their publication skills. In this column, we present information that many students have had to learn the hard way. We hope this information will make the publication process less intimidating and will prepare students to utilize many of the skills they are gaining in graduate school.¹



L to R: Amy DuVernet, Reanna Poncheri, Tara Behrend, Clara Hess, Jennifer Lindberg, & Jane Vignovic

The Who, What, When, Where, and Why of Publishing

Who

Graduate school is the perfect time to start publishing. Graduate students are knowledgeable about the current research literature and are honing writing skills for class assignments. In addition, students are surrounded by individuals who can share insights and information about the publication process (i.e., faculty members) and with whom there is the opportunity to collaborate (i.e., other graduate students). Publishing with faculty members or other students can be a beneficial activity for all involved parties.

Keep in mind that publishing is beneficial for all career paths. Often, publishing is emphasized for those who plan to go into academia but not stressed for those going into practice. However, a recent graduate told us, “Employers were impressed with the publications on my vita. It showed them I had a drive to take on challenges and to see something through to completion.” The lesson here: Publications are a concrete way to demonstrate skills to any type of employer, regardless if someone is pursuing a job as an academician or as a practitioner.

What

In our last column, it was suggested that students should submit class papers to conferences. Similarly, both class papers and conference presentations can be turned into publications. A great plan is to take a completed class paper, reduce its length for a conference submission, and then begin prepar-

¹ Thank you to the academicians, practitioners, and peers who provided much of this valuable information.

ing the paper for publication as soon as it is under review for the conference. One student who responded to our MySpace poll indicated that she presents one or two first-author papers at major conferences each year and then submits at least one of these papers for publication. This process provides many opportunities for continual manuscript improvement.

Remember that a multimillion dollar grant is not necessary to conduct publication-worthy research. If you do not have a dataset available to conduct a research study, ask faculty members or other graduate students if archival datasets are available. Small-scale projects can still provide valuable information to the I-O community.

When

The earlier one starts publishing, the earlier one can reap the benefits. It can take years to complete a paper, wait for feedback, and respond to reviewers' comments and suggestions. If possible, first-year graduate students should take on more junior research roles because it will give them exposure to the publication process. More tenured graduate students may choose to lead their own research projects as they develop their knowledge of a particular content domain and increase their comfort with the publication process.

Where

Determining where to submit a manuscript for publication is perhaps the most important decision to make during the publication process. The academicians and practitioners we consulted suggested that writing should never begin without first identifying a list of potential journal outlets for the work. Read a variety of articles published in the journals being considered as publication outlets to get a feel for the journals. Structure your manuscripts accordingly.

One commonly used strategy for submitting a manuscript is to initially target a long-shot journal (i.e., the most prestigious); however, some topics in I-O psychology are more time sensitive than others (e.g., technology). Be sure to choose a strategy that compliments your topic.

Why

Publishing in graduate school can benefit students in the following ways:

- Enhancing academic and applied careers: As an academician, publications are the key to gaining tenure at many institutions. As a consultant, both current and potential clients will see a strong publication record as evidence of one's expertise.
- Providing a detailed, public record of one's work ethic and commitment to scholarly research: A publication can provide much more information about a student than can be gleaned from a course grade.
- Gaining valuable skills, such as working with others, delegating tasks, revising an idea, and responding to constructive criticism.

- Developing opinions: The publication process encourages the development of opinions and expertise in certain content domains (Godard, 2002).

Clearly, publishing is a beneficial activity for which graduate students are well equipped. Here are some tips for starting the process.

Publishing: A Brief “How-To” Guide

Note that none of these steps should be carried out in isolation. Each step is an integral part of a larger process. Also, this information is just a start. There are sources available with more extensive suggestions about how to be successful at publishing. We hope this article will inspire students to recognize the skills they currently have and will motivate them to seek additional information.

Step 1: Identify and frame the research topic.

Select a research topic that is interesting. Your passion about the topic is critical! Use a research journal to keep track of ideas, research questions, and lines of inquiry to pursue. In addition, always consider where research gaps exist in the field. What new research findings would move the field forward? Remember that even small-scale research can be valuable.

Step 2: Select the appropriate journal(s).

After identifying a topic to research and pursue for publication, begin the important process of selecting a journal for which to submit the manuscript. The decision will largely depend on the content of the manuscript and its intended audience. Does the content of the manuscript align with the journal’s mission and focus? Do you want to reach an I-O academic audience (e.g., *Journal of Applied Psychology*), a practitioner audience (e.g., *Academy of Management Perspectives*), or perhaps another population (e.g., military via *Military Psychology*)? Information about a journal’s mission, focus, and intended audience can be found on the journal’s Web site.

Ask others (i.e., faculty members and other graduate students) for their input on where to submit the manuscript. Also, consider having an informal exchange with the editor or a member of the editorial board of a journal under consideration. These individuals are uniquely positioned to provide input about what manuscripts are a good fit for their journals.

Here are some additional tips for selecting an appropriate journal:

- Learn about journals and how they compare to each other in terms of prestige. See the Zickar and Highhouse (2001) *TIP* article.
- Investigate the quality of journals using the Web of Science database. The Web of Science database, available at most university libraries, contains a link for “Journal Citation Reports” (JCR). Select “JCR Social Sciences Edition,” and then enter the name of the journal of interest. The resulting table provides valuable information about the

journal, including the impact factor, immediacy index, and cited half-life. Click on the help menu to get a full description of these indices.

- Explore where the main articles cited in the manuscript and other articles related to the manuscript's content domain were published (Chamberlin, 1999).
- Search for recent articles published in each journal to determine the type of work the journal publishes and the writing style of the papers published in the journal (Hewlett, 2002).
- Incorporate the work of an editorial board member's research when it is relevant to the manuscript.

One final note about selecting a journal: Determining journal prestige is somewhat controversial and the metrics discussed above are not flawless. Different parties have different perspectives on what makes one journal "better" than another, and different metrics matter to different people.

Step 3: Prepare the paper for submission.

After selecting a journal, the next step is to prepare the manuscript for submission. To prepare the manuscript for submission:

- Check the journal's Web site for submission requirements and evaluation criteria.
- Double check that the appropriate outlet for the work has been selected and written in a manner that is consistent with previous publications in this journal.
- Ensure that the manuscript meets the journal's formatting requirements. To prepare for blinds reviews, delete any document properties that may identify the manuscript author.
- Ask a faculty member or other graduate student to review the manuscript and provide feedback (Hewlett, 2002). Use this time to take a break from the paper and revisit it with a fresh perspective.

Generally, all journals will require a cover letter accompanying the submission. The cover letter is an important opportunity to market the submission to the editor (Fischer, 2004) and should:

- Highlight the contribution the manuscript will make to science, practice, or both.
- Explain why readers of the journal would benefit from the manuscript and make a case for why it would be a good fit for this journal (Gump, 2004).
- Include contact information, the type of paper being submitted, a statement confirming this work has not been published elsewhere, and an indication if supplemental material (e.g., still video images) will be provided.
- A cover letter can also be used to advise editors about who would or would not be appropriate reviewers based on the content of the manuscript (Hewlett, 2002).

Step 4: Wait for reviewers' feedback and respond to their comments and suggestions.

After submitting a manuscript, be prepared for the reviews and have a plan for how to proceed. Develop a thick skin. Remember, few people receive an outright acceptance, but a revise and resubmit decision is positive (Hewlett, 2002). If a revise and resubmit decision is received:

- Decide whether or not to pursue the revisions and resubmit the manuscript. Meet with coauthors to determine how to proceed. If revisions will be pursued, create a revision table that includes a cell for each reviewer comment, information about which changes were made and which were not, and an accompanying justification. Be sure to address each reviewer concern or comment, and ask for clarification from the editor whenever necessary.
- Keep in mind that not all reviewers are right 100% of the time. At times their suggestions may stem from not understanding a portion of the manuscript.
- Consider moving on to a second choice journal if the requested revisions are too extensive or are not possible given the constraints of the data.
- Be polite and professional in all written and verbal communication with the reviewers and the journal editor (Taylor, McKay, & Abramowitz, 2006).

If a rejection is received, select another journal and use the reviewers' comments from the first submission to improve the manuscript (Chamberlin, 1999).

Remember, persistence is the key to successful publishing. We hope this column has helped students to realize they have the tools to succeed in publishing and provided some information to start the process. The **TIP-TOPics** MySpace (<http://www.myspace.com/tiptopics>) has additional information, resources, and a discussion forum related to publishing and other topics of interest.

References

- Chamberlin, J. (1999). *Unpublished? Try your dissertation*. Retrieved August 2, 2007 from <http://www.apa.org/monitor/dec99/ed1.html>.
- Fischer, C. C. (2004). *Managing your writing for success: Passing the "gate keepers."* B>Quest. Retrieved August 2, 2007 from <http://www.westga.edu/~bquest/2004/gatekeepers.htm>.
- Goddard, P. (2002). Promoting writing among psychology students and faculty: An interview with Dana S. Dunn. *Teaching of Psychology*, 29, 331–336.
- Gump, S. E. (2004). Writing successful cover letters for unsolicited submissions to academic journals. *Scholarly Publishing*, 34(2), 92–102.
- Hewlett, K. (2002). How to publish your journal paper. *Monitor on Psychology*, 33(8), 50.
- Taylor, S., McKay, D., & Abramowitz, J. S. (2006). Publishing without perishing, part I: Suggestions for students and new faculty. *The Behavior Therapist*, 29, 4–9.
- Zickar, M. J., & Highhouse, S. (2001). Measuring prestige of journals in industrial-organizational psychology. *The Industrial-Organizational Psychologist*, 38(4), 29–36.

GRADUATE STUDENT WRITING WORKSHOP HOW TO CHOOSE AN ACADEMIC JOURNAL

March 21 2013

Prepared by Jean E. Wallace

If you do not yet have an article ready for submission, there is no need to worry. You can decide where you will submit your article before you begin to write it, in fact, I usually do.

Look in your reference list

If you've already written the paper, the first place to look for an appropriate journal to publish your article is in your own reference list for that paper. The works you have cited are the works with which you are engaging in conversation. If you are citing several articles from a particular journal this may be a good sign that journal may be an appropriate place to submit your article. If you haven't written the paper yet, but are still in the literature phase of collecting articles, make note of the journals you seem to be finding a lot of relevant papers in.

Find other journals in your area

After looking through your own citations, have a look at other journals in your field. Sometimes when you do a search on your paper topic, you may see that several journals appear to pop up a lot and those may be ones to consider.

Ask someone to review your paper and suggest a journal

As we talked about in earlier sessions, always ask someone else (preferably a few people) read your paper before sending it out to a journal for review. When you do this, you can list possible journals you are thinking of or ask your reviewers to suggest possible journals for your paper. It's helpful to have people in your area who have publishing experience suggest potential journals as they may be familiar with the journal's preferences, length of time for review, etc.

Research the journal – is it a good fit?

Visit the individual journal web pages and read the Aims & Scope to find out about the type of papers that the journal accepts – review papers? Theoretical papers? Quantitative papers? Mixed methods only papers? Look through recent issues of the journal to see the types of papers it publishes in terms of methodology, length, topics. Search for your topic and see if there are papers on your topic and how yours would fit in this journal in light of what has already been published.

Figure out the impact factor and journal rankings

Journal ratings, or journal prestige, are important as you get more experience publishing. Starting out, it is probably more important to just get something published in a peer reviewed journal. As you prepare for the job market and promotions, then journal rankings/prestige become more critical.

A journal's rating is based on a variety of metrics, which are different ways of counting how many times the articles in the journal have been cited. Articles that have been cited more often are thought to have a greater impact in the field, and thereby bring prestige to the journal in which they were published. Because journal ratings are somewhat important, you might want to take them into account before making a final decision about where to submit your article (but I think it depends on where you are in

your career and your goals for publishing that particular paper). Here are three ways to find out information on the relative quality of a journal.

1. You can use the software, [Publish or Perish](#), to get data on the impact factor and citation rate of journals in your field.
2. You can access [Web of Knowledge](#) through your university's library to get rankings of the journals in a particular area or discipline. For example, Web of Knowledge lists rankings within the discipline of Sociology, but also within the sub-field of Race and Ethnic Relations.
3. You can visit the journal's website to find out information about the journal in question. When investigating a particular journal, you should try to figure out whether or not the articles in the journal are peer-reviewed, what percentage of submitted articles they accept, and whether or not the journal is accessible through major scholarly databases such as JSTOR, Elsevier, or Sage.

And being completely and brutally honest...

Some questions I recommend that you honestly ask yourself before deciding on a journal:

- How desperately do you need a publication?
- How quickly do you need a publication?
- How many times has this paper been out for review already?
- If you've received reviews, do you think the paper is salvageable or should you walk away?
- Is this an earth shattering, field or career breaking paper or filler for your cv (or somewhere in between)?

Once you have chosen a journal, you can begin to write or revise your article with an eye towards publication in that journal. It's usually easier to write towards a journal than to write a paper and then try to find a journal for it or fit it into a journal that it may not fit into perfectly. Also, I usually try and have a second and third back-up journal in mind before I send it out to the first one so if it comes back rejected, I've already got "Plan B" (and "Plan C") lined up.

SOME ADVICE FROM EDITORS

Advice from Professor Stephen Ball, Editor of *Journal of Education Policy*:

"Some people who send papers ... simply send it to the wrong journal and that's becoming increasingly the case ... And it's surprising how many people submit papers clearly never having read the journal, never opened a page of the journal or read on the website what it is the journal's interested in. And increasingly, as the Managing Editor, I'm fielding papers at the initial stage which we would never send out for review and I write back and I say sorry, this doesn't fit within the remit of our journal."

"Be ... tactical in terms of thinking about which journal you want to send your paper to so you don't end up wasting your time."

"That can be frustrating as an Editor. I feel I'm having my time wasted when people send papers to the journal which patently don't fit in the journal at all. And they're wasting their own time because then they have to wait for us to read the paper and look at it and send it back to them and then they have to go through it again. I imagine there are some people who spend their life sending their papers to journals that don't want to publish them, not because they're not good papers but because they're just in the wrong place."

Advice from Professor John Evans, Editor of *Sport, Education and Society*:

"We're looking for something that's got something to say to the professions that are the readership of our journal."

"The most common mistake is not to have looked at the journal, not to have appreciated, I think, what it is about."

Advice from Professor Douglas Allford, an Editor of the *Language Learning Journal*:

"Also it's a good idea to read previous issues of the [journal] so as to get a feel of what it is we publish."

Advice from Professor Roger Slee, Editor of the *International Journal of Inclusive Education*:

"I guess the advice from where I sit would be that people writing for the journal ought to look back over the journal and think about what's been contributed and the way things have been framed for the journal."

Advice from Professor Michael Reiss, Editor of *Sex Education*:

"There's no doubt that as an Editor, when you first get a submission, what you're doing is two things: at one level you're simply filtering so, a fairly small proportion, we're probably only talking about twenty, twenty-five percent, do not get sent out by me for review, that's because they fall into one of a number of categories. Sometimes they simply fall outside the scope of the journal."

Advice from Professor Len Barton, Editor of *Disability and Society*:

"A most common problem of a submission is the lack of time and thought that authors have given to examining some of the back issues in the journal. Without this effort they are not able to connect to the history and ideas that have developed over the life of the journal. They are not sensitive to the history of those ideas, not that we are asking them to accept them but to be at least aware of them. We are still having articles today where there isn't a single reference to any published paper in twenty-odd years in this journal."

Advice from Professor David Gillborn, Editor of *Race Ethnicity and Education*:

"Look at past issues of the journal. See what kinds of things are published, I mean basically identify the papers that you think are the strongest papers. So everyone has certain papers that they think are amongst the key things in their field. Well what sets those papers apart? Look at how they've been constructed and then try and do the same."

Advice from Professor Sue Clegg, member of the Executive Editorial Board of *Teaching in Higher Education* :

"When I do the first read through of papers that come in, it's clear that I am sometimes getting things from people that haven't read the policy statement and actually haven't read papers, so one of the things that we added to the policy statement last time was to actually encourage people to situate themselves within the journal. So I'm afraid that the reason sometimes that papers get rejected before they go out to peer review is that they're simply not suitable for the journal; that they are very descriptive, small-scale descriptions of what went on in their classroom, and so that actually they're not suitable. One of the most important things that we say back to people at that stage, is 'please go away and read the policy statement, please go away and read the journal'."

INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS

When you have found the most suitable journal for your article, read through the *Instructions for Authors* very carefully. Each journal has its own, specific set of detailed instructions which can be found via a link on the journal's web page.

Journals consider all manuscripts on the strict condition that they have been submitted only to that journal and that they have not been published already. They must not be under consideration for publication or in press elsewhere. They may be under a review for a conference or presented at a conference but not under review at another journal or published previously. A few journals now ask you to attach any papers previously published from the data set you're using to make sure the paper you are submitting to them is sufficiently different and unique.

It is essential that you prepare your manuscript according to the journal's format and style specifications. Read through the *Instructions for Authors* carefully before preparing your manuscript for submission.

Further information about the journal, including links to the online sample copy and online contents pages, can be found on the journal homepage. If you need help to prepare your manuscript for submission, journals often have Resources for Authors or someone you can contact.

Some tips from some journal editors on the importance of following the journal guidelines.

Advice from Douglas Allford, an Editor of the *Language Learning Journal*:

"There are notes to contributors published in the journal; contributors are advised strongly to read these and to comply with them having read them."

Advice from Professor Michael Reiss, Editor of *Sex Education*:

"The most obvious advice, that journal editors are always absolutely amazed at the fact that only about half of all submissions manage to take account of it, is to follow precisely the journal guidelines."

Advice from Professor Len Barton, Editor of *Disability and Society*:

"Too many authors do not pay attention to the guidance for submission, believe it or believe it not, including in this journal, the policy statement on language and referencing, and do not keep to the specified wordage required. It is not a way of encouraging endearment of the editor of this journal to find a person who is presenting a paper that is one and a half thousand words longer than the recommended word length. It's a basic factor but it's still constantly one that we are having to face."

Advice from Professor Elspeth Broady, an Editor of the *Language Learning Journal*:

"We are also very, very sensitive to people checking their papers before they hand them in. ... Please do check ... the bibliographical guidelines."

**HEWLETT, K. (2002). HOW TO PUBLISH YOUR JOURNAL PAPER.
MONITOR ON PSYCHOLOGY, 33(8), 50.**

The Catch 22 in research publishing is that few authors work effectively in the process until after they've published a few manuscripts. The good news is that experienced journal editors and authors are willing to pass on their secrets of success. Here is their best advice.

Have a focus and a vision

- Angela M. Neal-Barnett, PhD, of Kent State University and author of the forthcoming book, "Bad Nerves" (Simon & Schuster, 2003), as well as numerous papers in multiple journals believes that the key to successfully publishing an article is to "get a vision"-- a reason and purpose for writing. That concept isn't always familiar to academicians who often write because they have to for tenure or promotion, she says. But, she advises, while "academic wisdom [says] 'publish or perish,' ancient wisdom says 'without vision, the people will perish.'"
- Once you have a vision, says Neal-Barnett, write it down and keep it in constant view to remind you of your mission.

Write clearly

- "There is no substitute for a good idea, for excellent research or for good, clean, clear writing," says Nora S. Newcombe, PhD, of Temple University, former editor of APA's *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*.
- Newcombe endorses the advice of Cornell University's Daryl J. Bem, PhD, who in *Psychological Bulletin* (Vol. 118, No. 2) wrote that a review article should tell "a straightforward tale of a circumscribed question in want of an answer. It is not a novel with subplots and flashbacks, but a short story with a single, linear narrative line. Let this line stand out in bold relief."
- Newcombe also admits that neatness counts. Though she tries not get in a "bad mood" about grammar mistakes or gross violations of APA style, she says, such mistakes do "give the impression that you're not so careful."

Get a pre-review

- Don't send the manuscript to an editor until you have it reviewed with a fresh eye, warns Newcombe. Recruit two objective colleagues: one who is familiar with the research area, another who knows little or nothing about it. The former can provide technical advice, while the latter can determine whether your ideas are being communicated clearly.
- Many academic departments form reading groups to review each others' papers, says Elizabeth M. Altmaier, PhD, editor of *Clinician's Research Digest: Briefings in Behavioral Science*. "New faculty should and can form reading groups where they can exchange drafts and get feedback to each other," she says.
- After you've gotten that fresh critique of your work, says Newcombe, listen to the pre-reviewer's advice. If the reviewer down the hall "didn't really understand page six and therefore got lost in page 13," she says, "don't just say they didn't read carefully--other people are going to make that same error."
- For a final check, some editors suggest having the manuscript professionally copy-edited.

Send your manuscript to the right journal

- Many rejections are the result of manuscript-journal mismatch--a discrepancy between the submitted paper and the journal's scope or mission. Newcombe advises authors to consider the "theoretical bent" of the papers that regularly appear in the journal before they submit a paper to it.
- A major faux pas is submitting your manuscript simply to get it reviewed, says Newcombe. She's heard authors say, "This is a small experiment that I know would never get published in that journal, but I would like to get some feedback." Not a good idea, Newcombe says, because it wastes editors' and reviewers' time, and those who reject it from the journal may also be the ones who have to review the paper when it's submitted to a different journal. "It's a small community out there. Don't use up your reviewers," she says.

Beef up your cover letter

- Many authors don't realize the usefulness of cover letters, Newcombe says. In addition to stating "here it is" and that the paper conforms to ethical standards, Newcombe says the letter can contain the author's rationale for choosing the editor's journal--especially if it's not immediately apparent.
- The letter can also suggest reviewers for your manuscript, she says, especially in the case of a field that an editor isn't well-versed in. The flip side is also acceptable: Authors can suggest that certain people not review the manuscript for fear of potential bias. In both cases, authors can't expect the editor to follow the recommendations, says Newcombe. In fact, the editor may not follow any of them or may use all of them.

Don't panic

- The overwhelming majority of initial journal manuscripts are rejected at first. "Remember, to get a lot of publications, you also will need to get lots of rejections," says Edward Diener, PhD, editor of APA's *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology: Personality Processes and Individual Differences*. Only a small proportion -- 5 to 10 percent -- are accepted the first time they are submitted, and usually they are only accepted subject to revision. Since most papers are rejected from the start, says Newcombe, the key is whether the journal editors invite you to revise it.

Read the reviews carefully

- In fact, anything aside from simply "reject," Neal-Barnett reminds, is a positive review. These include:
 - **Accept:** "Which almost nobody gets," she says.
 - **Accept with revision:** "Just make some minor changes."
 - **Revise and resubmit:** "They're still interested in you!"
 - **Reject and resubmit:** Though not as good as revise and resubmit, "they still want the paper!"
- Some reviewers may recommend submitting your work to a different journal. "They're not saying the article is hopeless," says Neal-Barnett, "they're just saying that it may not be right for that journal."
- If revision isn't invited following the initial rejection, many new authors may toss the manuscript and vow to never write again to or change programs. Newcombe's advice, though, is to read the reviews carefully and determine why that decision was made.

- If the research needs more studies or if the methodology needs to be changed somehow, "if you have a sincere interest in the area, do these things," says Newcombe. You can resubmit it as a new paper, noting the differences in the cover letter.
- Also keep in mind that "quite often, unfortunately, a journal will reject an article because it's novel or new for its time," says Newcombe. "If you feel that it is valid and good, then by all means, send it off to another journal."
- Gary R. VandenBos, PhD, APA's publisher, adds, "once you have published, you take a feedback letter for what it is--a good-news sign telling what you need to do to transform it into an acceptance." It can take three or so journal-paper publishing experiences to get the hang of the process, he says.

Don't put off the revisions

- If you are invited to revise, "Do it, do it fast and don't procrastinate," says Newcombe. Also, she warns that because reviewers can at times ask for too much, authors should take each suggestion into consideration, but decide themselves which to implement.

Be diplomatic

- What if reviewers disagree? "There is a wrong and a right way" to address dissention among reviewers, says Newcombe. She quotes from Daryl Bem's *Psychological Bulletin* article:
- **Wrong:** "I have left the section on the animal studies unchanged. If reviewers A and C can't even agree on what the animals have developed, I must be doing something right."
- **Right:** "You will recall that reviewer A thought the animal studies should be described more fully whereas reviewer C thought they should be omitted. Other psychologists in my department agree with reviewer C that the animals cannot be a valid analogue to the human studies. So, I have dropped them from the text and have attached it as a footnote on page six."
- Ultimately, it's good to keep in mind that the road to being published isn't a lonely one: "All authors get lots of rejections--including senior authors such as me," says Diener. "The challenge," he says, "is to persevere, and improve one's papers over time."

Preparation Checklist for ASA Manuscripts

This checklist is intended to help you prepare your manuscripts for publication in ASA journals. It covers some details of presentation and style that will be checked in copyediting if your manuscript is accepted for publication. Authors are advised to check with specific journals on guidelines for mechanics of submission (e.g., policies on electronic submissions) and to verify details on issues such as submitting blinded versus unblinded copies. Refer also to the *American Sociological Association Style Guide (4th ed.)*, available from the ASA Executive Office, 1430 K Street NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20005 (\$10 for ASA members; \$20 for nonmembers). **See especially section 6.6, “Checklist for Preparing and Submitting a Manuscript to an ASA Journal.”**

MANUSCRIPT FORMAT

- All pages must be typed or printed (12-point Times New Roman type size preferred), **double-spaced** (including footnotes and references); block quotes may be single spaced.
- Margins** must be at least 1.25 inches on all four sides to allow for editor’s or copyeditor’s marks.
- Use normal settings on word processing software. Do not create special characters on the keyboard.

TITLE PAGE

- Include the full **title** of the article, the **author(s) name(s) and institution(s)** (listed vertically if there is more than one author), a **running head** (60 characters or less), the **word count** for the manuscript, and a title footnote.
- An asterisk (*) by the title refers to the **title footnote** at the bottom of the title page. The title footnote includes the name and address of the corresponding author, acknowledgments, credits, and/or grant information.

ABSTRACT

- The abstract appears on a separate page headed by the title. It should be **brief** (one paragraph of 150 to 200 words), **descriptive** (a summary of the most important contributions in a paper), and **accessible** (jargon-free and clear to the general reader). A good test of the quality of an abstract is if it can serve as a press release for the research.

TEXT

- Content.** As you revise your text, read it objectively from a reader’s point of view. Use **terminology consistently** throughout the text (e.g., use variable names consistently). Also **active writing** (“I discovered that ...”) is more concise and accurate than passive writing (“It was discovered that ...”).
- Subheadings.** Generally, three levels of subheadings are sufficient to indicate the organization of the content. See recent journal issues for subheading formats.
- Text citations.** Include the last name of the author and year of publication. Include page numbers when you quote directly from a work or refer to specific passages. Cite only those that provide

evidence for your assertions or that guide readers to important sources.

If author’s name is in the text, follow the name with the year of publication in parentheses: “...Duncan (1959)”; if author’s name is not in the text, enclose both the last name and the year in parentheses: “... (Gouldner 1936).”

Pagination follows the year of publication after a colon: “... (Ramirez and Weiss 1979:239–40).”

Give both last names for joint authors: “... (Martin and Bailey 1988).”

For works with three authors, list all last names in the first citation in the text; thereafter use “et al.”: “... (Carr, Smith, and Jones 1962)”; and later, “... (Carr et al. 1962).”

For more than three authors, use “et al.” throughout.

Separate a series of references with semicolon: “... (Burgess 1968; Marwell et al. 1971)

For unpublished materials, use “forthcoming” to indicate material scheduled for publication. For dissertations and unpublished papers, cite the date. If no date, use “N.d.” in place of the date: “... Smith (forthcoming) and Jones (N.d.).”

For machine-readable data files, cite authorship and date: “... (Institute for Survey Research 1976).”

- Mathematical symbols and equations.** Use consecutive Arabic numerals in parentheses at the right margin to identify important equations. Align all expressions and clearly mark compound subscripts and superscripts. Clarify all unusual characters or symbols. Use italic type for variables in equations and in the text; use bold type for vectors.

FOOTNOTES/ENDNOTES

- Use footnotes/endnotes only when necessary.** Notes (particularly long ones) can be distracting to the reader. As an alternative, consider stating in the text that information is available from the author or adding an appendix.
- Begin each note with the superscript numeral to which it is keyed in the text.
- Type or print notes **double spaced**, either as footnotes at the bottom of the page or in a separate “ENDNOTES” section following the references.

REFERENCE LIST

- All references cited in the text must be listed in the reference list, and vice versa. Double check spelling and publication details—**ASA journals are not responsible for the accuracy of your reference list.**

- List references in alphabetical order by authors' last names. Include full names of all authors—use first name initials only if the author used initials in the original publication.
- For multiple authors, invert only the name of the first author (e.g. "Jones, Arthur B., Colin D. Smith, and Barrie Thorne").
- For two or more references by the same author(s) or editor(s), list them in order of the year of publication. Give the author's (or editor's) full name in all subsequent references. Arrange references for the same single author from the earliest to the latest. All single author references precede references with multiple authors, even though they may have been published earlier. References with multiple authors are arranged in alphabetical order of author's last names.
- To list two or more works by the same author(s) from the same year, distinguish them by adding letters (a, b, c, etc.) to the year or "Forthcoming" (e.g., 1992a, Forthcoming a). List in alphabetical order by title.

A few examples follow. See recent journal issues for further examples:

Books

Mason, Karen O. 1974. *Women's Labor Force Participation and Fertility*. Research Triangle Park, NC: National Institutes of Health.

Periodicals

Aseltine, Robert H., Jr. and Ronald C. Kessler. 1993. "Marital Disruption and Depression in a Community Sample." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 34(3):237–51.

Collections

Clausen, John A. 1972. "The Life Course of Individuals." Pp. 457–514 in *Aging and Society*. Vol. 3, *A Sociology of Age Stratification*, edited by M. W. Riley, M. Johnson, and A. Foner. New York: Russell Sage.

Web Site (No Author)

American Anthropological Association. 2006. "Race." Retrieved July 10, 2010 (http://www.aaanet.org/_cs_upload/resources/14737_1.pdf/).

BIOGRAPHY

Include a short biography (five or six lines) for each author, which should include the author's name, title, department, institution, and a brief description of current research interests, publications, or awards.

TABLES, FIGURES, AND APPENDICES

Include tables, figures, and appendices only when they are critical to the reader's understanding.

Tables

- Number tables consecutively throughout the text. Type or print each table on a separate page at the end of the manuscript.
- Include a descriptive title and headings for all columns and rows (see recent journal issues for examples).
- Always use the same **variable names** in tables as in the text.
- Include standard errors, standard deviations, *t* statistics, and so forth in parentheses under the means or coefficients in the tables.
- Gather general notes to tables as "Note:" or "Notes:" at the bottom of the table; use ^a, ^b, ^c, etc., for table footnotes.
- Use asterisks *, **, and/or *** (asterisks) to indicate significance at the $p < .05$, $p < .01$, and $p < .001$ levels, respectively; note if tests are one-tailed or two-tailed. Generally, only those results significant at the $p < .0$ level or better should be indicated as significant in the tables or text.

Figures and Other Artwork

- Number figures or illustrations consecutively throughout the text. Each should include a title. If the manuscript is accepted for publication, submit figures and illustrations electronically. All labels on figures and illustrations must be typeset.
- **IMPORTANT:** Before submitting a figure or illustration for publication, contact the journal editorial office to discuss size specifications and/or disk and file formats. All artwork and type must be legible when sized to fit one or two column widths, 2-9/16 and 5-5/16 inches wide, respectively (standard column widths for ASA journals).

Author(s) must secure permission to publish any copyrighted figure, illustration, or photograph.

Appendices

- Appendices appear at the end of the article and should be labeled "Appendix A," "Appendix B," etc.

REVIEW YOUR MANUSCRIPT

- Although authors should note that these functions may not always be reliable, run spell and grammar checks on your manuscript from your word processing software.
- Carefully read through the entire manuscript one final time before submitting.