

# On Avoiding Rejection by Journals



by Nancy D. Simco

There may be people who enjoy reading rejection letters from journal editors, but most of us would rather avoid that. What follows is advice on how to avoid that. It does not contain new insights into the “art” of being published. There probably are no new insights on this subject, but it always seems useful to review the old insights.

## Before Submission

Journal editors are often asked, “*What is the most common reason for rejecting papers?*” Many journal editors will agree that *the answer is that the authors of those papers have failed to convince the reviewers that they have anything to say.* With continual pressure to publish in order to obtain tenure, promotions, and salary increases, or even to remain in the profession, it is not surprising that some papers which have nothing to say are submitted to journals. However, a large number of papers which initially appear to fall into this category actually do not. The problem is an old one. Journalists are admonished not to “bury the lead.” Journal referees, and grant proposal reviewers, are generally very busy people who do not see it as their jobs to sift through pages of prose to find out what the author’s project is. A related adage is that papers in professional journals should not be candidates for mystery magazines. So, if there is a *first* rule regarding getting papers into print, it is to announce the point of the paper at the very beginning, and then to let the reader know how that point will be developed. It is not just reviewers one is apt to lose by burying the lead; since journal *readers* are deluged with material, they want to know right away whether *this* is a paper they want to read. If the central point of the paper has a reader’s attention, the next step is to help the reader along throughout its development. The author can do this best by trying to see the paper as the reader sees it. Be conscious of what the reader has been told—and not been told—at each step in the process.

Further, there should not be too many steps in the process. Papers which are the average length of most current journal articles usually cannot adequately address a very complex point, even if the author is quite skillful. If your idea for a paper cannot be stated in a short paragraph of no more than three to four sentences (many reviewers would say one or two sentences!), it probably should be developed in a more extended format than a journal article.

But what if your problem is that you *do not* have a journal-article-sized idea? The best sources of such ideas are philosophical discussions with your colleagues and reading journals. Both are useful in focusing attention on a manageable sized issue. When you talk about and read philosophy the point you wish to interject in the on-going philosophical conversation, and where it fits in that conversation, is likely to emerge quite naturally.

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While you are reading journals you will also be learning about the characteristics of particular journals. These characteristics need to be recalled when you are ready to submit your work. A useful practice is to keep your own notes, or log, on what you learn about each journal. The ultimate question your notes should be able to answer is, “Is there any reason to believe this journal will publish my paper on X?”

The answer to this question is the result of the answers to a number of prior questions. Has this journal published other papers on X? Are the papers in this journal written in a particular philosophical style? What is the normal length of papers in this journal? Does this journal publish comments? Discussion notes? Reviews? Let us look at these questions in a bit more detail.

First, let us consider **topics**. The clear case in which authors can be sure that their paper’s topic will be appropriate is when an invitation to submit papers for a special issue on that topic has been announced. There is at least one journal which publishes only special topics issues, and the topics are announced well in advance. Of course, most of the papers one writes will not have such an obvious target.

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There are topical trends within our discipline, just as there are in other disciplines, and those trends affect what is published. (Being able to see these trends develop and run their course prior to appearance in print is one of the reasons over-worked academics are willing to serve as journal referees.) It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to tell how long a trend will last, or where a particular journal is in relation to a trend, because authors do not have access to the papers accepted for publication that are “forthcoming.” Nevertheless, your perusal of journals will tell you quite a lot. If several papers have appeared on a particular topic, they will almost always be clustered in a few of the journals. There will be journals which have published no papers on the subject and that should usually be taken as an indication that those journals are interested in something else.

When a trend is at its peak, papers in the thematic region become more difficult to get accepted. The greater the number of papers in an area, the harder it is to find something which has not already been said. Sometimes editors find themselves in the position of receiving a high-quality paper which makes the same point as a lower-quality paper they have already accepted. In this situation both the editor and the author of the higher-quality paper are disappointed, but timing in this sense is under the control of neither. The point here is that the disappointed author had in fact done the work needed to choose an appropriate journal. That this work did not result in an acceptance was more a matter of luck than ability. In publishing journal articles, at least, *ability and persistence will eventually overcome bad luck*. We will return to this important point later, but for now, let us note that it is usually the case that the work, which led one to submit the paper to the journal that turned it down under these circumstances, will also have produced a set of alternative journals. It is a good idea to get the paper right back into the mail and on its way to one of the alternatives.

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**Philosophical style** also follows trends, and inexperienced authors should beware of getting too caught up in them. Attempting to write like someone else tends to trivialize your work. Remember that you are not Wittgenstein, Derrida, or your major professor. The best way for most of us to get into print is to say what we have to say as clearly as we can.

Clarity also involves not sending unintended messages to readers by the insensitive use of language. The American Philosophical Association publishes and distributes *Guidelines for Non-Sexist Use of Language*. Although this publication is directed toward making our use of language neutral with respect to gender, a number of people in the profession have reported that drawing attention to this issue has made them much more sensitive to other value-laden expressions which can interfere with communication.

There are other more specific senses of style with respect to which journals vary in what they accept. But, if you have been *reading* journals, there should be little confusion about most of these differences. For example, a piece of historical scholarship differs from a short discussion of a technical point in analytic philosophy in almost every detail. Papers on the same topic are written differently for subdisciplinary specialty journals than they are for general journals. The readership of a specialty journal can be expected to have a greater command of detail with the material. In general, readers of different journals have different expectations regarding the amount of tight argument or analysis, exposition, interpretation, background information, number of footnotes, content of footnotes, bibliographies, and length.

Journal editors scratch their heads when they are sent book-length manuscripts, or one-page political or religious harangues. But between these extremes paper length does raise some tricky questions. Some journals have explicit length specifications, for example, the “normal word limit is from 3,000 to 5,000 words.” But even when editorial instructions are so precise, one often finds that a high percentage of the work which actually appears in the journal is approximately the same length, say, for example, close to one end or the other of the range. The most reliable guide to the length acceptable to particular journals is their *most recent* issues. I stress “most recent” because healthy journals are not static. The people making the decisions change, the reviewers change, the topics of interest change (and different topics may require development at different lengths), and financial situations change (perhaps resulting in increases or decreases in the number of printed pages). Such changes may result in only minor variations, but they can also produce abrupt shifts. Being aware of the major shifts can obviously save authors from submissions which are no longer appropriate for a given journal. And, if one can pick up on the minor variations, one has undoubtedly already achieved “pro” status.

Length is not even a constant with respect to discussion notes and book reviews. We tend to think of both of these forms as significantly shorter than articles, but a survey of journals produces quite a large number of counter-examples.

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Again, the most reliable guide will be a few of the journal's most recent issues. Canvassing journals also indicates whether they publish **discussion notes or book reviews**. Beginning authors are frequently advised to start their publishing careers by producing work in one, or both, of these forms. Many authors have found this to be very good advice, but one still has to get the work to the "right" journal. Discussion notes should enter some on-going *discussion*. The "best bet" for acceptance should be the journal which is home to the particular point at which your work enters the philosophical conversation. Be aware that journals rarely (almost never) publish discussion notes which continue the discussion from a *different* journal. Particular journals cater to their own readers, and do not expect them to "jump" to another journal for a part of an on-going conversation.

There are wide variations in book review practices. Journals which never publish book reviews, or which publish reviews written only by their own staff, will not welcome unsolicited work of this form. However, some journals list book titles with an invitation to volunteer to review them. Journals which issue such invitations tend to be in subdisciplinary areas. That this is the case is an advantage for a beginning scholar in a particular subdisciplinary area. Since the number of people in our profession is relatively small, and the number is even smaller in any subdisciplinary areas, and most of the people in a given area will read reviews of the books in that area, one can become known to the people with whom one hopes to "do philosophy" by producing work in this form.

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Although volunteering for a specialized journal may offer the highest success rate, other types of journals do publish unsolicited reviews. However, before you spend your time in this manner, it is worth asking if an unsolicited review will be considered. A letter of inquiry, phone call, or e-mail message to the editor will help you judge whether to spend time on a particular review or move on to another project.

Regardless of which form your work takes, one of the primary characteristics sought by its reviewers is **originality**. If the first commandment of publishing in journals is "Don't bury the lead," the second may well be "Don't reinvent the wheel!" Here again, the best guide will be a thorough knowledge of the literature and journals in the area in which you are writing. The ultimate transgression of this commandment occurs when a reviewer comes upon a wheel of his or her own invention!

A related point is that it is always a good idea to let reviewers know that you are aware of work which is close to your own. For most journals, the accepted means of doing this is a brief footnote. This is part of **situating** your work within the literature. Both reviewers and readers want to know where your work is located in the on-going philosophical conversation. In some instances situating your work may require only a sentence (e.g., in a brief discussion piece), and in some instances it may require the bulk of the paper (e.g., in a piece attempting to persuade the reader of a point of interpretation regarding an historical figure). In any case, authors improve their chances of acceptance by locating their

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work. And, what is sometimes more important, they improve their chances of getting an evaluation that is useful for helping the author improve the work. Reviewers often express location failure by saying that the author has failed to **motivate** the work.

‘Motivation’ has several connotations in this context. Does the paper indicate right away why its topic is important? Why the reader should be interested? Why this topic at this time? Against which background? All of these questions should be answered directly, or the reader should find them obviously answerable from what is said directly. The answers locate your work. And, if a reviewer says things which indicate that you have a location failure, that is *almost* good news. Making sure that your paper answers the above questions is something you can readily determine and repair. This minor repair may be all that is needed for acceptance.

### Submitting your Paper

When you have settled on the journal to which you will submit your work, you can help your case by giving a little thought to what it would be like to be on the receiving end of your paper, plus a large number of other papers. A simple approach is best. The traditional “plain brown wrapper” is sturdy enough to protect a manuscript. Binding the envelope with yards of strapping tape is not necessary. And, special mail services are usually an unnecessary expense for the author and sometimes an inconvenience for the editor or journal staff. Anyone who handles a lot of mail can tell you that regular first class mail rarely fails. However, beware of anything which calls special attention to your package, especially if you are trying to save time! Special handling often adds unnecessary steps to the process. For example, a specially handled item may have to wait until an individual is available to deliver it, or a campus post office may send the journal office a notice by regular mail that there is a package to be picked up! An editor of a well-known journal told me that he has to drive to an off-campus post office to pick up certified mail.

Cover letters which describe the paper, or why the paper was written, are also unnecessary. Unless there is some particular reason the editor should be interested in the life history of a paper, all that is needed in the cover letter is the author’s name, address, and the paper title.

Advocating such a sparse approach to cover letters might lead one to think that they should be dispensed with all together. But this is not the case. Because of their editorial experience, editors are very often in the position of receiving papers which are not submissions for their journals. For example, they may chair program committees, review for other journals, or collect papers for an anthology. So, it is useful to include a cover letter which indicates why the paper is being sent.

Reviewers need to know even less about the paper’s circumstances than does the editor. There is no reason they should know the author’s name. Blind

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refereeing is a common practice in philosophy, but if it is to be effective the author has to make it possible. Publishing philosophy journals is hardly a big business, so journals do not have sufficient staff members to remove the authors' identity from papers. The easiest means, for both authors and editors, of preparing papers for blind refereeing is to put any information which identifies the author on a removable cover sheet, or simply in the cover letter.

If one really wants refereeing to be blind, then care must be taken not to reveal the author's identity in either the text or the footnotes. There are some obvious instances in which footnotes are actually designed to "let" the referee "figure out" the author's identity. Some referees find this practice to be pretentious and annoying. In this case authors would better serve their interests by making no effort to conceal their identities.

So, is blind refereeing worth the extra effort? It has been argued that blind refereeing results in more papers by women, minorities, and unknown philosophers being published. Critics of blind refereeing have argued that it results in fewer publications by under represented groups. The Association of Philosophy Journal Editors (APJE) in cooperation with the APA Committee on the Status of Women and the APA Committee on Blacks in Philosophy tried to obtain information relevant to answering this question. In 1993 the APJE sent questionnaires to journals asking for information about the representation of women, minorities, and unaffiliated philosophers among the journal's submissions and acceptances, and the journal's policies on blind refereeing. No one expected conclusive results from the survey, but the data collected was not very useful in determining the correlation between blind refereeing policies and the issue of representation because there are too many cases in which the relevant factors are unknown. For example, what can one report about "E. P. Johnson" who uses a home address in a large metropolitan area? The data showed a higher average acceptance rate for women authors (31.99% for 22.26% of total submissions) than men authors (20.27% for 77.41% of total submissions), but fewer than a third of the journals made an attempt to separate acceptances by gender. (Acceptance rates of 31.99% and 20.27% are much higher, at least double, the mean acceptance rates in philosophy journals.) So, the jury is still out on the value of blind refereeing. In the absence of concrete evidence, authors can only follow the established practice of journals (and program committees) which have definite policies, and make their own decisions when submitting to others. One of the virtues of word processing equipment is that it is fairly easy to keep more than one version of a paper. So, if you are undecided about the blind-refereeing issue, it is feasible to have two versions until some factor tips the scale toward one of the alternatives.

The greatest virtue of word processing capabilities is the ease with which we can make changes. However, this also raises the expectation that authors will take advantage of this virtue and present clean, accurate text. Poor proof-reading, or no proof-reading, prior to submission is not viewed charitably by reviewers. And don't pass up the spellcheck option. One reviewer expressed this quite

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succinctly: “Why should I spend my time on something the author cared about so little?”

Part of the proof-reading routine should be to format your work so that it meets any special directions for manuscript preparation announced by the journal to which it is being submitted. Almost all philosophy journals ask for double-spaced text, footnotes at the end of the text, and adherence to some commonly used style specifications. Reviewers are so accustomed to work meeting these basic requirements that they often find it distracting when they are not met. Some journals will return papers unread if these requirements are not met.

Having said all this about what authors can do to enhance the probability of acceptance of their work, it is important to be explicit about what authors should be able to expect from journals. In 1974, in an effort to help both authors and editorial personnel, the Association of Philosophy Journal Editors adopted a set of guidelines for the handling of manuscripts. The Guidelines were also endorsed by the American Philosophical Association. However, since neither of these bodies have legislative authority over journals, they serve as recommendations rather than mandatory policy. Journals do operate at least in the spirit of these guidelines, but only minor revisions have been made in them over the past twenty years and some particular points need to be up-dated given changes in the mechanics of journal publishing.

### **Suggested Guidelines for the Handling of Manuscripts by the Editors of Philosophy Journals**

The following guidelines are given with the recognition that the Association cannot, and has no wish to, legislate for its members. They are designed merely to facilitate and clarify the processing of manuscripts and to communicate general policy. It is understood that variations from these guidelines may be necessitated by a variety of editorial conditions. When so necessitated, differing editorial practices are within the spirit of the guidelines, though editors are urged to announce or communicate their special policies.

Philosophy journals exist to serve the community of philosophers and to promote and further philosophical inquiry. The following professional guidelines regarding the processing of manuscripts are designed to facilitate these goals.

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1. Special directions for the preparation of manuscripts shall be publicly announced by journals which have them.
  2. Journals shall notify authors by return mail of the receipt of manuscripts and where possible indicate the approximate time needed for evaluation procedures.

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3. Unless authors are notified to the contrary, such evaluation procedures will normally not extend beyond four months from the date of receipt. After this period of time authors are encouraged to inquire concerning the status of their manuscripts.
4. Authors of accepted manuscripts shall be notified in the letter of acceptance of the approximate date of the publication of their manuscript.
5. If articles are held for two months or more, letters of rejection shall normally include one of the following: a) the comments of the referees, b) a brief summary of the referee's comments, or c) the editor's reasons for rejecting the paper. The signed comments of a referee may be forwarded to the author only with the referee's explicit permission. Editors shall not be expected to reply to further inquiries about their evaluations.
6. Editors shall not suggest other specific journals to authors.
7. Authors have full responsibility for the proper preparation of manuscripts. When the manuscript is not properly prepared, services performed for them by editorial offices, as well as author changes in proof, are properly chargeable to them.
8. Changes in manuscripts by an editor other than those necessary for the style of the journal (footnotes, spelling, layout, etc.) shall be made only with the approval of the author.
9. Authors shall normally review their articles in proof before printing.
10. Authors shall submit the same manuscript to only one journal at a time.
11. Authors have responsibility for arranging (through envelopes, return postage, etc.) for return of their manuscripts.
12. A letter of acceptance from an editor is normally an agreement to publish the article in the journal.

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The items in the Guidelines were intended to be straightforward, but some of them deserve comment.

Number 3 encourages authors to inquire about the status of manuscripts after four months. Many authors are convinced that such inquiries will prejudice editors against their work. Editors say emphatically that it does not. What produces this apparent discrepancy? One can only guess, but busy editors' *abrupt* demeanor in response to telephone inquiries has frequently been cited! I believe that editors do genuinely encourage inquiries, *after a reasonable amount of time*. Weekly calls from an anxious author may not really prejudice the decision, but the editor is not likely to be pleased to see more submissions from this author.

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E-mail is quickly becoming the choice medium for inquiries. For both authors and editors, e-mail accomplishes the purpose without being as time consuming as letters back and forth by regular or “snail” mail, or as a game of “telephone tag.”

There are some pitfalls in Guideline 5. The widest procedural variation among journals probably occurs with respect to how they handle referee’s comments. Similar to several items mentioned earlier, the most reliable guide on what to expect is the author’s most recent experience with that journal (as well as the recent experience of one’s professors and colleagues). Some journals never try to explain why papers are rejected while some try to give a thorough explanation on every occasion. The reason there is so much variation is that providing authors with *good* explanations, which are accurate, fair, and not misleading, is by far the most time consuming task editors face. Some would rather offer no explanation at all than one which will be useless or harmful.

There is significant disagreement among editors regarding whether it is ever appropriate to reveal a referee’s identity. The reasons for not revealing the identity of the reviewer when the report is negative seem obvious, but problems also arise when the report is positive. The most extreme case may have occurred when the author of a rejected paper tried to get the favorable referee to join in a lawsuit against the editor! A more common problem is authors contacting favorable referees to read more of their work or help them find publishers. Even if the referee is disposed toward offering this kind of help, it can easily create unfair demands on the referee’s time.

There is also disagreement about whether editors should “be expected to reply to further inquiries about their evaluations.” Many editors want to know when authors believe something has gone wrong with the evaluation of their work. A large part of the editor’s job is to make the review process as fair, intelligent, and humane as possible. But if the editor does not know the process is failing, it won’t be fixed. Editors need to continually and open-mindedly scrutinize their own review processes, but this does not mean they should see them as having failed each time they are questioned. Editors will sometimes re-enter a paper whose author has questioned the process, or its results, so it is reasonable to ask for this treatment. At the same time, it should be recognized that given the large number of submissions to most journals, editors may be forced to avoid engaging in this practice.

Guideline 6 has raised a considerable amount of curiosity. The reason the APJE adopted it was that some authors mistakenly took the advice of the editor of journal X to send a paper to journal Y as a commitment on the part of the editor of journal Y. There is also a danger of an author taking a suggestion that a paper be sent to a specific journal as amounting to a recommendation to that journal to publish the paper. These kinds of situations have caused friction between authors and editors and between editors and editors.

The unique submission policy, Guideline 10, is common practice in philosophy, but not in other disciplines. This policy is designed to avoid the abuse of journal personnel, especially reviewers. Disciplines which allow multiple, simultaneous submissions are generally those in which reviewers are paid for their time. Since reviewers' time is professional *service* in our discipline, it is a very precious commodity. Without people willing to donate this service there would be no journals—or, at least, very few. If two or three referees have given careful consideration to a paper, and the editor then receives a letter saying that the paper is being published by another journal, its author should probably not send any more papers to that editor.

Guideline 11 is clearly a case in which this document is out of date. Journals no longer return manuscripts because word processing and photocopying facilities have made this practice unnecessary.

### Submitting Your Paper Again

Even if you have great ideas and take all of the advice available, the probability that you will never receive a rejection letter is quite low. Acceptance rates in philosophy journals are among the lowest in academia. However, there are several variations on the rejection theme and on most of them, you should submit your paper again.

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On some occasions your paper will be returned with referee's comments which suggest improvements, and an invitation to resubmit to that journal. Because editors have so many papers from which to choose, an invitation to resubmit is a clear indication that your paper is a strong candidate for publication in that journal. If you revise your paper as suggested and resubmit it to the same journal, that does not guarantee that the journal will publish it, but it does enormously increase the odds in its favor. Journal practices vary regarding whether revised, resubmitted papers are reviewed by the referee whose comments on the earlier version were sent to the author, or to new referees, or to both. But, regardless of the practice, an invited resubmission already has the editor's attention and interest. In most cases editors only invite resubmission of papers which can be revised in light of the referee's comments with a modest amount of work. Papers seen as requiring substantial revision are also seen as too great a risk to encourage their return.

Not all referee's comments will be as useful as those accompanied by an invitation to resubmit, but they should always be considered as a potentially valuable resource. The most common complaint about referees from authors is that their work has been misunderstood. When this happens one should remember that referees generally read a large number of papers and know what to look for in them, so if they have misunderstood, the average journal reader is likely to have a much harder time. Study the comments to see if you can determine what misled the referee. It is not always easy to adopt a reader's point of view with respect to your own work, but it may be the most useful skill you can acquire. Referee's reports, as well as your colleagues' comments and your commenting

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on your colleagues' work, are important resources for developing this skill. After you have done what is needed to get the reader on track, mail the paper to another of the journals you believe might be interested in it. Guiding the reader through the paper usually does not require extensive revision. It will almost certainly require less time than writing another paper.

Occasionally you may find that a referee's comments just "miss the mark." After you have ruled out the sort of misunderstanding discussed above, you may still believe that your work received an inappropriate evaluation. You have to be the judge of which revisions and how much revision is needed on the basis of any report. Sending the paper to another journal without revision is sometimes the best course of action. It is also a professional courtesy to let the editor know that you found the evaluation inappropriate. As indicated in discussing the Guidelines, this information helps the editor continually improve the review process, which contributes to upgrading publishing in the profession as a whole.

You may want to send an unrevised paper out again even if the referee's comments do not fall in the "off the mark" category. Not every set of referees will see the merits of a particular paper in the same way. For one thing, different sets of referees read different sets of competing papers. A particular paper can obviously be judged as the best of the lot with respect to one set of papers, but have a much lower ranking in another set.

If the referee's comments are useful, and you decide to make the suggested revisions, you then have the option of sending the paper back to the same journal. However, if you do send it back to the same journal, the cover letter should indicate that the paper is a revised version of a paper reviewed by the journal. Authors frequently include a copy of the referee's report with the resubmission. This information is useful to the editor in selecting which referees will be most helpful for both the author and editor. If you send the revised piece to another journal, you need not indicate that it is a revision. It has a clean slate with the new journal. Some people recommend sending unsolicited revisions to a different journal in every case because of the clean slate feature. This may be good advice when decisions at the first journal are made by one, or a small number, of people. But, for most journals which use a large number of reviewers, unsolicited revisions are not disadvantaged.

There is really only one crucial point to be made with respect to papers which have not been accepted: Submit the paper again! Earlier we saw that a paper may not be accepted because of bad luck in timing. There are also other reasons for rejections which are not based on the quality of work. In discussing trends within the discipline, we noted that there can just be too many papers at one time on a particular theme. An editor may believe that the journal has published so many papers on a topic that the readership has tired of them. There are also questions of balance. Whatever the journal's established readership, the editor will want to print papers which appeal to as many interest groups within the readership as is feasible.

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## After your Paper Has Been Accepted

The letter of acceptance will tell you what happens next. Sometimes you will be asked to do minor revisions. If the acceptance letter gives you a publication date, you should do the revisions as quickly as possible. Otherwise, your paper might have to be rescheduled. Some journals do not schedule papers for publication until they have the final copy. In this case, the speed at which the author makes revisions determines how soon the paper will appear in print.

Most journals now ask for disk copies of accepted papers. This saves production costs and staff hours for journals, and significantly increases accuracy. In spite of beginning with electronic copy, most journals still send page proofs to authors. This is another occasion on which you should respond promptly. Journals with tight publication schedules may have to delay publication of a paper if the page proofs arrive late, or they may publish the paper as is.

If a journal asks for disk copy and you cannot provide it, just explain this to the editor. This should not result in the journal's inability to print your paper. It has been projected that in a few years journals will be forced to charge authors for producing electronic copy of their texts, but there is no indication that this is necessary at this time.

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However, as indicated above in the APJE Guidelines, it is sometimes necessary to charge for author-errors corrected at the page proof stage. Corrections at page proof can be minimized if you do a good job of proofing before submission. The old advice about proof reading is still best: read with a helper if possible, with one of you reading the copy aloud and spelling any unusual words; or if you proof alone, follow along one line at a time with a straight edge underneath the line, and avoid reading for content.

If the journal which accepts your paper has a copy editor, when you receive page proofs you may find that your text has been altered to conform to the journal's style. If changes made by a copy editor change the meaning, or even the tone, of your work, you should mark the proof to indicate that you want to retain the original copy and include a brief explanation.