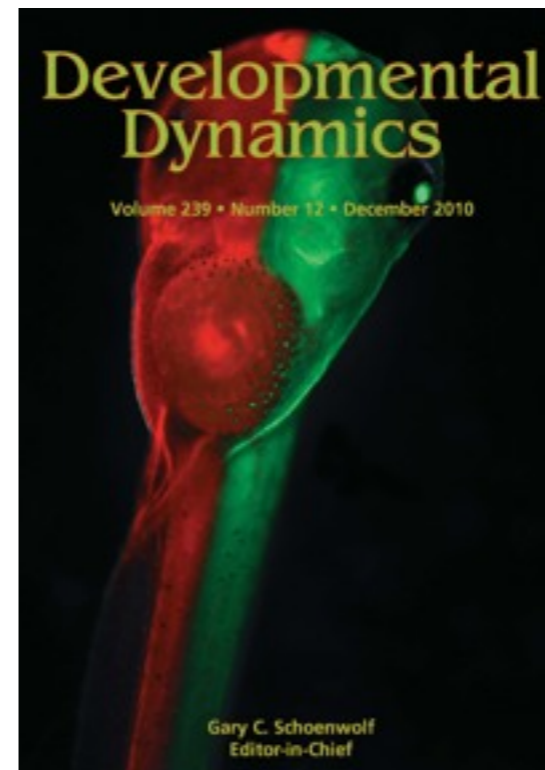


# Publication Workshop:

## Maximizing Your Chances of Getting Your Papers Published in the Best Journals



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# The Workshop Leaders

Kurt Albertine, Editor-in-Chief *The Anatomical Record*



Gary Schoenwolf, Editor-in-Chief, *Developmental Dynamics*

# The Workshop

Schoenwolf: Why publish? How to choose your journal wisely?

Albertine: How to write your manuscript to sell it?

Albertine: What is accepted ethical conduct in Western publishing?

Schoenwolf/Albertine: Ethical publishing: What would you do?

# Getting Published: Why Publish and How to Choose Your Journal Wisely

# Publication Provides an Opportunity to Tell Your Story

Once upon a time. . .

# Why Tell Your Story? That is, Why Publish?

Main reason: To report the solution of an important  
scientific or medical problem

# Secondary Reasons

To have your work validated by peer review (not officially part of the scientific record until it undergoes peer review)

To provide a record that's readily accessible worldwide

To provide a record that's permanently accessible

To receive approval/recognition from your peers for your work

To repay a debt to society (your education, mentoring, research funding, institutional support) by advancing the field through new knowledge

In academia, publication is an expectation (publish or perish)!

# An Inherent Conflict of Interest Based on Two of the Reasons for Publishing:

To Advance One's Field

To Advance One's Career

## Research Misconduct

**But an Author is Not Alone When  
it Comes to Conflicts of Interest**

# Publishing Protagonists

Authors



Editors



Reviewers



Readers



For Publishing to Truly Advance the  
Field, All Protagonists Need to Act  
Ethically at All Times

Where to Tell Your Story? That is,  
How Do You Decide Where to  
Publish?

# Two Choices Need to be Made for Publication

You (the authors) choose where to submit (i.e., which  
journal)

They (the journals) choose what to publish (i.e., which  
papers)

But, YOU actually have some control over both choices!

# Picking Where to Submit (Totally Your Choice)

## What to consider?

- A. Fit between your paper and the journal's scope
- B. Reputation of the journal and its editorial board
- C. Customer service of the journal

# A. Fit between Your Paper and the Journal's Scope

A good fit, means that your paper is more likely to be accepted by the journal

A good fit means that your paper is more likely to be read by the readers in  
your field

Your goal in publication is to showcase your  
work: Publications are the coin of the realm  
(the official currency of your field) that  
advance your career as well as the field

# B. Reputation of the Journal

## IMPACT FACTOR:

A good strategy is to submit to the journal with the highest impact factor in your field that you think will likely accept your paper in some form or fashion (don't aim way too high or low)

# Choosing a Highest Impact Journal Can Be Like Fighting with a Double-edged Sword: it Cuts Both Ways!



Journals with the highest impact factor:

Have the highest non-review and rejection rates

Have a high “page-pressure” rate resulting in severe limitations in number of pages, figures, and references; much of the data becomes supplementary

Frequently require several additional experiments, resulting in a delayed resubmission

Because of the limitations, not enough data are always presented to convince skeptical and perhaps jealous scientists (all scientists are skeptical and focus on flaws)

However, Journals with the highest impact factor are widely read and cited, and the science published in them is generally assumed to be better

# Mitigating Factors for Choosing the Highest Impact Journals

Common knowledge/bias in the field of a journal's quality  
(not necessarily the same as impact factor)

Ranking in the field (e.g., 3rd out of 10 journals, in the top third)

The scientific quality of the editorial board

Citation half life

Author's previous success or lack thereof with a particular journal

Customer service

# C. Customer Service of the Journal

How quickly do they review? How quickly do they publish?

How fairly do they review?

How helpful are their reviews?

Are there costs to publish (page and color) or other limitations like number of pages, number of figures, number of references?

Are they open access? If so, when?

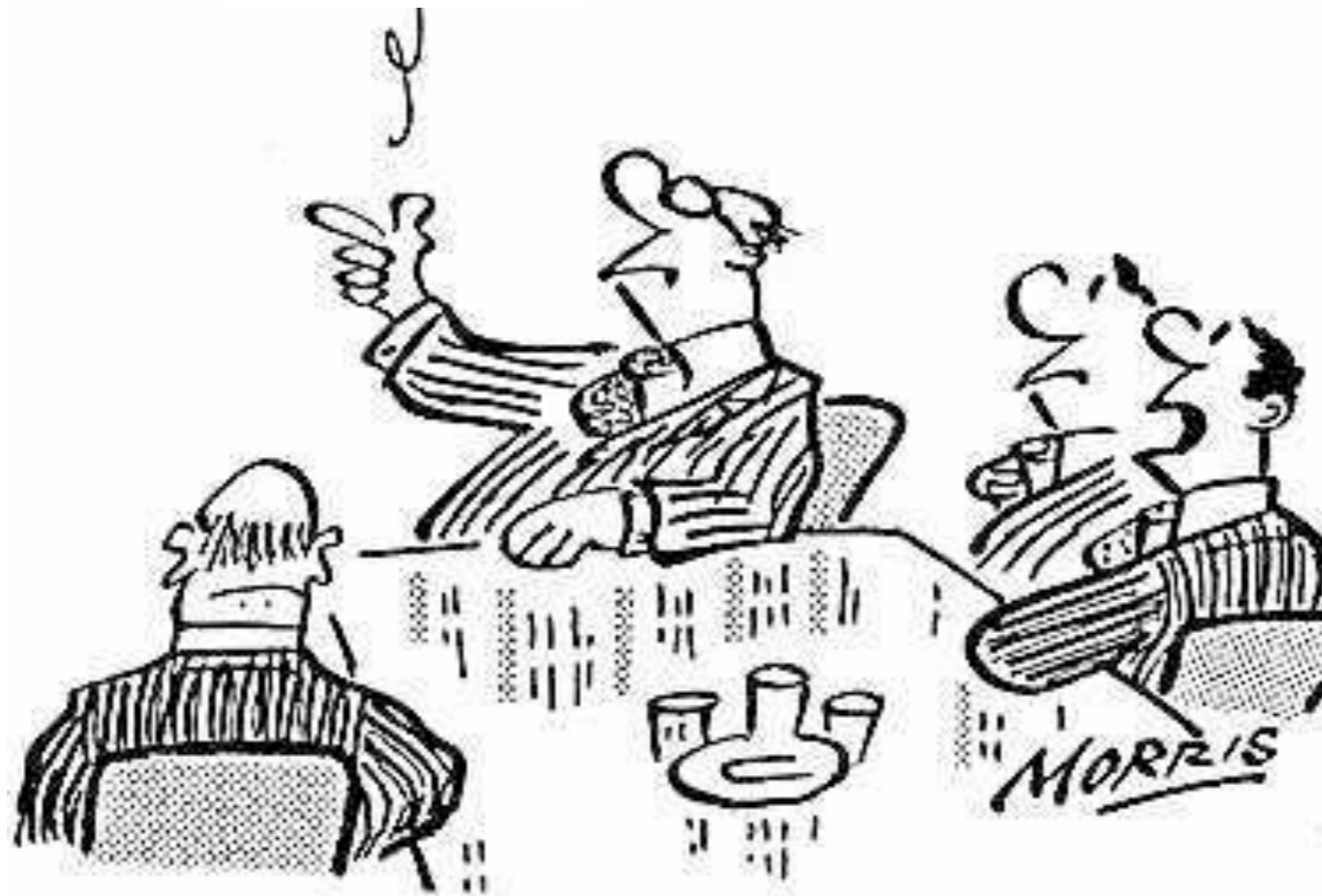
Do you like the quality of their product (e.g., figure reproduction)

# How Do They Decide to Accept or Reject Your Story? The Importance of Peer Review

# How Do They Choose What to Publish?



Heads, We Accept!



"I wish I could be as calm as JB when it comes to making decisions."

# How Do They Choose What to Publish?

They choose based on fit: is the study of high interest to their readers? Is it of broad interest?

They choose based on the importance of the advance in the field: is the study of high impact?

They choose based on excellence

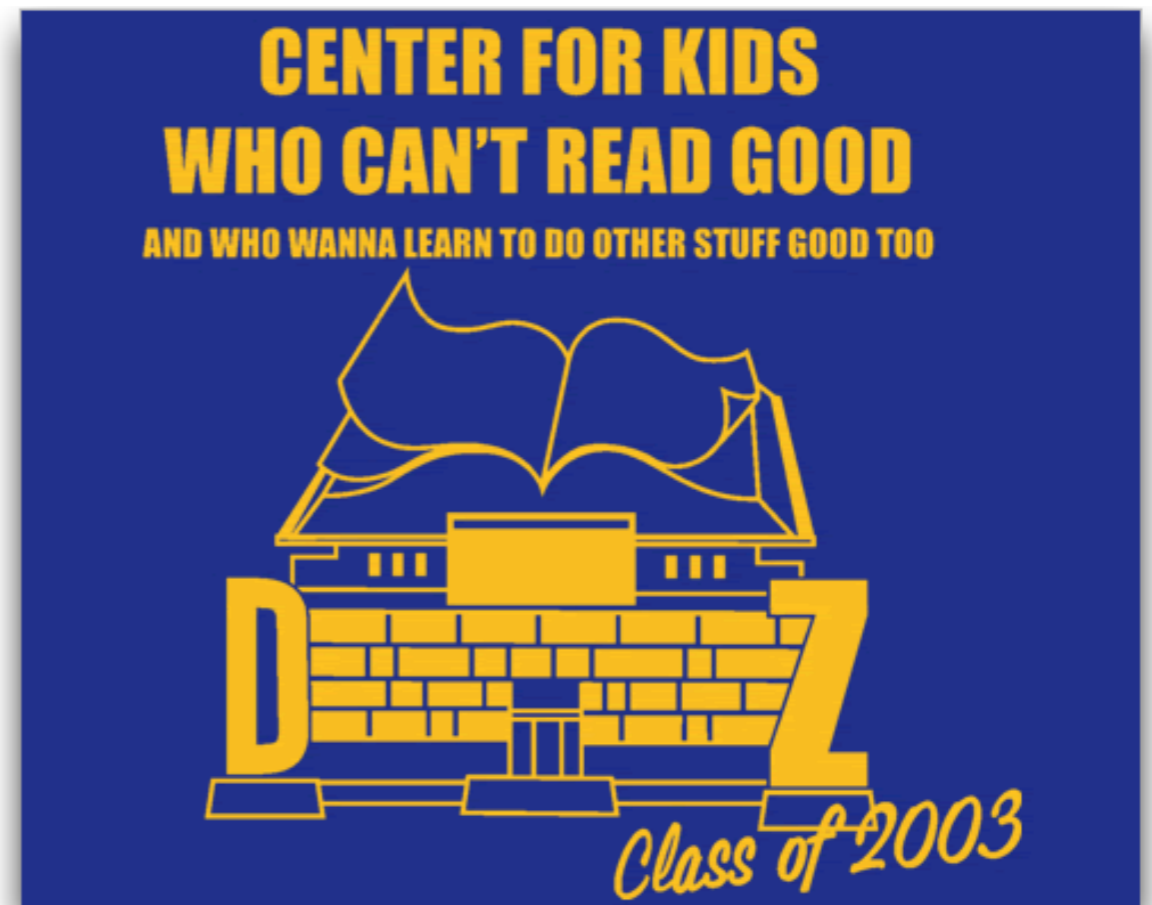
# How Can You Influence Their Choice? You Have Up to Two Chances

## At Submission

1. Use the Title, Abstract, and Introduction to announce that an important problem in the field has been solved
2. Use **the augmentative core**--the Results, Discussion, and Methods--to construct a sound scientific argument to convince skeptical scientists that the claim to have solved an important scientific problem is credible
3. Use the byline, Acknowledgments, and Literature Cited to give credit where credit is due

And, Make Sure that You Write  
Clearly, Concisely, and  
Persuasively

**“Write good!”**



# Importantly, Also Include a Cover Letter

“Dear Sir or Madame: . . .”

# A Bad Cover Letter

We are pleased to submit our article . . .

The method of this experimental work is not very modern, but we hope this study is quite original.

Therefore we are encouraged and hope to find the audience for our research.

**Instead, tell me that you have solved an important scientific/medical problem!**

# Ancient Chinese Proverbs

## **Confucius says:**

Modesty is attended with profit, arrogance brings on destruction.

The man(**uscript**) of worth is really great without being proud; the mean man(**uscript**) is proud without being really great. (GCS edited)

Unfortunately, modesty is unlikely to get your manuscript published in a western journal, so “toot your own horn,” without being arrogant (don’t use hyperbole)

# Your Second and Final Chance to Influence Their Choice

## At Resubmission

Be professional and respectful, but you can challenge (with cogent and concise logic and facts) reviewers' and editor's comments and decisions when you believe that they are in error or unreasonable

Respond to all criticisms with an appropriate revision or a reasonable explanation as to why a revision was not done

To some degree this is a negotiation process, but the scientific standards (as interpreted by the editors) of the journal must be met

# Don't Burn Your Bridges!



Peer review and the editorial process: it's not always perfect, but it's the best we have

# Publication Provides an Opportunity to Tell Your Story

And they all lived happily every after. . .