Writing for Peer Review Journals

Reflections of an Accidental Editor

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Balancing Concerns in Community-based Participatory Research
(McCarty, Nicholas, & Wyman, 2014)

“Triple Vision”

Community concerns

Research concerns

Participants’ concerns
Presentation Overview

• Part 1: Sharing questions & ideas about writing for peer review journals
• Part 2: Examples from the Wakanyeja “Sacred Little Ones” Project
• Part 3: FAQs—Some frequently asked questions
• Part 4: “An invitation to dialogue” — Next steps
Part 2—A Parallel Example: Wakanyeja ECE Initiative
(With appreciation to Dr. Tarajean Yazzie-Mintz, American Indian College Fund)

Overview

- Improve cognitive and non-cognitive skill acquisition among American Indian children
- Improve ECE teacher education by partnering with tribal colleges
- Bridge pre-K transition to K-3 schooling
- Integrate Native language(s) and culture(s) into curriculum development and teacher preparation
- Empower families and communities to act as agents of change in education for their children

(SOURCE: American Indian College Fund, 2016)
Wakanyeja Partners
(courtesy of American Indian College Fund, 2016)
Grandma is dancing with the children at the social song and dance. I wanted to share this photo to encourage others to allow the elderly to teach our children. She is guiding them and allowing them to express themselves by dancing. She is also encouraging them to not be afraid to go out in front of people. They are identifying the songs that are being sung in ceremonial songs versus powwow music.

Auntiewithe Jim, parent of Naya and Rudy
Which journal is right for my work?
A first step in identifying the right outlet —
Survey the “journal landscape”

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<th>Journal Title</th>
<th>Aims/Scope</th>
<th>Readership/Impact Factor</th>
<th>Website</th>
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Factors to consider ....

- **Know** the journal’s mission and scope.

- **Weigh** impact factor, acceptance rate — what is important for you and your community?

- **Ask** —
  ~ What research conversations do you want to engage?
  ~ Who are your readers?
  ~ What problems of research/theory/practice do you want to impact?
Ask the editor ....

- Don’t be shy about inquiring with a journal editor about whether your manuscript is a good fit for that journal.
Be on the lookout for appropriate special issues (and extended deadlines!)
How do I know when my paper is “done”?

Is it ready to send out for review?
What happens once I submit?

What should I expect?
How long does it take?
Life Cycle of a Manuscript in Review — AERJ and JAIE
(Courtesy of Nicole Mancevice, UCLA)

Manuscript Received
- Check for blinding & formatting.
- Review internally.

Manuscript Assigned to an Associate Editor or Coeditor
- Invite expert external reviewers.
- Secure minimum of 3 agreed reviewers.

Manuscript Awaiting Reviewer Scores
- Remind reviewers of deadlines.
- Invite additional reviewers as needed.

“Desk Reject”
- Reject w/Encouragement to Revise
- Conditional Accept
- Reject
- Accept

Manuscript Decision
- Decision letter sent to author.

Manuscript Receives a Recommendation
- Editors review the manuscript, reviews, and confer on a decision.
What do reviewers look for?

An example from AERJ-SIA and JAIE....
Thank you for agreeing to review a manuscript for the Social and Institutional Analysis section of AERJ (AERJ-SIA). The AERJ-SIA editorial team has created this guide to support your review of the assigned manuscript.

As you read and review this manuscript, please consider AERJ-SIA’s mission and scope:

The Social and Institutional Analysis section of AERJ (AERJ-SIA) publishes scholarly research that addresses significant political, cultural, social, economic, and organizational issues in education. This section publishes research analyzing the broader contextual and organizational factors affecting teaching and learning, the links between those factors and the nature and processes of schooling, and the ways that such “external” domains are conceptualized in research, policy, and practice. The section invites manuscripts that advance the theoretical understandings of the social and institutional contexts of education and that encompass the diverse communities of schooling and educational research to achieve social justice in education.

Please use the following categories to focus your feedback to the editorial team and manuscript author(s).

Review Categories

Objectives or purposes. Does the manuscript address critical political, cultural, social, economic, and organizational issues in education? Does the manuscript offer new insights on these issues?

Perspective(s) or theoretical framework. Is the manuscript well grounded in current research, theory, and practice? Is the theoretical framing adequate? If not, what additional information would improve the manuscript?

Methods, techniques, or modes of inquiry. Is the manuscript methodologically sound? Please provide an explanation for any critiques that you offer.

Data sources, evidence, objects, or materials. Is the manuscript supported by relevant data?

Results and/or substantiated conclusions or warrants for arguments/point of view. Do the findings match the conclusions drawn? If not, what other evidence is required?

Scientific or scholarly significance of the study or work. Will this manuscript be useful to scholars and practitioners with an interest in political, cultural, social, economic, and organizational issues in education?

Organization and writing style. Is the manuscript clearly organized and presented in a coherent and comprehensible way?
How should I respond to reviewers’ comments?

(Even when they are contradictory....)
What if my manuscript is rejected?

We’ve all had it happen....
Be “smartly persistent” —

- Consult with colleagues, mentors, and other editors.
- Consider other journals (it may have been the wrong fit), & publication types (e.g., edited volumes).
- Use reviewers’ and editors’ feedback proactively to strengthen your work.
- *Have faith in your work!*
What if my manuscript is ACCEPTED?

Celebrate

Disseminate
And remember “triple vision”
Part 4—An invitation to dialogue....next steps
Ahéhee’ — Thank you!