

MEETING THE EDITORS – 13/01/2010

Doctoral School of Human Sciences workshop, Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Brief report by Joke Beyl

Participants were JP Van Bendegem ("Logique et Analyse"), Chris Smith ("Journal of Visual Art Practice"), Margaret Harris ("British Journal of Developmental Psychology"), Lars Magnusson and Jan Ottosson ("Economic and Industrial Democracy"). Moderator was Nico Carpentier.

First there was a general discussion on the future of academic journal publishing, then the participants focussed on the do's and don'ts of publishing in journals. Their advice will be summarized here.

The do's and don'ts of publishing in a scientific journal

- § Observe the journal's requirements (style, format, references, length...)
- § Use clear language: logic, rigueur and clarity
- § Always subject the article to an internal review before sending it to the journal
- § Focus, specify the article: one question in one article; strong, clear focus in a short paper (if you have more than 3 – 5 keywords, there might be something wrong)
- § The author is responsible for obtaining permission to use visual material from other authors
- § Start early with writing, schedule well: get it right from the start
- § Don't wait too long to respond to remarks
- § Good introduction of the article = important
- § Accept the referees' remarks, rewrite the article and insert a letter to the editor in which you explain in great detail what you have changed and why you did/did not change something + thank the referees for their comments
- § Don't give up: learn from the comments and improve the article
- § Read the referees' and the editor's comments carefully
- § If something is unclear, don't hesitate to mail the editor for an explanation
- § Don't send in the same paper to various journals. However, when your paper is rejected you can improve it based on the comments and send it to another journal.
- § Always have someone proofread your paper
- § Present your ideas at a conference to obtain valuable feedback before you send an article about it to a scientific journal

- § Get your work known: networking = important, go to conferences, meet other researchers: “If you only follow your field in journals, then you are not active in your field of research” Keep up with online discussions and blogs as well
- § Don’t reinvent the wheel: use published articles as an example
- § Act pro-active & don’t wait. You can send in an article and ask the editor whether it fits the journal’s objectives at any time. Nevertheless, special issues are important because they arouse interest.
- § Try to publish your article in a journal that is read by an international audience.
- § Be open to (new) journals focusing on your topic of study
- § Bear in mind the time lag between sending in an article and the publication of the article.