Successful Publishing in Scholarly Journals

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*Participants are encouraged to contact Bruce Thyer (Bthyer@fsu.edu) if they have any questions or issues to discuss pertaining to publishing, anytime during or after the conference.
Some Reasons to Publish

- Add to the Knowledge Base of One’s Field
- Enhance One’s Practice Knowledge
- Enhance One’s Marketability
Some Reasons to Publish

Promotion/Raises?

Earn extra income?

Enhance One’s Credibility as a Practitioner?

You will be Loved by your Boss?

Narcissism, Literary Immortality?
More Reasons to Publish

- Some professional Codes of Ethics suggest it
- It is important that the knowledge base of the field be developed by practitioners, not just academics and researchers
- It can be fun!
Consider Submitting a Variety of Forms of Scholarship

Keep in mind that empirical research is a special part of scholarly publications (perhaps the most important part), but that in many fields the majority of articles are non-empirical. In contemplating becoming a published author you have many other options besides RESEARCH!
Here is a Partial List:

- Letters to the Editor
- Book Reviews
- Responses to Published Articles
- Theoretical Papers
- Original Opinion or Editorial Articles
- Case Histories Without Data
- Descriptions of Innovative Programs or Treatments, without Data
Purely Descriptive Studies

With Data

Correlational Studies

Case Studies with Data, Such as Single-System Designs

Group Outcome Studies

- Retrospectively Designed
- Prospectively Designed

Answered baseline survey and were randomized, n=11969

Original program, n=5966
Lost to follow-up, n=3025
Completed follow-up, n=2341

Modified program, n=6003
Lost to follow-up, n=4107
Completed follow-up, n=1896

Percent of Volunteers Withdrawal Chart
Book Chapters
Edit a Book
Author A Book
Poetry and Other Literary Works
Methodological Works
Phone Application?
Any Other Ideas?
Micro Strategies to Publish

- Specialize in a Limited Area - Write About What You Know Best. Think Small, initially.
- Maintain a File of Articles Related to Your Area(s) of Expertise – hard copy (old school) or PDFs (current practice)
- Seek out Active Researchers - Ask to Assist Them
- Recruit Others to Work with You
Micro Strategies to Publish

* Take Advantage of Naturally Occurring Opportunities for Research and Publishing

Examples of Such Low-Hanging Fruit:

- Patient/Agency Records (e.g. Recidivism, Admissions, Discharges, Outcome Data, Staff Statistics)
- Student term papers, theses, dissertations
- Clinical Work with Individuals
- Clinical work with Groups, Families, couples, etc.
- Supervision or Administrative Practice
- Teaching (e.g., describe or evaluate new methods)
Micro Strategies to Publish

- Offer to Revise and Resubmit Others’ Papers
- Give your own Papers to Someone Else to Revise and Resubmit
- Make a Public Commitment at Work to Submit Something
  - perhaps to your supervisor, major professor, or Director, during your annual review?
Micro Strategies to Publish

Arrange Contingencies to Support Your Writing
- e.g. - Prepare an abstract of a paper and send it to a professional conference. If it is accepted, you are ethically obligated to have the paper ready at the time of the conference.

Reinforce one Another for Writing Efforts – celebrate!
- Learn the Existing Journals well - Consult Journal Resource Books
- Respond to Calls for Papers for Journals
- Edit Your Own Special Issue of a Journal, and Slip Your Work into it!
Some Issues to Consider in Selecting a Journal Outlet

- Practice Versus Research Journals
- Do They Employ Blind, Peer Review?
- Is There a Publication Charge?
- Is the Journal Abstracted (e.g., PsycINFO)
- What Publication Style Does the Journal Use?
- Old versus New Journals
- Only print, only on-line, mixed?
- Open access versus limited access?
- Is the Journal Picked up by the Major Indexing Services (e.g., Journal Citation Reports in the Web-of-Science”, or PubMed)?
Issues in Selecting a Journal Outlet

Does it have a high impact factor?

Does it have a credible H-index?

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Impact Factor Trend Graph: RESEARCH ON SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Impact Factors

JCR Years

*Impact Factor -- see below for calculations*

The journal impact factor is a measure of the frequency with which the "average article" in a journal has been cited in a particular year. The impact factor will help you evaluate a journal's relative importance, especially when you compare it to others in the same field. For more bibliometric data and information on this and other journal titles click on the "Return to Journal" button.

NOTE: Title changes and coverage changes may result in no impact factor for one or more years in the above graph.

2009 Impact Factor

Cites in 2009 to articles published in: 2008 = 42  Number of articles published in: 2008 = 66
2007 = 91  2007 = 62
Sum: 133  Sum: 128
Calculation:Cites to recent articles 132 = 1.039
Number of recent articles 128

2008 Impact Factor

2006 = 71  2006 = 47
Sum: 107  Sum: 109
Issues in Selecting a Journal Outlet

- Impact on Field (Child Study Journal vs. Children and Youth Services Review) – overall quality and reputation?

- Is it a Disciplinary Journal (e.g., Research on Social Work Practice), Interdisciplinary (e.g., e.g., Science, Nature), or Does it Belong to Another Field (Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology)?

Is this important to you, your research or your fields?
Issues in Selecting a Journal Outlet

- Is the Journal Respected? – ask colleagues
- Do They Treat Authors Respectfully and offer quality peer review?


Macro Strategies for Administrators to Promote Faculty Publications

- Recruit Active Publishers, Encourage Them to Collaborate with Existing Faculty/Staff
- Make it Clear that Every Faculty Member is Expected to Participate in Some Form of Writing/Publication Endeavor
- Build Such Expectations into One’s Yearly Assignment
- Provide Authors with Travel Money to Present Papers, Contingent upon their Submission of the Work to a Professional Journal
- Prepare a Bulletin Board or Display Case Containing Reprints of Articles or Actual Books Published by Faculty/Staff
- Post lists on departmental webpage
- Prepare hardcopy booklets of publications
- Build Reinforcers into Merit Raise System
- Share Reprints, Publicly Recognize the Authors of Accepted Articles
Most practitioners do not publish anything, but then, neither do most human service or health care professionals such as physicians, psychologists, dentists, lawyers, nurses, etc.

Writing for publication can be viewed as a professional skill, like any other, and can be carefully cultivated and learned by almost any reasonably intelligent person (clinical interview, physical examination, mental status examination, etc.)
General Tips

- Target your Journal
- Do not be Picky About the Order of Authorship
- Use Deadlines with Collaborators
- Read the instructions for authors and prepare the manuscript accordingly. Social work journals may require a different publication style than psychology journals, and psychiatry journals may be different from both
- Follow the author’s instructions to the letter, especially the referencing format.
Learn the Relevant Styles!

- Prepare your manuscript on a word processor yourself.
- Let the manuscript rest a day or so and then re-read it slowly. Revise as needed.
Circulate for Peer Review & Submit Properly

- Circulate it among peers and ask for their written comments, to be placed directly on the manuscript itself. Ask them to look for unclear sentences, paragraphs, loose structure, etc.
- Submit the manuscript properly. Use a web-based portal, email or, if hardcopy - Send the correct number of copies, and a short letter (not a lengthy one!). Points to include are that the work is original, unpublished, and not under concurrent editorial review. Indicate IRB approval (if relevant), ethics compliance, etc.
Now comes the hardest part - CHILL OUT - be patient. Some journals take months to make a decision. You deserve a prompt (within a month) acknowledgement of your submission. Do not hesitate to send letters of inquiry if you don’t get an acknowledgement. You will eventually receive a decision.
Accepted as it is

- Least Likely outcome 😞
- If it is accepted, have a party 😊
- Tell your boss and co-authors (send copy of the letter of acceptance)
- Tell other helpful persons (spouse, data gathers, etc.)
- Do what is asked (e.g., sign an author’s agreement, etc.)
Revise and Submit

Very Possible

If you are asked to Revise and Resubmit --

• Undertake the revising process immediately. Do not let it wait.

• In your return letter document how you have (or decided not to) addressed each of the recommended revisions.

• If you attend to most of the suggestions, the odds are high that it will be accepted.
Rejected!

- If it is rejected - if the manuscript is returned with reviewer’s comments, peruse them, and revise the manuscript accordingly, if the comments are sensible and workable.

- Then, promptly prepare a letter of submission to another journal and resubmit the manuscript immediately!

- ALWAYS keep your work in circulation.

Anticipate Rejections

Everyone gets rejected all the time, even well established researchers!

Realize that to some extent, the peer-review process used to select articles for publication is a random one,


Anticipate rejections - Develop, in advance, a hierarchical list of potential journals to send your manuscript to.

As a *last* resort, send your manuscript to a subsidy press, or open access journal with lax standards. At least your work will be accessible.
After Your Article is Accepted

- The next step is your receiving the page proofs, checking them carefully and making any needed corrections.
- Return page proofs on time.
After Your Article is Accepted

- Await publication.
- When published, postal mail or email clean copies to all your friends and family, any researchers/scholars you wish to be acquainted with your work.
- Perhaps, announce its availability on various relevant listservs, and offer to send a PDF to interested parties. Be judicious in this. There is a fine line between making a helpful offer, and engaging in unseemly self-promotion.
DON’T WAIT FOR THAT MAGIC TIME IN YOUR LIFE (e.g., after Ph.D., after tenure, after the baby is born, next summer, prison?) WHEN YOU WILL HAVE SOME FREE TIME TO WRITE.

IT IS UNLIKELY TO HAPPEN!

JUST DO IT! Little every day?
Useful Resources

Pop Quiz

Which of the following is the most important factor by which reviewers immediately judge the quality of a manuscript submitted for possible publication in a journal?

A. The high quality of the abstract.
B. The novel treatment of the subject.
C. Good writing - Clarity and style.
D. Seminal piece of work/research.
E. None of the Above.
The Correct Answer is:

E. None of the Above

“The Professional Appearance of a Manuscript” is the most important factor. To some extent the peer review process is a probabilistic one!
Q and A

This Completes this Presentation.

Yes, you can.

THANKS FOR LISTENING