

PEER REVIEW

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON BEING A JOURNAL REVIEWER

PEER REVIEW

WHAT IS PEER REVIEW?

- **READERS VALUE ‘TRUSTED’ INFORMATION**

- **REVIEW BY PEERS**
 - **WITH SIMILAR EDUCATION/TRAINING**

- **EXTERNAL REVIEW**
 - **BY EXPERTS IN THE FIELD**
 - **USUALLY 2 OR 3 REVIEWERS FOR EACH MANUSCRIPT**

- **INTERNAL REVIEW**
 - **BY EDITORIAL BOARD AND STAFF**
 - **COLLATES RESULTS OF EXTERNAL REVIEWERS**

PEER REVIEW

- **CORRECT REVIEWER CLASSIFICATIONS KEY**
 - **REVIEWER ASKED TO INDICATE AREAS OF EXPERTISE**
 - **REVIEWER INVITED BASED ON CLASSIFICATION LISTING**
 - **IF CLASSIFICATION INCORRECT?**
 - **YOU WILL BE DECLINING MORE INVITATIONS TO REVIEW**
 - **USUALLY REVIEWER STATES THIS NOT THEIR AREA OF EXPERTISE**
 - **WILL BE ASKING ALL REVIEWERS TO UPDATE LIST**

PEER REVIEW

POTENTIAL LIMITATIONS OF PEER REVIEW

- **SUBJECTIVE**
- **BIAS MAY BE SUBTLE**
 - **OPEN TO ABUSE**
- **SLOW AT TIMES**
- **EXPENSE OF STAFF**
- **FRAUD DETECTION ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE**
- **CRITERIA MAY BE DIFFERENT FOR EACH JOURNAL**

PEER REVIEW

PROCESS AT JBJS

- **MANUSCRIPT SUBMITTED**

- **STAFF CHECKS FOR SEVERAL ITEMS**
 - **WORD COUNT**
 - **BLINDING OF MANUSCRIPT**
 - **COMPLETENESS OF FIGURES AND TABLES**
 - **DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST (ICMJE)**
 - **PLAGIARISM CHECK AFTER FIRST REVISION**

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PROCESS AT JBJS (continued)

- **ASSIGNED TO EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**
 - **ASSIGNS CLASSIFICATIONS TO IDENTIFY REVIEWERS**
- **ASSIGNED TO DEPUTY EDITOR BY SPECIALTY**
 - **MAY REJECT WITHOUT FURTHER REVIEW (15%-20%)**
- **SENT FOR REVIEW TO 2 OR 3 REVIEWERS**
- **WHEN REVIEWS COMPLETE, DEP ED COLLATES**
 - **DECIDES IF NEEDS METHODOLOGY/STATISTICS REVIEW**
 - **SUBMITS RECOMMENDED DECISION**

PEER REVIEW

PROCESS AT JBJS (continued)

- **DECISION BY DEPUTY EDITOR SENT TO AUTHORS**
- **IF ASKED TO REVISE, AUTHORS COMPLETE REVISION**

- **REVISION MANUSCRIPT REVIEWED**
 - **BY DE AND OFTEN 1 OR MORE OF ORIGINAL REVIEWERS**

- **CYCLE CONTINUES UNTIL DE AND EIC SAY 'READY'**
- **FINAL EDITING DONE BY EIC**
- **SENT FOR COPY EDITING AND PUBLICATION**

PEER REVIEW

WHAT DO DECISION GRADES MEAN?

- **C REJECT WITHOUT REVIEW**
 - DECISION BY DEPUTY EDITOR AND EDITOR
 - NOT SENT TO REVIEWERS
 - ABOUT 15%-20% OF MANUSCRIPTS

- **C-REJECT**
 - REVIEWERS CRITICAL OF STUDY
 - MAY REJECT ON METHODS/STATS REVIEW ALONE
 - AUTHORS NOT INVITED TO REVISE AND RE-SUBMIT

- **C+ REVISE**
 - TECHNICALLY AN INITIAL REJECTION
 - AUTHORS INVITED TO REVISE
 - BUT NOT ACCEPTED AT THIS STAGE
 - RE-REVIEW OF REVISION → DECISION MADE
 - ABOUT 2/3 WITH EVENTUAL ACCEPTANCE

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WHAT DO DECISION GRADES MEAN? (con't)

– B REVISE

- INITIAL REVIEWS RELATIVELY POSITIVE
- ALMOST ALL ARE ACCEPTED AFTER REVISIONS

– A REVISE

- EXCELLENT REVIEWS, < 10% ON INITIAL REVIEW WITH 'A'
- WILL BE PUBLISHED AFTER REVISION

– ALMOST REVISE

- ESSENTIALLY NEVER USED BY REVIEWERS
- USED BY EDITORS WITH MINOR FINAL CONCERN

– READY

- FULLY ACCEPTED AND SENT TO BE PUBLISHED
- DECISION MADE BY DEPUTY EDITOR AND EDITOR
 - NOT USED BY REVIEWERS

PEER REVIEW

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR REVIEWERS

- **YOU ARE ADVISING THE EDITORS**
 - **EDITORS MAKE FINAL DECISION**

- **CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM, NOT NEGATIVITY**
 - **AVOID PEJORATIVE LANGUAGE**

- **KEEP CONFIDENTIALITY**
 - **SHOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED UNTIL PUBLISHED**

- **TIMELY REVIEW IF ACCEPT ASSIGNMENT**
 - **ALL AUTHORS PREFER QUICK DECISION**

- **DISCLOSE YOUR CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

- **MAIN PURPOSE → IMPROVE WHAT IS PUBLISHED**

PEER REVIEW

WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

- **IMPORTANCE OF TOPIC**
 - **IS INFORMATION ON THIS TOPIC WIDELY SOUGHT?**

- **RELEVANCE TO READERS**
 - **DATA WIDELY APPRECIATED BY READERS**
 - **BETTER SUITED FOR A SUBSPECIALTY JOURNAL?**

- **ORIGINALITY**
 - **NEW IDEA PREFERRED OVER CONFIRMATORY STUDY**

- **WILL IT LEAD TO BETTER PATIENT CARE?**
 - **IMPORTANT FOR CLINICAL JOURNAL**

- **VALIDITY OF REPORTED FINDINGS**

PEER REVIEW

POTENTIAL BIASES FOR REVIEWERS

- **POSITIVE RESULTS PUBLISHED MORE OFTEN**
 - **IMPORTANT TO INCLUDE NEGATIVE STUDIES**

- **WRITING UNEVEN FROM NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS**
 - **REVIEWER TO COMMENT ON SCIENTIFIC DATA**
 - **COPY EDITORS CAN CORRECT TEXT LANGUAGE**
 - **NO NEED FOR REVIEWERS TO COMMENT ON ENGLISH**

PEER REVIEW

POTENTIAL BIAS FOR REVIEWERS (con't)

- **FINDINGS AGREE WITH YOUR POINT OF VIEW**
- **MAY RECOGNIZE AUTHOR EVEN WITH BLINDING**
 - **IN ONE STUDY, IDENTIFIED AUTHOR 24%-50% OF TIME**
- **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**
 - **INDUSTRY TIES OR SAME AREA OF RESEARCH**
 - **JBJS REVIEWERS ASKED TO DECLARE CONFLICTS**

PEER REVIEW

FEATURES OF MANUSCRIPT TO NOTE

- **IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH QUESTION**
 - ARE FINDINGS ESSENTIAL FOR READERS TO KNOW
 - EVEN RCTs MAY NOT ADDRESS ISSUE OF IMPORTANCE
 - WILL THIS IMPROVE ORTHOPAEDIC PATIENT CARE?
- **ORIGINALITY**
 - CONSIDER LITERATURE SEARCH ON THE TOPIC
 - » SEVERAL LINKS IN EDITORIAL MANAGER TO SEARCH
 - **WILL PROVIDE CITATIONS OF SIMILAR ARTICLES**
 - EVEN IF NOT NEW, MAY BE LARGER STUDY COHORT
 - » METHODOLOGY MAY BE BETTER THAN PRIOR STUDY
 - PROVIDE REFERENCES IF OTHER STUDIES NOT NOTED

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FEATURES OF MANUSCRIPT TO NOTE (con't)

– VALIDITY

- **IS STUDY DESIGN APPROPRIATE FOR QUESTION?**
- **IDENTIFY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF STUDY**
 - **CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS**
- **ARE CONCLUSIONS SUPPORTED BY DATA?**
 - **OVERREACHING CONCLUSIONS COMMON**
- **CHECK SOME TABLES AND NUMBERS FOR CORRECTNESS**
- **COMMENT ON DATA COLLECTION AND METHODS**
 - **UNDERPOWERED STUDIES COMMON IN ORTHO**
 - **YOU HAVE ACCESS TO METHODS/STATS EDITORS**
 - » **IF YOU THINK THIS IS KEY, RECOMMEND THAT REVIEW**
 - » **ADMIT IF YOU ARE NOT STRONG WITH METHODS/STATS**

PEER REVIEW

FEATURES OF MANUSCRIPT TO NOTE (con't)

– PRESENTATION

- **BALANCE OF TEXT, TABLES, AND FIGURES**
 - » **TEXT = STORY...TABLES = DATA...FIGURES = ILLUSTRATE**
 - » **SUCCINCTNESS VALUED**
- **DOES ABSTRACT ACCURATELY RELECT FINDINGS?**
 - » **OFTEN MAY NOT**
- **FOR SPECIFIC QUESTIONS, REFER TO LINE NUMBER**
 - » **FOR AUTHOR TO IDENTIFY QUESTION FOR REVISION**
- **DO NOT WORRY ABOUT SPELLING MISTAKES**

– ETHICAL ISSUES

- **ANY ETHICAL ISSUES EVEN WITH IRB APPROVAL**
 - » **SOME COUNTRIES DO NOT HAVE ETHICAL REVIEW**

PEER REVIEW

REVIEWERS PLAY KEY ROLE AT JBJS

- OVER 1000 REVIEWERS VOLUNTEERED
- EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR BEST EVIDENCE
- VALUED SERVICE TO ORTHOPAEDIC COMMUNITY

- OFTEN THANKLESS TASK...
 - BUT YOU HAVE A CHANCE TO COMMENT ON NEW IDEAS
 - HELP TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LITERATURE

- IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE PROCESS, LET US KNOW AT editorial@jbjs.org



**THANK YOU FOR BEING A
REVIEWER!**

