



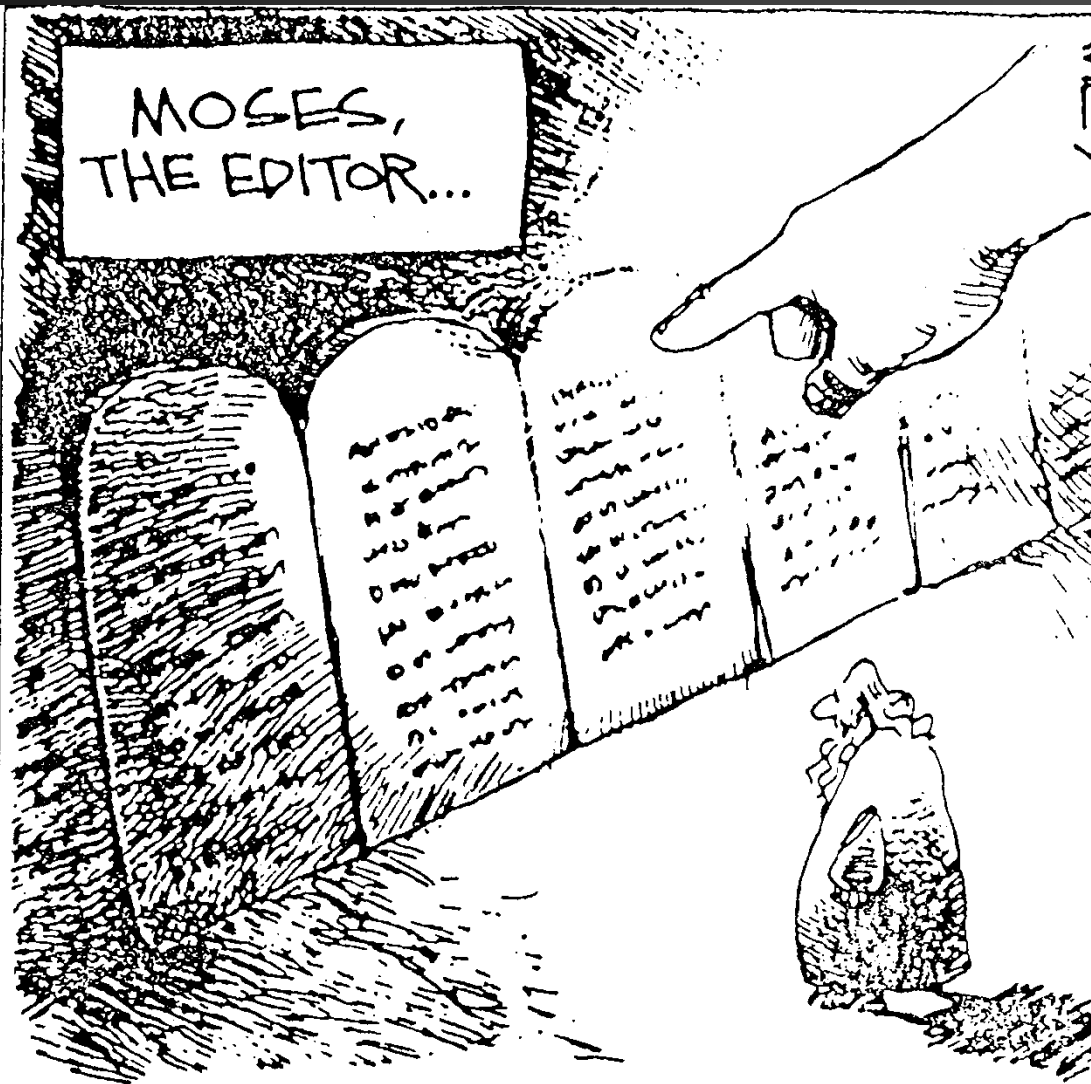
# Publishing Without Perishing

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What editors really want

*Kuda Takarinda and Tony Reid,  
Union and MSF Brussels*

MOSES,  
THE EDITOR...



"OK... I AGREE THESE 100 COMMANDMENTS CLARIFY YOUR POINT OF VIEW, BUT I'M GOING TO HAVE CIRCULATION PROBLEMS, NOT TO MENTION THE PUBLIC'S SHORT ATTENTION SPAN, SO WE'LL HAVE TO CONDENSE THEM WA-A-AY DOWN!"

# Golden Rules

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- Choose your journal *before* you start writing
  - Print off the journal's guidelines
  - Follow them!
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# Choosing a journal for publication

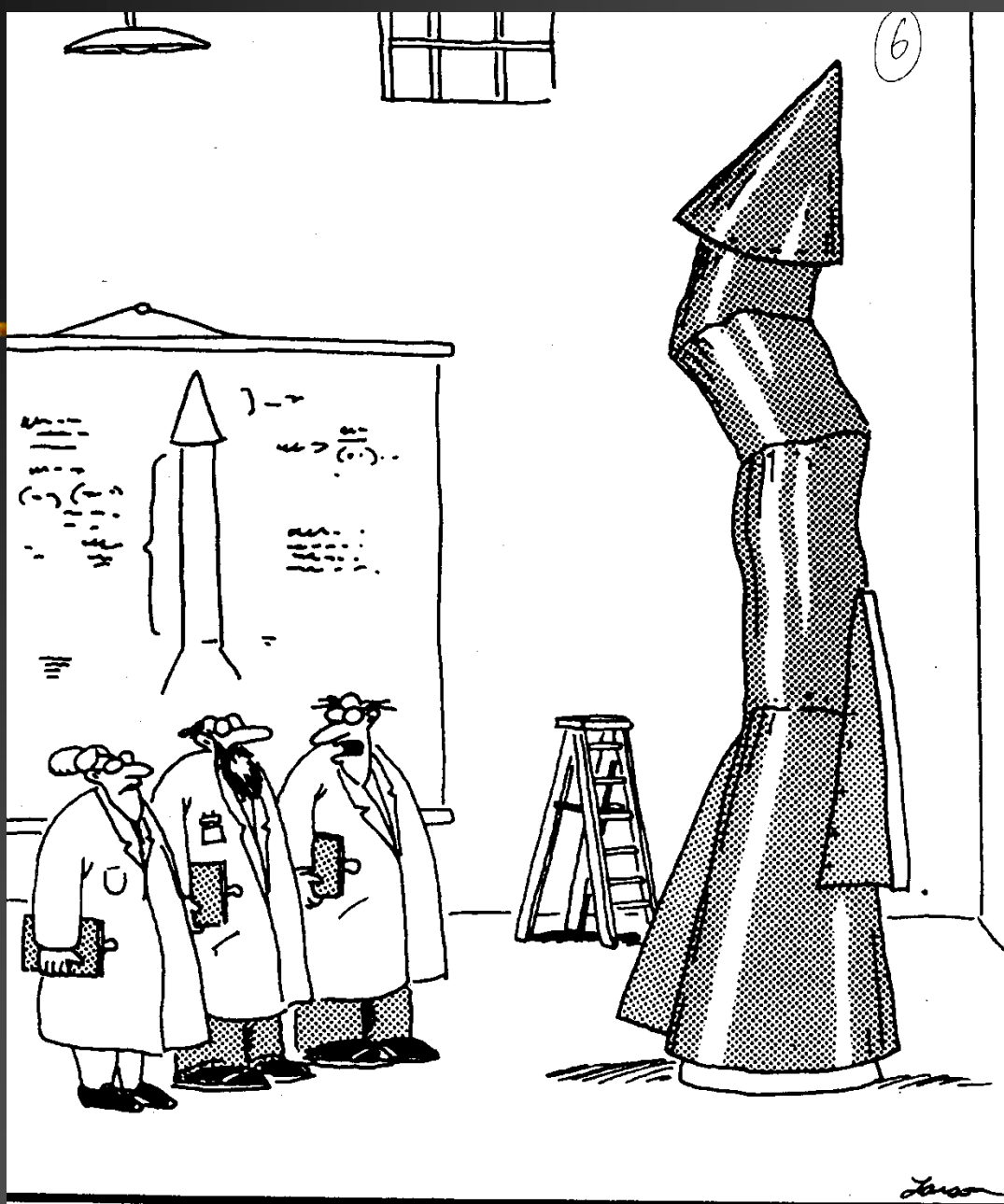
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- Your audience
  - Interests of the journal
  - Listed on PubMed
  - Impact factor
  - Turn around time
  - Open access vs closed journals
  - Previous experience
  - Ask a librarian or seasoned colleague
-

# Check the journal

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- Types of articles
    - Original research
    - Short Report
    - Case report
    - Opinion piece/editorial
    - Letter to the editor
  - **Guidelines** to structure the article
  - Note to the editor re appropriateness of the article
-



"It's time we face reality, my friend. ... We're not exactly rocket scientists."

# Structure

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- Introduction
- Method
- Results
- Discussion = IMRAD
- (Conclusion)

# Introduction

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- Set the scene - What is the general problem?
  - Specific question to be addressed
  - What has been done before - the latest research
  - Don't overcite
  - Problems with previous research
  - What is still unknown? Gaps?
  - What's new? - Marketing!
  - Conclude with aim and objectives: 1-2 sentences
-



# Method

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- Design
  - Setting
  - Sample population – inclusion/exclusion
  - Data collection
  - Data variables – defined, sources, validity
  - Analysis strategy – stats tools, sample size
  - Ethics approval
-

# Results

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- Just the facts, nothing but the facts
  - Relevant results – your objectives
  - Response rate
  - Demographics
  - Outcomes – numbers, %, *P* values, Confidence Intervals
  - Avoid duplication in text and tables
  - Tables/figures should stand alone
  - Stats – only report planned outcomes
-

# Discussion

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- Main findings of your study – link to objective
  - What is new? Why important?
  - Strengths of study
  - Limitations of study (sometimes in last paragraph)
  - Compare to the literature – explain differences
  - Speculation
  - Implications – clinical, policy
  - Future research
-

# Conclusion

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- Keep it short and simple
  - What did you show?
  - Must be supported by your data
  - Relate back to your objective(s)
-

# Abstract

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- Write after the paper is completed
  - Structured
  - Word count
  - Reflect the study findings fairly
  - Marketing - most people only read this!
-

# Title

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- Your first chance to catch readers' interest
  - Specific information
  - Study design, eg RCT
  - Format – question, statement, two-part
  - Try for “The Hook” – Marketing
-

# Title Page

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- Title
  - Authors
    - Addresses, affiliations
    - Order of authors
  - Corresponding Author
  - Key words
  - Short running title
  - Word count
-

# References, Acknowledgments

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- Limit references to relevant ones
  - Cite fairly
  - Check journal's style – eg Vancouver or Harvard
  - Keep a copy of all references
  - Consider electronic ref program eg Endnotes, Mendeley
  
  - Acknowledgments – contributors, not authors
  - Permissions
-



# Funding, Competing interests

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- Funding sources always requested
  - Disclose all
  
  - All financial or other competing interests must be declared
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# Authorship [ICMJE – Dec -2014]

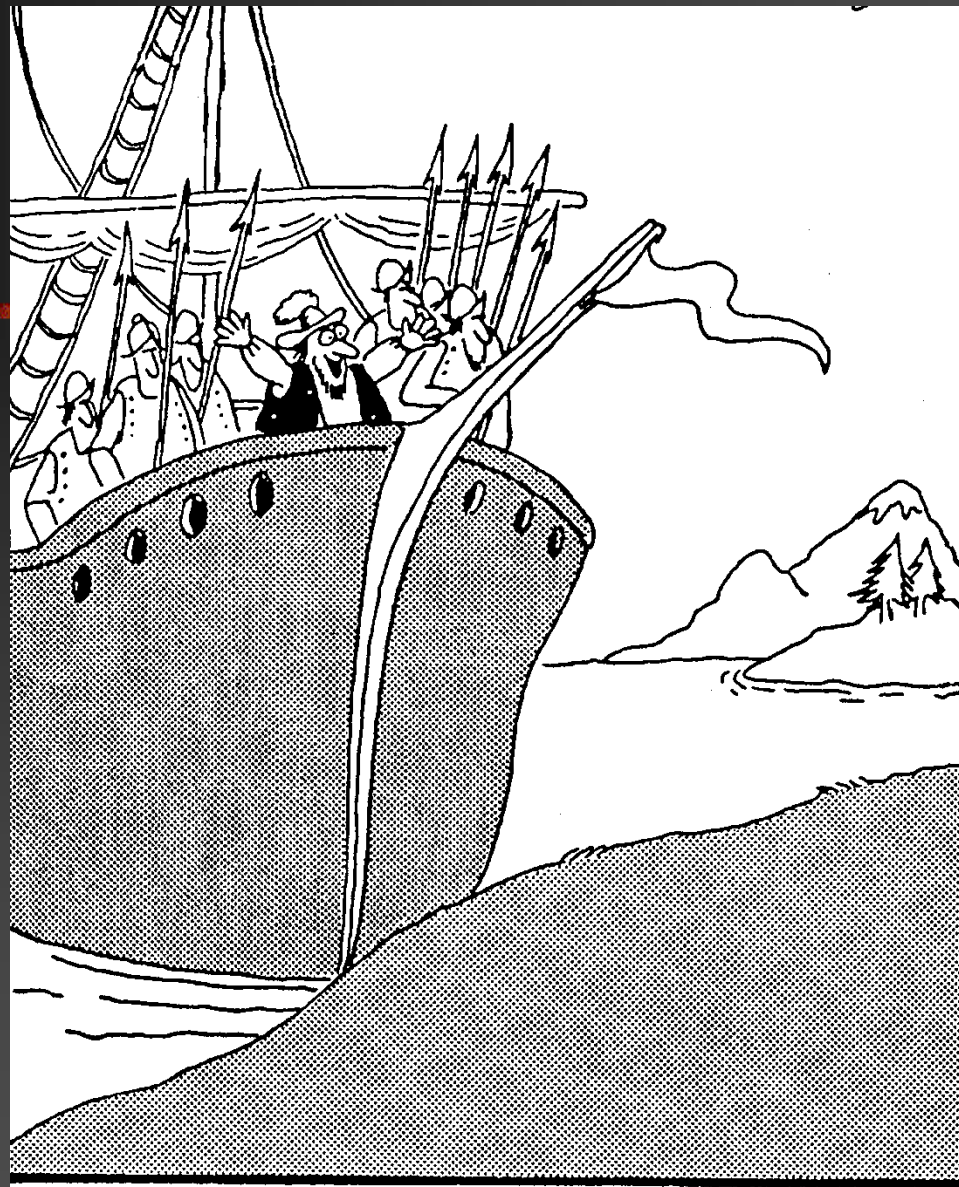
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- 1. Substantial contributions to conception and design, or acquisition of data or analysis or interpretation of data
  - 2. Drafting the article or critically reviewing
  - 3. Give approval for final version to be published
  - 4. Agree to be accountable for the work
  - Must meet all 4 conditions
-

# Authorship

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- Discuss early in the study's history
  - Source of conflict, misunderstanding
  - First author does most work
  - First author gets most glory
  - Corresponding author
  - Authors' contribution statement
-



**“Look! Look, gentlemen! . . . Purple mountains!  
Spacious skies! Fruited plains! . . . Is someone  
writing this down?”**

**Abstract** This paper draws on a study of female and male adolescents' social constructions of the body and self-identity in and around physical education lessons. The concepts of the social construction of the body and embodied self-identity are discussed and related to popular physical culture in Australia. Data from a two year study in Australian secondary schools is then used to illustrate the ways in which popular physical culture is appropriated, reconstructed and accommodated within adolescents' lifestyles. It is argued, on the basis of this data, that many girls and some boys experience degrees of disembodiment in physical education lessons as a strategy for the protection of self-identity. As a result, many are hindered in appropriating the resources of popular physical culture to lead active or healthy lifestyles. The paper concludes by raising issues for the teaching of physical education and for health promotion more broadly.

## Introduction

*Researcher:* Why would your mum want to get fit?

*Andrea:* She's got to do exercise because she's got something wrong with her back. She hates the way she looks, she says. She just went out and bought an exercise machine. I couldn't believe it when she brought it home.

*Annette:* Some people exercise to get thinner, to look good, and not just to impress other people too.

*Andrea:* Not just to look good, but to prolong your life sort of, get fit.

*Michelle:* Yeah that's a lot of it. Be fit, healthy, eat the right foods. Don't drink, don't smoke. (Interview, Year 10 girls, co-ed school)

For all the boom in fitness and training, not many of us are lean, bronzed or rugged. In fact, though we've never been healthier, we've never looked worse. Men look like apples, women look like pears. And

# Writing for clarity

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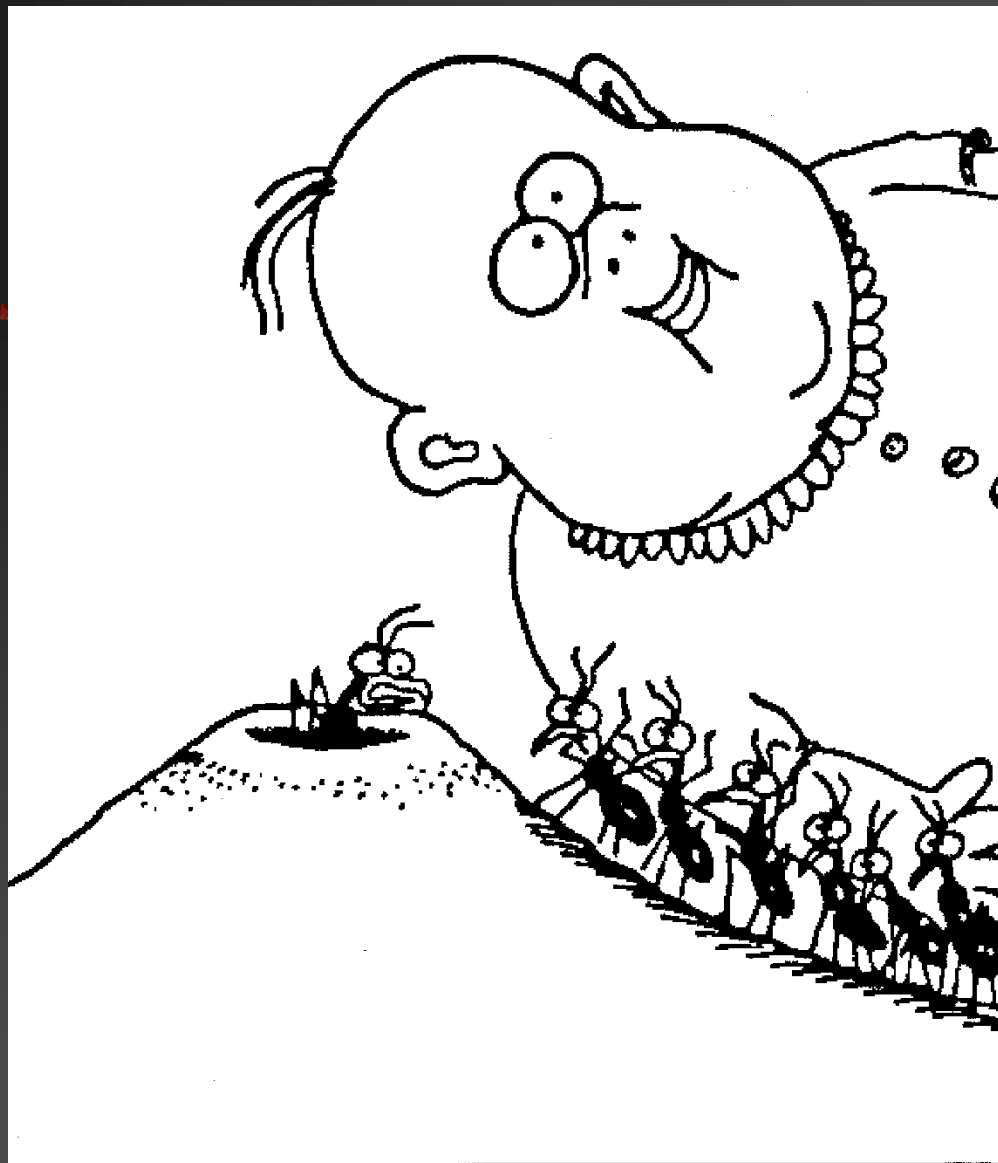
- “Scientific writing” vs communicating
  - Jargon - minimise
  - Simple/familiar words
  - Concrete vs abstract words
  - Keep sentences simple – 15-20 words
  - Keep paragraphs short – 5-6 sentences
  - Avoid unnecessary/meaningless words
    - "It is the case that..."
    - "It is well recognised..."
-

# Writing

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- Use active voice vs passive
  - Avoid abstract nominalisations
    - "facilitation", "collaboration", "consultation"
  - Be careful with emphasis words – “really” “most”
  - Less is always more
  - Check tense – past vs present
  - Word – Tools – Spelling/Grammer - Readability
-





"You idiots! ... We'll never get that thing  
down the hole."

# Submitting your article

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- Do it right! – generic vs tailored
  - Instructions for Authors
  - Length, format, spacing, tables, references
  - Tables/figures – clearly labeled
  - Copyright – closed vs open journals
  - One journal at a time
-

# Covering letter

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- Most journals require it
  - Keep it short – one page
  - Explain what the study is about
  - What is important
  - Why this journal was chosen
-

# Electronic submission

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- Usual format
  - Can be frustrating!
  - Explore the program – what is required?
  - Assemble all the pieces beforehand
  - Tables/figures separate?
  - Acknowledgement
-

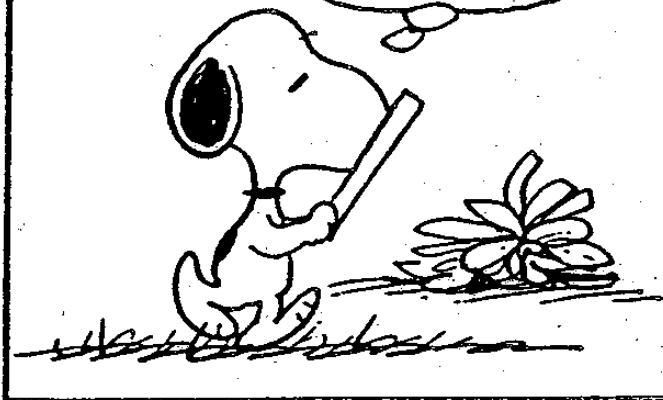
# What happens to your article?

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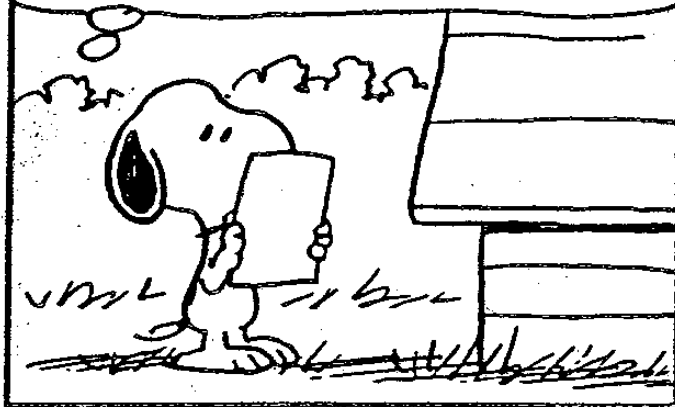
- Screened by editor – may be returned quickly
  - If suitable – sent to peer reviewers (2-4)
  - Reviews returned to editor (3-4 months)
  - Editor reviews and makes decision
  - Returns decision and reviews to authors
  - Authors respond, editor responds – tennis match
  - Final approval or rejection
-

**PEANUTS**

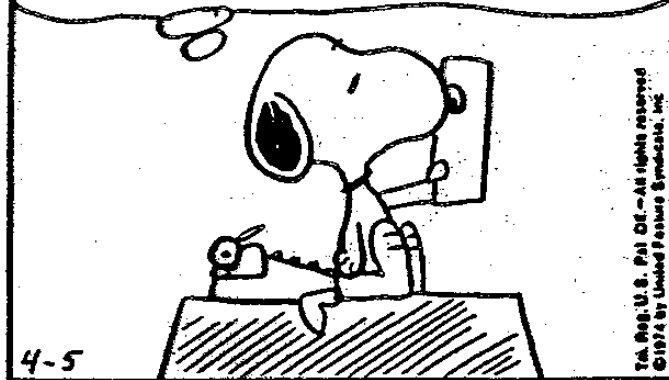
"DEAR CONTRIBUTOR"



"THANK YOU FOR SUBMITTING YOUR STORY TO OUR MAGAZINE"



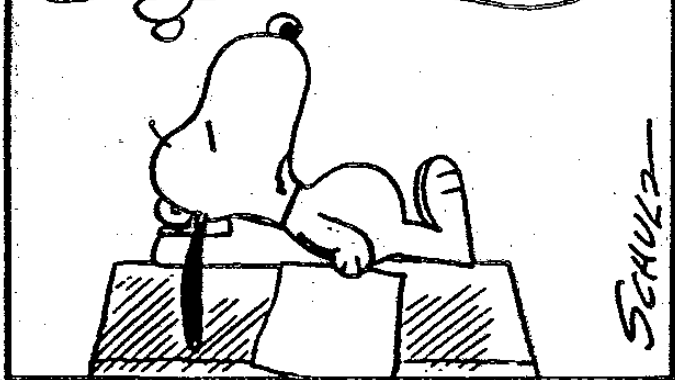
"TO SAVE TIME, WE ARE ENCLOSING TWO REJECTION SLIPS..."



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"...ONE FOR THIS STORY AND ONE FOR THE NEXT STORY YOU SEND US!"



SCHULZ

# Reviewers' criteria

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- Does the article add to existing knowledge? New?
  - Methods appropriate and well explained?
  - Results credible?
  - Discussion include importance, implications and limitations?
  - Conclusions justified by findings?
  - Should it be published?
-

# Handling revision/rejection

- Expectations
- Read the editor's letter – what does it really say?
  - “Your manuscript is at once good and original, but the part which is good is not original and that which is original is not good” Samuel Johnson
  - Accept    Revise
  - Accept after revision                      Reject
- Answer point by point, be polite
- Ask for an appeal



# After rejection

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- Five stages: shock, denial, anger, depression, acceptance
  - Put it away for a few weeks
  - Consider another journal – refine your choice with expert advice
  - Revise the article using the reviews
  - Revise/reformat according to the new journal's guidelines
-

# After publication

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- Your job is not over
  - May be questions from the journal (letters to the editor) to be answered
  - Store all original data safely, must be accessible for requests (min – 3 yrs)
  - Consider how to move the research into policy
-

# Cheating

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- Copy text/ideas without attribution = plagiarism
  - Fabricate/falsify data
  - Submit to more than one journal at a time
  - Guest/ghost/false/unfair authorship
  - Unfair citation of references
  - Hidden competing interests
-

# Tony's tips

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- Work with an experienced author
  - Work in groups
  - Break up the writing into bite-sized chunks
  - Meet regularly, set a schedule
  - Set aside small, but inviolate, pieces of time
-



“Thanks for being my friend, Wayne.”