Publishing your research: Interacting with editors

Angela K Eggleston

Biological Sciences Team Manager & Senior Editor, *Nature*

a.eggleston@us.nature.com

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How did I become an editor?

- ❑ B.S. and M.S. in Microbiology and in Molecular Genetics, Univ. of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN
- ❑ Ph.D. in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, Northwestern Univ., Chicago, IL
- ❑ Post-doctoral fellow, Imperial Cancer Research Fund, Clare Hall Labs, South Mimms, UK
- ❑ Post-doctoral fellow, HHMI/Children's Hospital, Boston, MA
- ❑ Associate Editor, *Nature Cell Biology*, London, UK
- ❑ Senior Editor, *Cell*/*Molecular Cell*/*Developmental Cell*, Cambridge, MA
- ❑ Biological Sciences Team Manager & Senior Editor, *Nature*, Boston, MA

Why is journal publication important?

- You could simply post your data on the web and trust search engines/algorithms to pick up your work, but this is risky and very limited in reach and offers no guarantee of quality

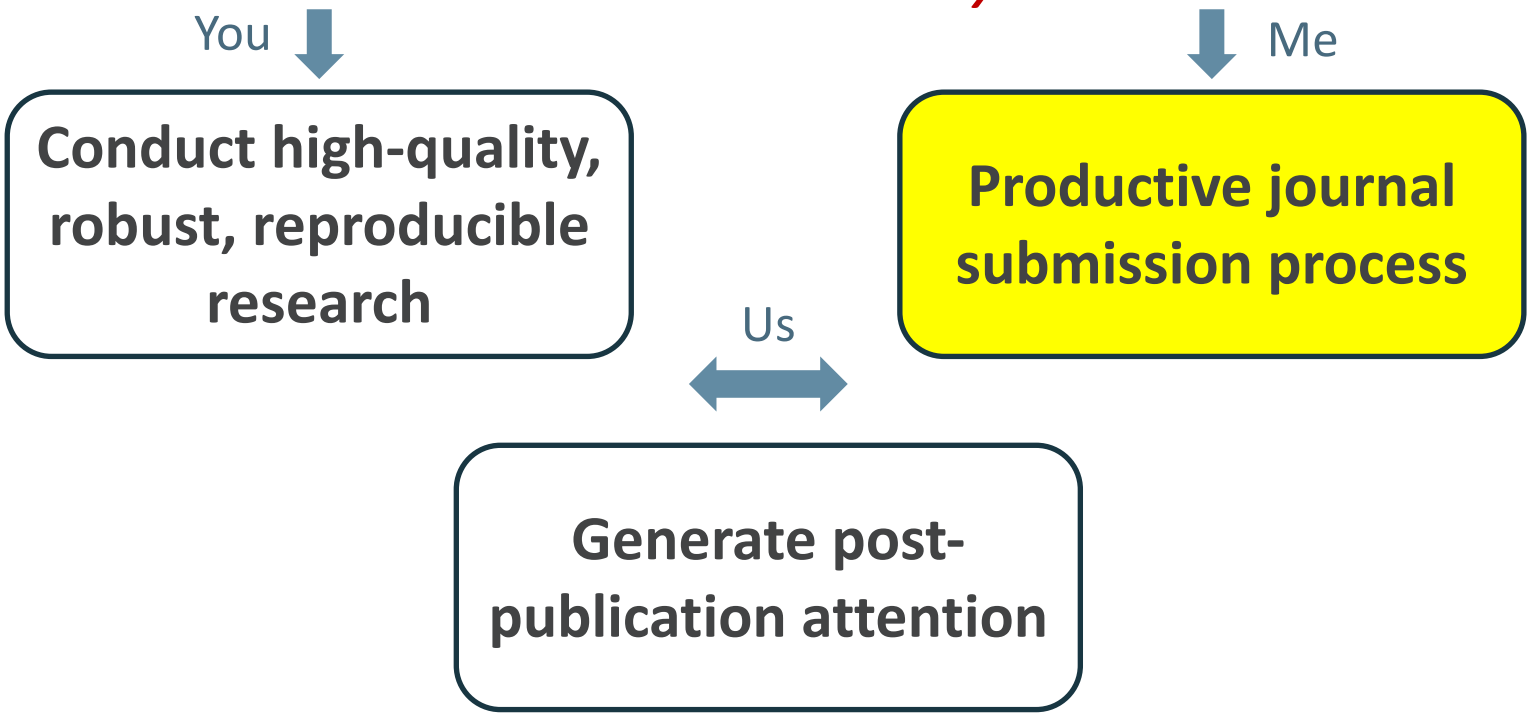
- For that reason, journal publication remains the method of choice for the value provided by filtering, curating, validating, IMPROVING studies through peer-review, and then publicizing them

- With that in mind, the editor is a gatekeeper that you must deal with in a (hopefully!) collegial and mutually beneficial manner

A journal cannot exist without authors, referees, and readers who value its content

Successful research requires that you be an effective communicator

Your goal is not only to be published, but also to be widely read



The editorial model for Nature-branded journals

- The editors are full-time professionals with PhDs and most with post-doctoral experience
- No editorial board
- No affiliations with scientific societies, funding bodies, or institutions
- Independent and unbiased decisions

Most journal editors, though, are not full-time editors

Full-time professors
Department heads

Journal editors when they have time

Regardless of whether the editor is a full-time professional or an academic, you are competing with many other researchers for the editor's ***limited time,*** so be strategic

1) You want to make the best first impression when you submit: The cover letter

Introduce your manuscript	• Manuscript title • Article type
Why study is important	• Brief background • Research problem/aims
What you found	• Study design • 1 or 2 key findings
Why suitable for the journal	• Main conclusions • Why the readership will care
Additional information	• Include/exclude reviewers • Publication ethics

2) You want to be seen as responsive: The response to referees

Most common mistake

Stating that “revisions have been done”, not what the specific revisions were

Best recommendation

✓ Include ALL of the comments received; do not cherry-pick some comments to respond to

What is the editor looking for in the response?

Do you agree or disagree?	• Why do you agree/disagree? • Support disagreement with evidence
What revisions were done?	• Highlight new experiments added • State how text/figures were revised • You can include data just for reviewers
Where can revisions be found?	• Page and line numbers • Updated figure numbers

3) You want to be strategic: The appeal

- ❑ We take appeals seriously and are open to further discussion with the authors, whether to clarify a decision or revisit a decision in light of additional information
- ❑ Appeals on decisions not to send a paper out to review are rarely successful and cannot take a high priority
- ❑ The appeal should contain a detailed point-by-point response to **all** of the reviewers' comments
- ❑ New data should be provided if the rejection was not for editorial reasons (*i.e.* lack of conceptual advance or novelty)
- ❑ Factual errors or misunderstandings can be highlighted
- ❑ It may be in your best interests to accept the decision and start the publication process elsewhere

Transfer consultations within Nature family journals

Manuscript

- ❑ **Authors must opt in during submission of their manuscript to take advantage of this service**
- ❑ **It enables an editor to provide direct feedback on suitability for another Springer Nature journal**
- ❑ **For example, a *Nature* editor may consult with editors at another Nature journal**
- ❑ **The consulted editor receives access to the full manuscript files and any referee reports**
- ❑ **A direct link is provided to transfer the manuscript:**

Decision letter: "Although we regret that we cannot offer to publish your paper in *Nature* for editorial reasons, we felt it might be suitable for *Nature Genetics*. **We have discussed your manuscript with our colleagues at *Nature Genetics*. Should you wish to transfer the manuscript, they have expressed interest in sending your manuscript out for peer review.** You may use the following link to the manuscript transfer service to transfer your manuscript files to them; it is not necessary to reformat your paper at this point."

Other opportunities for engaging with editors

- At conferences: don't be intimidated—do introduce yourself and your interests
- During lab visits: you do not need to have a "high-impact" story ready to submit—use the opportunity to describe what your lab does and is trying to achieve in the field, and to ask questions
- Via social media: for example, a quick tweet to highlight publication of a preprint or to ask a question about publishing policies

Promote your article after publication

Don’t wait for people to find it!

Present at conferences

- Interact with others in your field
- Target your key audience
- Establish new collaborations

Promote on social media

- Twitter, LinkedIn
- Post the Shared link

Promoting your work after publication: Shared

- This is a Springer Nature innovation that allows view-only access to full text for everyone, everywhere for ALL peer-reviewed papers, even those that are not OA
- Link can be posted anywhere

Article | Published: 12 May 2021

Skeletal editing through direct nitrogen deletion of secondary amines

Sean H. Kennedy, Balu D. Dherange, Kathleen J. Berger & Mark D. Levin

Nature **593**, 223–227 (2021) | Cite this article

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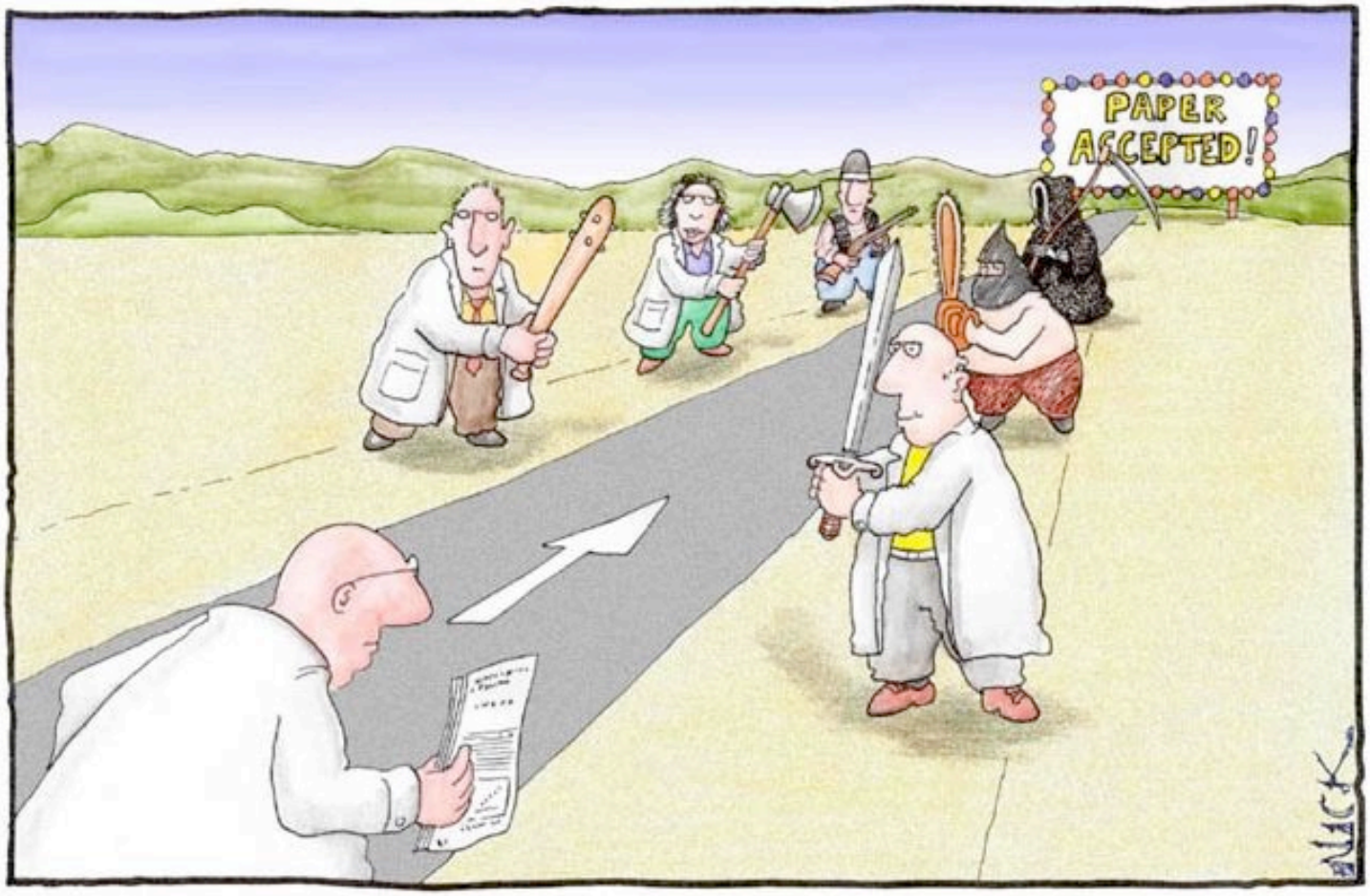
Editors are not (merely) the Grim Reaper; they are advocates for YOUR science



Thank you

Questions will be answered at the end

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