

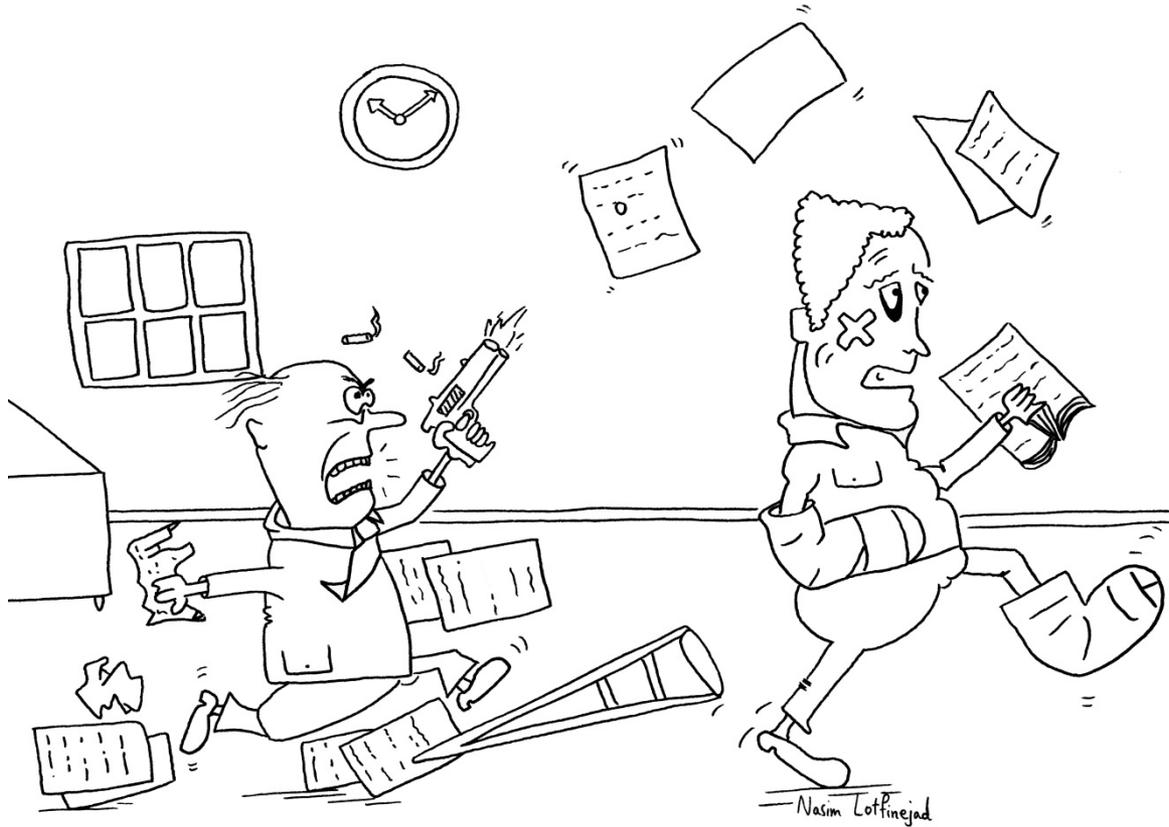
MCGILL QUALITATIVE HEALTH RESEARCH
GROUP

**WHO'S AFRAID OF
PEER REVIEW?
LEARNING TO LOVE
THE CHALLENGE**

Sandra Peláez,
Crystal Noronha
Mary Ellen Macdonald

January 21st, 2015

OR THIS...



"The peer review process, final round!"

OBJECTIVES

- ◉ Deconstructing the process of peer reviewing
- ◉ Understanding the reviewer's responsibilities
- ◉ Getting the most out of personal and professional responsibilities related to the reviewing process

FORMAT

- 2 hour workshop
 - Interactive presentation organised in four interrelated steps
 - Strategies using collaborative learning

1. GETTING INTO THE PEER REVIEWING PROCESS

WHAT TYPES OF PEER REVIEW?

- Formal

- Journals
- Grants

- Informal

- Peers and colleagues
- Students

GETTING INTO THE PROCESS

- ◉ Receiving a general invitation
 - What is a legitimate and valuable invitation?
 - Beall's List: Potential, possible, or probable predatory scholarly open-access publishers - <http://scholarlyoa.com/publishers/>

Dear XX,

Horizon Research Publishing is an open access publisher with 55 peer-reviewed international journals covering a wide range of academic disciplines. Thousands of articles have been published on over 500 issues.

To promote academic development and maintain influence of our journals, we are seeking more known experts to join our editorial team. If this experience sounds interesting to you, please complete the [application form](#), and send it to us via email at joinus@hrpub.org.

Responsibilities / Benefits of Reviewers

Review 6 new papers per year;

Your name would be listed in the journal website;

Keep up to date on the research in your field;

Get the advice and feedback from journal editors;

Provide an honest and constructive suggestion for improving the manuscript;

Complete their reviews within the deadline; ...

GETTING INTO THE PROCESS

- ◉ Suggested by a colleague as a peer reviewer
- ◉ Invited by the editor of a journal (that you trust)

GETTING INTO THE PROCESS

○ Volunteering to peer review:

- Qualitative Health Research
- International Journal of Qualitative Methods
- Qualitative Inquiry
- Journal of Advanced Nursing
- Social Science and Medicine
- Nursing Research
- Nurse Education Today
- Canadian Journal of Public Health
- Journal of the American Medical Association
- Canadian Medical Association Journal
- Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health

“YES” MEANS WHAT, EXACTLY?

- ◉ Confidentiality
 - as a reviewer; as a professor training your students to review papers; as a professor presenting data in class
- ◉ Blinded and unblinded reviews
- ◉ Conflicts of interest
- ◉ Topic/Methodology expertise
- ◉ Deadline for the review
- ◉ Search in pertinent databases
- ◉ Accept and respect author guidelines
 - Or, negotiate with the editor

“YES” MEANS WHAT, EXACTLY?

- ◉ Ethical principles

HOME

NEWS

The latest science scam: Peer-reviewing your own paper

TOM SPEARS, OTTAWA CITIZEN | 01.11.2015

WHEN TO SAY “NO”?

- Acknowledging your limitations
 - Decline because of timing
 - Decline because of lack of substantive or methodological expertise
 - Or, offer to only review parts of the manuscript

2. THE VOICE, THE PLACE, THE POWER

GETTING PREPARED FOR A REVIEW

- ◉ Audience: Who will you be writing for?
 - Tone and content: when writing to the editor vs when writing to the author
- ◉ How to approach the review dispassionately?
- ◉ What issues deserve specific preparation?
 - Be familiar with the specificities of the manuscript field (e.g., methodology, topic)
 - Refresh yourself concerning the specific guidelines for both authors and reviewers that the journal proposes

POSITIONING YOURSELF AS A REVIEWER

- ◉ Who are you writing for?
- ◉ How to approach it dispassionately?
- ◉ Be aware of the standards the journal proposes to the authors
 - Critically engage these in conversation with the editor (not the author!)
- ◉ A belligerent vs. a constructive/critical/respectful response
- ◉ Denigrating the author vs. working to understand what they are proposing
- ◉ Responding to a polished paper vs. responding to a sloppy paper

ISSUES OF POWER

- Understand the author is both exposed and in a vulnerable position when being reviewed

NEGOTIATING STANDARDS

- Balancing the report you have to present (e.g., the journal's guidelines) vs. the aspects you feel you need to assess (e.g., your own standards)

Qualitative Health Research - Score sheet:

1. Importance of submission: What are the manuscript's strengths? Is it significant? Does it contain new and unique information?
2. Theoretical evaluation: Is the manuscript logical? Is the theory parsimonious? Complete? Useful?
3. Methodological assessment: Inductive approach? Appropriate method and design? Is the sample appropriate and adequate? Are data saturated? Theoretical analysis? Linked with theory and/or praxis?
4. Adherence to ethical standards?
5. Manuscript style and format: (Please evaluate writing style, organization, clarity, grammar, appropriate citations, etc.). Is this manuscript unnecessarily long?

Additional material may be uploaded.

NEGOTIATING STANDARDS

- Different paths to take when doing your review
 - For example, feedback focused on:
 - the mission of the journal
 - each section of the manuscript
 - line by line editing
 - discussing only the main issues that you think the author needs to address

CONTACTING THE EDITOR

- You may want to contact the editor to:
 - Acknowledge your own limitations and negotiate how you can still contribute.
 - Ask for specific suggestions on how to convey your feedback when you have serious concerns about the paper's quality.
 - Let them know the author was not completely blinded
 - When does it matter if you know the author?

3. CLOSURE

BELIEVE + BE CRITICAL + DO THE REVIEW + RECONCILE

- ◉ Reconcile critical thinking and available standards (for the author and for you as a reviewer).
- ◉ Review in the service of science with a generosity of spirit.
- ◉ Be respectful of the author and the audience.
- ◉ Do not take the paper or review personally.
- ◉ Do not be rude.
- ◉ As an expert, have humility and dare to defy your own paradigm.

**4. LEARNING TO
ADDRESS OUR
RESEARCH FLAWS
FROM REVIEWING
PAPERS**

LEARNING FROM PEER REVIEW

- From “imparting wisdom” to “rethinking” our own research and writing approach
 - Learn from the author
 - Learn from the other reviewers’ comments
 - Think, reflect, and reconsider your own position as a researcher.



ACTIVITY

ACTIVITY

Group 1:

As an author, what do you want reviewers to keep in mind when reading your work?

As an author, what do you consider a fair and useful review?

Group 2:

As an author, what do you want reviewers to keep in mind when reading your work?

As an author, what do you consider an unfair and useless review?

Group 3:

As a reviewer, what do you want authors to keep in mind when submitting to a journal?

As a reviewer, what do you consider a fair and useful review?

Group 4:

As a reviewer, what do you want authors to keep in mind when submitting to a journal?

As a reviewer, what do you consider an unfair and useless review?

REFLECTIONS PER GROUP

Group 1:

As an author, what do you want reviewers to keep in mind when reading your work?

As an author, what do you consider a fair and useful review?

- The reviewer:
 - Has the required methodological expertise
 - Is dispassionate
 - Is honest about his/her conflicts of interests
 - Respects the deadlines
 - Takes into consideration the amount of work required to prepare a manuscript
 - Respect the author's objectives and does not impose his/hers
- The review:
 - Is written in a way in which it is obvious that a human being is relating to an other human being
 - Helps both to improve the paper and to learn from the comments
 - Contributes to your own self-promotion
 - Points out the positive things

Group 2:

As an author, what do you want reviewers to keep in mind when reading your work?

As an author, what do you consider an unfair and useless review?

■ As an author

- To put themselves in the authors position when engaging in the review.
- To keep in mind that the feedback should be viewed as having a conversation between them (the reviewer) and the author as opposed to simply providing judgments of the manuscript.
- To keep in mind that not all research is feasible (e.g., funding), and so having expertise in various methodologies is critical e.g., the reasons for cross-sectional research versus longitudinal studies.
- Reviewers must be genuinely interested in the topic in order to give the necessary feedback that is needed.
- If the manuscript is fundamentally flawed, it would be helpful if the reviewer provided references to support their feedback and claims.

■ As an author, what would you consider to be unfair/useless?

- If the reviewer did not provide adequate information/feedback to help improve the manuscript.
- When rejecting a paper, it would be helpful to be concise rather than to provide an in-depth account of all the flaws in the paper.
- Be careful that the feedback does not destroy the spirit of the author.
 - When the reviewer's comments are inconsistent with the expectations originally mentioned.
 - When the reviewer includes their personal views in the review process.

Group 3:

As a reviewer, what do you want authors to keep in mind when submitting to a journal?

As a reviewer, what do you consider a fair and useful review?

- The reviewer:
 - Ensure proper formatting so that time and attention can be spent on reviewing author's content
 - Wish for the author to be open-minded and to not become overtly defensive
 - For the authors to recognise the vulnerability of the study participants, to not portray participants in a way that perpetuates perception harmful to the study group
 - We would want the authors to have the goal of furthering knowledge rather than furthering their own careers
 - Well-funded conclusions/interpretations that bring out both the positive and the negative aspects

Group 4:

As a reviewer, what do you want authors to keep in mind when submitting to a journal?

As a reviewer, what do you consider an unfair and useless review?

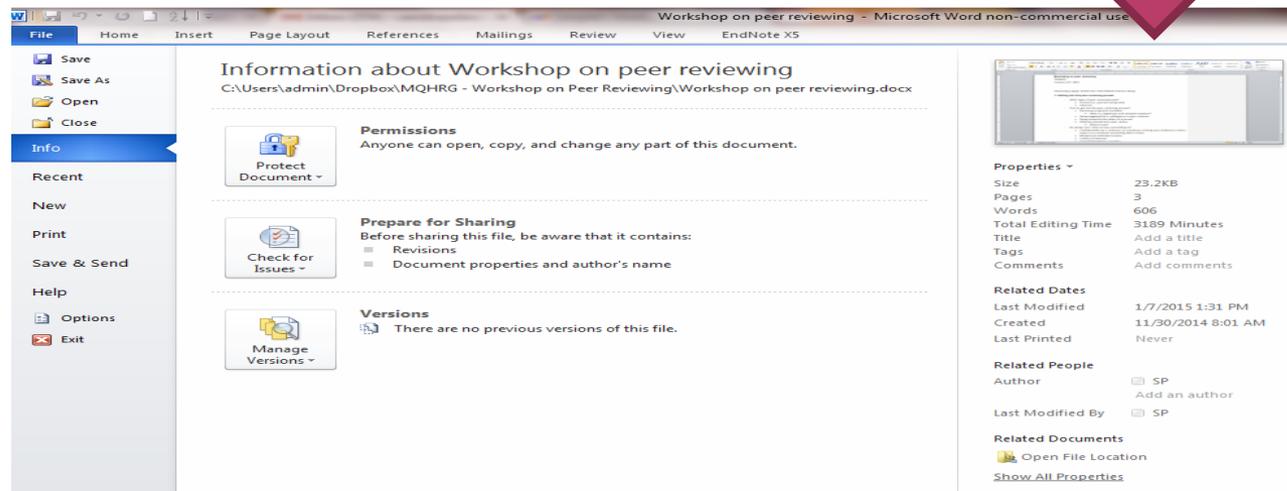
- As a reviewer, authors should have in mind:
 - Respect the written word, avoiding inappropriate style
 - Respect the audience
 - Follow the guidelines
 - Include content in the appropriate section
 - Polish the manuscript
- As a reviewer, an unfair and useless review is one that:
 - Provides critiques without having the necessary expertise and/or knowledge
 - Does not provide reasons for rejection and/or suggestions for other potential paths for publication

APPENDIX

BLINDING A WORD DOCUMENT

○ Once your document is done, you have to go through the following steps to blind a document:

1. Go to the "file" tab
2. Go to the third column



The screenshot shows the Microsoft Word 2013 interface with the File tab selected. The ribbon includes options like Save, Save As, Open, Close, Info, Recent, New, Print, Save & Send, Help, Options, and Exit. The main area displays 'Information about Workshop on peer reviewing' for the file 'Workshop on peer reviewing.docx'. It features three columns: 'Permissions' (Protect Document), 'Prepare for Sharing' (Check for Issues), and 'Versions' (Manage Versions). A large red arrow points to the 'Info' tab in the ribbon.

Property	Value
Size	23.2KB
Pages	3
Words	606
Total Editing Time	3189 Minutes
Title	Add a title
Tags	Add a tag
Comments	Add comments
Last Modified	1/7/2015 1:31 PM
Created	11/30/2014 8:01 AM
Last Printed	Never

BLINDING A WORD DOCUMENT

3. Go "Properties" > "Show Document Panel."
Delete all information related to identification and close.
4. Go "Properties" > "Advanced Properties."
Delete all information related to identification and close.
5. Go "Properties" > "Related people." Delete all information related to identification and close.
6. Now, go to the second column.

BLINDING A WORD DOCUMENT



Workshop on peer reviewing - Microsoft Word non-commercial use

File Home Insert Page Layout References Mailings Review View EndNote X5

Save Save As Open Close

Info

Recent

New

Print

Save & Send

Help

Options Exit

Information about Workshop on peer reviewing

C:\Users\admin\Dropbox\MQHRG - Workshop on Peer Reviewing\Workshop on peer reviewing.docx

Permissions
Anyone can open, copy, and change any part of this document.

Prepare for Sharing
Before sharing this file, be aware that it contains:

- Revisions
- Document properties and author's name

Check for Issues

Manage Versions

Versions
There are no previous versions of this file.

Properties

Size	23.2KB
Pages	3
Words	606
Total Editing Time	3189 Minutes
Title	Add a title
Tags	Add a tag
Comments	Add comments

Related Dates

Last Modified	1/7/2015 1:31 PM
Created	11/30/2014 8:01 AM
Last Printed	Never

Related People

Author	<input type="checkbox"/> SP
	Add an author
Last Modified By	<input type="checkbox"/> SP

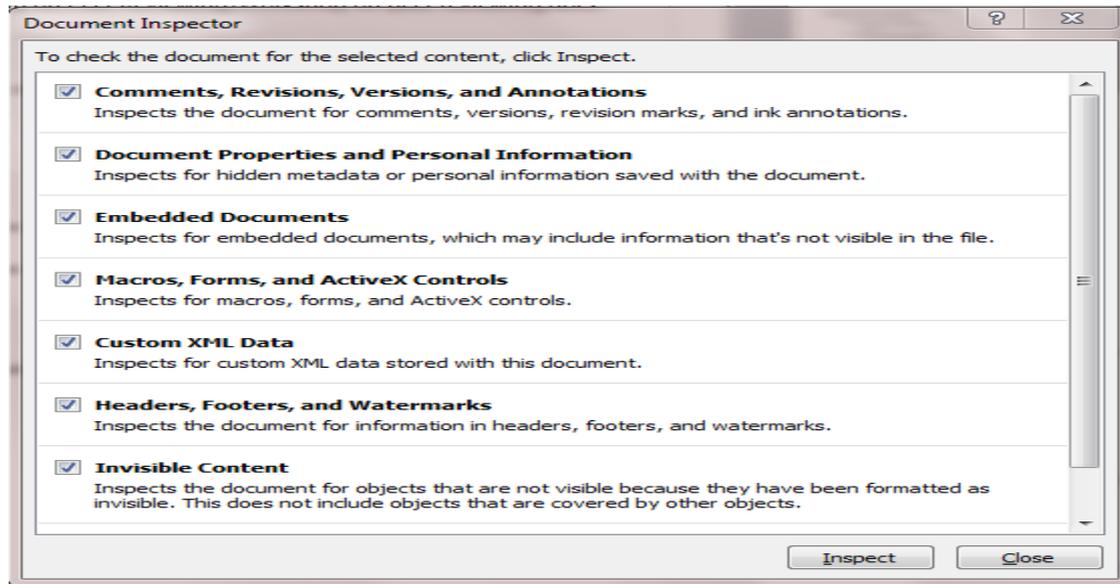
Related Documents

Open File Location

Show All Properties

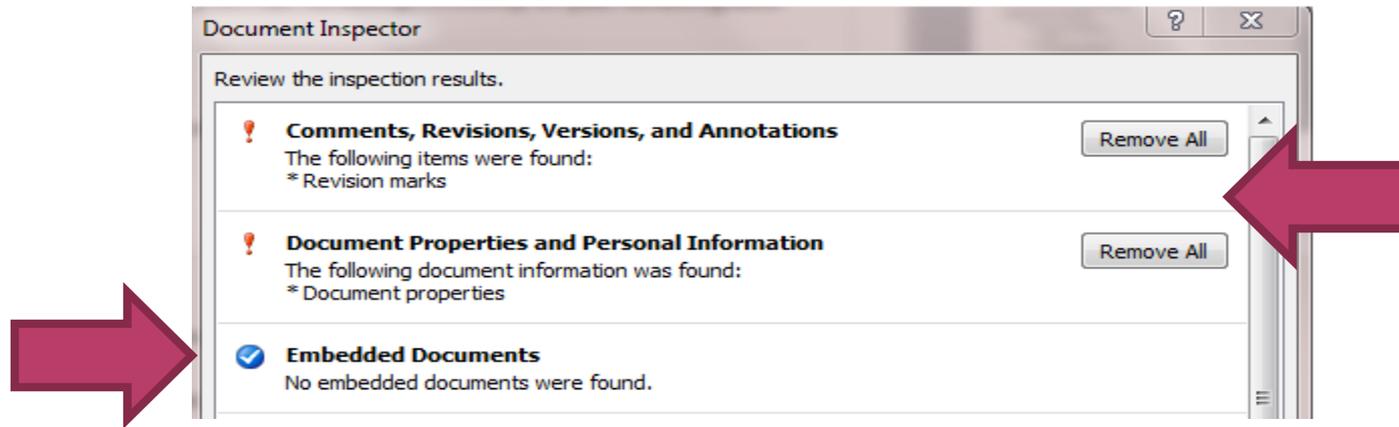
7. Go to "Prepare for Sharing" > "Check for Issues" > "Document Inspector" > "Inspect"

BLINDING A WORD DOCUMENT



8. Once this is done, the "Document Inspector" will tell you what are the parts of the document that are still unblind

BLINDING A WORD DOCUMENT



9. Click on “Remove All” and inspect again until all parts of the document are blinded

The document should be now completely blinded and ready to be shared!

RESOURCES

- ◉ International Congress on Peer Review and Medical Publication

<http://www.peerreviewcongress.org/index.html>

- ◉ American Psychological Association

<http://www.apa.org/research/publishing/peer-review.pdf>

- ◉ BioMed Central

<http://www.biomedcentral.com/authors/rats>

- ◉ Wiley blog

<http://exchanges.wiley.com/blog/2014/05/13/peer-review-fundamentals-and-the-future/>

- ◉ Ethical guidelines for peer reviewers

http://publicationethics.org/files/Ethical_guidelines_for_peer_reviewers_0.pdf

REFERENCES

- Azer, S.A., Ramani, S. Peterson, R. (2012). Becoming a peer reviewer to medical education journals. *Medical Teacher*, 34: 698-704.
- Benos, D.J., Kirk, K. L. & Hall, J.E. (2003). *Advances in Physiology Education*, 27: 47-52.
- Godlee, F., & Jefferson, T. (Eds.). (2003). *Peer review in health sciences* (2nd ed.). London: BMJ Books
- Graue, B. (2006). The transformative power of reviewing. *Educational Researcher*, 35: 36-41.
- Lam, R. (2010). A peer review training workshop: Coaching students to give and evaluate peer feedback. *TESL Canada Journal / Revue TESL du Canada*, 27(2): 114-127.
- Morse, J.M. (2014). Cooperative scholarship: The peer review process. *Qualitative Health Research*, 24: 1615-1616.
- Smith, J. (2009). Judging research quality: From certainty to contingency. *Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise*, 1: 91-100.
- Lovejoy, T.I., Revenson, T.A., & France, C.R., (2011). Reviewing manuscripts for peer-review journals: A primer for novice and seasoned reviewers. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, 42: 1-13.

EXAMPLES OF AUTHOR GUIDELINES

- ◉ Qualitative Health Research

http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/42790_QHR_Manuscript_Guidelines_SEP_2011.pdf

- ◉ Canadian Journal of Public Health

<http://journal.cpha.ca/index.php/cjph/about/submissions>

- ◉ Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health

<http://www.springer.com/public+health/journal/10903>

- ◉ Elsevier

<http://www.journals.elsevier.com/journal-of-psycho-somatic-research/>