



CSE PANEL PRESENTATION

DIVERSITY/INCLUSION IN RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION ETHICS

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publicationethics.org

BIAS IN THE PROCESS: NOT A NEW TOPIC

1. In the late 19th and early 20th century, suffragettes argued that scientific theories of sex dimorphism, including Darwin's theories of natural selection and sex selection, were ideologically biased theories which were aimed and used as the scientific bases for political practice such as the denial of the right to vote and the denial of access to university education.
2. There were also allegations from the political left that evolutionary theory was implicitly a support of Capitalism (evidenced in the Social Darwinism of a number of wealthy Capitalists in the period).
3. The second wave of the feminist movement included numerous empirical and theoretical critiques of science as sexist, biased and just 'bad science' methodologically.
4. In the late 70s and 80s, primarily Sociologists of Science ran empirical tests with fake article submissions to illustrate the bias in peer review (e.g., woman author name versus man; famous name versus unknown).

FAST FORWARD TO NOW: GENDER, TRANSGENDER, RACE, ETHNICITY, GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION, LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

We can't possibly deal with all of these identities issues in the next minutes so I am just going to underline general gender/race/transgender issues and spend a little more time on issues related specifically to the impact of English as the lingua franca of scholarship and issues of geography.

BRIEFLY, WHERE BIAS MIGHT OCCUR

With respect to:

Demographics in employees. The Workplace Equity Survey in Publishing conducted by the Workplace Equity Project published the results of an industry-wide survey. The results include the following:

...the industry is 76% female, 81% white and 83% heterosexual. Yet men are nearly twice as likely to be in senior and executive management roles, roles for which our study found no representation from respondents identifying as Black.

Global Voices for Workplace Equity, 2018

DEMOGRAPHICS IN EDITORIAL BOARDS/EDITORS

Many studies have surveyed the underrepresentation of women as editors and editorial boards. Three such studies include:

Topas and Sen (2016) found that while women made up 15 percent of the tenure-track faculty at doctoral degree-granting universities, they made up only 8.9 percent of editorships.

Similarly, Lerback and Hanson (2017) found that “Journals invite too few women to referee” in an analysis of peer reviewers for journals published by the American Geological Union.

Lerback and Hanson (2018) looking at the data of approximately 24,000 submissions to the Biomedical open access eLife journal found that “women worldwide, and researchers outside North America and Europe were less likely to be peer reviewers, editors and last authors.”

FURTHER SOURCES OF BIAS

Tompkins, Zhang and Heavlin (2017) reviewing refereed conference presentations and comparing single blind versus double blind reviews found that

“reviewers rate papers with famous authors or authors from prestigious institutions, more highly.”

One could also explore studies on citation numbers but for the sake of time, I will move on....

BLACK LIVES MATTER AND THE JOURNAL OF POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Recent Controversies in the Humanities and Social Sciences

There have been a number of recent, critical issues in publications in HSS with respect to issues of diversity and inclusion specifically with respect to gender and race.

In April 2017, the Journal of Political Philosophy published a 30 plus page symposium on substantive normative issues in the black lives matter movement authored by all white Philosophers. As Scott Jaschik quotes from an open letter by Black scholar Professor Chistopher Lebron who has recently published a book on the subject:

Try to imagine my distaste when it was brought to my attention that your journal published a philosophical symposium on 'black lives matter' with not one philosopher of color represented...

Christopher Lebron quoted by S. Jaschik, *Inside Higher Education*, May 30, 2017

HYPATIA

There has been a great deal written about this set of events including symposia on the issue. Briefly, the author wrote a think piece about whether it is possible to change one's race the way it is possible to change one's gender or religion.

There was a massive uproar with open letters of protest demanding retraction, criticizing the expertise of the peer reviewers, arguments that paper should never have been written or reviewed or accepted. There were challenges to the editorial board and the editor-in-chief.

Among the various actions and fall-out:

The associate editors resigned. Ultimately, after defending her position, the editor in chief resigned.

HOAX PAPERS — THE GRIEVANCE STUDIES AFFAIR

3 authors submitted 20 made up fictional academic papers to a number of established feminist and/or left leaning journals to show up what they called the lack of rigour in 'grievance' studies. 7 of these papers were accepted despite seemingly wrong-headed and overwrought in terms of topics, lack of real research and style.

THE ISSUES RAISED BY THE THREE EVENTS

1. Are standards of expertise for authors, peer reviewers and editors changing?
2. Are some subjects off limits for authors because the subject matter is not a part of their lived experience? The implication might be that only people who have been raped can study and write about rape, etc.
3. Does question 2 extend to peer-reviewers and editors as well?
4. Are there epistemological and methodological issues raised by these examples?

WHAT ABOUT ACADEMICS FROM LIC FOR WHOM ENGLISH IS A SECOND LANGUAGE?

English as Lingua Franca of scholarship.

“...around 27,000 journals included in the Web of Science...indexes – most prominently, the Science Citation index...[mostly]...publish in English. However, more than 9,000 peer-reviewed scholarly journals are being published in other languages, with French (3,500), German (2,700), Spanish (2,300) and Chinese (1,400) contributing the highest numbers. Most of these journals are excluded from journal indexes, thus perpetuating the ideology that English is the global academic lingua franca.”

Mary Jane Curry and Theresa Lillis (March 13, 2018)

WHY SHOULD THIS MATTER?

1. More countries and universities within those countries have changed their criteria for PhD graduation, hiring into tenure-track positions and requirements for tenure and promotion as a response to, among other pressures, the world rankings of universities. This includes preoccupation with Rank A journals, impact factors and the number of citations.
2. If the number of citations and the impact factor of the journal is biased toward English speaking journals then people for whom English is a second language are disadvantaged in fair peer review.
3. A number of articles about disadvantages of LIC and English as a second language have focused on higher rejection rates and other related issues.

RELATED ISSUES INCLUDE

4. Lack of available financial support to attend English language conferences and to network (and make contacts for consultation and to keep up to date on the discipline, including jargon in the field).
5. the tendency for authors from LIC who are rejected to submit papers to predatory publishers. Although recent research has illustrated that academics from high income countries also publish in predatory journals.

“The regional distribution of both the publisher’s country and authorship is highly skewed, in particular Asia and Africa contributed three quarters” of submissions and publications by authors.

Shen and Bjork (2015)

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS AND ADVICE

Bias and competing interests

COPE provides the following advice:

It is important to remain unbiased by considerations to the nationality, religious or political beliefs, gender and other characteristics of the authors, origins of a manuscript or by commercial considerations.

Further, “...be aware of sensitivities surrounding language issues that are due to the authors writing in a language that is not their first or most proficient language, and phrase the feedback appropriately and with due respect.”


SYSTEMIC NATURE OF THE PROBLEM AND THE LIMITATIONS OF THE CURRENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Problem of recommendations to date:

1. Recommendations are directed at the individual but the problem is systemic and operates across the language and culture of entire nation states
2. Because the problem is identified and directed at individuals, solutions are presented as the responsibility of individual scholars (e.g., pay to get your paper edited by a professional language service which you pay for – which, by the way, often is inadequate because the services are variable and services providers rarely have the scholarly expertise relevant to the specific discipline)

ALTERNATIVE DIRECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Journals and publishers should formally adopt directives to reviewers, such as the COPE guideline suggestions, to ameliorate the intolerance of English language reviewers to English as Additional Language scholarship
2. Journals and publishers should provide technical editing services for authors with substantively acceptable articles once they have been accepted
3. Universities and the governments that support them should provide in house technical support for editing of scholarly research articles prior to their submission to journals for review and not make individuals responsible for finding services themselves
4. Federal government research grants should include the costs of technical support as part of granting funds



5. International granting agencies and national granting agencies should make funds available to increase international networks of scholars, conference travel and other opportunities to create venues for ameliorating the linguistic and cultural isolation of scholars in non English as a first language universities.

6. Encourage citation indexes to start including other languages in listing non English language articles



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS?

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