

**Royal
Geographical
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

www.rgs.org

www.rgs.org

**Royal
Geographical
Society**

with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)

1 Kensington Gore | London | SW7 2AR | UK

T +44 (0)20 7591 3000

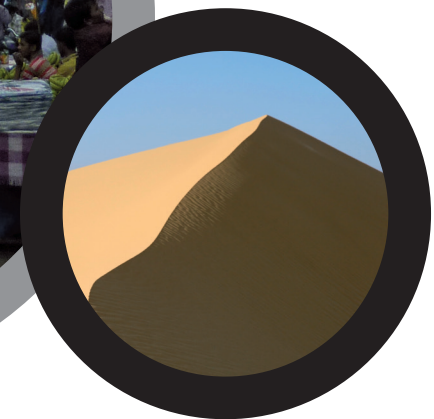
F +44 (0)20 7591 3001

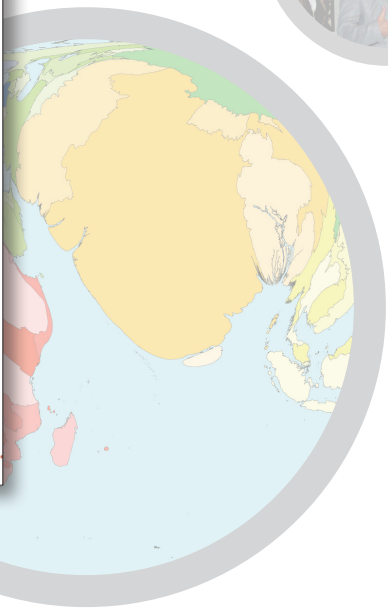
E journals@rgs.org

Publishing and Getting Read

A Guide for Researchers
in Geography

Edited by
Alison Blunt
Madeleine Hatfield
Catherine Souch





Also published...

Communicating Geographical Research Beyond the Academy: a Guide for Researchers

- Perspectives from academics and users of geographical research in government, business, education, schools and the media to reflect on motives, means and methods.
- Examples of good practice.

Guides available free online
www.rgs.org/Guides



Contents

1 Introduction (Alison Blunt, Madeleine Hatfield and Catherine Souch)	2
2 Publishing in journals	
2.1 Research articles (Louise J Bracken and Alastair Bonnett)	4
2.2 Themed or special issues (Alison Blunt)	10
2.3 Review essays (Michael J Bradshaw)	10
2.4 Book reviews (Helen Jarvis)	13
2.5 Peer-reviewing (Kevin Ward)	15
3 Publishing books (Kevin Ward and Jo Bullard)	16
4 Publication strategies	
4.1 Thinking strategically about publishing (Michael J Bradshaw)	22
4.2 Participatory approaches to authorship in the academy (Mrs C Kinpaisby-Hill)	24
4.3 Communicating with non-academic audiences (Klaus Dodds)	25
5 Authorship best practice	
5.1 Research and publication ethics (Alison Blunt and Madeleine Hatfield)	26
5.2 Preparing an article for publication (Matt Jenkins)	28
5.3 Online supplementary material (Catherine Souch)	30
5.4 Multimedia in academic publications (Bradley L Garrett)	30
6 Getting read	
6.1 Journal Impact Factors and bibliometrics (Jenny Neophytou)	31
6.2 Help readers find your publications (Rhiannon Rees)	33
6.3 Reaching audiences through blogs and social media (Mark Graham)	34
6.4 Open access and repositories (Madeleine Hatfield)	35
6.5 Supporting research articles: a publisher's perspective (Tom Pater)	36
7 Concluding comments from the editors (Alison Blunt, Madeleine Hatfield and Catherine Souch)	38
8 References	39
9 Notes on contributors	40

Second Edition (2013), Publishing and getting read: a guide for researchers in geography

First Edition (2008), Publishing in geography: a guide for new researchers

Cover: Original images taken from front covers within the RGS-IBG Book Series. With thanks for their kind permission (from right to left): iStockphoto, Colin McFarlane, Ingrid Pollard, Alex Jeffrey and Kurt Iveson.

1 Introduction

Alison Blunt, Madeleine Hatfield and Catherine Souch

Publishing is a crucial, but often daunting and unexplained, part of academic life. All academic geographers are supposed to do it, but there are few formal guidelines about how best it should be done. Many of us discover how to do it by trial and error or through the mentoring and support of colleagues. The publishing and academic landscapes also change, presenting new challenges to established academics.

This guide has four main aims: to provide clear, practical and constructive advice about how to publish research in a wide range of forms; to encourage you to think strategically about your publication profile and plans; to set out your opportunities and responsibilities as an author; and to support you in getting your published research read.

So why publish? First, publishing your research is the best established way of disseminating your research findings. The aims, nature and findings of your research should be the main starting point in identifying your publication goals and strategy. However, as the contributors in this guide explain, thinking about who you want to read your research is key to deciding where to submit your work. This might mean submitting articles to specialist or more generic journals, both within and/or beyond geography, and/or developing a book proposal. Often the best publication strategy encompasses different types of output, aimed at different readerships. Sections two and three of the guide explain different types of publication, providing step-by-step guidance to the publishing process.

The second reason for publishing your research is academic career development, whether in terms of securing a postdoctoral position or a lectureship, or applying for research grants, tenure and promotion. A strong publication record – and clear future publication plans – are vital parts of an academic curriculum vitae. Academic publishing is also central in a variety of different schemes of research assessment (including, in the UK, the Research Excellence Framework). Where and in what form your work is published matters. Section four encourages you to think about your publication strategy for academic publications, as well as to consider publishing your work in a variety of other ways, particularly in terms of seeking to communicate your research findings beyond the academy, whether to policy-makers or a wider public readership, and/or in collaboration with research participants. For more on this, please see the companion guide, *Communicating research beyond the academy: a guide for researchers* (available at www.rgs.org/Guides).

Section five provides guidance on authorship best practice and aims to demystify other aspects of publishing. This includes ethical issues such as plagiarism, copyright and acknowledgements, plus practicalities such as correctly formatting and preparing your manuscript for publication, including the growing possibilities offered online to use non-textual, multimedia content to enhance your writing.

Getting something published is not the end of the publishing process and getting your publication read is something that also requires thought and effort. Beyond the format and outlet you chose, writing style, title, abstract and key words all matter. As authors you can play a key role in promoting your journal articles and books by advancing the profile – especially online – of both yourself as a researcher and your publications. With increasing pressure on researchers to demonstrate the reach of their research, understanding metrics including and beyond Impact Factors and citation/downloads is also important. Section six of this guide expands on understanding, gaining and demonstrating readership and citations.

This guide is aimed at both human and physical geographers, as well as scientists and social scientists in other disciplines, and has been published by the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) (RGS-IBG) and Wiley-Blackwell. The RGS-IBG and Wiley-Blackwell publish three academic geography journals – *Area*, *The Geographical Journal* and *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* – as well as the *RGS-IBG Book Series*, which publishes both human and physical geography books. Details about each of these journals and the book series are available online via www.rgs.org/Journals.

The different sections of the guide have been written by academics and publishing experts who between them have considerable experience of publishing from a wide range of perspectives as authors, reviewers, editors, editorial board members and of course readers, as well as publishers and analysts.

This guide is a collaborative effort, which updates and expands the earlier *Publishing in geography: a guide for new researchers*, published in 2008. We are very grateful to all of the contributors for writing such full and informative pieces for both editions, and for their enthusiasm in contributing. We are also grateful to colleagues at Wiley-Blackwell for all of their help in producing this guide.

On behalf of all of the contributors to the guide, we hope that you will find it useful and informative, and that it makes the academic publishing process easier to negotiate whether you are publishing your first article or trying to demonstrate the impact of an established portfolio.

This guide is also available online at www.rgs.org/Guides.

2 Publishing in journals

2.1 Research articles

Louise J Bracken and Alastair Bonnett

Publishing in journals has several advantages. Because of the refereeing process journal articles are considered to have been vetted for quality; journal articles are more readily turned up by search engines such as *Google Scholar* giving them greater visibility over book chapters and books; articles tend to be easily accessible due to online versions and publication ahead of print; and they are easier to digest (and to write) because they are shorter than monographs. The advice given in this section is based on our experiences as editors, authors and referees.

Choosing a journal

It is important to submit your article to an appropriate journal. This decision is based on a range of factors including (in no particular order): the prestige of the journal (often measured by the Impact Factor [see 6.1]); the subject covered in the journal; the type and length of article published in the journal; readership of the journal (or who you wish to engage with); the turnaround time between submission and publication; and stipulations that may be mandated by funders (see 6.4).

Some journals are very specialist and others more general in remit. An article in a general geography journal will need to engage with broader debates in the discipline and include more background information compared to an article published in a more specialist journal. Articles published in discipline or even sub-disciplinary journals often focus on a more narrow set of debates and take more background information for granted. Publishing in a general subject journal can raise your profile and demonstrate your ability to engage with wide ranging debates. However, articles in more specialist journals may be more helpful in establishing your expertise and research credentials.

When dealing with more specialist journals it is important to check that your material maps on to the advertised remit of the journal. If your piece does not fit, save yourself time and energy and submit somewhere else. If you are unsure, most editors are happy to advise about suitability on receipt of an abstract. If you are not in a rush to have an article accepted you might try submitting to a more prestigious and selective journal. If the article is rejected it can then be submitted elsewhere – although you must ensure that you do not submit the same article to two journals simultaneously (see 5.1). However, if you would like your work published as soon as possible, it is safer to submit to a journal you think is likely to accept it. Turnaround times from submission to publication can vary dramatically. Turnaround information is usually available on the journal website or from the editors (but remember that this information does not guarantee your article will be dealt with within the average specified period).

Writing the article

A journal article needs to be a discrete entity, capable of standing alone. This is especially important when writing up pieces from a thesis or a large research project. Most articles follow a clear structure which sets out a well defined contribution to a body of literature such as an ongoing debate or methodological development. Published articles need to demonstrate that they are making a substantive and original intervention or argument: mere summaries of previous work, no matter how well written, are usually of little interest to editors (see 2.3 on review essays).

The literature and/or debate you choose to engage with should be relevant to the journal to which you are submitting. The article should then discuss its approach/methods and data sources. The way in which this is done depends on the type of research and data involved, but it is important to link your methodology to the results and discussion that follow. Geography is a very broad discipline: in some sub-fields, results and interpretations should be clearly separated (this is often the case in physical geography); whilst in others (notably some of the more cultural areas of human geography) a more essay-based style is favoured. Remember that referees/readers need to understand the approach/methods used to be able to assess the quality of the overall contribution made by the article. In the conclusions, the significance and implications of findings should be discussed, rather than simply repeating and summarising outcomes. It is always a good idea to study previously published articles in the journal selected to find out whether there is a preferred structure around which to base your own article. Always keep articles within the specified word limit of the journal.

Many essay prizes or other awards linked to a particular society or journal are specifically aimed at early career researchers (including the *Area Prize for New Research in Geography*). In addition to any useful cash or free books that may be on offer, many prizes have the big incentive that the winners are likely to be published or promoted in the journal, and the recognition gained is very helpful for career development.

Giving a paper at a conference is a useful way to gain feedback from your peers before submitting it to a journal. Listen to their comments and make your work part of the wider debate. The skills of précis and concise argument that are needed to present a conference paper are not that far removed from those needed to prepare a good journal article. Receiving immediate comments from some of the target audience for your eventual article is equally valuable.

Remember that if you do not have enough material for a full article then you may wish to consider writing a short comment or observation piece. A number of journals publish these, for example, Commentaries in *Area* (about 1500 words) and *The Geographical Journal* (3-4000 words). They tend to be more lightly refereed but can be useful in starting a debate and raising your profile as an author.

Abstract and key words

All articles will need an abstract, which should succinctly establish the issue, approach, key findings and important implications of the research (see 6.2 for more on optimising abstracts for search engines). It can be difficult to write a good abstract, but it is important to spend time and effort on doing so since this is the section of your article that will be most widely read, and will inspire people to read the complete article.

Key words enable people to find your article when using search engines and so it is important to think carefully about these, and to follow author guidelines about the type and number of key words to include. You want key words to reflect the key topics covered in the article, but also to map on to any key trends and widely used terms in research to enable your article to be found by as many people as possible. These details are becoming ever more important with the online dissemination of journal content. Abstracts and key words, along with your name and article title, are often the only data that are supplied to the abstracting and indexing databases, and to the inter-linked citation systems, such as *CrossRef*, with which most journal publishers collaborate.

Following author guidelines

It is important to follow the published guidelines for authors. These are usually provided on the inside cover of hard copies of the journal and on journal websites. These details will inform you of topics covered by the journal, word lengths, the journal's house style and formats (e.g. for headings and references), and how to submit your article. It is important to adhere to the published guidelines since manuscripts can be rejected on first screening if they are too long or do not follow the house style.

Author guidelines also specify details of how figures should be drawn. This includes the resolution of photos, size of artwork and acceptable software packages. It is important to follow these since most submissions are now electronic and the software only allows 'correct' versions to be uploaded. It will also save a lot of time in the submission of your final article following acceptance. Also note that the author is responsible for securing permission to reproduce copyright images both in print and online, and for paying any necessary fees for permissions (see 5.2).

Submitting the article

Details of how to submit your article are often provided on the inside cover of hard copies of journals and on journal websites. Most journals now use electronic/online submission systems and it is advisable to make yourself familiar with this software once you have decided on the journal to which you want to submit. This will let you establish the suitable file formats and other information that needs to be submitted alongside the text and diagrams (e.g. copyright agreements and permission requests for using previously published figures). It can be frustrating if you are not aware of these when you try to submit your article, but cannot proceed until you have the extra information in place.

The refereeing process

There are four stages in the decisionmaking process: pre-screening, refereeing, editorial decisionmaking and, after any necessary revisions, final acceptance or rejection of the article. Pre-screening is conducted by editors and involves assessing whether the article's substance, approach, length, quality and style are suitable for the journal. This is done to make the refereeing process more efficient and to avoid trying the patience of referees. You are unlikely to receive extensive comments if your article is rejected at this stage.

If your article passes pre-screening it will then be refereed. Referees are selected by the editors and, for some journals, can be guided by suggestions from authors. It is common for editors to seek three referee reports, although editors' decisions may be based on fewer, or sometimes more. Referees advise the editors about the quality of the article and whether it should be accepted or not. It is their job to be critical and this can be tough on authors, especially if you feel they have missed the point. However, comments from the more conscientious and constructive referees can really help improve and refine arguments and presentation of data and ideas, making the finished article much stronger. Referees often have distinct perspectives and it is normal to receive different comments and recommendations. The refereeing process is time consuming because there are generally no inducements to do it apart from a sense of professional responsibility (although several publishers offer discounts on books to referees). This is the stage that is likely to hold up publication of an article. It can take time for editors to find willing referees, it then takes time for referees to read the article and write a report, and there are often frequent reminders from journal managers to referees encouraging them to submit their reports (for more information on acting as a referee, see 2.5).

There are usually four principal recommendations open to referees: i) accept as stands; ii) minor revisions; iii) major revisions; or iv) reject. Once the editor feels that they have received sufficient feedback they will make a decision on your article and communicate it to you. You will be sent the decision, an explanation of the decision and, if relevant, a list of suggested changes. Where referee reports vary the editor will usually give you clear guidance about how to respond to the recommendations.

Revised manuscripts may be sent back to one or more of the original referees for further review and recommendations. There is no guarantee that a revised article will be accepted for publication. Sometimes editors ask authors to complete a further round of revisions before coming to a final decision about whether to accept an article or not.

Revising an article

If you are asked to revise an article you should consider all of the comments made by the editor and referees seriously. Difficulties arise when you feel that the referee has misunderstood something in your article or even missed the point completely and hence disagree with some of the suggestions for revision. Often when this situation

occurs it shows that you have not been clear enough in your explanations and some revision is necessary, even if it is not along the lines suggested by the referee. At this stage, you may find it helpful to seek the advice of a peer, colleague or supervisor. It is a good idea to try to incorporate, or at least address, all of the revisions suggested. However, if you disagree then you can make a case for not accepting a referee's suggestion to the editor. Always remember that your article can be rejected at this point if the editor is not happy with the revisions undertaken.

Covering letters

A covering letter is desirable on first submission but essential on submission of a revised version of an article. The initial covering letter only needs to be brief, stating you have an article you'd like to submit and possibly suggesting some suitable referees (although you may also have to enter these again during electronic submission).

There is no need to write a lengthy covering letter at this point (indeed, they are often unwelcome). The covering letter when you submit a revised version is much more important, likely to be much longer, and should be written carefully. Also note that referees are usually able to read versions of these covering letters if the editor decides to ask them to review the revised article. In this letter you should describe the changes you have made in response to the referees'/editor's comments. If you have not chosen to take on board particular comments, this is the place to say what you have not done and why. It is important to state your case clearly and concisely so the editor (who is not necessarily an expert in your area of research) can assess the implications for the overall quality of the article.

Final acceptance of an article only occurs once the editor (often after seeking further advice from one or more of the original referees) decides that the revisions have been satisfactorily completed. You will then receive an acknowledgement from the journal and the article will move into the production stage.

Production

Once the article has been accepted it will pass on to production. This tends to be managed by the publisher rather than editors and any contact about your article is likely to come from them (see 6.5). There may be requests from the publisher about figures, particularly the format and resolution, but more often than not there is no contact until you receive the proofs of your article. Proofs are the final version of your article, as it will be published online or in the hardcopy of the journal. You will be asked to check the proofs and answer a list of queries raised by the production editor. The proofs should be checked and queries answered as soon as possible. No publisher likes lengthy changes at this point and these should be avoided if possible. Beware that some journals charge you for any major changes, for instance if alterations are more than correcting the odd date, word or reference. Sometime after proofs have been returned, you will receive a PDF of your article and, if applicable, your article will be published online ahead of print.

Dealing with rejection

The key to successful publishing in journals is dealing constructively with rejection. Nearly all academics have had articles rejected (often very many articles). If your article is rejected do not argue with the editor's decision. Editors are not open to letters of appeal. Their decisions are final. You are entitled to an explanation but pestering editors is a waste of time. It is important to move on. Try to understand why the article was rejected and explore whether it is worth submitting the article to a different journal. In many cases, a rejected article can be used as the building-block for a much better one. Do not let a rejection prevent you submitting to the same journal again in the future: decisions are made on articles, not authors.

Ethics

There are a few golden rules to remember about publishing articles (see further discussion in section 5):

- It is not acceptable to submit the same article to more than one journal at a time. If you are caught (and there is a good chance this will happen through the refereeing process) the article is unlikely to be published and you will gain a bad reputation as an author.
- It is unethical to publish the same article in more than one place (academic journals always stipulate that they only publish previously unpublished work). It is acceptable to submit more than one article on the same research, but each should have a distinctive take on the material and make a unique contribution.
- Be careful of publishing too many similar articles. This can harm your reputation and lead to people not wanting to read your work because it is too repetitive (this is sometimes called 'salami slicing'). This can be a problem when you are trying to establish a reputation as an excellent and innovative scholar.
- All those who contributed to the writing of the article should be named in the list of authors. It is conventional to list authors alphabetically if they all contributed equally to the article or, where this is not the case, to place the lead author first. Other acknowledgements (to funding bodies for example) should be included at the end of the article. Failure to do this may not only harm your reputation with others but also compromise your ability to secure future grants for example.

2.2 Themed or special issues

Alison Blunt

Many journals publish themed or special issues or sections, which bring together a range of articles on a particular subject and are edited by one or more guest editors (see, for example, sections in *Area* and *The Geographical Journal*). Some journals have policies about publishing one themed issue or section each year, whilst others might publish them more or less often than this. Guest editing and/or contributing to a themed issue is an excellent way to publish your research and potentially make a significant contribution to a particular field of work.

Conference sessions often provide the starting point for developing a proposal for a themed issue. If you and/or colleagues have identified an original, timely and incisive theme, you should identify the most suitable journal for publication, and write to the editor(s) with a proposal. The proposal should include a title, outline, and list of potential authors, article titles and abstracts. If the journal editor agrees that the proposed issue is one that fits the remit of the journal, and that there is potentially space for an issue or section on this particular theme, the articles are submitted and sent out for review in the normal way (see 2.1). Guest editors usually write an introduction to the issue or section, setting it in a wider context as well as introducing the specific articles.

For a journal editor to accept the proposal for a themed issue does not guarantee that all, or any, of the articles within it will be accepted for publication. The turnaround time for publishing a themed issue can be considerably longer than for a single article, because of the different lengths of time that it takes referees to write reports on each article, the different requirements for revision, and because not all contributing authors are likely to meet deadlines. As a guest editor, your role is to liaise with authors and the journal editor about deadlines, completing revisions and the final production process. As an author, you should be realistic about meeting deadlines and responding promptly to required revisions before you agree to write an article for a themed issue.

Whilst the journal editor retains overall editorial control, guest editors have considerable input into developing each of the articles and the coherence of the issue or section as a whole. In many ways, themed issues are similar to edited books, but you will often find that authors are more enthusiastic about writing an article for a journal rather than a chapter for a book, as these are peer-reviewed and generally seen to have a greater impact (see 4.1).

2.3 Review essays

Michael J Bradshaw

Writing a good review essay is just as challenging and rewarding as writing a research article. Anyone completing a thesis or writing a research grant application finds themselves writing a literature review that places their research in the context of previous work and identifies a research gap that is worthy of further research.

However, just as chapters from a PhD seldom make publishable research article as they stand, so a literature review chapter needs further work before it becomes a good review essay. Undoubtedly, you have the knowledge, the raw materials, to write a review essay: this section provides you with some pointers as to where to submit and how to produce successful review essays.

Where to publish

The first thing to be aware of is that many journals do not publish review articles and have an explicit policy of only publishing articles based on original research. Therefore, before you start to write your essay, identify a target journal and make sure that the editors are open to review essays (see 2.1). Most journals now publish a clear statement of aims and scope alongside more detailed notes for contributors on their website and you can also look through recent issues to see if they have review sections. There are some journals that specialise in publishing review articles. The most well-known to geographers are: the *Progress* journals (including *Progress in Human Geography*, *Progress in Physical Geography* and *Progress in Development Studies*), *Geography Compass* and *WIREs Climate Change*. However, some sections of these journals are populated by commissioned reviews where an individual is asked to provide a series of reviews over a number of years. This is the case with the *Progress in Human Geography* Progress Reports, for example. In the case of a journal like *Geography Compass* or *WIREs Climate Change*, contact the appropriate section editor, because although these journals do commission reviews, they are also open to unsolicited submissions. In general, if you are unsure contact the editors before you waste your time writing an essay that won't be considered by your target journal. There are also journals that have review sections and while again these are often commissioned, the reviews editors may be open to suggestions. For example, *The Geographical Journal* has a review essay section that publishes essays based around one or more publication or other output. Like *Geography Compass*, some of these are commissioned essays, but the reviews editors may also welcome proposals.

Getting the level right

Having identified an outlet for your review essay, you need to think about the purpose of your review and its potential readership. Is your essay aimed at other specialists in your field or is it aimed at non-specialists as an introduction to the field? I would argue that this is a key distinction between the *Progress* journals and *Geography Compass*, for example. *Progress* is aimed at other researchers, who have a good deal of prior knowledge; while *Geography Compass* is aimed at the novice reader (a senior level undergraduate or Masters student) as well as academic staff from geography and other disciplines looking to familiarise themselves with a particular field or issue. The different audiences require you to think carefully about the purpose and structure of your review essay.

Purpose and structure

Your review essay must have a clear purpose and structure to be successful. Simply using it as a vehicle to demonstrate how much you have read is not a recipe for success!

Review essays can be surveys of:

- Recent debates.
- Areas where there has been a recent surge of interest, or substantial new developments.
- Areas where developments in one part of the field might speak to (or lead to) developments in another.
- Areas that have been neglected, but need to be revived (and the reasons for that).
- Areas where there has been recent interest from the popular media and that might serve as the basis of debate.
- Comparisons of topics across different schools of thought.
- Developments in other disciplines on a particular topic that is of interest to geographers.

A clear sense of purpose will help you to define the scope of your essay. In other words, how broad or narrow should a topic be? Cast the net too wide and you will struggle to deal with the key issues in sufficient depth; cast it too narrowly and you will not attract sufficient readership to merit publication. That said, topics can be fairly specialised, as long as they are presented with appropriate background and attention to different positions on the topic.

To succeed, a good review essay needs a clear structure, but there is no single best way to do this. Each of the purposes identified above demands a different structure. A good review is organised around themes and not individual publications (unless it is an extended book review). Review essays that demand attention are those that build on an authoritative review of the existing literature to present a new argument. In other words, they add value beyond a summary of the literature. The author need not be utterly neutral, but should be sure to do justice to the different approaches to the problem. An article that dismisses one or more current approaches to a problem or issue in a sentence or two and concentrates on a single approach is less valuable to the reader than one that gives reasonable attention to a wide range of alternatives, even if the author ultimately draws the conclusion that one alternative is the most promising, and gives more weight to that approach.

The bibliography

For the reader, the purpose of a review essay is to survey a particular issue, gain understanding and identify the key authors and outputs to pursue if they want to find out more. Thus, the bibliography is a critical component of any review essay and also a measure of how comprehensive and up-to-date it is. How wide-ranging should the bibliography be? Here, it is safe to say that more is better. The more you can include, the easier it will be for your reader to enter the debate or to figure out where to go next.

A review essay is a good route for new and more established researchers: a successful review essay can be widely cited, often more so than a research article, and will get you associated with your area of research specialisation. However, knowing the literature is the start of the process, not the end.

[N.B.: This is a revised version of a contribution originally co-written with Rochelle Lieber (University of New Hampshire).]

2.4 Book reviews

Helen Jarvis

Writing a good book review and having it published in an academic journal can be richly rewarding in several respects. Right at the heart of scholarly career development are the skills of close, critical reading and clear, engaging writing – skills which are perhaps best honed by writing a book review. Further, by specifying a fairly precise area of expertise you can receive a new book ‘hot off the press’ (which you get to keep), which you will enjoy reading and benefit from intellectually through the challenge of writing a succinct exegesis. Finally, writing a successful book review can be a good career move. It is a relatively quick and sure way to make yourself known to established scholars internationally in a particular subject area.

A key characteristic of the academic book review is that it is not peer-reviewed but instead thoughtfully steered through the process of revision and publication by a book review editor. This also makes it a gentle entrée to the rigours of getting your work published.

Where to publish

Many academic journals publish a book review section although increasingly these are online-only features. The contents of each are implicitly specified to reflect the scope and audience of the particular journal. If someone wants to keep up-to-date with books published in a particular field, they are likely to reach for the book review section of a specialist journal. So the question of where to publish usually comes down to which journals you read to reflect your own sub-discipline. Once you have identified the journal(s) you would ideally like to write for, it is worthwhile making yourself known to the book review editor. A short email is sufficient to identify yourself (also naming

your supervisor perhaps), alongside your stage of career and the topic(s) on which you could meaningfully write. Contact details for the book review editor are printed inside the cover of the journal and listed on the publication website. Lists of books for review are also often available online or distributed via list-servs. It is worth noting that editors rarely accept unsolicited book reviews.

What to expect from the editorial process

It is much quicker to publish a book review than a peer-reviewed article. Once you have been formally invited to write a review of a particular book (and a copy of the book has been dispatched) you will be given a set of guidelines on review content and format and a time frame within which to write your review, usually about six weeks. The time frame has to be quite strict to ensure that new books are reviewed in a timely fashion. You should write your review to the prescribed format and submit it to the book review editor (or managing editor, as directed), and expect a minimal degree of editorial fine-tuning to suit house style (and to correct any minor grammatical errors). If more substantial revisions or a cut in length are required, the editor will return the review with suggested changes until the review is ready for production (see 6.5 for what happens next). Although getting a book review published is relatively quick, you should still expect a delay of some six months between the editorial process and final publication.

How to write

There is much more to writing a book review than meets the eye. The word length is usually quite short (in the range of 400-1200 words) meaning that this piece of writing has to be succinct, accessible, and critically engaging in a constructive rather than polemic way. The following will be useful to bear in mind:

- The fundamentals are an accurate résumé plus analysis and appraisal.
- Your commentary should locate the work within the current debates of its respective sub-discipline.
- Avoid lengthy chapter-by-chapter descriptions of the content; simply introduce the outline structure and then focus on key contributions and innovations.

Variations on the single author book review

The 'standard' book review can get a little stale and it is worth considering that some journals (notably *Area*) welcome suggestions for review panels and collective engagement with one or more text(s) in a colloquia or conference session. This format may involve several reviewers writing in collaboration to produce a series of critical dialogues on a single book. There are opportunities here for research or reading groups to play an instrumental role in shaping a debate. Again, the best advice is to pitch your idea directly to the book review editor of your preferred journal.

2.5 Peer-reviewing

Kevin Ward

It is hard to over-estimate the importance of peer-reviewing, the process through which academics are approached by an editor to read and comment on another's work in order that the editor can make a decision over whether or not to publish. A good review – one delivered on time and written in an encouraging and supportive manner and that provides clear guidance to the author(s) about how to improve the manuscript – makes the job of an editor considerably easier. It means quick decisions, reducing the uncertainties in the system as authors wait to hear back. This is particularly important at the start of an academic career. And, how else is an editor to decide whether or not to accept a proposed publication? No one editor (or even group of editors) can cover the breadth of the discipline. So, we rely on those we approach to agree to review and to do it in a timely and professional manner.

One way of thinking about the whole process is as a virtuous circle. You produce an article and submit it to your chosen journal. Imagine it is *Area* (and why would it not be?!). The article is sent out for review, the comments come back in and the editor makes a decision. In the process you have benefitted from the labour of other academics in the short term (in terms of improving your article) and perhaps in the longer term (in terms of your wider research project). You then have a responsibility to read and comment on the work of others when asked. So, you will have made work for referees by submitting articles – a withdrawal from the system if you like – while at the same time making a deposit, so to speak, by giving your time to read and comment on the work of others. That does not mean that you should say yes to every article you are asked to review. Saying no is fine (although if you do, editors usually appreciate your suggestions for other potential referees). However, an important aspect of being a responsible academic is acknowledging the wider system of which we are all part and what is needed in order to sustain it. Reflecting on this circle might also help you to think about what makes a good review. Those that are the most use to me, and I think to authors, are provided in a timely manner, and consist of thorough and constructive comments. And, it is not just about being responsible. The referee can also gain from the process. Being asked to review reflects the accruing of a certain amount of reputational capital, and it is commonplace to find reviewing duties listed on curricula vitae. In addition, your own work might benefit as you get to read leading-edge work prior to publication. This may nourish and stimulate your own research. Moreover, new contacts and networks can be formed through the review process, as you realise someone else is working on similar issues. Although much reviewing is still done 'double blind' (the author and referee are anonymous to each other, which is especially common in human geography), it is possible – via an editor – to reach out to an author whose work you have reviewed.

So, the next time you are asked to review, take a minute to read the title and abstract, decide whether it might be in your interest to read and review it, and reflect on whether you are running a system-wide surplus or a deficit!

3 Publishing books

Kevin Ward and Jo Bullard

This section seeks to unpack the 'black-box' that is the publishing of books. It provides some guidance on different stages in producing a book, from why bother to write one, to ways of ensuring you reach your target audience.

Why write a book?

Writing a book, whether on your own or with a colleague, is not easy! There will be plenty of times when you ask yourself 'why am I doing this?' The intellectual and organisational effort required is immense. If you are writing a monograph (a research-based and authored rather than edited book) there is a need to sustain an argument over approximately 90 000 words. If you are editing a book, this throws up its own challenges: introductions and conclusions need to pull together the contributions of individual chapters; and awkward contributors have to be managed. So, given this, why write a monograph or edit a book?

There are a number of reasons for producing a monograph. Some are specific to writing a book while others are more general reasons for publishing academic work. First, writing a monograph remains a highly valued activity. While some have argued that in the UK the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and its predecessors have devalued the worth of academic books (Harvey 2006), the intellectual effort involved means that monographs continue to be benchmark publications, although this does differ from one country to another (Ward et al. 2009) and across different disciplines and even sub-disciplines in geography. Second, and in contrast to journal articles, they allow authors to produce a sustained argument. There is greater capacity to construct a serious theoretical argument and to give empirical findings a real airing. You are not constrained in the way you are when writing journal articles and may also have the freedom to be both provocative and creative. Third, monographs travel across disciplines. If you want to appeal to publics beyond geography then writing a monograph might be a good way of going about it. They also last - disciplines are known for the books they produce, less so for their articles. In some disciplines and sub-disciplines, books are still the mainstay of building academic reputations through publishing.

For edited collections many of these arguments also hold true. While you will not write the whole book, you will be the intellectual spark, and it will be you – perhaps with colleagues – who will put your imprint on the collection through the volume's introduction and the conclusion. These chapters are important as they set the scene and pull together the points made in the individual contributions. Edited collections can be an effective way of uniting a group of authors working on similar subjects but from different perspectives, or of collating the uses of, or approaches to, new theoretical frameworks or specialist techniques forming a benchmark volume. Specialist conference sessions or workshops can be good starting points for such a book.

Choosing a publisher for your book

When considering writing a book it is worth looking at the profiles of different academic publishers. Think about the sort of book you want to write. Who is its intended public? Many academic publishers are now focused on textbooks and unlikely to be interested in publishing a research monograph, however some do still specialise in this area. It is also worth checking the activities of the learned societies relevant to your field. While some society publishers have more restricted marketing and distribution systems than large multi-discipline publishers, they may be ideal for a specialist book with a specific audience. There are also examples of partnerships between learned societies and mainstream academic publishers where the society sets the agenda for the series but gains expertise and facilities from the publishing partner – one example being the RGS-IBG Book Series. Speak to academic colleagues about their experiences, visit publishers' stands at conferences and check publisher and society websites.

Questions to consider:

- Does the publisher publish in your research field and have a good reputation among intended readers?
- Does the publisher produce the type of book that you want to write (e.g. textbook, monograph, edited book, conference proceedings, reference book)?
- Are hardback and paperback versions published simultaneously? If not, how many hardbacks does your book have to sell before the publisher will commission a paperback run? How are they priced? Will an e- and o-book be available, and in which formats?
- What marketing and distribution system does the publisher have? For books likely to appeal across disciplines it may be advantageous to choose a publisher with an appropriate range of catalogues (e.g. (human) geography and sociology, history, economics; (physical) geography and geology, engineering, meteorology).
- Does the publisher have a sales team to promote books internationally?
- Does the publisher send out copies to academic journals for review?
- Does the publisher attend large academic conferences and book exhibitions?
- Does the publisher have a track-record of accommodating specific author requirements and/or are they willing to negotiate? E.g. some publishers are willing to make certain books available in economically-disadvantaged countries at a locally-viable cost; some will publish a large number of figures.

If a publisher gives you the answers you hope for to most of the above questions, you have probably found the publisher for you. Unlike simultaneous submissions to journals, which are not allowed, it is permissible to submit your book proposal to more than one publisher at the same time (although you cannot hold multiple contracts!). Different publishers will react in different ways if you choose to tell them you have done this. For some it will not be a problem, for others it might be.

Writing and submitting your proposal

In the majority of cases in order to get a book contract you have first to write a book proposal. This is a sales document – it is your attempt to sell yourself and the book you want to write to a publisher. Before writing your proposal, and as part of identifying a potential publisher for your book, you need to consult the publisher's website which should include instructions on how to structure and submit your proposal. Most publishers request very similar material, including the following:

- A summary overview, which outlines the book's central argument, drawing on the work of others to make an intellectual case for why such a book should be commissioned.
- A detailed outline of the book's structure and content, with a short paragraph describing each chapter, and how it speaks to the main arguments of the manuscript. This should show how the book's arguments develop over the manuscript. For edited books, most publishers require a list of chapter titles and named contributors (and their affiliations). Many publishers require an estimate of the final length of the manuscript (and have strict limits for maximum length).
- A realistic definition of the primary and secondary markets for the book.
- A list and assessment of competing titles and the ways in which your book will be different from these existing publications.
- Author's/editor's curriculum vitae and academic biographical details.

In some cases publishers also like to receive sample chapters or full manuscripts. This is particularly the case in the US, where there is a strong tradition of graduate students turning their PhDs into books in order to gain tenure. In the UK and elsewhere, revising PhDs into books is not the norm, although it does happen. And, of course, there are also certain risks involved in writing a book for a particular publisher before getting a contract. Put simply, it might not get commissioned and you then have to revise it in light of the requirements of other publishers.

For proposals for edited books you are often in the awkward position of having to approach contributors before you have a publisher, as the publisher will rarely approve a contract if the contributors are not identified. If you are unable to confirm all of your contributing authors, most publishers will tolerate some uncertainty about who will contribute to the book, but you will need to state clearly who has been approached and has agreed (if only in principle) to write chapters. You will also need to indicate what

steps you will take to control the quality and consistency of the chapters and what steps will be taken to ensure the final book is coherent and balanced. Protocols for this vary. In some cases the book editor reviews each chapter and only when the book is complete is it sent out to external review; in other cases individual chapters may be sent out to external reviewers by the editors before they compile the volume. The most appropriate procedure is likely to be dictated, if not by the publisher, then by the editor's level of expertise in relation to the breadth or depth of the subject matter.

The proposal review process

The person to whom you might send the proposal differs from one publisher to another. In some cases you might submit it to the general geographical list, which would mean sending it to the commissioning editor. Alternatively you might send it to a series editor, who will tend to be an academic. In some cases the academic editors have the final say on which proposals are commissioned; in others it is the commissioning editor who makes the final decision.

Once your proposal arrives at the publisher it will usually be sent for review by at least two academics in the field. These will be chosen by the series or commissioning editor, although you may have the chance to suggest possible names.

Once the editor receives the reviews they will liaise with others at the publisher or with other editors or an editorial board. The editor will then make a decision on your proposal. If the decision is to accept then the commissioning editor will present the proposal to senior staff within the publisher for contract approval. In most cases this is straightforward, but in some cases authors might be required to make some changes to their proposal before being issued with a contract. The decision to reject a proposal, at whatever stage, can be taken for all manner of reasons. Sometimes the proposal is simply not good enough. In other cases it might be felt that the book does not fit in the publisher's list or series. Whatever the outcome, the reviewers' comments will be forwarded to you, so even if the proposal is not accepted you can take on board the comments when producing a revised proposal that might then be accepted elsewhere.

Academic reviewers may be asked to comment on the following types of questions:

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed book?
- What would you see as the likely readership for this book?
- Who is going to read it and who is going to buy it?
- Are you aware of any competing titles? If so, how does the current proposal compare to these?
- Is the author/editor the best person to produce this book? For edited books, are the intended contributing authors the best/most appropriate?

The contract and delivery of your book

Do not think that submitting the manuscript marks the end of your work! When you sign a contract with the publisher it will detail your responsibilities including specifying the expected word length and delivery date. The contract will indicate the number of presentation copies you can expect and will set out a royalty percentage. This is always low. Very few academics make any money from publishing academic monographs. The publisher will also provide guidelines detailing how the manuscript should be formatted. As with journal articles, it is the author's responsibility to secure the right to reproduce any copyright images or other material, and to pay any necessary permission fees. Sometimes publishers will agree to pay you an advance on future royalties towards these expenses.

Once you pass the completed manuscript to the publisher it is likely that it will be reviewed by at least one academic referee. This should take a couple of months and you will then be expected to respond to these comments, which normally will consist of matters of substance rather than style. Typical revisions that you might be asked to make include the balancing of content, removing any repetition and reducing the length of the book (make sure it is within the word limit you agreed before you submit it!). Once you submit the final version of the manuscript it will be passed on to another section at the publisher, or increasingly, to a freelance employee. Typically the manuscript will go through the same stages as journal articles (see 6.5):

- **Copyediting:** the publisher commissions someone to read the manuscript. They check the grammar, the spelling of the text and the references. The copyeditor will contact you with a list of queries which you will need to address before the manuscript is typeset.
- **Typesetting:** the manuscript is typeset according to the publisher's house style.
- **Proofs:** you will be sent a copy of the proofs, which you will be required to check promptly for errors. A professional proof-reader may also be appointed by the publisher. At this point, an index has also to be compiled, either by you or by a professional indexer. Where 'professionals' are employed it is likely that you will have to pay for this against your future royalties.
- **Printing:** the manuscript is finalised and the book is printed.
- **Publication:** advance copies are sent to you a week or so before publication, with the rest to follow once the book is published.

Post-publication activities

Books do not sell themselves. While the publisher will market the book it is also your responsibility as the author to do your bit, which can take a number of different forms. All publishers ask authors to complete a marketing questionnaire and provide a host of information usually including:

- Short academic biographies.
- Short and long descriptions of the book, including its main purpose and the thinking behind writing it.
- Key features.
- The book's main competitors and its USP (unique selling points).
- Details of the book's main audience.
- Mailing lists/online forums around which details of the book should be circulated.
- Conferences or professional meetings where the book should be displayed.
- Scholarly journals which are likely to review the book.

It is worth providing as much information as you can to the publisher to make sure that you see your book marketed effectively, reviewed in journals and on sale at conferences. There is nothing worse than having invested all that time and effort in writing a book to find it not on display at conferences or not being reviewed in journals.

Ultimately whether a book sells or not depends on a number of things. Some of these are beyond your control. What you can do as an author is to produce a clearly written and organised book that is aimed at a particular audience and then do your bit to market it wherever and whenever you can. Good luck!



4 Publication strategies

4.1 Thinking strategically about publishing

Michael J Bradshaw

In the age of impact and research excellence it is essential to think strategically about how and where to publish. Not only are academics now expected to demonstrate the significance, originality and rigour of their research through the publication of outputs, in the UK and elsewhere they also have to demonstrate that they can have an impact beyond the academy. The need to devise a publication strategy starts early in your career as PhD students seeking to follow a career in academia are now expected to start publishing before they complete their theses; indeed, in some institutions a series of linked published articles replace the lengthy PhD thesis. So, where to begin?

First, start when you have something original to say! Second, think about who you want to say it to and target your writing and publishing accordingly. You might start by writing your own blog or contributing to an existing blog, such as *Geography Directions* (www.geographydirections.com). Your department (or RGS-IBG Research Group) might already use *Facebook* and *Twitter* to promote its activities; perhaps you can contribute by letting others know about your research? Write a short (2-3 page) briefing document on your PhD project and post it as a PDF on your departmental web page and use this link to publicise your research (but check you are compliant with your University's Code of Practice). As your own project evolves and you start to generate original insights into your particular area of interest, then it is time to start thinking about more formal forms of publication and other forms of dissemination. Conference papers and presentations are often a good way to start a line of thought that may eventually become an article. Equally, consider publishing a working paper, but be aware that some publishers are not happy with this practice (but see 5.1) and other, less scrupulous, researchers may steal your insights.

When starting to publish, avoid the dangers of premature publication by discussing your plans with your supervisor(s) and sharing your draft articles with them and your peers. Think hard before you submit!

Should you publish a book or journal article? Should you go for a more specialist journal that will attract the attention of others working in your field, or should you go for a more general journal to reach a broader readership? Each journal has its own niche, mission and place. There are journals that publish review articles (see 2.3) but most do not. Some journals – *Area* is the obvious choice – have a particular mission to publish the work of new researchers. However, while the editor may be more supportive of your efforts, the peer-review process is just as rigorous as other journals, so seek advice before you submit that first article.

To get a PhD you must make 'an original contribution to knowledge' and there is no reason why you should not be submitting your findings to a flagship journal such as *Transactions*; it may take longer, but the rewards for success are greater. Your choice of journal determines the kind of article that you should write. Again, seek advice.

Perhaps there are colleagues in your department who have recently published in your target journal or are editors or members of editorial boards. Equally, contact the editor of your target journal to see if the topic of your proposed article is of interest. Having chosen your journal, follow the instructions to authors carefully (see 5.2) – this will make it less likely that your article will simply be returned to you as unsuited to review. The review process can be lengthy and making revisions is time consuming. You need to approach this constructively and engage with the comments you receive (see 2.1).

If your article is ultimately accepted, well done! If it is rejected learn from the process, look at the reviewers' comments and decide whether or not you want to submit it elsewhere. We all have articles that ended up going nowhere. Whatever you do, do not simply resubmit your rejected and unrevised article to another journal. It is a very small world and the editor of the new journal may send it to the same reviewers. If you have taken their previous comments on board and produced a substantially improved article, then all should be well, but if you have not, expect the same outcome!

In the reality of the UK Research Excellence Framework (REF), you are probably best advised to listen to your mentor who will likely tell you to focus your initial publishing efforts on journal articles. Depending on when you are appointed to an academic post following your PhD, you will be required to produce a certain number of 'REFable' outputs over the 4-5 year assessment cycle. Other countries have different assessment procedures that you need to account for in developing your academic publication strategy. There may also be conditions attached to your funding that you need to consider (see, for example, 6.4 on open access publishing). Of course, the REF guidelines state that it is acceptable to submit book chapters, monographs and any number of other forms of output, although a common perception is that primacy is given to research articles in high-ranking journals.

Journal theme issues may appear an attractive proposition, but they often take longer to get published as you may be held hostage to the last article (see 2.2). Thus, they may be best avoided until you have passed various deadlines, particularly probation. Turning your PhD into a book is a challenging task and few publishers are willing to take the risk, but there are opportunities, such as the *RGS-IBG Book Series*, that are worth considering. Equally, book chapters are rewarding, attract a specialist audience, and many have a rigorous internal review process; but both REF and most internal probationary and promotion processes are looking for a healthy number of peer-reviewed articles.

To end on a positive note, if you land a job as a lecturer, your department is likely to be only too well aware of the pressures of the current 'publish or perish' culture and as a new researcher you will benefit from assistance to help you develop your 'REF profile' or equivalent. However, often critical to getting that first job is a clearly articulated academic publishing strategy.

4.2 Participatory approaches to authorship in the academy

mrs c kinpaisby-hill

Participatory approaches to research are well established in geography (Kinson et al. 2007). Extending them to publishing unsettles the norms of academic publication by questioning: Who owns the research? Who should write/represent the knowledge generated? Who is the audience? In what language (in all senses) should we write? How might publishing contribute to social change?

Five reasons for publishing collaboratively are to:

1. Explicitly acknowledge that we are never 'lone scholars' and that all knowledge is collectively produced.
2. Involve reciprocity that formally recognises the time and expertise others contribute to making research projects work; ensuring research benefits extend beyond academic careers, institutions and priorities.
3. Open academic debate to the informed opinions of a wider range of people to address class, race and gender-based inequalities in knowledge construction and engage directly with the vexed politics of 'representation'.
4. Improve scholarship, rigour, validity and the 'fit' of theory, as outputs become negotiated texts reflecting a range of experiences, voices and expertise.
5. Challenge the predominance of competitive and individualistic career paths, and contribute to the movement to disrupt academic institutional structures that increasingly favour certain types and outputs of scholarship as proxies for quality (Pain et al. 2011).

Geographers are experimenting with forms of co- and collective authorship with research participants/partners, and among themselves. Janet Townsend (Townsend et al. 1995) co-authored one of the earliest examples and our own collaborative work (e.g. *mrs c kinpaisby* 2008; *mrs c kinpaisby-hill* 2011) draws strength from the feminist and collectivist spirit of the Women and Geography Study Group (1997) and 'J. K. Gibson-Graham' (e.g. 2005). Our pseudonyms reflect the impossibility of separating out our contributions and are gestures to the absence of ordinary voices in scholarship, aiming to disrupt the 'game' of individualistic publishing and citation (see also the Autonomous Geographies Collective 2010; Ian Cook et al. 2008 and Participatory Geographies Research Group 2012). Elsewhere, the chasm between critical geographers' stated commitment to radical praxis and justice, and the privileging of academic publication reinforces the position of 'the university' as a distanced ivory tower (see also Berg 2004).

Collective writing and participatory publications involve challenges. The process requires genuine alliances and commitment to negotiate differences in priorities, interpretations, 'voice', and divisions of time and labour (Cahill and Torre 2007) and

the necessary compromises may not always yield radical results. There are also risks involved in breaking the rules of the citation game that privilege publication of single-authored articles in elite journals. However, with a suitable degree of critical reflexivity and strategic planning, participatory and collaborative authorship can address some of the issues of representation and accountability that have troubled some geographers, and result in more rigorous and multifaceted scholarship that makes a difference.

4.3 Communicating with non-academic audiences

Klaus Dodds

If you wish to communicate and publish outside the academy then it is highly likely you will need to learn a different way of communicating, including writing (for more on this, see the *Communicating* guide at www.rgs.org/Guides). Over the last twenty years, I have deliberately chosen to engage with policy-makers, the media, and a range of international organisations including non-governmental organisations, and oil and gas companies interested in the Arctic/High North. Over that time, I have published in professional/corporate magazines (e.g. *Lloyds Register*), environmental publications (e.g. WWF outlets), defence/diplomacy journals (e.g. *RUSI Journal*), popular magazines (e.g. *Geographical*, *BBC History*, *History Today*) and a multitude of other forums, including blogs.

Publishing in such a variety of publications is challenging and when I started my career there was no guidance available for such activities, and to be perfectly honest there was little encouragement to do so. As one senior professor at the University of Bristol told me, my writing priorities should focus on the production of academic journal articles and eventually books – sole authored or edited. While I heeded this advice, my doctoral topic (geopolitics, foreign policy analysis and the Falklands/Antarctic) attracted interest from non-academic audiences. So I was faced with a dilemma of sorts – did I want to engage with these audiences and what might they expect, even demand?

If you are going to engage with these diverse audiences, I would suggest bearing the following in mind – you need to have the confidence to express complex ideas simply but not simplistically. Do not expect to seek refuge in dense theorising. You need to bear in mind that some of these audiences (e.g. policy-makers) are highly intelligent people with intense time pressures. Your writing/speaking needs to be concise, crisp and confident in tone. A side of A4 might be all you have; in other words an executive summary. You will need, if writing for popular journals or magazines, to be able to tell stories that capture the imagination of readers. They are paying for the publication and its content; they expect to be enlightened, informed and possibly entertained. One way to tackle this is to try and think of something slightly unusual about your research area. So, for example, what I tend to say about the Antarctic is that its apparently exceptional nature is useful because it helps us understand territorial nationalism closer to home, such as waving flags, place naming, making maps and demarcating territory. Regardless of topic, you need to be prepared to think about narrative – a dramatic start might help but you certainly need a clear take home message.

5 Authorship best practice

5.1 Research and publication ethics

Alison Blunt and Madeleine Hatfield

There are many important ethical issues to consider in conducting research and these do not stop when it comes to writing up research for publication. In fact, publishing brings new considerations and issues. Publishers – like departmental or institutional ethics boards – may ask you to affirm that the research has been conducted in an ethical manner and there may be questions to consider such as including the identity of participants and the kinds of empirical material reproduced, as well as sensitivities around making research publicly accessible.

New topics that become particularly important in writing up your research include the acknowledgement of all parties involved in the research and writing. Collaboration and co-authorship is common in geography and can take a number of different forms. Sometimes each of the co-authors writes different sections of an article or book and works together to develop the argument as a whole. Sometimes one author writes a draft and others contribute and comment. If different authors contribute equally to the final article, it is usual practice for their names to appear in alphabetical order. At other times there is a clear lead author who, in geography, is commonly named first in the list of authors. From the outset, it is important to be clear about your responsibilities as a co-author, whether in terms of drafting the article or responding promptly to a draft that another co-author has circulated. It is also important to be clear about the contributions of different authors. You will often need to document the nature and extent of your contribution as co-author, whether you are writing a PhD by publication, or applying for jobs, tenure or promotion.

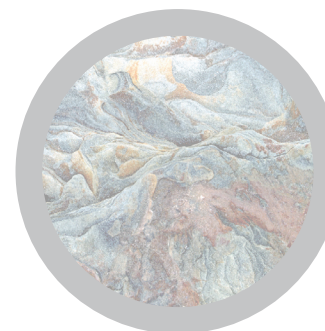
Other, non-author, contributors are usually included in a separate acknowledgements section at the end (in journal articles) or beginning (common in book formats) (though see 4.2). As well as the wider research team, assistants, participants and institutional settings, any funding should be acknowledged. The latter is increasingly mandated by research funders so failure to do this may harm your relationship with them. It is also good practice to acknowledge the contributions of referees and the editors when they have helped to improve your publication.

On submitting a manuscript for publication, you will invariably be asked to state that the work is your own, has not been previously published and is not under consideration elsewhere. Many academic monographs include material that has been revised or reproduced from other publications such as journal articles but the right to reproduce material must be secured from the publisher of the original journal article(s), and correctly acknowledged. You cannot usually re-publish chapters from a monograph as subsequent journal articles because journals require articles to be original and unpublished (this is something to consider in terms of your publication strategy – see 4.1).

One consequence of the pressure to publish high numbers of publications is finely slicing research contributions although it is – or should be – tempered by assessments of the quality, not just quantity, of those outputs. This can lead to research articles lacking a sufficiently original contribution; and also to the temptation to reproduce particular parts of texts, especially theoretical and methodological introductions. While it is recognised that some information might be repeated across published outputs, it is not acceptable to re-use direct excerpts without acknowledging their original publication elsewhere, just as when quoting from another person's work. To re-use your own text without acknowledgement is self-plagiarism and is a breach of authorship ethics in terms of both the original and subsequent publications.

It is not uncommon for the peer-review process to reveal manuscripts as dual submissions or wholly or in part (self-)plagiarised work. For example, articles submitted to more than one journal can easily be sent to the same reviewers by simple coincidence; or reviewers can draw attention to material unethically drawn from previous publications, sometimes their own. Indications are that the frequency of such breaches of authorship ethics is increasing. This has led publishers to use software such as iThenticate, from the same company as the student submission checker turnitin. The software is integrated with the online submission and review systems used by many journals and, while the quantitative assessment must be considered carefully on a case-by-case basis, this helps to identify instances of misconduct.

This does not mean researchers cannot disseminate or get feedback on publications through other channels before having a piece of writing accepted for publication. Working papers, for example, are an established way of doing this (although see 4.1 for a note of caution). However, best practice is to update these draft documents with information on where they have been submitted and, later, where they have been published. Some publishers' copyright agreements mean that this material will need to be removed on publication of the final version, and indeed authors may wish to do this following improvements to the final version of their article to avoid having multiple (and possibly weaker) versions available to readers.



5.2 Preparing an article for publication

Matt Jenkins

Once your work has been accepted for publication in a journal or as a contribution to a book it is passed on to a production team. There are a number of things you can do to make sure your manuscript is in the best condition possible for production. Failing to do so is unlikely to mean your manuscript goes unpublished (although certain problems can result in this), but will slow things down.

Formatting your manuscript

At a bare minimum, your manuscript needs to be clear and complete: headings should be obvious; notes or captions should be clearly separate from the text; figures or tables cited should be included with your submission; there must be a reference entry for every work cited.

You do not need to make your manuscript look exactly like the published style of the journal or book but you do need to format it according to the house style, which may influence the way you write your piece (e.g. the number of heading levels, format of tables and figures, whether figures can appear in colour). Style guides are normally available online or, if not, from the editorial office or publisher.

References

Referencing is a vital part of the academic endeavour. References should therefore be as complete and accurate as possible, and in the correct style (again, refer to style guides or previous examples, particularly when referencing less usual media).

Things to remember include: providing page numbers for chapters, providing full and accurate URLs and accessed dates for material from the web, not using a year of publication for unpublished work ('forthcoming' or 'in review'), adjusting the style from that of any publication to which a manuscript was previously submitted.

Works published online ahead of print should be cited using their Digital Object Identifying (DOI) number. The format follows the style for referencing material published in print, with the year of publication indicating when the work appeared online and the volume, issue and pagination details being replaced by the DOI. If the DOI is used correctly, it will help readers (and citation indices – see 6.1) find the right article.

Figures

Maps, graphs or images can be an integral part of your piece, so it is important that they are as clear as possible, and that they adhere to the author guidelines. Resolution (how well defined an image is), is measured in dots per inch (dpi). Figures with a low resolution can appear pixelated when printed so for most purposes figures should have a minimum resolution of 300dpi if they are tonal (e.g. most photographs and illustrations) or 600dpi if they are line art (e.g. most graphs and anything with text included within the image).

For most publishers, almost any electronic format is acceptable, although TIF and EPS are preferable. Graphs and tables produced in software such as Microsoft Excel are generally better submitted in their original format. It is best to avoid providing PDFs as they cannot be easily utilised by publishers. Best practice and style will also influence the details required, such as north arrows and scale bars on maps; labels, units and keys for graphs.

Copyright and permissions

Unless you have signed a contract with a publisher which moves the responsibility onto them, you will be responsible for ensuring that you do not infringe on the intellectual property rights of anyone else. This means securing permission to use almost any material originally produced by someone else.

The main exceptions are unmodified quotations of less than 300 words and the use of facts or ideas originally put forward by another author, as long as you are expressing them in your own way. In these cases, you merely need to fully acknowledge their origin through a citation.

As a rule of thumb, everything else will need copyright clearance. This applies to images; photos you have taken of items and artworks belonging to others; any text, however little, from poems and songs; most maps. All identifiable individuals in photos or interview extracts should be anonymised, unless they have given you explicit permission to publish their image/statements. This is separate from the permission to take part in your research, which is not sufficient for publication of their images. The exception is public figures performing public duties, although if you have not taken an image yourself you will still need permission from the photographer or owner.

5.3 Online supplementary material

Catherine Souch

In a rapidly changing technology environment, publishers provide the opportunity to include supplementary materials for most online journals. These can range from animations, to movies, sound or text files, 3D images, or programmes used in analysis. Increasingly, research grant funders are also starting to mandate that data sets are published alongside articles in data repositories or online data journals.

Supplementary materials provide great opportunities to enhance a standard article: to illustrate methods or results in new and creative ways, to include figures and data that otherwise would be excluded because of restrictions of length, and to advance the arguments and interpretations being made and/or to allow multiple levels of interpretation. That said, do not underestimate the amount of time it takes to create such materials, so before embarking on this route do ensure they really are enhancing the article and the key points you wish to make.

Journals will have specific restrictions on what can be included and the formats in which they need to be submitted, so consult the guidance and/or contact the editor before submission.

5.4 Multimedia in academic publications

Bradley L. Garrett

As multimedia becomes an increasingly important and ubiquitous part of our social lives, researchers are developing new ways to utilise audio, video, and photography in our publications. Multimedia recordings allow us to change the pace of time, undertake minute analysis of events and empower people to share their stories directly with audiences in and beyond academia. In my work with urban explorers, for instance, I was able to use video and photography to give viewers a close sense of wonder and trepidation.

Yet these technologies also create new sets of difficulties for researchers around issues of ethics, permissions and ownership of recorded materials. As the novelty of 'new' media and online sharing platforms wears thin, people are naturally becoming more guarded about being recorded. Researchers must consider carefully the ways recordings can be used and misused, especially in the context of human geography.

Despite possible drawbacks, publishers have also been quick to adapt to these fast-changing technologies and many major academic journals now accept multimedia material in both supplementary and standalone formats. Multimedia research can expand audiences through online platforms such as *YouTube* and *Vimeo* and at photo, film and arts festivals, which often complement academic articles well. Some journals have even begun accepting full 'video articles', a promising format still in its infancy. Using multimedia in our publications can greatly increase the potential for sharing results and ideas and add, or even demand, more social relevance from our work.

6 Getting read

6.1 Journal Impact Factors and bibliometrics

Jenny Neophytou

In a world of ever-increasing publication output, bibliometrics can help us identify and assess academic content. Usage, social networking statistics and other alternative metrics have received a lot of attention recently but citation metrics remain the most prevalent.

Citation metrics

Citation metrics are based on the assumption that when an article is cited by another academic, it has had an impact on their research. From this, metrics are produced at an article and journal level.

The 2012 Journal Impact Factor, for example, measures the average number of citations received in 2012 to articles published in the journal in the previous two years (2010 and 2011). This aggregation of data means it is not necessarily representative of individual articles within the journal: one may be very highly cited while others have not been cited at all.

At an article level, is it a fair assumption that citations are an indication of either impact or quality? Perhaps not – people cite for many reasons. Citations can also be manipulated, for example through the use of controversial words in an article title, self-citation, or deliberately aligning an article with a more highly-cited discipline. These tricks tend to distort academic research for the purpose of the metric. The fact remains, however, that citations are easily definable and measurable, and tell us something about an article's usage within the published academic community.

Factors to consider when comparing citation metrics:

Subject area. Different disciplines (and sub-disciplines) have different citation behaviours, and different coverage within the main citation databases (see overleaf). Metrics should not be compared across subjects unless these factors are accounted for.

Type of research. Reviews typically attract more citations. Case studies are often invaluable for teaching or practical work, but tend to be less well cited in academic research. This does not mean that they are poor quality or less valuable.

Time frame. Older articles will have higher citations – not because they are 'better', but because they have been around for longer. Metrics that fail to set a time frame can be unfairly weighted towards articles (or academics) that have been around for longer.

6.3 Reaching audiences through blogs and social media

Mark Graham

An increasing number of geographers are now using the internet to share and publish their work with and for a broad audience. Doing so not only helps to promote your work, but, more importantly, makes it available to people around the world that might not otherwise have access to it. There are three interlocking ways in which you might want to consider sharing your work online.

Enhance your profile

Ensure that you have a professional and publicly available profile page. At a minimum, the page should contain a description of your research interests, a list of your publications, links to any courses that you teach, and an email address or phone number. Most universities encourage (and provide support for) students and staff to develop an online presence. However, many faculty and student profile pages tend to be woefully out of date. It is important that your web presence accurately reflects your current interests and outputs (rather than the work a webmaster thought that you were doing three years ago), and it is fairly straightforward to create a quick and easy-to-update website using free tools.

Keep blogging

Blogging is a useful way of sharing ideas and having conversations outside of academic journals and conferences. Because of this, the potential audience for blogs (even blogs about niche topics) is enormous compared to audiences for most traditional academic outlets. Many academics therefore choose to use blogs as a platform for translating their research into more accessible language and ways of writing. Doing so allows for a communication of ideas between researchers and journalists, policy-makers, and members of the public that might not otherwise have been possible.

Furthermore, I've noticed with my own blogs (zerogeography.net and floatingsheep.org) that while the majority of views and comments come from the UK and the US, a significant number originate in the Global South. Blogging thus offers a way to communicate ideas to audiences that might not have the resources to access your work through traditional channels.

Journal articles, book chapters and conference papers are necessarily only selective slices of a much larger universe of knowledge, thought and research that we devote effort to. We spend a lot of time reading, researching, analysing, mapping, writing, and reflecting; and blogs offer a way to make more of this work public. Nobody expects perfectly polished writing or thoughts in a blog post, but it remains that there will be audiences for much of what you have to say. Blogs are most useful when written as frequent and short updates about your topic of interest. They also seem to be especially popular when they contain visual cues. Photos, charts, graphs, diagrams,

maps, and other visualisations can offer an accessible entry-point (and can hyperlink) to some of your more detailed work and publications. This kind of visual communication can also help to share your work beyond English-speaking audiences.

Social networks

Social media can be a highly effective way of broadly sharing your work. I hear many in academia complain about the uselessness of such platforms. But Twitter and Facebook can be about much more than just celebrity gossip and funny cat videos. Twitter, in particular, is an efficient way of communicating ideas and links (posts are limited to 140 characters) and staying aware of work that others in your field are doing. You can also take advantage of the social media tools being developed especially for academics, such as Academia.edu, ResearchGate and Mendeley, which help you promote your publications directly.

It is important to point out that most of these methods of outreach can also be monitored to track online impact. Simple tools exist to measure where, when, and how many people are downloading, reading, and sharing your work. The Internet is littered with shells of abandoned blogs and websites, and I suspect that many of their owners failed to adequately reach out to the right audiences. *Google* and other search engines will only do some of the work for you. In the same way that going to the right conferences and workshops can be useful for your professional development, tapping into the relevant social media circles is ultimately necessary if you want people interested in your topic to read your work.

Whether you like it or not, people will search for you online and form impressions about you based on your digital traces. It therefore makes sense to be keenly aware of the ways in which your work and your profile are presented and to actively shape your online presence into a form that you are comfortable with.

6.4 Open access and repositories

Madeleine Hatfield

The majority of those accessing scholarly journals do so via institutional subscriptions, with readership often confined to those who have this resource. In the UK and elsewhere, there have been recent increases in demands for research to be more widely accessible, particularly to potential user groups, and to have 'impact' outside of the so-called ivory tower of academia. The open access (OA) agenda has expanded in response to this, with calls that more research be made freely available.

In the UK, the main research councils (RCUK) have stated that all research funded by them should be made OA in one form or another; the Higher Education Funding Council for England have made a statement in support of all research being as widely available as possible; and the EU Commission have also expressed strong support for the OA agenda. This follows the lead of organisations such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the USA, Max Planck Society and the Wellcome Trust.

7 Concluding comments from the editors

Alison Blunt, Madeleine Hatfield and Catherine Souch

We hope this guide provides a useful introduction to the basics of academic publishing, including:

- Publishing your research in a wide range of forms.
- Thinking strategically about your publication profile and plans, particularly the audiences you wish to read your work.
- Understanding your opportunities and responsibilities as an author.
- Getting your published research read.

The academic publishing landscape is always evolving so as an academic or researcher it is important to keep engaging with current best practice, policies and opportunities. Formal publishing channels are being joined by many other ways of communicating research, particularly online, presenting exciting opportunities and challenges. Journals and books, however, continue to remain central to the exchange and assessment of academic research and knowledge. We hope this guide illustrates how scholars can engage with both formal and informal dissemination to best promote their research and build their academic careers.

This guide also demonstrates the wealth of knowledge and experience contained within the academic community and its publishing partners. Alongside individual expertise, there are many training and information events on research dissemination, hosted by higher education institutions and other partner organisations.

We would encourage you to get involved in shaping the future of academic publishing, as well as producing your own academic publications and supporting the dissemination of research through editing and peer-reviewing.

Guides for researchers available free online

www.rgs.org/Guides

Learn more about the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) scholarly publications

www.rgs.org/Journals



8 References

Autonomous Geographies Collective 2010 Beyond scholar activism: making strategic interventions inside and outside the neoliberal university *ACME: An International E-Journal of Critical Geographies* 9 245-74

Berg L 2004 Scaling knowledge: towards a critical geography of critical geographies *Geoforum* 35 553-8

Cahill C and Torre M 2007 Beyond the journal article: representations, audience, and the presentation of Participatory Action Research in **Kindon S, Pain R, and Kesby M** eds *Connecting people, participation and place: Participatory Action Research approaches and methods* Routledge, London 196-206

Gibson-Graham J K 2005 Surplus possibilities: postdevelopment and community economies *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 26 4-26

Harvey D 2006 Editorial: the geographies of critical geography *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 31 409-12

Ian Cook et al. 2008 Writing collaboration (<http://writingcollaboration.wordpress.com/1-introduction/1f-ian-cook-et-al/>) Accessed 18 September 2012

Kindon S, Pain R and Kesby M eds 2007 *Connecting people, participation and place: Participatory Action Research approaches and methods* Routledge, London

mrs kinpaisby 2008 Taking stock of participatory geographies: envisioning the communitarity *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 33 292-9

mrs c kinpaisby-hill 2011 Participatory praxis and social justice: towards more fully social geographies in **Del Casino V, Thomas M E, Cloke P and Panelli R** eds *A Companion to Social Geography* Blackwell, London 214-34

Pain R, Kesby M and Askins K 2011 Geographies of impact: power, participation and potential *Area* 43 183-8

Participatory Geographies Research Group 2012 Communifesto for Fuller Geographies (<http://pygyrg.org/pygyrg/communifesto-for-fuller-geographies/>) Accessed 18 September 2012

Townsend J G with Arrebillaga U, Bain J, Cancino S, Frenk S F, Pacheco S and Pérez E 1995 *Women's voices from the rainforest* Routledge, London

Ward K, Johnston R, Richards K, Gandy M, Taylor Z, Paasi A, Fox R, Serje M, Yeung H W-C, Barnes T, Blunt A and McDowell L 2009 The future of research monographs: an international set of perspectives *Progress in Human Geography* 33 1 101-26

Women and Geography Study Group 1997 *Feminist geographies: explorations in diversity and difference* Addison Wesley Longman, Harlow

9 Notes on contributors

Alison Blunt is Professor of Geography at Queen Mary, University of London, and former Editor of *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*.

Alastair Bonnett is Professor of Social Geography at Newcastle University, and former Editor of *Area*.

Louise J Bracken is Reader in Geography at Durham University, and former Co-Editor of *Area*.

Michael J Bradshaw is Professor of Human Geography at the University of Leicester, and Editor-in-Chief of *Geography Compass*.

Jo Bullard is Professor of Physical Geography at Loughborough University and Editor (Physical Geography) of the *RGS-IBG Book Series*.

Klaus Dodds is Professor of Geopolitics at Royal Holloway, University of London, and Editor of *The Geographical Journal*.

Bradley L Garrett is a Researcher at the School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford.

Mark Graham is Director of Research and a Research Fellow at the Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford.

Madeleine Hatfield is Managing Editor: Journals at the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers).

Helen Jarvis is a Reader in Social Geography at Newcastle University, and former Book Reviews Editor of *Area* and *The Geographical Journal*.

Matt Jenkins is a PhD candidate in the Department of Geography, Newcastle University, and former Senior Production Editor at Wiley-Blackwell.

mrs c kinpaisby-hill acknowledges a debt of gratitude to geographers Rachel Pain (Durham University), Caitlin Cahill (City University of New York), Sara Kindon (Victoria University of Wellington), Mike Kesby (University of St Andrews) and the many research participants with whom she has worked and written.

Jenny Neophytou is a Bibliometrics Analyst at Wiley-Blackwell.

Tom Pater is Journals Commissioning Editor, Geography, at Wiley-Blackwell.

Rhiannon Rees is Marketing Manager, Geography, Development and Urban Studies, at Wiley-Blackwell.

Catherine Souch is Head of Research and Higher Education at the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers).

Kevin Ward is Professor of Geography at the University of Manchester, Editor of *Area* and former Editor (Human Geography) of the *RGS-IBG Book Series*.

Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) Publications

Royal
Geographical
Society
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) is a leading world centre for geographers and geographical learning, dedicated to the development and promotion of knowledge together with its application to the challenges facing society and the environment.

Journals of the RGS-IBG



Area

Exploring innovative themes and supporting new researchers, Area is at the cutting edge of the discipline and has an annual prize for new researchers

Edited by **Kevin Ward**, University of Manchester, UK and **Paul Wood** (Co-editor, Physical and Environmental Geography), University of Loughborough, UK

The Geographical Journal

Focusing on public debates, policy-oriented agendas and notions of 'relevance' the long-running GJ has exceptionally wide international reach

Edited by **Klaus Dodds**, Royal Holloway, University of London, UK

Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers

One of the foremost international journals of geographical research, TIBG publishes landmark articles which advance the discipline

Edited by **Gavin Bridge**, Durham University, UK

www.rgs.org/journals

RGS-IBG Book Series



Publishing work of the highest international standing with an emphasis on distinctive new developments in human and physical geography

Series Editors:
Joanna Bullard and **Neil Coe**

www.rgsbookseries.com

Also of Interest

Geography Directions

Featuring topical news items linked to articles published in the RGS-IBG journals giving academic context to current news

www.geographydirections.com