

Getting There from Here in a Timely and Effective Manner: Editorial, Volume 8, Part 3

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'I love deadlines. I love the whooshing noise they make as they go by.'
(Adams, quoted in Simpson, 2003)

Introduction

Welcome to the eighteenth edition of *Exchanges: The Interdisciplinary Research Journal*, and our first regular issue of the year. If this is your first issue of *Exchanges*, then welcome, it is always lovely to have new readers. Conversely, if you are one of our growing number of regular readers, then you are equally welcome back with us once again!

Heeding Good Advice

Back in the final months of that inauspicious year, 2020, I co-hosted an 'ask me anything' session about *Exchanges*. More recently in March this year, I enjoyed the pleasure of chairing a panel discussion bringing together a number of speakers to talk about their own routes to success in publication. Both of these engagements formed part of my regular contribution to our much-respected local early career researcher training programme, *Accolade*, here at Warwick. Moreover, I also spoke very recently at a pair of conferences about *Exchanges'* activities, but specifically our contributor developmental mission (**Johnson, 2021a&b**). During all of these events I fielded a variety of interesting and occasionally unexpected questions, which were concerned perhaps less about the journal, but more about the whole art of publishing, especially from the perspective of early career authors who have not had the opportunity to publish as of yet. Consequently, alongside with the conversations I continue to enjoy with various authors as part of *The Exchanges Discourse* podcast series, means the inspiration for this issue's editorial arrived rather more fully formed than I usually expect. Hence, I think the time might be ripe to editorialise a little more this issue about some of the good practices we advocate to those authors considering submitting *Exchanges* and other journals for the first time. If you are an experienced author, you

may wish to move along to the articles making up this issue. Although, given I always love to chew over authors' publishing experiences with a podcast host's microphone in hand, I would welcome your thoughts as well for future episodes of the series.

To Begin at the Beginning

I will commence by considering what is perhaps an obvious first step, but surprisingly one which I hear time and again of neophyte authors failing to heed. When considering a potential journal for your publication, read the *about* pages and *author guidance* sections with extreme care. Here you will find clearly spelled out the journal's expectations from authors in terms of article scope, length and formatting. Ignore this guidance at your peril of being summarily rejected on submission for failing to follow their contributor rules! Alongside this scrutiny, take the time to at least browse through the other articles in recent issues and ask yourself carefully if your proposed work would resonate or compliment these. If so, all is good, but if it looks like your intended article would be a poor match at any point, it is likely time to consider another journal. Nevertheless, a brief clarification email to the editor if you are at all unsure may help alleviate any remaining uncertainty.

A related point here is to consider within your article both the audience you want to reach and what you want to say to them. Your ideal audience will commonly guide your choice of journal from the outset, but never be afraid of breaking out of the disciplinary tramlines and seeking to address your work to new readers. Undoubtedly academic research increasingly benefits from being exposed in different scholarly domains, and hence reaching out to a new audience can be a crucial step towards greater personal and professional recognition. Just take care to ensure you write in a clear style which can be engaged with by scholars from across your broader audience target: a common critique of authors during peer-review of manuscripts submitted to *Exchanges*. Again, glancing at articles in your journal of choice and even the author guidance will help shape your language and terminology appropriately.

In terms of knowing what you want to say, the best advice my own doctoral supervisor used to give me, repeatedly I must confess, was to stress or guide the reader to the most exciting and salient elements of my research in my writing. 'Celebrate these' he insisted, 'make them plain and the reader is more likely to continue with your work'. Today when writing for publication I always look back over it and ask myself 'Have I signposted the key elements clearly enough?' and 'Is this going to engage the reader's interest sufficiently to keep them reading?' Certainly, these are questions all authors need to keep asking themselves when writing for publication.

Talk is Cheap, but Good

Another element of advice which comes through loud and clear on a regular basis is that of informal communications with the journal's editor ahead of submission. It can be a valuable step in terms of evaluating if your work might be suitable for publication in any particular journal. Editors are, for the most part in my experience, human, approachable and keen to hear from scholars with an interest to publish with them. Hence, any trepidation you might have about approaching them can normally be disregarded. However, from personal experience, if you do approach an editor with questions about the suitability of your work for publication, remember they would often rather receive your abstract or outline thoughts on an article, rather than the full manuscripts. Their time is limited, and you will more often get a swift, and hopefully positive, response if you keep your communications with them brief, to the point and not too lengthy. Incidentally, don't submit your C.V. or résumé along with your question or abstract, it won't be read and generally adds little to this kind of interaction.

A related piece of advice concerning the quality and suitability of your work for publication, ahead of submission, is to speak with a trusted fellow scholar about your publication plans. A critical friend or two is worth more than their weight in gold in terms of pointing out errors or confusions in your writing, elements which may see it summarily rejected by journals before even reaching review. Some critical friends may even be willing to read through your work in depth and provide advice in terms of improvements to clarity, narrative flow or syntax. Here, a past supervisor or collaborator, for example, makes for an excellent choice. Naturally they may well ask for a return of the favour in reading and commenting on their own work at a future point, so be prepared to return the favour when the time comes. As an anglophone journal it perhaps saddens me to note some of the papers we receive from non-native English-speaking authors may have benefitted from having been read pre-submission by someone with a native comprehension of the language. Not all, by far, but certainly some, and worth considering if English is not your native language.

One work of caution about sharing your work, academia can be a competitive environment, and there have been sadly some instances of unscrupulous scholars making use of their early access to a pre-publication work to beat an unsuspecting author to the punch. Hence, take care to ensure your critical friends are indeed people you know to be ethical and trustworthy before sharing your work with them.

Writing is Rewriting

I could probably fill the rest of the journal or my next monograph discussing peer-review feedback, but I am sure our readership would rather I kept it brief. Hence, I will stress how feedback from peer-reviewers and editors is always something that's worth dealing with in a timely manner. Remember, try to perceive reviewer comments as being intended to provide impartial advice on how you can improve the clarity, impact and coherence of your writing, rather than an *ad hominem* attack on your professional ego! That is not to acknowledge the existence of the occasional caustic reviewer you are, regrettably, bound to encounter along the way. Just remember they are an outlier as most scholars are sincerely dedicated to helping improve the research communication in their field by acting as reviewers. Hence, even when feedback is somewhat extensive, do not be dismayed, but rather treat it as a rich opportunity to form a plan of action to revisit and revise your work to your personal benefit.

I would also advise not leaving feedback to fester for weeks untouched. Partly, because it will become a bigger and more dauntingly oppressive 'task' to deal with the longer you leave it. Moreover, it is worth tackling sooner rather than later, as journal editors will become frustrated to the point of dropping your manuscript from consideration if you can't revise your work to a reasonable timescale. While here at *Exchanges* we try to be sensitive to the myriad of challenges our authors face, at the same time, we are in the 'business' of trying to compile a journal. Hence, when an author shows signs of diminished engagement, our natural proclivity to move our attentions along to those more willing to work with us to progress their piece to publication.

Finally, it is important to remember publication is a journey and not a destination. By this I mean, to be rejected for publication by a journal is not a calamitous end of days for the piece. Rather, you should view it as only another milestone along the road towards its eventual appearance in the public eye. Study any comments from the journal's editors carefully, take on board any suggested improvements and then consider afresh which journal might be a suitable home for it. Many more specialised and niche journals have reputations for rejected papers which are, essentially, excellent and well-crafted, but simply fall beyond the title's disciplinary scope. Thankfully, with *Exchanges* and other multi and interdisciplinary titles, this is less likely to be the case, but do ask yourself for every declined paper the simple question: 'Was I trying to simply publish with the wrong title?'

Which brings us full circle, to our author once again reading another journal's submission criteria closely and considering making that efficacious approach to its editor. Anyway, enough advice from me for one issue, and while I shall continue to look forward to speaking with potential authors over the coming months about their own insights and experience with publication, it is now time to move on to the main body of this issue.

Corrections

Before we do, a slight apology to our readers. Periodically, despite our efforts, errors slip through to publication. For the article by Matteo Leta (2020), the author notified us of a number of minor concerns. As such, a brief errata to this issue has been appended to the article (**Exchanges, 2021a**), to which we wish to draw readers' attentions. Our thanks to Matteo for alerting us to this, and their patience while we arranged for the supplementary documentation.

Papers

Now it really is time to introduce this issue's articles. We begin with a musical theme, as Elloit Cardozo brings us a piece entitled *'The Sagacity of Words': Gandhi and 21st Century Hip Hop*. The article explores the parallels existing between Gandhi's ideas and Hip Hop culture. Beginning with establishing the cultural links present between these two areas, the author then moves to consider intersectionalities of knowledge perception and significance which can also be exposed here. The article concludes with a discussion of how Gandhi is referenced and represented within modern Hip Hop music (1).

Our second article is a lengthy discourse provided by Saswat S. Das and Ananya Roy Pratihar. Entitled *Beyond the Carceral #MeToo*, the paper begins by offering a radical critique of the #MeToo movement but continues on to explore its related societal impacts. Interpreting the movement as a form of 'nomadological flow' the authors consider how #MeToo related activism has darker potentialities and may in fact have malign impacts on the 'relational dynamics of the genders'. The article continues in this vein to explore the metamorphosis of activism linked to the #MeToo movement, exploring some of the specific ways in which it may enable less socially desirable consequences. The paper concludes with an examination of the movement within a 'schizo-aesthetic' framing of body and desire (13).

Critical Reflections

Moving to our selection of critical reflective pieces, M Onat Topal and colleagues share with us a piece which excitingly was produced in response to our call for works relating to artificial intelligence. In their timely paper, *Use of Artificial Intelligence in Legal Technologies*, Topal and colleagues consider the functionality and potential impacts of artificial and machine intelligences in the legal domain. Beginning with some valuable clarification and explanation of the field itself, they continue by exploring the pertinence and relevance of current discourse in this field. The paper continues by scrutinising the current applications of these A.I. technologies in this realm, before continuing to review how they can and will likely impact on future legal decision-making processes and practice (35).

Continuing our technological theme Sven Van Kerckhoven and Sean O'Dubhghaill provide us with a timely paper entitled *Gamestop: How online 'degenerates' took on hedge funds*. As highlighted in the news earlier this year, this piece explores the novel efforts of amateur investors to take on hedge funds' algorithmic domination of the financial markets. The authors highlight how the actions of the community of Reddit amateurs' investors raise new questions of regulation and investment within high finance. Moreover, the article concludes by providing some practical guidance to individuals who, as a result of the Redditors actions, might now be tempted to test the waters of the stock market for themselves (45).

Finally, Jaime A. Teixeira da Silva and Quan-Hoang Vuong tackle a topic close to my own heart by postulating the question: *Do Legitimate Publishers Benefit or Profit from Error, Misconduct or Fraud?* In part resonating with an article in a previous issue of *Exchanges*, this paper argues that journal publishers benefit financially and in terms of metricised esteem capital from the publication of articles which are later retracted. Consequently, the authors stress publishers have a moral responsibility to diminish their claims of 'peer-review excellence' in promoting their titles as author publication destinations. It closes with calling for academic scholars to be more proactive within the 'publishing ecosystem', in terms of drawing attention to errors in the literature and the organs within which they are published (55).

Open Calls for Paper:

If all these papers have whetted your appetite to consider contributing to *Exchanges* then you will be pleased to know that the journal welcomes submissions throughout the year on any subject, with no deadline. Articles which are accepted for publication will be subsequently published in the next available issue of the journal.

Peer-Reviewed Articles

We are especially happy to consider research focussed or review articles which will undergo peer-review addressing any topic, ideally incorporating some element of interdisciplinary methods, methodology or thinking. Alternatively, we are delighted to receive pieces which are written to address their topic to a wide and general academic audience, written from within a disciplinary domain.

Critical Reflections & Conversations

We especially welcome submissions of interviews with key scholars or critical reflections on important scholarly events, conferences or crucial new texts, which undergo internal (editorial review) scrutiny only. Along with their briefer wordcounts this permits the submission of timely pieces which usually see a more rapid progression to publication. As can be seen in this issue, they are a very popular type of article for authors old and new, and often have particularly high readership, due to their innate wider accessibility.

Deadlines

There are no deadlines for these submissions, which may be on any topic, theme or discipline of prospective interest to our readership (see below for more guidance). Note that the periodic thematic calls for special issues or themed sections of the journal produced normally will include a deadline within their outline information. A new themed call for contributions will appear in the Autumn 2021 issue of the journal.

Advice for Prospective Authors

As an interdisciplinary journal with a wide scholarly readership, authors should seek to write their manuscripts to be suitable for a general academic audience. Wherever possible, consideration should be given to unpack, delineate and expand on any potentially 'disciplinary niche' language, terms or acronyms used. Ideally, authors should seek to incorporate some element of interdisciplinary thinking or perspectives, or outline the broader scholarly relevance of their work, within the manuscript.

Exchanges has an expressly multidisciplinary, global and largely academic readership, and as such, have strong interests in work which encompasses or straddles disciplinary boundaries. Manuscripts providing an introduction, overview or useful entry point to key disciplinary trends, discovery and discourse are often among the most frequently accessed publications in the journal. Therefore, prospective authors are strongly encouraged to consider tailoring their manuscripts, narrative, thought and analysis in a mode which addresses this broad audience. For interviews and critical reflections, authors are especially advised to highlight the importance of disciplinary discourse or interviewees' scholarly contributions to the global academy, society and the public at large.

The Editor-in-Chief welcomes approaches from authors via email, or video-call, to discuss prospective submissions. However, abstract submission or editorial discussions ahead of a submission are not a requirement, and authors are welcome to formally submit their full manuscript without prior communication. Wherever possible, authors should include a note to editor indicating the kind of article they are submitting.

As *Exchanges* has a mission to support the development and dissemination of research by early career and post-graduate researchers, we are especially pleased to receive manuscripts from emerging scholars or first-time authors. All submitted manuscripts will undergo editorial review, with those seeking publication as research articles additionally undergoing formal peer-review by external assessors. Editorial decisions on manuscript acceptance are final, although unsuccessful authors are normally encouraged to consider revising their work for reconsideration at a later date.

More information on article formats, wordcounts and other submission requirements are detailed in our author guidelines ([Exchanges, 2020](#)). All manuscript submissions must be made by their lead author via our online submission portal. *Exchanges* is a diamond open access (**Fuchs & Sandoval, 2013**), scholar-led journal, meaning there are no author fees or reader subscription charges. Authors retain copyright over their work but grant the journal first publication rights as a submission requirement.

Forthcoming Issues

The next issue of *Exchanges*, currently expected to see publication during late summer, will be our next special issue (*vol 8.4*). This edition of the journal will focus on work by, about and inspired by the history and student experience relating to the arts faculty at the University of Warwick. It has been developed in collaboration with the *Then and Now: Arts at Warwick* research project and exhibition (**Warwick, 2020**), and I am pleased to report preparations are well advanced on bringing the submitted manuscripts to publication.

Beyond this, we are looking towards our regular Autumn issue (*vol 9.1*) and our next anticipated special issue, for the time being, focusing on papers relating to cultural representations of nerds. If you had the opportunity to attend the workshop in mid-March (**Exchanges, 2021b**) you will have enjoyed the opportunity to preview many of a themes and discussions which will comprise this issue. If not, do not worry, as the manuscripts for this issue are approaching their submission deadline, and we hope to bring you this next issue towards the end of this year or the beginning of 2022. We will also be beginning work on our latest commissioned special issue relating to theme's concerning the anthropocene, for which we will be hosting a tie in publishing workshop. More about that project will be appearing on the *Exchanges* blog in the near future.

Consequently, as you can see 2021 continues to be *Exchanges* busiest year to date, with plenty of interesting and varied discourse coming your way for at least the next 18 months or so.

Acknowledgements

As always, my thanks to our authors and reviewers for their vital intellectual labour contributions towards creating this issue. Without you, producing a quality-assured, peer-reviewed, scholar-led publication would quite simply not be possible. Thanks also to our reader community, who play a key role in developing the debates and insights raised in each issue. I hope you find this issue as informative as usual.

My continued thanks to the members of our Editorial Board community, especially in recent months for their insights on matters of publishing policy and ethics. Naturally, also a big thanks to them for their operational editorial labour on behalf of the journal and ongoing interaction with authors and reviewers alike. A special tip of the editorial hat here for Monash University based longstanding Board member **Dr Roy Rozario**, who has very recently passed his doctoral examinations.

My gratitude as well to **Rob Talbot** and **Dr Julie Robinson** at the Warwick University Library, and **Fiona O'Brien** of the *Reinvention* journal for their continued insights, technical support and conversations. My thanks as well to the IAS' **Dr John Burden** for his role as an invaluable source of positivity and moral support, along with effective line management and pragmatism too.

Finally, my grateful thanks to our publisher, the [Institute of Advanced Study](#) at the University of Warwick for their ongoing financial and strategic backing for *Exchanges* and our related activities.

Continuing the Conversation

Exchanges has a range of routes for keeping abreast of our latest news, developments and calls for papers. In-between issues you may wish to listen to our growing range of podcasts or read our regular blog posts, to continue the interdisciplinary exchange of experience underlying our operations. Please do contribute to the conversation whenever and wherever you can, as we always value hearing the thoughts of our author and readership communities.

Editorial Blog: blogs.warwick.ac.uk/exchangesias/

Linked.In: www.linkedin.com/groups/12162247/

Twitter: [@ExchangesIAS](https://twitter.com/ExchangesIAS)

As Editor-in-Chief I am also pleased to discuss potential publications, collaborative opportunities or invites to talk further about *Exchanges* and our activities. Contact me via the email or via the social media platforms if you would like to arrange a video-consultation.

The Exchanges Discourse

Since our last issue, three more episodes of the companion podcast series to the journal, *The Exchanges Discourse*, have been published. Two episodes are conversations with past authors (**Exchanges, 2021c & d**), and the other a lengthier discussion with a number of our associate editors about their experiences working on the journal (**Exchanges 2021e**). We heartily encourage all readers of the journal, and especially first time authors, to seek out these episodes – available on all major podcast platforms, and specifically the Anchor.fm site.

Podcast: anchor.fm/exchangesias

Gareth has been the Editor-in-Chief of *Exchanges* for three years. Along with holding a doctorate in cultural academic publishing practices (Nottingham Trent), he also possesses various other degrees in biomedical technology (Sheffield Hallam), information management (Sheffield) and research practice (NTU). His varied career includes extensive experience in academic libraries, project management and applied research roles. Currently, he is also the Chief Operating Officer of the Mercian Collaboration academic library consortium, and a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. His professional and research interests focus on power-relationships within and evolution of scholarly academic publication practice, viewed from within social theory and political economic frameworks. He is an outspoken proponent for greater academic agency through scholar-led publishing, and an expert in distributed team management and effective communication practices. He is also the creator and host of a number of podcasts, including *The Exchanges Discourse*.



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