

Editorial

Because this is my first issue to edit of the *Proceedings of the Oklahoma Academy of Science*, I want to tell you something about my approach to editing the journal and hope it will help you understand our process a little better. In my view the editor has two traditional roles: (1) give readers the best papers that are easily readable, allowing the reader to fulfill his or her information goal; and (2) edit the papers so that the author looks as good as possible. Editors fulfill these two roles by walking a tightrope between the author and the reader.

While some editors maintain that they are the guardians of the language and consequently apply the rules of grammar, spelling, and style and usage with an iron fist, others recognize that access to the information by the reader should take first precedence. Sometimes an author is convinced that no one can improve on the prose in a manuscript. Editors then have to be a bit authoritative, reminding the author that readers are out there and if it wasn't for readers, there would be no outlet for the research the author is doing. Nothing kills a journal faster than to have readers quit reading it. In a traditional journal, the first telltale sign is no feedback from the readers—no, in most cases, letters to the editor, no rebuttals, just silence.

I want to establish the dialog that makes for good communication and good science. Do not hesitate to contact me anytime if you have a comment about something you have seen in the *Proceedings*.

Another job the editor has is to solicit papers for the publication. If you have been a longtime reader of these pages, you will have noted that the number of papers, notes, reviews, etc. increases and decreases more or less randomly. This issue contains about the same number of items as did the previous issue. So, my concern is not really with numbers. I do have a concern, however. I am concerned by the lack of variety of papers. When I inherited the job from Franklin Leach, he had a paper in linguistic geography in the files that had lain there for over a year, waiting for the authors to revise. Because I know both authors and because I was glad to find a paper in an area that has not appeared before, I contacted the one author who is still at OSU to encourage him to revise. Well, he/they did and you see it in this issue.

We have a wide range of papers within a few areas. One of my goals for the next issue is to get more papers from more areas. I have other goals as well:

1. Encourage graduate students in areas not normally represented to submit papers
2. Encourage members of both the Junior Academy and the Collegiate Academy to submit papers.

Those attending the Fall Technical meeting probably remember me in the halls soliciting papers from anyone I met who was on the program. If the editor of a mass circulation magazine does not have enough material, she or he can solicit and pay for additional submissions. If the editor of an archival research journal does not receive many submissions, she or he can do little other than pleading (or sometimes begging). So, please consider sending me a paper for the next issue of the *Proceedings of the Oklahoma Academy of Science*.

When you do submit your paper, I will promptly acknowledge it and enter it into the process. In your letter of acknowledgment, you will receive a chart showing how your paper will be reviewed and edited, so you can keep track of how it is progressing. Two (or sometimes three) competent peers of yours will be the first reviewers. While that is happening, my Editorial Assistant (Carrie McDowell) will do the first edit. You will receive both the edited version and reviewers' comments—we hope within four weeks. You can then consider all comments and suggestions and produce another version.

When I get this version, I will pass it to our Copy Editor (Dr. Otis Dermer, a former Editor of the *Proceedings*) for his masterful review. He will mark it for production and comment on the writing and the science. I then return it to you for your final review and revision. This time, you send back to me (1) the *marked copy*, (2) a paper copy of your revision, done with a word processor so that italics, special symbols, etc., show, (3) a 3.5 in floppy disk that contains (*only*) the digital version of your revision (including tables), with the disk file in TEXT (or ASCII) format (just do a "Save as" and follow the dialogue boxes), and (4) the originals of figures, prints, 'art work', etc. I then send it to our Production Editor (Dr. Robert Freeman) who typesets it and produces galley proofs. We will return the proofs to you for your final review, which is for the purpose of *catching errors (ours and yours) and making corrections, not for significant changes in the paper*. Time is now critical; you will not have much time to review, mark, and return the proofs to me.

After that, wait for your copies of the *Proceedings*.

Of course, we do more at our end, but that is a general outline of what you will do. The really hard work is getting the research done and that manuscript written and edited. We know that authors cannot catch everything, so don't develop writer's block over the manuscript. I expect to have an article in the Newsletter soon about writing a paper, so watch for it to get some hints on making your paper better.

Meanwhile, please share your research and findings with your colleagues in Oklahoma and beyond. The *Proceedings* has a fine tradition and reputation that is well deserved. All of us want your paper to help continue that tradition, and we want our readers to find the information they need for their work.

Tom Warren