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Unreviewed Mixed Matters Article:

Top 11 ways to annoy your Reviewers

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As an author of an article, there are few things more annoying than comments from those anonymous reviewers. They call your creation ugly, and they force you to waste time rewriting just because they aren't smart enough to understand what you meant, instead of what you said.

The good news is that there are simple ways you can return the favour and annoy the reviewers. So just try a few of these little gems and enjoy the responses you get!

> Sure the original is made of flint, and you are using plastic, but that is perfectly reasonable, and modern tools are pretty much the same as ancient ones, right?

Competitive Sentence Length

Is your personal best 150 words in a single sentence? 200? You can do better! We believe in you; just throw in more commas (and some parenthetical thoughts) - (extra points for, like, entirely unnecessary, clauses in brackets), with bonus points if you can do a single-sentence paragraph that takes up more than one page. Periods are for URLs, not for use in paragraphs!

Leave Out Details

Keep them guessing! Leave out a few measurements and a couple of experimental steps. You know all of these facts - if they want to learn, they can ask! Force those trying to repeat your experiments to guess what you did. It will also make it easier to refute their conclusions later when they don't do it right!

Mix and Match Words

Just because you called it coal the first time doesn't mean you can't call it charcoal the next time, right? The fact that those two materials aren't the same thing just makes it more fun! Change the word's spelling from time to time if you can't do something more creative. Shift-F7 is your best friend! (Of course this is for Microsoft Word, why are you even bothering to work on a Mac?) Can't think of the right word? Just use a handy thesaurus (preferably a very old one) and choose any word from that list, preferably several different ones. They all mean the same thing, right?

Word Counts for the Win

Pascal was right; it takes too long to write succinctly. Just throw extra words in everywhere. Bonus points for writing the same thing in two different back-to-back sentences. Just because your university required papers to be over 5000 words is no reason to take the time to edit it down to just the critical parts before submitting the article to a journal.

Second Languages

The good news is that the EXARC Journal is published in English, one of the most ridiculously idiosyncratic languages that exist. Even native English speakers can't tell you all of the grammar rules. If English is not your native language, you can annoy many reviewers merely by not asking a native English speaker to read over your paper before submitting it. That will ensure problems with matching pluralization and word order if nothing else, which is sure to make reviewers out rip their hairs. If you are a native English speaker, do make sure you use several turns of phrase known only in your home region - 'Nuff said'? This can particularly

apply to spelling, so be sure to combine both American and UK versions, especially when repeating a word already used many times in your text. No matter what the subject is, think about including untranslated words in your native language just to further complicate matters. If you are not a native English speaker, include an invented translator and/or English editor in the acknowledgements.

Carefree Substitutions

Sure the original is made of flint, and you are using plastic, but that is perfectly reasonable, and modern tools are pretty much the same as ancient ones, right? Just by leaving out the explanation of what you changed and why you changed it you are sure to raise the reviewers' blood pressure. Additional points for using high-tech lab equipment to 'simulate' the much simpler historic methods and tools.

Jangling Jargon

You are an expert in your specialized area, make sure to prove it by using those terms that clearly anyone without those same years of study is unlikely to understand. At least not without referring to a dictionary. This can be especially impressive if you use words, or better yet phrases, in a completely different language than either your own, or the language used for publication - without offering translations of course.

Mapping the World

It is important to stress to your readers just how isolated they really are. The location of your archaeological fieldwork or the village where you undertook your experimental tests has been occupied for thousands of years, everyone should know where it is. The internet is universal, so there is no need to mention obsolete country boundaries, can't people just use Google Maps?

Citation Obscura

Do make sure that you only refer to the classic works in your area, the older the publication, the better. It is especially important to stay with theoretical treatments over practical descriptions. If you are forced to cite such recent works as journal articles or conference papers, do make sure these are only published in less well-known languages, like for example *Inuktitut*. The more complicated the language is the better. Especially avoid any attempt to be influenced by those outside the formal academic community, and never refer to any materials published on the internet.

It Was Good Enough for the Professor

You got a high grade when you submitted that paper as part of your university course, why would you bother to alter anything to suit the average journal reader? Just leave in any bias that your instructor had and avoid any contrary views in your source materials. Remember that an especially poor experiment can be hidden behind a detailed repetition of archaeological research, especially if buried in quotes. Randomly interjected footnotes can hide a multitude of weaknesses!

By following just a few of these little hints, you can be sure to get back at the reviewers for all of their minor nitpicky complaints!

The topic of publishing experiments has been tackled in the journal several times. Please see also:

https://exarc.net/eurorea-2-2005/ea/readers-sake-publishing-experimental-archaeology

https://exarc.net/sites/default/files/exarc-eurorea_2_2005-how_to_publish_experimental_archaeology.pdf

Presenting your paper is a topic for another day!

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