



## ***Editor's Note:***

### **Peer Reviewing the Peer Review Process**

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**Abstract:** To meet the highest standards of scholarship, liberatory editorial practices need to transition from static peer reviewed to dynamic peer reviewing models that de-couple publication from defective pre-publication peer review requirements, and engage in alternative peer review practices that remain open to all those wishing to review a manuscript at any time in the post-publication phase—encouraging expanded and deepening exchanges among scholars, authors and readers alike. They need to invite critical thinking about prevailing and dominant paradigms and inflame creative spirits to forge new scholarly horizons and intellectual landscapes. And they need to embrace the subaltern voices in the academia and beyond, voices of those who have been deprived of cultivating their sociological imaginations through formal scholarly publishing avenues. *Human Architecture* warmly invites contributors and readers to peer review the innovative scholarships of learning published herein and to openly share their critical and constructive insights with one another in the future chronicles of this journal.

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*“The problem with peer review is that we have good evidence on its deficiencies and poor evidence on its benefits. We know that it is expensive, slow, prone to bias, open to abuse, possibly anti-innovatory, and unable to detect fraud. We also know that the published papers that emerge from the process are often grossly deficient. Research presented at the conference [Third International Congress on Peer Review held in Prague in 1997] showed, for instance, that reports of randomised controlled trials often fail to mention previous trials and do not place their work in the context of what has gone before; that routine reviews rarely have adequate methods and are hugely biased by specialty and geography in the references they quote...; and that systematic reviews rarely define a primary outcome measure.”<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Smith. “Peer Review: Reform or Revolution? Time to Open Up the Black Box of Peer Review.” *British Medical Journal*, 1997, 315:759-760. (<http://www.junkscience.com/news/bmjpeer.html>)

The peer review process is an essential and vital mechanism in scholarly production and distribution of knowledge through which a given manuscript (prospective article, book, etc.) is subjected to the consideration, evaluation, and vetting of peers (“referees”) who specialize in a given field. The objective and hope are that in the course of the review process a general consensus may appear (or not) regarding the value of the topic, substance, methods, style, coherence, relevance, and significance of a particular research/report in the context of others preceding it.

The particular model most commonly associated with the scholarly peer review process is one using which the publication of a manuscript is made conditional upon the evaluation by peers who are selected by

a journal or press editor to serve as referees. Such an evaluation is often a blinded process whereby the referees (single-blind) or both the author and the referees (double-blind) remain anonymous.

More specifically, the editor of a journal, for instance, upon receiving a manuscript from the author(s), makes an initial assessment regarding the fit of the manuscript to the journal's theme and its overall quality for being deemed worthwhile to be subjected to the review process. If the editor accepts a manuscript for review, he or she then selects two or more from a pool of qualified, available, and interested experts in the field, to referee the manuscript. Upon receipt of the review statements and evaluations from the referees, the editor then determines the overall value of the manuscript for publication, the decision usually taking the forms of accepting, rejecting, or conditionally accepting the manuscript subject to certain recommended revisions.

A significant requirement of any serious scholarship, however, also remains that of subjecting all things, ideas, processes, and mechanism to critical reassessment—and not accepting them in an a priori fashion as gospels of truth. Especially in social scientific and sociological inquiry, it is essential to maintain a critical attitude toward reified social constructions, which in this case should especially include the peer review process. This is especially important, since the peer review process is itself the mechanism using which the scholarly nature of knowledge production process is itself determined.

Problematizing what we take for granted as established norms and practices in the academic everyday life, and awareness of the subjective considerations that shape “objective” decisions made by academic social actors, are important scholarly practices that in fact should directly arise from sound sociological applications of phenomenological and symbolic interactionist theories in

sociology. Rational choice decision-making and social exchange considerations, also highly central to the issues explored in sociological theory, seem to be of particular relevance to the peer review decision-making process. Macrosociological theories of (neo)functionalism, conflict theory, and especially postmodern discourses in sociology and social theory should make us highly sensitive to and aware of, for instance, the manifest and latent functions that the peer review process in scholarly publishing serve, how the process can be subjected to socio-economic, political, and ideological factors and interests, and how such taken-for-granted mechanisms in scholarly knowledge production can and must be problematized and continually *deconstructed* in the hopes of designing and building ever more functional, fair, and open procedural frameworks for determining scholarship standards and contributions. Critical sociology, in other words, cannot remain scholarly, let alone even “sociological,” while maintaining a reificatory attitude toward the mechanisms of academic and scholarly knowledge production itself. It is in fact particularly incumbent upon scholars, especially sociologists, and in particular those of applied sociological persuasion—and upon the universities of which they are members—to point out, address, and take into consideration, the socially constructed nature of the peer review process and how knowledge and power are intricately linked with one another.

There are many ways to fulfill the peer review process as an important requirement for advancing scholarship. In other words, the first consideration in problematizing the prevailing peer review procedures is to make an important distinction between *substance* and *form*. While the significance and necessity of peer review process as a mechanism of scholarly knowledge production is maintained as a *substantive* prerequisite, in other words, there should be no reason why

one cannot subject particular *forms and mechanisms* of peer review process to critical sociological and critical scrutiny.

In this regard, two important questions can be raised in regard to the prevailing mechanisms of peer review process as broadly delineated above.

### **IS BLIND PEER REVIEW SCHOLARLY, OR EVEN BLIND?**

In the prevailing practices, the editor requests a blinded manuscript from the author from which, as far as possible, any identifying information such as name and affiliation of the author is omitted. Omitted almost always are, as well, the citations that the author may have made to his or her own prior works, published or not, as well as the list of such works in the bibliography. In other words, the assumption of the double-blind<sup>1</sup> peer review process is that the author and the referee remain anonymous so as to arrive at an "objective" and "unbiased" opinion about the nature of the manuscript.

One sociological objection to the assumptions informing the blinded procedure may be that the practice of objectivity does not, and should not, require one to evaluate the findings of an author *outside* the context of his or own biography as a whole, and his intellectual biography in particular. The blind peer review process, perhaps having been unproblematically crossed over and applied from the natural sciences to social scientific scholarship, in other words, carries with it significant assumptions about what constitutes "objectivity" and how it

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<sup>1</sup> For the sake of this consideration, I will assume double-blind peer review as the main format, where both the referee and the author remain anonymous to one another. Regarding the single-blind format, where the referee remains anonymous but the author known to the referee the first point of the argument advanced herein applies partially, but under the prevailing peer review conditions, the overall result remains the same. I will elaborate on this matter further in this editor's note.

can be achieved in especially social scientific scholarship. A scholarly approach to peer reviewing the peer review process should necessarily question this assumption and problematize the taken-for-granted presumption that the mechanism of scholarship determination in natural sciences is or should be the same in social sciences and the humanities.

One may turn the tables around, in fact, and question whether not just in social sciences and the humanities, but even in natural sciences, the peer review mechanism of achieving objectivity via blinding has scholarly merits. Even the most abstract and "natural" of social scientific research undertakings are still, after all, carried out by people who are situated in concrete socio-economic, political, ideological, and institutional contexts. Can objectivity be arrived at through abstracting and blinding from the concrete biographical and social context of the author's research? Would it be a sounder and more effective strategy for seeking objectivity through an opposite procedure—namely, that of actively seeking knowledge of and awareness about the social and institutional rootedness and background of the scholar's intellectual activity and project, on one hand, and the context of his or her intellectual biography, on the other?

Karl Mannheim explored this issue in his *Ideology and Utopia*<sup>2</sup> in a way that may point to alternative ways in which the requirement of objectivity may be fulfilled. For him, the question is not about avoiding biases but about the opposite, of seeking increased awareness of them. The evaluative requirement, in other words, is met not by dismissing the possibility of existence of biases, but by becoming more and more aware of them. This, moreover, must hold true not only for the investigator himself or herself, but also for those seeking to review

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<sup>2</sup> Mannheim, Karl. *Ideology and Utopia*. (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, Harvart Books, 1936).

and evaluate his or her knowledge productions. If the assumption giving rise to the need for peer reviewing in order to partake in scholarly activity is that scholars can be biased, this naturally must hold true for both the author *and* the referees. The referee is also a scholar who is additionally empowered to judge another's work. The key to a sound peer reviewing process, therefore, seems to be not in the assumption of the a priori correctness and absolute truthfulness of one or another scholar's judgment, but in the *relational* process of their mutual engagement and discussion. It is the *exchange of views* regarding the merits of a manuscript, in other words, that defines and assures the scholarly nature of the review process, *not the dicta or claims* one-sidedly made by one or another party in the dialogue. In almost all prevailing peer reviewing procedures, however, such open and mutual exchange among scholars (between the author, referee, and even the editor) is lacking, the decision often being made prior to the author's having had a chance to even read, let alone respond to a referee's comments. Some editors do not even find it necessary to even explain why, in their judgment, one or another referee's review is a sound basis for their decisions—decisions that are ultimately the editors' to make. These do not seem to be scholarly ways or mechanisms for advancing scholarship.

The transition from ideological analysis to the sociology of knowledge, in fact, is achieved, according to Karl Mannheim, when social actors begin to notice that not only their adversaries' views and positions, but even their own ideas and viewpoints are ideological, biased, and socially rooted. In a peer review procedural context, this should mean that the editor and the referees should recognize that not only the author's but even their own judgments may be biased, ideological, and thereby fairly in need of justification and reciprocal peer reviewing. The requirement of objectivity would then be achieved not by blinding the peer

review process and making it one-sided and a back-stage activity, but by making it open and, at the very least, and even for at least one cycle—and there is simply no reason why this can't be practiced even under prevailing conditions—a reciprocal process whereby the final decision regarding the value of a manuscript is postponed until the author has had a chance to read and respond to the referee's comments.

In single-blind peer review procedures, where the referee remains anonymous, but the author is known to the referee, one may find at least some degree of required information being made available to the referee to put the author's work in the context of his or her life, intellectual biography, and social context. However, the single-blind procedure still often falls short of the requirement of scholarly exchange noted above, i.e., the author is not, as a matter of sound and required procedure, able to read and respond to the referee's comments before being judged worthy of publication. Appeal procedures recognized in some editorial practices still often fall short of recognizing the scholarly exchange of views on referee's opinions as a required *rule* for scholarship, rather than an exceptional circumstance relegated to grievance procedures.

Given the apparent dysfunctional nature of the prevailing peer review procedures, then, one can also ask—as the sociologist Robert Merton did in more general terms—*For who and what purpose is the prevailing peer review procedures functioning?* To this point I shall return later in this essay.

The peer review process can become a functional mechanism in the service of scholarship and objective evaluation, when both the author and the referee know one another, and can openly subject the review process to critical and mutual interactions and exchange of opinions. The blindness of the process, however, often provides the referee the convenience of making random and ungrounded claims and judgments that are not reciprocally subjectable to peer re-

view and evaluation in turn. Open peer review procedures seem to be much less subjectable to unwarranted and unbridled bias and misjudgment by referees or editors, and more conducive to sound and fair peer review evaluations.<sup>1</sup>

However, even if we set aside the above considerations regarding the peer review process, there is a curious fact about the prevailing blind peer review procedures that should draw the attention of any lay, if not scholarly, observer. *There is not really such a thing as a blind peer review process, single or double, when considered as a whole—as far as the ultimate decision is concerned.*

The blinding mechanism has been devised presumably to avoid a situation where actors involved in the evaluation process know one another so as to precipitate an “objective” assessment of a given manuscript’s worth. However, the blinding mechanism does not do away with this presumed requirement; it only shifts the subjective bias factor to another actor in the process, i.e., to the editor. The editor plays a significant role in the peer review process. The editor determines *first* the fit of a contribution to the journal and, *second*, its initial quality and review worthiness. *Third*, he or she plays a crucial and determining role in seeking and selecting referees and in providing them with a framework for undertaking their review. *Fourth*, and importantly, it is the editor who determines the quality and worth of the evaluative statements received from the referees. And, *fifth*, it is the editor who is the final arbiter in whether or not a contribution is published.

It is the editor who significantly shapes and influences the nature of the peer review process, in other words, and ultimately makes a decision regarding the publishability of a manuscript—an editor who, by the way, knows the author and is known by the latter, and as a scholar himself or herself, *does* have a significant impact on the outcome of a peer review process due to all the above mechanisms, but especially in terms

of whom he or she selects to referee the manuscript. We are not even considering here factors such as how the editor determines who is or not an expert, whether or

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<sup>1</sup> For a very lively and frank, and illuminating, discussion among various editors regarding the peer review process see the World Association of Medical Editors website (at <http://www.wame.org/blinded.htm>). In this regard, the words of Professor Richard Rothenberg, MD, Editor-in-Chief of *Annals of Epidemiology*, is worth quoting at-length:

“I became concerned about reviewer bias, so I stripped names of authors and institutions from the version of the manuscript I sent to reviewers. Then I became concerned that the Associate Editors would be subject to the same bias, so removed the names of authors, their institutions, reviewers, and their institutions from the versions that went to the Associate Editors for adjudication. Then the Associate Editors became concerned about my bias, so we decided to ask authors to submit manuscripts anonymously, using an e-mail alias (hotmail.com was pleased). We then decided to publish worthy articles anonymously as well (Medline was not pleased) in order to prevent reader bias in assessing the results. To preserve total anonymity we removed our names from the masthead and decided to remove the names of the Editorial Board members as well (they didn't notice) ...

“You get the idea. This is not as fantastical as it sounds (cf. the path many IRBs have taken). If the purpose of the exercise is to eliminate bias, I would suggest that we are holding back the sea with a pitchfork. In its simplest nonstatistical meaning, bias refers to a systematic preference for something. We are all guilty, and if we weren't, it would be very hard to deal with the world. We bring a set of preferences, a template for examination, to the party, and I would suggest that that is as it should be. The real problem is when people fail to recognize bias in themselves (as Dr. Callahan has pointed out). I think all of us become good at spotting the irrational, pigheaded, unremediable commitment to an idea—we use our own biases to filter those of others. I say: don't pursue [the] futile exercise of eliminating bias, but embrace it. We ask reviewers to tell us what they think, and if thinking that a particular author or group doesn't do a very good job, that's part of the bargain (as per Dr Tierney's comments).

“As an aside, I might mention that I think double blinding became popular many years ago not in an effort to reduce bias, but to reduce character assassination. Many reviewers felt they had the licence to release whatever venom they wanted to (and we still see some of that), and double blinding had a salutary effect. But that was 30 years ago, and this is now.”

not they are or can be “objective” in their assessments, and more obviously whether or not any of the desired or “objective” experts are actually available, willing, or interested in reviewing a manuscript. We are not, moreover, even considering whether the two or few referees who take up the task are themselves fair scholars, do not have their own biases, or are adequately and fairly aware of or open to the diversity of views on the specialized subject matter.

The most important fact, therefore, remains that all these factors influencing the peer review process are ultimately sifted through the non-anonymous agency of the editor. Considerations regarding what constitutes “objectivity”—and whether or not blindness of review can achieve it—aside, the fact is that the very notion of *blind* peer review is a misnomer, a contradiction in terms and practice, and there is no such a thing.

### **SHOULD PEER REVIEW AND PUBLICATION BE COUPLED WITH ONE ANOTHER?**

The prevailing peer review practices are built according to a model which makes the publication of a manuscript conditional upon successful peer review. Most often, though not always, the assumption remains that if a manuscript is published by a “peer review journal,” it is scholarly, and if it is not, it must not have been scholarly (enough). We leave aside for the purpose of this consideration issues such as the proportion of submissions received to the capacity of the number of articles journals can publish in a year. Let’s assume, quite unrealistically, that all scholarly articles *can* get published.

The practice of coupling peer review with manuscript publication is a remnant of an era characterized by scarcity of means of print publication resources. If publishing is expensive and draws upon scarce resources,

then, one must prioritize those that are most scholarly against those that are not sufficiently so to merit the expenditure of resources. Let’s leave aside here, again quite unrealistically, the question of market forces and the considerations for the profitability of specific publishing ventures, as being determining factors of whether a scholarly work is deemed worthy of publication.

Another consideration for coupling the peer review process with manuscript publication has been, presumably, the need for easy identification of peer reviewed manuscripts—from those that are not—by scholarly readers, and especially by the relatively lay persons who may be regarded as not having the needed skills to discriminate good from not-so-good scholarship.

There are several considerations regarding the viability of a peer review process that is coupled with manuscript publication. The new electronic technologies of mass communication, still limited in scope as far as the poorer populations of the world are concerned, have nonetheless significantly expanded the accessibility of information to an increasingly wider portion of the global population, including the international scholarly community. The spacetime compression of global knowledge production and dissemination networks made possible by the Internet, email technologies, and the World Wide Web—including their impact on revolutionizing library systems—have increasingly made it possible to produce and publish knowledge at highly reduced costs compared to the traditional printing press technologies. E-books, e-journals, and vast and increasingly sophisticated and specialized databases now constitute essential electronic departments of libraries across the globe.

The rapidly advancing electronic publishing industries, in other words, have made it possible to publish anything in real time across the globe, increasingly undermining one of the original considerations that coupled the peer review process with

hard copy manuscript publishing. Peer reviewing does no longer need to be coupled with manuscript publishing. Note that the availability of new publishing technologies and opportunities does not, and should not, necessarily undermine the need for peer reviewing process as a self-evaluative scholarly activity that seeks to spread and deepen standards of high quality scholarship. Important, however, is to note that now the new electronic technologies can be used to spread and deepen the quality and nature of the peer review process itself. However, the (dys?)functioning peer review processes seem to continue lagging behind the advances made in the global information age.

The traditional coupling of the peer review process with manuscript publication drastically limited the nature and quality of the evaluative process.

First, it had to be done before publication, which meant the availability of new knowledges and manuscripts was more or less significantly delayed in reaching the wider scholarly and scientific community as a whole—a community which, according to basic commonsense, let alone scholarly standards should be the ultimate arbiter of the worth of a manuscript and research.

Second, while the scholarly community has steady grown in number over the decades, so has the quantity of manuscripts submitted for review. Especially, as far as the academic community is concerned, tenure-review procedures have put added pressure on faculty to publish-or-perish. The same scholars, therefore, have also been themselves subjected to the demands for referee services for journal and press agencies. The steady pressure to publish-and-review more and more has affected the quality and governing standards practiced by peer reviewers and is an important issue that may be taken into consideration.

Third, it is important to note that the coupling of review with publication and the need for making the latter dependent on the former, on one hand, and the subsequent

rise in publish-and-review demands, on the other, not only have contributed to often delayed and defective peer review practices, but also have deprived the possibility of using the new electronic technologies to subject the manuscripts to a wider, less deliberately selected (by the editors), and commonly reviewable peer review procedures that *should follow* the publication of a given manuscript. Regarding this latter point, further elaborations are necessary.

The traditional coupling of review with publication has been undertaken under the assumption that what once was reviewed (prior to publication) continues to remain a relatively valid, useful, and worthy scholarly contribution after publication. One does not have to be a scholar to realize that such an assumption is quite groundless. The nature of evolving knowledge, especially in such fields as in the social sciences and the humanities (but also in the natural sciences, as these days one can notice on the World Wide Web) obviously demonstrates how what once were considered highly regarded truths, valid theories, and sound paradigms, are subjected to significant problematization and refutation decades, years, months, or even weeks or days later. Just because a manuscript, no matter how lauded, was published in the *American Sociological Review* in the 1970s, for instance, does not mean it has any significant value today. As intellectual and historical archives of knowledge, of course, such contributions continue to have value, and even some findings can still remain valid. But being positively peer reviewed (and thereby published) at any given moment in time does not guarantee that the findings, method, relevance, or substance of a research undertaking would still pass the evaluative test if subjected to the peer review process today.

The point here is to distinguish conceptions of scholarly evaluation as a *process* from its conception as a *state*, a once-done-and-over-with activity. And the recognition of such a dynamic review process would

logically and necessarily lead one to conclude that the best peer review processes are those that are done not just in pre- but especially and continually in the post-publication phases, by as many non-deliberately selected specialists and scholars across the field in increasingly international arenas. The de-coupling of publication decisions from defective peer review procedures, in other words, liberates the peer review process to meet more scholarly requirements and standards—not less. The ultimate goal of better peer review practices, in other words, should be to de-couple publication from pre-publication peer review considerations short of basic considerations of topic, coherence of argument, relevance, etc. This would then allow a manuscript to be subjected to the widest and least-deliberately selective peer review evaluations in favor of advancing sound scholarship.

Liberated from both being coupled with publication, and from a blinding mechanism that is anything but blind, the peer review process can significantly advance in both its breadth and depth using new print and electronic technologies of mass communication. Even in hard copy print media, such as the present journal, one can, by creative use of new resources, make it possible to expand access to and horizons for publishing and peer reviewing opportunities. In fact, introduction and encouragement of such post-publication peer reviewing procedures can only add to the liveliness of scholarly exchange and dialogue in a given publication, precipitating further research and scholarly endeavors.

By changing the nature of hard copy and/or electronic journals from peer reviewed to peer reviewing media, one can enrich and enhance scholarly knowledge production and dissemination beyond the perpetuation of prevalent academic interaction rituals. This is where one may begin to question why the traditional practices continue to reign in the academic habitus de-

spite having proven themselves to be dysfunctional, and what explains their entrenched status in the midst of rapidly changing and ever (re)globalizing information society. That the dysfunctional nature of the prevalent peer review practices has become increasingly scrutinized and problematized across the natural and social sciences and the humanities is evident to any observer, scholar or lay—one needs only to consult academic databases for studies done on the subject, or even enter “problems with peer review” in the Google search engine and read the results. However, the continuation of prevalent practices can and do otherwise serve important functions. The manifest function of presumed sifting of scholarly knowledge can serve many latent functions.

The prevailing peer review mechanisms help continue the prevailing status quo of dominant paradigms of scholarship, making it more difficult for new, “other,” paradigms, theories, and concepts, to emerge.<sup>1</sup> The prevailing mechanisms provides major flagship and gate-keeping disciplinary editors of journals and market-driven acquisition editors of major publishing presses a powerful lever to influence the topics, substance, relevance, methods, and significance of knowledges published in their fields. But the issue goes much further than the substance of scholarship thus advanced. Since such peer review mechanisms also continue to be habitually used by academic institutions in conducting faculty hiring, annual reviews, and tenure-granting and post-tenure evaluations—not to mention how such referee mechanisms are used in reviewing grant applications—the very membership of scholars to the scholarly community becomes subject to the limitations of prevalent peer review procedures.

The compounded result of all these is the continuation of a mechanism that: 1-is built upon flawed presumptions (blind review, or the need for coupling pre-publication peer review with ultimate publication);

2-helps maintain the dominant paradigms; and 3-helps determine who becomes a member of, and remains and is promoted in, the scholarly and academic community. The ultimate victims of such a three-fold academic interaction ritual are open, critical/creative, and subaltern scholarly voices. And scholarship cannot remain scholarly if it does not remain open, critical, creative, and inviting for "other" insights.

Contributions to *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* pass through a rigorous selective process with

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<sup>1</sup> In his "Refereed Journals: Do They Insure Quality or Enforce Orthodoxy" (available at [http://www.iscid.org/boards/ubb-get\\_topic-f-10-t-000059.html](http://www.iscid.org/boards/ubb-get_topic-f-10-t-000059.html)), Frank J. Tipler, Professor of Mathematical Physics at Tulane University, argues that, "...prior to the Second World War the refereeing process, even where it existed, had very little effect on the publication of novel ideas, at least in the field of physics. But in the last several decades, many outstanding scientists have complained that their best ideas—the very ideas that brought them fame—were rejected by the refereed journals. Thus, prior to the Second World War, the refereeing process worked primarily to eliminate crackpot papers. Today, the refereeing process works primarily to enforce orthodoxy. I shall offer evidence that "peer" review is not peer review: the referee is quite often not as intellectually able as the author whose work he judges..." (p. 1-2).

Tipler goes on to provide the following illustration: "Einstein's experience is illustrative. He published three super breakthrough papers in 1905. One presented to the world his theory of (special) relativity. A second paper showed that light had to consist of particles that we now call photons.... Einstein was awarded the Nobel Prize for this explanation. The third paper explained the vibration of dust particles in air by attributing the motion to molecules of air hitting the dust particles. ...Not bad for one year! And Einstein wrote these papers in his spare time, after he returned home from his paying job as a patent clerk in Bern, Switzerland. All three papers were published in *Annalen der Physik*, one of the major physics journals in Germany. But none of the papers were sent to referees. Instead the editors—either the editor in chief, Max Planck, or the editor for theoretical physics, Wilhelm Wien—made the decision to publish. It is unlikely that whoever made the decision spent much time on whether to publish. Almost every paper submitted was published" (p.3).

respect to their fit, relevance, coherence of argument, and innovativeness in consideration of the scope, nature, and intended purpose of the journal. The journal adheres to the peer reviewing principle for advancing scholarship, but aims to design and build new scholarly avenues to meet this requirement—seeking mechanisms that foster openness of inquiry and evaluation; mechanisms that invite constructive judgments subject to free, open, and mutually interactive, not blinded and one-sided, peer reviewing practices; mechanisms that can be employed as widely and dynamically as possible among specialist and interested scholars in the field who value the need for the proliferation of new, critical, and innovative personal and global insights and transformations.

To meet the highest standards of scholarship, liberatory editorial practices need to transition from static peer reviewed to dynamic peer reviewing models that decouple publication from defective pre-publication peer review requirements, and engage in alternative peer review practices that remain open to all those wishing to review a manuscript at any time in the post-publication phase—encouraging expanded and deepening exchanges among scholars, authors and readers alike. They need to invite critical thinking about prevailing and dominant paradigms and inflame creative spirits to forge new scholarly horizons and intellectual landscapes. And they need also to embrace the subaltern voices in the academia and beyond, the voices of those who have been deprived of cultivating their sociological imaginations through formal scholarly publishing avenues.

*Human Architecture* warmly invites contributors and readers to peer review the innovative scholarships of learning published herein and to openly share their critical and constructive insights with one another in the future chronicles of this journal.