Best Practices Guidelines for Publishing in the Bioethics Literature

Following are best practices guidelines for publishing in the bioethics literature as complied by editors from the *American Journal of Bioethics*, *Bioethics*, *Cambridge Quarterly of Healthcare Ethics*, *Developing World Bioethics*, *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal*, *Nursing Ethics*, and *Theoretical Medicine* as part of the Journal Editors Project, sponsored by the Greenwall Foundation. In response to authors' continuing requests for information covered by the guidelines, *CQ* makes them regularly available for easy reference.

Guidelines

Transparency

1) Authors must declare to the journal any interests they believe would materially affect a reasonable reader's judgment about the validity of the authors' claims.
2) Such declarations will normally be published by the journal with the article when it appears in either electronic or paper form.
3) Authors must declare to the journal any external funding sources supporting the work that produced the article and must state the source(s) in an acknowledgements section of the article.

Authorship

1. For original empirical research papers or review articles regarding empirical research, the journal asks authors to adhere to the authorship criteria of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.
2. For philosophical, theological, policy, historical, legal, and other theoretical types of articles, criteria for authorship will be based on the general standards of the humanistic disciplines. Specifically, those who claim authorship should
    a. Thoroughly understand the argument of the article
    b. Agree with the argument and its conclusions at least at the level of a consensus among the authors
    c. Have been substantially involved in the writing of the article, generally understood to include at least two of the following:
        i. Generating the idea for the article
        ii. Outlining the argument
        iii. Supplying the abstract
        iv. Actually writing parts of the article's text
        v. Substantially critiquing and editing drafts
3. The following are considered insufficient in themselves as criteria for authorship:
    a. Mentoring of a student or junior colleague who writes the article
    b. Reading and commenting on a draft of an article conceived and written by someone else

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c. Obtaining funding to support the work
d. Functioning as the head of the academic unit in which the work was produced

Plagiarism

Copying text directly from the work of other authors without setting it out as quotations and without providing appropriate referencing constitutes plagiarism.

The journals will generally follow the COPE guidelines concerning the handling of plagiarism. This entails inter alia that if a submitted manuscript contains clear plagiarism (i.e., unattributed use of large portions of text and/or data, presented as if they were by the author), the journal will contact the author, requiring an explanation, and if no satisfactory explanation is given, the journal may contact the author's institution or other body responsible for research governance.

Redundant Publication

Publishing work that is identical to, or has major overlap with, previous work by the same author(s) constitutes redundant publication.

In all cases involving the submission of a manuscript that could be seen as redundant publication, the corresponding author should alert the journal in question to this fact. If this is not done, the journals will in general follow the COPE guidelines concerning the handling of redundant publication. This entails inter alia that the journal will contact the author, requiring an explanation, and if no satisfactory explanation is given, the journal may contact the author's institution or other body responsible for research governance.

In the case of empirical research, redundant or duplicate publication should in general be avoided.

In the case of philosophical/analytic research, redundant (but not duplicate) publication may be warranted in situations in which the nonredundant part of the manuscript contains significant, new, original argument or material. The journal will decide whether this is the case and may reject an article containing major overlap with previous work purely on this ground.

Confidentiality

In case studies, the privacy of patients should be respected. Cases should be written so as to disguise identifiers. The permission of any participants who are likely to be identifiable from the details of the case description should be obtained, unless this presents a practical impossibility.

In cases that have attained public notoriety, bioethical discussion should be confined to the facts publicly known.

Scholarship

A scholarly article in bioethics should

1) Situate the context of the topic and argument within the context of philosophical ethics, theological ethics, and the theories and subject matter of bioethics

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2) Acknowledge previous literature about the topic under discussion
3) Manifest conceptual clarity in definitions and distinctions
4) Report facts accurately and with appropriate references
5) Demonstrate skill in developing logical arguments and analyzing counterarguments
6) Be written clearly and articulately

Research Involving Human Subjects

It is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the publication of articles presenting research involving human subjects that the research described is conducted in accordance with the relevant international and national standards and regulations governing research involving human subjects. At the time of submission, the authors must state whether and how the research complies with this condition.

Social Responsibility

Institutions or groups involved in the production of bioethics publications have a social responsibility to make every effort to ensure that people in developing countries* have realistic access to the content of their publications (on request), including the availability of printed materials at shipping cost.

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