

Understanding Peer Review Terminology and Expectations

ASSAF's 4th New Editor's Webinar Series
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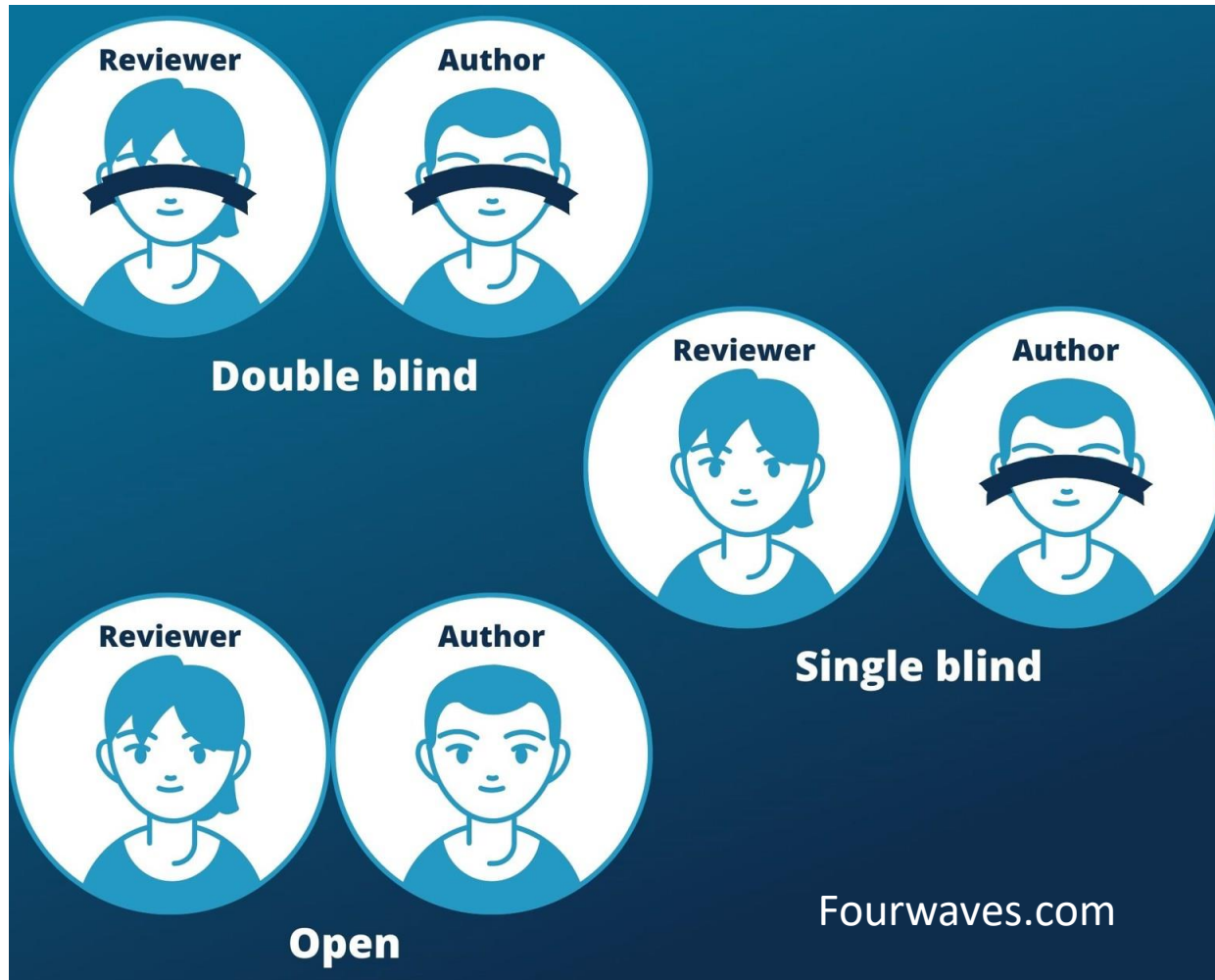
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Single- vs Double-Blind vs Open Review

- Double-blind: the authors and the reviewers are anonymous
- Single-blind: the reviewer is anonymous, but the author is not (the reviewer can see the authors' names)
- Open review: neither the authors nor reviewers are anonymous

Single- vs Double-Blind vs Open Review



Single- vs Double-Blind vs Open Review

- These terms refer to the anonymity of the authors and the reviewers during the review process
- This is determined by the journal, and forms part of its policies – it will not differ paper-by-paper
- Most journals will state up front whether the review will be single-blind, double-blind or open
- If it is a double-blind review process, the authors' guidelines will require you to ensure that your main manuscript document does not contain your name or any identifying details.

Single- vs Double-Blind vs Open Review

- There are pros and cons to each approach
- It can be argued that reviewers will provide more comprehensive and critical reviews if they are anonymous
- If the author is anonymous, it can be argued that there will be less bias relating to their level of experience, country of origin, or their field of expertise
- Knowing who people are allows for greater contextual understanding
- Many argue that anonymity can breed unfair criticism

Single- vs Double-Blind vs Open Review

What does this mean for the editor?

- Checking if the author's documents are blinded
- Checking if the reviewer's documents are blinded
- Checking the metadata
- Ensuring you don't accidentally add an author as a reviewer of their paper!
- If communicating the review outcome to the reviewers, ensuring this doesn't compromise the blinding

Single- vs Double-Blind vs Open Review

Common mistakes

- When self-citing, authors blank out their name
- Forgetting to change your name if inserting comments in MS word or working in track changes
- Including information such as ethics clearance reference numbers or funding bodies if these include identifiable features

Pre-Print Servers

Online repositories which allow you to post a pre-submission version of your manuscript online

These are becoming increasingly popular due to

- A desire to receive feedback from peers on the early version of a manuscript
- Putting your name to your work first if working on a new discovery, or in a fast-paced field
- To get a DOI for the piece of work early
- To get around work being hidden behind paywalls

Pre-Print Servers

These can pose a few challenges

1. If submitting to a double-blind review journal, your pre-print may expose your name
2. Allows research to circulate before peer-review, which may drive "fake news" – COVID19
3. Challenges for plagiarism softwares, especially if on a lesser-known server

Important to view these manuscripts as works in progress

Teixeira da Silva, 2018

Conflicts of Interest

There are a couple of ways in which conflicts of interest may arise in the publication process

1. From the authors

- If they have a direct financial interest in the findings of the study
- If they have an indirect (eg. funders) interest in the fundings of the study
- If they suggest reviewers who are their co-authors
- If their study tries to prove the efficacy of their organisation

Conflicts of Interest

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2. From the reviewers

- If they know the authors well personally or professionally
- If they have an direct or indirect interest in the fundings of the study
- If they are working on competing or very similar topics
- If they have a firm view in support or against a particular methodological approach

Conflicts of Interest

There are a couple of ways in which conflicts of interest may arise in the publication process

3. From the editors

- If they know the authors well personally or professionally
- If they discuss the manuscript in depth with the reviewers that they appoint
- If they are working on competing research
- If they have direct or indirect financial interests in the work
- If they have institutional biases.

Thank you!

Questions?

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ASSAf Research Repository

<http://research.assaf.org.za/>

B. Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) Events

I. Other

2023

ASSAf Webinar for New Editors – Tips on Editorial Processes

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