

## From the Editor

Dear Reader:

I've just read some of the papers presented at the Second International Congress on Peer Review in Biomedical Publication (*JAMA* 1994;272(2):79-174). The experts agree on two things: peer review is necessary and peer review is imperfect. Drs. Jerome Kassirer and Edward Campion, editor-in-chief and deputy editor of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, shared some of their thoughts on the "cognitive basis of manuscript review." Although the process is not well studied, they point out that it is the editor's task to find and point out deficiencies and errors. The goal, of course, is not to harass authors but to ensure that what is ultimately published is scientifically valid.

Another important aspect of manuscript review is to improve the readability of a paper. Drs. John C. Roberts, Robert H. Fletcher and Suzanne W. Fletcher, from the editorial offices of the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, presented a study that measured the change in readability between the original and the revised manuscript. They found there was a slight improvement but that the revised paper was still difficult to read as measured by the standard readability indexes used in the study. The final readability score fell between the scores for *The New York Times'* editorial page and a legal contract.

I hope the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Extra-Corporeal Technology* has served our readers well this year by ensuring that the papers in Volume 26 are scientifically valid and that we have also helped the authors to present their work in an understandable manner through careful and thorough peer review. I thank the authors, the Editorial Board and Kurt Larrick, our Managing Editor, for their commitment and contributions to the *Journal*.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Palmer Stark, CCP  
Editor

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