

Publishing Your Philosophy¹

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1. WHY BOTHER?

First of all, there are altruistic reasons. You have obviously been stimulated by the work of other philosophers, otherwise you wouldn't be reading this now. Publishing your ideas is a way of giving something back to the philosophical community. Philosophy's engine room is fuelled by ideas; we need yours!

In addition, it can be quite exciting to think that your ideas are being disseminated across the globe. People you've never met and may never meet are reading your work. And they're thinking about it—even while you're asleep at night!

Then, of course, there are prudential reasons. Submitting papers to journals is a means of gaining expert feedback on your work. When a journal receives your paper, it is sent to referees. The referees will usually have published in an area relevant to the content of your paper. They are instructed to decide whether your paper should be accepted by the journal for publication. In most cases, the referees are required not only to arrive at a decision, but they are also required to justify that decision. They return their reports to the editor of the journal, who, more often than not, forwards them to you. Even if your paper is rejected outright, there may well be some useful comments that you or your supervisor might not have otherwise considered.

In short, submitting papers can be a good way to monitor your philosophical progress by getting comments from someone outside the bubble of your home institution. If you're doing a doctorate, submission to a journal of material that will form part of your thesis is particularly useful. Since PhD theses are marked by external examiners, this can be a good way of gauging where you're currently at. You could think of it as a kind of miniature dress-rehearsal for the submission of your thesis.

Then there is the matter of appearances. Potential employers expect you to have one or two publications by the time you finish a postgraduate degree. It is solid evidence that you have arrived as an independent thinker, and that you will be able to make a useful contribution to the intellectual life of any academic institution that may consider employing you.

Publishing your work can also be beneficial in other ways. If you have a paper accepted for publication, the journal that accepted your work may well ask you down the track to do some refereeing work for them. That is, you are now seen as someone competent to make a recommendation to the journal about the merits of submissions by other people. That's a nice feeling, and you can also add to your CV any refereeing work you have done.

Moreover, your paper might attract sufficient interest to elicit a reply from another philosopher. Some people include on their CVs a list of articles and books where other philosophers discuss their work. This looks good because it shows that people find your work engaging; they've read your stuff and have taken the trouble to put pen to paper.

Also, once you have something published, you may find that people contact you in order to discuss your work. This can be especially fruitful if you work in a specialised field, or if you have few colleagues who are interested in your line of research.

2. HOW TO START?

A good way to dip your feet in the water, especially if you're in the early phase of your postgraduate work, is by reviewing a book. Many journals accept unsolicited book reviews. Book reviews are not subject to anything like the same level of scrutiny as journal articles. So, if you write a review it has a very good chance of being printed.

Nevertheless, before you write the review, it's probably a good idea to email the editor in charge of book reviews just to make sure that the journal is interested in receiving the review you are thinking of writing. You should mention that you're a graduate student, and, if possible, note that you are working in an area pertinent to the book you intend to review.

Here's a little bonus that you may accrue from writing a review. As a matter of course, publishers send sample copies of new books to journals with the explicit intention of having them reviewed. If the journal has received the book that takes your fancy, they will in all probability send you the sample copy. This is yours to keep in return for your review.

Why not try our local journal, the *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*? They are usually quite happy to have graduate students write book reviews.

You might also find it useful to subscribe to the email list *Philos-l*. *Philos-l* is a UK philosophy mailing list. It often (4-5 times annually) contains announcements, on behalf of various journals and websites, offering books for review. You can subscribe to this mailing list, or peruse the archives, by going here:²

<http://listserv.liv.ac.uk/archives/philos-l.html>

3. WHEN ARE YOU READY TO SUBMIT A PAPER?

Should your supervisor suggest that you ought to submit a certain paper or chapter you've written to a journal, that's great; go ahead and do it. . But don't rely on your supervisor to broach the topic; as a general guide, if you're already looking at a piece of work you've written and you're seriously wondering whether you should send it to a journal, there is a good chance that you ought to do so, and in that case, you should broach the topic yourself in a supervision session.

And remember, there are reasons for submitting papers to journals apart from the prospect of immediate publication. As well as helping to familiarise yourself with the process of submitting papers, there are the sundry reasons presented in §1.

Two cautionary notes are worth registering.

Although I point out in Section 1 that you can think of paper submission as akin to unofficial supervision, this kind of ‘supervision’ is unpaid. Referees do not receive payment for their work, and undertake these tasks in their spare time, usually out of respect for the discipline. So you should not waste their time by submitting under-developed work. Again, your supervisor can help you to decide whether your work is of an appropriate standard for submission. Something else you might like to consider is to deliver your paper at a conference (such as our own Australasian Association of Philosophy conference) in order to get external feedback on the paper before working it up for submission.

And do remember that your main priority is to finish your postgraduate course. Be warned that early publication success can cause *publication-lust*. If untreated, this condition may hamper your ability to submit your Masters/PhD on time. In conjunction with other patterns of behaviour, you may also go blind (but that’s a matter for another occasion).

4. SUBMISSION PROCEDURES AND RELATED CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 ORIENTATION OF THE JOURNAL

You have cranked out your paper and you’re now ready to pop it into an envelope and send it somewhere. Naturally, the pressing question at this point is *where?* There are many general philosophy journals that are happy to receive papers whose contents embody any of philosophy’s subdisciplines. In these journals you will find papers on the nature of demonstratives nestled comfortably alongside papers on virtue ethics. A general philosophy journal is a safe place to start.

There are also specialist journals. *Ethics* deals largely with ethics, *Mind and Language* deals largely with issues at the interface of philosophy of language and the philosophy of mind, and so on. Specialist journals are also worth a try. Make sure you have a look at a prospective journal’s self-description. These are usually found in the back or front covers of the journal, and on the journal’s webpage. The self-description usually gives you some tangible pointers as to the orientation of the journal.

Note that every now and then the self-description and/or title of a particular journal may be a little misleading. Occasionally, journals are like people; they describe themselves in one way and then behave in another! Sometimes the orientation of a journal changes over time without the self-description and title managing keep up. For instance, *Synthese*’s self-description claims that the journal is focussed on epistemology and methodological issues pertaining to the philosophy of science. However, a cursory glance at some of the journal’s recent contents show that they also publish some papers in the philosophy of language

and in metaphysics. You might also suspect that the *Review of Metaphysics* exclusively prints work in metaphysics. That's not true, though. It also accepts papers from other fields of philosophy.

So, to summarise, check out each journal's self-description, but also look at the contents pages of recent issues to see what sort of work they are actually publishing.

4.2 VARIETIES OF ARTICLE

Besides the question of orientation, other things are important to consider when you're deciding where to send your paper. We'll now discuss a few salient categories under which published papers fall.

First, there is what we will call, for lack of a better description, the *substantial article*. Such papers tend to be longer than 3000 words, and purport, for the most part, to make a new contribution to the literature on a given topic. Of course, they don't *have* to be more than 3000 words. If you can make a new contribution to the literature of a topic in one page, then good luck to you!³

Then there are *discussion pieces*. Discussion pieces tend to be composed of fewer than 3000 words, and are usually less ambitious in scope than are substantial articles. Generally, the primary focus of these papers is restricted to comments and/or criticisms of a particular person's work. So, for instance, if you've read a paper in the latest edition of *Mind* and think to yourself, "That's all so wrong, and here's why...", then the (orderly) expulsion of these thoughts from your mind might result in a discussion piece. Note that most journals will not print discussion pieces about articles published in other journals.

The last category we will mention is that of the *critical notice*. Critical notices tend to be around the same length as substantial articles. You might think of them as extended book reviews, though that description is probably gratuitously demeaning. A critical notice is a discussion at length of a recently published book. The author of a critical notice has, in general, more freedom than the author of a book review. In fact, the best critical notices often contain a lot of original material. When reading a really good critical notice, there is a tangible sense of the so-called "community of inquiry" in action. That is, you observe that the author of the critical notice has been inspired to write some new and original material that might well not have occurred to him or her in the absence of the book. Critical notices are often, but not always, solicited by the journal in question.

These are the three main categories of journal articles. However, the emphasis that different journals place on each of these categories differs. Thus, when deciding where to send your paper, you need to ask yourself which category it falls under.

Some journals, such as the *Journal of Philosophy* and *Philosophical Review* almost exclusively publish substantial articles. Other journals publish a mixture

of substantial articles and discussion pieces. Relatively few journals publish critical notices.

In particular, notice that you won't always get a good idea of a given journal's composition with respect to these categories just by looking at its contents page. *The Australasian Journal of Philosophy, Mind*, and the *Philosophical Quarterly* all publish both substantial articles and discussion pieces. What's more, these journals clearly divide their contents into sections with headings that reflect this fact. *Philosophical Papers* and *Philosophical Studies* also accept substantial articles and discussion pieces. However, their contents pages are not organised thus. What you get when you pick up one of these journals is just a straight list of the papers that appear therein. This means that sometimes you'll have to do a little research to discover which categories of paper a particular journal prints.

4.3 A SUBMISSION STRATEGY FOR YOUR FIRST COUPLE OF PAPERS

4.3.1 *A Tripartite Division of Some General Journals*

In order to implement the submission strategy I have in mind, we need to make some distinctions between journals. Here is a three-way division of some general philosophy journals on the basis of their reputation within the discipline. (Actually, it's based on *my* perception of their reputation within the discipline, so it's inevitably a little skewed. We must start somewhere, however.) The division is only a partial ordering, so for each partition, no distinction between the journals in that partition is intended; there are obviously distinctions in perceived quality between journals in the same tier, but I don't want to complicate matters further by attending to those.

First Tier Journals

Journal of Philosophy, Mind, Noûs, Philosophical Review,
Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,

Second Tier Journals

American Philosophical Quarterly, Analysis, Australasian Journal of Philosophy,
Monist, Pacific Philosophical Quarterly, Philosophical Quarterly, Philosophical
Studies, Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society

Third Tier Journals

Canadian Journal of Philosophy, European Journal of Philosophy, Philosophia,
Philosophical Forum, Philosophical Papers, Ratio, Southern Journal of
Philosophy, Topoi

First, some tedious qualifications.

These labels are somewhat misleading. All of the journals listed above are among the most respected general philosophy journals. There are hundreds and hundreds of philosophy journals, most of which are not very well known; prior to writing this guide, I was blissfully unaware of just how many philosophy journals exist. So you should read this partition as being a partition of those journals at the 'top end of town'.

In addition, let me re-emphasise that these divisions are being made on the basis of perceived reputation within the discipline. I'm not claiming here that this journal is better than that journal. I'm not even claiming to *know* that this journal has a better reputation in the discipline than that one, although I'd like to think that I have at least a crude idea. These divisions are intended only as guides. You may have your own opinions as to the relative reputations of journals in the discipline. If so, well and good! Once you've found your way around the journals, you can construct your own list; perhaps one that is more complete, and one that includes topic-specific journals if that suits your purpose.

I also don't want to say much about the relationship between the quality of a journal and its reputation among philosophers. The only thing I'd say is that the general perception of a journal does affect its quality, if only because people tend to send their best papers to higher ranked journals, and referees tend to be more selective than they might otherwise be if they know that they are refereeing for a journal with a high reputation.

4.3.2 *Start at the Middle*

Some might find these distinctions between journals odious. Fair enough. Certainly, many papers published in journals from the second tier and below have generated a lot of interest, while many papers published in the first tier have sunk like a stone. Unfortunately, should you want to pursue a career in philosophy, the general perception of the journals that you have published in does bear some weight. So, for instance, a publication in a first tier journal is going to look better on your CV than a publication in the second tier or below.

With that in mind, the obvious strategy is to start with the first tier and work your way down. After all, if you work down from a lower starting point, you immediately lose the chance of having your paper published higher up. As a consequence, the paper might end up being published in a journal of a lower rank than it would have been if you'd started at the very top.

However, I'm going to advise against this course of action. Unless you have reason to think that your paper is *really, really* good, or unless your supervisor says otherwise, I'm going to suggest that you start somewhere in the second tier. Here is the rationale for this recommendation.

There are problems with starting at the top. First tier journals often have long turnaround periods. With some of the first tier journals, you might have to wait up to a year to hear back from them. At that rate, if you're rejected by a few Tier One journals, it's going to take rather a long time to work your way down to an acceptance! And if you're aiming to get a publication or two by the time you've submitted your PhD thesis, for instance, this is probably not the optimal strategy to employ.

The second problem with starting at the top is that if your paper is rejected outright, many of these journals won't pass on comments from the referees. Since one good reason for submitting papers to journals is to get fresh input on your

ideas, this is not so good. In a bad-case scenario, you might receive a rejection letter, say, sixteen months after submission with no feedback at all.

Just as there is reason not to start at the first tier, there is reason not to start at the bottom. Certainly, third tier journals tend to have briefer turnaround periods than first tier ones. And they do usually pass on comments from the referees in cases where a paper is rejected outright. However, here they have no advantage over second tier journals. Second tier journals have turnaround times that are comparable with lower ranked ones, and they also tend to pass on comments in cases of outright rejection. So third tier journals don't have an advantage over second ranked ones with respect to these matters.

The only advantage that a third tier journal may have over a second tier one is that it is easier to get a paper accepted there (though it's not that unusual to have a paper rejected by a lower ranked journal and subsequently accepted by a higher ranked one). Since this is the only decent reason to start with a third tier journal, I'd advise that you start with a second tier one. It may not be that much harder to be accepted by a second tier journal, and other things being equal, an acceptance by a second ranked journal will look better on your CV than an acceptance by a third ranked one. So start somewhere in the middle and, if you have to do so, work down.

This is a good beginners strategy, at any rate. After you've had some experience with submitting papers to journals, and have had an acceptance or two, you might like to reappraise this strategy. By then you will no doubt have ideas of your own. And, needless to say, it would be rather foolish to slavishly adhere to this strategy for the rest of your life!

4.4 SUBMISSION FORMAT

You've decided where to send your paper; you're happy enough with the content and you've settled on a destination. There remains the matter of packaging.

You have probably noticed that most journals have their own idiosyncratic formatting conventions. These involve things like referencing presentation, whether footnotes or endnotes are preferred, whether single or double quote-marks are used, and so on. These conventions are invariably outlined in an 'information for contributors' portion of the journal.

The good news is that you can safely ignore these finer details for your initial submission, since presumably, for the referees to appraise your paper they don't need to see it in in-house style! If your paper is accepted for publication you will then be asked to prepare the final version so that it conforms to the journal's stylistic requirements.

There are a couple of exceptions to the above that are worth noting. Usually, journals ask for submissions to be double-spaced, with semi-generous margins. You should comply with these requests in your initial submission, since these suggestions are pretty clearly made so as to ensure that your manuscript is easy on the eyes of your referees.

This leads to a general point. Don't place extra obstacles in the path of your referees by presenting your paper poorly. Reading philosophy properly is already hard enough, and you don't want to make things any more difficult than is necessary! So don't use any silly fonts, for instance. Choose a font with serifs, because these tend to be easier to read than ones without serifs; plain old Times Roman is fine. Also, be careful to ensure that none of your paper's section headings appear on the last line of a page—that looks really untidy.

So let's assume that the presentation of your paper is fine, and that you've made as many copies as the journal requires. The last thing you need to do is write a cover letter. Keep the cover letter brief; a couple of lines should suffice. For example:

Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed two copies of my paper, "Health Risks Associated with Deep-Sea Oil-Rigging", which I would like to submit for consideration by the *Journal of Oil-Rigging*.

Yours,

T.W. Earp
<address>

You can use official Philosophy Department letterhead if that turns you on. Then, you post the lot. Or, if the journal prefers email submissions, you place the cover letter in the body of the email and include the paper as an attachment.

4.5 SUBMISSION ETIQUETTE

Now that you've posted your submission, the next thing you ought to do is send the same paper to another few journals in order to maximise your chances of acceptance, right?

Ah... well... no.

Under no circumstance should you do this.

Journals consider papers for publication *only* on the condition that those papers are not submitted elsewhere. To have a paper concurrently under consideration at more than one journal straightforwardly breaches this condition.

Like most of us, editors and their referees prefer not to have their time wasted. Multiple submissions of the same paper wastes people's time. Allow me to stress once more that editorial and refereeing work is unpaid. Most often, it's done out of a sense of respect for the discipline, and so, naturally, editors and referees don't like being taken for an unpaid ride.

4.6 THE WAIT

Within a month or so, you should get acknowledgement from the journal that they have received your paper and that it has been passed on to referee/s for assessment. Next comes the wait. By now, you should have a rough indication of how long the review process is expected to take. Journals usually give an indication of assessment times in their ‘information for contributors’ section or in their acknowledgement of receipt (or both).

What should you do if you haven’t received a decision from the journal by the time that they suggested? I tend to wait an extra couple of months, so as not to be unnecessarily burdensome. If I haven’t heard anything by then, I email or write to the person in charge of submissions and politely inquire about the status of my submission. The editor then, in all likelihood, asks me to bear with him/her, and sends a reminder to the lagging referee/s.

However, some eminently qualified people regard this approach as a little too gentle. Laura Schroeter, for example, disagrees strongly:

You should definitely NOT wait politely for two extra months for the editors to get back to you. Make sure that you get an acknowledgement of receipt and then get back in contact to ask about its status when the advertised delay is up — hopefully no more than three or four months. This is crucial to make sure that they haven't actually lost your paper or that the editors get on the referees to get a report. It doesn't hurt your chances of getting published in the end and it's important to make sure you're not kept waiting longer than absolutely necessary. (I know a number of cases where a paper has been more or less lost in the system—the editors sent something out to a referee and then everyone kind of forgot all about it until the author contacted them months later. You don't want a journal sitting on the paper for 8-12 months, something which can easily happen.)⁴

I should note that Laura is not the only person who conveyed something like this view to me.

I do think that the possibility of the journal losing your paper or forgetting to send the paper to referees, as they have promised you in their acknowledgement of receipt, is reasonably remote (though I have heard of the odd case where this occurred). However, I also agree that it won’t hurt your chances of being published if you are a bit assertive in following up the progress of your paper. So you should make your own judgement.

5. JOURNAL EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Naturally, individual journals vary regarding the details of their evaluation procedure. Nevertheless, most journals adhere to something like the following outline.

When your paper is received by the journal, the editor in charge of submissions makes an initial appraisal. This is to isolate those papers that are obviously not publishable. Any paper that fails at this step will have been deemed by the

submissions editor to be so obviously unpublishable that it need not be sent on to someone with explicit expertise in the area covered by the paper. You shouldn't worry about being rejected at this stage. Seeing as you've reached postgraduate level, it's quite unlikely that your paper will fall at this hurdle.

The next step is for the submissions editor to select referees who are considered by the journal to know enough about the topic of your paper to make a judicious judgement about whether it ought to be published by the journal. Most journals engage two referees. Copies of your paper are sent to the referees. The referees read your paper and compile reports which are then returned to the journal.

On the basis of the referees' recommendations, the editors make a decision about what to do with your paper, and subsequently inform you of that decision. These are the possible decisions, in order of desirability (from your perspective).

Outright Acceptance: The journal accepts your paper unconditionally. They will publish it in its current form. You do not have to make any changes to the content of the paper.

Conditional Acceptance: The journal accepts your paper on the condition that you make some changes to the content in the light of comments from the referees. Usually, the conditions are not too demanding. You might, for instance, be asked to say something about an argument from Philosopher *Y*, which you haven't addressed, but which a referee thinks you ought to discuss.

Revise and Resubmit: This means that the journal thinks your paper holds promise, and they want to encourage you to rework it. They offer you the opportunity to resubmit it after you have taken into account and/or responded to criticisms made by one or more of the referees. This is still a very good result. The journal has committed itself to reconsidering a revised version of your paper. They wouldn't do this if they didn't take your paper seriously.

Outright Rejection: This is probably not what you were hoping for!

6. HOW TO DEAL WITH REFEREES' REPORTS

In this section we will discuss what to do if your paper falls into the twilight zone and you are asked to revise and resubmit. Then, we'll look at what you ought to do if your paper is rejected outright.

6.1 REVISE AND RESUBMIT

Should you be asked to send the journal a revised version of your paper, you should be quite pleased. Most submissions that the journal receives won't get this far. What's more, a request to revise and resubmit means you've managed to wedge your foot in the door. What you need to do now is push harder (with your foot, that is).

Here's a procedure that you might find useful when preparing your paper for resubmission.

6.1.2 Reading the Reports

You should take the revision procedure very seriously. Read the referees' reports closely a number of times. Do your best to understand each point that the referees make. Sometimes this can be difficult, since the reports themselves aren't always models of clarity.

6.1.3 Two Divisions of the Referees' Objections and Suggestions

The next thing you should do is grade the referees' objections and suggestions in terms of their seriousness. Here, we'll consider a simple division of the objections and suggestions into the categories, *serious* and *less serious*. By 'serious', I mean the following. A serious objection is an objection with some *prima facie* plausibility, which at the least, if correct, would undermine a significant portion or argument of the paper. A less serious objection is an objection that, if correct, would not undermine the main thread of the paper, or an objection that would count as serious if it were at least a little *prima facie* plausible. A serious suggestion is a suggestion, with some *prima facie* merit, to change the paper in a significant way. For example, you might be asked to address an article by a certain philosopher whose work you haven't considered in your paper. Or, it might be suggested that a certain section of your paper is superfluous and ought to be excised. A less serious suggestion is a suggestion to change your paper in a reasonably unsubstantial way, or a suggestion (without *prima facie* plausibility) to change your paper in a significant way. Such a suggestion might bear on your written expression, the ordering of the sections in your paper, and so on. Or it might be a suggestion to excise a section of your paper that is pretty clearly crucial to your main line of argument.

First of all, divide the objections and suggestions that you understand into those that you think the referees consider serious, and the ones that you think they consider less serious. This division is important because the objections/suggestions that the referees considered to be serious are the ones which have resulted in your being asked to revise and resubmit. If you had received only objections/suggestions that the referees consider less serious, your paper may well have been accepted (on the condition that you address these less serious objections/suggestions). In terms of getting your paper accepted, the most important thing to do is convince the assessors that you can deal with the objections that the referees consider serious, and (insofar as this proves necessary) implement the suggestions that the referees consider serious.

Second, divide the objections and suggestions into those objections and suggestions that *you* think are serious, and those that you think are less serious. Of course, this division may not line up with the first division. There might be some objections that one of the referees felt to be particularly damaging, but which you think you can negotiate with ease. Remember to be brave here, and don't be afraid to disagree with the referees. Referees can and do make mistakes! And, after all, if you've been brave enough to critically discuss a philosopher's work in your paper, there's no reason to be afraid of disagreeing with a referee's report.

Why it is important to make both of these divisions should become clear within the next few paragraphs of this guide.

6.1.4 *Your Revised Manuscript and the Cover Letter*

The resubmission of your paper has two crucial ingredients, namely, the revised manuscript and the cover letter that you include with your resubmission. The cover letter is a guide for the editor (or whoever else is doing the reassessment). It lets the reassessor know (in brief) how you have altered the paper in response to the referees' comments.

So, what goes in the cover letter and what goes in the revision of your paper?

In the revision of the paper you should definitely address those objections and suggestions that both you and the referees agree are serious. You might also decide to address in the paper those objections (if any) that were presented by the referees as less serious objections, but which you think are actually serious ones. As for the comments that you consider to be less serious, use your own judgement to decide in each case whether an adjustment to your paper is warranted. Sometimes it's useful to address, in the paper itself, less serious objections and suggestions. However, sometimes it only serves to obscure the structure of your paper and to frustrate the reader, who may, for instance, be wondering, "Why is the author pausing to consider this obviously mistaken objection?"

The most important functions of the cover letter are to (1) direct the reassessor to the places in the revised version of your paper where serious objections and suggestions have been addressed or incorporated, and, where necessary, to (2) explain why you haven't addressed certain of the referees' comments in the paper. In particular, it's important to make sure you explain why you have not seen fit to address comments that the referee in question took to be serious ones. Do try and keep the cover letter to fewer than three pages; you should aim to make it as short as is feasible.

6.1.5 *The Final Countdown*

When the journal receives your resubmission it will send you an acknowledgement. Thereafter, it's a matter of sitting it out until the final decision is made. If the paper is accepted, then you have your first publication. If it's rejected, then have a look at any further comments on your paper forwarded by the journal. You may consider revising your paper in the light of these. If your paper is rejected after you have been asked to revise and resubmit, you should definitely submit it elsewhere; in terms of your paper's quality, being invited to revise and resubmit is a good sign.

6.2 OUTRIGHT REJECTION

Since acceptance rates in philosophy journals tend to be quite low, it's normal to receive outright rejections.

In this case, you should look at the referees' comments; they may be quite useful in helping you to improve your paper. If you feel that your arguments haven't been refuted, then you might decide to revise your paper in the light of these comments. Sometimes you might decide to incorporate the referees' comments into your paper and respond to them.

If, after careful consideration, you think that the referees' comments are just plain misguided, then don't bother to revise the paper. Rather, you should immediately send it to another journal. However, cases where all of the referees' comments are unhelpful are rare. Read the comments with charity, and take care not to dismiss with undue haste the thoughts of a world authority on your topic. Even if a referee has misunderstood you completely, often the misunderstanding turns out to be partly of your own making. Ask yourself, 'Have I put this as clearly as I am able?'

One last thing is worth mentioning here. You may receive quite unhelpful, and very occasionally, pompous, condescending or even downright nasty referees' reports. While such reports are rare, it is also true that referees are human, and are thus subject to the same social deficits as the rest of the community. The impersonal nature of the review process (most journals do not reveal your identity to the referees, and vice-versa) occasionally encourages referees to say things that they might never dream of saying to someone in person. If you ever receive a report like this, discuss it with your supervisor. One strategy is to think of the referee in the same way that they have treated you (as someone of no consequence); take what you can from the report, but don't take it to heart.

7. RESOURCES

<http://wikihost.org/wikis/philjinfo/wiki/start>

'A place for authors, editors, and referees to share information on philosophy journals: their editorial practices, response times, backlogs on publishing, policies on providing comments to authors, etc.'

http://homepages.ed.ac.uk/pmilne/links_html/journals.html -

Peter Milne's listing of philosophy journals.

<http://www.epistemelinks.com/Main/MainJour.aspx>

The Episteme Links listing.

http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/2004/11/philosophy_jour_1.html -

'Philosophy Journals: Which Ones are Responsible, Which Ones Not?' Note that this discussion is, for the most part, a couple of years old.

http://www.esf.org/fileadmin/be_user/research_areas/HUM/Documents/ERIH/NEW_ERIH_Philosophy_Initial_List_2007_01.pdf

European Science Foundation's ranking of Philosophy Journals. For some comments about these rankings, see:

<http://leiterreports.typepad.com/blog/2007/06/european-scienc.html>

<http://tar.weatherson.org/2004/08/17/journals-survey/>

The results of Brian Weatherson's survey.

Well, that's it. Do contact me at neil.mckinnon@arts.monash.edu.au if you have any comments, or suggestions for improving this document.

¹ I am grateful to Toby Handfield, Graham Oppy, Neil Levy, Laura Schroeter, and, in particular, Mark Colyvan, for helpful comments and suggestions.

² Thanks to Neil Levy for this snippet.

³ Note that this has actually been done in very rare cases. Consider, for example, Gareth Evans (1978) 'Can There Be Vague Objects?', *Analysis*, 38, p. 208.

⁴ Personal communication, October 18, 2003.