PHILOSOPHY RESEARCH AND PUBLISH LAB HANDBOOK

For Teaching Know-How Related to Research and Publication

Matthew Baxendale & Maria Kronfeldner

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An Introduction to the Research & Publish Lab

A Short History of the Research & Publish Lab

The CEU offers small grants for developing teaching formats. The philosophy department applied for such a teaching development grant. It suggested the Philosophy Research and Publish Lab. The R&P-Lab took place over the Autumn Semester 2015 and was taught along as part of a 4 credit-point course: 2 CPs attached to the Lab and 2 CPs attached to a standard course. The Lab was directed by Maria Kronfeldner, who was assisted by Matthew Baxendale. The activities of the Lab have continued beyond the end of the one semester course. Matthew Baxendale, along with a PhD student from the Lab, Michele Luchetti, organised a Workshop centered on their PhD topics and invited doctoral and post-doctoral researchers to present and discuss on-going research. Organising this workshop enabled them to put into practice skills learnt during the Lab as well as engage in the active and collaborative aspects of researching in academia. The workshop included a Research & Publication session, with participants discussing the role of 'talent' in philosophy and its possible operation as an exclusion mechanism in the discipline. Participants in the workshop included members of the Lab as well as other students from CEU and elsewhere. As such, the workshop not only continued the activities of the Lab, it expanded the initial scope of the Lab by getting more people involved, as well as further developing the skills of those who participated. Future plans include an interview with a leading researcher in the field of Science Studies on their own thoughts, reflections, and experiences regarding the research and publication process. All students will be invited to attend and the interview will be made public through publication in CEU's Science Studies Graduate Journal, Pulse.

The Aim and Structure of Bringing a Course and a Know-How Lab Together

Broadly speaking the project had two primary aims. The first was to develop the know-how skill of students undertaking the course; developing their skills in several areas of tacit knowledge that is essential in academia. The second aim was to embed the tacit knowledge within the structure and learning process of a more-or-less standard course. This allows for the integration of tacit knowledge (know-how) with actual study assignments and new information (know-that). The integration of know-how and know-that created a dynamic and self-reflecting learning process, rather than abstract, dry, or 'disembodied' training.

The first aim, to develop the know-how skills of students, was centred on three kinds of tacit knowledge: (a) know-how to write different formats of texts, (b) know-how to use professional databases for research, and (c) know-how to publish one's research results. In order to address (a), students undertook a variety of short writing tasks, including writing a peer-review, a book review, and a focused argumentative piece. The tasks were bookended by in-class discussions. Before writing the students identified their own gaps in the tacit knowledge of each writing format and, led by the lecturer and peer-tutor, discussed how to prepare and structure their writing.

After the task was complete the students discussed their reflection on the process, what they worked well, or not so well, for them. In addition we ran two 'triadic feedback sessions', in which the students offered peer-feedback and constructive criticism to one another in groups of three.

In order to address (b) students were given instruction on how to use professional databases such as web of science, google scholar, and PhilPapers – including participation from the CEU library who ran an information session with the students. We discussed how to 'find the needle in the haystack', i.e., how to pick out relevant and high quality literature from the vast selection available online and in print. The students put their developing skills into practice by conducting a literature review, using keywords and an anchor paper, before presenting a paper of their choice to the class. Finally, (c) was addressed with a mixture of literature, in-class discussion, and visiting speakers. Firstly we read and discussed literature on publication bias and the peer-review process. Students undertook a blind peer review process and discussed the results. We had a session with the editor of a prominent philosophy journal at which students were able to ask whatever questions they had about the publication process, specifically concerning peer-reviewing and publishing in journals. In addition the heads of the CEU Press and the CEU Library joined us for a session on journals, publishing houses, and general issues in the publication process.

The second aim, to embed the know-how within the structure of a more-or-less standard course was met by partitioning one session a week to literature on the Unity of Science. We began by reading a contemporary book on the issue. This gave students a broad base of information to start from and provide the opportunity to write a book review. This piece of writing allowed for the first triadic feedback session, as students commented and critiqued each others' book reviews, before having time to improve their own work based on feedback. After discussing some background material (several papers introduced by the course lecturer and peer-tutor) the students presented contemporary papers that were selected from the result of the literature reviews they had complied – using the database and research skills they had developed. The students then wrote an argumentative piece on the basis on their paper selection, and participated in a double-blind peer review process of other class member's argumentative pieces. In these ways, the students applied their developing know-how to the know-that material delivered by the course lecturer, peer-tutor, and other members of the class.

The following pages contain Handouts for

Modules That Can be Used Independently

How to do a Book Review

A handout created by the **CEU Philosophy Tacit Knowledge Group**

How do I Prepare to Write a Book Review?

Active Reading of the Book

- Don't get lost in the details: stay in survey mode.
- Collect flashy quotes. But do not use too many of them in the review.
- Go back to the introduction repeatedly.
- Use the Table of Contents and Index for the 'art of non-reading'.
- Get some anchors, such as purpose/concrete goal of the book, keywords, and core references.
- Read actively, i.e. adapt speed and intensity, given the focus set by your interest and/or readership.
- Write early! Make notes continuously, best without looking at the book (Kavéhaz, grandma mode).
- Start getting background information, but only after you drafted a first version.

Goal and structure of a book review

- Goal: A book review should help the reader to decide whether the book is worthwhile to buy/to read. The goal is not to tutor or address the author.
- Length: 500-1000 words. Ask about the length if regulations do not contain anything on it.
- Time for doing it: usually at least 4 weeks, but this varies a lot.

Journal/Readership

- Choose your journal/blog for the book review since that will determine the readership.
- Remember that the significance of the author's work might be relative to the readership or journal in which the review will appear.

What is the Content of a Book Review?

Book reviews content both positive and critical aspects, in this section of the handout these will be indicated with the following symbols

(+) = Positive aspects of the review
(+/-) = Positive & Critical aspects of the review
(-) = Critical aspects of the review

Topic of the book (+)

- What kind of book is it (textbook, research monograph, ...)?

- What is the declared purpose and concrete goal of the book? What is its main argument?
- Try first (and as long as possible) to evaluate the book according to the author's goals (internal critique)!
- Do a brief summary of the content (250 words roughly should always suffice). Use ToC, index, and keywords to stay in the abstracting mode. You can use make use of keywords to structure your summary (imagine that you tell the content of the book to your grandma on the phone, or record it verbally).
- Present the main arguments of each part of the book and show the links between the parts. Express your negative criticism either after you presented the arguments contained in that specific part of the book, or towards the end of your review (but not in the conclusion).

Quality of content, methods (+/-)

- Which methods are used, were they made explicit, did the author deviate from them?
- Are the methods appropriate, given the declared goal of the book?
- Is the content rigorous and substantive? Is the author well-informed about the issues related to the book?
- Are the examples presented compelling and engaging?
- Are the arguments being made new? Is the question new?
- Is the Author introducing new elements to a debate or offering a new perspective on the debate?
- What would someone who hasn't read the book gain from reading it?

Writing style (+/-)

- Is the style suited for the kind of readership the book is presumably for? What background knowledge should the reader possess?
- Is the structure clear and precise?
- Is the book engaging, is the style affecting, is it a pleasant read?

Organisation (+/-)

- What is the impact of the general structure of the book on the main argument? Does it help or hurt? Is there evidence of a specific reason for the author to choose the organisational scheme he/she did?
- Focus on the cohesiveness and coherence of the sections with respect to both their function within the whole book and their mutual relations. Does every section have a clear argument? Evaluating the internal relations among arguments in different sections can provide insight for better the overall structure of the book.
- Is there any part (section or argument) of the book which appears to be isolated or detached from the rest? Why?

Critical points? (-)

- Are there any blind spots in the author's argument or overview of the topic?
- If blind spots affect the argument or goal highlight its effect without being argumentative.
- If possible make concluding remarks on the book, what it did or did not accomplish, what was good or bad about the book, etc.

Be critical, but do not write an argumentative piece. If you find your piece is becoming too argumentative you could try:

- Pointing out potential issues for further consideration outside the scope of the review, i.e., 'this is not the place to pursue this argument/concern'.
- Opening a new document and starting afresh whilst keeping your argumentative points in the original file. Perhaps to develop at a later time for an argumentative piece.

How do I Publish a Book Review?

There are three common ways to end up writing a book review for publication. You will get a free book if you do a book review. There are three ways to get it:

(1) you might get asked,

But you might also take initiative

(2) by approaching the publisher, or
(3) by approaching a journal.

If there is a book you want to review, you can always ask the review editor of the journal (e.g. many journals print a list of books received for review). Give reasons why you want to review it (e.g. you are doing your research on the area).

Well-known review journals/blogs:

- Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews (NDPR): https://ndpr.nd.edu
- ISIS: http://www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/journals/journal/isis.html

Comprehensive lists of Philosophy Journals?

Probably, no list will be truly comprehensive, but there are ranked lists (e.g. according to expert judgments, or citation indices) and alphabetic lists.

Alphabetic lists:

- PhilPapers list: http://philpapers.org/journals (probably most inclusive)
- ESF journal list: https://dbh.nsd.uib.no/publiseringskanaler/erihplus/ (choose discipline and you get a full list with links to the Sherpa Romeo status (about open access polices of the journal).
- You could also ask faculty members about a list of journals suitable for your topics. Libraries sometimes have lists about journals subscribed to at the institutions, but often these are not very selective since many, many journals are included via database purchase that are not considered to be top journals and some top generals are quite expensive. So, it depends on the University whether or not it can afford all top journals.

Ranked lists:

Are published by institutions such as the European Research Council or by individuals. There is plenty of discussion on these:

- http://the-brooks-blog.blogspot.hu/2011/09/journal-rankings-for-philosophy_29.html,

- http://certaindoubts.com/philosophy-journal-information-esf-rankings-citation-impact-rejection-rates/,
- http://philosopherscocoon.typepad.com/blog/2013/08/rankings-what-are-they-good-for.html

What if I got asked to review a book and think the book is not good?

- If you get asked, have a quick look and decide whether you have enough reasons to review it to take the risk (you wanted to read it anyway; you need to say something on the topic).
- If you do not want to take the risk or you have other reasons not to accept the invitation, then recommend 2-3 people who might be able to review the book.
- If it turns out that (in-between, in the end) you think the book is not good enough to write a review, then immediately either return the book so that the editors can find an alternative referee or ask whether you can do something really short (more like a notice). Some journals offer this option. But this should be a worst-case scenario. The first step should be taken seriously to prevent returns and delays.

Further advice

Read lots of book reviews! Not just from philosophy. For additional material on book reviews see:
- ANU's Website: https://academicskills.anu.edu.au/resources/handouts/writing-critical-book-review
- Purdue Owl: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/704/01/

References

Sarton, George. 1960. "Notes on the Reviewing of Learned Books" *Science*. New Series, Vol. 131, No. 3408 (Apr. 22, 1960), pp. 1182-1187.

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A Guide to Peer-Review

A handout created by Matthew Baxendale

The primary purpose of a peer-review is to recommend either the acceptance, revise and resubmit, or rejection of a paper to the editor of a journal. However, a good peer-review should make this recommendation on the basis of comments and constructive criticism that will concurrently help the author of the paper develop the central argument and ideas of the paper. Taking part in the peer-review process is not only a service that is expected within the academic community, it is also a good opportunity to keep up-to-date with contemporary research and literature.

Before you get started

- Make sure you are comfortable enough with the topic area to review the paper.
- Make sure that there are no conflicts of interest, most importantly that you cannot identify the author of the paper.
- Familiarise yourself with the requirements of the journal, what are their goals, scope, and target audience (or for the issue, if it is a special issue).

The basic structure of a Peer-Review

Often a peer-review consists in writing a report based on the submitted paper.

(1) It is always a good idea to begin by outlining the basic structure of the main argument of the paper. This shows you understand the author's intentions in the paper and gives you a clear basis to begin discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the argument. It also shows to both the editor and the author that you've read and understand the paper. Additionally, if the argument you present is, in fact, not what the author intended, this might go to show that the author needs to present their argument more clearly and precisely.

(2) You might then outline some of the strengths of the paper. Your report is a recommendation to the editor, not a final verdict on the paper, so highlighting the strengths of the paper is important in giving a balanced recommendation.

(3) Next you need to outline the weakness of the paper. This is the most important section for giving constructive and precise criticism. Take each criticism in turn and discuss how this point relates to the overall impact of the author's argument. Perhaps there is an obvious counter-example available to one of the author's points. Perhaps a point seems interesting but needs further development to be convincing. There could be an inconsistency in their overall line of approach, maybe the author stated that they would address issues that they did not, or maybe there are issues that they really need to address in order to make the argument convincing.

(4) Conclude by summarising your points, on the basis of which provide your recommendation.

Key Questions to Consider

You should be making your recommendation and structuring your report based on some key questions:

- Is the argument clear, coherent, and precise?
- Does the author(s) do what they stated they would in the introduction to the paper, do you feel convinced that their proposed task has been completed?
- Is the argument well motivated and well defended?
- Do the authors make reference to key literature in the topic area that is salient to their own argument?
- Does the argument, or position of the paper, fill (or perhaps create) a gap in the literature?
- Is the paper well-structured and well formulated, is it clear to follow?
- Where could the weaknesses in the argument be, could there be obvious counter-examples or clear cut objections to some of the author's main points? If so, what are they?

Some General 'dos' and 'do nots' for Peer-Review

- In general it is not advisable to spend time on minor stylistic or grammatical issues – your job is not that of the copy-editor.
- The journal (or target publication more generally) is very important to the review of the paper, particularly to the scope, accessibility, and literature included. Rejecting a paper, or suggesting revisions may not merely be because of the strength of the argument, considerations of the appropriateness of the paper for the journal are also important.
- Don't merely list objections, you need to explain why these objections make the paper unpublishable, or why these objections are problematic for the paper as a whole.
- Tone is important! If you go into academia you will have papers rejected or subject to criticism, there is an important distinction between being critical and being offensive. Imagine you are receiving the report you are currently writing – would you feel that the report falls on the right side of that distinction? Be supportive and constructive in your criticism.

Additional Resources

Berk, J., Harvey, R., and Hirshleifer, D. (2015). 'Preparing a Referee Report: Guidelines and Perspectives', Available at SSRN: http://ssrn.com/abstract=2547191 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2547191

Caligiuri, P. & Thomas, D. (2013). 'From the Editors: How to write a high-quality review'., *Journal of International Business Studies* 44: 547-553

Lucey, B. (2013). 'Ten Tips from an Editor on Undertaking Academic Peer Review for Journals', Available at SSRN: http://ssrn.com/abstract=2331281 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2331281

Sometimes publishers have guidelines on their websites about what they expect from peer-reviewers. Elsevier's is particularly good, including an outline of the structure of the report: http://www.elsevier.com/reviewers/how-to-conduct-a-review#youve-been-asked-to-review

How to Explore your Field

A handout developed by Maria Kronfeldner

Nowadays, it is easy to find a lot of literature for any given philosophical topic. Just google ..., right? But how to find good and relevant references? Experienced researchers *know how* to do it and might even say that they simply ‚have a feel' for it, see it, but are at the same time lost if asked to explain how they do it. The goal of this handout is to give you some guidance for finding material for a research topic of your own.

1. Getting started

If your research question is not yet very specific (e.g. if it is hard to write down a list of keywords), you should first get a secure hold via consulting introductory material.

> **Have you checked the introductory material in the field?**
>
> - Encyclopedia (e.g. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy)
> - Lexica (e.g. Oxford Companion to Philosophy)
> - Guides to the literature (e.g. London Philosophy Study Guide)
> - Introductions and companions on the field
> - Bibliographies
>
> → You can derive your **keywords** from that material!
> → Get **a feeling for the debate** (who is who, where are the demarcation lines)!
> → You can also **check the library** shelf. The classification in libraries (which books are close to each other) is still a good entrance to a field! Take advantage of the work that goes in maintaining order in a good library!

2. The anchor strategy

To size down the literature that one finds and to make sure that one finds all the relevant pieces, one needs a search strategy. To search via *Google* (or even *Google Scholar, generally recommended)* and the resulting lucky hits cannot replace a systematic search in professional databases. Furthermore, to search and find is a cumulative process with loops of refinement of your search strategy and keywords. The anchor strategy is a way to do it.

The anchor strategy

1. Step: Set the anchor
1a. Take a core article that you know that it is good and relevant as an anchor. If that is not possible, go to 1b.
1b. Take a couple of core keywords as anchor. (If your anchor cannot be found in the place you search (e.g. in the library, in the database), this can (but does not have to be a hint) that you are searching in the wrong place.

2. Step: Exploit the anchor
Check the latest of the author. Maybe s/he has published on the topic something since then. If so, you can use it to find the most relevant papers in the debate inbetween. Places to look: The homepage or google-scholar page of the author/s; world-cat (the world-wide catalogue for all academic libraries), databases. But keep in mind that there are 'citation circles', which is why step 3 is important.

3. Step: Explore from there
Systematic search online (especially in professional databases) in order to get the latest research on the topic.

3. Online-Search Tools

Introductions

The CEU library offers face-to-face databank training by a librarian, if you need more help. See: http://library.ceu.edu/help/database-training (if you need help in organizing references, then add this to the topics you are interested when signing up).

Philosophy specific portals and databases, available via the CEU library

The CEU offers a philosophy specific entry: A subject breakdown of the list of databases, broadly defined. See: http://ceu.libguides.com/az.php?s=60475

PhilPapers: http://philpapers.org/
Philpapers cooperates not only with *Google Scholar* but also with *Philosophy Research Index*. Easy and quick access (as *Google Scholar)* and basically a mix of database and document archive. In contrast to Google Scholar, it is specific to philosophy. Authors themselves (as with Google Scholar) can create their own profile (and add items if something is missing). A special feature of *PhilPapers* is the categorization system, which is especially helpful if you have not yet decided about the focus of your research, i.e. if you do not yet have a proper anchor for your research. Full access only with institutional login! It needs to be mentioned that there is another philosophy specific database, the so-called "*Philosopher's Index*". CEU has no access to it however.

General databases, tools and portals

Global Search: http://library.ceu.edu
As the name says, this (now the default search if you go to the CEU library) is intended to be a global search tool. Given that it is pretty comprehensive you should go to this one first if you do a search. It will show you if the items you find are also in *Web of Science*, which allows to create a citation map. Another very useful tool is to search for "similar results" or to check who cited the anchor you have set for the search.

Google Scholar: http://scholar.google.de/
For a quick search, often with direct access to the full content (but most of the time you need your vpn-connection being set up!) A disadvantage: Results are not systematic, less advanced search management and hits cannot be exported as a list. Yet, you should also try the personal profiles that Google Scholar allows authors to create.

Web of Science: http://apps.webofknowledge.com
This is a general tool that covers a whole spectrum of disciplines and covers over 9000 academic journals. Still, some philosophical journals are missing. Since it is such a big database, a good search strategy is very important to get relevant findings and the anchor strategy can help. The options for refinement are particularly good. The most significant feature (that you won't get somewhere else) is the citation- and cluster analysis that it offers. Use it to exploit your anchor. Institutional login is necessary!

JSTOR: http://www.jstor.org/
JSTOR (für Journal Storage) is a very well searchable archive for a huge amount of academic journals from all kinds of disciplines. Many, even if not all philosophical journals are included. Recently it also included some books. If there is no subscription from the university for the respective journals you may not have access to the most recent volumes (sometimes the access might not be directly via the JSTOR site). Therefore, it is not a tool to get the complete recent picture! Yet, you can search the archives of the included journals, which is particularly useful since some authors react to each other in the same journal. Only with institutional login will you get full access

4. A couple of tips and tricks

Tips and tricks:
- How to recognize relevant literature? Here are three fast and frugal heuristics: (a) reliable recommendation (e.g. Syllabus, well-known encyclopedia); (b) recognized publication place (e.g. excellent journal, often marked by a very high rejection rate); (c) high citation rate. But be aware of false negatives (and also false positives)!
- Use the statistical tools such as "find similar articles", "cited by," and the like!
- Adapt your keywords after a while! Find synonyms and antonyms!

Exclude technical problems!

Checklist Explorative Search

1. Why and where do I search?

- Specify the topic (e.g. write down a couple of sentences and one precise question)
- Where should I search first? Justify your choice.
- Which time period is relevant?
- Special notes:

2. Search strategy

- What is my anchor?
- Write down at least 5 keywords? (Often the anchor text contains a couple of them already).
- Alternative keywords? (synonyms, antonyms, translations, more generic or more specific keyword better?)

3. Document your search

Think about a strategy to document your search trajectory so that you can retrieve it later when you continue or need to check back.

How to Write an Argumentative Piece

A handout created by the **CEU Philosophy Tacit Knowledge Group**

Finding your topic and the research question

Formulate a clear and concise research question to guide both your research and your writing. The scope of the question will depend on the format of your writing and its size, but generally keeping the research question as narrow and focused as possible will help structure your work best:

- Make a conscious decision to focus on just one of the issues in the debate.
- Use more specific keywords.
- You could choose a title and play around with it to get started.

How to develop a structure for a piece or for research and manage to keep it focused:

- It is usually advisable to being with a clear statement of what your thesis is, i.e., what you will argue in the paper.
- Some background work may be necessary next, perhaps to position your argument within the literature and the current state of the debate. Don't forget to motivate both the problem (your research question) and your solution to it.
- Remember to define any technical terms or esoteric phrases that are necessary for your argument, as well as from within the debate more generally - even if they seem obvious to you!
- Present your argument, in as much detail as the size of the piece allows. Carefully explain the premises or points and how the argument establishes your thesis.
- Consider objections to your view. Responding to objections is a productive way to strengthen the position of your own argument (as long as they are careful and considered objections, don't spend time fighting windmills!)
- Conclude, this should be more than a summary of what you have written up to this point. It is useful to reconstruct the thread of the argument and what you propose to have established but you could also include prospects for future research given your argument, or the implications that your thesis might have for related areas in the field.

Writing

Preparing to Write

Things to respect:

- Charitable reading: interpret the views and arguments you are going to discuss or criticize in the most charitable way. Charitable interpretation will not only convince your audience

that you are being as fair as you can be to your opponent, but will also increase the significance of your own essay.

- No minimal answer: an essay's quality is largely determined by the *depth* of understanding the issues that it exhibits, the *comprehensiveness* with which it treats them, and by how *thorough and convincing* a case the essay makes for its thesis.
- Argumentation: arguing for a position does not mean simply reporting your beliefs on the subject. Giving an argument for the view you are advocating involves giving you audience something that should count for them as a reason that they, too, should hold your view.
- Consistency: the arguments should be consistent, which means devoid of logical contradictions. If possible, it can be useful to abstract at least the essential argumentative scheme in logical form even before writing.

During the Researching Phase:

- Keep the research focus restricted and relative to the size and scope of the piece you are writing.
- Find the balance between being concise and being thorough
- Keeping it all in mind by methods of abstraction: you could try to summarise your position within the literature using mind maps, one-page summaries, or any form of abstracting that works for you.
- Remember that it is important to actively make the decision to stop researching and start writing once you have the material you need.
- Titles are important. They should always be informative, and sometimes they can be catchy and provocative too.

During the Writing Process

- Find a regular writing schedule: choose a time that suits your writing best and keep it free just for writing
- Don't edit your work or think too much about the topic whilst you write. Writing is a generative process in itself, your ideas will form and refine as you write.
- Getting rid of irrelevant details that lie beyond the scope of your piece: once the paper is finished, you should be able to go through it and explain how each paragraph (and each sentence) is making some contribution in support of the thesis your attempting to establish.

How to deal with an unexpected or surprising conclusion:

1. Drop the expected conclusion,
2. Change the conclusion, e.g., by narrowing or limiting the claim,
3. The "split-brain solution", considering your original argument as proposed by someone else and proceeding to criticising it.

Further Issues

- Don't be afraid to use the trashcan and start again.
- Don't try to write it all at once, give yourself enough time for the ideas to develop. Outline, giving one short sentence to each premise. Draft, giving yourself enough time to

clear your head between your first draft and your draft for review. A good paper isn't written, it's re-written (and re-written, and re-written).

- Say no more than you need to say. A philosophy paper should establish a modest point as clearly, carefully, and concisely as possible.
- Use direct quotes sparingly. Mostly employ them to present and interpret potential ambiguities in another author's work.

Further Resources
P. Kyle Stanford, 'The Seven Deadline Sins of Argumentative Writing'. Available here

Daniel Dennett, 'Rapoport's Rules', in *Intuition Pumps and Other Tools for Critical Thinking,* Ch. 3.
Ryan Robb, 'How to An Argumentative Essay'. Available here

Belcher, W.L. (2009). *Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks: a Guide to Academic Publishing Success,* California: SAGE Publishing.

Look around the 808 section for other books on general writing and research issues. More books can also be found in the Multimedia Library.

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Triadic Feedback Sessions

A handout developed by Matthew Baxendale

A triadic feedback session is designed to develop feedback skills, both in terms of offering critical feedback on the work of others, as well as integrating the comments of others into your own work. The interesting structure of the session gives all participants the chance to receive considered feedback on their work, give feedback to others, and develop discussion skills. Furthermore it is an enjoyable way to work together with others on your own work!

Set-up

For a triadic feedback session you need to be divided up into groups of three participants (other combinations are possible but three people per group works best). Each participant must have a piece of work with them that they wish to receive feedback on. The time required will depend on how long each stage of the session is divided up (as will be explained below). As a minimum you will probably need 45 minutes. For the purposes of explaining the session let's call each participant: person (a), (b), and (c). There are three 'stages' to each 'round' of the session which are then repeated dependant on the amount of people in the group, so ideally this will be three times. Each stage must be allocated a set amount of time in advance, a minimum of 5 minutes is advisable and around 10 minutes is probably ideal – although there is no limit on the amount of time!

Stage (1)

At this stage person (b) & (c) read person (a)'s work. If the texts to be discussed are longer (e.g. more than 1000 words), the texts should be read before, as preparation for the session. (b) and (c) are allowed to ask *clarificatory* questions and (a) is allowed to respond briefly. No discussion between (b) and (c) should take place at this stage, rather they should try to understand (a)'s work as best as possible. (a) should try to give as much information required to clarify their work but no more than that at this stage.

Stage (2)

At this stage person (b) & (c) openly discuss (a)'s work. They will discuss aspects they liked, potential areas of improvement, and ideally raise critical issues for the piece. Importantly, at this stage, person (a) is *not allowed* to comment on this discussion. (a) must listen attentively and consider the points being raised. This is a crucial, and novel, aspect of the triadic feedback session format. This stage gives (a) the opportunity to develop their skills in response to feedback. Rather than offering a quick response to suggestions, the requirement to stay silent means that (a) must consider the discussion carefully, absorb the critical points, before formulating a response. This can be difficult! To help (a), (b) & (c) must try not to talk *to* (a), rather they must try to ignore (a)'s presence as best they can.

Stage (3)

In the final stage (a) is given the opportunity to respond to (b) and (c)'s discussion. The authors (a) can thus ask clarificatory questions, push (b) & (c) on critical points that may have been unclear or are in need of development, and offer responses to feedback that they may disagree with. The author (a) should be encouraged to only respond to constructive feedback, critical points that can be used to improve the text.

This completes one round of the session, after which the three stages are repeated for each participant's work.

Further Useful Material

Material on How to Write a Peer Review

Berk, J., Harvey, R., and Hirshleifer, D. (2015). 'Preparing a Referee Report: Guidelines and Perspectives', Available at SSRN: http://ssrn.com/abstract=2547191 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2547191

Caligiuri, P. & Thomas, D. (2013). 'From the Editors: How to write a high-quality review'., *Journal of International Business Studies* 44: 547-553

Lucey, B. (2013). 'Ten Tips from an Editor on Undertaking Academic Peer Review for Journals', Available at SSRN: http://ssrn.com/abstract=2331281 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2331281

Sometimes publishers have guidelines on their websites about what they expect from peer-reviewers. Elsevier's is particularly good, including an outline of the structure of the report: http://www.elsevier.com/reviewers/how-to-conduct-a-review#youve-been-asked-to-review

Material on How to Write an Argumentative Piece

Kyle Stanford, 'The Seven Deadline Sins of Argumentative Writing'. Available here

Daniel Dennett, 'Rapoport's Rules', in *Intuition Pumps and Other Tools for Critical Thinking,* Ch. 3.

Ryan Robb, 'How to An Argumentative Essay'. Available here

Belcher, W.L. (2009). *Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks: a Guide to Academic Publishing Success,* California: SAGE Publishing.

Look around the 808 section for other books on general writing and research issues. More books can also be found in the Multimedia Library.

Material on Academic & Dissertation Writing

Eco, U. (2015). *How to Write a Thesis*, C. Farina & G. Farina (trans.), Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Germano, W. (2008). *Getting it Published*, 2nd Edition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Germano, W. (2013). *From Dissertation to Book*, 2nd Edition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Schimal, J. (2011). *Writing Science*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Material on the Publication Process

Lee, C. & Schunn, C. (2011). 'Social Biases and Solutions for Procedural Objectivity', *Hypatia* 26 (2): 352-373

Lee, C. *et al.* (2013). 'Bias in Peer Review', *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 64 (1): 2-17.

Rubow, L. Shen, R. & Schofield, B. (2015). *Understanding Open Access,* Authors Alliance, [Available Here.](#)

Suber, P. (2012). *Open Access.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

The Scholarly Kitchen – A Blog dedicated to current issues in scholarly publishing. [Available Here.](#)

'Answers from Academic Publishers', *Daily Nous.* [Available Here](#)

LSE Impact Blog. [Available Here.](#)

Lists of Philosophy Journals

The Directory of Open Access Journals – A comprehensive database of OA journals. [Available Here.](#)

PhilPapers list: http://philpapers.org/journals (probably most inclusive)

ESF journal list: https://dbh.nsd.uib.no/publiseringskanaler/erihplus/

A Sample Course Structure

Wk	Research and Publish Lab meetings (Know-How)	Course Meetings (Know-That)	Written Assignment for Homework (graded, replace term paper)	Reflective Learning Units	Additional Notes
1	Introduction	Introduction	Read the first part of the course book	Start a Research-and-Publish Notebook by writing down your individual learning goals	In order to allow for the writing of a book review the students read a book and discuss its content.
2	Discussion of the content of the book	Discussion of the content of the book	Complete the course book		The content of the book is discussed.
3	Tacit knowledge: „How to write a book review" Tasks: - Search for a good book review in the field (but not one on the book we were reading!) - Discuss it with respect to the standards for a good book review	Discussion of classic research literature	Write a book review (1000 words)	Make your notes regarding book reviews	Students discuss issues related to the writing of a book review in-class and write a first draft afterwards. Students contribute to the writing of a course handout on book reviews.

The next four weeks also contained short lectures and group discussion sessions on classic literature in the topic area. |
| 4 | Tacit Knowledge: "How to find the needle in the haystack?" Tasks: - Search online for 30 minutes the way you usually do - Search in Google Scholar - Discuss your keywords - Search in a professional | Discussion of classic research literature | Do a brief literature report on your topic of choice (500 words)

Revise your book review | Make your notes regarding database sarch | We had a joint session with the CEU library in which they introduced students to various databases, as well as strategies and methods for utilising these databases in their own research. The students were then tasked with developing these new skills by conducting a short literature report on a topic of their choice, with the aim of using this research for their argumentative piece later in the course. |

#		Discussion	Assignment	Notes	Description
	philosophical database				
5	Training: How to give critique, how to take critique in **Triadic Feedback Groups** Tasks: Discuss your book review with peers	Discussion of classic research literature		Make your notes on what you want to learn in regards to giving critique and taking critique Meet with the course instructor and discuss your notebook	Students participated in a triadic feedback session with peers to critically discuss their own book reviews and give constructive criticism on others'.
6	Training: **Develop an argument of your own** Tasks: - How are you developing an argument? Share your technique and develop it. - Write down the standards of evaluation	Discussion of classic research literature	Do an **argumentative piece** on your topic of choice (1000 words)		Students discussed in-class issues related to writing an argumentative piece and contributed to a course handout on the subject. At this juncture we also conducted a mid-term feedback session, led by the peer-tutor with the course instructor absent
7	**Develop an argument of your own** - Discuss in groups your draft of an argumentative piece	Discussion of contemporary research literature			The students discussed the progress they were making with their argumentative pieces and further refined the course handout collaboratively. For the know-that meetings, students presented and discussed the anchor paper for their argumentative piece. This paper had been selected by students as a result of the know-how sessions on database research.
8	Tacit Knowledge: **"How to do a peer-review"** Tasks: - Do a double blind peer-review of an argumentative piece from your peers (250	Discussion of contemporary research literature	Finalize your **peer review** and share it (250 words)	Make notes on what you learned and what you still wish to learn regarding peer review processes	Students discussed issues related to peer-review. They then conducted blind peer reviews on one another student's argumentative piece, before finalising the reviews after class.

		words)		
9	Tacit Knowledge: **The world of journal publishing** (citation metrics, open access) * with in-house input from Diane Geraci	Discussion of contemporary research literature	Make notes on what you learned and what you still wish to learn regarding academic publishing	In this class we discussed material related to publication bias, methods of peer-review, and alternative forms of publishing, for example open-access publishing. We benefitted from input from a CEU graduate journal, Pulse,
10	Guest lecture: **Trends and problems in academic publishing**	Discussion of contemporary research literature	Make notes on what you learned and what you still wish to learn regarding academic publishing	In this session we had guest speakers from the CEU Library and from the CEU Press to discuss issues relating to publication with students.
11	**How to get it Published**	Discussion of contemporary research literature	Make notes on what you learned and what you still wish to learn regarding academic publishing. Meet with the course instructor and discuss your notebook and your state of art regarding your learning goals. Finalize your Research-and-Publish Notebook	A final discussion on publication took place in this class. Students prepared for the meeting with the editor by reflecting on and discussing, drawing on the wide-range of issues discussed to this point. Other loose ends related to course assignments were also tied up in this final substantive class.
12	**Meet the Editor**	Preparation for meeting with the editor		In this session we had a skype meeting with the Editor of a philosophy journal. Beforehand, students discussed and refined the questions they wished to ask the editor, particularly given the past few weeks' discussing publication

Some Experiences and Feedback

How students felt their know-how had improved:

- Improved skills and greater autonomy in the choice and evaluation of the relevant literature as a starting point for my research.
- Greater self-confidence in receiving/giving critical feedback and in justifying my argumentative choices.
- My know-how improved in writing book reviews and peer-review reports.
- Database efficiency
- Narrowing the focus of my research

How students felt they are now better equipped to research and to write:

- I believe I have acquired more self-consciousness with respect to my own argumentative skills and ability to work with different formats of academic writing (e.g. book reviews, peer reviews, etc.)
- I understand better the important role that peer-reviewing has and how beneficial it is for the writer that is submitting a paper.
- I am confident to write either peer or book reviews, my argumentation has improved by becoming more concise, and my ability to find relevant articles has improved.
- I feel that now I can find and follow a right strategy for writing my philosophical papers.
- I think this course really helped me to demystify writing and publishing.

How students felt their publication know-how improved:

- I have a clearer idea of the general standards required for publication and of the importance of improving my work by benefiting from the peer review process (before and after submission)
- Knowing about tools like web of science and learning techniques for mapping out a research area makes me more confident in knowing when to stop reading and start writing, which in turn makes it even possible to attempt to publish.
- I feel more confident in my work. I feel it is a part of the normal academic process to start publishing at this point and to even try doing so in very influential journals.

Which course activities engaged students the most:

- The book discussion, the contemporary literature discussion and the writing process which lead to the collaborative handouts were all extremely engaging learning experiences, especially in virtue of the co-operative and supportive environment and the active and autonomous role that each of us was taking up. The triadic feedback sessions were also very engaging from the learner's point of view.
- Coming up with questions to ask the editor of Erkenntnis, and being able to engage with him was really exciting. It gave real context to the articles we had read about publication bias.
- Writing a book review

- During discussions about publishing because I knew little about that. And also during the lecture about database research.

How students felt they benefited from peer-learning activities:

- The triadic feedback sessions and the internal peer review process were extremely helpful in that the active role we were supposed to take enhanced the learning process and the sense of responsibility in giving/receiving feedback.
- Both activities of giving feedback on the book reviews and on the argumentative essays were very useful for me because, given that I didn't know much about the topics people were talking about, this meant that I couldn't have given comments on content, and so I was forced to give comments on structure and other formal aspects, especially on the argumentative structure, and because of this it was a very enjoyable and informative activity.
- The most helpful was peer reviewing of book reviews; I could get acquainted with diverse outputs which indicated how differently other students had understood the same task

General comments

- It would be very interesting to develop the research & publish lab as an independent workshop which could actually lead students to elaborate and publish their papers.
- This was the best course I've ever been to, it was perfect for me. It was dense, it was about lots of things, I had to work a lot, and this is how one can become better (I hope).