

Editorial: To Review Is to Be

The Physical Review is now 130 years old! It might be an appropriate time to make a list of our most impactful articles, chart the growth of the publications from one journal to seventeen, or provide a vision for the future of our journals and scholarly publishing. Instead, I would ask you to consider the content of our journals: think about an article that inspired new work, provided essential information, or just made you smile. That article is, of course, the creation of the authors, and they receive the credit. But it is also the result of the editorial team and, most importantly, referees: scholars just like you, who volunteer their time to ensure that articles are correct, readable, and novel. Technically, peer review begins when the manuscripts are sent to the referees, but peer review as a process begins when authors first anticipate their readers. As reviewers, do we get credit? As current consumers of the journals, we have been borrowing on credit our whole careers: we owe to future readers what the past referees provided for us. It does not require a discourse on metaphysics [1] to understand that if everyone shirked their duty, peer-reviewed publications would disappear, it would become increasingly difficult to filter the wheat from the chaff, and it would become *impossible* to trust the scientific record.

Early career researchers should be brought into the review process by their mentors through joint reviews. Before a mid-career scholar passes on a review request (or worse, ignores the request!), they might consider the contribution to their success provided by the time and thoughts of their referees. Senior scientists concerned about their legacy can offer no greater impact on the future than ensuring that there is a reliable and coherent record of the state of our field. Make time to review. Compare that effort to the time you spend on activities that embellish your curriculum vitae or the time and resources you spend at conferences. And then, when you do review, choose which journals get your time: support your local learned society!

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REFERENCE

See, for instance, I. Kant, *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* (J.F. Hartknoch, Riga, 1785).