

Published in *Editors' Notes*, 11.2 (1992), 23–28.

## Tasks Involved in Editing and Producing the *Journal of Hispanic Philology*

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Early in 1992 I decided to discontinue editing and publishing the *Journal of Hispanic Philology*, which I founded in 1976. In a word, the reason was overwork, which resulted in health problems, and a feeling that the personal rewards no longer justified the personal costs. As a step toward reaching this decision, I made up a detailed list of the tasks involved, and am offering this as a parting contribution to *Editor's Notes*. Items marked with an asterisk were ones with which I had help.

Some of my colleagues decided they did not wish to see the *Journal of Hispanic Philology* disappear, assembled some additional resources, and have announced their intent to continue it with a slightly different focus.

### I. Getting articles.

- A. Suggest to authors of interesting papers that they submit them. Be careful not to make commitments to items not seen in writing.
- B. Answer inquiries from prospective authors. Send out style guidelines.
- C. Determine if articles received are within scope of journal. The journal receives many manuscripts out of scope.
- D. Give a cursory reading to see if article is worthy of serious consideration. More than a few submissions were not research articles.
- E. Write letter if article is out of scope or not worthy of consideration. If author included return envelope and postage, return MS.
- F. Send acknowledgment form to all other authors. This form asks for the author's signature that the article was not under consideration elsewhere, that it would not be reprinted or incorporated in a book without permission and credit, and asks for information about the author's word processing program and disk format.
- G. If article is within scope and worthy of consideration but poorly printed, with faint ribbon or defective printer, ask author to fix before proceeding.
- H. Mail articles to members of editorial board, as needed.
- I. Review evaluations by editorial board members.
- J. Make decision: publish as is; with minor revision; conditional on major revision; not at all.
- K. Write authors, usually explaining reasons for negative decision, and/or making suggestions or requests for revision.
- L. For those articles that were resubmitted with revisions (not all were), check to see if revisions followed instructions. Repeat the above as necessary.

- M. Communicate final acceptance. Inform author when article will probably appear.
- N. Translate abstracts.

## II. Book reviews.

- A. Request appropriate books that did not come in automatically.
- B. Log each book in; decide if a candidate for review or not.
- C. Add books not being reviewed, if within scope, to the Books Received list, published irregularly. Dispose of books not reviewed: to colleagues, to library, to self.
- D. Prepare proper review heading.
- E. Identify possible reviewer.
- F. Write possible reviewer. (Repeat until reviewer is found.)
- G. Prepare mailing label, print out reviewer's instructions with proper review heading, mail out book.
- H. Send reminder notices to tardy reviewers.

## III. Write my column.

## IV. Prepare annotated lists of suggested research topics.

- V. \*Prepare section itemizing contents of congress proceedings and homage volumes. Obtain copies from sometimes reluctant publishers. Get others from library or borrow from friends. Mark tables of contents showing articles to itemize. Check work of student that typed tables of contents. Add unusual characters the student cannot handle. Add proper headings.

## VI. Prepare index (every third issue).

## VII. Process accepted material (articles and reviews).

- A. Move material on Macintosh disks to IBM-compatible disks.
- B. Convert material not in WordPerfect into WordPerfect.
  - 1. Use WordPerfect's "Convert" program.
  - 2. Use conversion program "Software Bridge."
  - 3. Go to computer center in unsuccessful search for help with the output of obsolete word processing programs.
  - 4. For material done on a Macintosh with Microsoft Word, whose authors had not followed the instruction to save them with "fast save" off (some did not understand the instruction), go to Macintosh which department owns, open file, save it again with fast save off. Then go back to PC and repeat above steps. No PC-based file conversion program accepts Macintosh Microsoft Word files that have been "quick saved."
  - 5. Reenter by hand untranslatable special characters.
- C. Convert material not in MLA style into MLA style. (One of the most irritating steps of the process. There is not even a common national style, much less an international one; journals in linguistics use a different style than journals in literature. As a result, many authors are not familiar with MLA, or confused about its differences from other styles. MLA, which has also made poorly explained changes in its style, does not address

many important questions, such as book review format.) Add notes asking authors to supply first names instead of initials, to fix obviously incorrect references, and the like.

- D. Rewrite defective language, as needed.
- E. Format the material. Collections of commands or macros to carry out some of these tasks are described in my article "Processing Electronic Manuscripts on the PC," originally in *Editors' Notes*, 9, No. 1 (Spring, 1990), 20-30; revised and expanded version in *Scholarly Publishing*, 22 (1991), 93-108.
  - 1. Remove authorial formatting (margins, tab settings, font commands, headings, etc.).
  - 2. Put quotation marks outside periods and commas. With British authors, convert double to single quotes and vice versa.
  - 3. Convert typewriter-type hyphens and dashes into those used in typesetting.
  - 4. Convert endnotes to footnotes.
  - 5. Remove extra spaces separating footnotes.
  - 6. Remove spaces between paragraphs.
  - 7. Indent quotations. Some authors, despite instructions, indented quotations with hard returns and tabs or spaces on every line. Since fonts necessarily changed in typesetting, and these indentations then produced nonsensical results, they had first to be removed, a tedious manual step.
  - 8. Change underscore to italic.
- F. Run spelling checker on material; correct as needed.
- G. Add font and margin information.
- H. Format article title, author, block introductory quotations (if any), authorial address.
- I. Turn on hyphenation; page through article answering hyphenation queries.
- J. Add running heads.
- K. Print out proofs; eyeball; send to authors.
- L. Note date proofs sent. Write authors who do not return proofs promptly.
- M. When corrected proofs arrive, input corrections. (A painstaking step, as authors sometimes changed correct spelling to incorrect or wished to remove formatting.)

#### VIII. Assemble the issue.

- A. Decide order of articles and reviews.
- B. Add sequential page numbers.
- C. Do trial printout on scrap paper; check page breaks; adjust as needed.
- D. Prepare table of contents, with abstracts.
- E. Do final printout.
- F. Proofread further as time permits.
- G. Take printout to copy shop, copy, and bind.
- H. Mail to printer with letter of instruction.

#### IX. Mail the issue.

- A. Pick up plastic bins from post office.
- B. Get postage added to postage meter.
- C. Add to subscription database authors of articles, book reviewers, and authors of books reviewed, so they will get a copy of the issue if not already subscribers.
- D. Export addresses from subscription database, sorted by mail class. Import to WordPerfect and print mailing labels.
- \*E. Place labels on envelopes and cover with tape.
- F. Check issues received from printer.
- \*G. Add postage to envelopes.
- \*H. Stuff issues, seal. If last issue of a volume, insert expiration notices for individual subscribers.
- \*I. Cart to post office.
- \*J. Cart excess to mini-warehouse.
- K. Shlep 120 copies to the university library.
- L. Bill the library. When they pay, log payment and add to checks for bank.
- M. Pay the printer.

X. Mail offprints.

- A. Prepare mailing labels for each article and review
- B. Put labels on envelopes, add tape, stuff envelopes, include author's original disk, weigh each individually, add postage, seal, place in mail.

XI. Mail tear sheets to publishers of books reviewed.

- A. Prepare envelopes with publishers' addresses.
- B. Tear pages out, label, stuff in envelopes, add postage, place in mail.

XII. Items not associated with a particular issue.

- A. Yearly chores.
  1. Print out year-end dump of database, for security.
  2. Fill out IRS forms.
  3. Renew annual corporation registration.
  4. Fill out subscription dealers' annual forms. Also fill out forms for directories of periodicals.
  5. Host (in combination with a publisher friend) receptions for authors at MLA and other conventions.
- B. Subscription maintenance.
  1. Post each payment received.
  2. Deposit checks. Finding a bank that would accept checks from Spain and Japan, which had no electronic routing numbers, presented an ongoing problem.
  3. Correspond with subscription dealers who order for incorrect periods, or who specify a volume and a year that do not match.
  4. Prepare invoices for direct billed subscriptions at end of each year and end of each volume. (Volumes ended at the end of June, the poorest decision I made when starting the journal and the source of no end of correspondence and confusion.)
  5. Place invoices in envelopes, add postage, and mail.

6. Prepare expiration notices for individual subscribers.
  7. Answer claims from libraries and subscription dealers.  
These were very numerous when the journal always ran behind its cover date.
- C. Back issue sales.
1. Respond to requests for price quotations.
  2. For each order, make out invoice.
  3. When payment received, go to miniwarehouse, pick the issues, make out mailing label(s), stuff mailing bags, add postage, place in mailbox or take to post office, according to size.
  4. Log payment, add to checks going to bank.
- D. Recruit editorial board members. Keep them happy. If they do not respond to mail or are not impartial, get rid of them.
- E. Identify, train, and answer questions from student workers.
- F. Purchase office supplies.
1. Mailing bags, in several sizes.
  2. 7½ x 10½ clasp envelopes, a hard to find size.
  3. Window envelopes with return address and postage, from the Post Office.
  4. Laser printer cartridges. Experiment unsuccessfully with using refilled cartridges.
  5. Letterhead.
  6. Computer disks.
  7. Paper.
  8. Labels for the laser printer, ten per sheet.
  9. Labels for the typewriter, four per sheet.
- G. Set up the assistant editor's modem. Make our computers read each other's disks.
- H. Set up all the above procedures.
1. Write and debug the macros.
  2. Design database used for subscriptions.
  3. Create invoices, link them with database.
  4. Write form letter to acknowledge articles submitted; instructions to authors and book reviewers; style guide.
- I. Design pages of journal.
- J. Evaluate, select, and purchase hardware and software. Sell the first initial choice of laser printer, buy another. See, on this process and on common errors to avoid, "In-House Typesetting on a Tight Budget," *Scholarly Publishing*, 21 (1990), 205-20. The LaserJet III printer, which I now use and am satisfied with, was released after this article was written.
- K. Purchase and install software updates.
- L. Obtain type from vendor; install it on the computer.
- M. Maintain computers and printers. (There was deliberate duplication of all hardware in another identical system used by my wife on unrelated work, but available for the journal in emergency.) Calibrate and optimize hard disks. Replace defective hard disks. Store a spare hard disk. Add memory.
- N. Back up contents of computer's hard disks every day. Store at another location.