



# Academic Publishing in Military Studies: Insight and Tips from an Experienced Editor

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# Presentation Overview

1. Manuscript Review Process
2. Editors Perspective
3. Tips for article acceptance in AF&S
4. Book Reviews (Don Travis)
5. General Tips (content quality)
6. To Do -- Before submit
7. To Do – R&R
8. Keys to Success (personal)



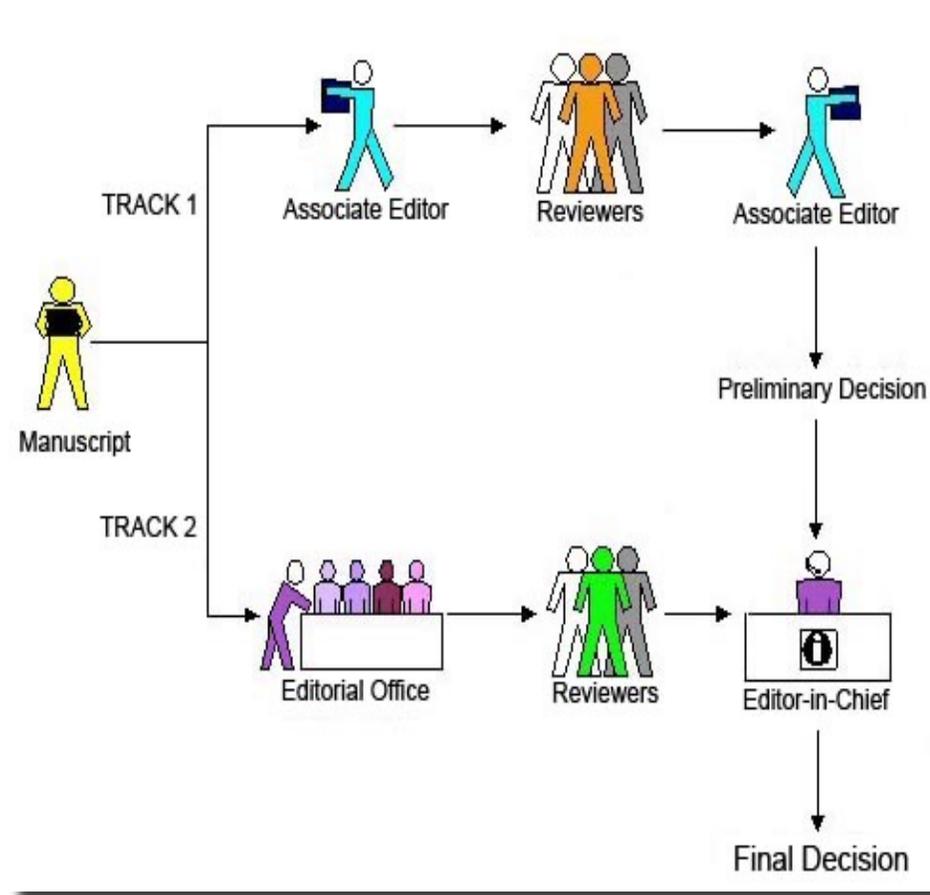


# Double Blind Peer Review



Promotes Fairness in Process

# Editorial Process (submission - publication)



# Stage 0 (Before submission)

- Getting the Manuscript Ready for Review
- Follow manuscript guidelines

## Armed Forces & Society



Impact Factor: **1.135** / 5-Year Impact Factor: **1.318**

JOURNAL HOMEPAGE

**SUBMIT PAPER**



*Armed Forces & Society (AFS)* a quarterly publication with international scope publishes articles on civil-military relations, veterans, force effectiveness and diversity, military culture, officer education and training, military institutions, ethics, unit cohesion, military families, peacemaking, privatization, public opinion and conflict management. The editors and ... | [View full journal description](#)

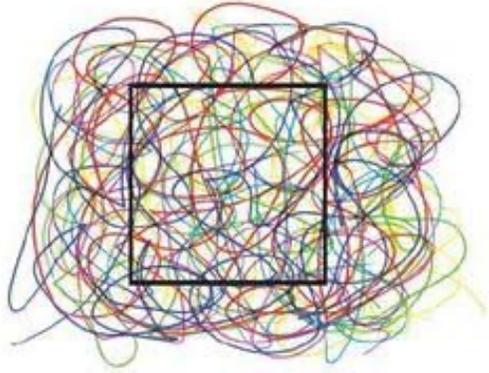
Browse journal

Current issue

OnlineFirst

All issues

Free sample



If far outside guidelines

**Return to Author to Fix**

## A few basics

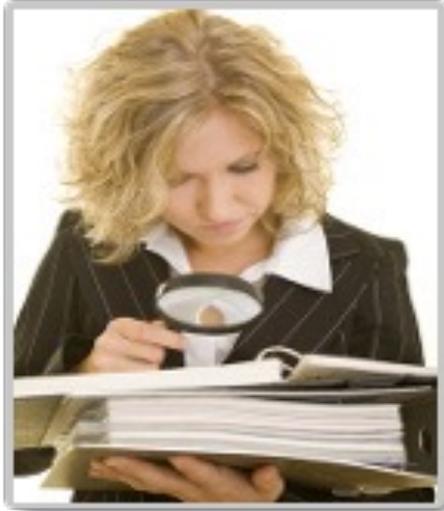
- APA 7.0 Style. (examples)
- Endnotes
- **Anonymize**
- Figures/tables at end of paper

# Stage 1

- Manuscript arrives
- Managing Editor Review
- Editor's Review  
Reject 40- 60%
- Find Reviewers



# Stage 2



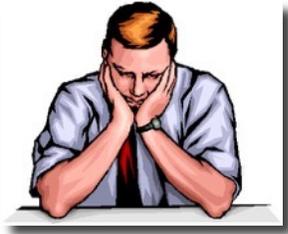
- Send out for review  
2-4 reviewers
- Reviews in
- Reviewers' assessment

# Stage 3

## First Round Decision



- Accept Very rare (1 in 500)



- Reject
- Revise and Resubmit



# Stage 4 +++

- R&R decision, comments sent to author
- Revised Manuscript and letter with explanation arrives
- Re-review Re-review (could be 2 - 4 rounds)
- Decision - Accept/Reject
- Sent to publisher for processing

# Stage 5

- Copyediting by SAGE
- Author queries – Clarification/approval
- [Onlinefirst](#). (5-7 weeks)
- Assigned to an Issue (12 – 18 months)





Editors  
Perspective



Scholar's perspective

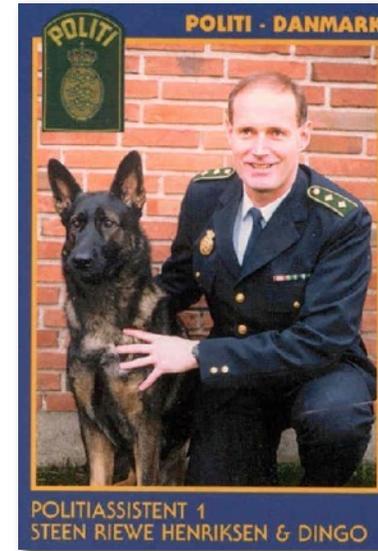
# Steward or Caretaker Role



# Editor as Coach and Cop



Improve the manuscript



Make sure poor material gets caught

# Most Precious Asset



Reviewer time

More challenging to find reviewers

# What is the citation potential?

Index used to rank and rate journals

1.4. 2-year

1.6 5-year

## Impact Factor





# Tips Article Acceptance

Getting past the  
Editors Desk

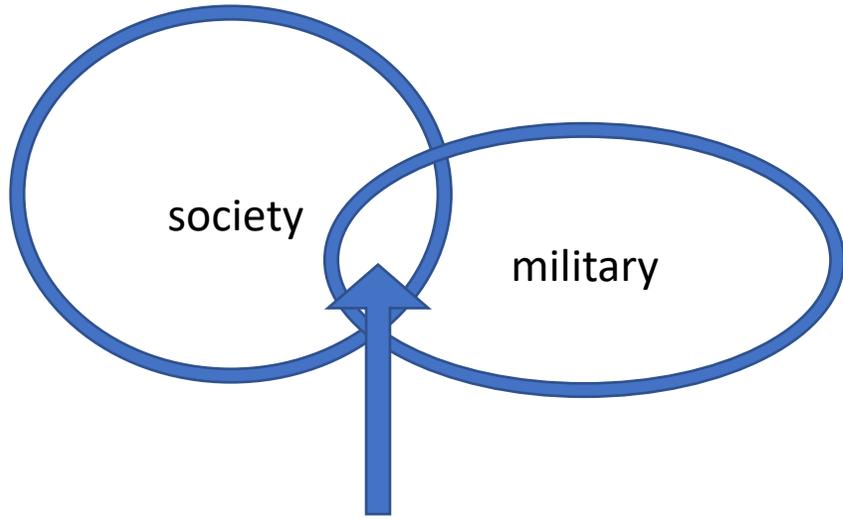




## **POOR FIT**

Outside scope or mission of the journal

# Bulls eye topics



- civil-military relations
- professionalism/leadership
- veterans & reserves
- military families
- recruitment/retention
- public opinion/popular culture
- gender/race issues
- peacekeeping
- domestic use of military
- civil/military cooperation
- health/mental health
- contracting
- police/military interface
- cohesion/readiness

## Not Bullseye topic (far end of dartboard)

- Need to make the case – fits the mission (implicit or explicit)
- Look for new topics. Forest changes



“Dynamic intersection of Military & Society”

[https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-3-030-02866-4\\_31-1](https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-3-030-02866-4_31-1)

*Handbook of Military Science*



**Audience --**  
Scholars/Policy Makers  
International & Interdisciplinary  
Military scholars

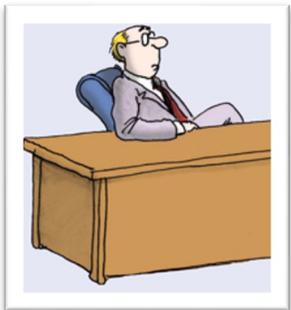
## **AVOID**

- Purely Military topics (strategy, tactics)
  - Purely International Relations Topics
- If audience is military leadership of a particular country
  - Narrowly tailored for a specific discipline
  - Lots of country or discipline specific acronyms

# Strong Abstract



Gateway to reviewers



Gateway to readers and citations

# ABSTRACT

Raw size is the way of  
This jams and is the  
of the most reliable  
of the most reliable  
signal is the the-empirical of the a  
obscure this is first appeared in  
script related to tension based on  
on closer examination you found that  
this text is not genuine.

Does the  
find the  
to be re



## Include (empirical)

- Purpose
- Method
- Key findings
- Take-away

## Avoid

- Acronyms
- Convoluted sentences
- Obvious conclusion

(more research needed)



## Strong/Interesting Title

- Not too long
- Not too short
- keywords
- Limit acronyms

Title



Abstract



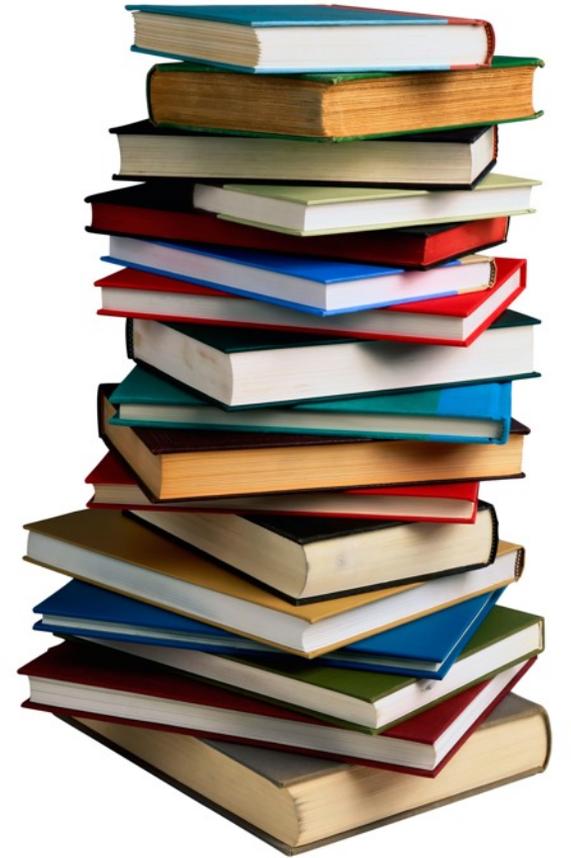


# Introduction

- Big Picture
- State purpose or aim early
- Compelling Case for research question
- Strongest Writing

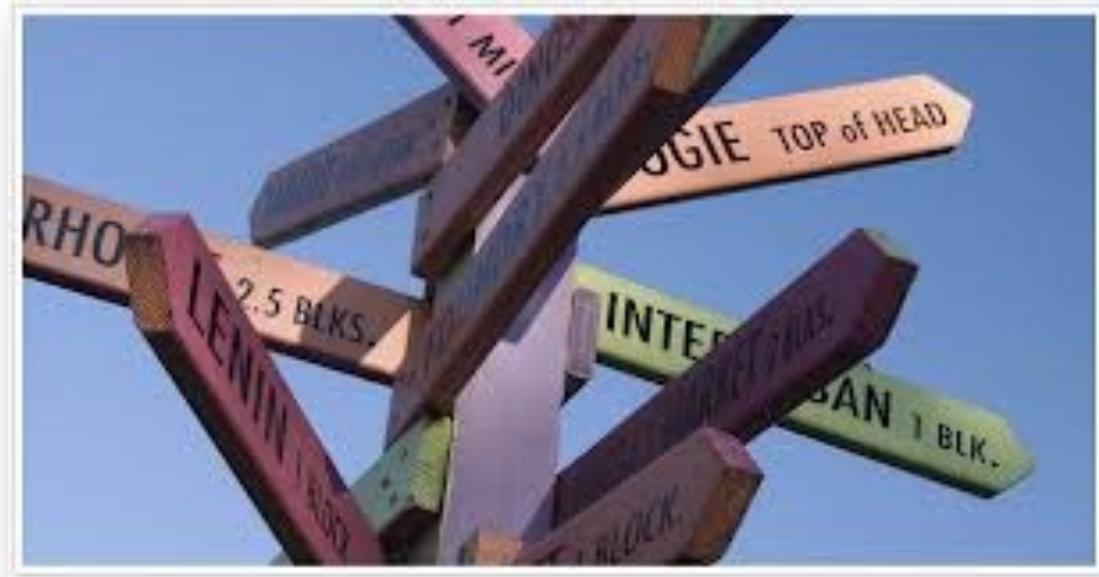
# Bibliography

- Overall Quality of references
- Cites to journal submitting to
- Find Reviewers



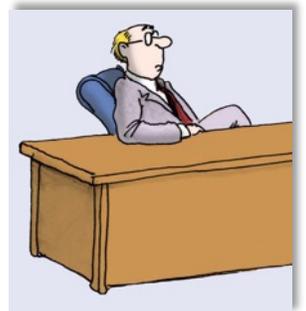
# Easy to Navigate

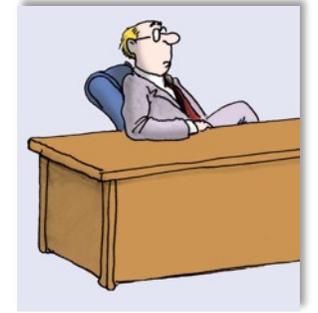
- Clear logical subheadings
- Tables – Stand alone quality
- Easy productive skim



# Discipline Specific Orientation

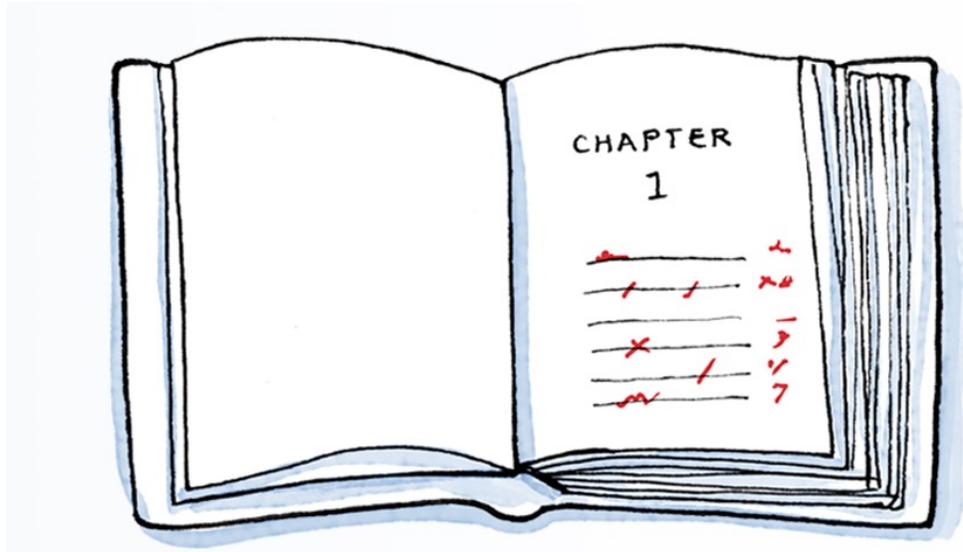
- Do not Consider AF&S Audience (Interdisciplinary, international military scholars)
- Use of jargon and write for discipline specific audience (Psychology & Medicine)
- Lots of discipline specific acronyms
- Lots of general workforce references (literature review)  
The military is not just another job.





Inadequate sample size  
(7 interviews, 2 focus groups @  
university Y, systematic review 5  
articles)

# More like a book chapter than an article.



- analyzes existing knowledge
- synthesizes knowledge
- descriptive
- Bib filled with books



- adds to knowledge
- argues a position using reasons/evidence
- analytical or explanatory
- methodology section

# Quality Threshold



- Poor Writing
- Tired ideas
- Lacks Coherence
- Limited generalizability
- Will it give a reviewer a headache?



# Book Reviews



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**Managing Editor**

**Book Review Editor**

***Armed Forces & Society***

➤ **So what? Why bother with a book review?**

➤ **What kind of books? Books related to the intersection of Armed Forces and Society, such as:**

- Civil-Military Relations**
- Military Organizations**
- Conflict Resolution**
- Logic and Consequences of War**
- Terrorism**
- Military Leadership & Professionalism**
- Cohesion**
- Peacekeeping**
- Recruitment and Retention**
- Reserve Forces and Veterans**
- Representation Issues**
- Military Family and Health Issues**
- Military History**



# Book Reviews

*Three phases...*

A. We identify a book:

- ✓ A book is brought to our attention by an individual
- ✓ We independently gain awareness of a book
- ✓ **An author submits a review**

B. We seek out a reviewer:

- ✓ Who is qualified to review the book?
- ✓ Solicitation or recommendations: finding the right author
- ✓ **Authors, as reviewers, submit their reviews**

C. Submission of the review, then review of the manuscript



# Book Reviews

## Book Review Submission Guidelines



Book reviews must be submitted electronically via <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/afs>; authors must establish an online account on the SageTrack system powered by ScholarOne. Manuscripts are not accepted by e-mail nor are they 'pre-reviewed' by editorial staff for suitability.

Book reviews should adhere to all submission guidelines and should be approximately 1500 words and will not exceed 2000 words.

### Manuscript Quality: Rating Criteria

- Appropriateness of book
- Readability/writing style
- Relevance/ interest to readership



# Book Reviews

## Questions?

Contact the journal's editorial staff at [afsjournal@iusafs.org](mailto:afsjournal@iusafs.org) if you have any questions or concerns about submitting a book review that are not addressed here.

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[dontravis752@yahoo.com](mailto:dontravis752@yahoo.com)

**Managing Editor**

**Book Review Editor**

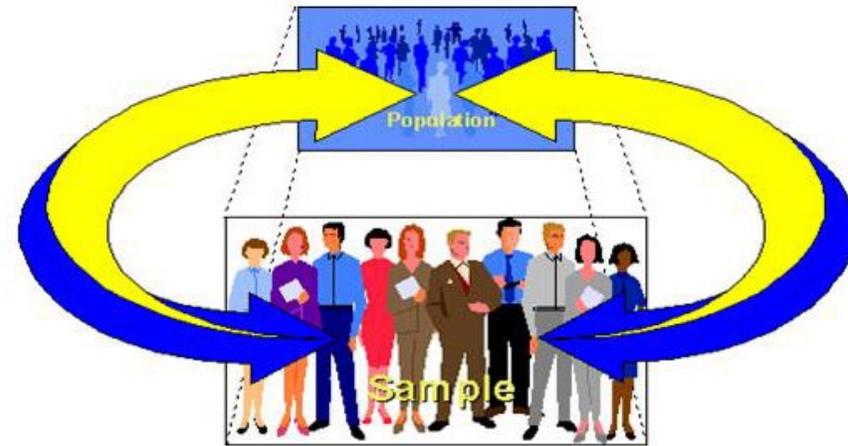
***Armed Forces & Society***



To ensure meets quality threshold



Strong  
External Validity  
Broadly Defined



Survey Research

Case Studies multiple countries

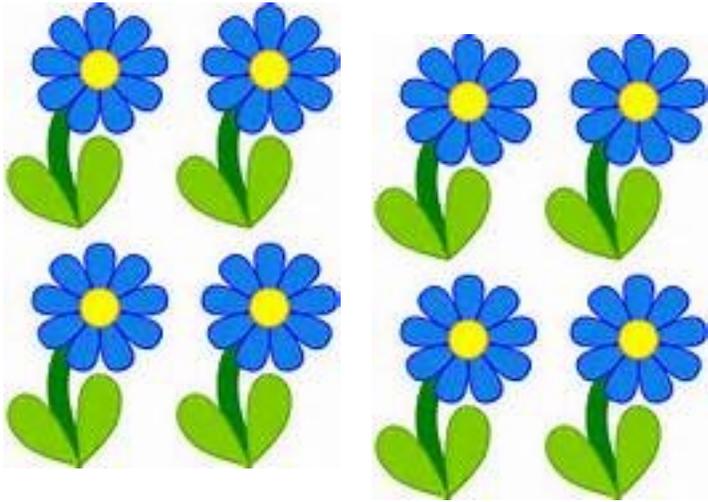
Theoretical analytical generalizability



# Missing Methodology Section

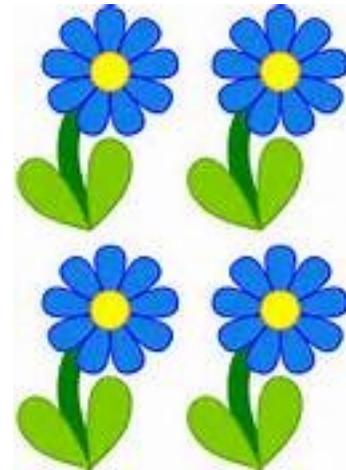
Most often with Case Study





Enough Information

Imagine **how to Replicate**





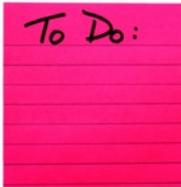


## Do Data and Claims match?

- Inappropriate generalization (qualitative research)
- Recognize Alternative Hypotheses



Before you send it out



# Strategize the best fit journals

Find journal description, does it fit?

What is journal's quality threshold?

Have they published articles on similar topics?

Preferred Methodology?



**End** with a plan and a ranking of journals

**DO YOUR HOMEWORK**



Send to journals you cite!





Revise & Resubmit Decision

*To do list*



Get control of emotions



Open minded Creative Thinking

# Revise & Resubmit Explanation Letter

- Organized
- Thoughtful (not superficial)
- Disagree OK
  - good reason





# Additional





- Don't take it personally (key test how you deal with first rejection)
- Try again (use comments from reviewers)





- Share your work widely – present at conferences
- Conference Papers/Syllabi on Academia.edu, Institutional Repository, Research Gate

# Cultivate Collaborators



No downside to “Good” co-author(s)

# Two Personal Rules for Successful Scholarship



1. The only good dissertation is a completed dissertation.
2. Better in a library than a file cabinet.





## Become an Active Reviewer

- Familiar with behind the scenes
- Hone critical review skills – apply to own work
- Respect of the editor
- Get a sense of what is a strong/weak paper
- Active member of scholarly community



## Shed the insider perspective

- Consciously write for a larger audience
- Limit unnecessary acronyms
- Stand alone tables – easy skim



International & Interdisciplinary

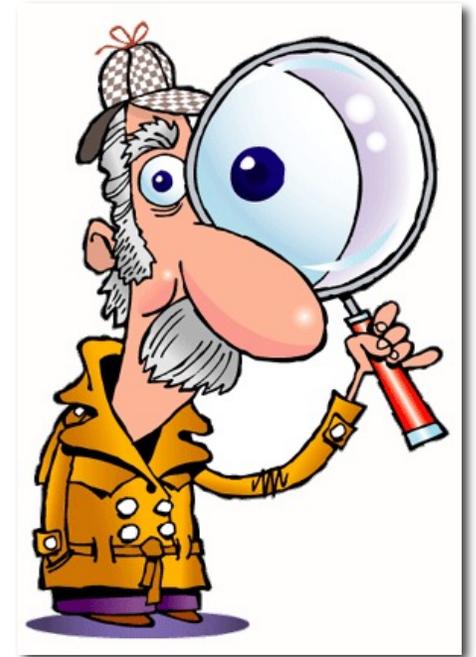


# Discoverability

## Optimizing Article For Search Engines

### EXTRA ATTENTION

- Key Words
- Abstract
- Title





Questions??

## References and Additional Resources

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