

# Literature and insights Editorial

## Beauty and scholarship

What if I told you that the rejection of papers that you have carefully researched, written and sent to selected publications was based on social media and consequent perceptions of the journal's hipness and marketability? It would immediately draw into question the professionalism and integrity that we expect from robust scholarship. In fact, it would be regarded as scandalous. Or would it?

I will go out on a limb here and say that none of you have had a 100 per cent success rate with submitting papers to journals, at least in the first instance. I certainly have not. It is hardly surprising given how competitive the process is, and that there may be big variations in quality. In the end, it is down to the standards of the journal in question as understood and applied by its editorial team. Though you may not be happy with the outcome of your submission, you have to accept it.

Let us take the other extreme. If a particular journal accepted every paper submitted to it, i.e. there were no rejections whatsoever, the opinion of it in the relevant professional community would plummet. That would be the common reaction to such an approach. There is another way, however, that would expand the world of accounting journals and capitalise on an unexplored opportunity without drawing into disrepute the traditional world of academic publication. Also, it would be right up to date with current trends.

It is in true entrepreneurial spirit then that I now give you, readers of the *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal (AAAJ)*, advance notice of a new journal that promises to make publishing in this area ultra-fashionable, reasonably accessible and also affordable. On that last point, regrettably there will be a fee for submission but it will be to cover costs associated with running the publication.

How will it work? The exciting thing is that it will be modelled on the best restaurants and, therefore, on existing practice, so relying on known principles. That bit about restaurants might surprise you but this is the age of innovation, after all. The journal will also be entirely online. There will be only one criterion, though it is necessarily subjective since it involves aesthetics. The single criterion is beauty.

Imagine that you entered a very fashionable restaurant and were met by a member of staff who pointed out that there was a dress code that you, apparently, did not meet. Maybe it was that you wore the wrong shoes or shirt. Do not bother arguing about the glamorous young things waved through during your discussion who also fail to meet the code as you will likely be told that your booking has suddenly been lost, or that the restaurant is now full. In short, you are not beautiful enough to fit the establishment's concept of how wonderful the place looks on social media when the trendy patrons send out their images on Twitter and Facebook (McCracken, 2017).

Rather than trying to correct such a skewed approach, I plan to embrace it. Imagine an editorial board that contained a few, prominent and elegant celebrities who were displayed



as figureheads (some of your fees would be to retain their expertise, of course). All submissions to the journal would be welcome provided that they addressed issues in accounting, and were accompanied by a picture of the author(s). There are methods for measuring the standing of a journal, such as impact. Same here – acceptance is based on attractiveness, and impact is measured by hits on the article.

Tell me it would not work, but only if you can say why there would be no one ready to submit their work with a modest payment and an alluring selfie, or at least a picture of someone claimed to be them. Now all I have to do is persuade the rest of the *AAAJ* board itself about the brilliance of this proposal.

While you are considering just how creative this idea is, why not read Lelys Maddock's poetry in this issue? The three connected poems here follow on from one in Vol. 29 Issue 5, all contemplating the interplay of humans and the environment, necessarily focusing on the damage done.

Your own creative contributions can be submitted via ScholarOne (see below), and your e-mail correspondence is always welcome, of course, at: [steve.evans@flinders.edu.au](mailto:steve.evans@flinders.edu.au)

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#### **Reference**

McCracken, D. (2017), "The forum", *The Weekend Australian Review*, 28-29 January, p. 2.