

The future is bright

"Many articles are neither read nor cited; indeed many articles are poor. In general many journals seem to be of little practical help to clinicians facing problems at the bedside."

"... in the course of a year at least half the journals on the shelves are never looked at at all."

"Most editors ... are 'half nun, half whore.'"

"... in the 300 years of their existence journals have done little to examine their own practices."

"What *are* editors?"

"If an editor does not please himself, he used to say, 'he will not please anybody.'"

"Defensive editing we do not need."

"Medical journals in developing countries are, with very few exceptions, unattractive."

"I believe that the future for general medical journals—particularly those published in English—is bright. They will undoubtedly change, but they will not disappear."

The debate was lively and the opinions conflicting and forcefully expressed when, to mark its 150 year past, the *BMJ* decided to join with other general medical journals in examining their perhaps not too certain future. At a conference at Leeds Castle editors of major general medical journals throughout the world, with experts in information science, sociology, and epidemiology, discussed the functions and effectiveness of modern journals, and debated possible choices for development. Edited by Stephen Lock, *The Future of Medical Journals* is a unique compilation of papers on this important but little analysed aspect of medical science.

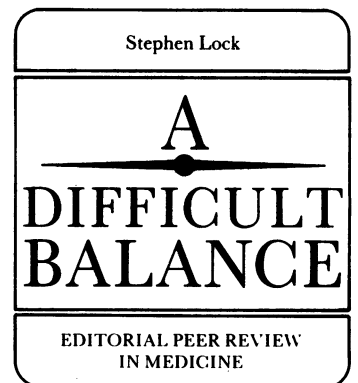
September 1991

UK £14.95; Abroad £17.50 (BMA members £13.95 or £16.50)

Peer review is one of the key processes at several stages of scientific research, applications for a research grant, assessing an abstract of a contribution submitted to a meeting of a scientific society, and refereeing a paper for publication in a journal. Without publication, which entails such preliminary validation (continued afterwards by the journal's general and specialist readers), science cannot advance. And ensuring that peer review is as accurate, fair, and quick as possible is one of the principal tasks of most scientific editors.

Third impression 1991 (with new introduction)

UK £12.95; Abroad £15.50 (BMA members £11.95 or £14.50)



ORDER FORM **British Medical Journal, PO Box 295, London WC1H 9TE.**

Please send me the following books:

QTY	TITLE	AUTHOR/EDITOR	AMOUNT
Prices include postage, by air abroad			TOTAL £

NAME _____
(print clearly)

Membership No _____

ADDRESS _____

Cheque enclosed (made payable to British Medical Journal) £ _____
Debit my AMERICAN EXPRESS/VISA/MASTERCARD

Card No _____ Exp _____

POSTCODE _____

Signature _____

Please send me a book catalogue

BMJ books are also available from major booksellers or the BMJ bookshop in BMA House.