



Jornal de Pneumologia 1995-1998

Carlos Alberto de Castro Pereira¹

Editor-in-Chief of the Journal of Pulmonology from 1995 to 1998.

Are you glad to have been appointed Editor? You will spend all of your already scarce free time on it, you will not think about anything else, you will lose some of your friends, and you will not make any new ones... Those were the words that Lock⁽¹⁾ said to me when I was about to become the new Editor of the *Jornal de Pneumologia*. When I did, in 1995, the journal had been in existence for 20 years and had come to be published every two months. At the time, Brazilian Thoracic Association Board of Directors made the decision that the Journal should be financially independent, requiring no expenditures by the Society. An increased number of advertisements allowed the journal to be published every two months. Subsequently, the journal was renamed the *Jornal Brasileiro de Pneumologia*.

Before accepting the position as Editor of the *Jornal de Pneumologia*, I read articles and texts on the topic of editing, I bought (and then repeatedly referred to) the American Medical Association Manual of Style,⁽²⁾ and I read books and articles on clinical research, evidence-based medicine, and biostatistics. At the time, there were no associate editors or executive editors; that is, whenever an article was submitted to the journal, an initial evaluation was performed and a preliminary decision was made to reject it or send it to two reviewers. The reviewers were (and still are) anonymous, and this often resulted (and still results) in hasty, misguided opinions that were (and still are) sometimes expressed aggressively. I always participated in the review process, often studying the topic

and sometimes disputing (or even overriding) the opinions of reviewers. I imagine that the current associate editors are specialists who review articles in their area of interest. However, I think it is time for peer review to be open and signed. Art, theater, and literary critics have the honesty and dignity to sign their published articles. Why should reviewers in the field of medicine remain anonymous? Are they afraid of losing their status as oracles? One randomized study⁽³⁾ showed that signed reviews were of higher quality, more courteous, and more thorough than unsigned reviews. Reviewers who signed were more likely to recommend publication. Honest authors should not resent well-founded criticism and should welcome suggestions to improve their manuscripts.

The JBP suffers from a type of "schizophrenia" (as do other Brazilian medical journals). Brazilian authors, including Editors and Editorial Board members, prefer to submit their best studies to international journals that have greater visibility and impact. This hinders the development of the Journal and results in its being regarded as a second-rate journal. The solution is complex.

Between 1995 and 1998, the Journal published guidelines and special issues on spirometry, tuberculosis, pneumonia, asthma, and occupational diseases, all of which had a significant impact. It would be of great interest to determine how many of the original articles published in the Journal in the past 40 years have had an impact on clinical practice and have survived as relevant contributions.

REFERENCES

1. Lock S. Survive as an Editor. In: Reece D, editor. How to do it: 3. London: BMJ Publishing; 1995. p. 108-12.
2. American Medical Association Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors. 8th ed. Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins; 1989.
3. Walsh E, Rooney M, Appleby L, Wilkinson G. Open peer review: a randomised controlled trial. *Br J Psychiatry*. 2000;176:47-51. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1192/bjp.176.1.47>

1. Disciplina de Pneumologia, Departamento de Medicina, Universidade Federal de São Paulo, São Paulo (SP) Brasil.