Ergo - Publication Ethics and Malpractice Statement

Introduction

Ergo follows formal COPE Guidelines intended to advise editors and publishers on expected publication ethics practices. This document explains how these guidelines are implemented in Ergo's editorial and publishing procedures.

Journal purpose

Ergo aims to publish original, high-quality research in all areas of philosophy, with a transparent, fair, and speedy review process.

Non-commercial status

Ergo is supported by the Ergo fund at Syracuse University, which in turn is supported by the Syracuse University Philosophy Department, Syracuse University Libraries, private donations from individuals, and membership donations from institutions. Ergo disavows any commercial interest in the work it publishes. No member of the Ergo editorial team receives any financial remuneration for services provided to the journal.

Open Access

Ergo is committed to open access. Every article published by the journal is permanently and universally available online without need for subscription or payment by author or reader.

Submissions and the review process

Ergo evaluates submissions using a triple-anonymous peer-review procedure. Area Editors and referees are unaware of the author's identity throughout the review process, and authors are unaware of the identities of area editors and referees. Attempting to discern the identity of an author (e.g. by using a search engine) is strictly prohibited. Referees must remain anonymous, and the managing editors will take care to protect their anonymity. Any conflict of interest must be disclosed by the referee immediately. Reviews should be conducted objectively and focus entirely on the academic content of the manuscripts. Personal criticism of the author is inappropriate. Comments for the author should be phrased respectfully. Review manuscripts must not be shared or discussed with others. See here for more information about Ergo's review procedures.

The Managing Editors are solely and independently responsible for deciding which articles submitted to the journal shall be published. However, unless a paper is desk-rejected, decisions concerning academic standards are delegated to the handling Area Editor as part of our review procedure.

Submission and Publication Fees

Ergo does not charge authors a fee for submitting a manuscript or for publishing an accepted manuscript.

Authorship and contributorship

All articles will be accompanied by a list of contributing authors. We encourage authors to use acknowledgements to recognise significant sub-authorial contributions. We also encourage authors, if desired, to provide a further contributor statement to be published alongside the article acknowledgments specifying the specific role of each contributor in the article's production. These statements may be based on guidelines such as the CRediT framework or the CSWG proposal.

Intellectual Property

Authors retain copyright over their work published in Ergo. Ergo will not re-publish any article without the author's explicit consent. Inquiries concerning any use of material published in Ergo which goes beyond the permissions granted by the Creative Commons licence under which the work is published should be addressed to the authors.

Data Sharing and Reproducibility

For publications which report experimental or observational data, Ergo strongly encourages that this data be made publicly available where this is legally permissible. Where it is not possible to include this data within the published article as an appendix or supplement, authors are encouraged to include a hyperlink to a suitable long-term archive location for that data in a data sharing statement published as part of the article. If it is not possible to share certain data, authors are asked to use the statement to confirm why it cannot be shared.

Post-publication discussions

Ergo does not host post-publication discussions of articles it publishes. Work which responds to work previously published in Ergo may be considered through the usual submission channels and will be reviewed according to the usual procedure.

Integrity of the scholarly literature

Ergo is committed to maintaining the integrity of the scholarly literature by identifying potential problems with submitted articles and responding appropriately to any allegations concerning published material as they arise. Area Editors and referees are encouraged to be alert to the possibility of plagiarism or other scholarly impropriety in articles under review, including suspicious citation patterns. If Area Editors, referees, or authors of published work or work under review have concerns about plagiarism, citation manipulation, and data falsification/fabrication, they should immediately inform the Managing Editors who will conduct a full investigation.

All material to be published in Ergo must be the authors' own work, with all material drawn from other sources attributed and referenced according to established academic standards and with explicit permission of rights holders where necessary.

Artificial Intelligence

We require that the original ideas and arguments of a submitted article have been generated by the author(s). Artificial intelligence (AI) systems, including LLMs such as Claude, ChatGPT, etc., may be used only in a supporting capacity. This could include: to identify the need for minor modifications to text via proofreading, to create tables and figures, to conduct literature searches, or to answer expository questions prior to writing up an article.

Direct use of AI-generated text in the body of a submitted article will usually be inappropriate. AI cannot be considered an author of any manuscript submitted to Ergo, and any AI-introduced errors are the responsibility of the human authors.

Any use of AI in a submission must be disclosed by the author, even if it is used only in a supporting capacity. These disclosures must be included in a note appended to submitted articles.

Ergo undertakes not to use AI for peer review of submitted articles, and we require our peer reviewers not to input submitted articles into AI tools (including AI checkers such as Pangram). Editors may however opt to use AI checking tools as part of an initial screening process. We also currently use AI tools in a limited capacity as part of our typesetting process; this is applied to accepted articles only, at the post-copy-editing stage.

Corrections and Retractions

Ergo follows COPE Guidelines regarding issuing corrections and retractions in light of allegations of misconduct. In making final publication decisions, the Managing Editors are guided by the journal's published review policy and constrained by any legal requirements in force regarding libel, copyright infringement and plagiarism. An outcome of this principle is the importance of the scholarly archive as a permanent, historic record of the transactions of scholarship. Articles that have been published shall remain extant, exact and unaltered as far as is possible. However, very occasionally circumstances may arise where an article is published that must later be retracted or even removed. Such actions must not be undertaken lightly and can only occur under exceptional circumstances. In all cases, the publisher will retain all article versions, including retracted or otherwise removed articles.

If an author discovers a significant error in their article after publication, they should notify the Managing Editors immediately and cooperate in its correction or retraction.

The Managing Editors should consider issuing a corrigendum / editorial note if:

- A small portion of an otherwise reliable publication proves to be misleading (especially because of honest error)

- The author / contributor list is incorrect (i.e., a deserving author has been omitted or somebody who does not meet authorship criteria has been included)
- Authors' potential conflict(s) of interest have been disclosed post publication

The Managing Editors should consider issuing an expression of concern if:

- They receive inconclusive evidence of research or publication misconduct by the authors
- They believe that an investigation into alleged misconduct related to the publication either has not been, or would not be, fair and impartial or conclusive
- An investigation is underway but a judgment will not be available for a considerable time

The Managing Editors should consider retracting a publication if:

- They have clear evidence that the findings are unreliable, either as a result of misconduct (e.g., data fabrication / falsification) or honest error (e.g., miscalculation or experimental error)
- The findings have previously been published elsewhere without proper cross-referencing or permission
- It constitutes plagiarism: appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results or words without giving appropriate credit (including those obtained through confidential review of others' manuscripts)
- It contains material or data without authorisation for use
- Copyright has been infringed or there is some other serious legal issue (e.g. libel)
- It reports unethical research
- The peer-review process has been compromised / manipulated and the scientific integrity of the article cannot be guaranteed
- Authors' conflict(s) of interest have been disclosed post publication and the disclosure is significant enough to potentially change the conclusions (in the judgment of the Managing Editors)

Notices of retraction should:

- Be linked to the retracted article wherever possible (i.e., in all electronic versions)
- Clearly identify the retracted article (e.g., by including the title and authors in the retraction heading)
- Be clearly identified as a retraction (i.e., distinct from other types of correction or comment)
- Be published promptly to minimize harmful effects from misleading publications
- Be freely available to all readers (i.e., not behind access barriers or available only to subscribers)
- State who is retracting the article
- State the reason(s) for retraction (to distinguish misconduct from honest error)
- Avoid statements that are potentially defamatory or libelous

Under the following circumstances, removing an article may be considered by the managing editors:

- It is a clearly defamatory article
- It infringes others' legal rights
- The article is (expected to be) the subject of a court order
- It contains medical error(s) that, if followed by a researcher or practitioner, could lead to significant physical or mental harm to patients or test subjects
- It contains a photograph or other personal data, publication of which would lead to a significant violation of recognised privacy rights.

Under emergency circumstances, an article may be taken down immediately by the Managing Editors.

The Managing Editors should consider withdrawing an article in press if any of the (above-mentioned) conditions for retractions and removals applies.

When a retraction is made:

- A retraction note titled "Retraction: [article title]" signed by the authors and/or the Managing Editors is published in the paginated part of a subsequent issue of the journal and listed in the contents list.
- In the electronic version, a link is made to the original article.
- The online article is preceded by a screen containing the retraction note. It is to this screen that the link resolves; the reader can then proceed to the article itself.
- The original article is retained unchanged save for a watermark on the .pdf indicating on each page that it is "retracted."
- The HTML version of the document is removed.

In an extremely limited number of cases, it may be necessary to remove an article from the online database. This will only occur where the article is clearly defamatory, or infringes others' legal rights, or where the article is, or the publishers have good reason to expect it will be, the subject of a court order, or where the article, if acted upon, might pose a serious health risk. In these circumstances, while the metadata (Title and Authors) will be retained, the text will be replaced with a screen indicating the article has been removed for legal reasons.

In cases where the article, if acted upon, might pose a serious health risk, the authors of the original article may wish to retract the flawed original and replace it with a corrected version. In these circumstances the procedures for retraction will be followed with the difference that the database retraction notice will publish a link to the corrected re-published article and a history of the document.

Ethical Oversight

The Managing Editors serve as primary ethical oversight for the journal. If ethical concerns arise for Area Editors, referees, or authors in the course of the review procedure, they should immediately bring them to the attention of the Managing Editors.

Conflicts of Interest

We require submitting authors to disclose any potential conflicts of interest which would reasonably appear to relate to their research. In particular, authors should declare whether they, or their close family members, have 1) funding, 2) employment, 3) unpaid collaboration or consultation, 4) financial (e.g. investment), or 5) other potentially relevant relationships with any industries related to their research, including formal or informal affiliation, or in-kind access to data or models. Authors will be asked at point of submission to provide full disclosure of any of these potential conflicts of interest; these disclosures will be published along with accepted papers. We also require authors to retroactively disclose any conflicts of interest relevant to previous published work.

If at any stage a conflict of interest appears to arise for Area Editors handling a submission to Ergo, they should immediately declare this to the Managing Editors. If the Managing Editors agree that there is a conflict of interest, the submission will be assigned to a different Area Editor.

If at any stage a conflict of interest appears to arise for referees reviewing a submission to Ergo, they should immediately declare this to the Managing Editors. If the Managing Editors agree that there is a conflict of interest, the referee will discontinue any involvement in the review process.

If at any stage a conflict of interest arises for a Managing Editor in connection with any piece of journal business, they should immediately declare this and recuse themselves from further involvement with that piece of journal business.

Complaints and appeals

If authors, referees or others have a complaint to make about the conduct of an Area Editor or Managing Editor, or about some action of the journal as a whole, they should first contact the Managing Editors (or, in case the conduct concerns one of the Managing Editors, they should contact one of the other Managing Editors individually). If the complaint concerns a particular editor, it will be addressed by a different editor. If the Managing Editors judge that there is a conflict of interest in any current Managing Editor addressing the complaint, they may refer the complaint to a past Managing Editor for adjudication.