

A Toolkit for Publishing in the Humanities

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What are the Humanities? / Overview / Tips and Tricks / What to Expect After Submitting / Beyond

Before we dive in...

Everyone's publishing journey's are different and so take this as insight into one scholar's experience, a set of guide posts to give you insight into the process rather than a definitive set of rules.

I'm working from an intersectional feminist position and so my advice will both discuss how things traditionally work as well as the ways in which I am critical of this and how I hope to see things shift in the future.

- Dr. Shana MacDonald

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What are the Humanities?

“ Study of human cultures and expressions

We study phenomena,



texts,



& objects



Why?

- To map histories, and
- Analyze how whatever we study:
 - circulates
 - & makes meaning
 - & then how that impacts the world
 - & what it will mean for the future

The Humanities is Interpretive and Analytic and their ultimate goal is to expand existing dialogues.

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Focus: determine the subject of your research

Framework: establish theoretical discourse to frame your research

Close reading: engage in a hermeneutic relationship with the text to determine new knowledge

Conclusion: weave in your analysis to advance the dialogue

Overview



**What is
at
stake?
Why
does this
matter?
Why
now?**

THE "SO WHAT?" QUESTIONS

At a Glance...

Timeline: **1-3 Years**

Double-blind **peer review** process

2-3 reviewers

Editor guidance

6,000-10,000 words

MLA, CMS, Harvard

Top-tier journals commonly have

<20% acceptance rates

Impact factors:

- standard is solo-authored
- top-tier journal

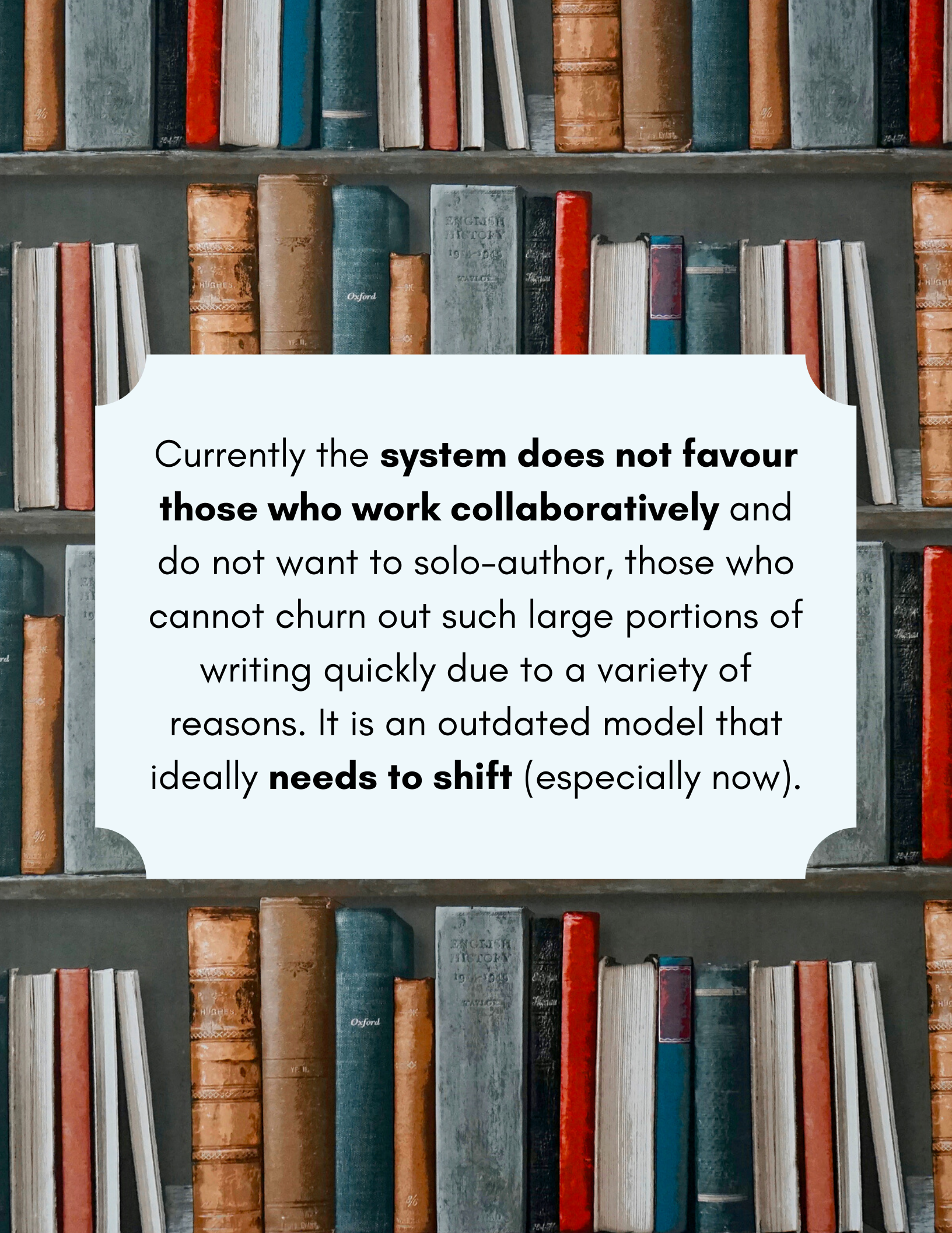
Are you making an original contribution to the subject?

Set up front the "What's at stake?" question

Offer an anecdote,

then offer a thesis and what will be in the paper, then answer the "**so what?**" questions

Tip: Think about public-oriented scholarship for really pressing stuff, and then go through journals for longer-term research presentations.



Currently the **system does not favour those who work collaboratively** and do not want to solo-author, those who cannot churn out such large portions of writing quickly due to a variety of reasons. It is an outdated model that ideally **needs to shift** (especially now).

Tips & Tricks: Before Submitting

1. Plan around your dissertation: **is it a book or a series of articles?**
2. Past writing projects: Are there articles **hidden in discarded writing** or term papers?
3. Calls for papers: **pitch to the call** even if you haven't written it
4. **Always be applying for special issues**
5. Get yourselves on **listserves** so that you get updated when interesting and relevant calls are announced
6. Can you get a **GRS** while doing your PhD?
7. Make a list of your **top 3 journals** you want to submit the article to
8. Contact the editor & **pitch your article in 1 paragraph** (only when you're nearly done)
9. **Format it properly** from the beginning with the "instructions for authors" on the journals you're targeting
10. Have your **citations list ongoing** and ready





“

If you get a rejection, give yourself a hug & move on to the next journal on your list

What to Expect After Submitting

3-6 months after submitting...

Accepted with major/minor revisions –

Congrats!

Revise and submit – Most common

Rejection – Move on to the next journal on your list

If you haven't heard from them in 6-8 months then you can email to ask for an update.

If it's taking *too* long, you can tell them that you're going to put it elsewhere.

Your editor will tell you how they want you to incorporate the reviews.

Tips & Tricks: After Submitting

1. Confirm with editor how you will proceed
2. **Take a break** from the work
3. Spreadsheet of request to track your responses to journals
4. Wade through the **to-do list of revisions** in your timeframe
5. Resubmit with cover letter **politely outlining revisions made** and if you did not address others, outline why
6. If you get rejected, **send a thank you** and then go to the next journal on your list and submit there
7. **Use first journal's reviewer comments** to improve next submission
8. Always be polite and conscientious with editors. It is a thankless job.
9. Think about when and where you agree/disagree with reviewers. They do this as a professional service and may or may not be an expert in your area. **You likely cannot take up all suggestions.**
10. Journals are gatekeepers and if you stir up too much in a field they may not engage; doesn't mean you shouldn't do it, you just need to do it elsewhere.

Rejection happens to
EVERYONE even the
superstars; don't let it
slow you down.



Beyond

Writing and publishing only becomes less daunting once you've done it a lot.

Best case scenario

Your reviewers and editors are generous and your work improves because of the dialogue you engage in

Worst case scenario

They are not generous and you learn a lot about gate-keeping and how your work fits/does not fit in existing disciplinary frameworks - this becomes the place for next explorations and for understanding what you bring as unique to your field

Once you have established yourself, get on editorial boards and **change the system for the better!**

Your intellectual growth will continue through the process of writing and publishing.

It becomes easier to get past your initial hesitations, fears, anxieties if you:

- think less about how getting published or not is tied up with your identity/value/worth
- think more about how this is an academic process of engaging in and contributing to field specific dialogues

Writing is hard. Find a support team, get a writing group, **know you are not alone!**