

Changes at *Tobacco Control*

S Chapman

Constant change is here to stay—and how things are changing at *Tobacco Control*

From 2005, we are delighted to announce that *Tobacco Control* will come out six times a year instead of four. We have experienced a healthy rise in submissions (up 46% between 2002–3; and up 7% between 2003–4), with no discernable decrease in quality. From January 2002 to September 2004, we received 700 submissions—excluding papers for commissioned supplements. We rejected 58% of these, nearly half of which were rejected without review. Our acceptance rate is not the reciprocal 42%, because currently there are 67 papers either being reviewed or revised, some of which will be rejected. Rejecting papers is the worst task editors must perform. But it is one necessitated by space and cost constraints, and our concern to maintain the journal at as high a standard as possible. The box at the end of this article summarises the 10 main reasons why we reject papers.

We have about 1100 subscribers. However, this figure grossly underestimates the number who read our papers. Included in this number are many institutional subscribers who buy the combined paper journal plus online access package. Web access allows sometimes tens of thousands of staff and students at large universities to access the journal. In July 2004 for example, we had an average of 4923 distinct computer hosts connect each week to the website. The total number of pages opened in the month of July was 38 416.

Our top 10 accessed articles in 2003 were together opened 31 392 times. Articles in our second issue of 2004 were opened 18 851 times, with the most read article opened 1597 times. These data are incomparably better than our paper journal's circulation, so in a very real sense the journal must be seen increasingly as an electronic resource. With many predicting the demise of paper journals, we are constantly thinking of ways of adding value to our website. Thanks to our Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant, we have added a series of 22 free Powerpoint presentations which have so far been downloaded 29 175 times, at an average of 503 times a week. Soon we will be adding a searchable cartoon archive going right back to

our first issue in 1992. This will make access to our fabulous selection of cartoons that much easier.

IMPACT FACTOR

This year we received the news that our 2003 impact factor (3.164) had leapt 54% from the 2002 result (2.037) which in turn had increased 57% from the 2001 level of 1.289. We now have the second highest impact factor of 10 journals in the Substance Abuse category after *Addiction* (3.241). Perhaps more remarkably, we have the ninth highest impact factor in the Public, Environmental and Occupational Health category (of 89 journals). In fact, we are the leading "single issue" journal in that field, with all those above us being general public health and epidemiology journals.

Our top 20 cited papers as of September 2004 are listed below. Of these, eight concerned youth smoking, five concerned secondhand smoke, and three were review articles.

Mike Cummings, our deputy editor since 1999 and a regional editor from our very first issue in 1992, is stepping down from the journal with this issue. At the risk of making the understatement of the year, Mike has given an immense amount of both time and his extraordinary knowledge to the journal. His almost peerless grasp of tobacco control across a wide spectrum of issues, together with his energy, wit, and insights into the policy process, has made him an invaluable member of our team. Melanie Wakefield is assuming the deputy editor position, and we are delighted to announce that Dr Joanna Cohen of the Ontario Tobacco Research Unit is joining the senior editor group.

We'd be very pleased if more people would use the rapid response facility to comment on articles and to make suggestions for future journal content. We look forward to what promises to be our biggest year yet in 2005.

MOST CITED ARTICLES

These are the 20 most cited and web accessed articles in *Tobacco Control* since 1998.

- Tyas SL, Pederson LL. Psychosocial factors related to adolescent smoking: a critical review of the literature. 1998;7:409–20 (67 citations; 5822 total web accesses)
- DiFranza JR, Rigotti NA, McNeill AD, et al. Initial symptoms of nicotine dependence in adolescents. 2000;9:313–19 (64; 7052)
- Lantz PM, Jacobson PD, Warner KE, et al. Investing in youth tobacco control: a review of smoking prevention and control strategies. 2000;9:47–63 (51; 23 336)
- Wakefield M, Chaloupka F. Effectiveness of comprehensive tobacco control programmes in reducing teenage smoking in the USA. 2000;9:177–86 (41; 5338)
- Malone RE, Balbach ED. Tobacco industry documents: treasure trove or quagmire? 2000;9:334–8 (38; 1309)
- Farkas AJ, Gilpin EA, Distefan JM, et al. The effects of household and workplace smoking restrictions on quitting behaviours. 1999;8:261–5 (37; 3465)
- McKee M, Bobak M, Rose R, et al. Patterns of smoking in Russia. 1998;7:22–6 (37; 1138)
- Bonita R, Duncan J, Truelsen T, et al. Passive smoking as well as active smoking increases the risk of acute stroke. 1999;8:156–60 (35; 15 069)
- Farrelly MC, Evans WN, Sfeakas AES. The impact of workplace smoking bans: results from a national survey. 1999;8:272–7. (29; 4138)
- Pollay RW. Targeting youth and concerned smokers: evidence from Canadian tobacco industry documents. 2000;9:136–47. (27; 3370)
- Ashley MJ, Ferrence R. Reducing children's exposure to environmental tobacco smoke in homes: issues and strategies. 1998;7:61–5. (27; 2747)
- Feighery E, Borzekowski DLG, Schooler C, et al. Seeing, wanting, owning: the relationship between receptivity to tobacco marketing and smoking susceptibility in young people 1998;7:123–8. (27; 2834)
- Osler M, Prescott E. Psychosocial, behavioural, and health determinants of successful smoking cessation: a longitudinal study of Danish adults. 1998;7:262–7. (27; 19660)
- Sly DF, Heald GR, Ray S. The Florida "truth" anti-tobacco media evaluation: design, first year results, and implications for planning future state media evaluations. 2001;10:9–15 (24; 3697)
- Matt GE, Wahlgren DR, Hovell MF, et al. Measuring environmental

tobacco smoke exposure in infants and young children through urine cotinine and memory-based parental reports: empirical findings and discussion. 1999;**8**:282–9 (24; 2938)

- Henningfield JE, Benowitz NL, Slade J, *et al.* Reducing the addictiveness of cigarettes 1998;**7**:281–93. (24; 8364)
- Yach D, Bettcher D. Globalisation of tobacco industry influence and new global responses 2000;**9**:206–16. (23; 4484)
- Hill D, Chapman S, Donovan R. The return of scare tactics.1998;**7**:5–6. (23; 2135)
- DiFranza JR, Savageau JA, Rigotti NA, *et al.* Development of symptoms of tobacco dependence in youth: 30 month follow up data from the DANDY study 2002;**11**:228–35. (21; 7316)
- Biglan A, Ary DV, Smolkowski K, *et al.* A randomised controlled trial of a community intervention to prevent adolescent tobacco use. **9**:24–32. (21; 6792)

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Ten reasons why papers are rejected

1. Studies of smoking prevalence and its correlates. These are best suited to national journals. Few people living outside a country are interested in whether that country has 30% or 35% of smokers.
2. Knowledge, attitudes, behaviour (KAB) studies of particular population groups or health professionals. Again, these are better suited to national journals or to health professional specialty journals. Few people in other countries are likely to be interested in (for example) whether nurses in a regional hospital are interested in helping patients quit. National studies, and those taking such studies into original areas, are of more interest.
3. Reports that evoke unanimous “so what?” responses from the editors. These are papers with findings that seem to hold no obvious importance for changing policy or practice in tobacco control. They often display methodological finery, but don’t take us anywhere important or interesting.
4. Opinion pieces where the opinions are unoriginal, poorly argued, naive, or disregard important ethical issues in favour of sloganeering.
5. Papers that show the authors have never opened *Tobacco Control* and do not understand its primary focus on tobacco *control* rather than on tobacco and its use and health consequences. We are interested in such papers, but only if their authors address the implications of their findings for tobacco control.
6. Papers with glaringly obvious, fatal methodological problems
7. Papers on subjects that require highly technical or discipline-specific language unlikely to be understood by the majority of readers.
8. Papers which are replications of already well established findings or offer little new information.
9. Local studies where the implications for the journal’s international audience are unclear.
10. Reports written for governments or local health authorities that someone thought could be given a quick makeover and submitted as a journal paper.