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Editorials

Editorial: Calling a Halt to Further Proliferation of Journals

Linda Steiner

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Editorial: Calling a Halt to Further Proliferation of Journals

Linda Steiner

The double-negative notwithstanding, there is no aspect of editing *CSMC* that I will not miss when my term is over. Some aspects have been frustrating—from dealing with egregious plagiarism to prompting recalcitrant referees to complete their reviews. Yet, I found every responsibility gratifying and worth doing. I even came to regard with fondness the Manuscript Central, which initially seemed eccentric, if not perverse.

That said, having vigorously—perhaps some might say, viciously—edited manuscripts in order to preserve space for additional or longer manuscripts, I now claim a bit of this precious resource for commenting on an increasingly troubling trend: the continuing proliferation in the number of academic journals in media studies and communication. One international expert in library and information studies provides data indicating growth at a diminishing rate in the total numbers of academic journals across the disciplines (Meadows, 1993). Whether this tapering off is also true of our field is unclear, but it does not appear to be the case. Certainly, as in other fields, media or communication journals are very rarely killed off. The problem is that while knowledge is a public good, more is not necessarily better.

Some will compare this criticism to the “old” immigrant groups trying to block an influx of new immigrants. Founded in 1984, *CSMC* is arguably a newcomer, compared to the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, now publishing its 93rd volume. Nor is



Notes

1. Consider, for example, the fact that, given the time and space constraints of a journal, the appropriate technique for presenting a research paper is often a matter of style and technique. The

more there are journals with overlapping missions, the more often authors will resubmit their rejected manuscripts. Thus, the more “we” incur this cost.

2. Whether university and commercial presses have significantly reduced their commitment to scholarly books (see Greco, Rodriguez & Wharton, [2007](#)) remains unclear, but the claim is probably overstated. In any case, much attention has been paid to books; but of the little attention paid to serials, most of it concerns questions of electronic and open-access formats.

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