

# International Studies Review

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## Annual Editorial Report 2013

*Submitted by* **Janice Bially Mattern, Editor-in-Chief**  
National University of Singapore

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## Executive Summary

The National University of Singapore editorial team officially assumed responsibility for International Studies Review on December 1, 2013. This report discusses stewardship of the journal from December 1, 2012 to September 30, 2013. This period is shorter than the normal reporting period by 2 months.

The following information summarize the nature of our activities for the past 10 months:

- Our mean response time (from submission to decision) was 57 calendar days.
- Our editorial team processed 141 new manuscripts. Extended over a 12 month period this represents a 92% increase from AY2012, as reported by the previous editorial team.
- We received 226 books for review. Of these we commissioned reviews on 94 books.
- We accepted 10% percent of all submissions, 16% of those sent out for review.
- Women authors accounted for 31% of manuscripts submitted and 21% of manuscripts accepted.

- The Editorial Team has launched a new format for multiple book review essays and has refined the guidelines for the Forum.

## Manuscript Flow

During the 10 month reporting period we processed 141 new manuscripts, including 138 Analytical Essays and 3 Forums.<sup>1</sup> Of the 141 total, 47 (33%) were rejected without review, 40 (28%) were rejected after review, 36 (26%) were invited for revision and resubmission; and 14 (10%) were accepted for publication. At the close of our reporting period, 4 manuscripts (3%) were still under review. (See Table 1 and Figure 1, below.) During this period we also received 226 books for review and have commissioned reviews on 94 of them.

The total number of manuscripts processed during the 10 month reporting period (141) represents a 60% increase over the total number of manuscripts processed during the most recent 12 month period reported by the previous editorial team (88). Extending this trend over a 12 month period indicates a 92% increase in manuscript submissions over 2012.

As a new editorial team we note with some concern the 33% desk rejection rate. We are unable to find data

<sup>1</sup>Although forums contain multiple short manuscripts by multiple authors each forum is counted as a single submission.

on desk rejection rates from the previous editorial team; however, it bears note that we have reserved desk rejects strictly for submissions that do not fit within the scope of ISRs mission. The dramatic increase in manuscript submissions over the previous reporting period is also likely a factor. Where appropriate, desk rejected manuscripts were redirected to appropriate ISA journals. The editorial team has undertaken an effort to more clearly disseminate the message about the ISRs publishing mission.

Of the total manuscripts submitted 94 were sent out for external review, 90 had completed the review process (with a decision rendered) by September 30, 2013. Calculated within this peer-reviewed subset, ISR rejected 44%, invited 40% for revision and resubmission, and accepted 16%.

We are unable to find data on the number of books commissioned for review by the previous editorial team. However, the previous annual report indicates that the team received 303 books during the 12 month period of its report. Projecting out to 12 months from the 226 books we received during the 10 month reporting period, there has been a 11% decrease in the flow of books to ISR from publishers. This is likely a function of transition issues and related to the time-lag in shipping to Singapore. To remedy the latter, and to address some publishers' concerns about costs, we have made arrangements with some publishers to screen books electronically. In the future this will likely lead to a decrease in the number of books we receive physically but it will ultimately increase the pool of books from which we can choose to review.

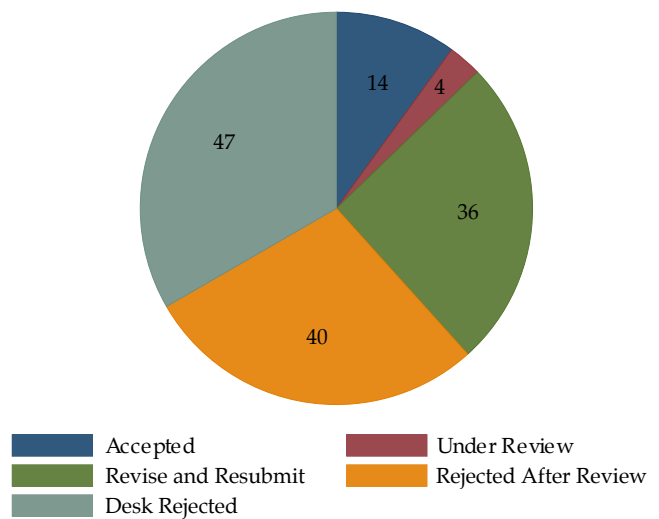
**Table 1: Manuscript Decisions**

| Decision              | Number | Percent |
|-----------------------|--------|---------|
| Desk rejected         | 47     | 33      |
| Rejected after review | 40     | 28      |
| Revise & Resubmit     | 36     | 26      |
| Accepted              | 14     | 10      |
| Under Review          | 4      | 3       |
| Total received        | 141    | 100     |

We are unable to find data on the number of books commissioned for review by the previous editorial team. However, the previous annual report indicates that the team received 303 books during the 12 month period of its report. Projecting the 226 books we have received in 10 months to 12 month period suggests a 10.5% decrease. This is likely a function of transition issues and related to the time-lag in shipping to Singapore. To remedy the latter, and to address some publishers concern about cost, we have made arrangements with some publishers to screen books electroni-

**Figure 1: Manuscripts by Decision**

(Analytical Essays and Forums)



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## Turn-around Time

Our mean turn-around time was 57 calendar days for manuscripts; 16 days for book reviews; and 8 days for desk rejections. These turn-around times compare favorably with the most recent report by the previous team, which faced personnel problems that led to a 119 day turnaround time. (See Table 2, below.)

The most significant factor impacting turn-around time is the willingness of invited reviewers accept invitations, their promptness in doing so, and their ability to meet review deadlines.

**Table 2: Turn-around Time**

| Essay Type                 | Calendar days |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| Analytical (desk rejected) | 8             |
| Analytical (reviewed)      | 57            |
| Book review                | 16            |

## Author Participation, Gender and Geography

Women accounted for 95 (31%) of the 303 authors that submitted to ISR in this reporting period. (See tables 3, 4, and 5.) There was little difference in gender distribution across different types of submissions. Women authors account for 33% of book reviews; 30% of analytical essays; 21% of accepted manuscripts; 28% of revise and resubmits; and 15% of those rejected after review. (See table 6.) Geographically, authors of both analytic essays and book reviews are concentrated in the USA (42% and 70% respectively). There were 4 or more instances of authors located in Germany, Belgium, Australia, Canada, the UK, Israel, Taiwan, Japan and the Netherlands. (See Table 7.)

**Table 3: Submitting Authors**

| Category           | Number | Percent |
|--------------------|--------|---------|
| Analytical essays  | 234    | 77%     |
| Book review        | 69     | 23%     |
| Co-authors         | 104    | 34%     |
| Total Contributors | 303    |         |

**Table 4: Author Gender**

| Gender | Number | Percent |
|--------|--------|---------|
| Male   | 208    | 69%     |
| Female | 95     | 32%     |
| Total  | 303    | 100%    |

**Table 5: Author Participation by Gender**

| Gender            | Number | Percent |
|-------------------|--------|---------|
| Analytical Essays |        |         |
| Male              | 162    | 69%     |
| Female            | 72     | 31%     |
| Book Reviews      |        |         |
| Male              | 46     | 67%     |
| Female            | 23     | 33%     |

**Table 6: Submission Outcome by Gender**

| Outcome     | Male | Female | Total |
|-------------|------|--------|-------|
| Accept      | 11   | 3      | 14    |
| R & R       | 26   | 10     | 36    |
| Reject      | 34   | 6      | 40    |
| Desk reject | 34   | 13     | 47    |
| Total       | 105  | 32     |       |

Note: these data are gathered by manuscript decision. They reflect the gender of the submitting author but not any co-authors.

**Table 7: Author Participation by Country**

| Country      | Freq. | Percent |
|--------------|-------|---------|
| Argentina    | 1     | 0.43    |
| Australia    | 6     | 2.56    |
| Belgium      | 13    | 5.56    |
| Brazil       | 1     | 0.43    |
| Cambodia     | 2     | 0.85    |
| Canada       | 16    | 6.84    |
| China        | 2     | 0.85    |
| Estonia      | 2     | 0.85    |
| Ethiopia     | 1     | 0.43    |
| Fiji         | 1     | 0.43    |
| Finland      | 2     | 0.85    |
| France       | 2     | 0.85    |
| Germany      | 29    | 12.39   |
| Ghana        | 1     | 0.43    |
| Hong Kong    | 2     | 0.85    |
| Iran         | 1     | 0.43    |
| Ireland      | 1     | 0.43    |
| Israel       | 8     | 3.42    |
| Italy        | 3     | 1.28    |
| Japan        | 4     | 1.71    |
| Korea        | 3     | 1.28    |
| Macao        | 1     | 0.43    |
| Netherlands  | 3     | 1.28    |
| Pakistan     | 1     | 0.43    |
| Philippines  | 1     | 0.43    |
| Russia       | 1     | 0.43    |
| Singapore    | 1     | 0.43    |
| South Africa | 1     | 0.43    |
| Spain        | 2     | 0.85    |
| Sweden       | 3     | 1.28    |
| Taiwan       | 4     | 1.71    |
| UAE          | 1     | 0.43    |
| UK           | 14    | 5.98    |
| USA          | 98    | 41.88   |
| Uruguay      | 2     | 0.85    |
| Total        | 234   | 100.00  |

**Table 8: Book Reviewer Participation by Country**

| Country     | Freq. | Percent |
|-------------|-------|---------|
| Australia   | 3     | 4.35    |
| Austria     | 1     | 1.45    |
| Canada      | 3     | 4.35    |
| Germany     | 1     | 1.45    |
| Israel      | 1     | 1.45    |
| Italy       | 1     | 1.45    |
| Netherlands | 1     | 1.45    |
| New Zealand | 1     | 1.45    |
| Norway      | 2     | 2.90    |
| Singapore   | 2     | 2.90    |
| Sweden      | 1     | 1.45    |
| Switzerland | 1     | 1.45    |
| UK          | 3     | 4.35    |
| USA         | 48    | 69.57   |
| Total       | 69    | 100.0   |

**Table 11: Reviewer Participation by Gender**

| Gender   | Number | Percent |
|----------|--------|---------|
| Agreed   |        |         |
| Male     | 158    | 68%     |
| Female   | 74     | 32%     |
| Declined |        |         |
| Male     | 174    | 74%     |
| Female   | 62     | 26%     |

**Table 12: Reviewer Geography**

| Country     | Accept | Decline | Total |
|-------------|--------|---------|-------|
| Argentina   | 1      | 0       | 1     |
| Australia   | 16     | 9       | 25    |
| Austria     | 1      | 0       | 1     |
| Brazil      | 0      | 1       | 1     |
| Canada      | 12     | 11      | 23    |
| Colombia    | 1      | 0       | 1     |
| Denmark     | 2      | 2       | 4     |
| Finland     | 2      | 0       | 2     |
| Germany     | 10     | 3       | 13    |
| Hungary     | 1      | 1       | 2     |
| Ireland     | 0      | 1       | 1     |
| Israel      | 2      | 0       | 2     |
| Italy       | 1      | 2       | 3     |
| Japan       | 1      | 1       | 2     |
| Korea       | 1      | 0       | 1     |
| Macau       | 1      | 0       | 1     |
| Netherlands | 2      | 0       | 2     |
| New Zealand | 1      | 0       | 1     |
| Norway      | 4      | 0       | 4     |
| Russia      | 1      | 0       | 1     |
| Singapore   | 8      | 1       | 9     |
| Spain       | 0      | 1       | 1     |
| Sweden      | 4      | 3       | 7     |
| Switzerland | 5      | 3       | 8     |
| Taiwan      | 1      | 1       | 2     |
| Turkey      | 3      | 1       | 4     |
| UK          | 24     | 34      | 58    |
| USA         | 127    | 163     | 290   |
| Total       | 232    | 238     | 470   |

## Reviewer Participation, Gender and Geography

Women accounted for 74 (32%) of the 470 reviewers invited during this reporting period. (See Table 9 and Table 10.) Of the 470 reviewers contacted, 49% accepted and 51% declined. The figure of 51% includes reviewers who were automatically declined because they did not respond within ten days. (See Table 11.) As with authors, reviewers tended to be geographically concentrated in the USA (55%). There are 4 or more instances of reviewers located in Australia, Canada, Germany, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK. (See Table 12.)

**Table 9: Reviewers Contacted**

| Category            | Number | Percent |
|---------------------|--------|---------|
| Agreed              | 232    | 49%     |
| Declined            | 238    | 51%     |
| Reviewers Contacted | 470    | 100%    |

**Table 10: Reviewer Gender**

| Gender | Number | Percent |
|--------|--------|---------|
| Male   | 334    | 72%     |
| Female | 136    | 29%     |
| Total  | 470    | 100%    |

## Points of Interest

- After an unsuccessful appeal to Thomson/ISI to recalculate our impact factor in a way that does not penalize ISR for book reviews, the editorial team has launched a new full peer-reviewed format for multiple book review essays. The new format (now called Review Essays) will increase the quality of these submissions, their relevance to debates in the field, and will, we hope, make these items more citable.

- Considering the high cost of shipping books to Singapore, we have begun establishing agreements with some publishers that allow the ISR editorial team to vet and commission books for review electronically. In such instances, the publisher directly ships the books to the authors we have commissioned.

## Appendices

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