



Holiday Greetings

The month of December is a time when many cultures, countries, and religions celebrate a variety of events. I and the editorial staff of *Optical Engineering* would like to send holiday greetings to all of our readers around the world. May it be a time of peace and goodwill for all.

Ethical Practices

Concern is expressed almost daily in the media about the ethical practices of those who conduct research. These concerns come from a number of groups including the general public and state and federal governments around the world. The few incidences of misconduct that have occurred have received wide and extended publicity. We are all troubled by these events, and they certainly cause us all to reexamine our own practices.

Optical Engineering has never published a policy for the ethical practices in the various stages of publishing a paper. I believe that there are well-established principles that everyone understands, and I have not seen any evidence that there has been any violation of those principles. Having said that, I would certainly urge our readers to take the time to read the "Guidelines of the Optical Society of America Concerning Ethical Practices in the Publication of Research" (see *Applied Optics*, Vol. 31, No. 28, 5903–5904, 1992). These guidelines speak to the obligation of journal editors, the obligation of authors, and the obligation of reviewers of manuscripts. The footnote to these guidelines states that they "are based to a great extent in the 'Ethical Guidelines to Publication of Chemical Research' of the American Chemical Society, and 'Guidelines to Publication of Geophysical Research' of the American Geophysical Union which, in turn, is based in the American Chemical Society guidelines." So accepted standards do exist, and it is worth reminding ourselves of these whether we be editor, author, or reviewer.

Recently, I had the pleasure of having as a houseguest and visitor to the University of Rochester a colleague who is the editor of another journal. He raised the question about the use of citations. Is it sufficient for the authors to cite only those papers that the authors consulted in their work? We both said no, that is not sufficient. Authors should cite all relevant work that is

directly pertinent to the article being published; this helps the reader. We turned to the guidelines quoted above to see what they had to say:

An author should cite those publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work and that will guide the reader quickly to earlier work essential for the understanding of the present investigation.

A reviewer should be alert to failure of authors to cite relevant work by other scientists. Any statement that an observation, derivation, or argument has been previously reported should be accompanied by the relevant citation.

The editor's role is often to sort out whether a reviewer is in danger of being self-serving when a suggested (required) relevant citation is to the reviewer's own work. But then editors are required to earn their keep!

I repeat then that the guidelines referenced earlier are worth reading.

Brian J. Thompson
Editor

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November 1993

Acquisition, Tracking, and Pointing

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Optical Interconnects and Packaging

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High Heat Flux Optical Engineering

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