



## ***Critical Arts: South-North Cultural and Media Studies***

### **REFEREEING GUIDELINES FOR CRITICAL ARTS**

(A modified version of this document is sent to submitting authors)

*Critical Arts* prides itself in publishing original, readable, and theoretically cutting edge articles. Many articles first published in the Journal have been subsequently reprinted with acknowledgement elsewhere. We are proud of this republishing record, which includes original articles first published in *Critical Arts* by, for e.g., JM Coetzee, Nadine Gordimer – both Nobel Prize Laureates – David Kerr, Ken Harrow, Stuart Hall, Arvind Singhal and Ntongela Masilela, amongst many others. Many articles first published in *Critical Arts* have been reprinted with our permission globally in books and journals, student course readers and, increasingly, on the Internet.

*Critical Arts* publishes established authors. It is also geared to opening spaces for new, young and dynamic authors, whose emerging work is of critical and theoretical significance. Amongst our authors are MA and PhD students whose work is often theoretically refreshing, conceptually innovative and critically challenging. *Critical Arts* provides a platform for such students who need to find their niche within the research and publishing community.

*Critical Arts* receives many submissions which are inappropriate to its preferred interpretation of cultural and media studies (e.g. orthodox journalism and communication science). Where appropriate the Editor-in-Chief will reroute such submissions to more paradigmatically appropriate publications. We hope that this facilitation by us will help such authors to acquire some experience in this regard and obtain eventual publication in a journal better suited to such submissions. If such an article is received and is passed on for refereeing, please make the appropriate suggestions. Usually we will filter out such submissions on receipt.

About 80% of articles submitted to, and refereed by *Critical Arts*, require minor to major revisions. A minority of authors object quite rudely to such referee reports and recommendations. If the Editor is of the opinion that the author has a case, he will consult other editorial consultants. Most authors, however, will happily revise their papers on receipt of constructive referee reports which identify both the problems and prospects of their papers. We request that our referees and editorial consultants write helpful, anonymous reports, which can be sent on directly to our authors to assist them in revision or on submission elsewhere. (These may be sent to us by e-mail: [criticalarts@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:criticalarts@ukzn.ac.za))

When refereeing submissions, apart from conceptual coherence, logical argument, adequate empirical substantiation, etc., please address the following:

- a) Is the article adequately referenced? Regrettably, few submissions nowadays seem to bother with adequate citation.
- b) Are the references accurate? Far too many submissions evidence errors in dates, page ranges, and volume numbers in the Bibliography. Some even mix up names and titles. This happens often. Where possible, please carefully check the references.
- c) Authors are asked to use the Chicago referencing system. If initial submission is not in this style, write the evaluation anyway, and we'll ask for a resubmission in Chicago if the article is accepted. *Critical Arts* will no longer publish papers, even if accepted, if they are not submitted in final form in the Chicago style.
- d) Articles must be written in British English spelling - not American spelling, nor a mixture of the two. Please note spelling divergences where appropriate.
- e) *Critical Arts* sometimes is sent unmodified conference papers for publication as main research articles. *Critical Arts* does not publish conference papers, but it does publish commentary, debates and extended book reviews. We will also consider conference papers which have been obviously revised for publication.
- f) *Critical Arts* has been published since 2005 by UNISA Press, and from 2007, the international edition by Routledge. **To meet our pre-planned production schedule we request that all referees respond timeously as both a courtesy to our authors, to help us establish a regular publication production schedule, and to establish a reputation for reliability and administrative efficiency.** Reminders will be sent by e-mail on outstanding reports. Where Editorial consultants remain silent in the face of the reminders and/or other communications it will be assumed that they have no further interest in the Journal. (We have no objection to editorial consultants requesting help from colleagues where time is indeed a problem).
- g) All submissions are now required to be submitted with abstracts and six keywords. Does the abstract accurately reflect the substance of the article? Is the abstract suitable for inclusion in an index?
- h) *Critical Arts* is sometimes sent articles which have been previously published elsewhere. This status does not itself automatically merit reprinting in *Critical Arts*. (Sometimes a theme issue is well served by republishing such an article.) We have sometimes found bibliographic and other errors in such publications, not to mention conceptual and other difficulties which may require revision and updating. To safeguard both the author's and *Critical Arts*' interests, such submissions (if considered by the Editor) will be automatically sent on to our consultants and referees for evaluation. Sometimes authors opportunistically submit the same paper to different journals. If you become aware of such a situation please immediately inform us so that we can take appropriate action.
- i) Paragraphs or sentences which repetitively start with the name of a source are discouraged. CA's preference is that the sources be placed in brackets at the end of sentences, thus foregrounding the author's argument over the name of the source, who is then referenced in the normal Chicago

style. We believe that restructuring sentences thus makes for easier reading as it is the argument which is emphasised. This form of referencing also saves space (and thus costs).

- j) Articles which are returned to authors for major revisions will be resubmitted to the original referees for their approval or rejection. Authors will be asked to describe in writing in a covering letter what they have imported to the revision to make this second evaluation easier for referees.

The review template form is available on the Critical Arts ScholarOne Manuscript site. This will be sent, together with this document, upon you agreeing to review. Within this document, you might like to field your overall comments as well as responses to a) to j) above.

In conclusion, we'd like to thank you for your vital contribution to *Critical Arts*. Without our editorial board and our referees we would not have a viable journal. We invite maximum involvement from our editorial board and we do hope that you will find working on the Journal as exhilarating as do we.

Regards,

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