

You've Got Some Explaining To Do: Advice for Neuroscientists Writing for Lay Readers

Jane Nevins

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What are people who read opinion-page articles looking for? How can you reach people who read generalinterest magazines? Hint: It's not the same as your colleagues or science journals.

This compact book offers the reasons and information that can help scientific writers adopt new habits to be successful and happy writing for a non-science audience. Go ahead and write journal-style for science journals and colleagues, says longtime science editor Jane Nevins, but you'll need to try different styles to reach a different audience.

The book is divided into three parts: The Meet-up, Simple Fixes, and Science and Style. In The Meet-up, Nevins describes the different venues for lay writing, from opinion pages to popular magazines, and what readers of each expect and respond to best. In Simple Fixes, she shows how jargon, "cross-over words," and hackneyed expressions can be remedied, clearing away confusion for your readers. In Science and Style, she discusses what to put first, how to quote and paraphrase in lay copy, and what to leave out.

Throughout You've Got Some Explaining to Do, Nevins gives concrete, specific examples tied to neuroscience. The author, who served as the first editor in chief of the Dana Press, brings more than 20 years of experience in translating neuroscience to lay readers.

"No one is better at helping one learn to write for the non-professional public, as I can personally testify, than Jane Nevins."-Nobel laureate Eric R. Kandel, M.D., Director, Kavli Institute for Brain Science, Columbia University College of Physicians and Scientists.



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Mable Watkins:

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