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Publishing Tips Season 3, Episode 1: From Dissertation to Journal Article with Claire Jasper

Martha: This is season three of the UCSC Publishing Tips podcast. I am your host, Martha Stuit, she/her pronouns, the scholarly communication librarian here at the University of California, Santa Cruz. This third season is a little different from the previous two seasons. Instead of answering common questions about publishing from graduate students and candidates, this season offers interviews of graduate students and postdocs themselves, including master's students and PhD students or candidates and post-doctoral researchers, and we talk about their publishing experiences.

These interviews were conducted in the spring of 2026. The aim is to share stories so that graduate authors may learn about publishing from each other. These interviews span eight departments at UCSC, so there is a range of disciplines included. Keep in mind that even if an author interview is not about your area of study, there is still something to learn about the publishing process and the effort and feelings that go along with it from these peer stories.

In this next episode, I talk with Claire Jasper, she/her, a postdoc in ocean sciences at UCSC, regarding her editing of a dissertation chapter for a prestigious journal and what happened when she submitted it to the journal. Our interview covers her area of study, the way she went about transforming a dissertation chapter into an article, and what is next for her research and publishing.

Claire: I'm Claire Jasper. Uh, my pronouns are she/her, and I am a post-doc research scientist in the Ocean Sciences Department here at UC Santa Cruz and my research aim is understanding past climate by using deep sea sediment cores to understand how ocean circulation has changed in the past and how glaciers and ice sheets like Antarctica and Greenland have changed in the past and melted during past warm periods.

Martha: Sounds really interesting. How did you get into that area of study?

Claire: When I was in undergrad, I- Was just taking different classes. I thought I wanted to be a marine biologist, and then all of the ocean science classes were in the geology department, so I started taking more classes in the geology department, and, um, took a paleoclimate class in, in my senior year.

I did a senior research thesis on sea level projections in Northern Alaska. And at the same time was learning about this field called paleoclimate or past climate. And so I thought that that would be a nice connection for, like, kind of future research, understanding sea level change in the past using paleoclimate.

And what I kind of work on is paleo oceanography, so using cores and sediments from the deep ocean to study climate in the past.

Martha: Wow, so you have been doing research for quite a while.

Claire: Yeah, I was lucky enough to start in a few labs when I was an undergrad. I had gotten advice to just, like, get your hands dirty in the lab and, like, get some exposure to see if it's even something that you like.

And I think the first lab that I was ever in, I was just sieving sands from rivers around the world, and I was just in a basement by myself for, like, hours on end, like, sieving sand. And ironically, that's sort of part of what I do even now today, but I obviously now have a greater understanding of what the scientific results and what the big questions are that we're trying to answer when we're, like, working in the lab with these different samples.

Martha: Sounds like a lot of sand.

Claire: Yes. Yeah, exactly, and it is important, and there's actually, like, small, um, organisms that create, um, fossil shells, um, that incorporate the ocean chemistry at the time that they were living. And those shells are made out of hard, um, calcium carbonate, similar to, like, a coral, um, skeleton, and those actually sand-sized particles are grown by these organisms.

They're taking in the chemistry when they're alive, and then when they settle out to the bottom of the ocean, when we sieve for those and pick out specific species and measure them in the laboratory, we can get some really cool information about what's going on with ocean chemistry and actually what's going on with ice sheets and glaciers in the past as well.

Martha: I've always wondered how researchers know or can suss out what happened in the past from things like samples of soil or sand.

Claire: Yeah, I think, um, ice cores are really famous, um, because all the photos of the field work being out in, like, a place like Antarctica or Greenland and drilling down into the, um, ice is like, really, um, has captivated a lot of people's minds.

Um, and we can actually do the same thing at the bottom of the ocean using, um, ocean research vessels. Um, and the bottom of the ocean is actually a great place for climate archives because sediment is settling out year after year, um, and just accumulating at the bottom of the ocean. In, in most areas of the ocean, it, there's very little disturbance, so you're really creating a timeline over time just accumulating with not a lot of erosion, um- Or any sort of, um, disturbance that's gonna r- kind of ruin your record-

Martha: Mm-hmm

Claire: in any way.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: And you can go back, um, over millions of years with deep sea sediments, whereas ice cores you can go back maybe a few million years, um, in little point samples. But, um, the most continuous records are actually only, like, the last 800,000 years. So if we're interested in past warm periods when the Earth was, like, much warmer than it was today, uh, we have to go back a few million years and, like, look at, um, sediment cores during those time periods to understand what was going on.

Martha: That's so much time.

Claire: Yeah. My, my, um, my sense of time is just totally skewed, I think, from when, like, talking to, you know, other people that aren't in the paleoclimate world, right? I'm thinking on thousands to millions of years, where a lot of people are thinking in hundreds to thousands of years maybe at the most.

Martha: Yeah. Yeah, so are you doing field work as well, or is it primarily analyzing samples that have been gathered on other research journeys?

Claire: So my PhD research was all collected on one research cruise that happened just before I started my PhD. So I started my PhD in the fall of 2020, and there was a research cruise out to the Southern Ocean near Antarctica in spring of, um, 2019.

And, um, I was able to do all of my PhD research based on sediment cores that were collected on a two-month expedition a year before I started. Um, which was great because I kind of hit the ground running. We had the samples, and we had the, um, x-ray images and all of the data that I needed to kind of start my PhD.

And I was lucky enough to apply for a similar expedition to the North Atlantic near Iceland and Greenland, um, midway through my PhD, and I actually sailed on a two-month research cruise to the North Atlantic in the summer of 2023. So I was out on the research vessel collecting deep sea cores that were drilled down, um, into the sediments and actually also into the bedrock, um, in the bottom of the ocean.

Martha: What an experience.

Claire: Yeah. It was an awesome experience being out on the drill ship. Um, it's called the JOIDES Resolution. It's a really unique drill ship which has actually since been retired. And it was a really neat way to kind of connect the science that I had been doing in the lab and I had been doing on my computer to understanding actually how much work and effort goes into collecting these archives and, like, how valuable they are, um, and how unique they are, um, and how important they are to preserve and, like, study, um, for future, um, research as well.

Martha: Super important. Uh, I would love to keep talking about that 'cause it's so interesting, but we're here today to talk about publishing, and so publishing goes hand in hand with that research that you're doing because ultimately the, the field work and the analysis go into articles and other types of outputs that you are creating.

So I'd like to ask you what tales from your publishing journey would you like to share with us today?

Claire: Yeah. So I, um, was thinking about talking today about kind of converting a dissertation chapter, which is often a little bit on the long-winded side, to a short format, like high impact publication for a journal like Nature or, um, Science or Science Advances or Nature Communications.

Martha: A lot of students or candidates are working on publishing dissertation chapters or include articles that they've written in their dissertation. So how did you approach publishing this dissertation chapter?

Claire: Yeah. So, um, maybe we'll take a step back and think about my first, um, dissertation chapter. Um, so my first chapter I was focused on creating a really long record, a three-million-lo- year-long record of Antarctic ice sheet change.

So like understanding when in the past, like large amounts of icebergs were coming off of Antarctica and melting out into the ocean. So both contributing to global sea level, but also perhaps like contributing to changes in ocean circulation, um, and kind of climate evolution. And for that first chapter, a big part of it was a new method development trying to use machine learning and AI to identify specific features in these deep sea sediment core X-ray images.

So my first chapter, which was then published in 2024, was this really long paper. I think it was over 9,000 words when I submitted it-

Martha: Wow

Claire: ... um, to the journal, and I got back really good reviews from the two reviewers, and I think the editor said something like, "You have to reduce this by 25% for us to publish it.

Like it's a great paper, but you need to reduce it."

Martha: That's so hard to do.

Claire: Which was really hard to do.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: And, um, they gave me some good suggestions. And honestly, like when I reread the paper, it was like... It, it is surprising, like after you write something that long, it's like, okay, there is like a lot of fluff in here that we can like get rid of.

But my first dissertation chapter was published as kind of a longer format paper- Mm-hmm ... um, with a lot of methods, a lot of analysis, and different, um, ways of kind of like looking at the data. Um, and then kind of moving on to the dissertation chapter that I'm thinking of and that we can talk about today, um, it was looking at a smaller part of that record and really understanding what was happening during like specific warm intervals and going from these cold intervals, um, very quickly, rapidly into warm intervals, and kind of understanding like how quickly the Antarctic ice sheet can melt and like contribute to global sea level rise.

And for that chapter, um, I think I had been working on that manuscript for like well over a year during like the last year of my PhD, and obviously there's so much else going on. I'm do- like finishing up lab work for another chapter. I'm applying for postdoc fellowships. So it was kind of an ongoing process, and I had to put together kind of a long-winded explanation of three different things that could be going on, like driving these big changes in the Antarctic ice sheet.

And, you know, I defended my thesis, had a really good conversation with my defense committee right after. And, um, there was kind of like some debates about like what were the key drivers and what was happening in my record. And I took like a month after and, you know, they were all happy with the dissertation chapter, but I had a meeting with some of the people that were on my committee and then another collaborator and We basically sat down and we're like, "Okay," like, "let's get this down to, like, kind of a short format paper and let's get this down to something that has, like, one key point, like, what's the key take home that people are trying to take from your paper?

And, like, let's just make that the title of the paper." So I remember in that, I think at that point I had, like, five or six figures, and we had to get it down to three, and they're like, "Here's, like, the three key things that we need to talk about." It's like, "Here's the longer record, and here's, like, a zoom-in snapshot of two specific intervals that are interesting and, like, this is what's driving it," like, changes in ocean circulation.

And actually, the westerly winds are probably driving these changes, and that's just, like, the story. And let's build a new paper based on that kind of framework and submit that to maybe a more, like, high impact journal or a journal that's more short format. Um, I took a break. You know, I... Like, I finished my PhD, I needed a break.

I went on vacation. Mm-hmm. I enjoyed, like, holidays with my family. And then when I s- was starting up here as a postdoc, I was, you know, kind of all in, like, I wanna get this paper out. It's been sitting with me for, like, a year. It was part of my dissertation. Mm-hmm. I just wanna get it published as a peer-reviewed journal article.

So then that's when I sort of, like, dove into transitioning what I had for my dissertation chapter to really whittling it down to, like, three important figures, um, and, like, a format, um, and sections that were, like, much more condensed than they were before.

Martha: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. A few follow-up questions on, on that.

Was your PhD at a- another university?

Claire: Yep. So I did my PhD, um, at Columbia University in New York City.

Martha: Nice.

Claire: Um-

Martha: Mm-hmm ...

Claire: and it was a great university to be at for this work because there was, like, multiple professors that are experts in paleoceanography and deep sea core drilling, and so I had a really, like, collaborative group of people, um, that I could work with and, like, kind of bounce ideas off there.

The vast majority of this work was done at Columbia University.

Martha: Something else you said about the dissertation I thought was really interesting because I frequently talk with graduate students and candidates who plan to publish their dissertation as a book.

Claire: Hmm.

Martha: And we talk about how the book is a different product.

Claire: Hmm.

Martha: And, and it has a different audience than the dissertation. The dissertation shows that you are worthy of your degree, whereas the book situates you as an expert in the field on, on the topic that you're writing about. But what struck me as you were speaking about your dissertation versus the articles that you've pulled from your dissertation is that that is kind of similar for the articles, too.

There's a different purpose For what you cover in the dissertation versus what you cover in the articles.

Claire: Yeah, that's, that's totally right. I think for my first chapter it was like the two were pretty cohesive because a big part of my first chapter was like really developing a method,

and that was both important to show in the dissertation way like this is what I did and like this is what I've contributed.

But then in terms of like a peer reviewed publication, now other people know the method that I developed, the code is open access, and they can, you know, test out similar methods and like compare them to my method. So it felt like there was a lot of value to like basically publishing everything that I did.

For the second chapter, what I was more thinking about was like ice sheet and ocean processes and trying to like drive home like a point- Mm-hmm ... um, based on the data that we had that like this is what's happening in Earth's past and like this is why it's important for the future. And I think, not that my dissertation chapter wasn't doing that, but I think it was...

It's sometimes so long-winded that I imagine, and maybe I'm speaking from my own personal experience, is that when I'm reading papers, it's sometimes I'm looking for one or two key points and I'm trying to understand like how their data like explain those one or two key points. And when it's too long, it's sometimes hard to, you know, describe to someone else what you just read because oftentimes I like a lot of these high impact journals because the title is the conclusion, and I like that 'cause then I can remember it and I can be like, "Oh, remember this paper by, um, so and so?"

Literally the title is the conclusion and like this is the key point that they wanted us to take home, and I kind of understand that key point. Mm-hmm. And obviously a lot of science, like there's always nuance and there's like things that you can build off of these kind of like more condensed versions.

It is important to kind of sell yourself in some ways to say, "This is the one thing that I'm contributing and I want people to like take that home with them," and like have that understanding of like how your data explains like one specific problem.

Martha: Mm-hmm. Yes. And- Mm ... I think that can be really hard to do to figure out what story to tell or to look at your data and say like, "What is this telling me?

What, what is the story that I want people to take away?" Which is maybe another way of saying what you just said, but I think-

Claire: Yeah ...

Martha: is kind of a succinct, helpful way to think about it.

Claire: Yeah. No, that's definitely true. And I think in my dissertation I had explored maybe two ideas for like this is what's driving the change.

Mm-hmm. And I think the discussion with my, um, committee and like collaborators like a month after my dissertation, they were like, "Well, which of these is like the key contributor and like can you like direct towards your data more clearly?" So the point of like me condensing was like really looking at like the strongest evidence we had at this time and saying like, "This is my strongest like conclusion," and then obviously like for future like research projects we can kind of look at maybe these more nuanced things going on that require more data analysis and perhaps more data collection as well.

Martha: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. I'd like to talk a little bit about- Where you submitted your article or articles, how did you pick out a journal and why?

Claire: So for my first, um, dissertation chapter, I knew it was gonna be a longer paper, and there's a journal in my field, um, called Paleoceanography and Paleoclimatology, and there's just papers that are in those specific subfields, which is, like, what I work on.

And they have a word maximum, but, um, they're a bit flexible and they allow, like, many figures. And so that just kinda seemed the perfect place for, like, my more, like, methods, um, development paper. Um, but when I was thinking about a paper for my second chapter where I was really condensing and, um, focusing on, like, one key point, I was thinking of actually submitting my paper to, like, kind of a, a shorter format journal, like a Nature or Science.

I kind of had the understanding, like, okay, I probably shouldn't submit my second chapter to, like, Nature. Like, I don't think it's quite at that, um, level, and I think oftentimes with those journals you put so much effort in, and then you get a desk rejection, like- Right ... a day after. Which- Mm-hmm ... sometimes, um, you know, might as well try and see what happens.

Martha: And for those less familiar with your field, Nature or journals in the Nature portfolio are really... are a high bar or-

Claire: Mm ...

Martha: premier journal to publish in, correct?

Claire: Yeah. Oftentimes, like, Nature journals, there's a very low acceptance rate, and oftentimes there's even a low rate for the editor to send it out for review, so people- Mm-hmm

can have what are called- Mm-hmm ... desk rejections, which I've heard someone say, like, "Oh, on a Friday I submitted my paper and by Monday morning I had a rejection that they wouldn't even send it out for review."

Martha: Sure.

Claire: And so I wasn't submitting it to that high, like, high impact of a journal. I was submitting it to kind of one tier later, but still in the Nature portfolio.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: And so it's for my, um- For the geosciences, there's basically Nature Geoscience. There's also, like, Nature Climate Change, and I'm sure there's other journals like that-

Martha: Mm-hmm

Claire: ... um, that are publishing, you know, a very small amount of, like, high impact research happening in, like, pretty broad fields. And so your conclusions and kind of like your key take-home points have to be exciting and relevant for more than people just in, say, paleoceanography or your subfield.

But like why is this relevant to more than just people in my subfield?

Martha: Yes. So there's some journals that are more interdisciplinary or- Mm-hmm ... have a broader audience.

Claire: Yeah.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: Yeah, and so that was kind of the aim for this paper. We were like, "Okay, I think this will be, like, broadly relevant to people in the geosciences," because there's people that think about, like, physical oceanography, that are thinking about, like, ocean circulation changes in the future.

There's people that are interested in glaciology and how Antarctica is, um, changing in the modern environment. And there's also people, um, in the paleoclimate world, like, that is kind of the world that I sit in, that all are kind of interested in this, like, dynamic system where, like, the ice around Antarctica is interacting with the ocean.

So we thought that this paper, um, would have, like, a good, um, chance at a journal like Nature Geoscience because it would kind of bring in people from different, um, kind of subfields of the geosciences together.

Martha: Mm-hmm. That's a really good illustration of when you would think about a journal with a more specific audience versus a broader audience.

Claire: Yeah. No, that's exactly right. I think from kind of advice from, like, my advisor or people that I've worked with, it's like- You will often, like, know, you'll have a feeling if, like, what you've, like, discovered or, like, analyzed in your data really is, like, broadly applicable.

Mm-hmm. And it's okay if, like, your research findings are kind of, like, more specific to your field, and there are journals specifically for that.

But when you feel like you have this, like, really strong conclusion, it feels worth it to put yourself out there a little bit and, like, potentially face rejection by, like, writing something for these short format journals and just submitting it and see what happens. Like, maybe they are interested in what you're working on, and then that just gives you an opportunity to get more visibility to your research and, you know, kind of helps especially, like, an early career scientist kind of, like, move on, um, and have something that's, like, maybe a little bit flashy, like, in their, like, back pocket, like, on their CV or something.

Martha: Mm-hmm. So delving into submitting to Nature Geoscience, you mentioned that it was a special issue, correct? Would you say more about how you found the special issue and why that seemed like a good place?

Claire: Nature Geoscience has been doing a few special collections recently, and they were doing a special collection on ice sheet and sea level change.

Um, and they just had kind of a broad call, um, and it was actually all of the Nature journals, so Nature Geoscience, Nature Communications, and then Nature Communications Earth & Environment, um, were all part of this special collection. And they had a special collection deadline of March 30th, um, of this year.

And It's kind of funny because when I was, you know, met with my committee in, like, November, and we were talking about writing my paper, they were like, "You know what? You should go for it. Like, you should submit to Nature Geoscience." So that was kind of always the plan, was to submit to this, like, one specific journal.

And then when I really started sitting down and writing the paper, and I was, like, talking with some of my friends, um, and actually a professor here at UC Santa Cruz, um, I think they mentioned, "Oh, you know there's, like, a special collection for specifically ice sheet and sea level rise, like, at this journal."

And so it seemed like a good opportunity, one, to honestly have a deadline, 'cause oftentimes with submitting papers, there's not a lot of deadlines except for maybe, like, your dissertation. Um, and two, it perhaps was gonna, like, increase odds or, you know, might, there might be, like, more interest in a paper, like what I was going to write for that specific journal if they were, like, having a special call for a special collection, right?

So there might be more, um, interest to, like, send it out for review or, um, do something like that. So when I kind of realized that in January, I started making a plan for myself with, like, deadlines and, like, you know, every two weeks, it's like, okay, write the introduction, finalize the figures-

Martha: Mm-hmm

Claire: ... um, write the results and the conclusion, which a lot of this was, like, a lot of rewriting, but at the end, I feel like if you looked at the publication versus the dissertation chapter, they'd be, like, very different because- Mm-hmm

it's just really the scope is so, so much different and the, um, the length is so much shorter that you really do have to condense down, like, the introduction to, like, the key points and obviously the discussion to, like, one or two discussion points.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: So having the special collection was kind of just a good motivator to know, like, okay, if I need to submit this by March 30th, I need to send it to co-authors for review at least two weeks, at least a month before that.

I need to write up these sections by this amount of time and really finalize everything. And so for me, it felt like a good opportunity to give me, like, that positive pressure to get moving on something that is maybe kind of easy to put on the back burner, right? Mm-hmm. 'Cause I'm starting a new postdoc and kind of starting a new project here, um, but at the same time, I'm trying to get out these publications from my dissertation as well.

Martha: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Those are really good approaches both to almost project manage yourself.

Claire: Yeah.

Martha: You know, give yourself a date or you... In this case, you had an external date. Yeah. Yeah. Uh, that helped a lot and, and to map out when you're doing what is really helpful. One of your other approaches was to have some people give you feedback outside of the formal peer review process, which is also really smart just to see how something that only you've been looking at lands with someone else, to have another set of eyes on it.

Claire: Yeah. That's totally right, and it's... I felt like especially when I was in my last year of my PhD, you know, I was meeting with-

Martha: Mm-hmm

Claire: ... my advisor rather regularly, and I was meeting with my committee members every so often, so they sort of knew, like... And I would send them drafts of the paper, and they would give me feedback.

Transitioning to a new university, I'm not, like, a few steps away from, like, my PhD advisor, who's, like, knows everything about this research.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: So I felt really independent in that moment, and to be like, "I just need to write this myself," and then kind of share almost the final product to these people.

Because I had... You know, I had the dissertation chapter. I'd had discussions with them, and we kind of already figured out, like, even what... kind of what the title would be for this new paper. So I was like, "Okay, I really just need to sit down, buckle down, edit my own figures, and, like, rewrite the text, like, myself."

And I felt like I was kind of in my own bubble, like, just working in my office here at UC Santa Cruz on this paper.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: And then, you know, maybe it was, like, a few weeks before the deadline was kind of the day that I finally sent it out to all these people that kind of knew that this was coming, and they had kind of expected that I would be writing this new paper.

Um, but it was the first opportunity for them to actually comment on if they believed, like, what I had written was really true, right?

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: And what comments they had about, like, how to really bolster some of my conclusions and discussion points. Um, and so I was definitely really nervous for that, for sending it out, because I feel like for so long I had been kind of working in my own bubble, which was honestly, like, a chance for me to, like, grow as a person and kind of grow as a scientist, to really, like, focus in on my own research- Mm-hmm

um, without kind of getting too many opinions. And then kind of letting the final product be reviewed by collaborators, close collaborators that are, like, very familiar with the subject area. Um, and the other thing I will say that, like, I just love having co-authors and people who are, like, experts being on my papers because- It's just, it obviously is like a team effort, and they're gonna be the toughest reviewers of anyone, right?

Because they are the experts. They know so much about this work because they also work in the same or similar fields. And so they're gonna give you, like, the harshest reviews, and they're gonna give you things that are gonna actually make your paper and manuscript better before you even send it out to review.

So perhaps they say something like, "You know, you need to explain more about, like, how you constrained age." Um, and that's probably a good feedback because a reviewer later on might say the same thing, and they might be so angry at you that you didn't talk about, like, how you got your age that they're like, "Oh, this paper isn't, um, final enough to be, like, accepted."

Martha: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Claire: So I think it's like, it's really nice to get that feedback early on, and especially before you submit it.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: And definitely a huge advantage of having co-authors.

Martha: Yes, and your co-authors are invested because their name will be on the paper.

Claire: Yeah. Mm-hmm. Exactly. That's true, too. And yeah, sometimes you can use co-authors, um, as a chance for collaboration as well, right?

One of my co-authors sort of happened organically over the last year. I had seen that he was presenting at a conference on modeling work in a similar topic. So he was kind of modeling Antarctic ice sheet change over time, and that's what I study from, like, the paleo sediment core record, right?

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: So he's going at it from, like, a modeling, mathematical, physical perspective, and I was doing it kind of a different way.

And I just had a Zoom call with him, and was like, "I'm really interested in your research and how your model outputs compare to, like, my proxy data." And we've just, you know, had multiple conversations. His paper came out. I read it. It was like... I was like, wow, this is, like, really connected to, like, what I'm thinking about, and we just kind of continued the conversation.

And then when I was putting together this publication, I was like, "Well, I'd love to have you on the paper and, like, contribute," and, you know, he gave me some of his model output, and, um, it was just really great. It was nice to kind of, like, loop someone else in who was at... He's actually in Switzerland, like, totally across the world- Mm-hmm

and kind of loop him into this project that was sort of just, you know, initially just me and my kind of, like, advisory committee and people that, like, I had known for five years.

Martha: That's great. So you submitted your manuscript to Nature Geosciences, and then what happened next?

Claire: Well, for a while I was just waiting.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: 'Cause I kind of thought that, you know, if they don't wanna send it out for review, they would just tell me right away. One of my friends had actually submitted to the same special call a week before, and, and we were kind of both like, "Have you heard? Have you heard?"

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: And I waited, um, two weeks, and I was like, surely, by two weeks they're just like, you know, finding reviewers, and they're just gonna like send it out for review.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: But nope, unfortunately, after two weeks they did like reject it. So I think what they do-

Martha: Bummer.

Claire: Yeah, which was definitely a bummer, but it was just for those two weeks there was a lot of like building where I was like, oh, like this is exciting. Mm-hmm. Maybe it is going out for review. 'Cause I think if it goes out for review, you have pretty high odds of getting it accepted, and I think the biggest hurdle is like even like allowing it to go out for review.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: Um, so I was kind of maybe hopeful that like, oh, it's two weeks, like they must be really like finding the right reviewers for it.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: But they didn't, unfortunately. But that's okay. I think, um, you just never know what's going on with, um, in, in the journals, what papers that they have like currently, like in review or about to be published.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: And also it's like it could be that they just didn't feel like my science was like broad enough for like their broad readership. Um, you never really know. They give y- they, I mean, they gave me like a small blurb of like w- their reasoning, but, um... And it did seem like they did read the paper at least and like think more about it.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: It was maybe kind of nice that it wasn't just rejected the day after.

Martha: Yes.

Claire: Um, but the other thing that they, um, do, or at least my experience was that the editor did say like, "If you would like to transfer this to Nature Communications," which is another one of our journals, "it will like be sent out to review at that journal."

Martha: Oh, nice. Um, so- Not all journals do that, so it's really nice when they offer to transfer your article to another journal for consideration.

Claire: Yeah, exactly. So that was, um, it was really, that was kind of like the silver lining that they-

Martha: Mm-hmm

Claire: ... you know, they said it wouldn't be A part of this special issue in our journal, but it could still be part of the special issue and special collection in, like, another journal- Mm-hmm

um, pending, obviously, it goes out for review, and then, like, gets good reviews and gets published. Mm-hmm. So I think I'm not, like, crazy upset about it, and I think part of it was just I'm proud of myself for, like, really condensing, um, my story down to, like, kind of the key point, and I am, like, just really proud of myself for, like, um, creating a story, um, that's, like, pretty short.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: And yeah, and I guess, like, fingers crossed it does go out to review, and we get good reviews back and-

Martha: Mm-hmm

Claire: ... um, can kind of move on to other things as well.

Martha: Yes. Yeah, fingers crossed for sure. So your next steps with that article are, are more waiting basically?

Claire: Yeah. Mm-hmm. Yeah, it does seem like a lot of the process r- after it's, like, kind of hurry up then wait.

It's like-

Martha: Yes

Claire: ... there is just so much-

Martha: Mm-hmm

Claire: ... pressure, like, self-inflicted of course pressure. And part of me, you know, I was just, like, working so hard and trying to get this paper together. Um, and it was good to have a deadline, and I think I did say to my co-authors if I'm totally off base with my conclusions or, like, I didn't do enough analysis, like, we don't have to submit to the special collection.

Like, I- it's totally fine.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: And so I think I did try to give myself a little bit of space there. I think the special collection is a good opportunity, but I don't need to rush something, right? If they think that it needed more time. Um, but I think having that sort of deadline really did push me to get through, um, and just get it out.

And so now I'm at the stage where all I, I think I have to do, I think later today honestly, is just go home and, like, click a button and, like, have it transfer- Mm-hmm ... um, to the different journal. And then ideally wait Confirm that it goes out for review, and then just wait for the reviews to come back, and then kind of go on from there.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: But it's kind of nice that for the short term, um, I don't have to think about it, and I can kind of move on to working on other things.

Martha: Yes, definitely. It's nice when the ball is in someone else's court.

Claire: Yeah, exactly. Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Martha: So you started your postdoc this year, and you're wrapping up publications from your PhD program.

Mm. And now you're looking ahead towards new projects in your postdoc. How are you thinking about publishing during your postdoc in general?

Claire: I have more work to do with my PhD publications.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: But right now for my postdoc, I'm, like, really focused on data, um, collection and data generation. Um, so most of my time, um, is now, like, being allocated towards, like, working in the laboratory.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: And I have, like, undergraduate interns, research assistants working with me in the lab, which has been really great to kind of, like, switch off from being alone in my office all day staring at a computer screen to then being in a more collaborative, open workspace and getting new data. And the project that I'm working on for my postdoc, I had actually kind of already started in my PhD 'cause it's all data and samples that were collected on the research cruise that I went out on in 2023.

And a lot of the work that I'm doing, um, for my research project here at UC Santa Cruz is really building off of, like, my work for my PhD. So the two are very, like, complimentary, and I'm kind of analyzing the same time period, um, but now, like, looking at North Atlantic changes and changes in the ice, like Iceland and Greenland and, um, ice around that area, um, and then comparing it to my Antarctic record.

So I have a very specific, like, data output from my, um, postdoc, but kind of thinking about improving my understanding of, like, paleo climate and climate in the past and ocean and ice changes in the past. Like, I think the- my work and, like, continuing to work on some of these papers for my thesis, like, very related, and it's, like, only, like, helping my postdoc research.

Thinking about kind of where I would publish my work or, like, how I'm gonna publish my postdoc work, I think we'll... it'll take some time. I think the first thing is to, like, really look at the data that we have and, like, see what the story is, so-

Martha: Mm-hmm

Claire: ... something that's, like, useful for, um, the field. And so I'm hopeful that, like, at least two papers will come out of this work.

Um, from my postdoc It

Martha: sounds like you've got a nice runway during your postdoc to work on this.

Claire: Yeah. So, um, my postdoc is very short actually. It's two years. So it is actually a pretty short window of time. Um, so I had to kind of like frame the project and make sure that like I was like setting reasonable, but yet high enough like standards and expectations- Mm-hmm

for the amount of work that'll get done. Um, so like I said, like right now I'm kind of in the first phase of the project, which is really like data collection, data analysis, and, um, just doing as much as I can in the lab, and then toward- towards the later half of the postdoc it'll be a lot more of like looking at the data, plotting it up, analyzing the data, s- kind of figuring out what that means for like Earth's climate.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: Yeah, and broader implications.

Martha: Are you thinking about open access for your work?

Claire: Open access is always the plan. I think for my first research article that was published, I had the option of open access or not, and I just went for open access. It just makes more sense for me too-

Martha: Mm-hmm

Claire: ... and in some ways it's kind of nice because, you know, you never know who's gonna stumble upon your work and like it, you know, even just sending the link to my parents or something-

Martha: Yeah!

Claire: Someone, it's nice that it's like it is publicly accessible.

Martha: Mm-hmm.

Claire: Um, and I'm someone that typically, um, hasn't, uh, not necessarily never would, but I usually don't, um, like publish a pre-print before I submit a paper. Mm-hmm. Um, just 'cause it just, I don't know, I, part of me thinks like, "Oh, what if the reviews make me significantly change it," then like what people read as a pre-print is gonna really change.

So I think trying to get the final paper out there as either open access or like listing the accepted document somewhere-

Martha: Mm-hmm ...

Claire: um, I think is really important, um, for furthering science and making it just accessible for- Mm-hmm ... anyone that's interested.

Martha: Yes, definitely. Great. Well, thank you so much, Claire.

Claire: Yeah. Thanks so much for having me. This was really fun.

Martha: Thanks for listening. This season of Publishing Tips was produced by Daniel Story and me, Martha Stuit, with additional editing support from Isaiah Brazel and Jennessy Barba. Daniel, Isaiah, and Jennessy are all part of the University Library Center for Digital Scholarship, and we thank them for their support of this podcast.

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Thank you!