

ECO 640: Labor Economics Referee Report: Due December 3 2008

- **Referee Report** You have to write a ‘referee report’ of the paper by Na Yin and me on Social Security. You can find a link to the pdf version of the paper in my webpage. A referee report means that an editor (in this case I pretend to be one) has received this paper to be considered for publication. Editors are quite powerful, but they still need help. He is asking for your help in deciding whether this paper is worthy of publication in an economic journal (let’s call it **Economystica** for the sake of argument). Your report (maximum 3 pages) should include a short summary of the paper, an explanation of its contribution(s), if any, an explanation of its weaknesses, and possible ways to improve it. Finally, you have to decide between one of three options, and offer justifications for your decision:
 1. **Reject the paper:** usually this means the paper does not make a sizable enough contribution, or it has important mistakes, ignores some important literature, or is basically not interesting enough for a leading journal. Most papers submitted to leading journals fall into this category, but a lot of times is because they are not adequate to the journal. Our fictional journal is interested in all types of quality papers.
 2. **Revise and Resubmit:** ask for changes granting them the opportunity to revise it. The changes asked can range from small things like clarifications, to major changes of emphasis, new sections, extensions, appendices, etc.
 3. **Accept it as is:** not very common in a first try but it happens. (The myth says that *Gerard Debreu* has never revised one of his papers. Of course that does not mean that maybe he is his best (worst) referee. I have not been able to confirm this, but I will let you know if I find out for sure.) Sometimes it needs some minor changes, but nothing substantial that would prevent the editor from giving the good news to the author(s).