

Editorial

Criticism in scientific research

Many reviewers, geologists among them, fall in the ditch when they intend to review books related to their interests. In other words, they are usually biased towards their area of expertise.

In contrast, authors and editors would like to distribute their books to wide range of audience. Therefore, most of them try to cover several aspects instead of focusing on one selective subject. It is not the responsibility of the author or editor that the reviewer cannot and would not see more than his area of research.

A case study is focused on the book titled "Predation in Organisms"; Ashraf M. T. Elewa (Editor) (2006).

The present book was arranged according to two prominent orders:
Starting with invertebrates, then proceeding with vertebrates
Arrangement from smaller to bigger organisms

Even though, there are some scientists who probably could not notice this arrangement due to their focus on chapters of their interest.

The second point to discuss is the scope of editing such book. Dr. Veldmeijer, in his foreword to the book, argued that there is absolute necessity of combining data from other disciplines, like biological sciences, with paleontology to get insight in a complex system as predator-prey interactions. He affirmed that the present book is just such a work in its totality but within the various chapters as well. A similar meaning is introduced by the editor of the book.

The book could answer most of mentioned questions in the introduction of the book. For example, chapter 3 concluded that the environmental equilibrium plays an important role in predation. Also, avoiding predation is discussed by Langerhans in chapter 10. Moreover, Wildlife protection is explained by Bodenchuk and Hayes in chapter 11. Pitt and Witmer introduced synthesis of the past, present and future for the invasive predators in chapter 12 ... As you can see, the book covered wide area of research, however it is impossible to cover all subjects related to the idea of predation in one single book.

Albeit, I am partially convinced that the book on predation could not capitalize on an opportunity to open a dialog between ecologists and paleontologists on a common set of questions, however who previously did? Ecologists and paleontologists are working in isolation from each other. They even could not unify their efforts to generate same taxonomic names for the fossils and living organisms of the same species!!

In my opinion, you can say that any book is successful when scientists declare that general readers, interested in the subject, can benefit from some of what this volume has to offer; this is one of the most important goals to authorize and edit such books.

Criticism, in general, is a professional art, which is based on definite rules; these rules can be summarized in the following:

Unbiased consideration to the subject in hand.

Respecting the intellectual independence of the author or editor.

Avoiding real or distinguished conflicts of interest.

Avoiding personal criticism.

Introducing advice to both author and readers on how to benefit from this work in present and future.

For justice, the Journal of Geology and Mining Research (JGMR) represents such case of professional effort through experienced and talented group of editors, editorial board and employees. It is not strange that the previously mentioned rules of criticism are all represented in the editorial policy and practices of this great journal.

Reference

Elewa AMT (2006) Predation in organisms – A distinct phenomenon. Springer, New York, p 311

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