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Literature cited

Note: These are examples of preferred presentation style, some are not cited in the text.

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Appendix.

What is Peer Review?

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Authors are solely responsible for the content of their papers. When an article is quoted or cited, it is the author's name and reputation at stake. The author, not the reviewer, editor, or publisher, will be criticized or commended on the contents. Authors do have the last word on reviews. However, the review process can point out weaknesses and improvements to make the final version better.

Obviously, authors would like their paper to be as accurate and complete as possible. They usually have close colleagues review the paper before submission. Constructive criticism should be welcomed by all authors. This does not suggest that first drafts should be sent for PEER REVIEW. Good reviews not only improve the paper, but the reputation of the author. Disagreements are OK, but the author takes all risks.

What is a PEER? According to my encyclopedia, it is "a nobleman" [rare in scientific circles]; "a person who has equal standing as another as in rank, class, or age."; "a companion; a fellow" [Archaic]. The term originates in Latin: *par*, meaning equal; through Old French *per*, meaning equal; to Middle English *peer*. We often think of it as those above us, or those who know more. In fact, it only means equal. As a result, the reviewer should not consider his position as **authority** (after all, **author** is a part of the word).

So, what is PEER REVIEW? We all want our papers to be the best, and peer review is an attempt to "get another opinion". That opinion might differ strongly, but it should be heard by the author. He must still be the judge if he is willing to modify his paper. As an example, Darwin's peers (anonymous or not) might have had serious objections to his theory of evolution, or even the way he presented it. But science would have greatly suffered if his theory had not been published!

A recent Associated Press article entitled "Online publishing a threat to peer review" (Gainesville Sun, October 2, 2006) discusses the pros and cons of peer review. Obviously the concept of peer review applies to publishing online or hard copy printing. The article indicates that the Public Library of Science (journal PloS) will launch its first non-peer reviewed journal (PloS ONE). Manuscripts will be "...posted for the world to dissect after an editor gives them a cursory look." Some believe this may flood the Web with an unfiltered, deluge of junk science and poor quality papers. The CSE does not intend to give up the PEER REVIEW process, but we want to clarify how it is implemented within our editorial process.

Who are PEER REVIEWERS? Here we are referring to expert review of manuscripts on specialized scientific subject matter. Often there may be only 1 or 2 experts on a given subject. In most cases, the peer reviewer should be equally knowledgeable as the author on the subject matter, and as unbiased as possible. Their critique should be constructive, without personal attacks. They must be willing to sacrifice their valuable time reviewing someone else's research, with the expectation that someone will do the same for their papers. They are not required to be great authors, but should provide a constructive review, useful to the author and editor.

The PEER REVIEW process; how does it work? As a former editor for several journals and a peer reviewer for hundreds of papers, I have found that the existing peer review process does not work very well. For most journals it involves the editor sending the submitted paper to 2 or more potential reviewers, with specific guidelines and deadlines. Often the paper has already been scheduled for a specific issue of the journal. After some bad experiences with some reviewers, the editor pares down his list of competent and dedicated reviewers. The list is often very limited, and good reviewers are asked to review even more papers. It sometimes causes good friends to avoid their editors' requests.

The major problem with the process is time. When journals are 1 to 2 years behind, and delays on getting research published cause serious problems (e.g., synonymy), it is imperative to streamline the process. Editors may go without one or both peer reviews when printing deadlines dictate. In other cases, the author and reviewer disagree sufficiently that the editor must sit in judgment for the debate. In many cases he does not have the expertise or background to judge. Reviewers usually have ongoing research projects that may take them out of country, or prevent them from devoting the time to do a thorough job. Rarely does the process work as it is intended.

So, what can be done? For **Insecta Mundi**, the late Ross H. Arnett, Jr. and I came up with what seems to be a workable modification of the PEER REVIEW process. We wholeheartedly agreed with the necessity of such reviews. However, we believe that conscientious authors know the PEERS who can constructively review their papers. Therefore, we required authors to send their papers to 2 such reviewers and to include the reviews when submitting the paper to the editor. The Editorial Board can then determine if proper modifications were made, and to see any criticisms. This speeds up the process tremendously, because there is no waiting by the editor or mailing requests to the PEER REVIEWERS. Any peer reviews, judged by the Editorial Board, that appear the result of collusion, favoritism, or personal bias may be rejected and require further reviews. If anonymous or further review is necessary, it can still be done. We also consider our Editorial Board capable as a peer group, with expertise for providing suggestions to authors for manuscript improvements.

Because we are planning to publish **Insecta Mundi** by electronic processes, the speed and efficiency of the review process is essential. We expect to publish within weeks after papers have been accepted. Our system has functioned well over several years, and we intend to continue the requirements. We believe that this process constitutes PEER REVIEW as defined above, and thus, our journal is PEER REVIEWED. Only the mechanism for the reviews is changed, but quality papers are still assured. We require 2 peer reviews to be submitted with each manuscript!

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