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Dec 11, 2010

Want to have some fun? Do some peer reviewing for a scientific journal!



Every December, the journal *Environmental Microbiology* publishes a collection of humorous quotes made by peer reviewers while assessing manuscripts submitted to the journal. Some of them are hilarious! I am extracting a few of them from the last two years, but I recommend reading them all!

Here you go:

Desperate referees:

This paper is desperate. Please reject it completely and then block the author's email ID so they can't use the online system in future.

The biggest problem with this manuscript, which has nearly sucked the will to live out of me, is the terrible writing style.

The writing and data presentation are so bad that I had to leave work and go home early and then spend time to wonder what life is about.

The finding is not novel and the solution induces despair.

Desperate authors:

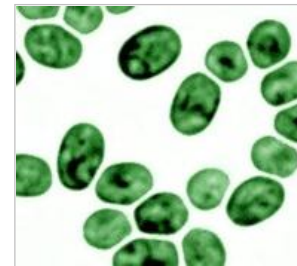
WOW! You did 'read it with interest' in SEVEN MINUTES?!! [Ed.: this is an author contribution in response to an editorial decision (rejection) made within 7 min of submission]

My FriendFeed

RT @TBVI_EU: Why is research essential to stop tuberculosis?
<http://www.tbvi.eu/fileadm...>

RT @Jason_Pollock: Facebook is the people you went to school with. Twitter is the people you wished you went to school with. /@twittelator

Hydrogen production comes naturally to ocean microbe: photosynthetic cyanobacterium gives off hydrogen as by-product -
<http://www.nature.com/news...>



Mycelia Sterilia: No Reproductive Structures? No Problem! -by @MycoRant -some fungi live their lives happily w/o spores -
<http://mycorant.com/mycelia...>



The Cell: An Image Library - freely accessible repository of reviewed & annotated images, videos & animations of cells /via @jhabig @cosmiclog @AmerSocCellBio -
<http://cellimagelibrary.org/home>



Holiday season:

Done! Difficult task, I don't wish to think about constipation and faecal flora during my holidays!

The peaceful atmosphere between Christmas and New Year was transiently disrupted by reading this manuscript.

Merry X-mas! First, my recommendation was reject with new submission, because it is necessary to investigate further, but reading a well written manuscript before X-mas makes me feel like Santa Claus.

Season's Greetings! I apologise for my slow response but a roast goose prevented me from answering emails for a few days.

Technical issues:

[...] maybe some beetle took a pee on one or the other of the samples [...]

You call the sample fresh water, this is confusing as it is saline water.

The trees are crap but, besides this, excellent work.

Writing style:

You know there is something important there but the language is so inaccessible that you cannot make up your mind if they are trying to hide something or they actually think that is a good style of writing.

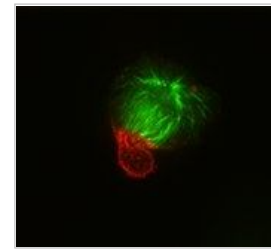
This manuscript gets the title 'worst written manuscript of the year reviewed by DJ'

The writing style is flowery and has an air of Oscar Wilde about it.

Great manuscripts:

This is a long, but excellent report. [...] It hurts me a little to have so little criticism of a manuscript.

I perused this manuscript while in the hotel prior to a friend's wedding. I was suspicious that a state of relaxation had influenced my enjoyment of a paper on soil formation; so I read it again, this time squashed between two large people on the delayed flight home, and still



WHO calls for roll-out of 'milestone' #tuberculosis test - it cuts diagnosis time from up to two months to 100 minutes - <http://www.scidev.net/en...>



Many thanks for RTs of my blog post! - humorous peer review comments on papers submitted to Environmental Microbiology <http://twistedbacteria.blogspot.com/2010...>

Comic for December 11, 2010 - <http://dilbert.com/strips...>

Re: Want to have some fun? Do some peer reviewing for a scientific journal! - http://twistedbacteria.disqus.com/want_to...

"Ha, ha (I thought about that too, and found a... [more...](#) - Cesar Sanchez

Want to have some fun? Do some peer reviewing for a scientific journal! - <http://twistedbacteria.blogspot.com/2010...>



A Mickey Kosloff, Christina Pikas, Mitchell J Stanton-Cook y Neil Saunders les gustó esto

Every December, the journal Environmental... [more...](#) - Cesar Sanchez

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enjoyed reading it.

Very much enjoyed reading this one, and do not have any significant comments. Wish I had thought of this one.

Share

is always a joy to review manuscripts such as this. Well-conceived, well executed, well edited. Clean. Pristine. From start to finish.

[rees' quotes – 2010](#). *Environmental Microbiology* (2010) 12, 3303–3304.
[rees' quotes – 2009](#). *Environmental Microbiology* (2009) 11, 3309–3310.

credits:
 (desperate schoolboy) modified from a [photo by Patrick Bell](#). Source: Flickr. This image is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported [License](#).

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Posted by César Sánchez at **1:36 PM**

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Manuel Sánchez 3 days ago

Well, I wonder what kind of quotes the peer reviewers from Science did with the arsenic-bacteria paper. At this moment, surely they will be fun. :-)

Un abrazo

(Edited by author 3 days ago)

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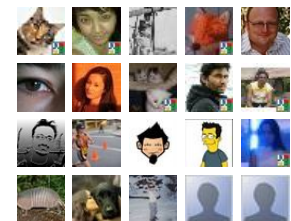
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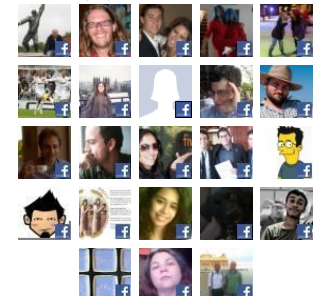
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César Sánchez 3 days ago in reply to Manuel Sánchez

Ha, ha (I thought about that too, and found a couple of quotes that could perhaps be applied to this case, but too much has already been written and said about the issue...)

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Psi Wavefunction 7 hours ago

Biology Direct does open review. Sometimes the reviewers seem to forget that. Hilarity ensues.

1 person liked this.

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Reactions



dbiello 44 minutes ago

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making peer review fun <http://bit.ly/h8uHhn> ph those wacky microbiologists



KPUNews 1 hour ago

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Entertaining RT @jonmsutton 'The finding is not novel and the solution induces despair' - peer review via @badscience <http://ow.ly/3py1u>



schammond 3 hours ago

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JohnNCoupland 3 hours ago

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1.000.000.000
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AS HELL.



Recommended non-profit website



SciDev.Net: News, views and information about science, technology and development. Note: I have no connection to SciDev.Net .





rufus_ 3 hours ago

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<http://twistedbacteria.blogspot.com/2010/12/want-to-have-some-fun-do-some-peer.html> - when scientists get snarky!



jonmsutton 4 hours ago

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'The finding is not novel and the solution induces despair' - peer review via @badscience <http://ow.ly/3py1u>



mandoran 4 hours ago

From [Twitter](#) via [BackType](#)

An interesting and amusing look at the world of real science: <http://bit.ly/h8uHhn>



scottahurrell 4 hours ago

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peer review comments - some classics! <http://twistedbacteria.blogspot.com/2010/12/want-to-have-some-fun-do-some-peer.html>



marcgalexander 4 hours ago

From [Twitter](#) via [BackType](#)

The best and worst peer reviewer comments of the year to the journal Environmental Microbiology - worth a read! <http://goo.gl/VBeFt>



Rosalind12 5 hours ago

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harr funny lecturers :D <http://twistedbacteria.blogspot.com/2010/12/want-to-have-some-fun-do-some-peer.html>

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Posted by David Booker at December 15, 2010 4:11 PM

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