Siller-Matula, J; Singh, B; Sithole, S; Six, F; Skoyles, JR; Slofstra, J; Sole, DA; Sommer, WF; Sonko, M; Starr-Casanova, CJ; Steakley, ME; Steinhauser, W; Steinhoff, K; Sterba, JH; Steppan, M; Stindl, R; Stokely, J; Stokely, K; St-Pierre, G; Stratford, J; Sterli, C; Stryg, C; Sullivan, M; Summhammer, J; Tadesse, A; Tavares, D; Thompson, L; Tomlinson, A; Tozer, J; Trevisanato, SI; Trimmel, M; Turner, N; Vahur, P; van der Byl, J; van der Maas, T; Varela, L; Vega, CA; Vermaak, S; Villasenor, A; Vogel, M; von Wintzigerode, G; Wagner, C; Weinberger, M; Weinberger, P; Wilson, N; Wolfe, JF; Woodley, MA; Young, I; Zuraw, G; Zwiren, N

Titel des Beitrags:
Peer review versus editorial review and their role in innovative science.

Abstract:
Peer review is a widely accepted instrument for raising the quality of science. Peer review limits the enormous unstructured influx of information and the sheer amount of dubious data, which in its absence would plunge science into chaos. In particular, peer review offers the benefit of eliminating papers that suffer from poor craftsmanship or methodological shortcomings, especially in the experimental sciences. However, we believe that peer review is not always appropriate for the evaluation of controversial hypothetical science. We argue that the process of peer review can be prone to bias towards ideas that affirm the prior convictions of reviewers and against innovation and radical new ideas. Innovative hypotheses are thus highly vulnerable to being "filtered out" or made to accord with conventional wisdom by the peer review process. Consequently, having introduced peer review, the Elsevier journal Medical Hypotheses may be unable to continue its tradition as a radical journal allowing discussion of improbable or unconventional ideas. Hence we conclude by asking the publisher to consider re-introducing the system of editorial review to Medical Hypotheses.

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