

Comment

JCOM — FIVE YEARS IN THE FUTURE

Quicker, shorter and focus on special issues

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ABSTRACT: Three possibilities are suggested by the author that aims to improve the quality of Science Communication. These are quicker responses to the contemporary issues, adding more short articles so as to enrich and enlarge information, and focuses on some special issues aiming to discuss one topic from different perspectives. The author also gives two examples of special issues of science communication.

Each country has its own situation in science communication. People try to find new patterns from “other worlds” as references while solving their own problems. If Science Communication wishes to further fulfill the needs from all over the world, some new efforts should be considered.

First of all, I hope there will be a quicker response to contemporary science communication issues. The world changes faster than before due to the function of transformational technology in communication, and a journal about communication must take this into account.

Secondly, science communication should continue to keep a stable, contemporary style, and at the same time, add more short articles so as to enrich each issue. None but you have a lot of information and thoughts; you can feed the hunger of international readers.

Thirdly, try to organize some special issues that focus on hot, as well as important, science communication issues of concern to worldwide researchers.

Talking about special issue, I have two interesting suggestions.

First is related to PISA, Program for International Student Assessment, launched by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). In 2009, when China first participated in this evaluation by using Shanghai data as an example, Shanghai achieved the top score on the index of science education. This created a big debate in China. Does it mean China’s science education is the best in the world? How much was science communication factor *involved* in the index? This is a good topic for a special issue and would allow experts from inside and outside China to dialogue about the issue. Even today, the lessons we draw can be a reflection for practitioners of other worlds. Does this seem like a good topic for a special issue?

The second is using science fiction (novels/stories/games/movies) to communicate science. In the past 30 years, my work expanded to study science fiction. I was an author of science fiction novels and short stories from 1979 to now. In 1991, I began to teach science fiction in Beijing Normal University. In 2003, my program was promoted to a master's program. Right now, I hope it can be upgraded to doctor's program. I hope literature, media, science and education students can study science fiction. The reason is science fiction covers a large area that not only belongs to literature, but to critical/creative/imaginative/speculative thinking, and, of course, science communication. According to Darko Suvin,¹ teaching science fiction is a specific form of civic education. I agree with him. If possible, I hope I can help to edit this special issue about science fiction in science education. It can cover many theoretical and practical experiences on our planet earth.

Anyway, to be a loyal reader of Science Communication journal, I wish it a prosperous future.

Notes and references

¹ C. Elkins and D. Suvin (2004), *Preliminary Reflections on Teaching Science Fiction Critically, Science Fiction Studies* (No. 19), volume 6, part 3, November 1979, date: 10/7/2004, from: <http://www.depauw.edu/sfs/backissues/19/elkinsuv19art.htm>

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