

## Re: JSH: Mistakes happen

**Source:** <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.math/2004-07/4923.html>

---

**From:** Andrzej Kolowski (*akolowski\_at\_hotmail.com*)

**Date:** 07/19/04

Date: 19 Jul 2004 11:17:36 -0700

jstevh@msn.com (James Harris) wrote in message  
news:<3c65f87.0407190543.11415180@posting.google.com>...  
> *akolowski@hotmail.com* (Andrzej Kolowski) wrote in message  
news:<a1fa83d9.0407181346.57ad8d81@posting.google.com>...  
> > *jstevh@msn.com* (James Harris) wrote in message  
news:<3c65f87.0407180806.6191474f@posting.google.com>...  
>> > *Now a poster has found a minor series of mistakes in my APF paper,*  
and  
>> > *I admit some chagrin. But mistakes happen. As an author you can*  
>> > *write something and for a lot of psychological reasons (and just*  
plain  
>> > *carelessness) miss mistakes.*  
>> >  
>>  
>> ... *And overlook them for over a year, even during extended*  
arguments  
>> *about exactly that part of a very short paper!*  
>>  
>>  
>> > *I don't know why I wasn't notified of that mistake by Ioannis*  
Argyros,  
>> > *but given what I've seen from editors at Southwest Journal of*  
>> > *Mathematics, I'm not surprised.*  
>> >  
>>  
>> *Simple. No one ever looked at it. Your claims that it passed*  
>> *peer review are bogus, probably the result of inexcusable*  
>> *carelessness by the editor.*  
>>  
>  
> *I was told by Ioannis Argyros that the paper passed peer review.*  
>  
> *Here's a direct quote with the original grammar errors:*  
>  
> *"Our decision to accept the paper for publication in SWJPAM*  
> *was based on positive opinions received by the reviewers.*  
>

A minor side issue here is that that is in itself a puzzling statement: "positive opinions received by the reviewers" – shouldn't that logically be "positive opinions received FROM the reviewers?" Plus it looks like a very generic statement (a form letter).

>You can visit(sometime in May):

><http://rattler.cameron.edu/swjpam/swjpam.html>

>to find it.

>

>Thanks for sending your nice paper to us."

>

>Now then, given *\*your\* find of errors it is reasonable to consider the*

>*possibility that Ioannis Argyros lied, which may mean that NONE of the*

>*papers published in the journal along with mine were actually*

>*reviewed!!!*

>

I don't think he lied, at least not at that point. I think it was simply a mistake. He or his secretary sent you the wrong form letter. The manuscript got put in the wrong file. With an electronic journal, you push the wrong button, you end up with the wrong paper being "accepted".

I mean, look at the evidence. You never actually got a referee's report. That in itself is unusual. If there were reviews – this journal says it sends manuscripts to two reviewers, I believe – BOTH of them had to have overlooked simple and obvious mistakes. NEITHER commented on the phrase "overinterpretations of Galois theory" which occurs in your abstract *\*with no further explanation\**. Any halfway competent reviewer would at least have asked what you meant by that phrase. Most of all, your main result is incorrect and your application of it to  $65x^3 - 12x + 1$  is incoherent. Any reviewer with expertise in algebra should have seen both of these problems. Face it: *\*there was no review\**. This whole thing was a stupid accident.

>*So the authors of other papers might need to be contacted if you*  
>*people on sci.math actually care about such a thing, or you can just*  
>*let it go.*

>

This is clearly a sloppily run journal. The articles are poorly copy-edited. It may have published previously an incorrect paper related to P-NP. The temptation to be less rigorous with electronic journals than with print journals is always going to be a problem. I agree that some action is justified, though contacting other authors seems rather pointless. They are not going to agree that their own papers are also incorrect. Anyway, this was almost

certainly a random accident that probably did not affect other papers. You should write a letter of complaint to each individual member of the editorial board, with a copy going to the AMS.

>My guess is that no one will even bother to look into it as this  
>newsgroup is not about substance. None of you really care if all the  
>papers published actually were reviewed, so you won't push the issue.  
>  
>You don't care.  
>  
>But you *\*do\** care if my paper was reviewed or not. So the problem  
for  
>you isn't about correctness of the results or proper review, but with  
>whether or not you can attack my paper.  
>  
>Now my position that my paper was reviewed was based on the words of  
>Argyros.  
>  
>Given that Argyros is the chief editor of SWJPAM, it seemed  
reasonable  
>to believe him.  
>

Not now, though, given the evidence at hand. Right?

You now know that the paper was wrong as written. You claim that the error I have noted amounts to just "typos" and it is easily fixed. That is incorrect as I have shown in another thread. Other errors have been pointed out to you many times. It is your responsibility to either withdraw the paper or to send a correction to the editor of the journal to which it is now submitted. Any other course of action is in my view an inexcusable continuation of fraud.

Andrzej

>  
>James Harris