EDITORIAL

To get to know, to discover, to publish – this is the destiny of a scientist.
François Arago

We live in a pragmatic world, where search for the truth is sometimes overshadowed by the desire, or even the need, to publish the discovered. While the pursuit of knowledge is a noble endeavour on its own, it is often the publication of said knowledge that pays dividends (figuratively or literally): being a published author can be used for a variety of purposes, from supporting a grant application to bragging rights.

We have recently come across an unpleasant issue of a Crux problem appearing somewhere else in print at approximately the same time (see comments on problems 4191 and 4192). It is unacceptable and unethical for a repeated proposal or solution to be submitted when it can already be referenced and found somewhere else. It wastes time and space that could be used for consideration and publication of original materials. Of course some potential repetition is acceptable (such as the problem that appears in another language or in materials not easily available to the general audience), but the original source must be acknowledged in the proposal with a proper reference.

As authors, we don’t often think about how much effort a journal spends on our submission. At Crux, each problem proposal gets reviewed by the entire Editorial Board. In accepting or rejecting a proposal, we consider many factors and regularly have lengthy discussions about them. We do not take these decisions lightly and there are a lot of decisions to be made! Last year, we received 780 problem proposals in total and so far this year we are on track to beat 2016 statistics. To me, editors’ time is precious. And not just because it is finite, but because it is voluntarily donated. Crux runs on the good will of its editors and they are its most valuable resource. So I ask you – our authors, solvers and proposers – to be mindful and respectful of our time and of the peer review system as a whole.

Since the Editorial Board cannot possibly check all the potential other sources, we ask our proposers to be honest about the originality of the material and our solvers to be vigilant and inform us if the material is not new (otherwise, you become an accessory to the crime).

To err is human, so if you’ve submitted a repeat proposal recently, I kindly ask you to withdraw it from Crux by emailing me.

Kseniya Garaschuk