

The First Post

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Many years ago, early in my career, I learned the hard way that every paper submitted for publication should be ruthlessly pared down to consist solely of factual material and fully justified statements. Any personal opinions, speculations, whimsical thoughts, comments or suchlike, should be eliminated; as, in the words of the poet John Donne, they would offer 'hostages to fortune'. That is, there would be at least one referee who would make such an opinion (suitably misinterpreted!) the basis for outright rejection of the manuscript, probably accompanied by gratuitously offensive comments. This of course raises questions about the role of the editor in this increasingly fraught process of peer review, and that is something to which I shall return in future blogs.

In the middle period of my career, I would occasionally receive a referee's report which expressed regret that I had not included more of my own views, and indicated that they would be welcome. My response to this was 'No fear', to use an expression from my remote childhood.

Recently I gave in to the temptation to do just that and, in what might well be my last journal submission (rejected by four different journals), I sweepingly dismissed both the Kolmogorov (1962) 'revised theory' and Landau's criticism of the Kolmogorov (1941) theory, without explaining why. I suppose I was relying on the critique published in my book of 2014. But they were seized upon by one referee to reject the paper, followed by the patronizing comment 'Need I say more'. Well, actually what he needed to do was to say less and to think more. That too is something to which I shall return in future blogs.

Evidently my self-imposed constraints are beginning to chafe! So, as a blog (if it is to be of any value as offering clarification or stimulus) should in fact consist very largely of the things that I have omitted from papers, the temptation to blog is clear. As I began my postgraduate research in 1966, I am now in my forty fifth year of turbulence research, so there should be no lack of material. Oh, and it should also be both pithy and hard-hitting. You have been warned.