

A Possible Case of Censorship of Submissions

on the Nature of Consciousness^{1,2}

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Abstract: To advance the scientific understanding of consciousness, one should be open to theoretical pluralism to freely develop and rigorously test a wide diversity of paradigm candidates and communicate the ideas and findings to the scientific community. Science development is jeopardized when journals tend to present a field's state-of-the-art findings in a biased or misguided way or suppress investigations of a particular perspective. We describe the challenges and pitfalls we faced as guest editors during the editorial review process of a special issue of the journal *Frontiers* on "The Nature of Consciousness" and how we responded to it. We describe and discuss how the journal staff overruled our editorial role to enforce what was very likely academic censorship. We then offer a couple of recommendations to authors and editors that may face similar issues. We believe that following these recommendations will ultimately contribute to practical and theoretical advances in the understanding the nature of consciousness and the mind-brain relation.

Keywords: consciousness, mind-brain relationship, scientific journal, dogmatism, physicalism, dualism, scientific communication.

Highlights

- We report abuses of editorial power that occurred during the editorial review process of a research topic.
- We offer recommendations to authors that eventually face similar issues.

Understanding the mind-brain relation is one of the most challenging philosophical and scientific quests human beings have ever pursued. Using the terms coined by the philosopher of science Thomas Kuhn, we are clearly in a pre-paradigmatic phase when it comes to a consensus about the human consciousness: there is no widely agreed upon scientific paradigm on how to understand, deal with, and investigate the human mind and its relation to the brain (Chibeni & Moreira-Almeida, 2007; Kuhn, 1970). To advance

the scientific understanding of this topic, we should be open to theoretical pluralism to freely develop and rigorously test a wide diversity of paradigm candidates (Moreira-Almeida & Araujo, 2017). As another philosopher of science, Imre Lakatos, proposed, we should allow and promote a Darwinian competition of research programs or paradigm candidates; the fittest (or the best one) should survive (Lakatos & Musgrave, 1970). In this sense, it is essential to combine methodological and rational rigor with open-mindedness for a fruitful and genuinely scientific quest.

Another centrally important way the scientific community ensures high-quality research is by publishing its findings in peer-reviewed scientific journals. In a nutshell, the peer review is a process by which scientists with expertise in the field critique each other's work before publication, ensuring that the new research is original and uses valid methods and analytical procedures. A peer-reviewed work is not necessarily correct or conclusive. It has its flaws, but scientific progress depends on the communication of information that can be trusted, and the peer-review process is a vital part of that system. However, science development is jeopardized when journals tend to present a field's state-of-the-art findings in a biased or misguided way (Moreira-Almeida et al., 2018) or suppress investigations with a particular perspective (Cardeña, 2015).

In this paper we briefly present the challenges and pitfalls that occurred during the editorial review process of the research topic "The Nature of Consciousness" for the journal *Frontiers*. We hope this report will help the academic community be aware of some of the obstacles posed by some journals to the integrity of the scientific process.

¹ This manuscript was sent to the *Frontiers*' Editorial Office before publication to give them an opportunity to respond. After two weeks, we received no answer or acknowledgment whatsoever.

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Brief Report

Planning the Research Topic

On July 29, 2020, the manager of the journal *Frontiers* sent an invitation to Marina Weiler to launch a research topic as a guest editor. After accepting the invitation, Weiler received on August 3, 2020, an email from *Frontiers'* journal specialist stating, "as a guest editor of a research topic, you would act as a [sic] handling editors for submitted manuscripts Each research topic is made up of a geographically diverse team of 3 or more guest editors of your choice to define the scope of your topic and share the editorial responsibilities." On August 31, 2020, Weiler had a conference call with a *Frontiers'* journal specialist, who later sent an email stating that they would "choose the most appropriate journal/sections once you have a theme in mind and we will discuss the best matching" (i.e., *Frontiers* would select the journal that best matched the proposed topic).

Weiler contacted other colleagues (Martin M. Monti, Raphael F. Casseb, and Alexander Moreira-Almeida) who agreed to work with her as co-guest editors of the new research topic devoted to the study of human consciousness. On September 28, 2020, along with an introduction to the final team of guest editors, Weiler sent an email expressing our concern about properly choosing a specialty chief editor who would suit the scope of our topic, fearing experiencing a similar issue with *Frontiers'* research topics as had occurred in the past (Cardeña, 2015).

On October 1, 2020, the journal specialist congratulated us for "putting together a very strong editorial team" while ignoring our concern about finding a proper specialty chief editor for our topic. However, she also informed us that the guest editors would be responsible for the following:

- Assessing whether or not a manuscript fits within the scope of the special issue and screening it with regard to whether or not it can be considered for inclusion and there-

fore sent on to reviewers.

- Sending the manuscript to reviewers through the *Frontiers'* system (a quick, streamlined, and straightforward process). Editors are asked to ensure that each screened manuscript is reviewed by at least two reviewers.
- Reviewing the reviewers' comments and making a decision on whether or not the manuscript is to be accepted for publication.

Three of the guest editors had a web meeting with *Frontiers'* staff to propose and discuss details of the proposed topic; we explained its aims and emphasized we would welcome theoretical and empirical papers dealing with different aspects of human consciousness. Importantly, we clarified we were interested in manuscripts that pursued different theoretical backgrounds, including physicalist and non-physicalist perspectives of consciousness, as indicated in the topic's description. We also expressed our concern about any possible bias from *Frontiers* toward approving submitted manuscripts, exemplified by the negative experience Cardeña had had in the past. In response, *Frontiers* assured us that the guest editors would have complete editorial freedom and submitted papers would be approved based on scientific rigor instead of philosophical backgrounds. After this meeting, we sent *Frontiers* the final version of our research topic proposal, "The Nature of Consciousness":

Since ancient times, humanity has shown a deep interest in "consciousness" and its many facets. Consciousness can be defined in terms of sentience (response to external stimuli), wakefulness and responsiveness (levels of consciousness), or awareness (access conscious thoughts, the content of consciousness). Yet another approach is the ability to subjectively experience the world, generating a feeling of presence—that is, phenomenal consciousness or qualia. A fundamental question is how a physical system such as the brain relates to

these first-person subjective feelings, known as the “hard problem of consciousness.” Studies investigating neural correlates of processes related to level and content of consciousness, for instance, have grown prolifically in the last few years due to the advance in brain imaging techniques. Nevertheless, the mind–brain relationship is one of the most fundamental questions we still struggle to move forward with in this debate.

The research topic proposed here intends to address the nature of consciousness and is open to include studies from philosophy to medicine, due to the complicated nature of the problem. More specifically, we want to discuss whether the mind is an emergent property of the brain or whether they are somehow independent of each other. In this collection, we call for manuscripts covering the vast scope of theories and human experiences related to the mind–brain relationship. We will also accept original manuscripts addressing altered levels (such as anesthesia, coma, vegetative state, minimally conscious state, and sleep) and contents (such as meditation, trance, hypnosis, dissociative and anomalous experiences, perception, awareness, and consciousness-related psychiatric disorders) of consciousness that provide empirical evidence to this debate.

Even though eminent discussions have intensively touched upon this topic and helped its progression, there seems to be no consensus regarding significant points such as the nature of consciousness. Our goal is to help construct an organized body of theoretical and empirical studies to gather different perspectives—or even disagreeing opin-

ions, in an unemotional fashion—and eventually contribute practical and theoretical advances to the field.

Keywords: consciousness, qualia, materialism, reductionism, dualism

On October 9, 2020, the guest editors received an email from a *Frontiers'* journal specialist, which read, “Everything looks good and promising.” She also informed us that *Frontiers in Systems Neuroscience*, *Frontiers in Psychology*, and *Frontiers in Neuroscience* would host our proposal because they fit our research topic goals. A web page for the research topic was launched on November 16, 2020, and presented to the chief editor, who accepted it. Four days later, *Frontiers* officially launched the new research topic and made it available to the public.

Challenges

The first of the many negative experiences we had with this project started when Dr. Jim B. Tucker, whom we initially invited to contribute a manuscript, submitted an original research paper to our topic on August 15, 2021. The manuscript, “Memories of Previous Lives and the Nature of Consciousness,” investigated cases of young children who reported alleged memories of a previous life, thus supporting the proposition that consciousness might not be wholly dependent on the neural processes of the brain but might exist separately from them.

Tucker’s manuscript had been stuck in an “initial validation” process for 7 days when Weiler contacted *Frontiers* to ask to move the validation process forward and send the manuscript to the guest editors. Importantly, this was the first time any submitted manuscript had been in this initial validation process for so long. In comparison, all the previously received manuscripts had been cleared after 1 day (at that time, we had around 10 manuscripts submitted to our topic; thus, we had a general idea of the *Fron-*

tiers' timeline to approve submitted manuscripts). Without receiving any response, the guest editors sent new emails on September 7 and 23, 2021, requesting *Frontiers'* editorial staff to provide some information regarding the current situation of the referred manuscript. To make the process fair and efficient, we also stressed that we would like to move the review forward and send it to experts for a thorough evaluation. Once again, our emails went without a reply. On September 30, 2021, though, *Frontiers* notified Tucker that his manuscript could not be accepted for publication in *Frontiers in Systems Neuroscience* because the manuscript did not meet the scope of the specialty section to which it was submitted. However, this decision by the *Frontiers'* editorial office was unbeknown to all the guest editors.

On October 7, 2021, we contacted the journal manager of *Frontiers in Systems Neuroscience* by email to express our discontent with the delay of the process:

There has been a mistake regarding the initial validation of the manuscript submitted by Dr. Jim Tucker (Manuscript ID: 759145). The submission was rejected (without consulting us), claiming it “does not meet the scope of the specialty section to which it was submitted.”

We, the topic editors who defined the scope, are sure that the manuscript does fit our special section. To underpin our statement, we kindly note that the research topic call for abstracts reads as follows:

We want to discuss whether the mind is an emergent property of the brain or whether they are somehow independent of each other. In this collection, we call for manuscripts covering the vast scope of theories and human experiences related to the mind–brain relationship. Furthermore, we will also accept original manuscripts addressing altered levels (such as anesthesia, coma, vegetative state, minimally con-

scious state, and sleep) and contents (such as meditation, trance, hypnosis, dissociative and anomalous experiences, perception, awareness, and consciousness-related psychiatric disorders) of consciousness that provide empirical evidence to this debate (as defined in the original research topic call: <https://www.frontiersin.org/research-topics/17734/the-nature-of-consciousness>).

The erroneously rejected manuscript presents a long and active line of research on “human experiences related to the mind–brain relationship” and aims “to discuss whether the mind is an emergent property of the brain or whether they are somehow independent of each other.” The author of the manuscript addresses “experiences . . . that provide empirical evidence to this debate.” [Abstracts for the three rejected papers are in the Appendix]

Hence, we kindly asked the *Frontiers'* editorial office to move the manuscript back to the editorial review process so we could continue the assessment of its scientific merit and decide on the acceptance or rejection of this work. The response came a week later, when a *Frontiers'* research integrity specialist provided a new reason for the rejection—namely, that it was not within the section’s scope:

While the manuscript may have been in scope for the research topic, all contributions to this research topic must be within the scope of the section and journal to which they are submitted, as defined in their mission statements. The specialty chief editor of *Frontiers in Systems Neuroscience* confirmed that this manuscript was out of scope for the section.

It should be noted that *Frontiers* performed the selection of the hosting journals for our topic according to the goals we described in the proposal. So we were surprised to

read that Tucker's manuscript did not fit the section's scope. Unhappy with this decision, Moreira-Almeida replied on October 18, 2021 (and did not receive a response):

We insist to be respected as research topic-invited editors. It is not reasonable that we as editors do not have a chance to evaluate the quality of a manuscript that clearly fits the scope for the research topic (a scope that was approved by *Frontiers*).

Someone (we don't know who), with no discussion with us (the editors), contacted the author, rejecting the paper, claiming it "does not meet the scope of the specialty section to which it was submitted."

We have experience as invited editors for special topics in scientific journals . . . and as book editors . . . and we have never seen anything like that.

Editors' decisions have always been respected. A respectful relationship that seeks rigorous scientific evaluation has always been the norm, as it is supposed to be in the academic world.

Hence, we insist the editorial office moves the manuscript back to the editorial review process so we can continue the assessment of its scientific merit to decide on the acceptance or rejection of this work.

On October 19, 2021, a second submission, "Observer's Mind, Does It Exist?" from Drs. Petr Bob and Jose Acacio De Barros, did not pass the initial validation step either and ended up being rejected by the *Frontiers'* editorial office on the following day. Two weeks later, a third manuscript, "Brain-Mind Dualism and Entropy," also from Bob, met the same fate. Once again, *Frontiers* did not communicate these decisions to any of the guest editors, and on October 21, 2021, we sent another email to *Frontiers* complaining about this overstep of our editorial attribution:

While we understand that this Initial Validation step is crucial for maintaining the quality of the manuscripts and ensuring they fall within the scope of the journal, rejecting submitted manuscripts at this step without the guest editor's consent is unprofessional, to say the least.

I feel highly disrespected as an academic scientist to see that *Frontiers* rejects manuscripts submitted by authors who were invited to contribute to our topic.

Every step of the editorial process is time- and energy-consuming, as you probably know. The guest editors spend hours per day looking for potential reviewers, evaluating their comments, and making sure the manuscripts are appropriate for publication, all for free and for the sake of open science.

The corresponding authors from the rejected manuscripts have contacted us to understand what happened, and we were speechless. . . . I am not moving forward with any review process that I am currently editing unless *Frontiers* undoes the rejections and lets the guest editors do the job they were invited to do. Unfortunately, the entire topic and the other authors might be jeopardized because of *Frontiers'* abusive attitude.

A week later, we sent a follow-up email requesting a response that once again did not come. However, our labor-intensive editorial responsibilities that followed any submitted manuscript, such as finding appropriate reviewers, evaluating the reviewers' comments, and making decisions about publications, continued. Paradoxically, while *Frontiers* wanted to ensure that we were performing our editorial duties in a timely fashion, they were, at the same time, not allowing us to be editors—or at least not in an unencumbered way. Then, on November 5, 2021, after having our request ignored but continuously receiv-

ing emails reminding us to take action on the other submitted manuscripts, we once again asked the journal to reverse the rejections:

A few weeks ago, I let *Frontiers* know that I wouldn't be doing any more work as a guest editor for our Research Topic unless *Frontiers* stopped rejecting manuscripts without our approval. . . . As I mentioned before, such an attitude is unprofessional and abusive.

As soon as the editor-in-chief makes the papers available again . . . I will be more than happy to resume my editorial role.

Another guest editor, disheartened with *Frontiers'* disregard for our requests, sent an email on November 10, 2021: "We would appreciate an answer to our message. We would be glad to resume our editorial role as soon as we are respectfully treated as editors."

Then, finally, on November 18, 2021, we received a vague explanation from the *Frontiers in Systems Neuroscience* journal manager regarding the rejections of two of the three rejected manuscripts:

All manuscripts submitted to *Frontiers* go through the same rigorous quality checks, and we reserve the right to reject manuscripts at any point of the review process if they fail to meet these standards . . . the manuscript "Memories of Previous Lives and the Nature of Consciousness," this manuscript was deemed out of scope by the specialty chief editor of the journal . . . the manuscript "Observer's Mind, Does It Exist?" this manuscript was found to have a very significant degree of overlap with existing articles.

Resignation

Thirteen months after our research topic was launched, we informed the journal manager of our resignation as guest editors. The three eventful months that followed the submission of the first rejected manuscript were filled with negative experiences that could jeopardize scientific advancements and academic freedom. In what follows, we discuss the three main reasons for our refusal to keep working with *Frontiers* during this research topic.

The first reason concerns the paradoxical and somehow unclear editorial role *Frontiers* expected from the guest editors. On the one hand, the labor-intensive and time-consuming duties related to any editorial role were requested almost daily. On the other hand, we had no freedom to decide which manuscripts merited peer review because three were rejected during the initial validation step without any guest editor's prior approval or disapproval. Importantly, we attempted to clarify the duties we would acquire as guest editors before launching the topic in a meeting with *Frontiers* representatives, whereby they guaranteed we would decide whether the manuscripts would be accepted for publication. However, that was not the case.

The second reason for stepping down from our editorial role was *Frontiers'* noncompliance with the agreed upon criteria for approving submitted manuscripts: scientific rigor and a match with the topic proposal. These criteria were not applied to any of the three rejected manuscripts. Our initial assessment was that they seemed scientifically sound and valid, fit the proposal scope, and should, thus, undergo the peer-review process. According to *Frontiers'* policies and publication ethics (<https://www.frontiersin.org/about/policies-and-publication-ethics>, 1.6. Retractions), they consider the following reasons as giving cause for concern and potential retraction:

- clear evidence that findings are unreliable, either as a result of misconduct (e.g., data



fabrication) or honest error (e.g., miscalculation or experimental error);

- findings have previously been published elsewhere without proper attribution, permission, or justification (i.e., cases of redundant publication);
- major plagiarism;
- the reporting of unethical research, the publication of an article that did not have the required ethics committee approval;
- legal issues pertaining to the content of the article, e.g., libelous content;
- major authorship issues, i.e., proven or strongly suspected cases of ghostwriting or sold ('gift') authorship;
- politically motivated articles where objectivity is a serious concern;
- the singling out of individuals or organizations for attack;
- faith issues (e.g., intelligent design);
- papers that have made extraordinary claims without concomitant scientific or statistical evidence (e.g., pseudoscience).

Although retraction of a published paper is somewhat different from a journal executive rejecting a paper supported by guest editors, the processes are similar, and the criteria for retractions can be used to examine the reasons for *Frontiers'* actions. *Frontiers* never discussed the scientific quality of the submissions nor provided us with any objective reason why the manuscripts were rejected. Such an unclear and obscure attitude was interpreted, from our end, as censorship because Tucker's paper suggested that consciousness might exist separately from the brain and Bob's papers contained words such as soul, nonphysical entity, and brain–mind dualism that may raise a red flag for physicalist scientists. We assume that *Frontiers* possibly rejected the manuscripts based on the last two items, criteria that clearly do not apply to any of the submissions. We, the guest editors, echo the words of Cardeña (2014), ironically published in a *Frontiers* journal, that “the scientific method should be applied in a non-dogmatic, open, critical but re-

spectful way that requires a thorough consideration of all evidence as well as skepticism toward both the assumptions we already hold and those that challenge them” (p. 2).

The third and last reason concerns the total disregard for our editorial requirements and discontentment. Our history with *Frontiers* is composed of frustrating attempts at communication, with no one providing us the name of the person in charge of the journals and the rejections. The scarce and vague responses that we received did not open any possibility for discussing a constructive and scientifically sound solution for the issues discussed above. Although it was easier for us, the guest editors, just to turn a blind eye to *Frontiers'* misconduct and move the research topic forward, we strongly felt that this was not the right thing to do. The scientific method is an invaluable procedure to humans' endeavor to understand nature and the human mind. Science is a process that progresses while acknowledging and working hard to fix its inevitable weaknesses and mistakes. Scientific journals have an essential role in this scientific process, ensuring the research is appropriately peer reviewed and communicated to the scientific community. Unfortunately, that was not the case for our topic.

Lessons and Recommendations

In light of all this background, we learned that, ideally, the scientific editorial process should: (i) maintain clear and respectful communication between authors, editors, and journal staff; (ii) remain open to submissions from a wide range of methodological and theoretical approaches; (iii) remain open to the investigation of the full range of human experiences; (iv) adopt scientific and philosophical rigor as the main criteria for analysis and rejection/acceptance of a manuscript in a non-dogmatic fashion.

We then offer a couple of recommendations to authors that eventually come to face similar issues than the ones reported here. Following these recommendations will ultimately contribute to practical and theoretical advances in the field.

- When abuses of editorial power occur, it may be an ethical duty to resign rather than participate in a compromised process.
- It is worthwhile exposing abuses of editorial power.

To conclude, it is our hope that our resignation echoes the voices of all authors and editors who believe in a respectful, communicative, and open-minded editorial process in scientific journals. It is all scientists' responsibility to ensure that the scientific process runs as straightforward as possible and does not get lost in the deep waters of authority and obscurity.

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Appendix

The abstracts of the three rejected submissions the initial validation step follow:

- "Memories of Previous Lives and the Nature of Consciousness." Jim Tucker, University of Virginia, Charlottesville. August 15, 2021: Manuscript submitted. September 30, 2021: Article rejected by *Frontiers in Systems Neuroscience* editorial office

Cases of young children who report memories of a previous life have been the focus of systematic study for the past 60 years. Over 2,000 cases of this worldwide phenomenon have been investigated. In the strongest cases, the children have provided details that proved strikingly accurate for an individual who lived in the past, sometimes at a great distance from the child's family. This review includes a set of case reports that demonstrate the phenomenon. The types of evidence that the cases produce of an anomalous connection between the child and the deceased individual are then considered. These include details the children provide that are verified to be accurate for the identified previous person; recognition tests in which the children are able to select people, places, or objects from the previous life out of a group of possible ones; behavioral and emotional features the children show, such as phobias related to the mode of death in the previous life; and birthmarks and birth defects in the children that are consistent with injuries, usually fatal injuries, that the previous individual suffered. The phenomenon is then considered in relation to the nature of consciousness. The cases suggest that following death, memories of events experienced by an individual can persist after the brain

has ceased functioning and later become associated with another brain. This supports the proposition that consciousness is not wholly dependent on the neural processes of the brain but can exist separately from them. This leads to an exploration of the places of consciousness in relation to the physical world, and which of them may ultimately be primary.

- “Observer’s Mind, Does It Exist?” Petr Bob, Charles University, Prague, Jose Acacio De Barros, San Francisco State University. October 19, 2021: Manuscript submitted October 20, 2021: Article rejected by *Frontiers in Neuroscience* editorial office

Rene Descartes described *res extensa* as a main characteristic of the external world structured from material bodies. On the one hand, he postulated that the human mind has a specific kind of “observing” existence that he called *res cogitans*, the soul. Recently, Francis Crick described some basic rules for the future science of consciousness, arguing that the traditional Cartesian concept of the soul must be replaced by a scientific understanding of how the brain produces the mind. On the other hand, some scientific research has suggested the opposite to be true, that the mind may influence the brain in measurable ways. According to scientific thought, the first world (*res extensa*) is composed of material bodies that also create the brain and its structures. The second world (*res cogitans*) is characterized by the “observer” as the basic existing nonphysical entity that, according to some interpretations of quantum mechanics, may “create” reality through the process of observation (or, technically, measurement).

- “Brain–Mind Dualism and Entropy.” Petr Bob, Charles University, Prague. November 3, 2021: Manuscript submitted December 6, 2021: Article rejected by *Frontiers in Psychology* editorial office.

According to recent evidence, mental functions and consciousness are related to specific brain structures, but at the same time, there is evidence that mental functions and consciousness are related to binding of distributed and synchronized neural activities. Recent findings strongly suggest that the neural binding cannot simply be explained

within the paradigm, suggesting localization of the mental functions needs a substantial revision of the philosophical scheme of the Cartesian concept of the brain and localization of consciousness and the so-called “brain–mind dualism.” These findings indicate that binding and synchronization of distributed neural activities enable information integration, which is crucial for the mechanism of consciousness. There is increased evidence that disrupted binding and information integration produce disintegration of consciousness in various mental disorders. These disturbed interactions produce patterns of temporal disorganization with decreased functional connectivity that may underlie specific perceptual and cognitive states. Together, these findings suggest that the process of neural or cognitive unbinding influences more irregular neural states with higher complexity and negatively affects information integration in the brain that may cause disintegrated conscious experience, decreased mental level, or the loss of consciousness. In this context, recent findings suggest implications for future research focused on the mutual relationship between psychological states assessed by psychometric measures and brain physiological activities measured through complexity analysis based on mathematical and physical descriptions.

Ein möglicher Fall von Zensur bei eingereichten Beiträgen über die Natur des Bewusstseins

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Zusammenfassung: Um das wissenschaftliche Verständnis des Bewusstseins voranzutreiben, sollte man offen für theoretischen Pluralismus sein, um möglichst viele Kandidaten für Paradigmen frei zu entwickeln und rigoros zu testen und die Ideen und Ergebnisse der wissenschaftlichen Gemeinschaft mitzuteilen. Der wissenschaftliche Fortschritt wird gefährdet, wenn Fachzeitschriften dazu neigen, die neuesten Erkenntnisse eines Fachgebiets auf voreingenommene oder fehlgeleitete Weise zu präsentieren oder Untersuchungen einer bestimmten Perspektive zu unterdrücken. Wir beschreiben die Herausforderungen und Fallstricke, mit denen wir als Gastherausgeber beim redaktionellen Reviewprozess eines Themenheftes der Zeitschrift *Frontiers* zum Thema “The Nature of Consciousness” konfrontiert waren und wie wir darauf reagiert haben. Wir beschreiben und diskutieren, wie sich die Mitarbeiter der Zeitschrift über unsere redaktionelle Rolle hinwegsetzten, um etwas durchzusetzen, was sehr wahrscheinlich auf eine akademische Zensur hinausläuft. Anschließend geben wir eine Reihe von Empfehlungen für Autoren und Herausgeber, die sich mit ähnlichen Problemen konfrontiert sehen könnten. Wir sind der Meinung, dass die Befolgung dieser Empfehlungen letztlich zu praktischen und theoretischen Fortschritten beim Verständnis der Natur des Bewusstseins und der Beziehung zwischen Geist und Gehirn beitragen wird.

Eberhard Bauer

Um Possível Caso de Censura a Contribuições sobre a Natureza da Consciência

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Resumo: Para avançar a compreensão científica da consciência, deve-se estar aberto ao pluralismo teórico para desenvolver livremente e testar com rigor uma grande diversidade de candidatos a paradigmas e comunicar as ideias e as descobertas à comunidade científica. O desenvolvimento científico é prejudicado quando periódicos tendem a apresentar as descobertas mais recentes de um campo de forma tendenciosa, ou mal orientada, ou suprimir as investigações de uma abordagem particular. Descrevemos aqui os desafios e os obstáculos que enfrentamos como editores convidados, durante o processo de revisão de um número especial da revista *Frontiers* sobre "A Natureza da Consciência", e como respondemos a ela. Relatamos e discutimos como a equipe da revista contrariou nossa função editorial para impor uma provável censura acadêmica. Por fim, oferecemos algumas recomendações aos autores e editores que eventualmente enfrentem problemas semelhantes. Acreditamos que seguir tais recomendações poderá contribuir para avanços práticos e teóricos na compreensão da natureza da consciência e da relação mente-cérebro.

Antônio Lima

Un Posible Caso de Censura de Artículos Sobre la Naturaleza de la Consciencia

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Resumen: Para aumentar la comprensión científica de la consciencia, se debe estar abierto al pluralismo teórico para desarrollar libremente y evaluar con rigor una amplia diversidad de candidatos a paradigma y comunicar las ideas y los hallazgos a la comunidad científica. El desarrollo de la ciencia corre peligro cuando las revistas tienden a presentar los hallazgos más avanzados de un campo de forma sesgada o errónea, o suprimen las investigaciones de una perspectiva concreta. Describimos los retos y escollos a los que nos enfrentamos como editores invitados durante el proceso de revisión editorial de un número especial de la revista *Frontiers* sobre "La Naturaleza de la Consciencia" y cómo respondimos a ello. Describimos y discutimos cómo el personal de la revista anuló nuestra función editorial para imponer lo que muy probablemente fue una censura académica. A continuación, ofrecemos un par de recomendaciones a los autores y editores que se enfrenten a problemas similares. Creemos que seguir estas recomendaciones contribuirá, en última instancia, a los avances prácticos y teóricos en la comprensión de la naturaleza de la consciencia y la relación mente-cerebro.

Etzel Cardeña