



Editor comment “Annals of Hepatology against plagiarism”

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After six years of publication, Annals of Hepatology has been growing continuously. In spite of the hard work, many things are still needed to further improve the overall quality of the journal. One of these issues is prevent and fight plagiarism. This act can be defined as to the action of stealing and using the ideas or writings of another as one's own. In the United States plagiarism has been reported in about 25% of the total allegations.¹ What can we do? Five criteria have been suggested to evaluate plagiarism: 1) What was the extent of the plagiarism?; 2) Was the intent malicious?; 3) Has the author been previously engaged in plagiarism?; 4) What is the position and training of the author?; and 5) Was the source material original or did the plagiarism occur from notes?¹

Recently, plagiarism was discovered in a review article published in the Annals of Hepatology (Ann Hepatol 2007;6:135-42) since some portions were identical to those used by; other authors who published a review article subject in Journal of Hepatology (Journal of Hepatology 2006;45:617-625). The Editors of that important Journal contacted me to let me know this act. The Editorial Board of Annals of Hepatology of and I feel the situation definitely unpleasant particularly since the authors who to be contribute to the Annals actually copied the text previously published in Journal of Hepatology. This is clear case of forgery and it is clearly illegal. It must be stressed that in spite the fact the reviewer who served the Annals of Hepatology was an experimented researcher in the field, he did not detect the plagiarism. When the authors were asked by me about it, they recognized the forgery but assured that they did not it maliciously. Also,

the author apologized for not mentioning the original publication.

As suggested, to avoid plagiarism it is important to educate graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty giving them basis for honest scientific behavior.² His also important to closely follow the guidelines suggested and in particular: 1) always acknowledge explicitly the originator of ideas and the contribution of another, regardless of whether it was paraphrased, summarized, or used directly; 2) any verbatim text taken from another author must be enclosed in quotation marks; 3) when paraphrasing, make sure you understand completely the text and use your own words; and 4) provide a reference when you are not sure that the fact or idea you are using is common knowledge.³ These simple rules must be kept clear in our mind and must be teach to our younger collaborators to avoid embarrassing situation as this faced by Annals in this case. The Editorial Board and I deeply apologize to the Journal of Hepatology for this embarrassing situation.

References

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