

Book reviews



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A call for volunteers

A few years ago now I drifted into the role of Associate Editor for Book reviews for *Preview*. It all started with a flourish. I contacted all the major publishing houses I could think of and offered to arrange reviews of their new geophysics books. Since then, however, I've only arranged a handful of book reviews in *Preview*, far less than the initial burst of enthusiasm had promised.

Soliciting book reviews requires little bursts of effort to organise a reviewer, sometimes persistent follow up, but generally once I've gotten my act together, it's been a trouble-free process of sending finalised reviews to our *Preview* Editor, Lisa Worrall, for publication. Whether I'm lazy or simply distracted, following up on potential book reviews hasn't always been undertaken diligently. The hardest part has been deciding who to approach for a review. But perhaps matching books to reviewers would work better if tackled in a different way? If, that is, book reviews are still relevant in this day and age.

I have wondered how often we all look at books relevant to our profession these days. I know my daughter – powering through her first year of high school – has a beautiful (but very dense) maths text book to refer to. I've never actually seen it in her hands though; it apparently gets used in class sometimes, but beyond that it stays in her locker and

she accesses the online version on her BYOD (Bring Your Own Device). She has a Japanese textbook too, but alas, no science textbook (!). Most of her assignments appear to make reference to various websites, so I do hope that her training in the pitfalls of internet information is effective.

Do you still use textbooks? Do you still value reading a book review in *Preview*? I have a few favourite textbooks that get opened occasionally. I even still have one on quantum physics that has a well-bound, bright blue (hard) cover, is not too heavy and not too light and, quite frankly, feels accurate and reliable. I've kept it despite never really grasping its contents.

Perhaps you've spotted a new book that you'd love to add to your shelf (if you still have the luxury of a bookcase in your workplace)? Or maybe you're curious to see what all the fuss is about a good, solid textbook? Publishers generally provide a gratis copy of books that are reviewed, although these days it is often a login to access the eBook. But don't let that deter you! If you do spot a book of interest, I'd be happy to contact the publisher to enquire about a copy for review.

While you ponder whether you know of a new book that you'd like to review, here are a couple that have come into my inbox in the last year or so, but clearly didn't get much further:

- *Guidelines for Mine Waste Dump and Stockpile Design*, edited by Mark Hawley and John Cunning, published April 2017 by CSIRO Publishing (almost got a reviewer for this one)
- *The Geology of Australia* (3rd edition) by Robert Henderson and David Johnson, published September 2016 by Cambridge University Press.

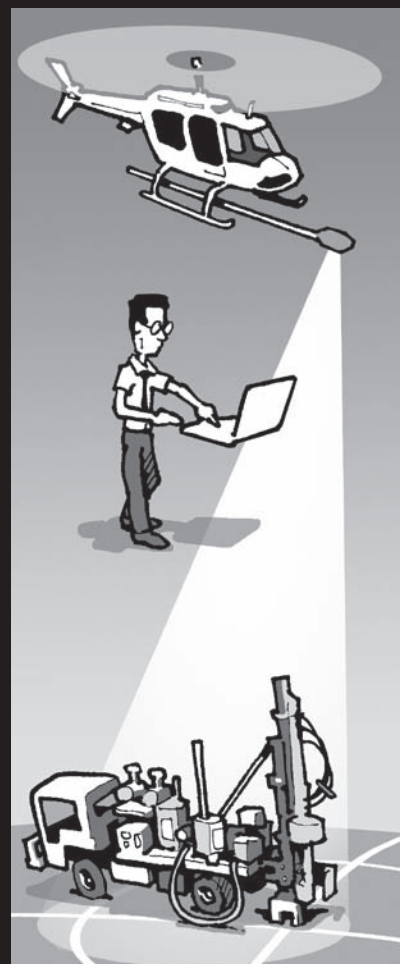
Please get in touch if either of these books are of interest to you, or if you can suggest someone who could undertake a review, or even if you'd like to express an opinion about the evolution of information sources in our profession.

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