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Title:	Niche construction in evolutionary theory: the construction of an academic niche?
Authors:	Prasad, N.G. (/jspui/browse?type=author&value=Prasad%2C+N.G.)
Keywords:	construction niche construction academic niche
Issue Date:	2017
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Citation:	Journal of Genetics, 96 (3)
Abstract:	<p>in recent years, fairly far-reaching claims have been repeatedly made about how niche construction, the modification by organisms of their environment, and that of other organisms, represents a vastly neglected phenomenon in ecological and evolutionary thought. The proponents of this view claim that the niche construction perspective greatly expands the scope of standard evolutionary theory and that niche construction deserves to be treated as a significant evolutionary process in its own right, almost at par with natural selection. Claims have also been advanced about how niche construction theory represents a substantial extension to, and reorientation of, standard evolutionary theory, which is criticized as being narrowly gene-centric and ignoring the rich complexity and reciprocity of organism–environment interactions. We examine these claims in some detail and show how they do not stand up to scrutiny. We suggest that the manner in which niche construction theory is sought to be pushed in the literature looks more like an exercise in academic niche construction whereby, through incessant repetition of largely untenable claims, and the deployment of rhetorically appealing but logically dubious analogies, a receptive climate for a certain subdiscipline is sought to be manufactured within the scientific community. We see this as an unfortunate and increasing post-truth tendency within science.</p>
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