getting into far enough in advance to practice evasive action, if it seems necessary.

The task of developing and refining such a field taxonomy is awesome, but now that the soil taxonomy is finished we need something to fill the void.

REFERENCES


THE SOIL—A CLEAN CONSTRUCT OF METAPHYSICS

Dennis Osborne

Criticism of one’s ideology should be analyzed rather than rejected outright, especially when similar criticisms are extended through many outlets over many years. Such is the case with arguments against the word “soil” presented in Soil Survey Horizons, Spring 1976 (Hunt, 1976).

With casual reading, the pedologist will find more in the argument with which to disagree than would the edaphologist. However, close examination by both will show the argument incompletely stated due to divergence of direction.

In the argument the word “soil” is decried for its ambiguity and chastised for its ambiguous use by the USDA. This seems a valid criticism, until one remembers that persons trained in pedological sciences, including USDA pedologists, are careful to distinguish between “soil” and “a soil” in practice and think of both occurring over weathered parent material and/or bedrock. Ambiguity of usage of “soil” is a reflection of casual usage, not confusion within the body of earth science professional workers.

Search for definitions can obscure or substitute for thought. Butler (1917) notes that a “definition is the enclosing of a wilderness of idea within a wall of words.” Field workers in earth sciences have a grand opportunity to extend definition of terms into understanding of concepts through use of Soil Taxonomy (Soil Survey Staff, 1975). As Einstein (1934) says: “concepts can only acquire content when they are connected...with sensible experience.” He concludes that, in ontological questions, an investigator must seek the characteristics in the mass of sensible experience from which his concepts proceed.