

Marching for science?

Andrea Saltelli
Centre for the Study of the
Sciences and the Humanities
(SVT), University of Bergen
(UIB) and
Institut de Ciència i Tecnologia
Ambientals (ICTA) -Universitat
Autonoma de Barcelona (UAB)

Masarykovy university, Joštova 10, Brno, April 19 2017

Where to find this talk: www.andreasaltelli.eu



HOME ABOUT ME

PUBLICATIONS

NEWS & VIDEOS

RESOURCES



()n the march: the spirit of the time in the house of science



Source: The Conversation, https://theconversation.com/scientists-march-on-washington-is-a-bad-idea-heres-why-73305





The March for Science is the first step of a global movement to defend the vital role science plays in our health, safety, economies, and governments.

It's time to get off the sidelines and make a difference.

Register to attend your local march



The March for Science champions robustly funded and publicly communicated science as a pillar of human freedom and prosperity. We unite as a diverse, nonpartisan group to call for science that upholds the common good and for political leaders and policy makers to enact evidence based policies in the public interest.



The March for Science is a celebration of science. It's not only about scientists and politicians; it is about the very real role that science plays in each of our lives and the need to respect and encourage research that gives us insight into the world.



Nevertheless, the march has generated a great deal of conversation around whether or not scientists should involve themselves in politics. In the face of an alarming trend toward discrediting scientific consensus and restricting scientific discovery, we might ask instead: can we afford not to speak out in its defense?

There is no Planet B. Join the #MarchForScience.

- 1. Science is in a deep existential crisis which has ethical, epistemological, methodological and even metaphysical dimensions
- 2. Likewise democracy which has with science a legitimacy arrangement
- 3. Science and its institutions are committed to the status quo & attempt to evade a critical reflection
- 4. Solutions aren't forthcoming anytime soon
- 5. There are few areas of 'Reformation' where science and society work together



THE RIGHTFUL PLACE OF SCIENCE:

SCIENCE ON THE VERGE

CONTRIBUTORS

Alice Benessia Silvio Funtowicz Mario Giampietro Ângela Guimarães Pereira Jerome R. Ravetz Andrea Saltelli Roger Strand Jeroen P. van der Sluiis



A crisis looms over the scientific enterprise. Not a day passes without news of retractions, failed replications, fraudulent peer reviews, or misinformed science-based policies

thebmj

Research *

Education *

News & Views >

Campaigns *

Feature

Coca-Cola's secret influence on medical and science journalists

BMJ 2017; 357 doi: https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.j1638 (Published 05 April 2017) Cite this as: BMJ 2017;357:j1638

Article

Related content

Metrics

Responses

Paul Thacker, freelance journalist

Author affiliations >

thackerpd@gmail.com

Figures & data

Article & suther info

Reproducibility in cancer biology: Making sense of replications

Brian A Nosek, Timothy M Errington

Center for Open Science, United States; University of Virginia, United States

DOI: http://dr.doi.org/10.7554/eLife.23383

Published January 19, 2017 Cite as eLife 2017;6:e23383

I-I Abstract

The first results from the Reproducibility Project: Cancer Biology suggest that there is scope for improving reproducibility in pre-clinical cancer research.

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.7554/eLife.23383.001



Downloads:



Reference tools:

DOWNLOAD

OPEN

Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America



CURRENT ISSUE // ARCHIVE // NEWS & MULTIMEDIA // AUTHORS // ABOUT COLLECTED ARTICLES // BROWSE BY TOPIC // EARLY EDITION // FRONT MATTER

Scurrent Issue > vol. 114 no. 14 > Daniele Fanelli, 3714-3719, doi: 10.1073/pnas.1618569114



Meta-assessment of bias in science

Daniele Fanelli^{a,1}, Rodrigo Costas^b, and John P. A. Ioannidis^{a,c,d,e}

Author Affiliations

Edited by Susan T. Fiske, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, and approved February 14, 2017 (received for review November 8, 2016)

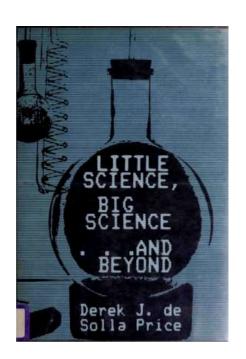
This Issue



April 4, 2017 vol. 114 no. 14 Masthead (PDF) Table of Contents

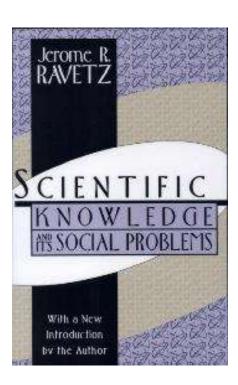
▼ PREV ARTICLE NEXT ARTICLE ▶

First thesis: Science is in a deep existential crisis which has ethical, epistemological, methodological and even metaphysical dimensions. This was neatly predicted by E. de Solla Price, Jerome R. Ravetz and others five decades ago





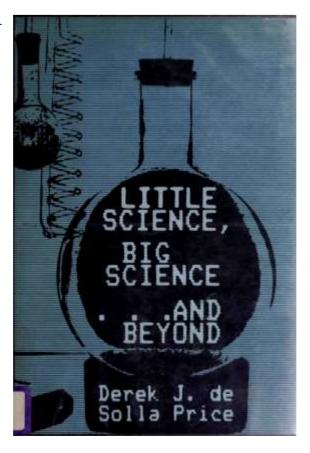
Derek J. de Solla Price





Jerome R. Ravetz

In 1963 Derek J. de Solla Price prophesized that Science would reach saturation (and in the worst case senility) under its own weight, victim of its own success and exponential growth (pp 1-32).





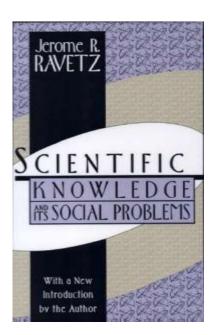
Derek J. de Solla Price

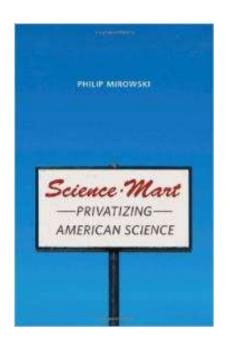


Science/knowledge degenerates when it becomes a commodity for Ravetz (1971), and Mirowski (2011).

Ravetz, J., 1971, Scientific Knowledge and its Social Problems, Oxford University Press, p. 22.

Mirowski, P. 2011. Science-Mart: Privatizing American Science, Harvard University Press.





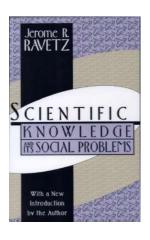


Jerome R. Ravetz



Philip Mirowski

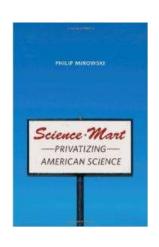
p.22: [...] The problem of quality control in science is thus at the centre of the social problems of the industrialized science of the present period."





Jerome R. Ravetz

In house science labs of major corporation were closed and research outsourced to universities which ··· became more and more looking as profit seeking organization (technology transfer offices in every campus) ··· then research ended up outsourced again to contract-based research organizations (CRO's)···





Philip Mirowski

Mirowski, P. 2011. Science-Mart: Privatizing American Science, Harvard University Press.









The Economist runs its cover on the crisis (2013) based on a 2005 paper from J.P. Ioannidis

Open access, freely available online

Essay

Why Most Published Research Findings Are False

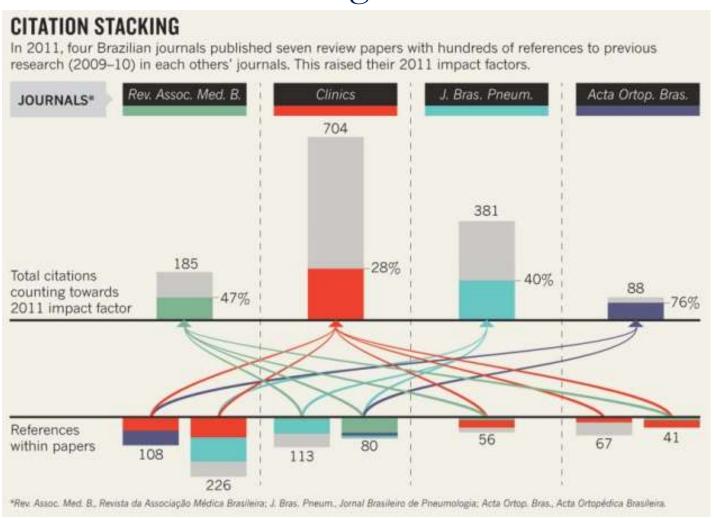
John P. A. Ioannidis



John P. A. Ioannides

J. P. A. Ioannidis, Why Most Published Research Findings Are False, PLoS Medicine, August 2005, 2(8), 696-701.

Use and abuse of metrics: from self-citation to citation cartels to citation stacking ...



Richard Van Noorden, 2017, Brazilian citation scheme outed. Thomson Reuters suspends journals from its rankings for 'citation stacking'. Nature, 27 August 2013



Science in crisis: from the sugar scam to Brexit, our faith in experts is fading

September 27, 2016 4 43pm AEST

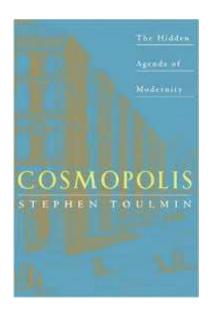


Thesis 2: Likewise in crisis is democracy which has with science a legitimacy arrangement





Jean-François Lyotard





Stephen Toulmin

→ today's post-BREXIT, post-Trump, post-truth brouhaha, the demise of expertise …

Thesis 3: Science and its institutions are committed to the status quo & attempt to evade a critical reflection with:

Denial

Dismissal

Diversion

Displacement

Uncomfortable knowledge:
Uncomfortable knowledge:
the social construction of ignorance in science and environmental policy discourses

Steve Rayner

Denial (1)

OECDpublishing

Please cite this paper as:

OECD (2015), "Scientific Advice for Policy Making: The Role and Responsibility of Expert Bodies and Individual Scientists", OECD Science, Technology and Industry Policy Papers, No. 21, OECD Publishing, Paris. http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5js331tjcpwb-en

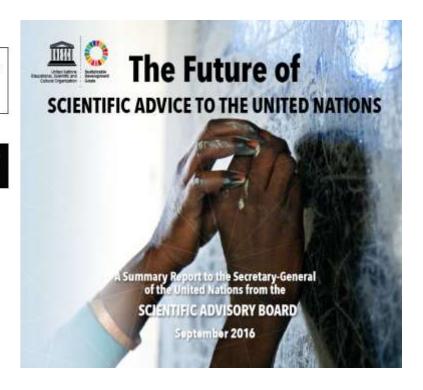


OECD Science, Technology and Industry Policy Papers No. 21

Scientific Advice for Policy Making

THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF EXPERT BODIES AND INDIVIDUAL SCIENTISTS

OECD

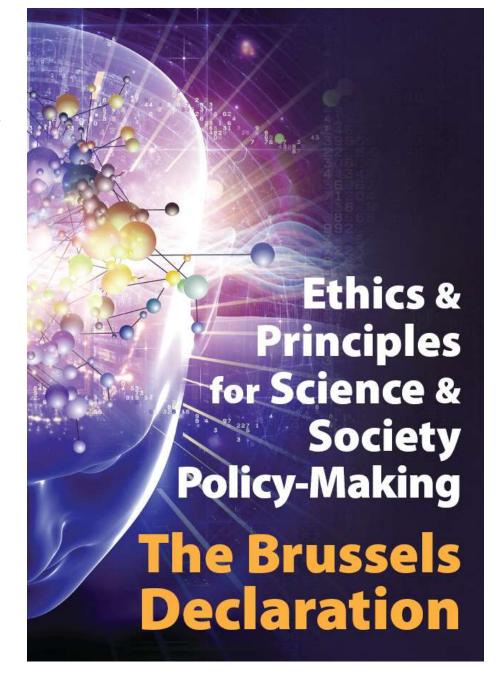


2015 2016

Denial (2)

Adopted on 17th February, 2017, at symposium of American Association for the Advancement (AAAS) after 5 y gestation, hundreds of experts involved

- No crisis
- No effect of crisis on evidence based policy
- No asymmetries in the use and availability of evidence for policy (citizens same power as lobbyists)



Dismissal? We can solve it!



"[...] measures [to] improving the transparency, reproducibility and efficiency of scientific research"

But …can we do it from the inside?

TABLE 1. GROWING PERVERSE INCENTIVES IN ACADEMIA

Incentive	Intended effect	Actual effect
"Researchers rewarded for increased number of publications."	"Improve research productivity," provide a means of evaluating performance.	"Avalanche of" substandard, "incremental papers"; poor methods and increase in false discovery rates leading to a "natural selection of bad science" (Smaldino and Mcelreath, 2016); reduced quality of peer review
"Researchers rewarded for increased number of citations."	Reward quality work that influences others.	Extended reference lists to inflate citations; reviewers request citation of their work through peer review
"Researchers rewarded for increased grant funding."	"Ensure that research programs are funded, promote growth, generate overhead."	Increased time writing proposals and less time gathering and thinking about data. Overselling positive results and downplay of negative results.
Increase PhD student productivity	Higher school ranking and more prestige of program.	Lower standards and create oversupply of PhDs. Postdocs often required for entry-level academic positions, and PhDs hired for work MS students used to do.
Reduced teaching load for research- active faculty	Necessary to pursue additional competitive grants.	Increased demand for untenured, adjunct faculty to teach classes.
"Teachers rewarded for increased student evaluation scores."	"Improved accountability; ensure customer satisfaction."	Reduced course work, grade inflation.
"Teachers rewarded for increased student test scores."	"Improve teacher effectiveness."	"Teaching to the tests; emphasis on short-term learning."
"Departments rewarded for increasing U.S. News ranking."	"Stronger departments."	Extensive efforts to reverse engineer, game, and cheat rankings.
"Departments rewarded for in- creasing numbers of BS, MS, and PhD degrees granted."	"Promote efficiency; stop students from being trapped in degree programs; impress the state legislature."	"Class sizes increase; entrance requirements" decrease; reduce graduation requirements.
"Departments rewarded for increasing student credit/contact hours (SCH)."	"The university's teaching mission is fulfilled."	"SCH-maximization games are played": duplication of classes, competition for service courses.

Modified from Regehr (pers. comm., 2015) with permission.

Academic Research in the 21st Century: Maintaining Scientific Integrity in a Climate of Perverse Incentives and Hyper-competition, Marc A. Edwards and Siddhartha Roy, ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING SCIENCE, 34(1), 2017

Incentive

"Researchers rewarded for increased number of publications."

Intended effect

"Improve research productivity," provide a means of evaluating performance.

Actual effect

"Avalanche of" substandard, "incremental papers"; poor methods and increase in false discovery rates leading to a "natural selection of bad science" (Smaldino and Mcelreath, 2016); reduced quality of peer review

Academic Research in the 21st Century: Maintaining Scientific Integrity in a Climate of Perverse Incentives and Hyper-competition, Marc A. Edwards and Siddhartha Roy, ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING SCIENCE, 34(1), 2017 Diversion (There is a problem, and this is due to an ongoing war on science between the educated liberal left and the ignorant conservative right)



Authors





Silvio Oscar Funtowicz

Adjunct Professor Centre for the Study of the Sciences and the Humanities, University of Bergen

https://theconversation.com/science-wars-in-the-age-of-donald-trump-67594

Displacement (This is the post-truth era)

THE CONVERSATION

Academic rigour, journalistic flair

Arts + Culture Business + Economy Education Environment + Energy Health + Medicine Politics + Society Science + Technology

To tackle the post-truth world, science must reform itself

January 27, 2017 7:33am GMT



Authors



Andrea Saltelli Adjunct professor, University of Bergen



Silvio Oscar Funtowicz Adjunct Professor Centre for the Study of the Sciences and the Humanities, University of Bergen

https://theconversation.com/to-tackle-the-post-truth-world-science-must-reform-itself-70455

Displacement (This is the post-truth era)



To tackle the post-truth world, science must reform itself

January 27, 2017 7.33am GMT



Authors



Andrea Saltelli Adjunct professor, University of



Silvio Oscar Funtowicz

Adjunct Professor Centre for the Study of the Sciences and the Humanities, University of Bergen

Was policy based on evidence before Brexit and Trump?

"Trump is not science's problem. Science is."

https://theconversation.com/to-tackle-the-post-truth-world-science-must-reform-itself-70455

Thesis 4: Solutions aren't forthcoming anytime soon, but:

Church stays to indulgencies as ...

Science stays to: predatory publishers, citation cartels & stacking, trade in authorship, domination of corporate interests in science from sugar to GMO…]



Martin Luther



Johann Tetzel

Thesis 5: Areas of resistance and 'Reformation' where science and society work together – emergence of a new polity of science, including citizen scientists and scientist–citizens









Jeffrey Beall

Lois Gibbs

Timothy Gowers Marc Edwards

http://scholarlyoa.com/2015/01/02/bealls-list-of-predatory-publishers-2015/#more-4719

https://www.bu.edu/lovecanal/canal/

http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0127502 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flint_water_crisis; http://flintwaterstudy.org/; http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/21/magazine/flints-water-crisis-and-the-

troublemaker-scientist.html

Has science become an endeavor where attempts to fix a diseased system lead you to disgrace?



Jeffrey Beall





http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2013/05/15/184233141/publisher-threatens-librarian-with-1-billion-lawsuit

http://retractionwatch.com/2017/01/17/bealls-list-potential-predatory-publishers-go-dark/

An even newer sort of heroes?



John and Laura Arnold



Brian Nosek, the Reproducibility Project.



John Ioannidis, Meta-research innovation centre at Stanford



Ben Goldacre, alltrials.net



Gary Taubes, The case against sugar

"Bill & Melinda Gates ... the world's biggest source of charitable money for scientific endeavours (\$4bn a year) [...its research] must be freely available to all [...and] will pay the cost of putting such research in one particular repository of freely available papers.



Bill & Melinda Gates

... offered the publishers of *Science*, \$100,000 to make papers published this year about Gates-sponsored research free to read from the beginning.

Mark Zuckerberg & Priscilla Chan will disburse \$50m to 47 local scientists on condition they made their work available as preprints."



Mark Zuckerberg & Priscilla Chan

http://www.economist.com/news/science-and-technology/21719438-about-change-findings-medical-research-are-disseminated-too



Yoshiki Sasai

Arts + Culture Business + Economy Cities Education Environment + Energy FactCheck Health + Medicine Politics + Society Science + Technology

Scientists' march on Washington is a bad idea – here's why

March 8, 2017 6.54pm AEDT



Author



Andrea Saltelli

Adjunct Professor Centre for the Study of the Sciences and the Humanities, University of Bergen, University of Bergen

Some questioned the concept of the Women's March on Washington. Now scientists will march against Donald Trump. Is that a good idea?

The Republic of Science: Its Political and Economic Theory Michael Polanyi

This article originally appeared in *Minerva* 1:54-74, 1962 and is put on WWW with kind permission from Kluwer Academic Publishers (http://www.wkap.nl) and John C. Polanyi.]

Polanyi's theses:

Science as a market driven by higher principles

Which feeds society's thirst for self improvement



Michal Polanyi

Science as a community of practice capable of self-governance ...

https://theconversation.com/scientists-march-on-washington-is-a-bad-idea-hereswhy-73305

Scientists' march on Washington is a bad idea – here's why

Author



Andrea Saltelli

Adjunct Professor Centre for the Study of the Sciences and the Humanities, University of Bergen, University of Bergen

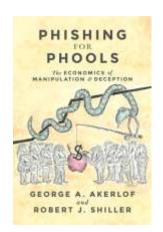
Today:

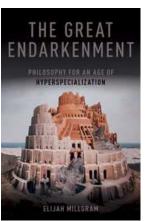
March 8, 2017 6.54pm AEDT

Science and innovation driven by imperfect markets

Society's self improvement likewise entrusted to market forces

Science divided by practices (methodological aliens)





https://theconversation.com/scientists-march-on-washington-is-a-bad-idea-heres-why-73305

here's why

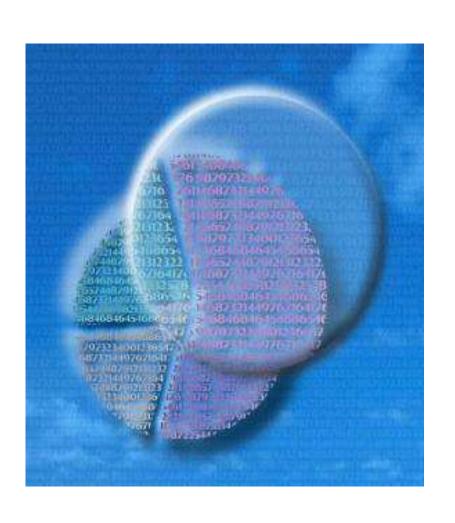
March 8, 2017 6.54pm AEDT

Author

Andrea Saltelli

Adjunct Professor Centre for the Study of the Sciences and the Humanities, University of Bergen, University of Bergen

"Our activism would be better inspired by the radical 1970s-era movements that sought to change the world by changing first science itself. They sought to provide scientific knowledge and technical expertise to local populations and minority communities while giving those same groups a chance to shape the questions asked of science."



END

Twitter:
<a>@andreasaltelli