

Mystical Renaissance Regulations on Scientific Writing

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Abstract

The results of the referendum on the role of science in our society that followed the recent election of Mystical Renaissance into the parliament could not have been any clearer. The victorious line two, advocating the phasing out of scientific activity while allowing current scientists to stay employed and active until retirement, was clearly the sensible alternative. Ethical considerations necessitated radical preventive action after the discovery of the detrimental effect of science on spirituality in our society. However, the remaining scientists can obviously not be allowed to continue their current practice unaffected. We propose strict regulations on all scientific writing that will limit the destructive effects of demystification and reductionism on the innocent public. The restrictions presented in this parliamentary bill will ensure that the contagious scientific ideas expressed in publications are contained and their impact limited.

1 Introduction

The production of scientific texts is one of the most important tasks of scientists. Publications are important tools to the individual scientist to progress in his or her career, but their main purpose is to communicate results and contribute to a field. It is this latter use that is in clear violation with the best interests of the public.

Recent un-scientific studies make the link between the increasing availability of objective “knowledge” and the decreasing spirituality and

mystical holism in our society painfully clear. The role of scientific writing as the dissemination of scientific results in such a way as to make the methodology clear, the experiments repeatable, and the reasoning logically sound, is therefore a major concern. Fortunately, this process is fraught with difficulties and easily corrupted.

By enforcing a number of restrictions and recommending guidelines that complicate the communication of the message we hope to protect the public by making otherwise obvious results obscure, and vague results unintelligible. Peer review is unpaid work that academics will happily be rid of, and the process would be replaced by a censorship committee that only accepts papers that are sufficiently incoherent. With the harmful messages disarmed, some scientists might be rescued from the ways of the skeptics while the rest are allowed to continue their research, avoiding any blemishes in the unemployment statistics.

2 Avoiding Attention

Neutralizing a scientific paper is a three step process involving structure, described in Section 3, style, discussed in Section 4, and careful consideration of the audience, as explained in Section 5. But our first effort is towards making sure the paper is never read at all.

The title is the first thing the reader sees and the first chance of averting his or her interest. Bore the reader with a long and complicated title using unfamiliar acronyms. Alternatively, make the title a short play with words, alliterations or recognizable phrases, but leave out any reference

to the topic of the paper. Ambiguity should be used with care since scientists are smart fellows that might be able figure out the true meaning if the title is insufficiently ambiguous.

A second chance at loosing readers is the abstract. Most of today's scientific papers include a short single paragraph text that describe what the paper is about. It is either a mini-summary of the research paper or concentrates on raising interest, like the back of a book that serves to quickly capture the reader's interest and convince him or her to devote the time necessary to read the paper in full or parts. Think of the abstract as the 30 second version of the paper. Such a small text is bound to be read in one pass, making the flow of the text an important target for obfuscation by using acronyms and the mixing of tense.

Also keep in mind that the abstract might in certain circumstances be separated from the original paper, e.g., if it is published in a book of abstracts, or if it is available free on a web site where the full paper is pay-per-view. These cases are excellent opportunities to make the abstract incomprehensible by introducing references to data in tables or papers in the bibliography that are only available in the full paper.

3 Reducing Structure

If the attempts at discouraging the reader from continuing failed, the best we can do is to obfuscate the contents of the paper, starting with the elimination of predictable structure.

Use of the traditional hourglass shape, starting with a broad introduction, narrowing into an argument for the case, and again broadening into a discussion and conclusion, should be restricted. The hourglass principle is obeyed almost universally in today's works of scientific writing but there are no limits to conceivable alternatives. Departing from the typical template will surprise a reader who expects yet another predictable content structure, causing confusion and inhibiting the transfer of knowledge. Advertising the non-standard structure in the introduction will obviously spoil these beneficial effects.

By studying the rhetoric principles of ancient Greece one discovers the beginnings of unsafe thinking. This is an excellent source of infor-

mation that can help us learn to avoid repeating history. E.g., hiding the purpose of writing effectively limits its harmful influence. But, in contrast, arranging the scientific arguments in logically irrefutable steps can have a devastating effect on the poor readers otherwise emotionally peaceful state of mind. However, present day scientific writing should remain the primary area of study and is full of shocking examples of carelessness with regards to the dangerous effects of rationalization on the human mind. A great piece of advise for anyone who feels unsure of some aspect of writing is to study those authors who's ideas have caused most harm and those texts that have had the most damaging influence. There is no need to enter the same blind alley of human kind that others have already explored.

4 Compromising Style

While scientific papers are already difficult to read, they can easily be made completely opaque to human understanding by compromising language style and layout.

Complicated language has always been a trademark of scientific writing. Nonetheless, experienced scientists have developed the ability to penetrate the surface complexity and get to the underlying meaning, repeatedly exposing themselves to spiritually destructive reductionist descriptions of nature. This is the reason why ambiguity is so important. It is well known that humans are expert interpreters who assign meaning to everything they perceive, however void of meaning the stimuli might in fact be. Through ambiguous expression the writer can increase the chances that the reader makes irrelevant or erroneous interpretations that help them stay clear of the destructive truth.

Comprehension is also made difficult by interrupting the flow of text with annoying details that distract attention and prevent an understanding of the overall purpose from crystallizing in the readers mind. Acronyms can be successfully used for this purpose. Each scientific discipline should have an agreed upon set of three-letter acronyms that are common knowledge within the field but prevent the spreading of harmful ideas to other related areas and to the public. Replacing each

occurrence of terms that have a corresponding acronym, even if they are only used once or twice, will make the simplest text incomprehensible to the uninitiated. Another simple technique is a liberal use of footnotes that force the attention of the reader to jump across the page.

Figures and tables still pose a very real threat since they have a tendency to expose facts that have been successfully obfuscated in the text. But by incorporating far too much information in key figures, important points can be kept from the reader as the down scaling of the figure to fit the page will make the text effectively unreadable.

To further complicate the matter of style we propose the use of an obscure typesetting program invented in the 1970s called L^AT_EX. Its learning curve is similar to a vertical brick wall, and even the most proficient users regularly waste hours battling with its stubborn layout algorithms. Others are mesmerized by the softwares arcane programmatic configurability and develop such an affection as to defy scientific reasoning and approach a cult-like following, which ought to be encouraged.

5 Pity the Reader

All the measures and restrictions in this paper are designed to safeguard the reader of a publication from the distress caused by the reductionist offensive of science. The most important consideration to keep in mind is therefore the safety of the reader. Keeping the audience in mind while writing the paper is the only possible way of minimizing the manipulative powers of the embedded scientific thoughts.

The reader and writer are two different people. While the writer might already be guilty of objective experimentation, the reader is possibly completely innocent. Leaving out vital background information will effectively protect novice readers and inhibit the spreading of ideas to other scientific disciplines that have enough trouble of their own.

Another effective technique is to bore the reader for his or her own good. A bored reader will skim through the text with only shallow understanding or even put the text down and stop reading all together. Loose the readers interest by conform-

ing mindlessly to all rules of writing and style. Never include anything unexpected or atypical. In the extreme, we can turn science against itself by using results from information theory, which reveal that something completely predictable is also completely void of information. A strategy of total conformance and predictability thus renders any text harmless by stripping it of information.

Consider the reasons why the reader might be interested in your paper. If the results extend previous work in the area, or fill a need that scientists have established, make sure the reader does not figure that out. If the results seem unique and important, he or she will assign a false value of significance to the scientific theories that inevitably clouds any insights about the true spiritual nature of the world we inhabit. Finally, structure the closing of the paper so as to leave the reader with a feeling of aversion towards science in general and your field in particular. Your paper might be the decisive deterrent that makes a hesitant researcher switch to a more productive career as a mystic.

6 Discussion

The essence of these writing guidelines is the disruption of the message transfer, thereby preventing scientific ideas from spreading like a contagious disease. A disease that threatens to suffocate our spiritual nature, leaving only soul less machines, governed by a set of deterministic rules.

Science has already caused much damage to our society, but the damage is not irreparable. In a single generation we may avert the unnatural ways of science and revert into mysticism. By enforcing the restrictions and guidelines laid out in this parliamentary bill, the primary tool of scientific “knowledge” dissemination will be crippled and rendered harmless.

This bill is a first step in a continuing effort that further includes the establishment of graduate courses in scientific writing where younger researchers can be encouraged to write their own guidelines on bad writing. While the seasoned professors may have already lost most of their in-born ability for spiritual enlightenment, an entire generation of younger researchers might still be part of the coming mystical renaissance.