

Peer Review

Review of: "From Medieval Scapegoating to Modern Conspiracy Theories in Healthcare"

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This article seeks to draw readers' attention to the topic of science popularization, warning against the dangers of oversimplification and distortion. It serves as a cautionary message about the modern tendency to sensationalize science in pursuit of views and likes—an approach that fosters ignorance and misinformation rather than genuine awareness. The healthcare domain is of particular concern, as distorted information in this field can be especially dangerous and even life-threatening.

A central theme of the article is captured in the word the author repeatedly emphasizes: "**translation**." Just as translating between languages is complex and often debated by philosophers such as Wittgenstein, Gadamer, and Borges, so too is the process of translating scientific knowledge. This translation is not merely linguistic but also involves bridging the gap between technical jargon and laypeople's understanding. The author underscores the necessity of making complex scientific concepts accessible without compromising accuracy.

In today's **information-saturated digital era**, the risk of scientific distortion is high. If science fails to provide reliable information that laypeople can trust, it ultimately undermines itself, fueling skepticism and promoting a distorted perception of science—one that prioritizes endless possibilities over rigorous methodology and hard evidence. Platforms like YouTube and Instagram, while offering broad access to information, can be double-edged swords. Influencers often spread misinformation, promoting unverified alternatives to approved treatments—sometimes with harmful consequences. The pressure to attract followers often leads to sensationalized content that prioritizes engagement over accuracy.

On a meta-level, the author demonstrates that it is possible to present compelling scientific insights without resorting to exaggeration. The article is rich with historical examples, from the **spinach-iron**

myth to the **ivermectin misinformation** during the **SARS-CoV-2 pandemic**, illustrating how misinformation has shaped public perception over time. Furthermore, **Artificial Intelligence** is identified as a new and pressing threat in the spread of fake news.

Beyond analyzing the historical roots of misinformation, the author offers a sense of hope by suggesting potential solutions. He emphasizes that science communicators must provide context when presenting information, and scientists themselves must actively engage in combating disinformation. The educational system should prioritize **critical thinking and public education**, equipping individuals with the tools to navigate an increasingly complex information landscape. Crucially, the fight against misinformation cannot rely solely on policies; it requires shared responsibility from both scientists and the public, writers and readers, to foster an informed and engaged society.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.