

# Review of: "Behavioral optimization in Scientific Publishing"

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The article discusses the peer review publication process from the perspective of the self-interest of all involved parties. The main argument is that the current peer review system is inherently biased against outsiders whether intellectual, personal, or institutional. This bias distorts truly progressive and open science. Therefore, we need a different – less cliquish – publication system. The article further proposes an alternative system where the authors decide whether their thoughts are ready for publication given public comments by reviewers. In my view, the fundamentals of the suggested solution are brilliant. But this comes with caveats.

While reading the article I found myself agreeing with virtually every point made by the author. More than once, I wanted to say "Bravo!" Yet, I was not sure if I could give this article five stars. The reason is that the article lacks evidence. In fact, it represents an informed essay on the subject. Although, of course, there is no inherent problem with that, in this particular case, I felt that the evidence was needed. Otherwise, it may and probably will be dismissed by incumbents. However, I will say that the evidence supporting claims made in the reviewed article exists, with names, journals, quotes. I am sure one day it will be published. Another way to provide evidence is to set up, for example, a simulation model that captures the core incentives of the involved parties and shows that the current system results in inferior outcomes compared to the proposed system. This is the core of my skepticism. A less critical problem is that I find the dichotomy of ratio vs. difference optimization redundant. The argument can be as effective without mentioning these ideas at all. Along the same lines, the title of the article can be misconstrued. Finally, I would recommend that at some point the author cooperates with a professional copy editor.

That said, I give this work five stars because I commend the author, share his perspective, and believe that science will benefit if these ideas get maximal attention among other researchers. I realize that given (in my view) substantive concerns mentioned above, assigning five stars may be undue. But I take that responsibility, for in the version that I read I did not see any fundamental flaws.