

Review of: "Further Chaos and Dysfunction in the Brickyard and the Systems That Support It"

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The subject of this article, the quality of scientific production, is obviously very important and it is an excellent idea to approach the problem with a historical retrospective, taking Bernard K. Forscher's 1963 article as a starting point.

However, I believe that this article is too limited to metaphor to contribute something constructive to the problem raised. The author speaks of a further deterioration of science, but he should quantify this. For example, there are many studies on the increase in scientific fraud as well as on the decrease in the frequency of articles bringing a real conceptual break. The author does not cite any of them and remains stubbornly in the register of the metaphor of the brickyard whereas it would be necessary to argue each point of his speech. The points he raises (the commercialization of scientific articles, the hegemony of publishers over scientific production, the diversion of the use of impact factors and h-indexes, etc.) are relevant but he does not effort to document them.

Another problem comes from the fact that the author does not seem to take into account the evolution of theories of knowledge since the 1960s. If Thomas Kuhn emphasized the role of revolutionary science in the paradigm shift, we know today that this analysis is far from applying to all changes in the scientific paradigm. In the same way, the author evokes, with the metaphor of the good bricks, the problem of the demarcation between science and pseudoscience. But the criteria for this demarcation have also evolved considerably since the 1960s. While Popper's refutation criterion remains a reference, multi-criteria approaches have also emerged.

From my point of view, despite an excellent starting point (taking stock of the deterioration of scientific production since 1963), this article contributes little. It looks too much like an opinion piece.