

# Sabine Hossenfelder Argues *For* the Current Publishing System *while admitting physics is corrupt and dying*



*by Miles Mathis*

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Before we get started I need to do my now tri-annual reminder to feed the webkitty. As part of that I remind you you are blessed here with a site with zero advertising, zero merchandizing, and near-zero fundraising. I tack-on a reminder like this only three times a year—very low profile and pressure. I know of no other website with the traffic I have that does this. Why do I refuse advertising? Because I don't want my site polluted by all that unsightly garbage. It offends my artistic sensibility. So if you want me to continue to have the freedom to do what I do, drop a few dollars in the guitar case before you forget. You can do that via Paypal by clicking on one of the kitties on my sites, or send a check or anything else of value (I like Mercury dimes, for instance) to pobox335, Garden Valley, CA 95633.

In my case, that is all it takes because I have done what I have done with nothing else. I don't require massive public funding, grants, or any other subsidies. I live on about \$2500/month, and that is paid for by book sales, art sales, and website donations. Yes, I could make a lot more by accepting advertising on my sites, but I am better off without it. If I had any money in the bank or any real assets, I would be an immediate target for a million slap suits. This way I have my freedom, which has always been my most important asset.

This is not beside the point here, because we are going to talk about funding of science now. Sabine has been moving strongly toward me for a decade, becoming more and more critical of mainstream science. She is now admitting that physics is dying or near death due to massive corruption, but she still doesn't seem to be able to spot the primary causes of rot. [In one recent video](#) she was calling bullshit on the whole String Theory—LQG crowd, attacking Brian Greene, Lee Smolin, and all the other big dogs by name. Which was somewhat nice to see, despite the fact she is mainly still giving them press. Lots of exciting things *are* going on in physics, most of them on my website, but she has to keep your eyes off that. It's called controlled opposition.

In that last video, she claims the only ones criticizing String Theory and LQG, besides herself, are Peter Woit and Eric Weinstein, which tells us a lot about her current project. I have seen Weinstein promoting her recently, too, so there is some sort of internal alliance here. The most important thing

going on here is that they have to continue to pretend I don't exist. My name is the one that may not be spoken, although I am the only one doing any real physics. Which of these people has done anything like [successfully predict a Solar Cycle](#), for instance, or [mechanically explain the Bode sequence](#), with full math, or [diagram the atomic nucleus](#), or [achieve unification](#) (which Sabine is admitting again is important)? Oh, that's right, none of them. But solving real physics problems with real math and diagrams is old-school. It is passe. It may well be racist.

It may also be worth reminding you [I blew String Theory into little bits](#) way back in 2005, to the extent that all those people, led by Brian Greene, should have ritually offed themselves with kool-aid on some [tarmac in Guyana](#). I killed them then and they have been nothing but zombies since, so there was nothing left for Woit or Weinstein or Hossenfelder to do. Same for Loop Quantum Gravity, which I [bombed to ashes in 2009](#). Sabine recently claimed zombies are impossible in another one of her cutting-edge videos, but I beg to differ. Academia is a waltz led by zombies.

After all that, Sabine then [published a video](#) on the big lawsuit against science publishers I just wrote about in my paper "[Walking Around the Hound of Hell](#)". I naively thought she would agree with me, to fit her recent bent, but she didn't. She criticized the lawsuit point for point like some oily attorney, and claimed it would just make things worse. She said that if the lawsuit was won, the publishers would quit publishing and the field would be harmed. Scientists have to publish, she implied, and with no real market for their work, this is how it is done. The market has to be manufactured and publishers allowed to profit by selling the work back to its authors, for the good of science.

What she completely misses is that this closed-loop system of science creation is one of the main things that has killed science. The peers (in both senses) have used this system to circle the wagons, protecting their hegemony, and in doing so have locked out any new ideas. The current system is the very definition of Alexandrian, and if you don't know what that means, I suggest you look it up. Don't look it up at Wikipedia or Merriam-Webster, however, since they apparently prefer you don't know what it means. It refers to a system mired in rules and regulations, complicated beyond all reason, and loaded down with layers of bureaucracy. It is the sort of system Terry Gilliam is always lampooning, in films like *Brazil*. We now live in such a system, as you know, so you can see why that definition has been purged from the internet. Such a system not only monopolizes a field on purpose, externalizing all possible opposition, it externalizes all creativity, by leaving no room for it. Any remaining creativity is just a pose or simulacrum, since scientists will always want to appear to be creative. But any real creativity is a threat to those entrenched in the system, and as such will not be tolerated.

To see what I mean in more detail, let's compare the physics department at the university to the fine arts department. There is an analogous requirement for grad students and professors to produce work in both fields, but in fine arts they have a show nobody comes to and have done with it. They (mostly) aren't required to create glossy catalogs and distribute them worldwide, for the alleged health of the field of art. If they do produce a catalog, it is done in-house at little cost and the run is just a few hundred copies, one being stored away in the local library and the rest given away to people's parents. You will say that is because art is already completely dead and the department has had to deal with that fact. Yes, and that is just my point. Physics is also already dead, so the department should have to deal with that fact. They should not be allowed to continue to prop up the corpse with taxdollars and tuition, just so a bunch of posers can feel important.

[That is the thing that leapt out at me in Sabine's video: she admits this is all [subsidized with taxdollars](#). So on the most basic level, it is just one more tax-and-spend scam. It is one more hose the usual suspects use to suck you dry.]

In fact, I will argue it hasn't gone far enough in the fine art department. The whole thing has long since become an utter waste of time and energy, and they should burn it down and start over from scratch. I am all for supporting the arts, but modern art isn't art and never has been. As I have proved, it is a completely manufactured field, one that has destroyed and usurped the real field of art, and it was manufactured by the financiers simply to launder money (and to give their children something to do to look interesting and important). So the best thing they could do is outlaw it as a crime against humanity and rebuild the art department on the old definitions. It wouldn't be hard to do.

And yes, the same goes for the physics department, which has followed Modern art down the drain, and mostly for the same reasons. It has been coopted and usurped by the same families for the same basic goals: control, profit, and to give their talentless children a way to look interesting and important. [Physics has become like one of those farcical books](#) made by the moderns to resemble a book (see Dubuffet's *La Lunette Farcie*), but with no content—just pretend words with pretend diagrams.



There has been no connection of physics to the physical world for over a century, and they now brag about it. Being concerned with mechanics or assigned math is now considered provincial. Just as old-style art is ridiculed as passe, so is old-style physics. But that is what we need: a reversal to about 1880 in both fields, and a taking of a completely different path from there. This path we are on dead-ended into a swamp long ago.

Millions of pages of absolute bombast are force-published every year, and even the most highly touted has no resemblance to physics or science, by even the widest definition. String theory is the perfect example, being promoted by TV and the glossies for forty years despite being nothing but angels-on-the-head-of-a-pin nonsense. That crap shouldn't be published in journals, it should be exhibited at

MOMA next to slashed canvases (see Lucio Fontana) and laugh-tracks of maniacal clowns (see Bruce Nauman).

There is no reason for any of this to continue, since it is just clogging up the field and preventing real science. Every one of these posers like Brian Greene or Lee Smolin or Leonard Susskind or a thousand others is filling some chair that should be filled by a real scientist, doing real work. If no real scientist now exists to fill that chair, it should remain empty until one comes along. In that case at least we will know where we stand.

This is what has destroyed physics: all the top university departments worldwide perch on the manufactured fame of these people. You will say that fame doesn't just come from Elsevier or Springer, it comes from the glossies, TV, and the mainstream press, all of which promote them for no rational reason. That is true, but the academic publishers control the field from the bottom up as well as the top down, by protecting these people from criticism and competition. Graduate students are forced by peer review to line up behind one of these posers or another, and that by itself externalizes all dissent and forces all discussion into narrow and ultimately meaningless channels of self-supporting blather. These aren't even channels. They are circular canals of effluent, like in Venice in high summer, where no fresh water can get in.

So there is actually no reason whatsoever for all this stuff to be published. It is no boon to science, and even if it were it could be done in-house for much cheaper and thrown up on the internet for almost nothing. The world doesn't need bound volumes of any of this, since that is all just a further insult to treehood. And universities are already connected to the internet—they can throw up their content as quickly and inexpensively as I do: they don't need to pay Elsevier or Springer to do it for them and sell it back to them at a huge mark-up. Which makes peer review another huge waste of time. Peer review obviously isn't used to keep the quality up, since the quality of physics has been nose-diving since the time of Maxwell. It is used only to police the field and protect the big dogs from critique. They don't have any peer review in the fine arts department, they just put everything anyone does on the wall or floor and let the audience decide if they want to look at, or for how long. They could do the same in physics and save a lot of time and money. Anything worthwhile would then make its way to the top on its own merit, and those few things could later make it into print or the larger market.

We won't see that anytime soon in physics, and we know by again looking at art. Physics isn't yet as dead as art—or not in the public mind, anyway—but there is no movement to reorganize the art department even now. Art has been stone dead since the 1920s, when Duchamp delivered the perceived *coup de grace*, so we are now in our tenth decade of zombies. But most people haven't cared. If they notice, they catalog it and move on. They crawl further under their beds and pretend history is still moving. The same thing has happened with science, as the zombies have taken over there. Physics has been replaced with a bad computer simulation, and as with art, no doubt physics will soon be taken over by AI.

But as strange as it sounds, *that* is the greatest sign of hope. Not because AI will reinvigorate art or science, but because it will finally kill both outright. It takes a zombie to kill a zombie, I guess. How is that, you ask? Well, once art and science are taken over by AI, people will finally lose any last shred of interest in them. Humans are interested in *themselves*. That is the first rule of humanism, you know, and computers will not be able to override or overwrite it. Computers are now only interesting as a novelty, but once they fully usurp art and science, people will learn to hate them as usurpers. If you think there is no market for art and science now, just wait until computers take it over. People will abandon both fields entirely, at which point there is no reason for computers to produce any of it.

Physics and art are still promoted by some small cliques only because they make some few of them famous. Art and physics now exist on that and that alone. Even the money-laundering schemes of art rely on the fame of human artists, since without that fame no one would believe the prices. Art is supposed to be—and is believed to be—rare and difficult and important. But if any machine can do it, it can't be rare or difficult, and humans will never believe anything is important except humans. In that way AI is an immediate limit on itself, even in the short term, and is why I have no fear of it. AI will soon dissolve in the same vat of Modern malaise and ennui as everything else, hopefully taking Modern art and science down with it. Once everything explodes down to constituent particles and there is nothing left but a scummy soup, the real artists and scientists can come back in and begin rebuilding the edifice on firm definitions, rational foundations, beautiful conceptions, and solid architecture.