**Full email exchange wherein I asked Nosek to confirm his position regarding establishing a minimum transparency standard that ALL researchers should be expected to meet:**

**Etienne LeBel** <etienne.lebel@gmail.com>                    Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 1:31 PM
To: Brian Nosek <nosek@cos.io>

Hi Brian,

I've been thinking more about your responses from an email exchange we had late in December 2019 (see below) in relation to requiring that all researchers (including senior researchers) meet a **minimum** transparency standard.   Based on your Dec 18, 2019 (3:16 PM) email, and follow-up response on Dec 19,  your position was that **meeting a minimum transparency level in one's research should still be completely optional** (in contrast to my position, which is that, 10 years after Bem's embarrassing ESP scandal, the "grace period" for adoption is over, and hence that we now should be requiring that ALL RESEARCHERS meet a **minimum** transparency standard in conducting and reporting their research.

I just wanted to confirm that this is STILL your position (i.e., that **meeting a minimum transparency standard in one's research should still be completely optional**).

Please let me know, thank you.

Warm regards,
Etienne.
[Quoted text hidden]

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**Brian Nosek** <nosek@cos.io>                    Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 7:21 AM
To: Etienne LeBel <etienne.lebel@gmail.com>

Hey Etienne --

Who would be doing the "requiring"?  If it is a general statement from a group with no enforcement power, then I don't think it would have the desired effect and could even be counterproductive by eliciting "You're not the boss of me!" rejoinders.  But I strongly favor moving toward requirements by those that can actually enforce them -- funders for their grantees, institutions for their employees, journals for their authors.  So, I guess my answer is that for groups involved in grassroots community building, the language of requirement is counterproductive, but what grassroots groups can do very productively is encourage those with actual power to develop and enforce requirements.

Warmly,

Brian


[Quoted text hidden]

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**Etienne LeBel** <etienne.lebel@gmail.com>                    Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 11:13 AM
To: Brian Nosek <nosek@cos.io>

Hi Brian,

Thanks for your response.

>>>> *But I strongly favor moving toward requirements by those that can actually enforce them -- funders for their grantees, institutions for their employees, journals for their authors.*
**But how well has that worked out?**  David Moher -- of the EQUATOR Network fame whom I'm now collaborating with in Ottawa -- has been fighting since the 1990s for journals, unis, and funders to require a minimum transparency level with absolutely ZERO success (and of course all of your efforts, though valuable, have also not led to any real change in requirements at any level).

**So how many more decades should we wait?**

Us as individuals.  Of course it's much easier to just keep blaming others, the system, the journals, the funders etc but at the end of the day, it is only **individuals** that have the power to change the system, **and** to change our individual behaviors, and ensure that all researchers (including senior researchers) are meeting minimum levels of transparency, and hence are accountable to themselves, other scientists, and the people they serve (e.g., the taxpayer).

Do you actually think your position is **FAIR** to the taxpayer who is paying for most of this research?  (I thought you cared about fairness and equity for marginalized individuals?)  We're dealing with an unprecedented crisis of confidence in academia, unprecedented high stakes and hyper-competition, billions of dollars on the line, tons and growing evidence that the majority of published findings continue to be plagued by QRPs, reproducibility and replicability problems (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9,10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16), and **you STILL THINK that, as individuals, we should NOT be requiring that all researchers (incl. senior researchers) meet minimum transparency levels in their research?**

I think you're gravely wrong on this, though of course **my** position could be off.  I guess we can just present the facts to the taxpayer and see what THEY think.   I'm starting a show called "Saving Science" as a last ditch effort to make ACTUAL progress on raising standards in academia so that we can finally get our house in order (see below for the explicit goals of the show).

I may use your curious position as an example of 1 of the hundreds of factors/problems that are contributing to the glacial pace of (desperately needed) transparency reforms in academia.

Warm regards,
Etienne.


**GOALS of the Saving Science show**
1. Raise public awareness of the deeply broken global academic system
2. Implement minimum transparency standards at UNIS & FUNDERS & implement a (minimalist user-friendly, & integrated) compliance system that ensures researchers, unis, and funders are actually meeting the new transparency standards (e.g., open data barring valid exemption & disclosure of COIs/funding sources).
3. Change laws to require open access (OA) -- & later open data -- of all publicly-funded research pan-nationally (following the lead of the Netherlands, France, & Belgium where, since 2015, 2016, and 2018, respectively, all publicly-funded research must be public domain OA by law.)

**Personal motivation:**
I'm motivated by
(1) the ethical duty of intellectuals to report on matters of public concern &
(2) the fact that properly functioning science is the best way to **finding better treatments for cruel medical conditions like suicide, cancer, and Alzheimer's, which have touched my family personally, and continue to afflict millions of people worldwide every year.**
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**Brian Nosek** <nosek@cos.io>                                                                    Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 11:18 AM
To: Etienne LeBel <etienne.lebel@gmail.com>

Hi Etienne --

How do you propose that you as an individual could require transparency of other researchers?

Brian

[Quoted text hidden]

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**Etienne LeBel** <etienne.lebel@gmail.com>                                            Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 11:30 AM
To: Brian Nosek <nosek@cos.io>

At least 3 different ways:

1. Not reviewing papers if they don't meet a minimum transparency requirement, e.g. via PRO initiative
2. Making strong public statements that it's simply unacceptable for researchers not to meet a minimum transparency standard in conducting & reporting their research, and
3. Ending friendships with colleagues who are still NOT meeting minimum transparency levels in their research (as I've done since 2008 in grad school, which of course means that i've lost a lot of friends and sacrificed my career goals, but at least my position is based on foundational scientific first principles rather than extra-scientific considerations...)
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**Brian Nosek** <nosek@cos.io>                                          Tue, Sep 29, 2020 at 11:58 AM
To: Etienne LeBel <etienne.lebel@gmail.com>

Those are requirements on yourself, not others.

I like the first as a social influence campaign, but it does nothing to impact researcher behavior. If you refuse, the journal moves on to get another reviewer. There is no direct impact on the authors. The mechanism of behavior change is to induce the journal to initiate requirements.

The second is not a requirement of anyone. People can just ignore it. And, doing it poorly induces reactance. There is very little support for effective behavior change via this mechanism.

The third is likewise not well supported as a behavior change tactic. By losing friends, you are not changing their behavior -- there is no requirement -- and you are losing opportunities to influence their behavior via effective tactics.

Brian

# Broader & original context where I asked Nosek why he's NOT interested in establishing <u>minimum transparency standards</u> that ALL researchers should be expected to meet:

M Gmail                                          **Etienne LeBel <etienne.lebel@gmail.com>**

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## Curate Science endorsement request
13 messages

**Etienne LeBel** <etienne.lebel@gmail.com>                              Tue, Dec 17, 2019 at 12:38 PM
To: Brian Nosek <nosek@cos.io>

Hi Brian,

We're making good progress at Curate Science scaling up our transparency and credibility curation products. We've just finished designing new curation products for journals, universities, and funders. We are now starting a funding campaign to secure our next round of funding to support our continued expansion through 2022.

Given your previous support of Curate Science, **we were wondering if you would be willing to make a public endorsement (1-2 sentences max.) regarding your current support of Curate Science and its broader goals and vision**. We would include such endorsement in our current "Funding Opportunity" document (see here or attached PDF), which we will soon share with potential funders.

Something positive along the lines of (or other angles):

- Our team has a proven track record of courageously pushing for higher research standards, in terms of higher *transparency standards* and higher *replication standards.*
- The platform allows forward-thinking researchers to signal their commitment to transparent and high-integrity research.
- How transparency and credibility curation has large potential to increase research efficiency and accelerate scientific progress.
- The platform has potential to re-invent scholarly evaluation by building tools to verify that research meets *minimum transparency standards*, ensuring the accountability of all producers of research (i.e., researchers, journals, universities, and funders).
- Curate Science is making steady progress tackling a "holy grail" problem in academic research, i.e., helping researchers differentiate credible evidence from unreliable research (or otherwise non-verifiable research).

We would be very grateful for your support. Please let us know. Thanks in advance.

Warm regards,
Etienne.
p.s. Thank you for your strong leadership and impactful work in this space. You've truly been an inspiration to me, and I'm very grateful for that.

📄 **CS-funding-request-FOR-FUNDERS.pdf**
334K

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**Brian Nosek** <nosek@cos.io>                                    Tue, Dec 17, 2019 at 1:28 PM
To: Etienne LeBel <etienne.lebel@gmail.com>

Hi Etienne --

Happy to do so, how about something like the following:

"Even researchers are prone to selective attention to evidence supporting a desired point of view.  And, even with motivation, it is hard to quickly identify the state of evidence for research claims. Curate Science is tackling these challenges head on with a platform that gives users a quick and complete view of the state of evidence so that they can make better decisions and cite the best available evidence."

I am glad to see that you continue to make progress on this effort.  I refer people to the website all the time!

Warm regards,

Brian

[Quoted text hidden]

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**Etienne LeBel** <etienne.lebel@gmail.com>                        Wed, Dec 18, 2019 at 10:40 AM
To: Brian Nosek <nosek@cos.io>

Hi Brian,

Great, that's awesome, thanks so much!

Quick question: Though you're a strong advocate of *increasing transparency*, you appear to be a lot less vocally supportive of technologies that would determine that an article/finding meets a *minimum transparency standard (*which would be pretty major, e.g., to use as an inclusion criterion in meta-analyses, and many other applications).  Do you not personally support these technologies or are there other reasons?
[Quoted text hidden]

**Brian Nosek** <nosek@cos.io>                                   Wed, Dec 18, 2019 at 3:16 PM
To: Etienne LeBel <etienne.lebel@gmail.com>

Hi Etienne --

==I think those are good concepts to develop.  My prioritization on "increasing" is purely strategic -- first get people doing the behavior, then inculcate standards for minimum (and best) performance on that behavior.  I am, however, really glad that many are already pushing on establishing minimum standards.  That work at the leading edge will keep the momentum going.==

Brian

[Quoted text hidden]

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**Etienne LeBel** <etienne.lebel@gmail.com>                      Thu, Dec 19, 2019 at 4:39 PM
To: Brian Nosek <nosek@cos.io>

Hi Brian,

>>>> *My prioritization on "increasing" is purely strategic -- first get people doing the behavior, then inculcate standards for minimum (and best) performance on that behavior.*

==That makes sense. Though I guess eventually, such a "grace period" needs to end right?  Do you really think it's justifiable for publicly-funded scientists, in 2020, to publish scientific papers without publicly posting data (barring valid exemptions)?==

In any event, I was hoping you could revise your endorsement to include your more specific position on this, which better captures Curate Science's vision and its unique value proposition. How about something along the lines of:

*The global open science movement has made great strides in increasing the transparency of scientific research. A current challenge, however, is to establish minimum international transparency standards. Curate Science is at the leading edge of tackling this problem by developing open-source technologies -- for all research stakeholders -- to ensure that research meets minimum transparency standards.*

Please let me know, and thanks again for your support and help with this!

Best,
Etienne.
[Quoted text hidden]

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**Brian Nosek** <nosek@cos.io>                                   Thu, Dec 19, 2019 at 5:16 PM
To: Etienne LeBel <etienne.lebel@gmail.com>

Sure, that's fine.  The ending "to ensure..." is redundant with the second sentence, so I'd suggest removing it.

Brian

[Quoted text hidden]

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**Etienne LeBel** <etienne.lebel@gmail.com>                      Fri, Dec 20, 2019 at 10:35 AM
To: Brian Nosek <nosek@cos.io>

Oh great point!
And thanks again for this, I really appreciate it.
And happy holidays.
Cheers,
Etienne.
[Quoted text hidden]

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**Etienne LeBel** <etienne.lebel@gmail.com>                      Mon, Sep 28, 2020 at 1:31 PM

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