

How to Identify Anti-Science Fanatics Masquerading as Scientists?

The fundamental distinction between science and religion lies in their treatment of foundational beliefs. In religion, questioning core tenets or dogmas is often considered blasphemous. In contrast, in science, it is a violation of intellectual integrity not to question baseless foundational assumptions—especially those that remain untested, unproven, or unfalsifiable. This includes widely accepted but empirically unsupported concepts, presumptions, or theoretical frameworks (i.e., material-fact-1).

No rational person would claim that the theoretical foundation for software engineering is a religion. Therefore, suppressing the right to challenge pseudoscientific dogma or entrenched assumptions (see Exhibits 1-4)—particularly when they lack falsifiable evidence—is not only anti-intellectual but also ethically indefensible. Such suppression directly contradicts the core principles of the scientific method.

Signs Someone May Be an Anti-Science Fanatic Pretending to Be a Scientist

1. Unquestionable Dogma

- **Real Science:** Encourages debate, questioning, and falsifiability.
- **Pseudoscience Pretenders:** Treat certain theories or assumptions as sacred. If you challenge them, you're labeled a heretic or "denier."
- **Red Flag:** They react emotionally or defensively to questions instead of addressing the content of the challenge.

2. Suppression of Dissent

- **Real Science:** Invites peer review, critique, and replication.

- **Pretenders:** Try to silence opposing views, often through ad hominem attacks, appeals to authority, or gatekeeping in publications and funding.
- **Red Flag:** Dismissing critics as "anti-science" or "conspiracy theorists" without engaging the actual argument.

3. Appeals to Consensus Instead of Evidence

- **Real Science:** Rests on empirical evidence, not majority opinion.
- **Pretenders:** Say, "The science is settled," even on topics still under investigation or debate.
- **Red Flag:** Using consensus as a blunt weapon rather than as a reflection of evidence-based agreement.

4. Misuse of Scientific Terminology

- **Real Science:** Uses precise terms with clear definitions.
- **Pretenders:** Use scientific jargon to obfuscate rather than clarify.
- **Red Flag:** They confuse or conflate terms like "theory," "hypothesis," and "fact," often intentionally.

5. Conflict of Interest and Ideological Bias

- **Real Science:** Declares and tries to control for bias.
- **Pretenders:** Push ideological, political, or financial agendas while hiding behind a lab coat.
- **Red Flag:** Research or commentary always aligns with a particular ideology or funding interest.

6. Resistance to Falsification

- **Real Science:** Accepts that theories must be falsifiable and provisional.
- **Pretenders:** Build belief systems that explain away all criticism (non-falsifiable), like unfalsifiable psychological or sociological explanations for disagreement.
- **Red Flag:** Theories are defended no matter what evidence emerges.