

Referee 2

Referee comment

I have just finished reading the paper. I was intrigued by the title (DANTE AND THE SCIENTIFIC VALUES) but I was disappointed by the actual paper. I thought it would be about the relationship between ethical virtues and scientific research, but in fact it is about the moral character (i.e. the behavior) of researchers. The fact that the researchers considered in the paper are scientists seems irrelevant, they could be humanists or social scientists, business people or carpenters and the thrust of the paper would still be the same and equally applicable. The idea of using the Divine Comedy as a grid to evaluate the behavior (the moral standards) of contemporary researchers is brilliant but in the end it does not tell us anything new about them beyond the fact that they are subject to human failings; above all, it doesn't tell us anything about scientific values, which I mistakenly thought would be the subject of the paper.

Author reply

We thank the referee, but politely disagree that the paper does not shed any new light on the moral character of scientists. The notion that the human failings highlighted in our manuscript could apply to other groups of people beyond scientists may well be true, but this does not detract from our analysis here, which was based on in-depth interviews with scientists about the life scientific. All quotes and findings in the narrative are pertinent to our sample of scientists, and from them, using a qualitative thematic analysis that is in keeping with grounded theory, we attempt to derive a set of scientific vices and virtues that can guide scientists, and act as a moral compass through contemporary science. Furthermore, we argue, the ethical issues explored in the manuscript, from the pace of scientific publishing, to the problems connected with research integrity and research assessment, are all deeply embedded in scientific culture and will be familiar to any scientist reading our paper. We note that the referee has misread the title of the manuscript, which is: "La Commedia Scientifica: Dante and the Scientific Virtues", not "Dante and the scientific values". A study of scientific values is beyond the scope of what we have done here.