

Viewpoint: Can we trust the research of scientists who work for corporations? Here's what you should know

There is a pervasive bias in academia against scientists who work in industry. It is often said that such individuals aren't "real scientists." The less charitable describe them as having gone over to the "dark side." For at least two reasons, this is a shameful and hypocritical way to characterize industry.

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This bizarre phenomenon of seeing shills everywhere one looks has also infected journalism. A team of journalists at NYU, led primarily by Charles Seife, routinely accuse others of malfeasance on behalf of industry. (One article written by Mr. Seife attacking plant geneticist Dr. Kevin Folta as an industry shill was so bad that it had to be [retracted](#).) Yet, while Mr. Seife accuses all those around him of being industry shills, his employer [NYU collected more than \\$1 billion in royalties for just a single drug](#) that it patented and licensed to Big Pharma.

The fervor with which the "corporate shill" label is applied is akin to McCarthyist zeal. That's unfortunate. The truth is that if the science is accurate, then it doesn't matter who paid for it — be it Monsanto, Vladimir Putin, or the Devil himself. Funding only matters if the science is inaccurate. That's when it's appropriate to ask, "Who funded this and why?"

**Read full, original article:** [Academic Bias Against Industry Is Toxic Hypocrisy](#)