



Where is your state of the art?

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Beyond the purposes of publishing, questioning and/or hypothesizing, every research has the noble aim to quench the constant human need of pushing farther away the boundaries of knowledge, may such frontier exist. The state of the art is the generic expression coined to limit the whereabouts of any particular knowledge. We use it just like a compass, it tells us how far we are, what has been done and where we should go. Take for instance quantum field theory, the state of the art in particle physics will tell you that everything that exists in this universe is made of bosons, quarks and leptons. What!?. Hold on, I was taught (and luckily maybe you weren't) that the fundamental particles were electrons, neutrons and protons, right?. Indeed, that is the state of the art but from almost one century ago. So, if I may ask... where is your state of the art?

This is not about quantum physics; it is not even about hydrology; it is about everything. Today, everybody doing or not a PhD fiercely believes that their research is important, extremely unique, life changing (and help us God if we are wrong); but how can you be so sure that what you do, isn't already done?. We live in a modern world, cool environmental scientists now have tagged this era as the Anthropocene; globalization is everywhere and of course knowledge has not escaped to it. Not only knowledge is now global but is totally diversified, any crazy idea you can think of (or actually you can't) it is very likely that somebody already has his/hers hands on it. Nevertheless, this is a good thing, isn't it?. Well, that is the whole point. Every time I should write my research's state of the art, I always get overwhelmed because it actually is pretty difficult to establish, and later when I think I get it, it seems that I am solving issues that somebody already bothered to solve 30 years ago. Therefore, does it really have some purpose to be swimming in a huge pool of knowledge, not knowing where exactly I am? or shouldn't we stride for a less diversified way of constructing knowledge?.