

**BROTHERTON:** When you're a scientist, it's about saying what's true and expressing things and exactly those things that you know are true. So a lot of times, in fiction or writing for the general public, you simplify things and make very clear declarative statements about, "This is how things are." But the more accurate you want to be, you have to start saying things like, "This is the way we think things are."

You start adding a series of qualifiers, and you want to make sure that any sentence that somebody reads they can't object to. Because in the tradition of science, if you don't write it exactly right, somebody will object to it. And you never know for sure when you've got it right.

But just like any other kind of writing-- the same thing I do for my fiction and all these things-- you have collaborators. You have people you pass your articles to, your papers to. Get them to read it over, and you have an editor and a referee at the journal. And they'll call you on things if they're not right. So there's multiple layers built into the scientific infrastructure to help make sure you're not saying anything wrong because people will remember that and criticize you for it.