The Morphing Author

Blaise Cronin
Editor-in-Chief, JASIST
1950: American Documentation*
1970: Journal of the American Society for Information Science
2000: Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology
2014: Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology

* American Documentation Institute (now ASIS&T) founded in 1937
The Journal welcomes **rigorous** work of an empirical, experimental, ethnographic, conceptual, historical, socio-technical, policy-analytic, or critical-theoretical nature.
JASIST statistics

- ~800 submissions per year
- ~80% from outside the US
- ~60% rejected outright by E-in-C
- Single blind
- ~8 weeks to final decision
- ~2.5 reviewers per paper (1-2,000 reviews p.a.)
- 12 issues (~2,500 pages) per year
- Full text accesses = ~300,000
- Page views = ~1,000,000
- Impact Factor = 2.23
- ~1,100 Twitter followers
‘A journal needs excellent submissions to generate prestige, but needs prestige to attract excellent submissions.’

Suber, 2008
Reward cycle

- Status
- Reputation
- Prestige
- Resources
- Power

Publication

Symbolic capital

enable

generates

augments
Editor’s dilemma

Accept  | Reject
---|---
Good paper | Type I error
Bad paper | Type II error
Peer review: Closed or open?

‘If peer review was a drug it would never be allowed onto the market.’

D. Rennie
Segmenting an author’s oeuvre

Scholarly substance

High

• Nature article
• OUP monograph

• Encyclopedia entry

• Technical report
• Book chapter

Low

• ACM conf paper

Light

• Keynote address
• Science blog

• Tweet

Heavy

• Op ed
• Letter to the editor

Peer review
‘Hyperauthorship’ (Cronin, 2001)

Words et alia

Contributions go well beyond words

Textual input

Instrumental contributions

Many hands

Few
Trending up  (King/Thomson Reuters, 2012)
LIS trends (Larivière, Sugimoto & Cronin, 2012)
Changing character of academic authorship

**Then**

- ‘Wordy’, discursive, static texts; narrative; craft activity

**Now**

- Data-intensive texts; visualizations; animations; dynamic texts; interactive data sets, software etc.

- Massive collaboration, fractionalization

Sole author
Authorial engagement

Trade-off

# of authors

Ownership/equity

Many vs. Few

Quality control and public trust issues: division of labor and weakened accountability, error, fabrication, retraction…
Forms of academic authorship

Author
- Co-author
- Gift author
- Ghost author
- Co-opted author

Sub-author

Unearned but granted
Earned but denied
Hired by Big Pharma
Acknowledgments – trusted peers, colleagues, technicians, funders, et al.
Accuracy and Outcomes of Screening Mammography in Women With a Personal History of Early-Stage Breast Cancer.

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Author Contributions:
Dr Miglioretti had full access to all of the data in the study and takes responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis.

Study concept and design: Houssami, Miglioretti, Buist, Irwig.

Acquisition of data: Miglioretti, Kerlikowske, Buist, Geller.

Analysis and interpretation of data: Houssami, Abraham, Miglioretti, Sickles, Kerlikowske, Buist, Geller, Muss.

Drafting of the manuscript: Houssami, Abraham, Miglioretti.

Critical revision of the manuscript for important intellectual content: Houssami, Miglioretti, Sickles, Kerlikowske, Buist, Geller, Muss, Irwig. Statistical analysis: Houssami, Abraham, Miglioretti.

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Study supervision: Houssami, Miglioretti, Kerlikowske, Irwig.

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CRediT
An open standard for expressing roles intrinsic to research

This taxonomy provides a high-level classification of the diverse roles performed in the work leading to a published research output in the sciences. Its purpose is to provide transparency in contributions to scholarly published work, to enable improved systems of attribution, credit, and accountability.
Culture of competition

• Pressure on authors puts pressure on editors
• Cutting of corners/sloppy writing
• Salami slicing/LPU
• Failure to (self-)cite
• Impatience, loss of civility, litigiousness