

# Publishing in innovation journals

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# The value of PHD days

- 1995 University of Aalborg event – Keld Laursen (Aalborg doctoral student) and Keith Sequiera (SPRU doctoral student)
- Lundvall, Metcalfe, Witt – senior faculty





# The value of PHD days

- Keld Laursen
  - 2001 started to collaborate
  - 2004 RP, 2005 CJE, 2006 SMJ, RegStu 2011, 2014 RP....
- Keith Sequiera – Cabinet, DG Research



**Copenhagen  
Business School**  
HANDELSSHØJSKOLEN



# Overview

- The dark art of academic publishing
- The ‘maturing’ market for ideas in innovation studies
  - Where?
  - Who?
  - How?
- Integrity in publications

# Is there 'rule for riches' in academe?

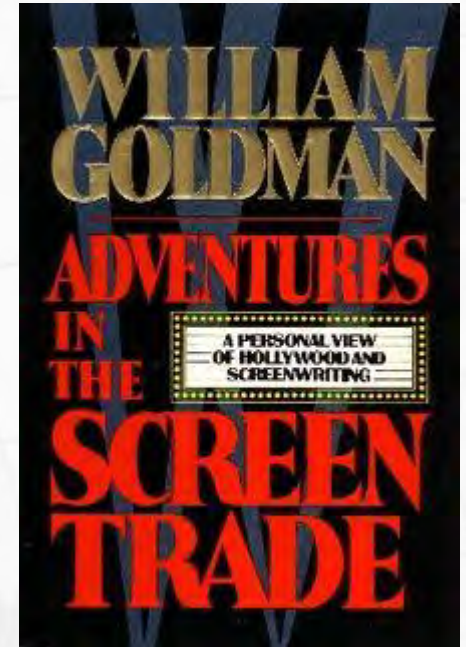


**Efforts to develop theories that, when applied, will always generate sustained strategic advantages clearly are foolish (Barney, 1991)**



# The dark arts

- “Nobody knows anything.....  
Not one person in the entire  
motion picture field knows  
for a certainty what's going  
to work. Every time out it's a  
guess and, if you're lucky,  
an educated one.”



# The role of publications in academic life

- Publications are the currency of academic life
- By publishing, you claim credit for your work and ideas
  - Writing is fun, interesting and challenging
  - Ability to choose an interesting topic, but also the ability to make your evidence credible to others working your area
  - The ‘gold standard’ – a novel paper in a good journal that gets cited by others – 100 citations in 10 years
  - Publications build your brand, reputation and legacy

# The role of publications in academic life

- There is a clear pecking order in academe between people and places
  - The highest status places have the most productive researchers
  - Academic institutions are risk adverse (especially in Europe)
  - The academic labour market is fluid
  - The rewards for achievement are tremendous
- Where you work, whether you are promoted or retained, your workloads where you work...all are determined by your publications



# A star scientist

- **Toby Stuart**

- Completed PHD in 1995 at Stanford with Joel Podolny as supervisor
- Placed at University of Chicago – 1995-2003 – promoted to associate professor in 1999, full professor in 2000
  - AJS 1995, 1996; 2000; 2001; SMJ 1996; 2000; ASQ 1998, 1999, 2000; 2003; ICC 1999; Man Sci 2002; RP 2003;
- Moves to Columbia in 2004-2006
  - Science 2006; AJS 2006
- Moves to Harvard Business School – 2006-2012
  - JEBO 2007; ASQ 2007; RP 2007; ASQ 2008; JIE 2009
- Joins UC Berkeley in 2012
  - SMJ 2013; Man Sci 2013; AMJ 2013



# Increasing importance of journal lists

- Journal quality is judged by many things – impact factor, reputation, history, editorial team...
- Lists of journals graded by ‘quality’ are increasingly common and used (for good and ill!):
  - National lists (see Anne Harzing’s website for a list of list)
  - UTDallas (no innovation journals)
  - FT45 (no innovation journals)
  - ABS list (RP and JPIM 4\*: R&D Man, Technovation, ICC 3\*)
- The status of innovation studies – not inside mainstream management, innovation and e’ship journals considered ‘field journals’ (good Bs), but innovation is a core part of many A journals (SMJ, AMJ, Org Sci, AMR, Man Sci, ASQ)
- A journal status is magnified by lists – value and status of top publications has increased

# Innovation journals

- Research Policy
- Journal of Product Innovation Management
- R and D Management
- Technovation
- Technological Forecasting and Social Change
- New Technology, Work and Employment
- IEEE Transactions in Engineering Management
- Industrial and Corporate Change
- International Journal of Innovation Management
- Industry and Innovation
- Prometheus
- Futures
- Technology Analysis and Strategic Management
- Science and Public Policy
- Journal of Evolutionary Economics
- Economics of Innovation and New Technology International
- Journal of Technology Management
- Journal of Technology Transfer
- Creativity and Innovation Management
- International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management (IJEIM)
- European Journal of Innovation Management
- International Journal of Technology Management and Sustainable Development
- Structural Change and Economic Dynamics
- Scientometrics
- Journal of Engineering and Technology Management
- Journal of High Technology Management Research
- Innovation: Management, Policy and Practice
- International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management
- International Journal of Foresight and Innovation Policy International
- Journal of Innovation and Technology Management
- Journal of Technology Management in China Research
- Technology Management: international journal of research management
- International Journal of Technology and Globalization International
- Journal of Technology Intelligence and Planning International
- Journal of Technology Policy and Management International
- Journal of Technology Transfer and Commercialisation
- International Technology Management Review
- Social Studies of Science
- Science Technology & Human Values
- Research Evaluation
- Science and Public Policy



# Research identity



# Working in the shadow of failure

- Most papers are rejected, most papers are rejected more than once, many accepted papers should have been rejected...
- The more ambitious you are as a scholar, the more likely you are to be rejected again and again
- For every paper, an author has published, they have had at least two rejections
  - I have published 44 academic papers, and therefore I have had at least 88 rejections!
  - 16 years as an academic, which means I have had 5.5 rejections per year
  - One of my papers was rejected 8 times, after in four cases after multiple rounds of review at good journals
  - It still hurts and it hurts anew each time, but overtime it hurts little less each time

# The pain of publishing

- Laursen and Salter, 'The paradox of openness', *Research Policy*, forthcoming
- First draft written in 2005, follower and related paper to Laursen and Salter 2006 (SMJ) and Laursen and Salter (2005, not published)
  - Presented at AOM 2006 – Symposium on open innovation
  - Submitted to Man Sci in 2007, desk rejected
  - Submitted to Org Sci in 2007, high risk R&R, revision rejected 2008
  - Submitted to SMJ in 2008, R&R, revision rejected 2009
  - Re-wrote (again!) – new data, framing and text - and then submitted to RP in 2013, after three difficult rounds it was finally accepted in December 2013
  - So, it took 8 years, over 100 versions of the paper, 8 presentations, 8 rounds of review at journals...



The skills required to be a successful researcher are similar to the skills required to get a good suntan.

Keith Pavitt, 2001



## Getting into *Research Policy* (same rules apply elsewhere)



- One of the leading journals in the field of innovation studies (Fagerberg and Verspagen, 2009)
- Published some of most influential papers on innovation (Martin, 2012)
- Journal impact factor (JIF) of 2.85
  - Puts 16<sup>th</sup> among the world's top Management journals
  - 5-yr IF of 4.39 places *RP* 11<sup>th</sup> in world's top Economics journals
- Strong focus on phenomenon – not just another management journal
- Broad range of interests and methods

# What do *RP* Editors look for?

- Evidence that author done homework first
  - e.g. checked website for scope of journal, instructions to authors etc.
- Then Editor asks 3 questions
  - 1. *Topic within scope?***
    - Is innovation/technology/R&D etc. at its heart?
    - Refers to literature familiar to *RP* readers – e.g. (recent) papers on same topic in *RP*?
    - Appropriate orientation (i.e. not too specialised) for *RP* and its readers?
    - Arrives at conclusions of interest to *RP* readers?
- If 'Yes', then move to Qu. 2
- If 'No', desk-rejection



# What do *RP* Editors look for?

## **2. High quality?**

- Important topic embedded in relevant literature?
- Original – reader learns something new/unexpected?
- Rigorous (and appropriate) methodology?
- Systematic analysis?
- Clear, significant, original, interesting conclusions?
- Logical argument, substantiated assertions?
- Specific policy/management implications?
- Well written, good English?
- If 'Yes', then move to Qu. 3
- If 'No', desk-rejection (~40% of submissions)

# What do *RP* Editors look for?

## 3. *Who to referee?*

- Hard to find reliable, conscientious referees
- Don't want to bother unless article good enough
- References cited in paper
  - Chance to influence choice of referees
  - Chance to show potential referees you have appreciated and understood their work
- Think whom editors might ask to referee
  - Cited authors – make sure that cited correctly
  - Advisory editors – look at list
  - Experts on that topic – make sure you cite!

# Response from *RP* editor

- ***If 'Revise and Resubmit'*** (~20% of submissions)
  - Read referees' comments very carefully
  - Don't expect much from the RP editor, as they tend to offer relatively little in their comments (although what they say is SUPER important!)
  - Decide which points you can respond to and revise
  - Prepare accompanying note to each ref explaining how and where you responded to each point
- Be prepared to R&R more than once!
- ***If rejected*** (~40% of submissions)
  - Learn from critical comments
  - Don't contest! Revise, improve & try another journal
- (When you referee a paper, remember what you look for and what you criticise)



# Common mistakes of innovation scholars

- Not another patent paper
  - Econometric standard for patent papers is high and climbing
- Not another CIS paper
  - All the 'easy' CIS projects have been done – you need to be original with method or data
- Not another university-industry paper
  - We know a lot about this area; what is new about your paper?
- 'Impressively detailed' = boring, descriptive paper
  - A credible evidence does not have to be dull text, it can be written with care and attention to detail and still be engaging to the reader

# Common mistakes of innovation scholars

- Hypotheses testing done badly
  - Ignorance of A journal template, poor or little argumentation for hypos - a 'wannabee' paper
- Below empirical threshold
  - Small number of interviews, small survey, well established measures retested on a new population...
- No engagement with theory
  - Tendency to assume phenomenon is all – it is not.
- Overly critical of that which came before
  - You may think your paper is better than prior efforts, but your paper could only exist because of prior efforts

# Picking good projects

- High uncertainty – no one knows....
- Based on the literature, but not gap filling
- Sources of novelty
  - Data – suggestion boxes, crowdsourcing, etc.
  - Setting – country, industry, firm...
  - Unit of analysis – individual, project, multi-level...
  - Phenomenon – Big data, green energy, simulation, 3D printing...
  - Puzzles – theoretical, empirical...
- Strong empirical core – related projects – theory may find you



# Going from A to B

- Top journals have a theoretical bent
  - Explanations build on core theoretical domains – network theory, RBV, RDT, expectancy theory, PLC, AC...
  - Identify mechanisms that lead to outcome
    - What drivers the key finding and how are they related to the mainstream theory (OI is not a theory!)?
- Measurement
  - Rich data – High N, suitable measures, tests for validity,
  - Increased focus on on identification and endogeneity – ruling out other explanations, reverse causality, sample selection, omitted variables...

# Engaged research

- Strong push for engaged scholarship in management (Van de Ven, 2002)
- Working with practitioners (managers and policy-makers)
  - Not easy – ‘underpaid’ and ‘unskilled’ consultants
  - More pressing problems and more interesting research
  - Apply some rigor or structure to their problems – ‘descriptives are good enough’
  - Change practices – sometimes?
- Impact assessment – becoming part of the audit regime around research (UK REF 20% weighting of score)

# The real world of collaboration

- Industry contact, long and hard sell to sign up, and agree NDA
- Open innovation project – leads to something else
  - 35 interviews, survey of 600 R&D staff, analysis of data
  - Papers: Org Sci 2014, JPIM, forthcoming, CMR 2014
- Relationship goes cold – follow-up study cancelled
- Contact becomes warm again
  - Project partner becomes CTO
  - Bring in system of ‘free time’ model, building our bootleg study
  - Want us to go to ‘shop-floor’ – look for unexpected issues
  - New study given go ahead
- Patience, credibility and mutual learning

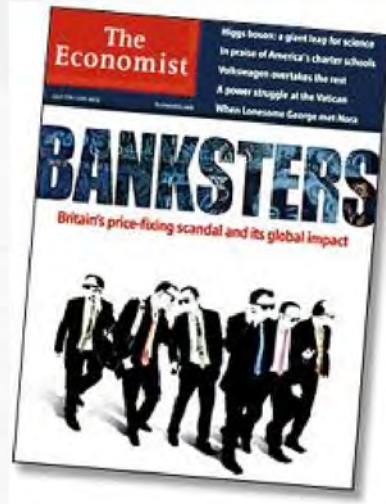
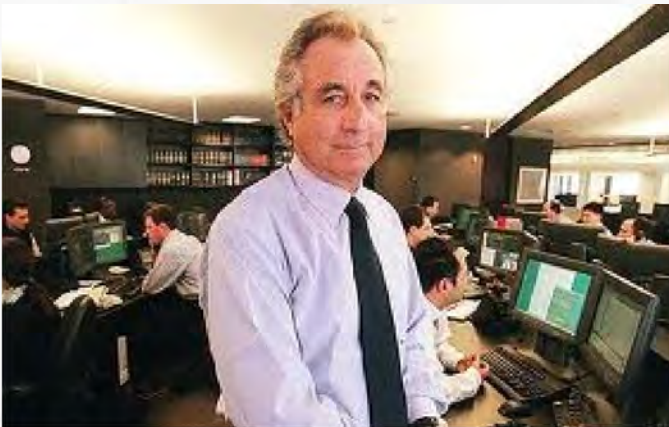


# Bootlegging



# Doing research with integrity

- Rewards for achievement are high, but monitoring is low



# The star is born

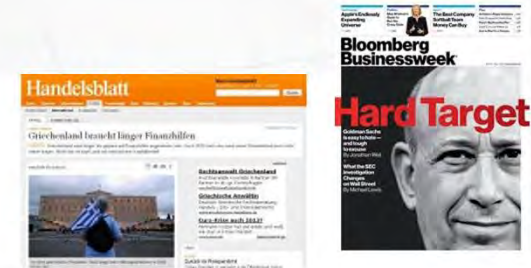
- Ulrich Lichtenthaler – received doctorate at WHU in 2005
- Hired at WHU Post-doctoral research
  - Produces a stream of papers: RP 2007; JBV 2008; Org Stu, 2008; AMJ 2009; IEEE, 2007; TASM, 2009; SO! 2009, R&D Man 2009....
- ‘The boy who does everything right’ (Handelsblatt) - high position in ranking of German business professors and publishes 60 papers in 5 years!
- Appointed Chair of Organization, University of Mannheim
  - Continues with papers in: Org Science 2010; ICC, 2010; JPIM 2009, 2012, 2013; JMS, 2010, 2012; SMJ 2012, ETP, 2012; JETM, 2010...



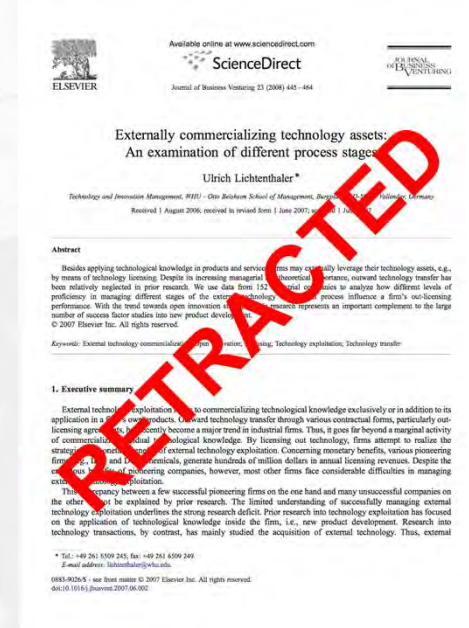


# A star collapses?

- Early 2012 – RP launches investigation, finds serious overlaps between papers, omitted variable bias, and false reporting of results in tables. Leads to 2 retractions from RP
- This sets off a stampede to the door – 14 retractions and counting at SO, AMJ, SMJ, JMS, ICC, JPIM, JMS, JWB, TASM, JBV...
- Case features in Bloomberg Business Week, Handelsblatt, RetractionWatch, and RP article by Ben Martin on research integrity
- WHU investigates Habilitation and then revokes teaching certificate and U of Mannheim launches investigation – *the case is continues....*



Retraction Watch



# High integrity research

- Be open and honest about the limits and nature of your work
- Cite your (and others) prior work
- Control for past variables in new papers – build on what you know and what others know
- Don't be greedy – one good paper is better than five bad ones
- Write clean – do not copy text, borrow phrases, language or ideas from others, write with your own voice, never cut and paste from documents (yours or others!)
- Be willing to share data and research tools
- Accept failures in your research efforts
- Expect your co-authors to uphold these values
- If you think you have spotted poor behaviour, speak up and act

# SEI Doctoral Consortium

- Consortium of European Business Schools (Bocconi, Imperial, LBS, CBS, ETH Zurich)
- Next one in Bocconi in September 2014 – open for institutional nominations
- Doctoral workshop
  - 20-25 doctoral students
  - Presentations by 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year docs
  - ‘Tough love’ comments
  - Supporting merging European job market
  - Please apply...



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