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Becker, William E. and Becker, Suzanne R.

Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana

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POTPOURRI: REFLECTIONS FROM HUSBAND/WIFE ACADEMIC EDITORS

by William E. Becker and Suzanne R. Becker*

Abstract

The authors provide a review of some of the more notable experiences they have had editing an academic journal and dealing with other editors of journals and books over the past thirty-five years. They address the use of the English language, poor scholarship, the refereeing process and the possible demise of economic education as a scholarly activity.

I. Introduction

When invited to contribute to this series on experiences of journal editors in academe, the first author (Bill) immediately said to Suzanne (the second author, wife and past assistant editor of *The Journal of Economic Education*, *JEE*), “I have stories to tell about poor scholarship and the possible demise of economic education as a scholarly activity and you have stories to tell about dealing with professors, the maiming of the English language and catching errors.” We edited the *JEE* for 20 years from summer 1989 to fall 2009 and were involved in economic education and the economics of education since 1973. What follows is a snapshot of some of the more memorable experiences and observations we have to share with younger scholars both for their edification and enlightenment regarding scholarship.

II. Whose English?

I (Bill) have long been waiting for an opportunity to tell of the first time I heard of the distinction between “economics education” and “economic education.” In the early 1970s, Rendigs Fels (then secretary/treasurer of the American Economic Association and a founding editorial board member of *The Journal of Economic Education*) politely but firmly informed academic economists that the term “economic education” said “cheap

education” and that we should be saying and writing “economics education.” In the 1980s, I was surprised by a visit from an elderly distinguished professor of English who took it upon himself to inform me that *The Journal of Economic Education* needed to be renamed *The Journal of Economics Education* because its title was an embarrassment to Indiana University.¹ In the 1990s, while visiting at the University of South Australia, a colleague sheepishly but repeatedly asked me if I knew the difference between the meaning of economics education and economic education.

In 2008, we (Bill and Sue) continued to edit authors schooled in the Queen’s English to the conventions of American English. When pushed, we learned to respond that if and when the American Economic Association and its *American Economic Review* and the Royal Economic Society and its *Economic Journal* change their names from the implied American Cheap Association’s *American Cheap Review* and the Royal Cheap Society’s *Cheap Journal* to the American Economics Association’s *American Economics Review* and the Royal Economics Society’s *Economics Journal*, then *The Journal of Economic Education* will consider changing its name but until then the U.S. convention of economic education will be followed.²

Debate about the use of pre-test, pretest, post-test and posttest is also worth a word. There is no confusion that pre-war and post-war mean before and after the war, respectively. Yet, many authors write pre-test and post-test to mean before and

* William Becker is Professor Emeritus of Economics, Indiana University; Adjunct Professor of Commerce, University of South Australia; Research Fellow, Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) and Fellow, Center for Economic Studies and Institute for Economic Research (CESifo). He is past editor of *The Journal of Economic Education*. Suzanne Becker is past assistant editor of *The Journal of Economic Education*.

after the treatment or intervention. Pre-test says before the test and post-test says after the test. Thus, the *JEE* convention is to use pretest with no hyphen to represent the pre-intervention test and posttest for the test after the intervention. But, the shortened prewar and postwar have also come to mean before and after the war, as Jesse Rothstein (2008, p. 6) made clear in email correspondence (July 23, 2008) following an inquiry as to why he was using pre-test and not pretest:

I focus on the value added of 5th grade teachers in 2000-2001.

I use annual end-of-year tests that were given in grades 3-5, as well as “pre-test” scores given at the beginning of the grade 3.

I treat the pre-test as 2nd grade tests. . .

Rothstein stated that he deliberately placed the quotes on “pre-test” to indicate that he was using the data creator’s convention. He added that a Google check yielded 2.9 million hits for “pre-test” and 2.89 million hits for “pretest.”

In the *JEE*, we continued to encourage authors to use pretest and posttest, although it might be better to refer to these tests as pre-treatment and post-treatment test scores and avoid cavilers.

III. An Error - No Way!

Some of those most certain of their infallibility with the English language and mathematics as well are assistant professors. When full professors make errors they tend to be more appreciative. For example, econometrician Asatoshi Maeshiro, one of Bill’s former professors, was “very grateful for detailed editorial suggestions.” He continued that he admired our “editorial skills and dedication” when Sue caught an error in one of his equations.

In Sue’s position as Assistant Editor, she edited manuscripts for publication. In this capacity, she read for thought, exposition and grammar. She marked equations and figures for *Journal of Economic Education* conventions and style. She had the privilege of editing Paul Samuelson, who made no objection to her correction of a small mixed metaphor.

Occasionally tables, figures or appendices survive a referee’s and associate editor’s recommendation to condense or delete, or authors continue to

refer in their revised text to deleted material. Since 1989 the only *errata* the *JEE* has published was in Winter 1997 to correct the duplication of a figure in the previous issue: Two figures had different titles but the same line graph. The error was pointed out by a mentor (W. Lee Hansen) of the author (John Siegfried). Despite this error, Siegfried remains one of the journal’s most frequent contributors and Lee Hansen has continued to serve on the editorial board.

Rosalind Springsteen, who was the managing editor for the *JEE* at Heldref Publications from 1990 to 2008, liked to remind us of the limited number of scholars who dig into an author’s mathematics. Her story was from her position at the *Monthly Labor Review*. During discussions on changes that were needed in articles with many equations, she would laugh and remember working with an author to make perfect a manuscript with about 50 equations (in the days before computer equation editors). The author told her that only two people in the world would ever read all those equations, and “we already have.”

Dealing with authors in the process of preparing their manuscripts for likely publication can be trying. Potential authors regularly get messages calling attention to their lack of clarity, the need for double spacing, use of endnotes instead of footnotes, missing references, requirement for camera-ready figures and the like.

Cocky assistant professors who see little value in editing are a concern. Sue recalls a six-month-long exchange with a young author, either obtuse or recalcitrant over the production of a final acceptable copy. (In most cases, this takes only 2 or 3 weeks.) After he argued over required changes, made excuses for failure to deliver, and claimed that a version was sent but never arrived, the author did send a complete and acceptable copy, along with the following cheeky email:

Hi, I wanted to confirm I personally sent the corrected manuscript and CD via Priority Mail this afternoon, so you should have it Tuesday or Wednesday at the latest. If it doesn’t show up by around then, please let me know promptly.

The advent of LaTeX has spurred some economists to believe that editorial expertise is irrelevant. We had one author whose work made

it through the referee process withdraw his manuscript when we informed him that editorial changes were required, including conformity with our reference style even if it did not conform to those available in LaTeX. He did not appreciate that our publisher would not go directly to typeset from his LaTeX source .tex and .bib files because copy editing was required. Although printing is now done electronically, we have learned that errors are reduced by insistence that the hard copy continues to govern in the editing-production-printing process.

As an example of hard copy and electronic files not corresponding, consider the editorial query to an author: "Why does panel b come before panel a in your table?" The author responded, "Nice catch!" His revision reversed the headers but did not properly change the numbers in the corresponding columns. When brought to his attention, he wrote "That was sad. I corrected it in the other files but not the one you needed."

Before the Internet, Sue recalls devoting hours each month in travel to or phone calls with the excellent and always helpful reference desk at the Indiana University library verifying quotations, references and filling in missing citation details.³ Authors continue to mess these up but it is rare now that any reference check is not completed quickly with a few words typed into Google.

IV. Poor Scholarship

Over the years we have seen many examples of poor scholarship: some are innocent little things such as assistant professors claiming to advance the teaching of economics or econometrics without giving sufficient credit to someone who wrote on the topic before them, or possible oversights such as authors of an article in another journal claiming that they had an article forthcoming in *The Journal of Economic Education*, when they did not. As an example of mindless prose, consider the authors who wrote:

The most widely used equilibrium concept in non-cooperative game theory is the Nash equilibrium The first application of the Nash equilibrium concept to firm behavior are the Cournot (1838) and Bertrand (1883) models of duopoly.

Cournot and Bertrand were long dead when Nash received his Nobel Prize in 1994. Needless to say, the authors were asked to rewrite.

Because of the overlap of issues among economic education, the economics of education and education in general, it is not unusual to see authors rebottle wine with new labels. As editors of the *JEE* we have not discouraged derivative articles (one piece being an extension of another) because journal audiences differ and the derivatives can be better than the original. On rare occasions, however, we have seen authors attempt to acquire another publication without indicating that one submission is an exact copy of the other. We are fortunate that referees catch this chicanery. We have never seen a case of plagiarism in which an author put his or her name on another's work. We have had cases where authors have asked to have their names removed from an article — none of those articles have been published in the *JEE*.

Those in schools of education with little or no formal quantitative discipline background are notorious for not recognizing, not understanding or ignoring what economists have to say about education processes and institutions. For example, consider Bill's experience with an invited chapter for a handbook on higher education theory and research. The editor, an endowed chairholder at a major research institution, is described on his webpage as primarily "concerned with education for a just society"⁴ yet he rejected Bill's chapter because he refused to rewrite and lengthen the piece to include "multiple discourses." According to the editor, the paper "placed a great emphasis on Stiglitz and the halo of economics . . . Stiglitz (2002, p. 76) makes some simple arguments. . . . a little more balance about economic hit men is needed . . . be a little more realistic about economists and markets. . . updating your critique by addressing some of the more recent work in the field."⁵ When queried about his judgment as the handbook's editor for economics/finance, as indicated in the initial email invitation of May 29, 2007, we learned that he was not really the editor but rather an associate editor who could only advocate for or challenge the publication. Lesson learned: make sure you are dealing with the person in authority and that person knows some economics and has quantitative research skills.⁶

For still more questionable scholarship consider the case of an Australian higher education

student-satisfaction guru who asserted that his research showed what encourages university students to learn effectively based on a bivariate comparison of student reported outcomes and teaching techniques.⁷ The author provided a scatter plot that he claimed showed a positive relationship between a *y*-axis index for his “deep approach” (aimed at student understanding versus “surface learning”) and an *x*-axis index of “good teaching” (including feedback of assessed work, clear goals, etc.).⁸

When I contacted the author to get a copy of his data and his coauthored “Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education, Brisbane (December 1997),” which was listed as the source for his regression of the deep approach index on the good teaching index, he replied that the conference paper had never been written and that due to a lack of research assistance, it would take some time to retrieve the data and referred me to his coauthor.⁹

Aside from the murky issue of citing a paper which this author subsequently admitted does not exist, and his not providing the data on which his published 1998 paper is allegedly based, in Becker (2004) I demonstrated a potential problem in bivariate comparisons aggregated at the university level.¹⁰ Subsequent to our correspondence, the author became embroiled in a controversy concerning the suspension of a research director who publicly criticized the Higher Education Academy’s National Student Survey as a “hopelessly inadequate improvement tool.” (Gill 2008)

The desire to control the method of analysis, policy recommendations and words used is not restricted to those in schools and departments of education. I was invited to write a chapter on the state of economic education for a handbook to be published in Great Britain and edited by two American economists. In my chapter I criticized the *Test of College Economics* (TUCE) for not reflecting current thinking in economics and being based on what is taught at less than stellar colleges and universities.¹¹ As part of a discussion of student evaluations of teaching, I also told the story of the student-satisfaction guru contained here and in large part in Becker (2004). The handbook editors claimed that the story constituted defamation of character and presented a liability issue for the publisher. Furthermore, the editors stated that my criticisms of the TUCE were slanderous toward the creators of the instrument.

After we checked with our lawyer, the handbook editors were informed that no changes would be made to these sections and that their accusations of libelous and slanderous material were not appreciated. They stated that the chapter was then unacceptable to the publisher.

Apparently, researchers are entitled to a free expression of ideas as long as they do not hurt the feelings of others or conflict with the beliefs, political agenda, or management style of those in power and those doing the commissioning. What are the consequences for higher education? To paraphrase Veblen, will lack of inquiry and debate transform university faculties into nothing more than high school teachers masquerading as much more?

V. That Damned Referee Process

Gans and Shepherd (1994) provided a brief review of how and why leading economists have had their work rejected; yet, none tell of having to reject their own work as I had to do as editor of the *JEE*. Like Gans and Shepherd’s quote from Paul Krugman, I am thankful for the opportunity to let off a bit of steam here.

The *JEE* 2002 Annual Report <<http://www.indiana.edu/~econed/>> highlighted the overreaction of risk-adverse university officials who when confronted with threats of government action and lawsuits regarding medical malpractice, needlessly extended central oversight to the use of student information in classroom research aimed at improving teaching and learning. I argued that centralized institutional review boards (IRB) add an obstacle to faculty members interested in pursuing research on educational practices. To assess the extent to which economists and academics in general were familiar with actual laws and regulations associated with students’ rights, Jane Lopus, Paul Grimes, Rodney Pearson and I conducted an online national survey.

When the manuscript that pertained to the economists’ knowledge of students’ rights and regulations was submitted to the *JEE* it received a negative recommendation from an associate editor and his referees. As editor, I felt that I had no choice but to follow that recommendation, although like all rejected authors I was unhappy and possibly even more so than my coauthors who received the letter. At one time or another, I have

had to reject articles submitted from almost all the *JEE* associate editors and none of them ever complained or formally questioned the decision, although like me, each was clearly unhappy with the outcome.¹²

Both the study of economists and the more general study involving all social scientists were published respectively in the *American Economist* (Lopus, et al., 2007b) and the *Journal of Empirical Research on Human Research Ethics*. (Lopus, et al., 2007a) As reported by Gans and Shepherd, on the outcome of other economists who have had their work initially rejected, these two articles have stirred a significant amount of debate, which we believe is a desired outcome of any academic publication. For example, a Protection of Human Subjects Coordinator for the U.S. Department of Education wrote to us (and also blindly to the editor of the *JERHRE*) with a list of ten questions.¹³ The extended elaborations that accompanied each question, however, made it clear that this inquiry was more of an agenda – a negative critique of our conclusions aimed at advancing the policy perspectives of the Grants Policy Oversight Staff, Protection of Human Subjects, U.S. Department of Education.¹⁴ We suggested to our correspondent and the editor that he prepare his comments in the form of an article commenting on our work and submit it to the *JERHRE* for which the editor and referees could assess its merits, and give us an opportunity to reply if his comments were published. We never heard from him again – the traditional peer review process does guard against frivolous inquiries, which the correspondent claimed was one of the functions of his agency and university IRBs.

VI. Associate Editors

At *The Journal of Economic Education* almost all refereeing is overseen by the associate editors. Special recognition and thanks go out to the associate editors of the *JEE* with whom we were fortunate to work, including Robin Bartlett, David Colander, William Goffe, Paul Grimes, Hirschel Kasper, Peter Kennedy, Kim Sosin, Myra Strober, William Walstad, and Michael Watts.

Getting highly visible and high quality scholars to volunteer to serve as associate editors is no small task. After all, we are asking extremely busy

academics who already have high demands on their time to volunteer to do a job for which they will end up rejecting many more papers than can be accepted and in the process upsetting more authors than they could ever please. Getting a “YES” response to serve from two of the *JEE* associate editors is particularly memorable.

Some 30 years ago, when I was associate editor of the *JEE* research section, someone had written something in the *JEE* that Peter Kennedy found objectionable and he wrote to me to call it to my attention. My secretary was given the task of finding this guy so I could talk to him. He was so shocked that we tracked him down at a family cottage that he agreed to do an article. Subsequently, when I became editor of the *JEE*, I used a similar tactic to get him to say yes to becoming the associate editor of the *JEE* research section. I learned that like most good scholars, Peter responded favorably to the sincere efforts put forward by others.

For personal reasons, Hirschel Kasper requested to be relieved of duties as associate editor after 22 years of outstanding service. This necessitated finding a replacement on short notice. I immediately called David Colander but was turned down with a long list of reasons. David, however, made the mistake of volunteering to help me find the perfect person. After a month or so of discussing the pluses and minus of several scholars, and even talking to some, I was able to demonstrate to David that he was in fact the perfect scholar for the job and that there was no other so uniquely qualified. Once again, a good scholar responded favorably to persistent sincere efforts.

VII. Economic Education and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

The *JEE* 1999 Annual Report <www.indiana.edu/~econed/anrpts/anrpt99/rep99.htm> called readers’ attention to the Carnegie Foundation’s launch of a multi-year project called the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL), which was established to promote the development of a scholarship of teaching and learning in academe to maximize the influence of work being done in varied educational settings (Hutchings and Shulman, 1999).¹⁵ Initially, my interpretation of the vision for CASTL (now associated with the scholarship of teaching

and learning, SOTL) was to have discipline-based academics combine the latest ideas in their fields with current ideas about teaching and learning in a way that is made public, open to critique and evaluation, and in a form on which others could build. By the time of the *JEE* 2007 Annual Report <www.indiana.edu/~econed/>, SOTL had lost its way.

Hutchings and Shulman conjured a problem confronting SOTL, in that discipline-based inquiry into teaching and learning would not have credibility within the disciplines. For example, Shulman (2004), then president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, wrote:

it is hard to deny that too often mainstream scholars in their disciplines marginalize these (discipline-specific educational research) journals, however well they perform their functions. I envision a time when we witness the incorporation of scholarly contributions on the teaching and learning of the disciplines in general periodicals in those fields, as well as in the specialized education journals. (p. 20)

Shulman did not provide documentation to support his allegation that scholars are marginalizing discipline-based journals devoted to the teaching of their respective subjects or the implication that scholarly contributions on the teaching and learning of the disciplines are not already appearing in the major field journals. Apparently, Shulman was ignorant of or chose to ignore what has been going on in economics, where economists at major research universities have reached the rank of full professor at least in part for their work in economic education: for example, Kenneth Elzinga (University of Virginia), Michael Salemi (University of North Carolina), John Siegfried (Vanderbilt University), Michael Watts (Purdue University), to name a few.¹⁶ The *Journal of Economic Literature* (one of the two oldest and most prominent publications of the American Economic Association, the other being the *American Economic Review*) has featured articles on the teaching of economics that economists have used to advance their careers. Similar articles have been published primarily in the *Journal of Economic Education* and other major refereed journals in economics such as the *American Economist*.

For example, Bill's *JEL* (September 1997) article on teaching economics at the college level featured 82 references, of which 65 were to academic journals. The *JEE* received the most citations (28) followed by the *American Economic Review* (10). In William Walstad's *JEL* (December 1992) article on the teaching of economics in high schools, there were 141 references, of which 78 were to academic journals, with the *JEE* receiving the most citations (38) followed by the *American Economic Review* (16). Similarly, the classic *JEL* article "Research on Teaching College Economics: A Survey," by John Siegfried and Rendigs Fels (1979), documented the path-breaking work in economic education going back to World War II. Although I make no claim to knowing about teaching and learning in the myriad of other disciplines, in my 2006 Midwest Economics Association presidential address, "Address the Controversies: There Are No Dogmata, Laws, Rules or Standards in the Science of Economics," (published in the *American Economist*, Spring 2007), I highlighted how mainstream physicists have been involved in the teaching of physics going back to Richard Feynman, co-recipient of the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1965, and the more recent 2001 Nobel Laureate Carl Wieman.¹⁷

More indication of the involvement of mainstream economists in the teaching of economics is found in perusing lists of *JEE* authors and referees. A quick review of the 239 referees used in 2007 <<http://www.indiana.edu/~econed/anrpts/anrpt07/anrpt07.htm>> shows scholars from Cornell University, Duke University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Northwestern University, University of Chicago, University of Michigan, Williams College and the like. As another example, consider the fact that almost all of the eminent economists reflecting on their careers as researchers mention in great detail the importance of teaching (Szenberg and Ramrattan, 2004).

Well-known economists publishing articles in the *JEE* in just the past few years include, among others, Ted Bergstrom (University of California Santa Barbara), Peter Bofinger (University of Würzburg and a member of the German government's independent council of economic experts), David Colander (Middlebury College), Avinash Dixit (Princeton University), William Greene (New York University), Daniel Hamermesh (University of Texas, Austin), John Hey (University of York), R. Glen Hubbard (Columbia University),

Morton Kamien (Northwestern University), Alan Krueger and Molly McIntosh (Princeton University), Michael C. Lovell (Wesleyan University), B. Peter Pashigan (deceased, University of Chicago), Hal Varian (University of California, Berkeley), and Klaus Zimmermann (Bonn University). The first three issues of the *JEE* in 1969 and 1970 had lead articles by now deceased but then highly regarded economists Kenneth Boulding (University of Colorado), Ben Lewis (Oberlin College) and 1982 Nobel Laureate in Economics George Stigler (University of Chicago). A quick review of the authors publishing in the *Journal of Scholarship and Learning* and like publications in SOTL does not show such an impressive author list of mainstream scholars at highly regarded institutions.

Inconsistent with my initial vision for SOTL, SOTL has become dominated by educationalists without a discipline base and administrators and managers who either never had a home in an academic discipline or have left it. For example, from the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning conferences held in Sydney, Australia (July 2–5, 2007), Edmonton, Alberta, Canada (October 16–19, 2008) and Bloomington, Indiana (October 22–29, 2009), the majority of the 435 (2007), 581 (2008) and 571 (2009) presenters (whose positions could be determined online) had titles suggesting that they were educationalists or administrators and managers and not established scholars at institutions of higher education. Only 17.2 percent of the 2007 presenters, 24.8 percent of the 2008 presenters and 34.3 percent of the 2009 presenters were non-administrators or non-managers with regular academic ranks at or above the assistant professor level within traditional arts, business, humanities, sciences and technology disciplines.¹⁸ Representatives from the prestigious universities and colleges stand out as few in number. The mainline discipline-based academics have not gravitated to SOTL.

SOTL may have appeal to the growing number of lecturers, clinical faculty members, and those solely responsible for teaching in post-secondary positions because its “scholarship” label appears to bring respectability within the tradition of higher education. Without the participation of mainline academics, however, large numbers of SOTL associates are likely to further diminish the status of teaching within higher education. A type of Gresham’s law might suggest that less discipline-based

faculty members will drive out the more discipline-based; or expectations of such will cause the latter to be rightfully on guard against the former. This may already be happening as seen in some schools of business, where Association for the Advancement of Collegiate Schools of Business announcements may have at first appeared to support SOTL-type initiatives but are now interpreted as saying that pedagogy cannot be as rigorous and scientific as other field work. These business school deans and faculty committees have mistakenly come to view all teaching journals as not worthy of the “A list.”

Contrary to Schulman’s assertion, mainstream economists have been involved in advancing the teaching and learning of economics. Unfortunately, and contrary to my 1999 vision that the scholarship of teaching and learning would further advance the recognition of teaching within economics, the SOTL movement may in fact end up marginalizing economic education because of its attraction to less than stellar scholars within the disciplines. This would be unfortunate and contrary to everything for which we have worked over the past thirty-five years.

Notes

1. In the 1990s, when Jay Wilson was chair of IU’s department of economics, the atmosphere was that interest and time devoted to teaching implied lack of interest and less time devoted to research; visibly, the title of the *JEE* gave the wrong impression. This fallacious argument confuses the time constraint with production and desired outcomes as made clear in Becker (1979) and Becker and Kennedy (2006). Fortunately, several colleagues (notably, Phillip Saunders and George von Furstenberg) and the Dean of the College of Arts and Science, Morton Lowengrub saw value in supporting the *JEE*.
2. Entering the “definition of economic” in Google, yields sources with definitions such as “of or relating to an economy . . . of or relating to the science of economics.” An “economic issue” or “economic concept” is not correctly interpreted to say a cheap issue or cheap concept. Thus, it is a stretch to understand how even a pedant can claim confusion regarding

the subject matter of *The Journal of Economic Education*, *American Economic Review* or the *Economic Journal*.

3. The IU library staff deserves special thanks for its service when an author's National Guard unit was deployed to Iraq. The author was not going to be able to use a library in Iraq to put his references into the required style. IU librarians volunteered to find the items missing on his reference list and returned the completed references within a day.
4. See, http://www.soe.umich.edu/people/profile/edward_stjohn
5. Personal email correspondence to William E. Becker from Edward P. St. John (April 20, 2008).
6. For the next issue of the *Handbook*, Bill's correspondent again invited the piece claiming that he was doing so because THE editor, "William Tierney (Wilbur-Kieffer Professor of Higher Education, University of Southern California), is no longer in the loop," Bill was told, however, that the associate editor's "opinion was consonant with the field" and his standards would have to be met. This invitation was turned down: Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me.
7. *Chronicle of Higher Education* writer Schmidt (2008) reported that "the lower a student's achievement levels when beginning college, the greater benefit he will get from such practices, says the report, written by George D. Kuh, director of Indiana University's Center for Postsecondary Research." Schmidt goes on to quote Carol Geary Schneider, president of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, saying that Kuh's sixth report in the series shows that "we know what works. . . ." For several years, I have been chastising Kuh for attempting to draw causal inferences from descriptive statistics that ignore sample selection problems, heterogeneity issues and other specification/estimation issues that plague opportunistic survey data. When contacted he provided a copy of his newest study but admitted that there was nothing new in his efforts to address the statistical problems in drawing causal inference. He said that he was co-operating with AAC&U "to expand the discussion a bit." (email, October 6, 2008) The hyping of Kuh's descriptive sta-

tics by AAC&U administrators is deceptive and misleading and could result in major misallocation of resources within higher education.

8. See Ramsden (1998, pp. 352-355).
9. McCullough and Vinod (2003) showed that the replication policy of the *American Economic Review* was ineffective. Then *AER* editor Ben Bernanke (2004) adopted the mandatory data and code archive recommended by McCullough and Vinod. This policy, however, would not have guarded against someone citing a non-existent paper as the source of empirical findings.
10. The author claimed to be working with data aggregated at the university level for student self-reported use of a "deep learning approach" and instructors' "good teaching practices." Inherent in working with such aggregated data is "Simpson's paradox," where disaggregate results contradicted aggregate results. Because the author could not provide his reported data, to see this phenomenon consider the individual regressions for the following three hypothetical universities, where each show a negative relationship for y (deep approach) and x (good teaching), with the respective slope coefficients of -0.4516 , -0.0297 , and -0.4664 . However, the fourth regression on the university means, which is what the author allegedly used, shows a positive relationship, with slope coefficient of $+0.1848$.

University One

$$\hat{y}(1) = 21.3881 - 0.4516x(1) \dots \text{Std. Error} = 2.8622 \quad R^2 = 0.81 \quad n = 4$$

$y(1): 21.8 \ 15.86 \ 26.25 \ 14.72$
 $x(1): -4.11 \ 6.82 \ -5.12 \ 17.74$

University Two

$$\hat{y}(2) = 17.4847 - 0.0297x(2) \quad \text{Std. Error} = 2.8341 \quad R^2 = 0.01 \quad n = 8$$

$y(2): 12.60 \ 17.90 \ 19.00 \ 16.45 \ 21.96 \ 17.1 \ 18.61 \ 17.85$
 $x(2): -10.54 \ -10.53 \ -5.57 \ -11.54 \ -15.96 \ -2.1 \ -9.64 \ 12.25$

University Three

$$\hat{y}(3) = 17.1663 - 0.4664x(3) \quad \text{Std. Error} = 2.4286 \quad R^2 = 0.91 \quad n = 12$$

$y(3): 27.10 \ 2.02 \ 16.81 \ 15.42 \ 8.84 \ 22.90 \ 12.77 \ 17.52 \ 23.20 \ 22.60 \ 25.90$

$x(3)$: -23.16 26.63 5.86 9.75 11.19 -14.29
11.51 -0.63 -19.21 -4.89 -16.16

University Means

$\hat{y}(\text{means}) = 18.6105 + 0.1848x(\text{means})$ Std.
Error = 0.7973 $R^2 = 0.75$ $n = 3$

$y(\text{means})$: 19.658 17.684 17.735

$x(\text{means})$: 3.833 -6.704 -1.218

Unlike this attempt to draw inferences from end-of-program student evaluations that suffer from problems of aggregation, sample selection, endogeneity, and heteroscedasticity, Weinberg, Fleisher and Hashimoto (2009) use appropriate model specifications and estimation techniques to address these problems. They show that student evaluations are positively related to grades but unrelated to learning once the effect of grades is removed. Any weak relationship between learning and student evaluations arises because students are likely unaware of or do not recognize how much they have actually learned at the time the evaluations are administered.

11. The manual accompanying the TUCE lists a “national (advisory) panel of distinguished economists” for whom “most members of the panel reviewed either the micro or macro exam but a few reviewed both exams.” (Walstad, Watts and Rebeck, 2007, p. 2) With the exception of Stanford University, however, none of their respective universities were in the TUCE sample on which the test was constructed. Even in the case of Stanford University, a non-tenure track instructor, and not a member of the panel, is listed as providing the data. Alan Krueger, a member of this panel from Princeton University subsequently wrote “A longstanding complaint of Krueger, as well as others (Becker 2004, 2007) is that introductory economics courses have not kept up with the economics profession’s expanding emphasis on data and empirical analysis” (Krueger and McIntosh, 2008, p. 180). Standardized testing based on out-of-date content being taught locks in ideas of old no matter how inconsequential, irrelevant or wrong they have been shown to be by state-of-the-art research.
12. The biggest insult in being rejected as an editor is that editors work so hard helping others get their manuscripts published.
13. Personal email correspondence to William E. Becker from Jeffery W. Rodamar (October 8, 2007).
14. The bureaucracy developing around human subjects is evident in a guest column for the local newspaper by Karen Hanson, provost and executive vice president, Indiana University Bloomington, who wrote “The Indianapolis office (location of Indiana University Medical School), which handles a large number of human subjects protocols, is accredited by the Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs, meeting a standard that exceeds the regulatory obligations imposed by the federal government. We are now in the process of seeking similar accreditation for the Bloomington campus and its Institutional Review Board.” (Hanson, 2008, p. A11) But what is the rationale for exceeding a federal regulation for a non-productive activity? If there is a legal threshold (which has little, if any, positive effect in areas of study that do not involve the life and death outcomes found in medicine), exceeding the standard is a waste of resources.
15. A similar version of my argument that SOTL is actually harming the advancement of teaching within traditional disciplines appeared in the January 2008 newsletter of the ISSPTL: “An Unrealized Vision for SOTL.” When Anthony (Tony) Ciccone, director of the Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) asked for comments on the success of SOTL, I forwarded my case regarding SOTL’s inability to move beyond educationalists, administrators and managers in post-secondary education, and that SOTL has not succeeded in involving regular faculty members from the traditional business, social science and natural sciences at institutions of higher education. Although I never heard again from him or the other educationalists copied on his email, the fact that the three annual ISSPTL conferences cited in this article show an increasing proportion of academic presenters at or above the assistant professor level suggests that some who are connected with the SOTL movement are attempting to change the composition of participants.

16. Sadly, I could name some good academic economists who did not get promoted for their scholarly work on the teaching of economics because of negative attitudes toward education on the part of colleagues or an erroneous argument that the time constraint implies teaching and research are substitutions (see discussion in endnote 1).
17. Physicists Bao and Redish (2004) are innovators in assessment and the identification of underlying models of cognition. Unfortunately, this work is unappreciated by those who have been creating standardized tests in economics, such as the *Test of Understanding of Economics*. There are some signs that this is changing. SRI International's Center for Technology in Learning, under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences, is working on an "evidence-centered design" for undergraduate economic education testing that seeks to assess the cognitive processes employed by economists in their reasoning. A more ambitious project is advanced by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) though the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). As part of the ACER (Australian Council for Educational Research)-led global consortium to develop assessment instruments in accordance with OECD's AHELO (Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes), in 2010 ETS was charged with the task of creating tests to assess the capability of final-year bachelor degree students in selected fields – engineering and economics – in an internationally comparable way. The student outcomes to be assessed by this ETS instrument are those outlined in a summer 2009 AHELO report for which I was the rapporteur and for which there was unanimous agreement as to what it means to think like an economist or to use the economic way of thinking.
18. We thank Christy Campoll for checking affiliations and titles of ISOTL participants and for providing summary statistics for us.
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