ASPA PhD Summit
Getting Published & Finding Coherence

Patricia M. Shields
Professor, Political Science
Texas State University
ps07@txstate.edu

Editor – in – Chief
Armed Forces & Society

March 16, 2014

International
Interdisciplinary
~ 40 years
Plan for Presentation

- Stages in manuscript processing
- Editor’s Perspective
- Tips for Article Acceptance
- Article Coherence
- Tips from the Playbook
Editorial Process
(submission - publication)
Editorial Process

- **Manuscript arrives**
  Scholar One

- **Editor’s Review**
  Editor’s Reject 40% (Handout – criteria)

- **Find Reviewers**
  - look at bibliography
  - Reviewer Data base
  - Key words
Editorial Process (cont.)

• Send out for review
  2-4 reviewers

• Reviews in
  Send reminders

• Reviewers assessment
  Accept, Reject, Revise and Resubmit
Editorial Process
First Round Decision

- Accept   Very rare (1 in 50)
- Reject    (1 in 2)
- Revise and Resubmit (most common)

Editor’s Comment
- How to weigh reviewers’ comments
  (Top scholar, graduate student)
- Find additional problems
Editorial Process (cont.)

• Revise and resubmit comments sent to author

• Revised Manuscript and letter with explanation arrives - Re-review Re-review (could be 2 - 4 rounds)?

• Decision - Accept/Reject

• If Accept publisher takes over

Like a sports team - it often takes practice and more practice to achieve the goal.
• Copyediting by Sage
• Author queries – Clarification
• On line first
• Assigned to an Issue

SAGE Publications
Tips for publishing

Editors Perspective

Scholars perspective
Editor as Coach and Cop

Improve the manuscript

Make sure poor material gets caught
Tips Article Acceptance
(any journal)

• Introduction
• Easy to Skim
Tips Article Acceptance

• good fit for journal

• Cite the journal
Tips for Article Acceptance

- Adequate sample size
- State Hypotheses in testable form
Additional Tips

• Share your work widely – present at conferences
• Develop cadre of research colleagues Co-author(s)
• Don’t take it personally (key test how you deal with first rejection)
• Try again – use comments form reviewers
Two Personal Rules for Successful Scholarship

1. The only good dissertation is a completed dissertation.

2. Better in a library than a file cabinet.
Discoverability
Optimizing Article For Search Engines

Change in the way knowledge is being generated and distributed.

In 20 years most knowledge will not be trapped in paper.

Correlation between downloads and citations
Tips from SAGE

• Pay extra attention to writing the Abstract
• Get the title right
• Choose key words carefully
Articles Rejected for Lack of coherence

Parts just not connected!
Steps in Research Process

- Purpose
- Theory
- Method
- Data Analysis

Conceptual Frameworks

Role of Theory
Connections between Steps
What is Theory?

“What theory can be defined as a coherent group of general propositions or as a verified explanation accounting for known facts or phenomena (theory of relativity or gravity). Theories are used to explain reality or make predictions.” Johnson, 2010, p. 17
Theories apply at different Policy Scales

Meta theory
Micro-economics

Where does your dissertation fit in this scale?

Hypotheses for study

What factors explain wages in local labor market?

Most fit here
Football Scale
• Rules
• Game Strategy
• Individual play

Moral and Science considerations
Plays are mental images/ideas that organize what players do on the ground in a particular situation.

Plays do not make sense without a purpose.

Plays are a kind of close to the ground Theory.

Like individual study.
purpose
Long or short yardage

Play
ideas that organize player actions

How men move on ground
Movement of players on ground

Results
Actual yardage gained

Actual yardage gained

How men move on ground

Movement of players on ground

Play
ideas that organize player actions

Long or short yardage

purpose
Research Process Taking into account Traditional Research notions of Theory

Conceptual framework – close to the data theory
Conceptual Framework: Organization of ideas to achieve a Purpose

- Purpose
- Conceptual Framework
- Method
- Data Analysis

Most common

Explanation

Hypotheses
What Explains the level of Wages?

**Explanation**
What explains wages?

**Hypotheses**
- Education
- Intelligence
- Job tenure

H1: As education increases wages increase
H2: As intelligence increases wages increase
H3: As job tenure increases wages increase
Explanation

What explains wages

Hypotheses

Education
Intelligence
Tenure

Method

Operationalize variables
Survey

Dependent variable – Wages *(Hourly rate of pay)*

Independent variables  Education *(years of school completed)* H1
Intelligence *(IQ score)* H2
Tenure *(months on the job)* H3
Purpose

Explanation (what explains wages)

Hypotheses

1: education
2: Intelligence
3: tenure

Method

Operationalize variables
survey

Statistics

Statistics used to test H1; H2; H3
(Regression; Correlation..)
PA has many types of purposes -- and Frameworks

Many Plays

Purposes

- Explanation
- Description
- Exploration
- Decision making
- Gauging

Conceptual Frameworks

- Hypotheses
- Categories
- Working Hypotheses
- Models of operations research
- Practical Ideal Type
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Conceptual framework</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td>Hypotheses</td>
<td>Survey, Existing data, Experimental design</td>
<td>Multivariate statistics, Regression, t-tests, correlation, ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Categories</td>
<td>Survey, Content Analysis</td>
<td>Descriptive Statistics, Mean, median, mode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploration</td>
<td>Working Hypotheses</td>
<td>Mostly Qualitative, Case study, interviews, focus groups, direct observation...</td>
<td>Evidence analyzed by working Hypotheses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>Models of operations research</td>
<td>Cost benefit analysis, cost effectiveness analysis, linear programing .......</td>
<td>Depends on the technique used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gauging</td>
<td>Practical ideal type</td>
<td>Mostly Qualitative, Case study, interviews, focus groups, direct observation...</td>
<td>Evidence analyzed by criteria of practical ideal type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Conceptual framework</td>
<td>Method</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td>Hypotheses</td>
<td>Survey Existing data</td>
<td>Multivariate statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Experimental design</td>
<td>Regression, t-tests, correlation, …</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Categories</td>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Descriptive Statistics Mean, median, mode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploration</td>
<td>Working Hypotheses</td>
<td>Mostly Qualitative Case study, interviews, focus groups, direct observation…</td>
<td>Anything goes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Making</td>
<td>Models of operations research</td>
<td>Cost benefit analysis, cost effectiveness analysis, linear programing …</td>
<td>Depends on the technique used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gauging</td>
<td>Practical ideal type</td>
<td>Mostly Qualitative Case study, interviews, focus groups, direct observation…</td>
<td>Evidence analyzed by practical ideal type category</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Traditional Methods Texts**
Examples of Quality Student Research

• Award Winning (national, regional)
• Cited (Journals, Books, United Nations Reports, Dissertations, Policy documents)
• Widely Downloaded
Handouts

What explains home fires?

College graduates attitudes toward high stakes testing.
Where do Conceptual Frameworks come from??

- Literature Review Chapter
- Creativity Chapter

Like coach that creates Plays

Learn Middle school plays before big time.