



On developing an understanding of approaches to research

Dr. Jens J. Hansen

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Our knowledge of the world grows incrementally over time...



KNOWLEDGE

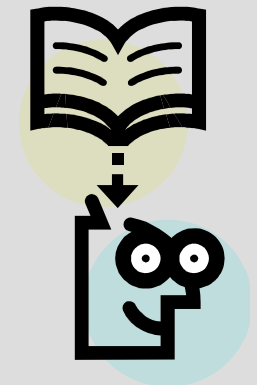
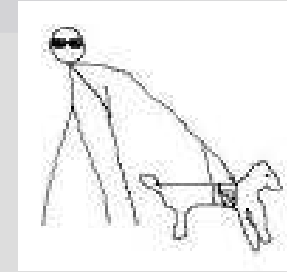
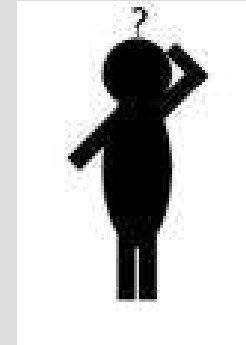
TIME

**So much new data and information to access,
so much subsumed knowledge to consider, and
so much to still find out. But there's so little
time. I can't see the way. Sigh!**



Indeed, researchers often work blindly...

- They know what they want to investigate...
...sort of...
- They know about tools to use...
...sort of...
- They generally know by how far they can extend their deadline for completion...
...DEFINITELY NOT INDEFINITELY!!!
- But regrettably for their research...
...they don't always contemplate theory...
- So let's contemplate that matter in a simple manner...
...right now, OK?



Even though knowledge becomes subsumed over time, social factors at play during any given period of history shape how we perceive and use the contemporary knowledge of that time. We use knowledge as currency to gain and sustain positive and negative power and we use it as a tool for setting positive or negative social agenda.

And research, in its many forms can inform such knowledge...

And remember there's mixed methods and a mixture of methods too!!

○	/	1
○○	W	2
○○○	W	3
○○○	W	4
○○○○	W	5
○○○○	W	6

Quantitative Research

Qualitative Research

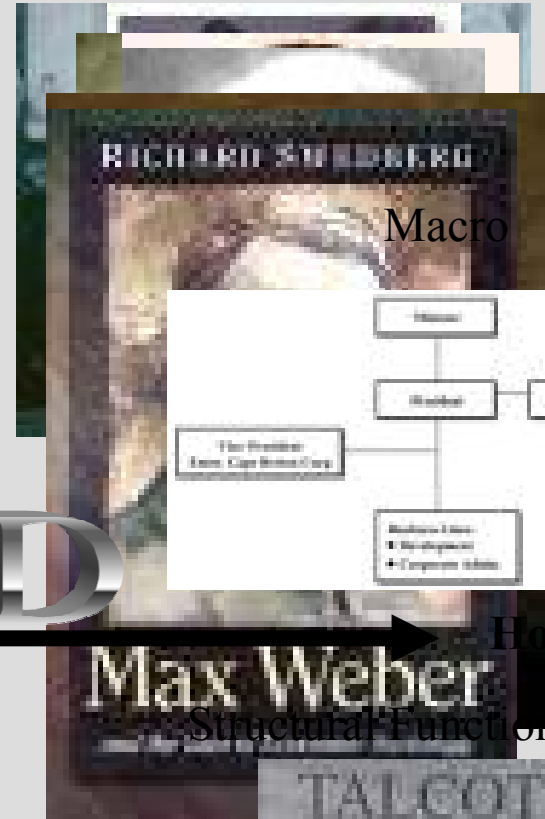
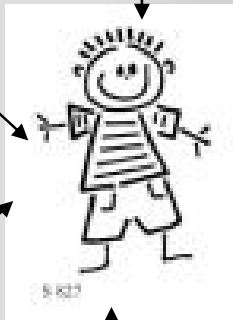
Magic Soul
Memories
Dream Art
Believe Fly
Create Spirit

Positivism

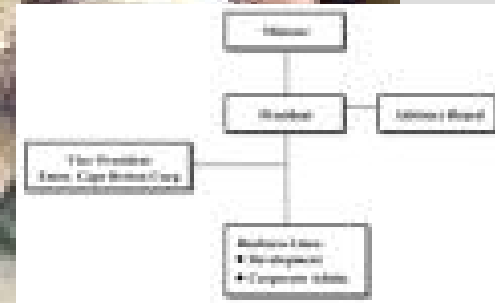
S1 → R1

QN

Micro



Macro



Elementarism

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Holism

Role Theory

Structural Functionalism

Harold Garfinkel
Alfred Schütz
Edmond Husserl
Merton

Phenomenology

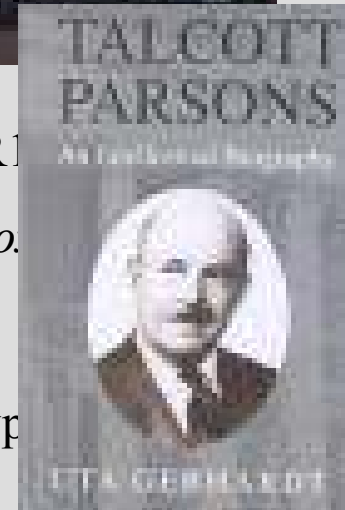
S1 → ??? → R1

The *black box*
of science

QL

Interpretivism

Ideal type



Positivism

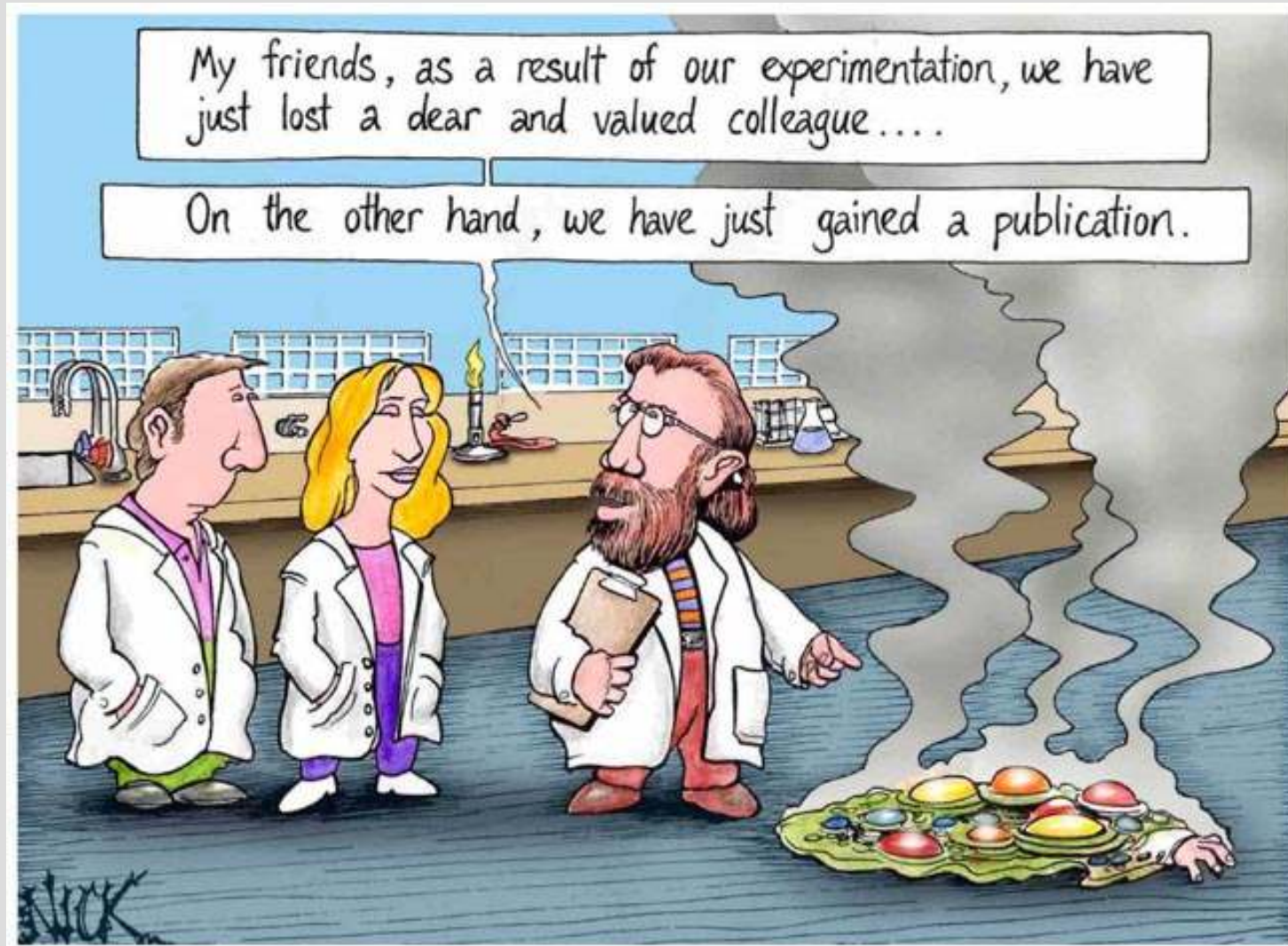
Qu
qu
Ele
The fundamentals of sound research are more likely to be achieved when investigators identify the single quadrant upon which their research is mainly to be focused.

Element
Micro
And fundamentally, their research will become more rigorous if it traverses more than one quadrant which means using more than one process focus.

Q
q
o
But beware of substituting a clear and simple focus by having an overly complex multi-quadrant research design that also spans a multiplicity of content foci.

interpretivism

Complex things may, of course, go horribly wrong...

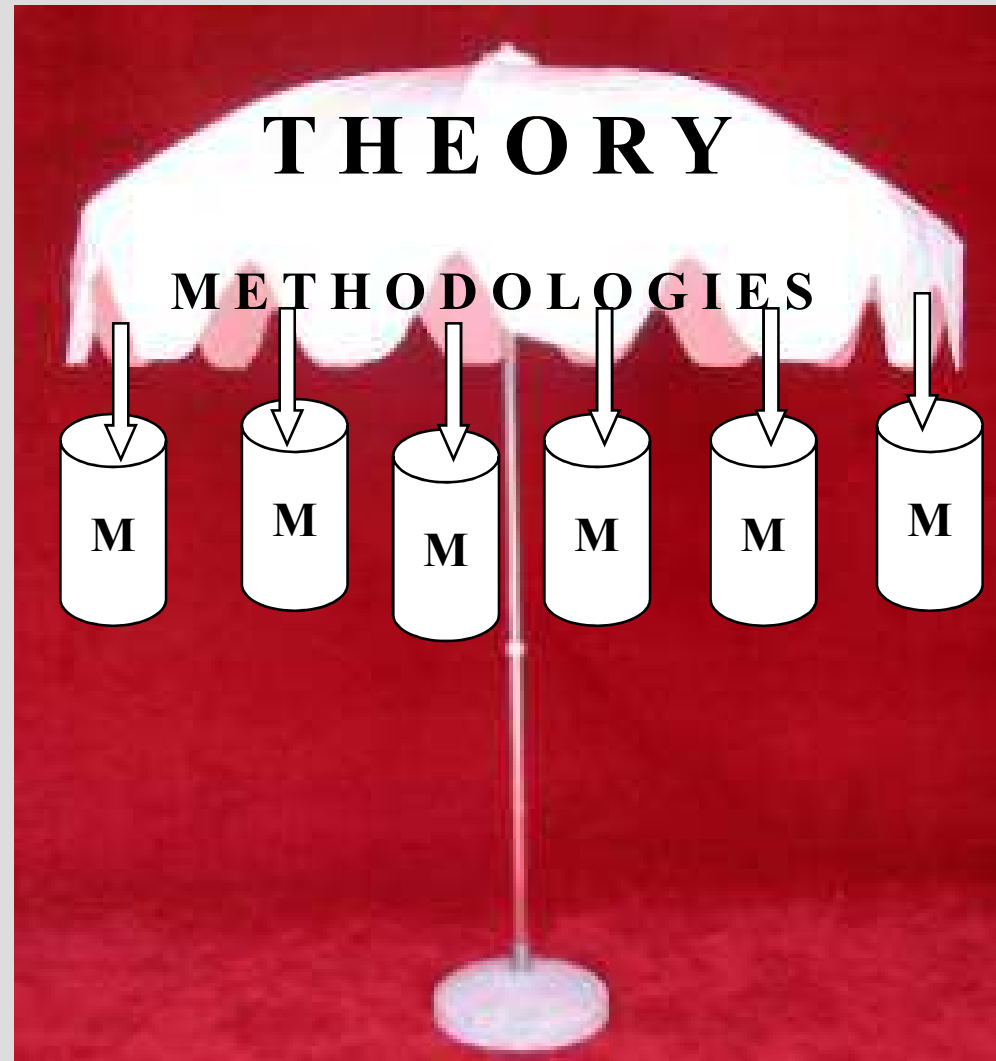


So what's going on here?

1. Theory overarches all of our work. It does so by challenging, extending or revising how we explain what we think we know and what we don't know.
2. Research methodologies are a product of, and are usually consistent with, the research theory and/or rationale of a study.
3. Methods, or research procedures, are strategies – these are a function of methodologies and are informed by the aims/ questions/ hypotheses/ rationale of a study.

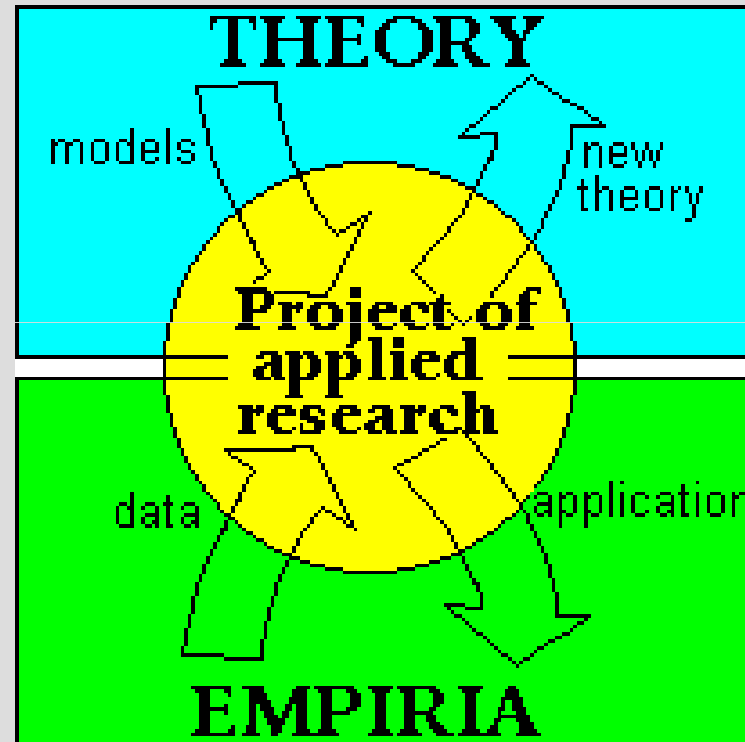


It's like a 'Down-under' umbrella



But wait – there's more...

- Some research is very theory laden;
- And some is very applied in nature;
- It all depends upon where your research sits insofar as epistemology is concerned...



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High Applied

High Theoretical

High Applied Emphasis → Lower Theoretical Focus



High Theoretical Focus → Lower Applied Emphasis

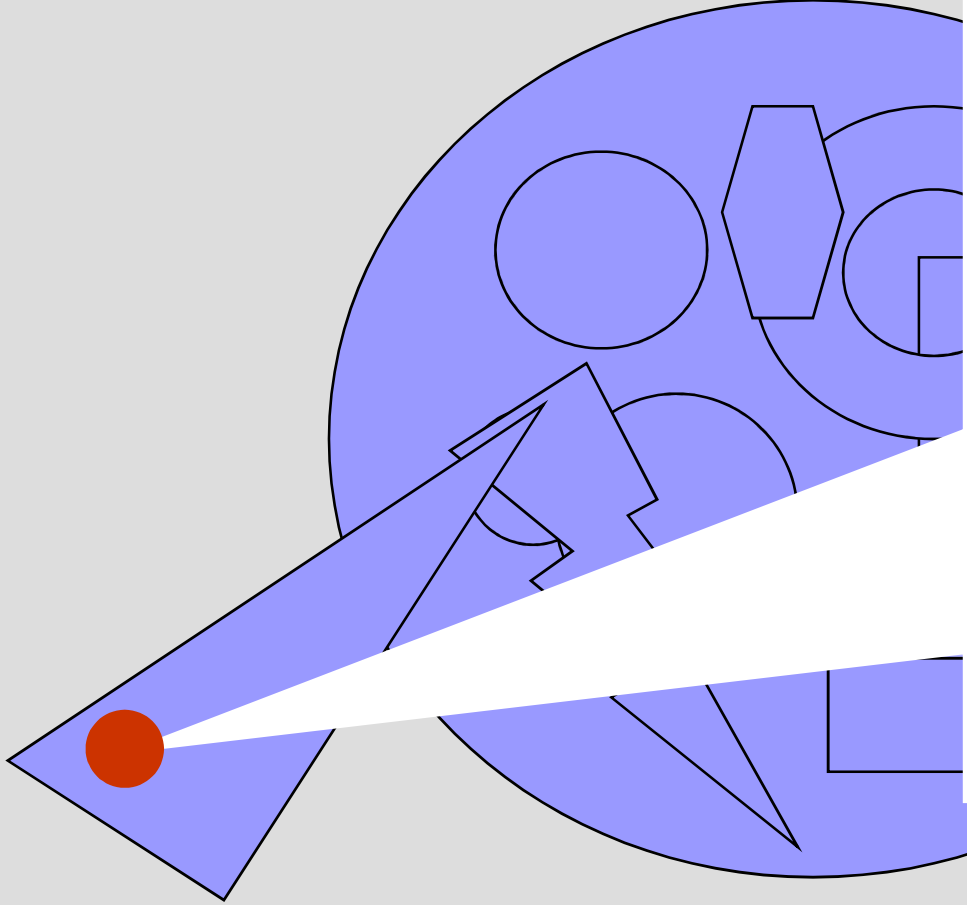
Low Theoretical

Low Applied

There are four phases to all of this...


- Phase One – Research & Data design.
 - Phase Two – Data gathering.
 - Phase Three – Data Management.
 - Phase Four – Data analysis and reporting.
- Phase One – We often neglect the ‘data before design’ principle.
 - Phase Two – We do this kind of stuff pretty well as a rule. Often too much.
 - Phase Three – We don’t do this well!!! We need to improve this phase of research.
 - Phase Four – We do OK, but we need to learn to work smarter by improving Phase Three.

Being precisely focused is the key thing...

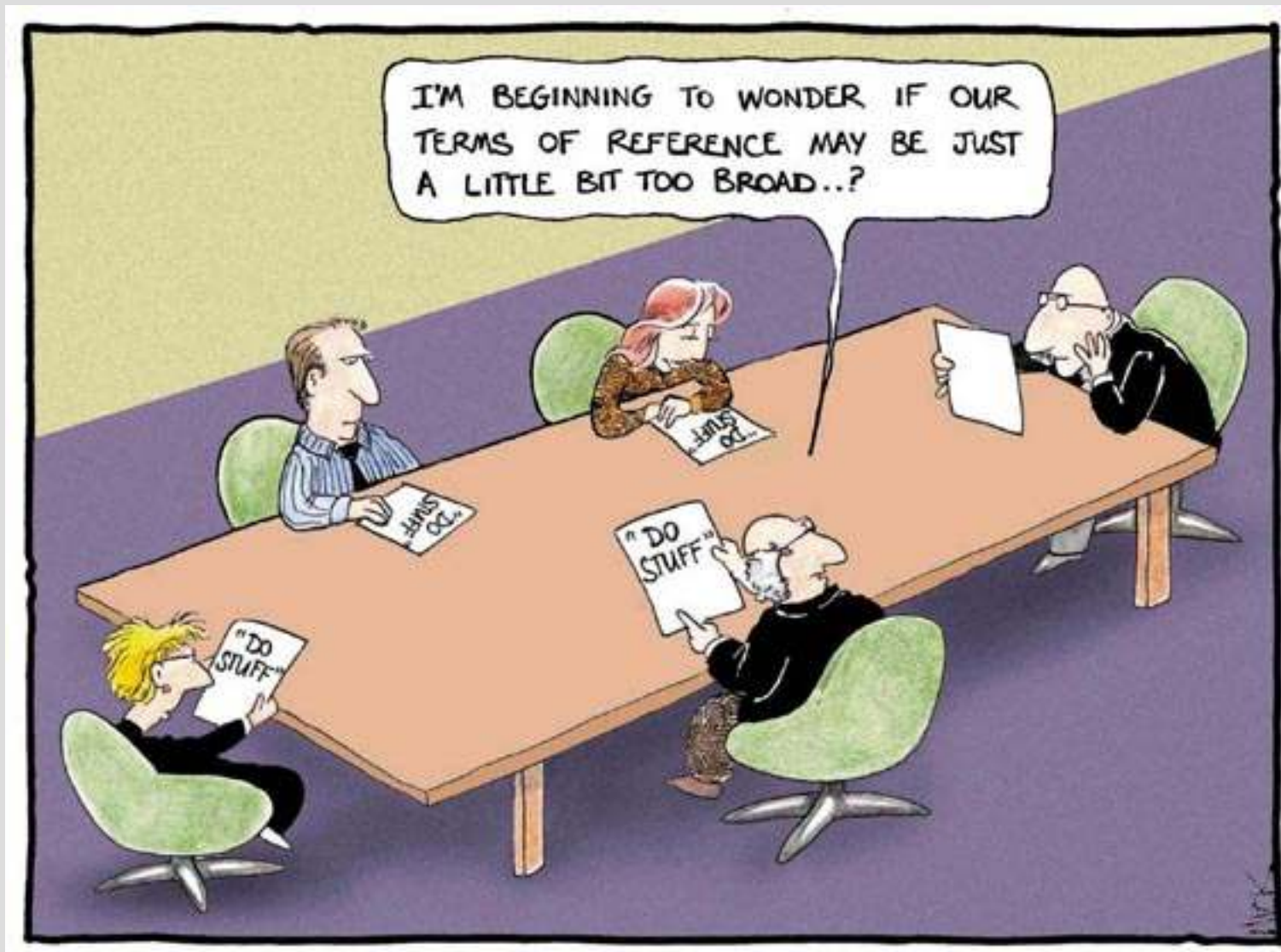



And within that slice of research, you focus even more specifically on your field. You concentrate solely on your research question, or issue, or hypothesis. You plan down from where you want to end up!

You take a slice of researchable reality ...

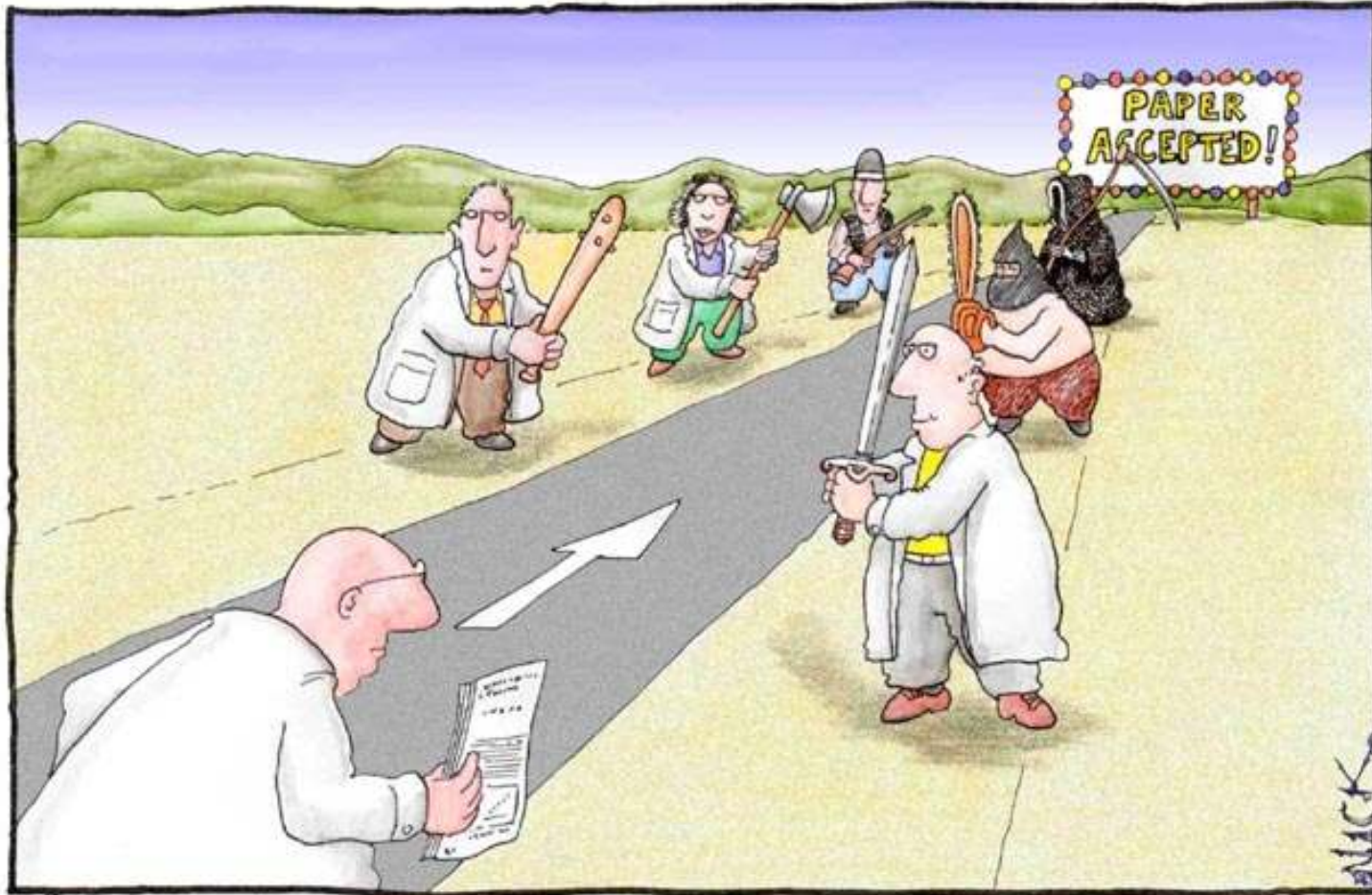


So now that you know
all about it, what do
you think happens
next?





Of course, for many academics, it is all, ultimately, about getting published...a gauntlet in itself and a story for another time...



Most scientists regarded the new streamlined peer-review process as 'quite an improvement.'