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The woman formerly known as...

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Section 5: People Focus

The woman formerly known as...

Judith Kamalski

Useful links:

1. Noordewier, M.K., van Horen, F., Ruys, K.I. & Stapel, D.A. (2010) "What's in a name? 361.708 euros: The effects of marital name change", *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, Vol. 32, No.1, pp. 17–25.
2. Rampell, C. "Women, work and name change", *The New York Times* (14 April 2010).
3. Tescione, S.M. (1998). "Research News and Comment: A Woman's Name: Implications for Publication, Citation, and Tenure", *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 27, No. 8, pp. 38–42.
4. Pawley, A. "What name should I publish under?", *Sciencewomen Blog* (12 June 2009).
5. Editorial (2009). "Credit where credit is due", *Nature* Vol. 462, No. 7275, p. 825.

"A woman who took her partner's name or a hyphenated name was judged as more caring, more dependent, less intelligent, more emotional, less competent, and less ambitious in comparison with a woman who kept her own name", according to a recent Dutch study¹. And, it gets worse: "[The monthly salary of a] job applicant who took her partner's name [...] was estimated 861.21 lower (calculated to a working life, 361,708.20)".

Yes, there seem to be some methodological issues with the study. Only Dutch subjects were involved, so this could possibly only apply to Dutch society. There seem to be indications that "Americans overwhelmingly believe a woman should take her husband's name"². Moreover, how would anyone in your working life know whether the name you use is your married name or your maiden name? But still, the matter is intriguing and leads Research Trends to wonder: how about changing your name in academia? Does that have positive or negative effects, if any?

Name changes in academia: Dr Who?

In academia, research suggests that changing your name when you marry "can inhibit dissemination of published work"³. In this paper, a fictitious example is given for Kathryn E. Jones, who married and became Kathryn Dalton-Jones. Divorced, she adopted the name Kathryn Elizabeth Jones again, and after re-marrying, she became Kathryn Jones Smith. This means that she is now referenced as "Jones, K.E.", "Dalton-Jones, K.", "Dalton, K.J.", "Smith, K." and "Smith, K.J.". This example makes abundantly clear that someone who does not know Kathryn personally would not know that all these references applied to the same person.

Clearly, this is also a problem for citation databases such as Scopus. How can any database calculate, for instance, the right h-index (a metric to evaluate an individual's scientific performance, combining output numbers and citation counts) for the hypothetical Kathryn? Difficulties in assessing one's performance might easily have harmful consequences for job applications, tenure track consideration or grant evaluations.

There are several solutions to this problem. The obvious one would be to keep one's maiden name. As mentioned on the blog *Sciencewomen*⁴, "It is much easier to explain that you publish under your old name than to get other people's literature searches to calculate the right h-index for you if your name is not stable". Or, as another commenter adds: "I know several people who publish and attend conferences as

Dr. Nee but are otherwise known as Mrs. Husbandname does make life easier for [indexing services]." Personally, I was given the same advice when I got married, so for professional purposes I use my maiden name and in personal circumstances my married name.

Setting the record straight

However, if there are very strong reasons to take the husband's name, then there are of course other solutions available. One would be to simply list on résumés and websites that in period X, publications appeared under name x and in period Y under name y. There is nothing wrong with this, but it creates more work for other people to calculate h-indices or gather comprehensive output lists. It makes it difficult to be sure that they will always have complete information when it comes to your publication record. In the media, there has also been mention of an author ID system that would make these notes unnecessary, but such a system does not yet exist⁵.



Another idea would be to go to Scopus.com and make sure that the system knows which separate author profiles are actually one and the same (namely yours). Scopus already makes use of powerful algorithms to group papers together in author and affiliation profiles. Currently, from November 2010 to January 2011, a project is being carried out to improve the precision and clarity of Scopus Author Profile data. As sophisticated as these algorithms may be, cases like Kathryn's make it a challenge to associate publications to the right author and to ensure that profiles are comprehensive. Manual review will always be needed to make the profiles even better.

So how does this work? When performing an author search in Scopus, you will see a list appear of possible hits to your search. Select the two or more that you would like to merge and hit the 'give feedback' button. This will allow you to send any comments on these profiles that you may have. Even though this may take some time to do, it will be worth it in the end when evaluation will be done and people can actually base their evaluation on the proper and complete data.

Section 6: Did You Know?

Frankenstein, or the rebirth
of science through literature

Sarah Huggett

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*¹, one of the most compelling tales of gothic horror, has recently been described as "perhaps the most famous work of medical science fiction"². Although references to specific methods are veiled in the text, the late-18th and early 19th centuries were thriving with scientific advances in particular the birth of neuroscience and the emergence of sensational experimentation on the effects of electricity on neuromuscular function, which no doubt inspired Shelley to write her gruesome story. The imprint of science on literature has long been recognized through the literary genre of Science Fiction, but it is interesting to note that science can even claim to be "stranger than fiction": a search in Scopus for this phrase in titles, abstracts, and keywords returns 58 papers spanning from 1859 to 2010.

Useful links:

1. Shelley, M. (1818) *Frankenstein* (London: Harding, Mavor & Jones).
2. Kaplan, P.W. (2004), "Mind, brain, body, and soul: a review of the electrophysiological undercurrents for Dr Frankenstein", *Journal of Clinical Neurophysiology*, Vol. 21, No. 4, pp. 301–304.