

Authorship and Co-authorship in science and research

Ethical aspects

Christian Munthe
Philosophy, Linguistics and Theory of Science
University of Gothenburg

flov.gu.se

Publications: role and function

- Report results
- Contribute to the process of science, research and development
- Contribute to the production of extraordinary knowledge
- Merit the researcher: promote career
- Means to acquiring funds

- That is: the publication is both a tool of science and research, and a **"currency"** in the institutional economy and politics of science and research

Misconduct

- Fraud and deceit
 - Stealing text (e.g. from student essays)
 - Ghostwriting
 - Unwarranted co-authorship
 - Impeding warranted co-authorship
 - Exaggerated co-authorship
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- **Only no. 1 *directly* opposes the aim of science and research**
 - **The rest are opposed to the function of authorship and publication as a "currency"**
 - **But flawed allocation of this currency may indirectly boost the wrong careers, allocate funds to the wrong people, and thereby impede science and research**

Who should be co-author and who shouldn't

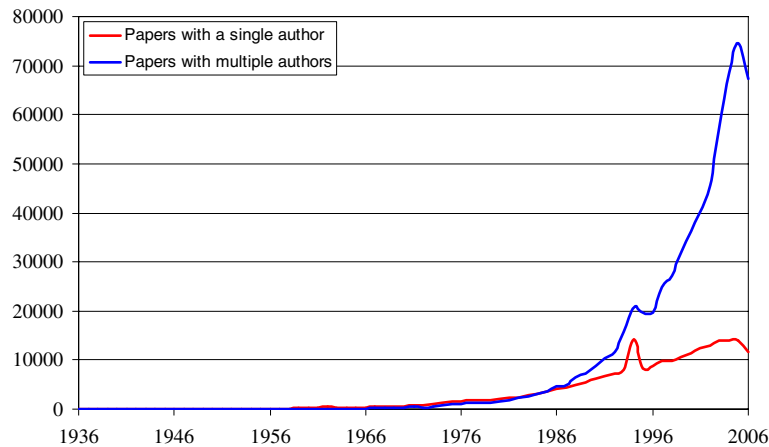


Fig. 2 Trends in single and multiple authorship in computer science papers (data gathered from *DBLP Computer Science Bibliography*)

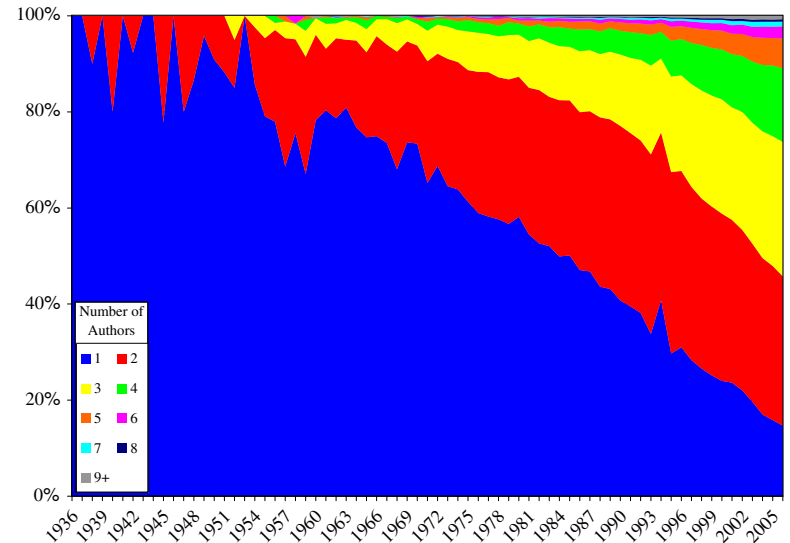


fig. 3 Trends in single and multiple authorship in computer science papers by percent (data gathered from the *DBLP Computer Science Bibliography*)

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ORIGINAL PAPER

**Programmers, Professors, and Parasites:
Credit and Co-Authorship in Computer Science**

Justin Solomon

“vancouver principles” in Biomedicine



- Authorship credit should be based on 1) substantial contributions to conception and design, acquisition of data, **or** analysis and interpretation of data; 2) drafting the article **or** revising it critically for important intellectual content; **and** 3) final approval of the version to be published. Authors should meet conditions 1, 2, **and** 3.
- When a large, multicenter group [...], the group should identify the individuals who accept **direct** responsibility for the manuscript. These individuals should fully meet the criteria for authorship/contributorship defined above [...] Journals [...] list other members [...] in the Acknowledgments.
- Acquisition of funding, collection of data, or general supervision of the research group alone does **not** constitute authorship.
- All persons designated as authors should qualify for authorship, **and** all those who qualify should be listed.
- Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content.

http://www.icmje.org/ethical_1author.html

Unwarranted (parasitical) authorship

- Unit- or department-leader
- Whoever is fixing the funds
- Person of strategic interest to please (vanity authorship)
- Supervisor or other senior on whom a student/ PhD candidate/young researcher depends

Impeding warranted authorship

- Students
- PhD candidates
- Young researchers
- Highly dependent researchers (temporary appointments, lack of funds, etc.)

Recommendation

- Make as clear and specific agreements as possible before you initiate a research collaboration. With new partners, these should be in writing!
- Mind your honour and long-term reputation!
- Falsely ascertaining warranted authorship to a journal/conference is fraud
- Accepting invitations to unwarranted co-authorship makes you at risk for having to answer for misconduct and deceit of others
- More and more journals apply principle of each author ascertaining their own contribution – try to go for these!