

# On the Need for a Replication Journal

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<sup>1</sup>The views expressed are those of individual authors and do not necessarily reflect official positions of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, the Federal Reserve System, or the Board of Governors.



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Broad: Redo previous study with new data selection or new approach

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Not only empirical studies, but also experiments and simulations

# Publishing in the age of Internet

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- a historical record of the research frontier



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Replication provides validation, esp. when code and data are missing

# How common are replications?

STEM: Very

Social Sciences: Rare

Humanities: Non-existent



STEM: Short papers, quick pre-publication refereeing, focus on post-publication replication

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Humanities: Long papers, lengthy refereeing, little data, narratives, case studies



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Social Sciences: In between

Humanities: Long papers, lengthy refereeing, little data, narratives, case studies

# What about economics?

Lengthy refereeing

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Complex, long, yet incomplete papers

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Costly replication, not happening before or after

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Little culture of sharing code and data

# The **sharing** culture problem

Importance of dataset discovery or creation



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Large fix cost of coding

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Fear of being overtaken (long time to publication)

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Few datasets are cited properly

# The **replication** culture problem

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Editors do not care

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Implicated authors despise them

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Negative incentive





Editors do not like to have their decisions doubted

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They ask implicated authors to referee despite pleas

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They ask implicated authors to referee despite pleas  
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Replication is not considered to be a contribution  
Very few published replications, even fewer retractions

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Case studies in paper

# What to do?



Few even try replication

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Data and code sharing not really working

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Need incentives for more replication

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→ **replication journal**



Safe haven for replications

Safe haven for replications  
Publication credit

Safe haven for replications

Publication credit

Create culture of replication and replication publication



Safe haven for replications

Publication credit

Create culture of replication and replication publication

Create data and code archive

Safe haven for replications

Publication credit

Create culture of replication and replication publication

Create data and code archive

Have more confidence in policy implications



Overcome negative attitude

Overcome negative attitude  
Authoritative editors

Overcome negative attitude  
Authoritative editors  
Strong procedures

Overcome negative attitude  
Authoritative editors  
Strong procedures  
Avoid undue harassment





1 managing editor, 4 field editors

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- 1 Empirical microeconomic studies

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- 2 Empirical macroeconomic studies

1 managing editor, 4 field editors

- 1 Empirical microeconomic studies
- 2 Empirical macroeconomic studies
- 3 Simulation studies

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- 2 Empirical macroeconomic studies
- 3 Simulation studies
- 4 Experiments (RCT and lab)



Managing editor: allocates papers to field editors

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Field editor: corresponds with authors and referees, prepares decision file



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Other field editors: vote on file

Managing editor: allocates papers to field editors

Field editor: corresponds with authors and referees, prepares decision file

Other field editors: vote on file

Managing editor: records votes, finalizes article



## 1 Importance of replicated study

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- 2 Replication failure

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- 4 Making code and data available
- 5 Lack of previous replication
- 6 Code and data previously not available
- 7 Difficulty of replication

# Will it work?

Find editors

Find editors → ?

Find editors → ?  
Find host

Find editors → ?

Find host → easy

Find editors → ?

Find host → easy

Find replicators



Find editors → ?

Find host → easy

Find replicators → they are lurking

Find editors → ?

Find host → easy

Find replicators → they are lurking

Find referees

Find editors → ?

Find host → easy

Find replicators → they are lurking

Find referees → they seem willing

Find editors → ?

Find host → easy

Find replicators → they are lurking

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Find acceptance

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