



Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Does Impact Change the Rules?

Vitae 23 March 2010

A bit about Goldsmiths

- Founded in 1891 as teacher's college by Goldsmith's Company
- Became part of University of London in 1904
- Became full College of the University in 1989
- 1994 Group Research Intensive

Outline

- What “impact” might be
- Why we should take it seriously
- An example

REF Evolution

- Initial emphasis on bibliometrics
- Retreat to peer review “informed” by bibliometrics where appropriate
- Many areas--Computer Science among them--don't rely on journal publications
- Some consternation at AHRC

HEFCE's Impact Ideas

- Recent consultation set impact as 25% of REF research ranking
- Potential requirement of an institutional “annual impact statement”
- “economic, social, public policy, cultural and quality of life”
- 18,000 signatures on a petition in support of “blue-skies” research

HEFCE Indicators

– Standard

- Research income from “users”
- Amount and extent of collaboration with full range of “users”

– Other

- 36 Indicators
- Plans to expand list--much needed to include arts and humanities on an equal footing, and practice-based research



Goldsmiths

- “Demonstrable effect of research results or process”
- Only way to account for our interdisciplinary practice
- Interdisciplinarity, “Mode 1” and “Mode 2”
- Iterative link between “curiosity-driven” and “problem-based”

Missing Indicator?

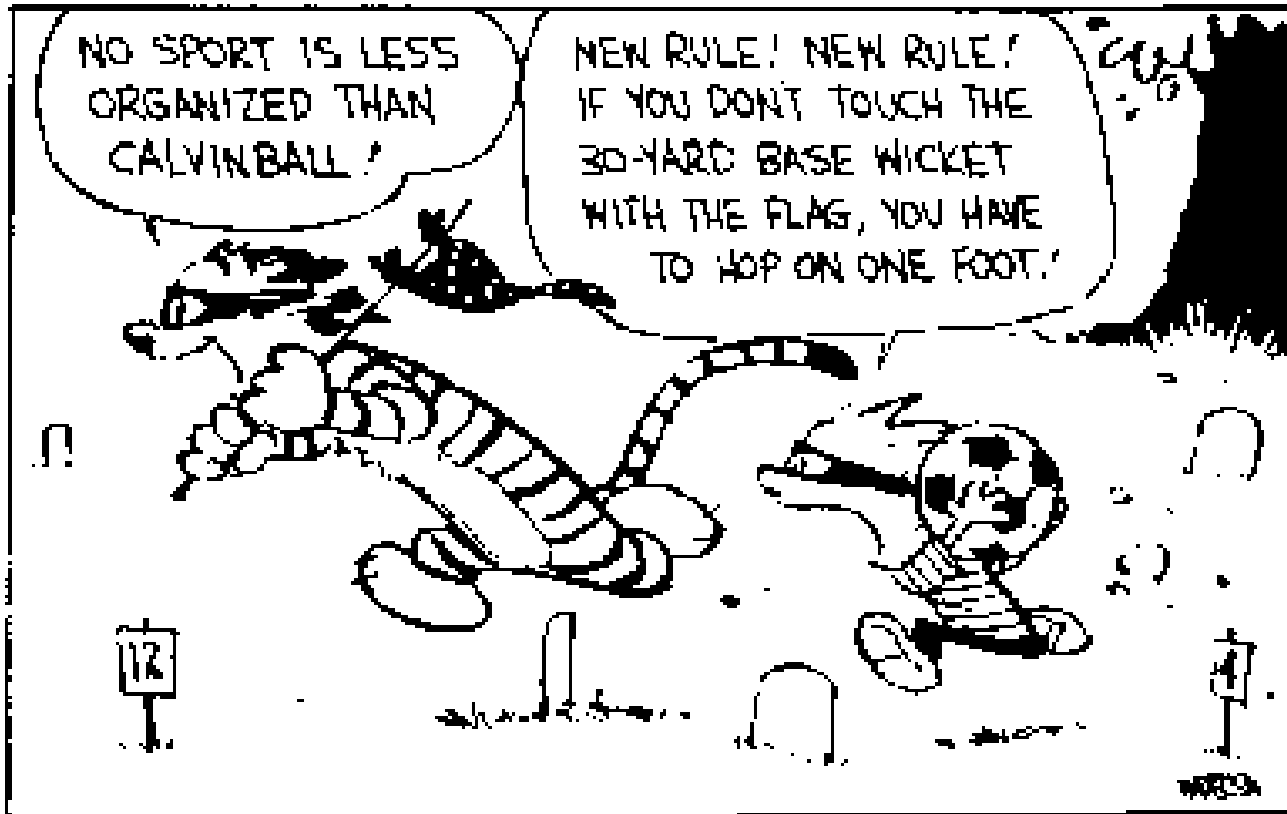
– Narrative

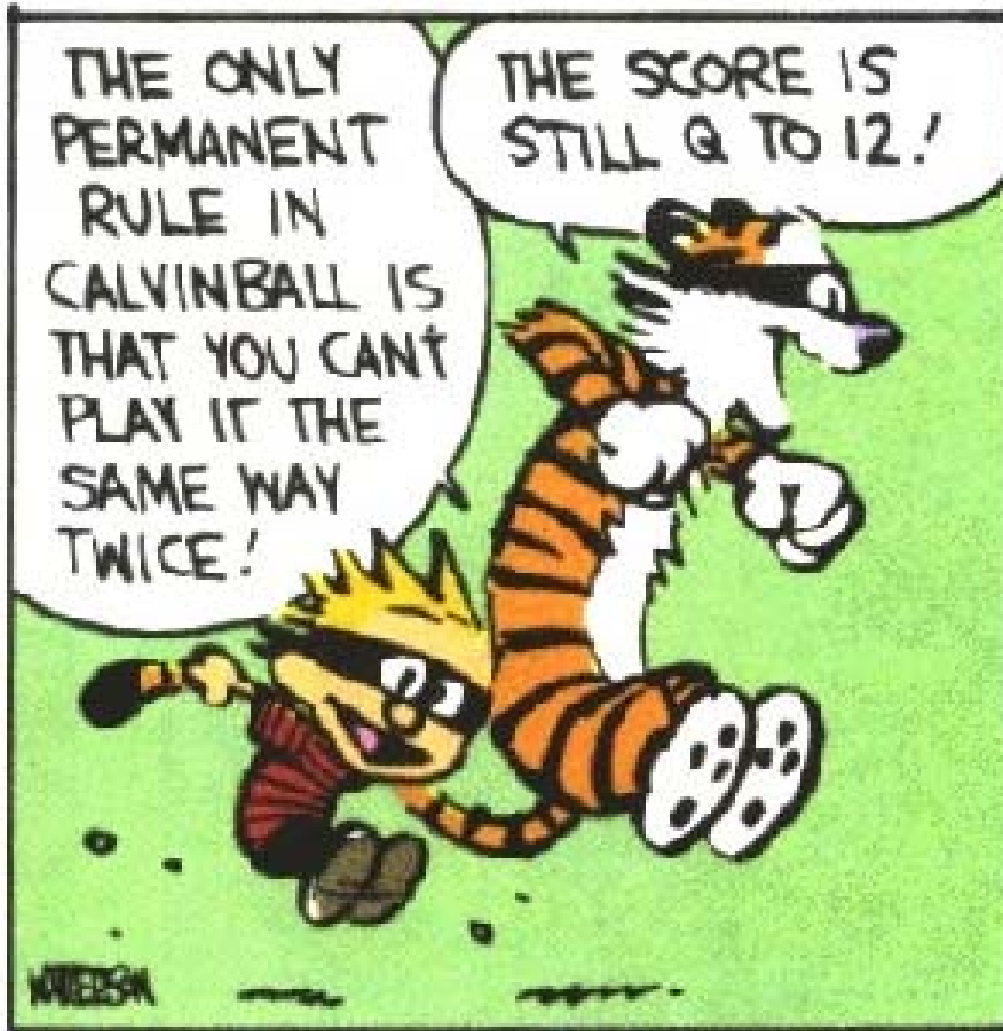
- research process as transformative of subjects
- capturing what is difficult to quantify

– Does not replace quantitative indicators, but balances them

– Should be a standard indicator

- peer review and current high weighting of impact call for narrative.





THE ONLY
PERMANENT
RULE IN
CALVINBALL IS
THAT YOU CAN'T
PLAY IT THE
SAME WAY
TWICE!

THE SCORE IS
STILL 0 TO 12!

WATERS

Why Take Impact Seriously?

- If we are in something like a game of Nomic, can't we just change the rules back?
- Potential extension of REF implementation for 2 years
- A charity anecdote

Public Accountability

- Failures of self-direction in very high-profile areas
- Enormous pressure on public funding
- Resilient processes of commodification and control

A New Language

- Iterative link between Modes 1 and 2
 - Lucent Technologies
- Use Mode 2 to make the case for Mode 1
- Engagement doesn't supplant research, but becomes the language we use to account for it to non-specialists
- Not going to work for everything
- Re-balancing strategy is the key

An interesting case

Intel

Conclusions

- Research is a continuum
- We work with OPM
- Impact broadly defined is a way for us to communicate our value
- This includes the strong case for curiosity-driven research

— Michael Metelits, Director of Business Development

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