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COLLEGIALITY WASHING? NEW TRANSLATIONS OF COLLEGIAL PRACTICES

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ABSTRACT

Over the past few decades, university reforms in line with management and enterprise ideals have been well documented. Changes in the ideals underlying the missions of universities have led to changes in their modes of governing and organizing, which in turn drive further transformation of their missions. One set of reforms in Swedish higher education has been the dissolution of collegial bodies and procedures. At the same time, in recent years, we have witnessed an increased interest in collegiality and a reintroduction of collegial bodies and procedures. New translations of collegiality appear not only in how universities are organized, but also in other core aspects of research and higher education. We review examples of peer reviewing, research assessment, and direct recruitment of professors and ask: Can these new translations of collegiality be understood as a revitalization of collegiality, or is it – to draw a parallel with greenwashing – rather a matter of collegiality-washing?

 Keywords: Greenwashing; translation; collegiality revitalization; collegiality-washing; collegiality drift; hypocrisy

IS COLLEGIALITY DISAPPEARING OR REAPPEARING IN REVISED FORMS?

Universities have always been subject to mixed forms of governance. Historically, many universities have been founded and controlled by the church, the state, and more recently, corporations and special interest groups. At the same time, university faculty largely have been granted a certain amount of autonomy to organize and control their activities through collegial governance. Over the years, collegial governance has been both at the core of academic work and a challenged mode of governance (see the Introduction to Vols. 86 and 87; and Östh Gustafsson, 2023, Vol. 86).

Hybrid forms of governance continue to develop (see for instance Denis et al., 2023, Vol. 87) with new missions applied to universities (Krücken et al., 2007), reforms inspired by enterprise ideals (see the Introduction to Vol. 86) and universities increasingly being transformed into organizational actors (Lee & Ramirez, 2023, Vol. 86). Collegiality has not disappeared but tends to be pushed to the background by new and more pronounced ways of governing. This development is related to a feature of contemporary collegiality that is referred to in the two introductions to the volumes of this special issue (Sahlin & Eriksson-Zetterquist, Vol. 86; Eriksson-Zetterquist & Sahlin, Vol. 87) – namely, that collegiality often remains vague and taken for granted. However, examples show that dramatic reforms in university settings have raised institutional awareness of collegiality (Crace et al., 2023, Vol. 87; see also Denis et al., 2023, Vol. 87). Such institutional awareness may exacerbate the erosion of collegiality, or revitalize and revise collegial practices. To shed more light on these dynamics, we explore what happens when collegiality is framed and translated in reformed academic contexts.

We begin by focusing on a series of university reforms in Sweden, which have weakened and eliminated collegial bodies and procedures over several decades. Following this stepwise reduction of collegiality, a 2011 reform eliminated national legal requirements for universities to have collegial bodies (i.e., faculty boards) responsible for the quality and content of research and higher education. In the same reform, peer review procedures for recruiting academic staff were deregulated. Exercising their new decision-making power, individual universities, particularly new universities and university colleges, modified their organizational practices and removed collegial structures (Ahlbäck Öberg & Boberg, 2023). At the same time, these reforms awakened interest in collegiality, leading to a reintroduction of collegial bodies and procedures at some institutions in recent years (Ahlbäck Öberg & Boberg, 2023). We review examples of new procedures for peer reviewing, research assessment, and direct recruitment of professors and ask: Can these new translations of collegiality be understood as a revitalization of collegiality or is it – to draw a parallel with greenwashing – rather a matter of collegiality-washing?

After a brief review of two main elements of collegial governance – peer review and faculty control of recruitment of academic staff – we define the concept of "collegiality-washing" with reference to common uses of other types of "washing." We base our reading of the "washing" literature on the concepts of decoupling and translation from organization theory. We then provide a short

empirical background on the stepwise reduction of collegiality in the Swedish university system before exploring how these changes have affected peer review, research assessment, and faculty recruitment processes.

After reviewing the Swedish examples, we turn to the increasingly debated world of journal publishing. We analyze two recent cases of renowned journals that have been reclassified as predatory, and focus on their peer review procedures, or rather lack thereof. In the concluding discussion, we revisit our questions regarding whether the reviewed examples indicate a revitalization of collegiality, or amount to nothing more than collegiality-washing.

Two Central Elements of Collegiality: Peer Review and Faculty-controlled Recruitment

Collegially governed operations are run by autonomous interrelated academic communities (Eriksson-Zetterquist & Sahlin, 2023, Vol. 87; Waters, 1989; Weber, 1922/1983). This form of governance emphasizes the independence and integrity of higher education and research. It is a meritocratic system wherein leaders and decision-makers represent science and the scholarly community. Vertical collegiality is built on formal decision-making, where academic staff carry the main responsibility for the content and quality of teaching and research. Through horizontal collegiality, peers subject academic work to review and scrutiny, and provide advice that forms the basis for academic and administrative decisions (e.g., publications, tenure and promotion, recruitment, etc.). In this way, vertical and horizontal collegiality constitute a system of governance that emphasizes faculty authority, independence, and self-policing.

For the academic community to have control over scientific developments, decisions about recruitment, promotion, assessment, and the publication of research results must be in the hands of faculty. A major component that enables this control is a reliance on peers with the scientific knowledge to assess research quality, progress, and rigor. Peer review processes involve critical scrutiny and contribute to a shared identity and understanding of a particular field. Merton (1942) emphasized these combined aims in his norms of science. The first norm, "communism," refers to the process whereby methods, new findings, and knowledge are scrutinized by colleagues who are experts in the field. According to this norm, scientific findings should be openly published. The second and third norms are "universalism" (i.e., "knowledge claims must be subjected to impersonal criteria of evaluation"), and "disinterestedness" (i.e., "personal interests must be excluded from proper scientific procedures") (Knorr Cetina, 1991, p. 523). The fourth Mertonian norm that guides peer review is "organized skepticism," including the methodological approach of suspending judgment until all facts are known, and the institutional mandate that criticism is permitted as well as encouraged.

In the introduction to this special issue (Sahlin & Eriksson-Zetterquist, Vol. 86), we defined collegiality as an institution. Such a definition implies: first, that collegiality is a structure as well as shared practices underpinned by common norms; and second, for the institution to persist, newcomers are socialized into

the community such that they come to share and uphold norms and practices. Again, this points to peer review, research assessment, and faculty recruitment as central practices whereby collegiality and faculty authority are maintained.

The collegial ideals of peer review and faculty recruitment have been discussed extensively over the years. Studies show that the translation of these principles of governance into practice often leads to both conservatism and the exclusion of "daring and innovative research" (Lamont, 2009, p. 243). Even so, both peer review and faculty-controlled recruitment remain fundamental collegial ideals, as no alternatives can support both innovation and rigor (Lazega, 2020).

GREENWASHING, DECOUPLING, AND TRANSLATION

In recent years, the suffix "-washing" has been added to words to refer to activities that are presented in a certain way but practiced in another. Perhaps the most recognizable is "greenwashing," often defined as a marketing practice to make companies or organizations appear environmentally friendly or in some dimension ecological, regardless of the circumstance that these companies or organizations include operating activities that contribute to environmental pollution (Laufer, 2003). "Bluewashing" has been used as a label for businesses to sign up for the UN global compact and use their association with the United Nations to enhance their image and shift attention from their controversial business practices (Jacobsson & Sahlin-Andersson, 2006, p. 257; see also Laufer, 2003).

It can be noted that although the use of the word "greenwashing" has grown since the 1990s, it has never been given a clear definition (Lyon & Maxwell, 2011). It is commonly used to refer to the practice of making misleading claims about environmental friendliness to benefit from the expanding market for "green products" (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). For example, when companies face pressure to assess and report their environmental impacts, some choose to disclose relatively benign ones, thereby creating the impression of transparency. Electing to disclose only minor or positive impacts provides an incomplete picture of ongoing environmental performance, as certain activities remain hidden. Thus, selected reports about environmentally friendly impacts become part of a "washed" public narrative (Marquis et al., 2016). Simultaneously, less impressive activities become obscured in the process of disproportionately revealing positive performance indicators. It can be noted that the practice of revealing only good news is influenced by financial reporting practices (Marquis et al., 2016), which can be skewed to match stakeholders' expectations.

Another approach to washing has been found to involve "strategic hypocrisy avoidance" (Carlos & Lewis, 2018, p. 134). This refers to companies that choose not to report progress within the field of sustainability, as it can lead to a public discussion of hypocritical behavior. Furthermore, there have been reports of companies deciding against progressive environmental measures because they knew that even if such measures were successful, public opinion could deem them hypocrites (Carlos & Lewis, 2018). It has also been found that some organizations may avoid promoting their work under certain labels or categories because

they want to distance themselves from others in the same category (Gehman & Grimes, 2017). In either case, reports of progress are hampered, resulting in washing. Each of these situations can be seen as attempts to translate practices into narrative accounts that align with widely held expectations and demands, a theme that we will revisit.

Companies engage in greenwashing for a variety of reasons, including pressure from stakeholders who want to see statements of environmental policies, but cannot control how the intentions of such policies are implemented (Ramus & Montiel, 2005). Other external pressures include legislative demands and regulations, or demands from consumers and investors. Greenwashing may also be driven by internal dynamics, such as optimism ("we will solve this"), organizational inertia hampering change, ineffective internal communication, and imitation of other companies within the industry that appear to be successful (Delmas & Burbano, 2011).

These "washing" examples show various instances of deviations between practices and public narratives, commonly understood to be motivated by companies seeking to foster perceptions that they perform better than they actually do relative to sets of widely held norms and demands. The complicated relationships between norms and practices have been explored extensively in organization studies. Formal organization structures have been built to reflect rationalized myths about proper organizations, yet these structures have been decoupled from daily activities (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). As they strive for legitimacy, organizations seek to align with widely embraced structures and notions "considered proper, adequate, rational, and necessary" (Meyer & Rowan, 1977, p. 345). Subsequent studies have also shown common instances of decoupling between policy and practice and between means and ends (Bromley & Powell, 2012). Such decoupling has largely been analyzed as strategic attempts by actors who seek legitimacy and is described as an outcome of window dressing or hypocrisy (Brunsson, 1989/2002). The above-reviewed notions of greenwashing fit this conceptual framework.

Gaps between norms and practices and means and ends not only follow strategic moves. Translation studies show that ideas (Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996) and models (Drori et al., 2014) change as they are transferred from one context to another. The term translation is thus used to denote the combined processes of movement and change (Czarniawska & Sevón, 1996), individual ideas, experiences, or models are actively transferred from one setting to another, and such movement invariably involves change, intentional or unintentional, as ideas are adapted in new contexts and settings. Many studies of translation processes have concentrated on how ideas travel from one setting to another, such as the translation of American management practices to organizations around the world (Boxenbaum, 2006; Sahlin-Andersson & Engwall, 2002) or the translation of Japanese management practices in multinational firms (Westney et al., 2022).

Translation studies also focus on intra- as well as inter-organizational processes, such as when policies, norms, and requirements are translated into practices or when practices are translated into narrative accounts (see Sahlin & Wedlin, 2008). As models, ideas, or policies are translated into practice, or as

practices are translated into narrative accounts, they are edited to fit the specific context (Sahlin-Andersson, 1996), often in relation to other models, ideas, policies, and practices in what has been conceptualized as ecologies of translation (Wedlin & Sahlin, 2017). Through these editing processes, policies and principles may be translated differently in different settings, resulting in gaps between ideals or norms, and practices. The ensuing changes are not necessarily strategic, but follow from how ideas and ideals are understood, adjusted to, and combined with local practices (see also Westney, 1987).

Broadly circulated ideas tend to be theorized (Strang & Meyer, 1993), globalized or generalized (Czarniawska & Sevón, 2005), and are applied differently in different settings through processes of glocalization (Drori et al., 2014). Above, we characterized collegiality as a vague idea. Moreover, we described how universities are subject to hybrid forms of governance. Together, these insights lead us to expect differences in how collegial procedures are being translated into practice as a result of both strategic moves and unintended editing processes.

Even though notions of washing are pejorative, when viewing the examples of greenwashing through the lenses of decoupling and translation, we find that even greenwashing is not always a matter of strategic decoupling, but involves various forms of decoupling and translation, ranging from corporations' strict control of the information provided (which is, strictly speaking, disinformation), to "public disclosure of hard information targeted to influence shareholder value" (Lyon & Maxwell, 2011, p. 7, footnote 9). As Ramus and Montiel (2005, p. 377) put it, "one cannot assume that public commitment to a policy necessarily translates into corporate greening activities and the implementation of the policy" (referring to Winn & Angell, 2000).

In summary, studies of greenwashing have inspired us to ask whether recently introduced procedures for peer reviewing, research assessment, and direct recruitment of professors can be understood as restored collegiality or rather a matter of collegiality-washing. Are these measures revitalizing faculty authority or merely enabling symbolic compliance with broadly held ideals on the integrity of scientific development? As we assess whether these practices amount to collegiality-washing, we also explore the potential consequences of revised forms of collegiality. Do these translations of collegiality further water down collegiality, and in turn, research integrity and trust in science? Our analyses and conclusions are informed by studies of widespread challenges of collegiality. In the next section, we describe such challenges in the Swedish system of higher education and research.

A STEPWISE REDUCTION OF COLLEGIALITY AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SWEDISH UNIVERSITIES AS ORGANIZATIONAL ACTORS

The first Swedish university, Uppsala University, was founded in 1477 as a Catholic institution. Pope Sixtus IV issued a decree permitting its establishment

and placed it completely under the control of the Catholic Church and the Swedish archbishop, who had been the main person advocating for a university in Sweden. Because the university was controlled by the Catholic Church, it entered a period of crisis and decline during the reformation in the 1500s. When the university was re-established in 1595, it was funded and controlled by the state (Lindroth, 1976). This model remained in place for several centuries. Carl Gustaf Andrén (2013), former vice chancellor of Lund University and former university chancellor of Sweden, described the budget for Uppsala University in 1940. This very detailed budget was set by the government and not only regulated the establishment of new professorships and faculty appointments but also specified positions such as building caretakers, administrative assistants, and resources to support university operations.

The organization of the university was also subject to detailed regulations, even though collegial bodies were responsible for decisions and control within the tight boundaries set by the state. Until the mid-1800s, faculty formed the university's board – the *konsistorium* – and professors took turns holding the position of vice chancellor for one semester at a time, and later, one year at a time. The first elected vice-chancellor of Uppsala University, Carl Yngve Sahlin, was appointed in 1876 and held that position for 13 years. He was elected to three-year terms by university professors comprising the academic collegium (the same year, specific peer review procedures for assessing and advising on the recruitment of new professors were implemented). However, the government retained responsibility for faculty appointment decisions. In the early 1900s, the *konsistorium* was transformed into a representative body as the number of professors increased; from that point forward, not all professors were members of the *konsistorium* (Frängsmyr, 2017). Toward the end of the 19th century, a reform was proposed that the university organization should be divided into academic matters and administrative matters. After much discussion, this suggestion was turned down (Frängsmyr, 2017). However, new challenges to the collegial governance of the university followed.

Frängsmyr (2017) described how academic collegiality was reduced step by step, especially from the 1960s onwards. Universities were formed as public agencies under the government, and thus reforms of the public sector impacted how universities were organized and controlled. Ahlbäck Öberg and Boberg (2023) found that this decision on the organizational form of universities was not the result of strategic considerations, but rather just thought of as a "convenient arrangement." Moreover, in 1969, the composition of the *konsistorium* was expanded to include representatives of the student body as well as the university administration. Even though the traditional name *konsistorium* was retained at Uppsala University, it increasingly began to resemble a corporate executive board. In 1977, the *konsistorium* was expanded once again to include representatives of broader society – initially, local politicians, followed by people affiliated with the business sector, national labor unions, cultural organizations, and civil society. Societal representatives comprised the majority of the *konsistorium* in 1988. A decade later, with a new state reform, the vice chancellor was no longer

the chair; instead, the government assumed responsibility for appointing chairs of university boards – typically, former politicians, business leaders, or public agency leaders.

The stepwise reduction of collegiality continued, with new groups gaining control over universities as more decisions about budgets, personnel, and academic content were being decentralized from the government. Decisions about new professorships and faculty appointments were delegated to the universities in 1993. In addition, universities were subject to the same organizational reforms as other public bodies according to widely circulated popular enterprise models (Brunsson & Sahlin-Andersson, 2000; Sahlin, 2013). With these developments, universities increasingly became organized as organizational actors (Sahlin & Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2016) and in 2011, legal requirements for universities to have collegial bodies (i.e., faculty boards) responsible for the quality and content of research and higher education were eliminated. Ahlbäck Öberg and Boberg (2022, p. 157) summarized the consequences of the 2011 reform as follows: "Our findings show escalating line management in the appointment of academic leaders, a diluted role for collegial expertise, and a loss of decision-making authority for collegial bodies."

DECOLLEGIALIZATION – RECOLLEGIALIZATION

Since 2011, Swedish universities have not only experienced a continued weakening of collegial structures and practices but also a growing interest in collegiality. As described above, faculty boards were eliminated at several institutions, but later were reintroduced as advisory bodies (Ahlbäck Öberg & Boberg, 2023). A personal experience of ours is that while collegiality was seldom taught in academic leadership courses before 2011, the topic is now a standard component of such courses. The last few decades have also included what could be described as a "boom" of assessments of research and educational programs. These assessments have been developed with reference to collegial principles and have involved peer reviews in various forms. Moreover, in the early 2000s, direct recruitment[1] of professors partly based on collegial principles and faculty authority was reintroduced in the Swedish university landscape.

Even though it is clear that reforms of Swedish higher education and research have strengthened bureaucratic and enterprise-like governance at the expense of collegiality (Eriksson-Zetterquist & Sahlin, 2023, Vol. 87), we also see that collegiality remains an ideal. Elements of collegial governance are often referred to, even if these tend to be contextualized, mixed, and often subordinated to the more dominating enterprise and bureaucratic forms of governance. Below, we present two examples of revised peer review procedures (as practiced by the Swedish Research Council and used in research assessment at Uppsala University) and describe the reintroduction and practice of direct faculty recruitment. We continue by asking: To what extent, if at all, can these procedures be understood as a revitalized form of collegiality?

REVISED PEER REVIEW IN THE SWEDISH HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE

The Swedish Research Council is the main governmental research funding body in Sweden. The council aims to support research of the highest quality within all scientific fields and this is accomplished primarily by issuing open calls for research proposals and evaluating them based on peer reviews. On their website,[2] the main process of allocating funding is presented as follows:

> The Swedish Research Council uses peer review to assess the scientific quality of the applications and the potential of the research. Peer review involves well-qualified researchers within the same or nearby subject areas scrutinising the applications. Peer review is used all around the world, is greatly trusted by researchers, and is considered to be the best way of ensuring applications receive a balanced and fair assessment.

A main instrument for research funding by the council is an annual open call for grant applications which can be submitted by individual researchers in any scientific field. Applications are typically reviewed by panels of national and international scientific experts (i.e., active researchers) in a given field. However, the Swedish Research Council also issues specific calls for research proposals, either after the council makes its decisions or by order of the government. In those cases, peer review procedures tend to vary. We describe such a governmental assignment below that resulted in a suggested procedure that has not (yet) been realized. The assignment concerned a proposed model for quality-based allocation of increased direct governmental research funding to Swedish universities. We first provide background for the proposed procedure.

Every fourth year, the Swedish government presents a bill to direct the governmental research policy for the next four years. One such bill titled "Research, freedom, future: knowledge and innovation for Sweden" was presented by the social democratic government in December 2020. Among other suggestions, the bill proposed a new scheme for quality-based direct funding of universities and university colleges. The proposed new model was presented as one of several efforts aimed at protecting and promoting free research and was intended to replace an indicator-based resource allocation model that had been in place for a number of years. The indicator-based model included measures of publications and external funding. The intention was that at least 500 million SEK (approximately 50 million euros) should be allocated using the new model in 2023 and 2024 and that this amount would increase over time. Thus, the four Swedish governmental research councils (The Swedish Research Council, Formas, Forte, and Vinnova) were tasked with designing a model for "quality-based distribution of research funding" to "reward high quality in research but also to increasingly reward strategic profiling and prioritization of research in such environments, where the conditions are deemed best for research of the highest international quality in universities and colleges" (Prop. 2020/21:60, p. 47).

The assignment resulted in a report published in 2021 and another report in 2022 in which the proposal was further developed. In the first report, the research councils suggested how universities and university colleges could work

with such strategic profiling. First, each higher education institution should define its own profile areas, and how these will contribute to increased research quality. The authors of the report described strategic profiling as a "bottom-up" process that could vary in terms of "theme, width, direction, interdisciplinarity, disciplinary profile" and "include both basic as applied research and innovation." The only guiding principle was "high scientific quality," which was defined to also include collaboration with society at large. Furthermore, the universities and colleges were free to decide if they would like to collaborate with each other. The report also contained a detailed suggestion for how to present the profile – that is, to focus on the work's potential to support the universities' strategic profiles, renewal, and quality development. Among other aspects, a brief SWOT analysis was requested to justify the area chosen for the strategic profile that would become the basis for expanding the quality of scientific research and collaboration.

A major part of the two reports then proposed how applications for strategic profile areas should be assessed. Three conditions were established: strategic profile, scientific quality, and quality of collaboration. In the second report, the proposed procedure was summarized as follows:

> We suggest that all applications are assessed by an international panel consisting of around ten persons in leading positions and with backgrounds in different fields. The panel members shall together represent a broad range of competencies with solid experience in research in different scientific fields, research strategy work, quality development work, organizational and leadership issues, evaluation of scientific quality in various scientific fields, and collaboration between research in academia and the surrounding society. The gender distribution shall be equal, and the members shall represent a wide range of geographical locations. (Swedish Research Council, 2022, p. 17)

In addition, it was proposed that "For the scientific quality component, the panel may obtain statements from 2 to 3 subject experts for each profile area."

While "external review committees" and the emphasis on scientific quality relate to the collegial practice of peer review, this was largely subordinated to other kinds of expertise and other assessment criteria. Rather than peers with scientific knowledge in the same discipline, the report proposed reviewers with competence in "research strategy work, quality development work, organizational and leadership issues, evaluation of scientific quality in various scientific fields, and collaboration between research in academia and the surrounding society." Even though the proposal mentions scientific quality (a task for collegial peer review) the prioritized competence of reviewers is strongly connected to enterprise experiences of strategic work.

It should be noted that the proposed scheme was not implemented by the government. This is partly due to heavy critique of the proposed model, but also because a new government took office in the fall of 2022. Nevertheless, we find similar revisions of expert assessments, both in other assessments controlled by the Swedish Research Council and in other contexts. A recent call for grants to establish centers of excellence shows this increased emphasis on organizational issues in the assessment of applications and the expertise used. This call followed an item in the research policy bill from 2020 and was thus tasked by the

government. The issued grants were 4–6 million SEK annually for up to 10 years. The call was presented on the website[3] as follows:

> The purpose of the grant is to support the build-up and development of environments that promote research collaboration on a joint theme and contribute to higher education. The call is open for applications relating to pioneering and multi-disciplinary issues in all scientific disciplines.

Similar to the proposal for quality-based research funding of universities, organizational issues were emphasized in the proposed review procedure which stipulated that panel experts should have both organizational and research expertise. The assessment is described as follows on the Swedish Research Council's website[3]:

> Scientific quality is the fundamental criterion when the Swedish Research Council allocates grants to research. Your application is assessed in competition with the other applications on the basis of the following assessment criteria.

> **Evaluation Process**

> Your application for a grant for the Centre of Excellence is assessed by a review panel, where the members are international researchers with experience in both managerial and organizational work and also program activities.

> *Review Panel*

> The assessment of the application is done in two stages. In the first stage, the review panel will assess Part 1 of the application, which consists of the organizational proposal, focusing on the design of the program activities, recruitment processes, management, and organization. The applications assessed as being of the highest quality in Stage 1 will go on to Stage 2. In Stage 2, external reviewers with subject expertise will be appointed to assess the remaining applications. The external reviewers assess Part 2 of the application, focusing on the scientific description of the central theme/central question. Finally, the review panel will read the scientific assessments from the external reviewers and make an overall weighted assessment of each application, and then submit a proposal for a decision to the Board.

These examples suggest that how research is organized and led is increasingly seen as an important aspect of research assessment. This is true, even when it is explicitly said that research quality is the main aim and assessment criterion. Moreover, organizational leadership experience is defined as an area of expertise, along with research expertise. Contributions to and collaboration with broader society is yet another competence included in the research assessment criteria.

RESEARCH ASSESSMENTS AT UPPSALA UNIVERSITY

The broadening of what is seen as expertise in reviewing research is not restricted to the Swedish Research Council but appears to be a more widespread development. Here, we present an example from a comprehensive assessment of research at Uppsala University. The first university-wide research assessment exercise was initiated in 2007. The initiative was partly taken in reaction to discussions in Sweden about a need for national assessments of research comparable to the British REF/RAE. With this initiative, Uppsala University demonstrated to the

government that research assessment could be best performed by universities. The assessment was labeled "Quality and Renewal 2007" and aimed to identify research with the potential to develop into strong future areas of research. In the 578-page final report from the assessment, the process was described as follows:

> The evaluation was conducted in a peer-review process, where distinguished scholars of the international research community were engaged in reviewing the research. As a separate exercise, a bibliometric study of research publications for the period 2002–2006 was carried out by external expertise. The peer review was based on written background material containing self-assessments, documents presenting facts and figures of department activities, and lists of publications. In order to acquire an in-depth opinion about the status and future plans of the various departments, all panels spent a week at Uppsala University conducting site visits, during which they met and interviewed faculty members and Ph.D. students. The review work was distributed on 24 different expert panels with an average of 7 panelists per panel, in total 176 panelists. 11 panels were assigned to Humanities and Social Sciences, 7 panels to Science and Technology, and 6 panels to Medicine and Pharmacy. (Nordgren et al., 2007, p. 11)

After this assessment, and partly guided by it, the university allocated extra resources to specific research areas and research units at the university. However, it should be noted that the conditions for resource allocation were not set beforehand, and among areas receiving extra resources, there were both areas that came out as very strong and areas that came out as weak. In other words, there was not a direct link between the assessment and resource allocation; rather, the assessment was intended to aid research groups and leaders on all levels of the university in their continuous strategic decision-making. Uppsala's initiative was followed by similar initiatives in several Swedish universities. It was also followed up with a new assessment at Uppsala in 2011.

A third assessment, Quality and Renewal 2017, was carried out at Uppsala University, but in a different format. This time, the preparatory self-evaluations, the composition of the international panel, and the primary aim of the assessment were different, with less emphasis on research and research outputs, and more emphasis on leadership and organizational issues. In the executive summary of the assessment report for Quality and Renewal 2017, these differences were described as follows:

> […] an internet-based survey was carried out, in which around 3,700 active researchers at Uppsala University shared their perceptions of and opinions on their local research environments at the University. Together with some bibliometric analyses, the survey results served as background material for departmental self-evaluations, which in turn were subjected to external peer review. In this process, more than 130 "critical friends," most of them from outside Sweden, evaluated 54 evaluation units to assess strengths and weaknesses and make recommendations.

> Q&R17 is the third major research evaluation at Uppsala University …. In contrast to those two evaluations, Q&R17 has not resulted in any sort of grading of the research carried out at Uppsala University, either in its totality or in its parts. Nevertheless, the panel reports include numerous testimonies of the perceived strength and excellence of research at Uppsala University.

> More importantly, given the purpose of Q&R17, a number of areas have been identified where action is needed if Uppsala University is to take steps toward reaching its full potential. These relate to quality culture and control; leadership and strategic renewal; talent attraction and retention; international milieu; external collaboration and outreach; research-teaching linkages;

and organization and infrastructure …. [The conclusions and recommendations coming out of Q&R17] will form the basis for a number of prioritized actions throughout the University aiming to further strengthen the international standing of Uppsala University. (Malmberg et al., 2017, pp. 11–12)

We see a change over time where assessment came to focus less on research results and research quality, and instead focused primarily on organizational and leadership issues. Second, instead of focusing on individual researchers and their scientific performance, assessments focused on research environments and proposed actions to be taken by university leaders. Notably, the change in focus is also emphasized in the final report from the assessment. For example, they described the panel as composed not of peers, but of "critical friends."

The transformed focus also meant that individuals with other types of expertise were recruited to the panel, and thus assessments were no longer controlled by autonomous interrelated academic communities. These additional experts did not represent science and the scholarly community, but rather the organized system of higher education and research. They were recruited based on their experience as leaders of such organizations. This also meant that experts were not specialized, but were largely expected to have generic experiences and expertise on how to lead, organize and assess science.

TRANSLATIONS OF DIRECT RECRUITMENT OF PROFESSORS

The examples above show how organizational aspects became integrated into assessments of scientific quality. This also meant that to a lesser extent, such assessments were controlled by the academic community – by peers. Two central features of a collegial system are, as emphasized above and in the introduction to Vol. 86 (Sahlin & Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2023, Vol. 86) that faculty control peer review and faculty recruitment as ways to control scientific developments. We now turn to a case of revised procedures for specific faculty recruitments.

As described above, practices associated with the recruitment of academic staff have been reformed in the Swedish system. If we take a longer historical perspective, it is clear that faculty have never had full control over recruitment. Tight state control of universities meant that recruitment decisions were made by the government. However, if we concentrate on more modern times, as recruitment was delegated to universities, the law prescribed a careful peer review process with external reviewers, meaning that recruitment was primarily controlled by the academic community at large. The 2011 reform deregulated faculty recruitment and several universities chose to transform their recruitment processes, for example, by weakening external reviewers' control over the process.

An interesting case concerns the specific regulations regarding universities' right to directly recruit professors. The right to appoint a specific person to a professor position without a prior open announcement was reintroduced in the Higher Education Ordinance in the early 2000s. The first attempt to reintroduce this right was a way to support gender equality: a qualified woman could be

recruited to a position without an open announcement and competition. A system with peer review of external reviewers would be used in cases when it was not obvious that the person was competent for the position (e.g., when the recruited person had not held a similar position at another university). The right to direct recruitment as a way to support gender equality was soon abolished, but direct recruitment was reintroduced in the early 2020s, primarily as part of an effort to internationalize Swedish research. The reason for including this exception in the higher education ordinance was that the ordinary procedures with open calls and peer review procedures were usually quite time-consuming which meant that opportunities to recruit leading international scholars were often missed.

The rule about direct recruitment of professors was an exception not only to the regulated process for recruiting academic staff at universities but also to regulations regarding how staff should be recruited in the public sector in general. The law stipulates that open calls should be made for positions in the public sector and the most qualified person should be recruited (RF, c. 12, § 5; LOA, § 4).[4]

The rule in the Higher Education Ordinance (1993:100, c. 4, § 7) reads:

> A higher education institution may nominate an individual for an appointment as a professor if the appointment of the individual is of exceptional importance for a specific activity at the institution. If a higher education institution nominates an individual for a post, the grounds on which the appointment is of exceptional importance for the institution must be placed on record.

Even though the work preceding the legal change stipulated that this procedure was intended to be used primarily to recruit leading international scholars, this was not explicitly part of the legal rule. Swedish universities translated the new regulations into their own policies in different ways:

Gothenburg University[5]

> The procedure will be used restrictively and aims primarily to facilitate the recruitment of prominent international researchers. The procedure can also in exceptional cases be used as a strategic instrument to achieve a more even gender distribution within the category of professors. (our translation)

Uppsala University[6]

> Notice of employment as a professor means that a person without prior information about a vacancy is newly hired as a professor. The summons procedure will only be used in the case of both the subject area and the one that is referred to be deemed to be of special strategic importance for a certain activity at the university. The summons procedure shall be used restrictively.

Lund University[7]

> The procedure will be used restrictively and aims to facilitate and accelerate the recruitment of internationally renowned researchers. The procedure will be used as a tool for strategic recruitment. The procedure must be used so that Swedish universities can compete with international higher education institutions for very prominent people that the university would otherwise risk losing in an overly protracted recruitment procedure. (our translation)

Although these rule changes were intended to strengthen faculty, in several cases across Sweden this process has not been used to recruit internationally renowned researchers. Rather, it has been used to give permanent professor

positions to local scholars who are serving in university leadership roles (which, according to normal collegial principles, should not be permanent). Moreover, these direct recruitments have not been initiated by faculty, but by vice-chancellors or vice-rectors – that is, by university leaders.

The Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in particular has used direct recruitment for this purpose, appointing 14 professors via this process since 2011. Seven of these persons already had appointments at KTH, one was recruited from another Swedish university and six were internationally recruited (Rönnmar, 2022). The documented motives were outstanding excellence in research (six cases), high-quality research funding (three cases), important work performed at KTH within research, teaching or leadership (two cases), and work upholding tasks as head of school or head of department (three cases), other motivations (two cases), and gender equality (four cases), with more than one motivation possible for each case (Rönnmar, 2022). Direct recruitment of a person holding the position of head of school led to much criticism and was subject to an external investigation. The person was not a professor at the time of the direct recruitment, yet no peer review of merits was performed. Investigators found that extensive criticism of the appointment was warranted and recommended that the university review its appointment procedures (Rönnmar, 2022).

Our review revealed that a central feature of academic collegiality is faculty control over recruitment, which is based on academic merit in research and higher education. The reintroduction of direct recruitment of professors in the Swedish system was motivated by the ambition to increase the internationalization of Swedish research with an emphasis on scientific merits. However, when translated into policies at the university level and enacted in practice, organizational and leadership issues and competencies became integrated into and even dominated scientific quality. Moreover, the processes were not controlled by faculty in the scientific areas of the directly recruited professors, but by persons in management positions.

PREDATORY PEER REVIEW PROCESSES

Our cases show how the unique competencies and boundaries of faculty in Sweden have been weakened as universities have been reformed, and thus constructed as organizational actors. International examples show that this phenomenon is not unique to Sweden (Bromley & Meyer, 2015; Krücken & Meier, 2006; Musselin, 2018; Ramirez, 2010). Notably, changes in collegial practices may also be linked to a watering down of collegiality in the peer review process for academic journals. Two recent examples from the journals *Sustainability* and *Frontiers* illustrate how collegial work is undermined in this context.

On Wikipedia in December 2022, the journal *Sustainability* was described as follows:

> *Sustainability* is a peer-reviewed open-access academic journal published by MDPI. It covers all aspects of sustainability studies. The journal has faced criticism over its quality. In September 2021 the journal was among the initial 13 journals included in the official Norwegian list of

possibly predatory journals, known as level X. In 2022 the Norwegian national publication committee determined that *Sustainability* is not an academic journal and removed it from the register of approved journals starting from 2023. The journal is listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals.[8]

Since its first issue in 2009, the open-access journal *Sustainability* has followed a remarkable development trajectory. In 2021, its impact factor was 3.889 and that year, 14,000 papers were published, making it the fourth largest journal in the world.[9] Over the period from 2016 to 2021, the annual volume of published papers increased six-fold. However, in a newspaper article published in the Norweigan higher education journal *Khrono* in May 2022, Espen Løkeland-Stai reported that the journal had not followed widely accepted procedures for peer review.[10] Additionally, papers were reported to have been published despite the need for language editing, and the volume of published manuscripts has increased tremendously.[11] Accordingly, Anne Kristine Børresen, head of "CRIStin,"[12] the Norwegian Scientific Index, decided to remove *Sustainability* from the index, meaning that manuscripts published in the journal would neither be counted as performance outcomes for academic careers nor be acknowledged in other academic contexts, such as applications for research funding.

Behind the increase in volume is the journal's owner, MDPI (Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute), which has been assumed to make great financial gains by capitalizing on scholars' desires to add "special issue editor" to their CVs. Instead of attempting to identify new fields in need of special issues, the incentive for special issues is claimed to be scholars' vanity and career ambitions.[13]

Another publication platform that has attracted criticism is *Frontiers*, established in 2007 by neuroscientists Henry Markram and Kamila Markram.[14] In December 2022, the journal's webpage reported that *Frontiers* was the "3rd most-cited publisher, 6th largest publisher, with 1.9 billion article views and downloads."[15] This open science platform stated its mission as follows:

> Our research journals are community-driven and peer-reviewed by editorial boards of over 202,000 top researchers. Featuring pioneering technology, artificial intelligence, and rigorous quality standards, our research articles have been viewed more than 1.9 billion times, reflecting the power of open research.[11]

The publisher also listed its innovations, three of which we highlight here:

> Community-driven journals: Leading researchers serve as independent editors and reviewers on our editorial boards.

> Research topics: Article collections showcasing emerging and important areas of research.

> Collaborative peer review: Our unique online forum with real-time interactions ensures rigorous, constructive, and transparent peer review. Source: Frontiers | Mission (frontiersin.org).

In 2015, a discussion developed in the medical section of *Frontiers*, when the chief editors published a manifesto that eliminated the ability to submit rebuttals, a principle that previously had been considered foundational for the journal. Moreover, the executive editor had fired all signatory chief editors, leaving the journal with no editor-in-chief, and just a few chief specialty editors. Some associate editors were embroiled in controversies, as they were being investigated

for data manipulation and their papers had been retracted. Leonid Schneider, who discussed whether *Frontiers* was a predatory journal, noted that the two co-founders, Henry Markram (Editor-in-Chief) and Kamila Markram (CEO), were a couple with ownership interests in the journal. While some scholars reported great peer review and publishing experiences with *Frontiers*, others were more negative. There were also ethical concerns, as rules for anonymity (human patient identity) were not followed. Peer reviewers had no option to reject a submitted manuscript[16]; instead, the journal advocated "interactive review," an ongoing discussion between the authors and reviewers as a paper is being developed. Taken together, it appeared as though editorial independence had been compromised, with the owners and publisher being highly involved in publishing practices.[17]

Another controversy emerged in the fall of 2022 when scholars involved in a special issue about "Change and Innovation in Manuscript Review" published in *Frontiers in Research Metrics and Analytics* discussed their experiences. Even though they were aware of previous criticism, the journals' explicit ambition to innovate the peer review process (as described above), led them to conclude that they should continue with the project. *Frontiers,* however, did not let them publish their reflections on the journal's peer review procedure. Instead, the scholars presented this content as a blog post. In brief, the algorithm-based system for reviewer selection, which contacted numerous potential reviewers (including those who were not qualified for the task) with preformulated invitations turned out to be very rigid, leading to significant extra work to correct errors made by the system. The time allocated for reviews was seven days. Overall, the journal's practices of not allocating space for editorials, not allowing the editors to reflect on their experiences, and not extending review periods led the guest editors to question, the integrity and quality of papers accepted by the journal.[18]

These examples show that shortcuts have been taken in peer reviewing in the wake of the rapid expansion of publications following the expansion of universities across the globe, the expansion of English-language journal publications, and the implementation of performance measurement systems that emphasize quantity (i.e., requiring scholars to amass an increased number of journal publications). This also has been shown to lead to negative outcomes in the form of declining quality of published papers and less innovation in research (Fleming, 2020; Gerdin & Englund, 2021).

The examples of *Frontiers* and *Sustainability* demonstrate yet another dimension of setting aside collegial principles for peer review – namely, the potential to benefit financially from publishing journals that claim to follow the principles of scientific work. The promotion of open access has put yet other pressures on the publication market. In the open-access model, scholars pay for publication upfront, and in return, their research is accessible to anyone on the Internet. Given that several distinguished journals have been recategorized as predatory, there appears to be a risk of peer review standards being sacrificed for the sake of ownership interests and financial benefits.

Taken together, a weakening of the peer review process for scientific work, the establishment of performance measurement systems, and the marketization of publishing channels challenge collegiality. Journals that claim to operate

according to foundational principles for scholarly work but actually set them aside appear to be watering down the critical principles of collegiality.

COLLEGIALITY-WASHING AND WATERING DOWN COLLEGIALITY?

Assessments of scientific quality have been discussed extensively over the years, and the importance of distinguishing scientific knowledge from pseudo-scientific claims has become a subject of much debate. Influential research has revealed the processes of boundary work in science (e.g., Gieryn, 1999). These attempts are in line with the organizational requirements of collegiality which have been summarized by Waters (1989) (see also Sahlin & Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2023, Vol. 86), who emphasized that collegial principles support self-governance built on scientific principles. This self-governance includes self-controlling and self-policing. As we stated in the introduction to this paper and as emphasized by Waters (1989, p. 958), peer review and faculty recruitment are the main vehicles for this self-governance: "There must be maximum stress on peer evaluation and informal control. The products of the work done by colleagues must be available for peer review."

Our analyses of several examples of recent peer review and recruitment policies in Sweden show that even when scientific quality and peer review are emphasized as important aspects of these assessments, specialized scientific expertise is blended with organization and leadership experience. The cases from Sweden show that research assessment is not exclusively in the hands of faculty. Organizational aspects have increasingly been incorporated into assessment criteria, even when such criteria are said to explicitly focus on scientific quality. While the historical review shows that assessment and recruitment have never been completely controlled by faculty, the cases suggest that organizational assessment criteria and motivations have become increasingly important and are increasingly being defined as part of the assessment of scientific quality. This has also meant a broadening of what is meant by expertise and who is seen as an expert. Whereas scientific expertise is documented, specialized, and subject to continuous scrutiny, organizational and leadership expertise is much less so and is dealt with in much more generic terms. Assessments have largely come to focus on how research is organized, rather than on research per se.

The cases about peer reviews and predatory journals show that challenges to collegiality not only come from external pressures and new demands but also a watering down of collegiality that follows from shortcuts taken in these processes due to the expansion of both research publications and commercial interests in them.

The examples presented here followed different developmental trajectories. Predatory journals set aside the prescribed model for academic peer review while symbolically claiming that their processes follow its principles and practices. This decoupling of presentation and practice amounts to window dressing that resembles cases of greenwashing described above.

At the Swedish Research Council and Uppsala University, collegiality was reduced when other groups began to participate in research assessments. These ways of organizing assessments had evolved gradually over time, limiting the influence of collegial principles in, for example, the appointment of academic leaders and practices within decision-making bodies (Ahlbäck Öberg & Boberg, 2023). In these cases, we see a stepwise translation rather than a clear decoupling. These can be described as examples of collegiality drift rather than collegiality-washing.[19] Collegiality is translated in hybrid settings, governed by a mix of enterprise, bureaucratic and collegial ideals. This hybridity eventually infiltrates assessments, too. Moreover, as universities are reformed and constructed as organizational actors, organizational aspects of research come to be seen as a quality criterion on par with scientific principles. With this development, the definition of who is a peer – or an expert – and what knowledge counts as relevant, becomes much less clear.

Another example is the direct recruitment of professors at KTH. Instead of applying the system of faculty-controlled recruitment according to the principles of collegial governance, those in management positions appear to have translated direct recruitment to prioritize organizational and managerial concerns. Thus, it is a story of a drift away from collegiality, leading to a more deceitful, perverted practice aimed at controlling faculty recruitment.

The examples of edited hybrid practices of peer review and research assessments (i.e., collegiality drift) and management shortcuts in faculty recruitment (i.e., perverted collegiality) can be understood as translations of the ideas and models provided by the institution of collegiality into something else. The ideal type of collegiality is edited in settings informed by enterprise ideals. For example, faculty-controlled recruitment was formulated as a collegiate process, but subsequent translations have become unrecognizable in relation to the template.

Regardless of whether deviations from collegial ideals follow from strategic uses of hypocrisy and window dressing, or stem from editing in university settings increasingly constructed as organizational actors dominated by enterprise ideals, collegiality is being eroded or watered down. Collegiality also erodes over time due to a lack of maintenance, and new, edited versions of "re-collegialization" no longer resemble the original ideas and practices. In the introduction to Vol. 86 (Sahlin & Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2023, Vol. 86) we defined collegiality as an institution of self-governance. An institution includes – and is upheld by – structures, shared meanings, and identities (March & Olsen, 1995; see also Sahlin & Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2023, Vol. 86). Hence, institutions are enacted in formal structures, shared meanings, and myriad supporting and reproducing practices, and in turn, these reinforce institutions. With a lack of maintenance, collegiality appears to be less resistant to the washing and drift we have described above, and the aims, as well as procedures or practices of collegiality as an institution of self-governance, are watered down.

Before we draw a few final conclusions on the consequences for the integrity and trust in the science of this watering down of collegiality, we will briefly return to the parallels drawn above to the green- and blue-washing literature. As described above, "washing" is normally used pejoratively and refers to instances of decoupling, where organizations claim to do one thing but hypocritically do

something else in practice (Brunsson, 1989/2002). Such hypocrisy is also obvious when journals claim to follow collegial principles for scrutiny, yet publish articles without legitimately conducting such examinations. This type of washing assumes intentionality and strategy: washing is thought to be a premeditated handling of contradictory demands or preconditions whereby results and activities are selectively presented or hidden. When we revisit the green-, and blue-washing literature in light of our own analysis, we find that the very ambiguity of "green" or "blue" norms and demands may lead organizations to translate such demands differently and not always guided by strategic intentions. We find instances of mission drift and perverted missions also in the green- and blue-washing literature.

Consequences for Collegiality and the Integrity of and Trust in Science

The cases we have presented and analyzed in this paper demonstrate the watering down of collegiality in the wake of collegiality-washing, collegiality perversion, and collegiality drift. We have noted how core elements of collegiality as a mode of self-governance and scientific knowledge inquiry are set aside. Organizational and leadership criteria, which have a much less specified knowledge base than science, are being integrated into research assessments and sometimes seem to become dominant. Criteria for assessments and prioritization are being blurred, and guiding principles for decisions are becoming less clear. Rather than being a matter of upholding the integrity of science, relations with society at large and with external interests are strongly emphasized. This may lead to a questioning of what science is, which decision criteria are used for awards and resource allocation, and what interests scientific developments and universities serve. These changes are also being driven by the tremendous expansion of universities, scientific research efforts, and publications. Collegial governance is perceived as taking too much time, introducing the risk that taking shortcuts may appear to be more efficient (see Östh Gustafsson, 2023, Vol. 86).

However, we also find that several of these washing attempts have surfaced in extensive criticism and debate. Too much deviation from collegial principles appears controversial and does meet resistance and reactions (see also Crace et al., 2023, Vol. 87; Dénis et al., 2023, Vol. 87). The reason why such washing attempts appear controversial also is clearly demonstrated in our examples of collegiality washing. Even if these attempts at collegiality-washing may be understood as translations of ideals and norms that appear unclear or ambiguous, we note that they have sparked debates and controversies because the norms of collegiality (i.e., faculty control, research integrity, and science-based knowledge development) are seen as crucial for scientific work and advancement. In this way, collegiality-washing reveals both the weaknesses of and challenges to collegiality, as well as the strengths of collegial norms.

NOTES

1. The procedure to recruit individual professors without a prior open announcement is translated differently from the Swedish expression *kallelse av professor* by different universities. Here we use the term *direct recruitment*.

2. Retrieved on December 26, 2022, from https://www.vr.se/english/applying-for-funding/how-applications-are-assessed.html.

3. Retrieved on April 20, 2023, from https://www.vr.se/english/applying-for-funding/calls/2022-06-21-grant-for-centre-of-excellence.html.

4. *Regeringsformen* (RF) refers to the Instrument of Government of 1974, one of Sweden's four constitutional documents. *Lagen om offentlig anställning* (LOA) refers to The Public Employment Act (1994, p. 260).

5. Our translation: Retrieved on April 25, 2023, from https://medarbetarportalen.gu.se/handels-internt/berednings-_och_arbetsgrupper/lararforslagsnamnden/rekrytering/rekrytering-professor/kallelse-som-professor;jsessionid=node0qrt8523e79cobu9omdh4sjfr1099335.node0?skipSSOCheck=true&referer=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.google.com%2F.

6. Our translation: Retrieved on April 25, 2023, from https://www.regler.uu.se/digitalAssets/237/c_237393-l_3-k_kallelse-professor-130312.pdf.

7. Our translation: Retrieved on April 25, 2023, from https://www.medarbetarwebben.lu.se/sites/medarbetarwebben.lu.se/files/foreskrifter-handlaggning-rektorsbeslut-kalla-professor.pdf.

8. Retrieved on December 14, 2022, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainability_(journal).

9. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainability_(journal).

10. This news article was a follow-up on an editorial written by four representatives (among them Børresen) from the Norwegian Scientific Index, in which they explained why *Sustainability* had been moved to the grey zone list in the index. Retrieved on December 15, 2022, from https://khrono.no/sustainability-er-ute-av-listen-over-godkjente-tidsskrifter/689358.

11. Retrieved on December 14, 2022, from https://khrono.no/stryker-et-av-verdens-storste-fra-listen-over-godkjente-tidsskrifter/689264.

12. CRIStin is an abbreviation of "Current Research Information System in Norway." It is used by different countries (e.g., South Africa, since 2016). Retrieved on December 15, 2022, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CRIStin.

13. Retrieved on December 14, 2022, from https://khrono.no/stryker-et-av-verdens-storste-fra-listen-over-godkjente-tidsskrifter/689264.

14. Retrieved on December 15, 2022, from https://www.frontiersin.org/about/history.

15. Retrieved on December 15, 2022, from https://www.frontiersin.org/about/mission.

16. According to "The Netherlands Code of Conduct for Academic Practice," Klaas Van Dijk stated that peer reviewers should be given opportunities to withdraw, for instance in cases of impartiality. Retrieved on December 15, 2022, from https://www.leidenmadtrics.nl/articles/reflections-on-guest-editing-a-frontiers-journal.

17. Retrieved on December 15, 2022, from https://forbetterscience.com/2015/10/28/is-frontiers-a-potential-predatory-publisher/.

18. Retrieved on December 15, 2022, from https://www.leidenmadtrics.nl/articles/reflections-on-guest-editing-a-frontiers-journal.

19. We would like to thank Logan Crace for suggesting that the cases presented in this paper are examples of collegiality-washing, collegiality drift, and perverted collegiality, respectively.

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