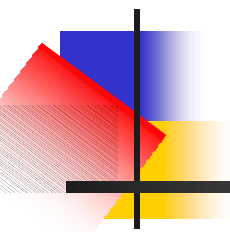


# Some Reflections on Research and Publishing



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A. Parasuraman  
University of Miami

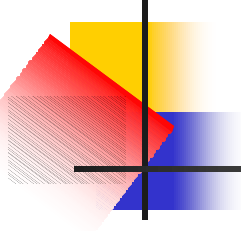
*SERVSIG Services Marketing Doctoral Consortium*  
*28 October 2004*



# Presentation Overview

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- Some thoughts on contributing significantly to a discipline
- A general typology of research and writing contributions
- Implications of the typology for academicians



# Thoughts on Contributing Significantly to a Discipline



# Roles of College Faculty

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- Three traditional roles: research, teaching and service
- Of these, research is the *defining* role of terminally qualified, tenure-track faculty
- Why?
  - College education is a “credence” product
  - As such, an instructor’s research reputation is an important signal for instilling confidence in skeptical students who are unsure of the *core quality* and *potential value* of their education

# Roles of College

## Faculty.....continued

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- A demonstrated ability to perform and publish high-quality research is a key credential for service roles such as supervising grad students, serving as gatekeepers for the discipline, etc.
- Thus, the research role is a *prerequisite* for important pedagogical and service roles.
- It is not surprising that “publish or perish” is a pervasive phrase in our professional lexicon...
- While phrases such as “teach or be terminated” and “serve or be severed” are not!



# Primary Conduits for Channelling Research and Writing Contributions

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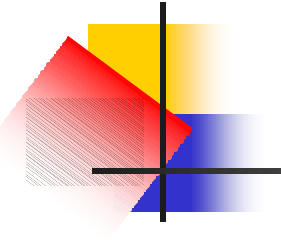
- Broad-based scholarly journals that are the discipline's standard bearers
- Specialized scholarly journals that have a narrower scope in terms of content and/or methodology
- Scholarly books or book chapters
- "Applied" journals that are aimed primarily at practitioner audiences
- Textbooks
- Business books



# Multiple Means for Influencing the Discipline through Research and Writing

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- By triggering further scholarly discourse and research
- By influencing Ph.D. students, the discipline's future gatekeepers
- By providing food for thought to thoughtful practitioners
- By offering "immediate" managerial applications
- By providing pedagogical aids for preparing students to be successful managers



# A General Typology of Research and Writing Contributions



# The six publication conduits and five means of influence together yield a typology of contributions that vary in terms of:

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- Nature of the contribution: *Knowledge Creation vs. Knowledge Dissemination*
- “Endurance” of the contribution: *The degree to which the contribution continues to stimulate scholarly thought and spawn additional research*
- Target of the contribution
  - Research scholars
  - Ph.D. students
  - Thoughtful managers
  - Managers in general
  - Non-Ph.D. students



# Hypothesized Variations in the Nature of the Publication Conduits

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- Broad-Based Scholarly Journals
- Specialized Scholarly Journals
- Scholarly Books/Book chapters
- “Applied” Journals
- Textbooks
- Business Books

*Primarily Knowledge  
Creation*



*Primarily Knowledge  
Dissemination*

# Hypothesized Variations in the Endurance of the Publication Conduits

- Broad-Based Scholarly Journals
- Specialized Scholarly Journals
- Scholarly Books/Book chapters
- “Applied” Journals
- Textbooks
- Business Books

*Relatively  
High*



*Relatively  
Low*

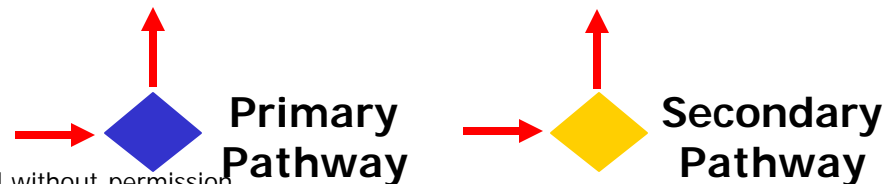
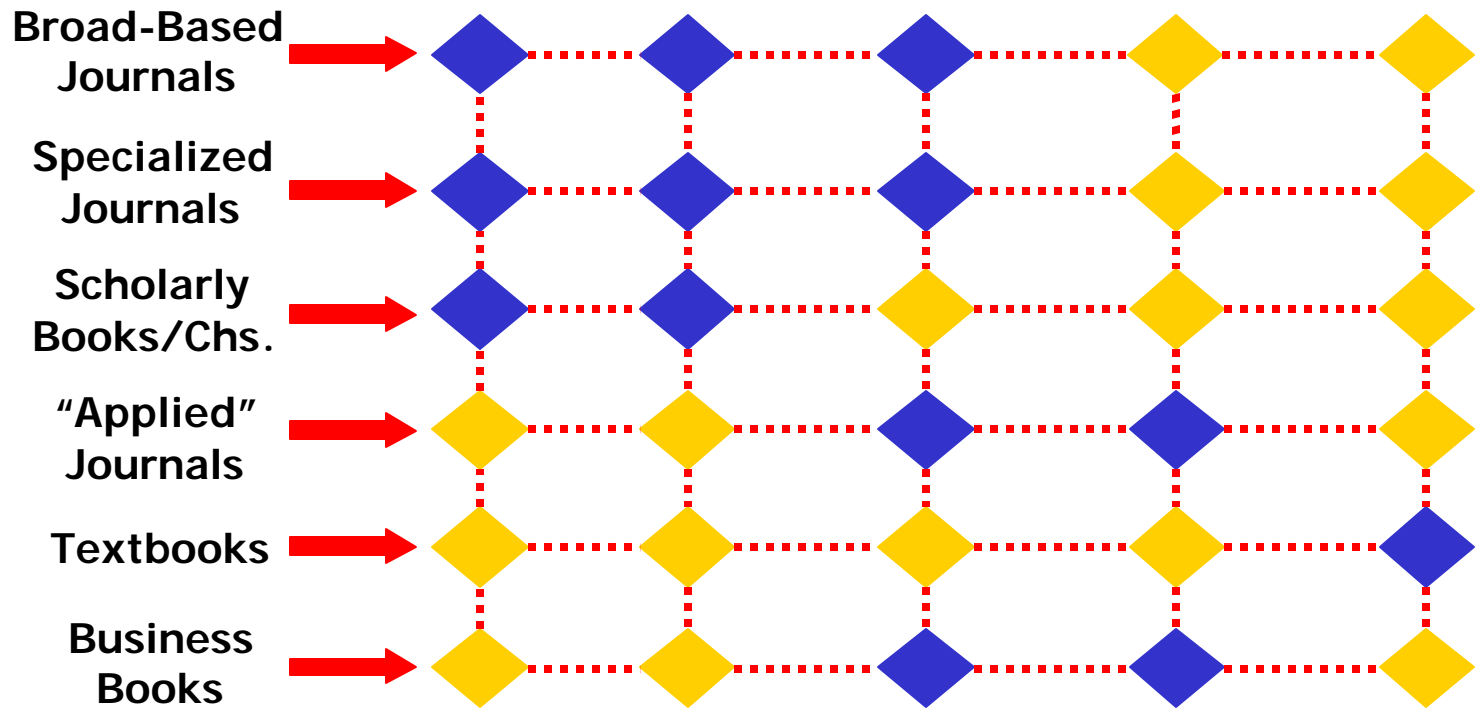
# Typology of Research and Writing Contributions

## Targets

Research Scholars    Ph.D Students    Thoughtful Managers    Managers in General    Non-Ph.D Students

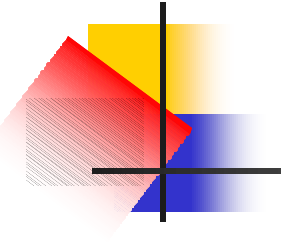
## Channels

*K.C.* High  
*K.D.* Low



**Nature**

**Endurance**



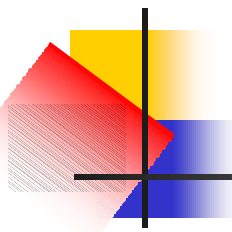
# Implications of the Typology: Four General Observations



# Observation 1: All publication channels merit consideration

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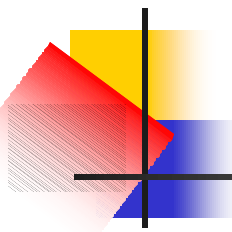
- The typology offers multiple *primary* pathways for influencing a discipline
- It is possible to make a significant impact through one, a few, or all pathways
- Within the marketing discipline.....
  - Some renowned scholars have made their mark primarily through scholarly writings
  - Others have made an impact primarily through textbooks and business books
  - Yet others have done so through a variety of channels



## Observation 2: Some publication pathways are more appropriate than others in early career stages

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- Despite Observation 1, *beginning* scholars would do well to focus mostly—if not solely—on pathways near the upper end of the typology.
- This is so because:
  - Publishing in a scholarly journal is a *critical* milestone that terminally-qualified, tenure-track faculty must cross.



## Observation 2: Some publication pathways are more appropriate than others in early career stages...contd.

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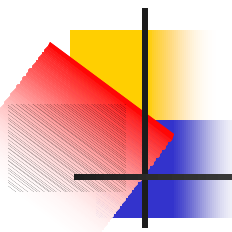
- The best window of opportunity for crossing that milestone is soon after obtaining one's Ph.D. for several reasons:
  - Current and extensive knowledge pertaining to the dissertation domain
  - Availability of a fresh, original piece of research (i.e., the Ph.D. thesis)
  - Minimum service commitments
- Establishing one's credentials by following pathways at the upper end of the typology will enhance the success and impact of later contributions through other pathways.



## Observation 3: It is advisable to consider multiple and varied journals within the realm of scholarly publishing

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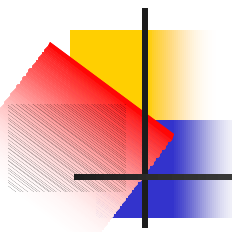
- Primary pathways at the very top of the typology are too narrow to accommodate the increasing flow of traffic trying to navigate them.
- That a vast majority of articles submitted to a discipline's flagship journals will be rejected (and not necessarily because of poor article quality) is a harsh reality.



## Observation 3: It is advisable to consider multiple and varied journals within the realm of scholarly publishing.....contd.

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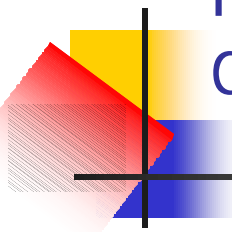
- Scholars in early career stages would benefit by:
  - Broadening their evoked sets of potential journal outlets
  - Increasing the number and variety of manuscripts they produce
  - Studying the nature, content and requirements of each journal
  - Ensuring a good fit between the journal and the manuscript being submitted to it



## Observation 4: Traversing all publication pathways will leave the most wide-spread and deepest imprint on the discipline

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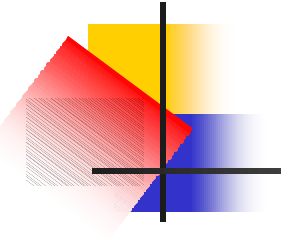
- The epitome of having a significant impact on a discipline is to make an impact on not only its knowledge base but also its practice and pedagogy.
- Achieving this epitome would require passing through most—if not all—pathways in the typology.



## Observation 4: Traversing all publication pathways will leave the most wide-spread and deepest imprint on the discipline...contd.

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- However, it is not necessary—nor advisable—to cover all pathways at once.
- Instead, scholars could consider a “longitudinal multi-pathway” strategy wherein they:
  - Add pathways—in roughly the top-to-bottom sequence in the typology—to their publication portfolios over time
  - Strive for synergy between the content areas of the newly added and already traversed pathways
  - If necessary, decrease the relative emphasis on pathways already traversed



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# Thank You!