

Title: The evolution of scholarly communication and the supreme power of inertia

Date: Sep 09, 2008 03:30 PM

URL: <http://pirsa.org/08090032>

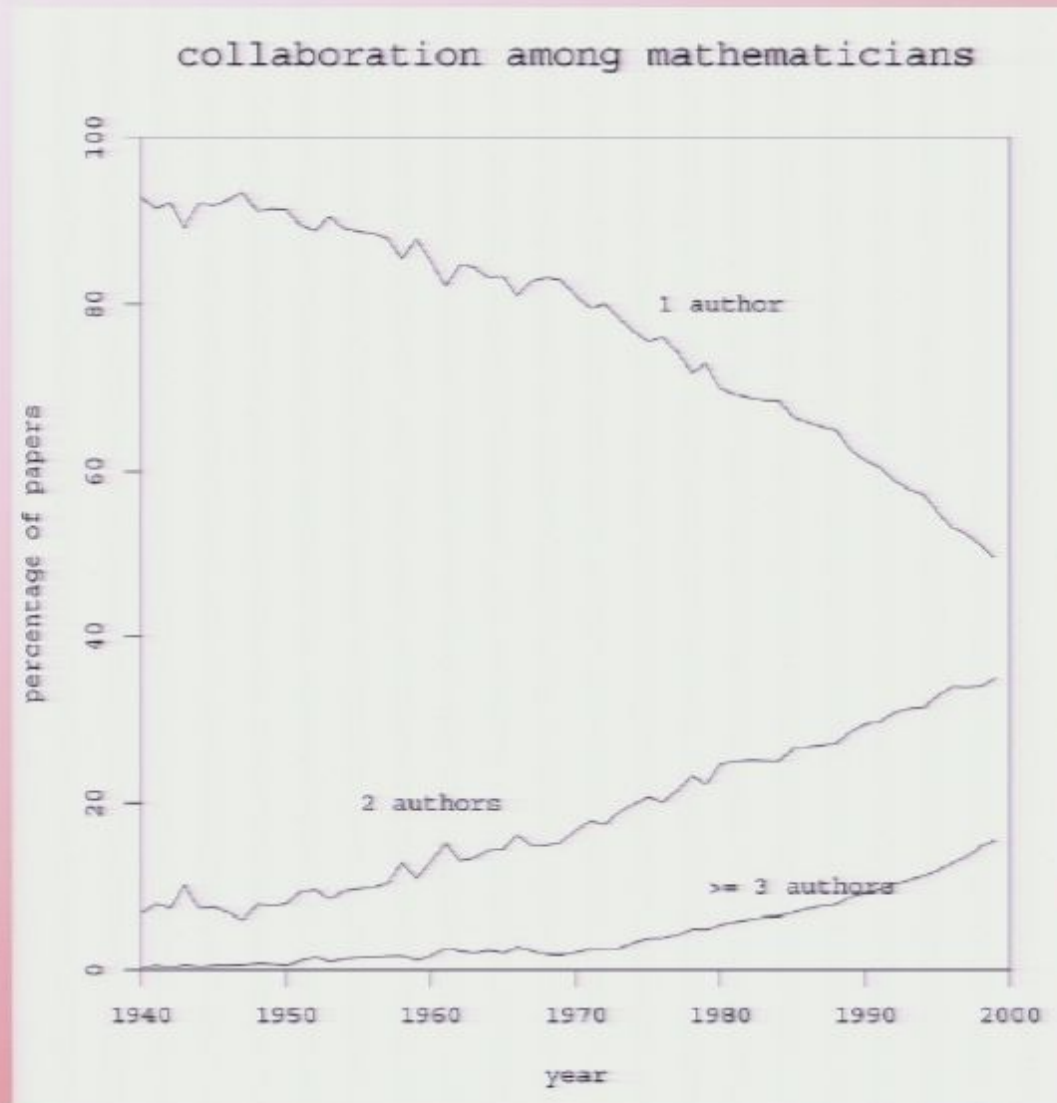
Abstract: The rapid technological change around us supports the idea of general speedup in the tempo of life, the illusion that we are living \on Internet time.\ Yet many changes are still taking generations, and that includes changes in scientific communication as well as in sociology of science. The evidence for wildly varying rates of changes, and the reasons for them, will be discussed.



THE PATENT SAFETY RAILWAY BUFFER.

* A humorous suggestion by "Mr. Pencil" as a means of preventing railway accidents.

Rate of change:



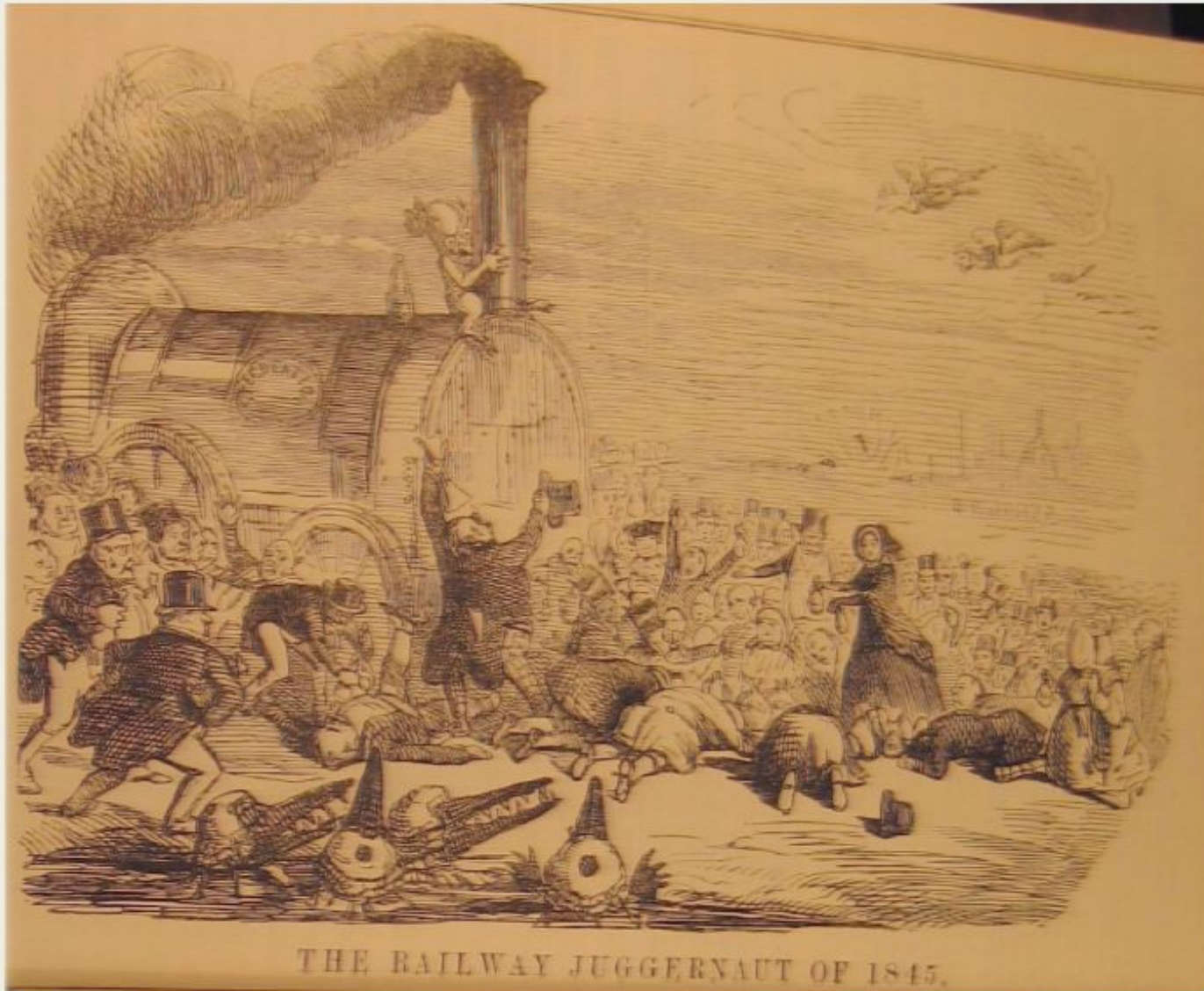
Mistaken predictions:

The goals of the advertising business model do not always correspond to providing quality search to users. ... we expect that advertising funded search engines will be inherently biased towards the advertisers and away from the needs of the consumers. ... But we believe the issue of advertising causes enough mixed incentives that it is crucial to have a competitive search engine that is transparent and in the academic realm.

One can be wrong and still succeed:

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Sergey Brin and Larry Page, 1998



THE RAILWAY JUGGERNAUT OF 1845.

Highly recommended reference:

William Aytoun short story, “The Glenmutchkin Railway”

(annotated version at <http://www.dtc.umn.edu/~odlyzko/rrsources/>)

- protagonists: Augustus Reginald Dunshunner and Bob O’Corkindale
- “abhorred [work] with a detestation worthy of a scion of nobility”
- eager to “[have] a pluck at the public pigeon”
- “the magical bands of iron [were uniting] all the populous towns”
- supporting characters: Tavish M’Tavish of Invertavish, the Captain of M’Alcohol, ...

