Pre-Reviewing and Carrots Instead of Sticks

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EGAP makes a direct analogy to the heavily regulated (FDAAA-style) medical model for registration

- Regulation as a “stick”
  - Failing to preregister reduces your chances of publishing in leading journals
  - Deviating from your plan requires a narrative of shame to be appended to your manuscript

- Regulation of behavior ⇒
  - Underproduction of inductive and descriptive research
  - Creates incentives to neglect data problems
  - Barriers to entry for resource poor and junior scholars
Instead focus on carrots instead of sticks

Use the registration system to create incentives to produce higher quality research instead of as a shaming mechanism for researchers who don’t conform to textbook standards for deductive research.
Carrot: Use the registration system to create a new mechanism to textbf{“pre-review”} research designs

- Pre-review as “carrot”
  - Reviews at the design stage would have the highest marginal benefit
  - Pre-review has the highest benefit to scholars who don’t have resources or extensive colleague networks
  - The quality of criticism is much higher in peer review than from informally circulating papers ("accountability")

- There is currently no mechanism for peer review of research designs
- Design the system so pre-reviewing is incentivized and not too time consuming
A mechanism for pre-reviewing

- Must preregister to be eligible for pre-reviews of your PAP.
- To begin create an account in the system and submit your PAP
- The system randomly assigns two PAPs into your account from the queue (one cannot choose which studies to review).
- Must complete two reviews of other studies in order for your PAP to be placed in the queue for peer review.
- In return you get two reviews of your study.
- Reviews are non-anonymous.
Pre-reviewing creates carrot-like incentives to participate in the preregistration system

- (I realize the most reviews are stupid, but you can usually find some constructive points even in the bad ones)
- Pre-reviewing:
  - Improves the quality of research designs at a point of highest benefit
  - Creates incentives to spend more time on the front end of research
  - Improves the credibility of research and of any subsequent null findings

⇒ Registration reduces fishing from these positive incentives rather than from directly regulating behavior and shaming