

# “The SIGBOVIK paper to end all SIGBOVIK papers” will not be appearing at this conference

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**Abstract:** Any attempt to write “the SIGBOVIK paper to end all SIGBOVIK papers” should be met with a healthy dose of skepticism, as its actual eventuality is statistically unlikely. The author attempts to make this clear through middlingly in-depth analysis, despite little actual background in statistics, science, finality, or writing SIGBOVIK papers.

## Introduction

There are few things that genuinely get me excited in any given year. A new season of a good TV show, the conclusion of a long running internet project, and the Tour de France all take proud positions on any given year’s list. SIGBOVIK, too, has been a fixture since I discovered it a few years ago.

Invariably, however, circumstances<sup>1</sup> conspire to ensure that I cannot experience the conference as it is in progress. In an attempt to ameliorate the issue<sup>2</sup> I am sending in this loose collection of statistics and “humour” with the goal of detailing the extreme unlikelihood that “the SIGBOVIK paper to end all SIGBOVIK papers” will appear at this conference.

Also, I was bored,<sup>3</sup> and it seemed like a good idea at the time.

## Prior work

Some statistical analysis has been performed in the past by other authors. The Organizing Committee for SIGBOVIK 2014 broke down the types of submissions received for each of the prior conferences.<sup>4</sup> 2017’s Committee reported receiving exactly 35,000 submissions, and looked at metrics for reduction prior to publication.<sup>5</sup> Finally, in 2019, Jenny H. Lin attempted to project a handful of trends in submissions, as well as surveying some past chairs of the conference.<sup>6</sup>

## I have the world’s most complete listing of SIGBOVIK papers

The data for this paper<sup>7</sup> is pulled from the proceedings for all previous SIGBOVIK conferences, which, with one exception, were found on the website of the Association for Computational Heresy.

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<sup>1</sup> I forget it is happening shortly beforehand and/or I sleep right through it. In all fairness, I live in Australia, and 9am on the day after April Fools’ is a weird time.

<sup>2</sup> “Surely if I am involved, I will not forget,” Thomas said, knowing full well this was not as foolproof a plan as he was letting on.

<sup>3</sup> What does it say about me that my cure for boredom was to perform a lot of tedious work?

<sup>4</sup> “Message from the Organizing Committee”, Organizing Committee, *SIGBOVIK 2014*

<sup>5</sup> “Message from the Organizing Committee”, Organizing Committee, *SIGBOVIK 2017*

<sup>6</sup> “A Survey and Projection of SIGBOVIK Trends”, Jenny H. Lin, *SIGBOVIK 2019*

<sup>7</sup> You can find my data here: <http://bit.ly/SIGBOVIKPaperData>

The remaining proceedings were found wedged at the bottom of a time hole,<sup>8</sup> which was very inconvenient, as I had just got the time out of my shoes after the last [expurgated for space concerns].

- Papers comprised partially or entirely of image files, inadvertently or otherwise<sup>9</sup>
- Incorrectly encoded non-ASCII characters in titles or names<sup>10,11</sup>
- Entirely incorrectly encoded papers<sup>12</sup>
- Very extensive authorship listings, with a range of different organisations, laid out in such a way as to make any hypothetical future statistician tear their hair out<sup>14</sup>
- Deliberate repetition of names<sup>15,16,17</sup>
- Catching a brief cold about halfway through the data entry process<sup>18</sup>
- Humorous fictitious names and organisations<sup>19</sup>
- Variations in names published under<sup>20</sup>

It's a lot of papers

	'07	'08	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13	'14	'15	'16	'17	'18	'19	'20
<b>Papers</b>	35	25	39	39	20	25	25	24	17	23	35	30	45	39
<b>(to date)</b>	35	60	99	138	158	183	208	232	249	272	307	337	382	421
<b>Authors</b>	33	33	43	78	37	31	35	28	19	72	49	57	61	66
<b>(to date)</b>	33	58	91	154	182	203	230	250	259	319	356	396	444	492

**Table 1:** Numbers of papers and authors at each conference, individually and cumulatively

My numbers differ from the 2014 Committee's, although this is to be expected for a few reasons: a) I am counting papers and not submissions, which may not comprise exactly 1 paper; b) I have not counted the comic section at the end of the 2007 proceedings; and c) counting is hard. My numbers also differ from Lin's findings as to the cumulative total as of 2019. I am reasonably sure the number has never been 371, but again, counting is hard, and nowhere more so than SIGBOVIK.

<sup>8</sup> The Internet Archive.

<sup>9</sup> "Transparency in research", Ryan Kavanagh, *SIGBOVIK* 2018

<sup>10</sup> "Stopping GAN Violence: Generative Unadversarial Networks", Albanie, Ehrhardt and Henriques, *SIGBOVIK* 2017

<sup>11</sup> "Which ITG Stepcharts are Bracket-Jumpiest?: In Which They Milk the 「A Boring Follow-Up Paper to "Which ITG Stepcharts are Turniest?" Titled, "Which ITG Stepcharts are Crossoveriest and/or Footswitchiest?"」 Series for All Its Worth in Publication Count After All, or: Hit Me With An Encore", Ben Blum, *SIGBOVIK* 2019

<sup>12</sup> "An Epistolary Reconstruction of the Curry-Howard Correspondence", Ben Blum and Michael Sullivan, *SIGBOVIK* 2012<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup>This was the most incredible breakdown of encoding. If I hadn't written out the title by hand, I'd have copied and pasted "♠♥♦♣st♥r@!§♦♦str"t♠♦♦♦t♥§\*rr②\*○☹r!\*rr§s♣♦♥♥§♥♥g", a paper by ♠§♥♠♠♠ and ♥♠♥♥♥♥♠♠♠♠♠♠♥♥, which, if you haven't noticed, isn't particularly useful information. All other encoding breakdowns were just squares.

<sup>14</sup> "An Algorithm for Erdos-Bacon Number Minimization", Garrod, Klawe, Matthews, Trutoiu et al., *SIGBOVIK 2010*

<sup>15</sup> "Level-of-Detail Typesetting of Academic Publications", Tom Murphy VII, *SIGBOVIK 2007*

<sup>16</sup> "Another article that makes bibliometric analysis a bit harder", J. Pfeffer, *SIGBOVIK* 2015

<sup>17</sup> I just ignored the repetition. “\_(ツ)\_”

<sup>18</sup> It was like two days, I'm fine, stop worrying.

<sup>19</sup> Too many to list.

<sup>20</sup> Radical leet speak, my dudes.

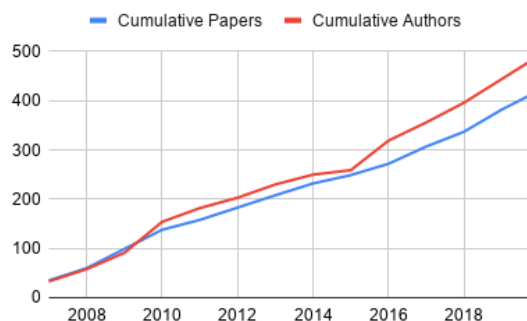


**Figure 1:** Numbers of papers and authors at each conference, individually

Charting the results, we find that largely speaking, assuming no papers with an obscene number of authors are published, there is a rough correlation between papers published and authors publishing in a given year. We can also see the number of unique authors who have published at any point is relatively steadily increasing, although there's a caveat I'll have to come back to on that.

That said, if the trend is correct, we'd expect that the ratio of first time authors to veteran authors would be high, and indeed, at all but the 2015 edition, well over half of authors are new to the conference.

However, deeper analysis of individual papers suggests that some number of authors are publishing under an extensive range of fictitious and often humorous names. While this should decrease the apparent number of first time authors, as well as the cumulative totals, I am of the opinion that: a) the sense of humour of the conference as a whole remains very healthy; and b) so does the intake of new blood.



**Figure 2:** Numbers of papers and authors at each conference, cumulatively



**Figure 3:** Proportion of previous authors to first-time authors at each conference

## Who's responsible for all this?

Two authors have put their name to at least one paper every year of SIGBOVIK as of 2020: Tom Murphy VII (33<sup>21</sup> papers) and Jim McCann (28<sup>22</sup> papers). Murphy is also the holder of the one-year record for published papers, generating 5 for 2019's conference. Here is a list of all other authors who have written at least five papers:<sup>23</sup>

- Ben Blum (17 in 11 years)
- Robert Simmons (10 in 7 years)
- Stefan Muller (8 in 6 years)
- Jason Reed (8 in 5 years)
- David Renshaw (7 in 7 years)
- David Fouhey (7 in 4 years)
- Mary McGlohon (7 in 3 years)
- Carlo Angiuli (6 in 5 years)
- Oscar Hernandez (6 in 5 years)
- Daniel Maturana (6 in 4 years)

<sup>21</sup> With at least one explicitly under a different name. This isn't an exponent.

<sup>22</sup> I've found at least five papers that use the same contact email as McCann but are otherwise not labelled as written by him. For that reason and the one above, I cannot say for certain who has actually written the most SIGBOVIK papers. Still not an exponent.

<sup>23</sup> All numbers assume every author always used their own name. They didn't.

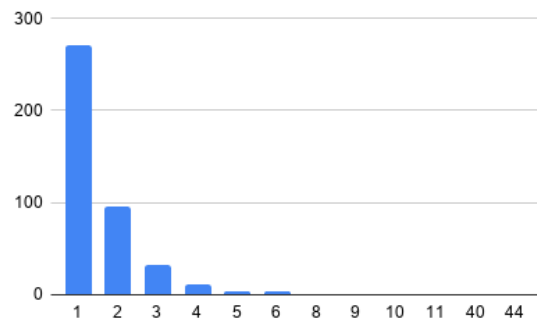
- Rose Bohrer (6 in 3 years)
- William Gunther (5 in 5 years)
- Brian Kell (5 in 5 years)
- Nels Beckman (5 in 4 years)
- Akiva Leffert (5 in 4 years)
- William Lovas (5 in 3 years)
- Daniel Lee (5 in 2 years)

Four papers have at least 10 authors listed:

1. "A Look into the Mind of the Modern Graduate Student via Telephonic Obfuscation"  
(2016, 44 authors, Harpstead, Das, Tasse, Gulotta, Ng, Zhao, Xiao, Olsen, Uchidiuno, Guo, Chen, Stankiewicz, Diana, Kasunic, Tenison, Holstein, Rojas, Madaio, Rivera, Yannier, deFreitas, Yang, Banovic, Kery, Dang, Wang, Liu, Williams, Taylor, Finkelstein, To, Gerritsen, Li, Gleason, MacLellan, Xhakaj, Sciuto, Choi, Chen, Rzeszotarski, Khurana, Seering, Chang and Laput)
2. "An Algorithm for Erdos-Bacon Number Minimization"  
(2010, 40 authors, Garrod, Klawe, Matthews, Trutoiu, Aguilar, Ashley-Rollman, Bovik, Bresee, Carlson, Desnoyer, Dinitz, Durni, Ferris, Garcia, Harper, Hudson, Humphreys, Hutton, Ireland, Ligett, Jaspan, Marlow, McCall, McCann, Mitz, Moraru, Phanishayee, Reed, Reed, Reid-Miller, Rivard, Sheffet, Sleator, Spriggs, Stanton, Stehlik, Thorsen, Vasudevan, Waugh and Zawadski)
3. "Human Computation Method for Generating High Impact Research Papers"  
(2010, 11 authors, Trutoiu, Zawadski, Sudol, Marlow, Coward, Taralova, Cady, Stanton, Jaspan, Sheffet and Bovik)
4. "COBOLd: Gobbler' Up COBOL Bugs for Fun and Profit"  
(2018, 10 authors, Timperley, Katz, Coker, Tonder, Soto, Afzal, Kinneer, Lacomis and Goues)

The vast majority of papers, however, have just 1 or 2 authors listed. The two most authored papers in SIGBOVIK account for the two dramatic spikes in Figure 2.

10 papers, spread across 9 years, do not attribute an author, even as Anonymous. The remaining 411 papers contain a total of 746 author credits for 492 authors, representing 642 years of SIGBOVIK experience.



**Figure 4:** Number of papers per number of authors

## Home is who pays you

I'll briefly touch on listed organisations. If an author credit came with an explicit organisation credit, that was used. In some cases, an organisation could be inferred from the email used, or some other information. All that being said, 292 author credits did not have a discernible organisation attached.

Of the remaining credits, it should come as no surprise that 253 author credits referenced, word for word, Carnegie Mellon University, the "home base" of the ACH. Another 15 author credits contained obvious puns or variations on CMU. And all this is ignoring the number of apparently non-CMU authors contactable via a CMU email address.

Of the remaining credits, 11 are to Google, another 11 to TCHOW llc, 6 each to Bard College at Simon's Rock, Centrum Wiskunde & Informatica, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and 5 to Emarhavi Heavy Industries. Another 100 or so other organisations are also credited at some point or another. One paper has had both its author and organisation censored.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> "Optimal censor placement in wireless censor networks", [censored], *SIGBOVIK 2008*

## Title measuring contest

The SIGBOVIK paper with the longest title is Luke Breitfeller's 2018 epic, "Heuristic Ordered-Word Longform Obfuscation, Normally Generated, Creating Abstract Nominalizations In Monogrammatic Arrangement Keeping Expected Maximum Yield: Study Infers Greater Breadth Over Vocabularic Initialization Key Property Regarding Extended Sesquipedalian Entries; Notably The Abecedarian Tactics Include Overelaboration, Neologisms, Textual Interpretations Twisting Lexical Entries By Eliciting Full Online Resources Explaining Possible Exchanges; Often Potential Logorrheic Excesses Require Eventual Alternate Listing (Instantiating Zeugma); Energetically Iterating Text Strains Jocularly Under Starting Thesis Allocating Humor Until Grand Exit After Conclusion Reaches Obvious Nadir Yattering Meaninglessly" at a staggering 722 characters, or 79 words.

The remainder of the top ten are 289/44<sup>25</sup>, 252/39<sup>26</sup>, 198/37<sup>27</sup>, 197/36<sup>28</sup>, 191/35<sup>29</sup>, 166/19<sup>30</sup>, 164/20<sup>31</sup>, 158/24<sup>32</sup> and 150/20<sup>33</sup> characters/words long. Truly, long paper titles are an artform.

The average word in a SIGBOVIK paper title is 6.97 letters long.<sup>34</sup>

## At last, the point

The previous 14 SIGBOVIKs each had a number of papers in their proceedings.<sup>35</sup> Each of those sets of papers has a final paper. Those final papers are:

2007. "Wikiplia: The Free Programming Language That Anyone Can Edit" by Tom Murphy VII
2008. "Yo Γ Γ!: a Pedagogical Proposal" by Jason Reed, MC B Combinator and N. Smith
2009. "Reviews of Paper #351: Sub-modular Density Functions for Robot Control" by Dmitry Berenson
2010. "The third and the last paper on SAMIR – ANVESH" by Samir Supra and Anvesh Komuravelli
2011. "Med School, CS Grad School, Both, or Neither?" by Brian Hirshman
2012. "Address space content randomization: exploit mitigation through data randomization" by Carlo Angiuli
2013. "The First Level of Super Mario Bros. is Easy with Lexicographic Orderings and Time Travel ...after that it gets a little tricky." by Tom Murphy VII
2014. "Unit-Test-Based Programming" by Miguel Á. Lechón

<sup>25</sup> "Which ITG Stepcharts are Bracket-Jumpiest?: In Which They Milk the 'A Boring Follow-Up Paper to "Which ITG Stepcharts are Turniest?" Titled, "Which ITG Stepcharts are Crossoveriest and/or Footswitchiest?"' Series for All Its Worth in Publication Count After All, or: Hit Me With An Encore", Ben Blum, *SIGBOVIK 2019*

<sup>26</sup> "A Thorough Investigation of the Degree to which the COVID-19 Pandemic has Enabled Subpar-Quality Papers to Make it into the Proceedings of SIGBOVIK, by Reducing the Supply of Authors Willing to Invest the Necessary Effort to Produce High-Quality Papers", Shalin Shah, *SIGBOVIK 2020*

<sup>27</sup> "A Comparative Photographic Analysis of Pittsburg(h) – From Yesteryear to Today; From Old to Knew .. oops that was a typo. I CLEARLY meant the other knew with an 'N', you know "v" uh I mean "new"...", McVu, MacLee, McDonner and O'Ashley-MacRollman, *SIGBOVIK 2009*

<sup>28</sup> "I'm on Vacation So I'm Submitting A Vacation Picture Instead Of A Paper, Or, Perhaps, A Vacation Photo In The Format Of A Paper; I Hope A Predatory Open Access Journal E-Mails Me About This Article", Jim McCann, *SIGBOVIK 2017*

<sup>29</sup> "Can a Paper Be Written Entirely in the Title? 1. Introduction: The Title Pretty Much Says it All. 2. Evaluation: It Gets the Job Done. However, the Title is a Little Long. 3. Conclusion: Yes.", Daniel Gaston, *SIGBOVIK 2020*

<sup>30</sup> "GradSchoolNet: Robust End-to-end \*-Ahot Unsupervised DeepAF Neural Attention Model for Convexly Optimal (Artificially Intelligent) Success in Computer Vision Research", Divam Gupta and Varun Jain, *SIGBOVIK 2020*

<sup>31</sup> "Simple Systems: A Holistic, Postmodern Alternative to the Oppressive and Outdated Study of Complex Systems: Semiotics, Transformative Hermeneutics, and Applications", Mayank Lahiri, *SIGBOVIK 2010*

<sup>32</sup> "World Domination Through the Use of a Graphical Representation of the Six Degrees of Separation Concept with Potential Robot Design for Mode of Implementation", L.S. Berg and P.J. Barton, *SIGBOVIK 2012*

<sup>33</sup> "Retraction of a boring follow-up paper to "Which ITG Stepcharts are Turniest?" titled, "Which ITG Stepcharts are Crossoveriest and/or Footswitchiest?"", Ben Blum, *SIGBOVIK 2020*

<sup>34</sup> You can remove three hundredths of a letter by taking away any titles in your titles.

<sup>35</sup> See IT'S A LOT OF PAPERS above.

- 2015. “The Portmantout” by Tom Murphy VII
- 2016. “Ode to Reviewer Two”
- 2017. “Cerebral Genus: Dead Duck or Phoenix?” by Oscar Hernandez
- 2018. “Is This the Shortest SIGBOVIK Paper?” by Dicong Qiu
- 2019. “On the Time Complexity of the Verification of the Factorization of  $2^{67}-1$ ” by Isaac Grosf
- 2020. “Erdős-Bacon-Sabbath Numbers: Reductio ad Absurdum” by Maria Klawe et al.

As this paper is being published at SIGBOVIK 2021, the conference has continued and papers are still being accepted, therefore none of the previous final papers can claim to have been “the SIGBOVIK paper to end all SIGBOVIK papers”.

Indeed, the number of papers that have been “the SIGBOVIK paper to end all SIGBOVIK papers” each year has been zero. The total is also zero. Trends suggest the total will remain zero.

If “the SIGBOVIK paper to end all SIGBOVIK papers” is ever written, the most likely candidate to write it is Tom Murphy VII, who authored three of the previous fourteen final SIGBOVIK papers. However, Murphy has written zero of “the SIGBOVIK paper to end all SIGBOVIK papers” to-date, and this trend seems likely to continue.

Since 2007, there has been one SIGBOVIK conference every year. This trend also seems likely to continue. It seems plausible that someday there will not be a SIGBOVIK conference. If this happens, the last SIGBOVIK paper will have been “the SIGBOVIK paper to end all SIGBOVIK papers”.

On the other hand, time is infinite, and this may never come to pass. On a yet third hand,<sup>36</sup> time extends infinitely in both directions. As the average number of SIGBOVIK conferences in any given year is now zero, we can show that “the SIGBOVIK paper to end all SIGBOVIK papers” will never be published, because no SIGBOVIK conference has ever-

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to SIGBOVIK for accepting this paper. ~~No thanks to Google Docs' PDF generator for making me redo a bunch of stuff to get the pagination right. Next time I should just bludgeon L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X into doing what I want.~~ Thanks to L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X for letting me bludgeon it into doing what I want.<sup>37</sup> Thank you to the Society for Internet Blaseball and the Open Air Gazebo for looking over this before I did something stupid, even if nothing actually came up.

## Copyright, or lack thereof

This paper is released to the public domain. Where this is not possible, the author grants permission for anyone to do whatever they damn well please with it. Wear it as a hat. That'll show him who's boss.<sup>38</sup> I make no warranties about this paper, and disclaim

liability for all uses of it, to the fullest extent permitted by applicable law. Don't be a dingus.

## About the author

**Thomas Chick** [he/they] is an Australian content creator with a very eclectic range of talents and interests. He is the voice of Tree in the series Battle for Dream Island,<sup>39</sup> the progenitor of the object show genre. He does work for the Society for Internet Blaseball Research,<sup>40</sup> the pre-eminent gathering of data witches around hit 2020 web game Blaseball. On Wednesday nights, he can be found on a couch across from his Dad, watching movies and recording a podcast, Cellulose Free.<sup>41</sup> He likes his sarsaparilla strongly flavoured, and thinks Letter format paper is weird. “Why can't we all just use square paper?” he yells at no one. This is the sort of thing that keeps him up at night.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>67</sup> This is an exponent. Good job, you found it.

<sup>36</sup> You'd think this would make juggling easier, but no, my hand-eye coordination is as bad as ever.

<sup>37</sup> Something I only decided to do after the deadline extension. Also, reduced font size to cut two pages without losing any content! ...I am never typesetting a paper in Google Docs again.

<sup>38</sup> It's him, he told you to do that.

<sup>39</sup> <https://bfdi.tv>

<sup>40</sup> <https://sibr.dev>

<sup>41</sup> <https://anchor.fm/cellulose>

<sup>42</sup> That, and timezone malarkey. See footnote 1.