

The Research Revealed Impact Tool

<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2011/01/25/the-research-revealed-impact-tool/>

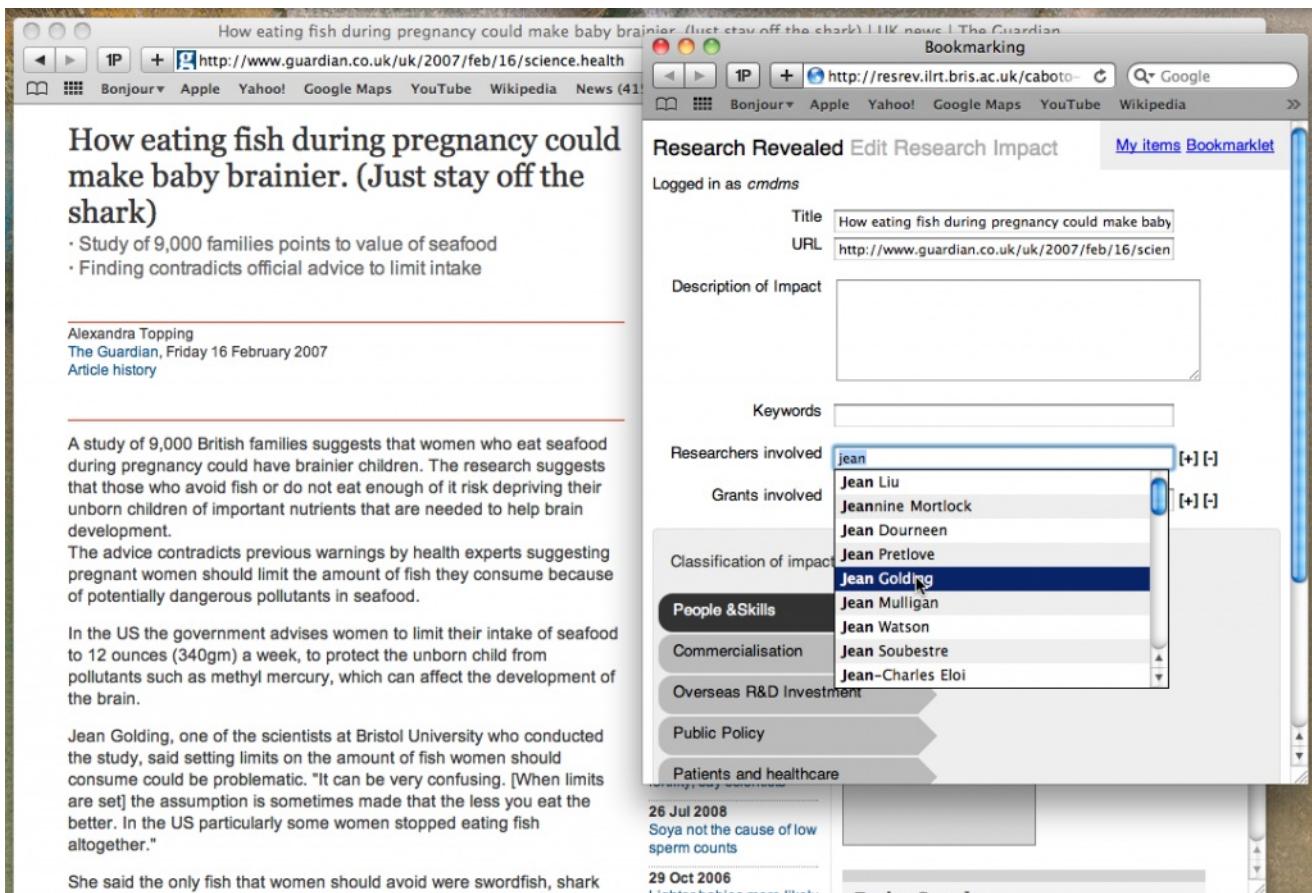
1/25/2011

Damien Steer from the University of Bristol is the lead developer of Research Revealed, a new tool designed to help academics track their research impact.

Research Revealed is a [JISC Information Environment](#) funded demonstrator which gathers available research activity information involving the University of Bristol and presents it in a unified view. Although largely concerned with the use of research information, we did anticipate the need for researchers to augment this data: university systems don't record many classes of researcher activity. We wanted to provide some way to plug those gaps.

Through internal discussions with research managers one significant gap became apparent: impact.

Providing a complete offering with respect to impact was beyond the scope and means of Research Revealed. What we provide is the means to collect the necessary evidence in a natural way. If you've ever used bookmarking tools like [delicious](#) or [citeulike](#) the bookmarklet approach will be familiar:



The screenshot shows a dual-browser setup. On the left, a window displays a news article from The Guardian titled "How eating fish during pregnancy could make baby brainier. (Just stay off the shark)". The article discusses a study of 9,000 families and contradicts official advice. On the right, a window titled "Research Revealed Edit Research Impact" is open, showing the "My items Bookmarklet" interface. It has fields for "Title" (set to the article's title) and "URL" (set to the article's URL). Below these are "Description of Impact" and "Keywords" fields. A dropdown menu under "Researchers involved" lists names, with "Jean Golding" selected. Other categories like "Grants involved", "Classification of impact", "People & Skills", "Commercialisation", "Overseas R&D Investment", "Public Policy", and "Patients and healthcare" are also visible, each with a list of relevant names.

Here we have a story in a national newspaper reporting a study conducted by Bristol. The user can record this by clicking on a bookmark button in their browser. The impact tool captures the URL and title of the page automatically (ideally it would detect the publication date, but unfortunately this is rarely present), and provides description and keyword fields. Involved researchers and grants can be quickly noted using auto-completion. Finally relevant impact categories (based on the draft REF categories) can be selected.

The intention was to make this capture process as simple and unobtrusive as possible. It is, of course, limited to evidence present on the web. In practice this doesn't appear to be a significant limitation, especially in a university

context where journal and newspaper database subscriptions are common.

The submitted evidence snippet also records who made the bookmark, and when it was made. The impact tool database ultimately represents a network of researchers, grants, and impacts (with associated meta-data), which can be explored or queried. We hope it provide a valuable starting point for anyone writing impact reports.

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