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Title: *Corporate Alzheimer's In The Hotel Sector - using & abusing Library databases to eradicate persistent historical myths*  
Theme: Subject-based Research / Enterprise Activity  
Type: Seminar  
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This presentation explores the research opportunities that *SSU Library* databases offer us; especially the chance to verify and validate the accepted sector histories that textbooks and journals perpetuate - and which underpin many current journal analyses.

Triangulating specific entries in two online databases and a set of corporate histories, for a short *Induction Week* research exercise, resulted in:

- the *Oxford Dictionary of Biography* inserting a revision within one of its recent entries
- commentary upon a recent article within the *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* [a Tier 1 journal]

The perpetuation of such persistent historical myths has long been recognised, within *Hospitality & Tourism*; nevertheless, that was a worrying hit-rate

In order to demonstrate how using and abusing various databases, easily accessible to *FBSE/SSU* staff and students, generates fresh insights into a sector's historical evolution, when compared with mainstream assumptions, this presentation will critique key aspects of Quek (2011).

Both the *IJCHM* editor and Quek (2011) did a perfectly creditable job; the high concentration of errors arose due to three factors, that are seen elsewhere within the literature:

- the collation of historical research material that had, previously, been more widely dispersed
- the paucity and/or absence of robust peer-review, regarding the historical accuracy of material being collated / critiqued
- the long-term persistence of historical myths, within a paradigm's accepted context

For non-*Hospitality* audience members, consider this:

- *Sir John Cohen* is famous for running *Tesco* and for handing it over to his son-in-law, *Sir Leslie Porter* – but:
  - what other supermarket chain did he help to establish [and run, for several decades] ?
  - what role did his other son-in-law play in *Tesco's* development ?

Quek, M. 2011 "Comparative historical analysis of four UK hotel companies, 1979 - 2004", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 23 No. 2, pp. 147-173. [viewed 27<sup>th</sup> May 2011]

Available: <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/journals.htm?issn=0959-6119&volume=23&issue=2>