

PHILOSOPHY

# OF GUESTS AND GHOSTS

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Here is a rare occasion where you can identify “guests” and “ghosts” in a paper – a common practice.

It is the most highly cited paper of a former collaborator

## **Prevalence of Asthma and Atopy in Two Areas of West and East Germany**

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The German reunification offers a unique opportunity to study the impact of environmental factors on the development of childhood respiratory and allergic disorders in ethnically similar populations. We inves-

If you scroll down to the methods you will find the ghost

Children in Munich were studied between September 1989 and July 1990 and children in East Germany were studied between October 1991 and July 1992. The fieldwork was implemented by different teams in Munich, Leipzig, and Halle. However, all coworkers from Leipzig and Halle were trained by participating in the ongoing survey in Munich. Moreover, one coworker (M.W.) who had implemented the fieldwork in Munich supervised the colleagues in Leipzig and Halle during the whole study period.

That's correct: I (M.W.) wrote the study plan and grant application together with S.D.. Furthermore, I prepared study materials and carried them to East Germany, supervised the examination, and back home I did the first data analysis. Who is F. D. M. ?

We may therefore ask if any of these computer generated [impact ranking lists](#) really make sense, nay, nay.

