



Trust and Authority in Scholarly Communications in the Light of the Digital Transition

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Trust and authority in scholarly communication project:

- Funding by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation
- Research led by David Nicholas at CIBER Research Ltd. in the UK and Carol Tenopir at the Center for Information and Communication Studies (CICS), University of Tennessee
- September 2012-November 2013
- Collaborators include Taylor & Francis, SAGE, PLoS, Biomedcentral, Wiley, and Elsevier



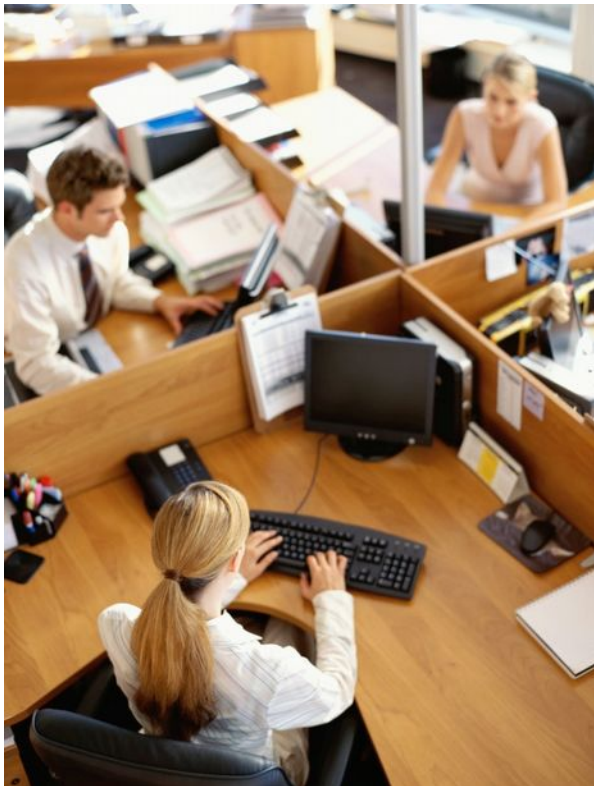
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Aims of project:



- Study how academics assign authority and trustworthiness to sources they *read*, *cite*, and *publish* in
- Examine behaviors and attitudes of academics in changing digital times

Multiple Methods to Study Trust

- 14 focus groups of 66 academics in the UK & US
- In-depth interviews of 87
- International survey of over 3800 researchers



Traditional Indicators of TRUST in Journal Articles

- Journal Name
- Journal Reputation
- Author Expertise



The reality of trust (from focus groups):

- They read many things they “trust” but would never cite (e.g. Wikipedia)
- Politics influence citing and publishing
- Cite to protect yourself and add “trustworthiness”
- Publish to help your career
- Use different criteria for reading, citing, and publishing



Trust in *reading* is complex

1. Navigational Metrics

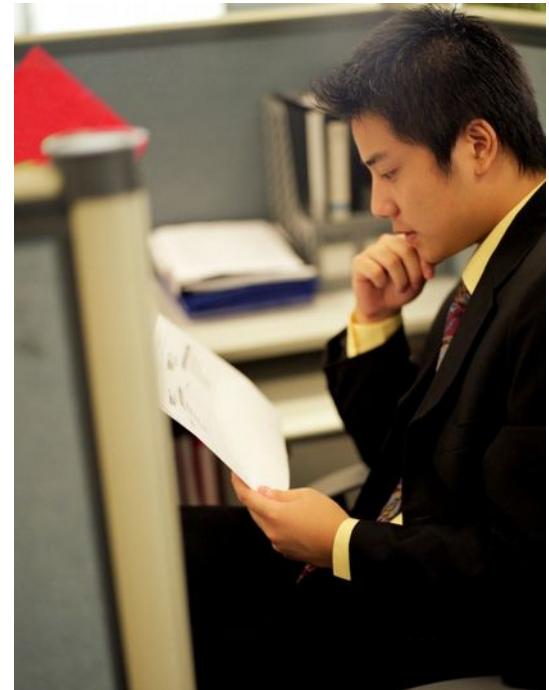
- Read abstract and methodology
- Check for credible data and sound logic
- Look at source's references

2. Social Metrics

- Colleague recommendations
- Experience with the author

3. Traditional Metrics

- Familiarity with journal
- Peer-review linked to quality
- Impact factor a factor...



How trustworthiness is determined for *citing*

- Known and trusted authority
(author, journal or conference)
- Seminal work in the field
- Supports methodology
- Research group/institution known



How trustworthiness is determined when deciding where to *publish*




- Traditional metrics (e.g., impact factor) still important
- Influenced by promotion criteria
- Institutional research policies
- Audience of a journal
- Likelihood of getting published

How trustworthiness is determined by different *age groups* for *publishing* and *citing*

Younger researchers more likely to...

- trust nontraditional methods of dissemination



- feel pressure to publish in highly ranked journals to obtain research grants
- cite people they know because they trust them
- cite **OPEN**  **ACCESS** journals if properly peer-reviewed





Peer Review

Across the board, researchers use the peer review process to determine trustworthiness in what they read, what they cite and where they publish.

But...

The Dark Side of Peer Review

"I think it is difficult to publish data which goes against current trends in high impact peer review journals."



"I am sure the fame of the author has an influence on accepting the paper for publishing."



"Whilst peer review is essential it sometimes worries me that reviewers' opinions can be skewed by their own personal and professional prejudices..."



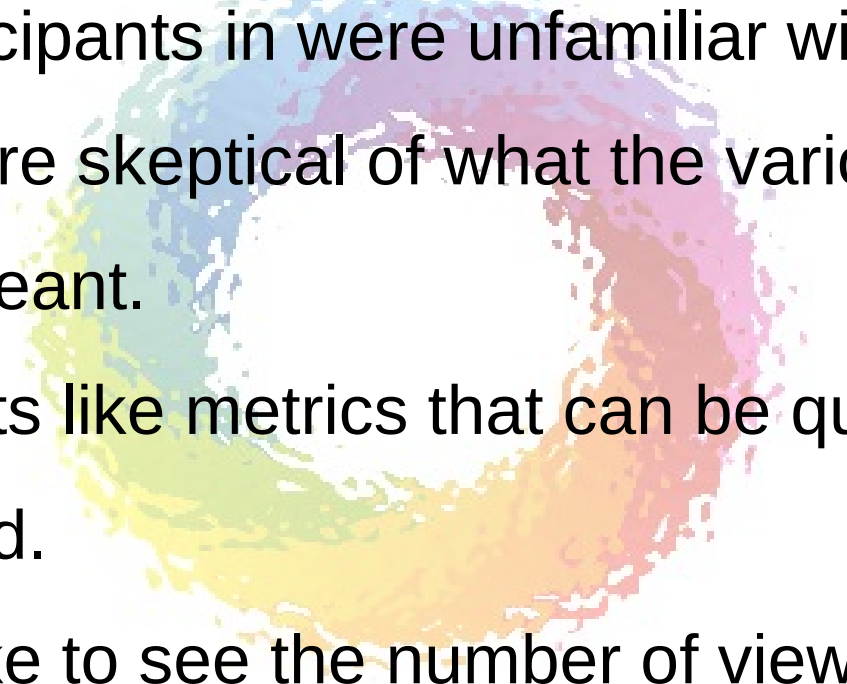
Trust and Impact Factor

- More important for deciding where to publish than what to read or cite
- High IF journals can publish low-quality articles
- High IF journals may lack innovative and fresh papers
- Trusted by younger academics more than older academic for reading and citing





Trust and Altmetrics

- 
- A large, faint, circular graphic composed of many small, overlapping colored dots in shades of blue, green, yellow, orange, and pink, forming a ring-like shape in the background of the list.
- Most participants in were unfamiliar with concept.
 - Others were skeptical of what the various altmetrics actually meant.
 - Participants like metrics that can be quickly understood.
 - Authors like to see the number of views and downloads for their articles.

What is Trust in online environment?



I think it is “connectiveness” through name of friend who sent the link. You need to connect to a source to have trust. If information is isolated, just floating out there, I don’t trust it, but if it is connected to others then I trust it.

Open Access

- A lot of confusion
- PLoS One considered trustworthy
- Common thoughts:
 - Too expensive
 - Lower quality
 - Quick publication time
 - No review system
 - Suspicious of journal's motives



Overall findings:



TENURE



OPEN  ACCESS



Shifting Trust

- Publisher's websites not often mentioned
- World Wide Web trusted over publisher platforms and library catalogues & websites
 - ...Hence, the popularity of Google.
- Google Scholar thought to be *surprisingly* good.



The screenshot shows a library catalog interface. At the top, it says "Welcome To The LIBRARY CATALOG". Below this is a "SIMPLE SEARCH" section with a text input field, a "Title" dropdown menu, and an "Exact Match" checkbox. To the right of these are three circular icons labeled "REFRESH", "SEARCH", and "HOME". Below the simple search is an "ADVANCE SEARCH" section. It features a list of search criteria: Title, Author, Subject, Publisher, ISBN, Publication Year, and Publication Place, each with a corresponding text input field. To the right of these fields is a "Search Options" box containing radio buttons for "Combined (AND)" and "Inclusive (OR)", and a "Match" dropdown menu set to "Any part of field". At the bottom of the advance search section are three circular icons labeled "REFRESH", "SEARCH", and "HOME".

VS.



Libraries are now considered..

Nostalgia



Incomplete



No longer...

...Curators of
Quality



...Points of
Entry



Libraries need to change tack

Thanks!

For more information:


<http://cics.cci.utk.edu/cicsprojects/Sloan>

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