"Capturing Impact: Telling the Story of Your Scholarship Beyond the Citation Count"

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CAPTURING IMPACT: TELLING THE STORY OF YOUR SCHOLARSHIP BEYOND THE CITATION COUNT

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Abstract

When we conduct research, what is our end goal? Who is our audience? Since the mid-20th century, with the development, first, of journal citation indexes, then journal impact factors, then journal citation metrics for individuals, academia has seen increased pressure to publish and be cited in journals within one's discipline. These citation metrics are used to compare schools and to evaluate scholars for promotion and tenure, for grant consideration, and for bestowing other awards and honors. Discipline-specific journal citations tend to be the easiest to measure, looking to a major scholarship database, such as Web of Science or HeinOnline. Yet as critics of these measures have shown, they are woefully incomplete. To set high stakes on such an inaccurate number and call it "scholarly impact" stands to devalue all the other forms that scholarship can take. This article seeks to address that misvaluation, first by surveying the history and reasoning behind these citation counts; then examining the varied forms and formats scholarship can take; and ending with a discussion of other measures, tools, and strategies for painting a more holistic picture of scholarly impact.

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I. Introduction: Why We Cite

Significant pressure is placed on citations today. But what, exactly, is the purpose of a citation? At its purest, a citation serves one of three functions: to verify a claim made in the written material; to acknowledge previous work on a particular topic; or to document the development of a concept over time. Citations are as much a part of the relationship between the author and their audience as the main body of the written work. "In principle, every nonobvious factual claim should be supported in some way, either by citing direct evidence or by tracing a link through citations and/or inference to that evidence.... Citations offer the readers an opportunity to determine for themselves whether the original source of a claim was justified and whether that claim is being accurately represented in the current piece." In that way, the author is recommending the best additional sources to their reader, for further exploration of the topic. Depending on the subject of the article, citations may also provide a history of research on that topic, not just the leading study, but the earliest and most recent developments.

While we might think of those as best practices for citation, in reality, many other factors can influence an author’s decision to cite a particular work. Often a preexisting high citation count for a particular journal, article, or author will entice further citations. Scholars refer to this as the halo effect, "the tendency for eminent researchers... to be cited more frequently than others simply because they are eminent; it is as if by citing 'name' authors, some degree of legitimacy is added to

2 Id. at 192.
3 Id.
This practice emerges when citing works outside of one’s discipline as well, where the author might take social cues from experts within the external discipline to determine the leading research and authority to rely upon. In the same vein, one might show preferential citation practices toward a particular set of colleagues or to oneself, thereby creating closed citation networks. There can be virtue in such referential citation practices, to be sure, giving an appreciative nod to a mentor or scholar whose work has had meaningful impact in one’s career. However, returning to the foundational purpose of the citation—to aid the reader in verifying a work’s claims and researching the topic further—selective citation practices can easily diverge from this principle, benefitting the author instead of the reader. When this occurs, one wonders whether the fundamental purpose of the citation (and scholarship itself) has changed.

For decades, across disciplines, citation count has been the single most common measure of scholarly impact in academia. Obsession with citation counts arguably finds its origins in the development of the Journal Impact Factor (JIF), originally conceived by Eugene Garfield as a method for determining what journals to include in his Science Citation Index. Taking inspiration from none other than Shepard’s Citations, Garfield developed his Science Citation Index (SCI) in the 1950s in response to the booming rate of scientific publication, to help fellow scientists identify articles in their field of interest. A list of citing references to an article further assisted the researcher in tracking down additional related articles. With so many journals that could potentially be included in the SCI, the JIF offered a simple means for journal selection and inclusion, looking at the number of citations to a specific journal, divided by the number of articles that journal publishes. A side effect of this tool was that scholars could now track an article’s influence over time, based on citation count. The wider the use of the SCI spread, the more entrenched the calculus of the JIF became, such that, as Garfield’s work moved on to other disciplines, including the development of the Social Science Citation Index, and the Arts & Humanities Citation Index, the measure remained unchanged, despite the

5 Freda B. Lynn, Diffusing Through the Disciplines: Insiders, Outsiders, and Socially Influenced Citation Behavior, 93 SOCIAL FORCES 355, 357-358 (2014). The authors refer to this as a “cognitive load problem.... Citing what everybody else cites would be a way of leveraging the weight of all previous citers (‘safety in numbers’).” Id.
6 Haddad, supra note 4, at 29. Citing within a closed circle is sometimes referred to as in-house citation.
9 Fleck, supra note 7, at 334. This JIF formula changed over time, focusing on a 2-year period instead of total citations, among other decisions that adjusted the formula of what gets counted. Id. at 336–37.
10 Id.
wide differences in the disciplines.\textsuperscript{11} "This execution of experimental calculations was a two-sided elitism, favoring science over other academic disciplines, and paying more attention to journals of unquestionable status compared to all other media of scholarly communication."\textsuperscript{12} As interest in the number of citations to individual articles grew, additional impact measures developed over time, focusing on the scholar, rather than the journal. Most prominent is the $h$-index, whose purpose is to assess both the quality (by citation count) and quantity (by overall output) of a scholar's work. Here again, these measures typically originate in the hard sciences, and do not translate as effectively to other disciplines.\textsuperscript{13}

As originally conceived, citation metrics were a bibliographic device. The JIF was intended as a means of determining what journals to include in the SCI, and the SCI and other later citation indexes were intended as research and collection development tools. For scholars, the SCI helped identify the latest research and find related articles based on their citing references; for librarians, it helped identify journals to purchase, based on their perceived impact.\textsuperscript{14} Over time, this identification of "impact" has spurred further use of these citation measures for higher-stakes purposes; today these citation metrics are used routinely in decisions to award grants, in promotion and tenure decisions, and to rank departments and schools.\textsuperscript{15} With so much on the line, it is small wonder that authors can be tempted to adopt less than ideal citation practices in their own work to maximize their rank.

Despite their pervasive use and reliance in measuring scholarly impact, focusing on journal citation counts as a comparative and evaluative tool has glaring shortcomings. First, citation behavior varies widely by discipline, so a high citation count may look radically different from one field to another.\textsuperscript{16} This occurs within disciplines as well, as some content areas are more popularly read and cited than others. In law, for instance, every time a new study of the top most-cited law articles comes out, the list of articles is dominated by constitutional law topics. A scholar in a less dominant field, like tax law, is unlikely to have their scholarship crack the most-cited list, yet in their circle of tax scholars, they might be the most prominent

\textsuperscript{11} As an example of these disciplinary differences, Fleck observes that the 2-year period of measurement is too short for the social sciences; in his study of sociology journals, only 11.4% of the citations in a particular year were to articles in the previous two years. \textit{Id.} at 338–39.

\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Id.} at 337.

\textsuperscript{13} Motty Perry & Philip J. Reny, \textit{How to Count Citations If You Must}, 106 \textit{AMER. ECON. REV.} 2722, 2722–2724 (2016).

\textsuperscript{14} Fleck, \textit{supra} note 7, at 334.

\textsuperscript{15} This despite the fact that the rationale for these measures is rarely offered. \textit{Id.} at 350.

\textsuperscript{16} Perry, \textit{supra} note 13, at 2723. It is for this very reason that Perry and Reny offer a flexible measure, the Euclidean Index, to allow for a fair comparison across disciplines.
and highly cited scholar.\textsuperscript{17} There is some concern that rigid focus on raw citation count could affect where scholars choose to direct their research efforts, thereby “distort[ing] as well as stunt[ing] the advancement of knowledge.”\textsuperscript{18} That fear might be a bit extreme, but it does shed light on the very real challenge of properly interpreting raw citation data.

Another significant shortcoming of journal citation counts as a measure of scholarly impact is that it is nearly impossible to capture all journals that scholars within a particular discipline publish in. Citation studies in the sciences, for instance, most often rely on Web of Science for their data. Web of Science captures a broad array of journals across the sciences, but it comes up short in certain areas, both by discipline and by geographic region.\textsuperscript{19} Likewise, scholars across disciplines are increasingly engaging in interdisciplinary work, and may, therefore, not be publishing in journals within their own discipline at all. This is certainly true in law, as recent studies have shown.\textsuperscript{20} Other scholars discuss the additional problem that these rankings focus on journals alone, at the exclusion of the many books, treatises, and chapters that law faculty write.\textsuperscript{21} This article will focus on a related flaw with these rankings: Faculty today do not necessarily write for the academy alone; many use their research and expertise beyond academia, in the public sector. Citation studies, with their focus on journal articles, necessarily define scholarly impact as being measured exclusively within and among the academy.\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{17} J.M. Balkin & Sanford Levinson, How to Win Cites and Influence People, 71 CHI.-KENT L. REV. 843, 849. “The economy of citations confirms and establishes the types of articles and subject matters that produce higher citation counts and greater academic attention.” Balkin and Levinson go on to study Fred Shapiro’s “Top 100” lists from 1981 to 1991, showing that articles on constitutional law dominate every year. Id. at 853. This remains consistent in Shapiro’s follow-up publication, Fred Shapiro & Michelle Pearse, The Most-Cited Law Review Articles of All Time, 110 MICH. L. REV. 1483, 1489–1492 (2012). In addition to the top 100 list, the authors provide a top-five list for each year, 1990–2009; again, constitutional law plays a dominant role. Id. at 1492–1497.

\textsuperscript{18} Haddad, supra note 4, at 27.

\textsuperscript{19} Fleck, supra note 7, at 343.

\textsuperscript{20} Bonnie Shucha, Representing Law Faculty Scholarly Impact: Strategies for Improving Citation Metrics and Promoting Scholarly Visibility (Univ. Wisc. Law Sch. Legal Studies Research Paper Series, Paper No. 1692), https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3808250. In her citation study of the University of Wisconsin Law School’s faculty scholarship, Shucha found a staggering difference in where the University of Wisconsin, known for their focus on interdisciplinary research, would fall in the rankings, if interdisciplinary journals were included in the citation metric. Id. at 10–11.

\textsuperscript{21} Andrew Hayashi and Gregory Mitchell demonstrate that Philip C. Bobbitt, a well-known constitutional law scholar and legal theorist, is largely misrepresented in HeinOnline’s citation counts, despite the fact that one of his books is in HeinOnline. But because Hein’s Author Profiles only count citations to journal articles, the hundreds of citations to even just the book available in HeinOnline are not included. Andrew T. Hayashi & Gregory Mitchell, Maintaining Scholarly Integrity in the Age of Bibliometrics, 69 J. LEG. EDUC. 145 (2020).

\textsuperscript{22} This is a salient critique of the laser focus on citation counts as a measure of scholarly impact: Journal articles are primarily written with an intended audience of other academics within the author’s discipline.
however, can have just as much impact, but it is woefully underrepresented in current citation counts.

II. Why We Write

When we think of academic scholarship, perhaps due in part to the emphasis on the types of citation-focused impact measures that haunt most every discipline, the image that comes to most people’s minds is the discipline-specific journal article. This type of article has a scholarly, typically theoretical focus, with a primary audience of other scholars within that discipline. While that is the image most of us conjure, it is by no means the exclusive, and for some scholars, even the primary, focus of research. Indeed, there are several defined directions an academic’s scholarship can take, each with a different intended purpose and audience. When research was first introduced into higher education as an additional faculty responsibility (in addition to teaching), it had a much broader focus; research “referred to a variety of creative work carried on in a variety of places, and its integrity was measured by the ability to think, communicate, and learn.”

Over time, academia has increasingly prioritized research, developing the so-called “publish or perish” model for tenure-track faculty members. Couple that pressure to publish with added pressure to publish in specific media, especially high-ranked journals, and it is small wonder that our image of scholarship is the journal article.

Yet, what about those other directions an academic’s scholarship may take? What about that original, freer conceptualization of what constitutes research for faculty? Not all scholarship fits in a journal article. Likewise, not all audiences who could benefit from an academic’s research read journal articles. Should not these other avenues of scholarship be equally prized and encouraged? This is precisely the argument Ernest L. Boyer made in his seminal work, Scholarship Reconsidered. In his critique of the “publish or perish” model, Boyer argued for a return to the broader conceptualization, challenging academia “to move beyond the tired old ‘teaching versus research’ debate and give the familiar and honorable term ‘scholarship’ a broader, more capacious meaning, one that brings legitimacy to the full scope of

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To so narrowly conceptualize scholarly impact is to discount the many other audiences and avenues that a scholar’s work can influence, or as one research team puts it, “[T]he way we currently assess the impact of our scholarly work seems to be based on an incestuous, closed loop,” Herman Aguinis, Isabel Suarez-Gonzalez, Gustavo Lannelongue & Harry Joo, Scholarly Impact Revisited, 26 ACAD. OF MANAGEMENT PERSP. 105, 106 (2012) [hereafter Aguinis I].


24 Id.
academic work.” To achieve this goal, Boyer identified four functions of scholarship: discovery, integration, application, and teaching.

A. Scholarship of Discovery

Scholarship of discovery is what many would consider “traditional” research: theory-based journal articles that fuel intellectual debate among scholars within the same discipline. For law, this would include articles in the standard law review or law journal. This is the type of scholarship most likely to be measured in a discipline’s scholarly impact citation count. Boyer acknowledges that this category of scholarship remains integral: “Scholarly investigation, in all the disciplines, is at the very heart of academic life, and the pursuit of knowledge must be assiduously cultivated and defended.”

B. Scholarship of Integration

Scholarship of integration is what we today might call cross-disciplinary, interdisciplinary, or multi-disciplinary research, contributing one’s own research to a larger body of knowledge. Boyer argues that this category is “increasingly important as traditional disciplinary categories prove confining, forcing new topologies of knowledge.” Tangential to scholarship of discovery, scholarship of integration might still lean theoretical, and likely be published as a journal article, but with an intended audience in a different field. Depending on how one’s scholarly impact citation count is collected, some cross-disciplinary research may be included, but often is excluded from traditional measures.

C. Scholarship of Application

Applied scholarship expands further outward, focusing on how one’s research can be applied to societal problems; this is often referred to as public scholarship. Public scholarship shifts the scholar’s focus outward, beyond the academy, to external stakeholders. Often this type of work is categorized as service, rather than research, “routinely praised, but accorded little attention— even in

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25 Id. at 81.
26 Id.
27 Id. Scholarly monographs would fit this category as well.
28 BOYER, supra note 23, at 82.
29 Id.
30 Id.
31 See, e.g., Shucha, supra note 20.
32 BOYER, supra note 23, at 84.
programs where it is most appropriate.” In law, scholarship of application might include writing an amicus brief for a court case or submitting written testimony for a congressional hearing. Where the first two categories of scholarship, discovery and integration, are more theoretical and more prized by academic institutions, the scholarship of application is far different and much less likely to receive equal esteem. Boyer argues that this category of scholarship is a critical bridge between the ivory tower and the rest of the world, one that not only allows the academic to share their expertise and knowledge with the world, but enables the academic to gain further knowledge and understanding through the same external engagement, creating a give-and-take relationship that in itself advances knowledge. “Such a view of scholarly service—one that both applies and contributes to human knowledge—is particularly needed in a world in which huge, almost intractable problems call for the skills and insights only the academy can provide.”

In this scholarship of application, the scholar seeks to share their expertise more broadly, but with such a diverse audience, the nature of the scholarly writing may necessarily take a different tone. True public audiences come from diverse backgrounds and may not have legal expertise to digest the weighty language of a law review article. Public scholarship, then, often must be written in an easily digestible format and is unlikely to be published in a law journal. In addition to writing for the courts or the legislature, public scholarship may take the form of opinion essays, news articles, and blog posts. Traditional citation metrics do not count these types of publications, focusing instead on scholarly journals, and even more narrowly, on journals focused on a particular discipline. Yet public scholarship can have meaningful impact in the broader society, perhaps even more so in the context of law, where an expert’s communications can deeply affect readers’ understandings of their rights and remedies.

D. Scholarship of Teaching

The fourth and final category, in some ways focused both inward and outward, is the scholarship of teaching, in which the scholar uses research to improve the pedagogy of their discipline, thereby better educating the students of today to be stronger practitioners tomorrow. Pedagogical research shifts focus from the scholarly role of the academic to the instructional role. Straddling the line between scholarship of discovery and scholarship of application, the scholarship of teaching

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33 Id. at 85.
34 Richard H. Fallon, Jr., Scholars’ Briefs and the Vocation of the Law Professor, 4 J. LEG. ANALYSIS 223 (2012). Fallon’s research indicates an upward trend in the writing of scholars’ briefs by faculty and their overall positive reception by the courts. Id. at 225–226.
35 BOYER, supra note 23, at 85.
36 Id.
37 Id. at 86.
can be underappreciated at times, as "teaching is often viewed as a routine function, tacked on, something almost anyone can do." Yet returning again to the earliest academies of higher learning, teaching was the core purpose of the faculty, not merely transmitting knowledge, but transforming and extending it as well, inspiring students to be thinkers and doers. Even for those skeptics who might staunchly continue to prioritize the theoretical scholarship of discovery and integration, Boyer argues that the scholarship of teaching can have a meaningful impact on those categories of scholarship as well: "In the end, inspired teaching keeps the flame of scholarship alive. Almost all successful academics give credit to creative teachers—those mentors who defined their work so compellingly that it became, for them, a lifetime challenge. Without the teaching function, the continuity of knowledge will be broken and the store of human knowledge dangerously diminished." Being adjacent to traditional scholarship, these articles may be published in the same types of journals, but may also find their place in specialty journals instead, such as the Journal of Legal Education. Depending on the location of publication, this type of scholarship may or may not be counted in traditional citation metrics.

Boyer’s argument was that all four of these elements of scholarship are interrelated, hold equal importance, and should be equally prized by academic institutions. So why, if all of these other categories of legal scholarship exist, do the majority of citation metrics focus only on traditional, theoretical scholarship in traditional scholarly journals, typically within one’s specific discipline? Why are these other, equally important, categories overlooked? A search of the literature critiquing these metrics does not provide a clear answer, but two logical reasons present themselves. First, entrenchment—recall the discussion at the beginning of this section on the development of citation indexes that begat the impact factor that begat the h-index and all subsequent and similar citation count-focused measures. The earliest tools were discipline-specific, so the focus today remains on the discipline. Second, measurability—while a quick read of any of the critiques of citation counts in any discipline will reveal that journal citation counts are far from perfect, it is much easier to count citations in discipline-specific journals than any other category or form of scholarship. Most disciplines have a database that captures the majority of their journals and thus a focus on discipline-specific scholarly journals in some ways makes sense. Books are far less easy to capture, since not all are published in an e-book format, and even those that are rarely get collected into the same singular databases the way journals do, so it would be difficult to equitably count citations to books and book chapters. Other forms of scholarship, such as opinion pieces, presentations, and blogs, are typically not held in the same regard as

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38 Id. at 85.
39 Id. at 86.
40 BOYER, supra note 23, at 86.
41 Id.
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more formal modes of scholarship. Even if they were, these modes of scholarship are rarely included in databases or any unifying mechanism for equitably extracting citation metrics.

While still not wholly satisfactory, this, at least, provides an explanation for why these citation counts are measured in such a limiting way. But as emerging studies have shown, if all anyone focuses on is this narrow measure of citation counts as scholarly impact, it stands to grossly underrepresent the actual impact and influence of an individual scholar or, in some instances, an entire law school faculty. Many scholars have posited enhancements to the currently understood plans for the law school scholarly impact ranking that would make it more inclusive, but there will always be scholarship and scholarly innovation that is excluded, particularly scholarship and initiatives directed at the public. If we accept that this law school scholarly impact ranking is unavoidable, despite its many anticipated flaws, this acceptance calls on us to be proactive in controlling and correcting the narrative that this ranking will tell. The second half of this article will look at possible methods that scholars, schools, and libraries can adopt to take control of the narrative.

III. Alternative Measures of Scholarly Impact

The previous sections have shown why citation-based impact metrics have developed such a peculiarly narrow focus on discipline-specific journals, despite the fact that critics have identified at least four different legitimate directions that an academic’s scholarship might take. To become more inclusive, we must redefine scholarly impact and seek out additional measures that take into account broader acts of scholarship and stakeholders outside of the academy. This section will discuss alternative methodologies for more inclusively measuring scholarly impact. If, dear reader, you were hoping that this section will provide a magic solution, I am sorry to disappoint you. The spoiler is that there is as yet no one tool or technique that equitably measures and captures impact for all categories and forms of scholarly output. Instead, this section begins by reviewing a few studies that have attempted to find a broader measure of scholarly impact and discusses alternative methods of demonstrating audience engagement with scholarship.

42 Hayashi, supra note 21, at 145.
43 Shucha, supra note 20.
44 Herman Aguinis, Debra L. Shapiro, Elena P. Antonacopoulou & Thomas G. Cummings, Scholarly Impact: A Pluralist Conceptualization, 13 ACAD. OF MANAGEMENT LEARNING & EDUC. 623, 626 (2014) [hereafter Aguinis II].
A. Web Presence Studies

One of the many criticisms of citation-based, journal-focused impact measures is that such a narrow scope only considers impact with internal stakeholders, mostly scholars within one's discipline, a notion that one research team deemed an "incestuous, closed loop."45 In their study of scholarly impact in the field of management, Herman Aguinis, Isabel Suarez-Gonzalez, Gustavo Lannelongue, and Harry Joo sought an alternative measurement that would take into account impact on external stakeholders as well. Instead of focusing on citation count, their alternative metric looked at the number of mentions on the web.46 As a comparative exercise, the authors used as their sample population the 550 most influential management scholars, as determined by a traditional citation count study in Web of Science. Using Google, the authors searched each scholar's name in quotation marks and created their own ranking list based on the number of web pages that contained a scholar's name.47 Because their intent was to compare impact inside and outside the academy, they differentiated their search results by .edu and non-.edu web pages.48 The results of their study were telling, particularly when comparing the ranked lists based on citation count to those based on mentions on non-.edu web pages. The authors found that, "on average, there is a difference of 100.32 ranks between the lists based on citations and non-.edu entries. Moreover, there are 19 scholars for whom there is a difference of more than 200 ranks across the two lists."49 Interestingly, comparing the entries in .edu pages to the traditional citation count, they found a much tighter correlation, suggesting that appearance in .edu pages is a further indication of internal stakeholder impact, rather than external.50

Like all studies, this one is not without its flaws. A reference on a web page could be positive or negative, which may blur the conception of what it means to be impactful. As the authors point out, though, the same is true with citations in a journal article, which, too, can be positive or negative.51 Another issue is the multifaceted nature of web references. When an author is cited in a journal article, it is almost certainly due to their role as an academic, but anyone versed in web searching might point out that simply having one's name appear on a web page does not necessarily

45 Aguinis I, supra note 22, at 106. See also Aguinis II, supra note 44, at 625: "In other words, all the measures based on citations assess the extent to which research is noticed by other researchers."
46 Aguinis I, supra note 22, at 107.
47 Id. at 108. Some refinements to the study had to be made. In particular, they removed scholars from the study whose search results brought back too many false positives within the first 50 results. Id. By the time they were done making refinements, their sample size was down to 384. Id. at 109.
48 Id. at 109.
49 Id. at 115.
50 Id.
51 "Both [the web presence and citation count] measures are unidimensional and broad, based on a simple count, and indicative of impact regardless of the reason for such impact" (emphasis added). Aguinis I, supra note 22, at 128.
have to do with one’s work as a scholar. Though the authors were careful to eliminate scholars from the study whose results brought up too many false positives based on references to others who share their same name, there is no indication that the authors of the study further weeded out results that contained references to a scholar based on other aspects of their life. 52

A study of economics scholars based on the Aguinis study, conducted by Chan Ho Fai, Markus Schaffner, Stephen Whyte, Bruno S. Frey, Jana Gallus, and Benno Torgler yielded similar results, indicating little to no correlation between external influence based on non-.edu web counts and internal influence based on citation counts. 53 Examining external influence further, the authors found strong evidence that scholars in economics who received major awards, such as the Nobel Prize or the John Bates Clark Medal, showed tremendous external influence in non-.edu web pages. 54 Before diving into their study that focused on web mentions as compared to citation counts, Fai, et al, identified several other areas that one might include as indicators of external impact for scholars. 55 This included achieving positions of influence, such as sitting on high level advisory boards or holding public office; 56 having their work cited in official documents; 57 receiving significant awards; 58 writing for, being cited by, and appearing in popular media; 59 and participation and reference in new media, such as blogs and other social media. 60 One of the primary shortcomings they identify for the majority of these potential measures is the lack of reliable data, as a comprehensive database is unlikely to exist for any of these measures. 61

B. Pluralist Measures

As with traditional citation measures, the web presence studies are far from perfect, but they do support the proposition that a scholar with a lower formal citation count may nevertheless have significant impact outside of the academy. To conceive of a more holistic and inclusive view of scholarly impact, we must look to these and other additional measurements to capture impact in all forms. The research team of

52 Id. at 108.
53 Chan Ho Fai, Markus Schaffner, Stephen Whyte, Bruno S. Frey, Jana Gallus & Benno Torgler, External Influence as an Indicator of Scholarly Importance, 87 FONDAZIONE ENI ENRICO MATTEI [FEEM], at 18 (2013).
54 Id. at 20. This was true even when the authors removed from their results web mentions surrounding the announcement and receipt of the award itself.
55 Specifically, economists. These categories may not be equally applied in all fields.
56 Fai, supra note 53, at 7–8.
57 Id. at 8.
58 Id.
59 Id.
60 Fai, supra note 53, at 9.
61 Id.
Herman Aguinis, Debra L. Shapiro, Elena P. Antonacopoulou, and Thomas G. Cummings proposed a pluralist approach to measuring scholarly impact that would use multiple measurement tools to assess scholarly impact on multiple stakeholders.\(^{62}\) Using their methodology, one might include a traditional citation count, as well as media references to one’s scholarship, and even student evaluations.\(^{63}\) Addressing the differences in the nature of scholarship across disciplines, and the varied reasons one might be conducting an impact measurement, the pluralist conceptualization is purposefully flexible. It is designed to add external stakeholders into the multivariate impact analysis, but what external stakeholders are included is up to the data collector.\(^{64}\) The advantage of a multi-stakeholder impact analysis is that scholars would no longer be made to feel an inescapable divide between the different categories of scholarship. Instead, “a pluralist conceptualization suggests that there can be synergies across the various stakeholders in terms of impact, such that more impact on one stakeholder actually leads to more impact on others.”\(^{65}\)

One of the primary challenges in establishing a multi-stakeholder analysis of scholarly impact is locating a reliable tool for measuring external impact. Aguinis, Shapiro, Antonacopoulou, and Cummings compare this to the development and refinement of traditional citation-based metrics—those tools have evolved over the years to create the best possible fit for measuring impact within the academy. Likewise, over time, improved tools will develop to measure impact outside the academy.\(^{66}\) One possible external measurement is web presence, as examined by the Aguinis and Fai studies highlighted above, but the predominant measure of external impact today involves the implementation of altmetrics.\(^{67}\)

C. Altmetrics

Rather than being a singular tool or form of measurement, altmetrics refers to a variety of tools and measurements of online engagement with scholarship. It can include the number of times an article has been bookmarked, likes and retweets on social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook, mentions in blog posts, and views and downloads from databases like JSTOR or HeinOnline.\(^{68}\) There are a growing number of tools that will collect this data for the researcher, saving the trouble of collecting the data manually. Appendix A provides a comparative table.

\(^{62}\) Aguinis II, supra note 44.

\(^{63}\) Id. at 627.

\(^{64}\) Id. at 628–29. This flexibility also allows for weighting impact scores based on different stakeholders, or readjusting your impact formula over time, in response to changing priorities.

\(^{65}\) Id. at 629.

\(^{66}\) Id. at 633.

\(^{67}\) Also referred to as cybermetrics or webometrics. Aguinis II, supra note 44, at 633.

\(^{68}\) Id.
As with any impact measure, however, altmetric measures are not without their flaws. Similar to the flaws of traditional citation metrics, none of the different altmetric tools are comprehensive. Nearly all overlap in some areas and diverge in others, with none providing a complete picture of external impact.69

More notably, critics of altmetrics question whether they measure true engagement or mere “buzz.” To illustrate this potential distinction, Aguinis, Shapiro, Antonacopoulou, and Cummings highlight the case of an article published in the open-access journal *PLoS ONE* in October 2009. The article concerned bat fellatio, and certainly attracted quite a lot of attention. By April 2014, *PLoS ONE*’s altmetric measurements included an astounding 312,685 article views and 9,920 shares, but the article only received four citations.70 Studies of altmetrics have raised the same question. Zohreh Zahedi, Rodrigo Costas, and Paul Wouters note that, because altmetrics is still a relatively new field, we do not fully understand what motivates users to bookmark an article in Zotero or Mendeley, mention an article in a blog post or on Wikipedia, or share an article on Twitter or Facebook.71 In their study examining the relationship between altmetrics and citation metrics, the authors found a more positive correlation between traditional citation measures and more scholarly web-based tools, such as Mendeley and Zotero.72 This harkens back to the web presence studies referenced earlier in this paper, which found a closer correlation of impact between traditional citation measures and web presence on .edu websites. This suggests that, in order to measure external impact, one might focus on other altmetrics, such as blog and media mentions and social media engagement, to measure impact on external stakeholders.

It takes very little time to like or retweet a post, so altmetrics may indeed be measuring shallow buzz, but raw citation counts can include shallow citations, too. Citing an article in a string cite, for example, does not indicate a deep connection with the article. Likewise, many citation study experts suggest that a common practice in citation is to cite highly cited articles to legitimize one’s own scholarship.73 This may acknowledge a seminal article’s stature more than indicate meaningful engagement with it. Unless citation studies are going to focus exclusively on citations in which the cited article is discussed, or at the very least quoted, it would be foolish to assume every citation is meaningful.

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69 See Appendix A for a comparison of coverage.
72 Id.
73 Haddad, supra note 4, at 29.
On the other hand, it would likewise be foolish to argue that a like on Facebook or Twitter has the same weight as a citation in a journal article. Altmetrics are not replacement metrics, but rather a helpful complement to traditional citation measures, particularly as a means of measuring those stakeholders and forms of scholarship that are so often excluded from traditional citation measures. Proving the maxim that the more things change, the more things stay the same, studies of altmetrics most often focus on the traditionally-counted forms of scholarship, namely journal articles. Like the work of Zahedi, Costas, and Wouters, these studies typically seek to assess whether any correlations can be found between altmetric indicators and traditional citation indicators for a specific dataset of journal articles. Yet I would charge scholars to think more expansively about the role that altmetrics can play in measuring scholarly impact. Returning to the pluralist approach of Aguinis, Shapiro, Antonacopoulou, and Cummings, and the categories of scholarship defined by Boyer, recall that journal articles are only a fraction of the form that scholarship may take, and a balanced approach at assessing scholarly impact should endeavor to capture these other forms of scholarship as well. I believe altmetrics can play a key role here.

IV. Beyond Citation Count: Impression Management

Despite the many studies that law scholars have already published proving how inaccurate the ranking will be, the US News law school scholarly impact ranking is still set to arrive in the near future. If the history of citation-based scholarly impact studies has shown us anything, it is that this ranking will never capture all forms of faculty scholarship and will continue to emphasize, at most, two of Boyer’s four categories of scholarship (discovery and integration). I will leave it to Shucha and others to continue championing efforts to improve upon the methodology for creating this ranking, but with its inevitable publication, our new mission must be to get out ahead of the ranking and tell our own story of scholarly impact. Whether a scholar writes predominantly journal articles, monographs, or chapters, and whether their focus is on the scholarship of discovery, integration, application, or teaching, there is a much broader story to be told of their scholarly impact than mere citation count. In this section, I will highlight approaches and tools that scholars should consider for telling their own story of scholarly impact.

74 I also applaud HeinOnline’s efforts to include more interdisciplinary journals in their Law Journal Library, to hopefully at least render this slice of scholarly impact a little more accurate.

75 While law schools and law libraries can and should employ many of these strategies as well, not all may, and it is therefore incumbent on individual scholars to control their own narrative. Specific law school and law library strategies will be addressed at the end.
A. Social Media

Like it or loathe it, there is no better strategy for disseminating one’s scholarship to a broader audience today than by making use of social media. While there are a growing number of academics who champion the use of social media in promoting their work, there are still many who bemoan the very thought. Social media can seem shallow, distracting, and time-consuming, but it can also be an effective avenue for engaging audiences within and beyond academia. Whether a scholar’s goal is to promote their scholarship to increase citation count, or to promote their scholarship to the public for broader consumption, embracing social media will serve the scholar well. Does this mean employing every social media vehicle? Certainly not. In fact, when deciding how to use social media as a research advantage, the scholar should strategize, thinking about what message they want to send with their research and to whom. Because there are so many social media platforms today, one can pick and choose based on such factors as intended audience, comfort level, and desired media format. This section will highlight the most prominent social media platforms for scholars, with advice on how and why you might adopt each.

i. Twitter

Twitter is arguably the most popular social media platform for academics. It does not have as large a user base as some other social media platforms, but it has many features that make it a very effective tool for engaging, both with the academic community and especially with the public. The biggest challenge with Twitter is the post length limit of 280 characters. A scholar cannot rehash their latest thesis here. However, the advantage of the character limit is that it encourages the user to repackage their scholarship into a much shorter message. Compose a research hook to capture the audience’s attention in 280 characters, and post a link to where they can read the work in full.

Particularly if the scholar is trying to reach the public with their scholarship, taking this opportunity to repackage one’s thesis into small, digestible chunks can make the research more appealing. If the user is still struggling with the 280 characters (much more generous than the original Twitter policy of 140, but nevertheless still limiting), there are ways to work around it, such as creating a series of threaded tweets, effectively serializing the message into multiple (hopefully

76 Aguinis II, supra note 44, at 634.
numbered) tweets. There are several strategies for engaging with the Twitter community, both for disseminating one’s own posts and for engaging with others’.

- **Hashtags**—Hashtags are an effective way to search Twitter, and therefore also an important way to make one’s posts more discoverable as well. Use hashtags to identify the subject of one’s tweet or one’s intended audience. For instance, some appropriate hashtags for this article would include #altmetrics and #scholarlyimpact for the subject, and #law, #legalscholars, and #lawlibrarians for the audience.

- **Engage**—It is important to give as much as one takes with social media. In addition to composing one’s own tweets, a scholar can comment on others’, tag other users in one’s own tweets, or reply to comments made on one’s tweets. Active engagement raises awareness of one’s social media profile and, by association, one’s scholarly work.

- **Lists**—One aspect of Twitter that can be overwhelming is how quickly content moves. Keeping up with every tweet that comes through one’s newsfeed would be a full-time job, and probably still require a second pair of eyes! Lists are a helpful tool in Twitter because they allow the user to manage where certain followed accounts’ posts appear. The user can make their lists private or public (and a public list can be yet another way of building community, such as a tax law scholar creating a public Twitter list of fellow tax scholars’ Twitter accounts).

**ii. Facebook**

By far the most populous of the social media platforms, Facebook is certainly worth considering when promoting one’s research. Unlike Twitter, Facebook allows for lengthier posts.\(^{79}\) Despite this freedom of verbosity, however, research suggests that, when it comes to online engagement, brevity is still the soul of wit.\(^{80}\) Another advantage Facebook affords is flexibility:

- **Content Variety**—Facebook is very flexible in what format one’s content sharing can take. Posts can be text (long form or short form), video (pre-recorded or live), images, or links.

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\(^{79}\) It is not limitless, but it is over 60,000 characters, plenty of room to discuss one’s research. Dominique Jackson, *Know Your Limit: The Ideal Length of Every Social Media Post*, SPROUTSOCIAL (Dec. 15, 2020), https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-character-counter/.

\(^{80}\) Id. Research suggests that user engagement on Facebook is greatest when posts are limited to 40-80 characters. See also Veronica Jarksi, *The Ideal Word Counts for Social Media Posts (Infographic)*, MARKETINGPROFS (Apr. 5, 2016), https://www.marketingprofs.com/chirp/2016/29671/the-ideal-word-counts-for-social-media-posts-infographic.
Beyond the Newsfeed—Facebook allows users to present content independent of their personal profile and newsfeed. For instance, a scholar could create a page for their research. If one writes primarily monographs, this could be a good way to personally promote one’s books. To better put the “social” in social media, a scholar could create a Facebook group and invite particular users to discuss their mutual research area, or create events in Facebook to invite users to. We know from the earlier section on citation in scholarship that who one cites can itself be a form of communication and community. Social media allows one to amplify that community and conversation further.

iii. Instagram

Where Twitter and Facebook, at their core, are text-based social media venues, Instagram is image-based. This format might seem like a stretch for scholarly use—how would one use a visual-based social media platform to share their written research?—but Instagram has tremendous potential for researchers. For one thing, it has the highest engagement level of any social media platform.\(^81\) A user can post still images or video, and with Instagram Stories (which only stay up for 24 hours) the user can engage with their followers by posting polls or asking questions. While the post itself is visual-based, the user can add captions, thereby pairing the visual with textual content. Additional advantages of this platform include:

- Creative Outlet—When sharing one’s research with a broader audience, learning to repackage scholarship for non-academic readers is an important exercise. With its visual focus, Instagram can make this a creative exercise as well. The scholar might share a table, chart, or graph from their research, identify a representative image, or create a graphic that shares a provocative quote from the scholarship. In any of these approaches, the scholar is challenged to consider how best to encapsulate their research, quite literally, at a glance. The scholar could then provide a link or citation to the full work in the Caption field that accompanies the visual post.

- The Facebook Connection—As noted above, social media can be time-consuming, but because Instagram is owned by Facebook, if a scholar uses both platforms, they can have their Instagram posts feed automatically into their Facebook profile as well, thereby capturing both audiences at once.

\(^{81}\) van Alstyne, supra note 78, at https://theacademicedesigner.com/2019/social-media-platforms/?subscribe=succes#instagram.
iv. YouTube

When considering visual content, it is hard not to think of YouTube. Because of the nature of the content, video, YouTube is less likely to be a social media platform one would post to every day, but can nevertheless be another approach to sharing one’s research with a broader audience, most notably because it requires the scholar to present their research in a new format (unless they’re planning to film themselves reading their article, word for word!). Like Facebook, YouTube has an enormous (and fastest-growing) number of monthly active users, so could be a powerful means of reaching a broader community. Prominent features include:

- **Playlists**—With a YouTube account, a user can create public or private playlists. In this way, a scholar could organize videos by research topic or project.
- **Audience Engagement**—Users can allow followers to engage with their videos by liking, commenting, and even sharing. Followers can also subscribe to one’s YouTube channel to avoid missing a new video.
- **Beyond YouTube**—YouTube allows users to easily embed their YouTube videos elsewhere, so one can share one’s YouTube video on other social media platforms, on a course website, or on a personal website or blog.

v. LinkedIn

As Jessica van Alstyne writes, “LinkedIn is the most powerful platform academics are on but don’t use well.” Most academics use LinkedIn as a professional profile, effectively another version of a CV, but there are many prominent features on this platform primed to boost scholarship’s visibility:

- **Bio**—Within one’s bio, in addition to listing publications and awards, a user can add multimedia, post links, and make recommendations.
- **Connect**—Like other social media, LinkedIn users can build their network by following other academics, journalists, and practitioners in their field. They can also join groups and follow organizations to engage with an even wider audience.

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82 For an example of law scholars spreading their expertise over YouTube, see Break Into Tax, a fun and lively tax law YouTube channel run by tax law scholars Leandra Lederman and Allison Christians. https://www.youtube.com/c/breakintotax. In its first three months, this channel already has over 300 subscribers, over twenty videos, some with over 1,000 views.
84 Id. at https://theacademicdesigner.com/2019/social-media-platforms/#linkedin.
The Role of Citation in the Law

• **Share**—Perhaps most importantly, users can post content on LinkedIn, from text to images to video. If a scholar wanted to share details related to their research but did not want to put the time into maintaining a blog, for example, posting on LinkedIn could be a helpful alternative.

**B. Blogs**

Many academics use blogs to communicate their research in a more informal manner, reaching a broader audience, outside of academia. A study of top-ranked economics blogs and bloggers as an alternative means of ranking economics departments found that, while some top-ranked institutions, like Harvard, remained top-ranked, other traditionally lower-ranked institutions, like Appalachian State, rose dramatically in the rankings. 85 A well-maintained academic blog, then, can be a powerful indicator of scholarly impact. While blogs certainly do not have the same scholarly heft as a traditional journal, there are many well-known scholarly blogs, such as *The Volokh Conspiracy*, created by UCLA law professor Eugene Volokh, and authored today by several additional academics and practitioners. 86

Blogs can be a helpful way to share snippets of one’s research and draw attention from a broad audience. This may be especially helpful if one’s primary scholarly vehicle is in a less visible publication format, such as books and book chapters. A scholar could combine this with social media by tweeting or sharing links to their latest blog posts on the various social media channels to which they subscribe. Likewise, most blogging platforms, like Wordpres, allow bloggers to link their social media accounts from their blog home page, broadening both blog and social media exposure for the scholar. Finally, for assessing impact, blogging platforms typically provide a number of metrics to help the scholar monitor audience engagement. This includes blog post likes and comments, views, and (in Wordpres) “ping-backs,” in which another online source has linked to one’s blog post.

**C. Presentations**

Another shortcoming of traditional scholarly impact metrics is that they focus on written scholarship, but scholars can have considerable influence through presented work as well. 87 Of particular prominence in the realm of professional presentations are TED Talks. TED Talks reach an extensive, worldwide audience,

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86 *The Volokh Conspiracy*, https://reason.com/volokh/.
87 Aguinis, et al., note particularly media appearances and serving as an expert witness in high-profile court cases. Aguinis II, supra note 44, at 626–27. Fai, et al., briefly discuss the possibility of assessing impact based on speaking fees for presentations outside of the academy (though they conclude that we lack a comprehensive tool for collecting this data). *Supra* note 53, at 7.
are highly viewed, and often used for pedagogical purposes. A comprehensive study of TED Talks found that talks given by academic presenters received more engagement through comments than non-academic presenters, “suggest[ing] that commenting behavior might be a potential indicator of engagement and impact, beyond views.” If, like TED Talks, a scholar’s presentation has been recorded and archived online, user engagement metrics, such as views, shares, likes, and comments, may be available. Making use of social media, the savvy scholar would do well to share the presentation themselves through their personal channels, increasing awareness of the content.

D. Podcasts

A discussion of methods for promoting scholarship today would be lacking if it failed to mention podcasting. A podcast is typically an episodic series of audio files stored with a podcast hosting company and made available to listeners through any number of popular podcast sites and apps, such as SoundCloud, Stitcher, RadioPublic, Spotify, or Apple Podcasts. Taking the informal atmosphere of a blog and combining it with the popularity of audiovisual content on social media platforms today, a podcast provides the best of both worlds (less the visual content). Podcasting is a convenient means of conveying one’s scholarship to an audience who can engage with the material at times unavailable with the previously discussed methods, such as when commuting to and from work or walking the dog. Academic podcasting is a growing market. Anyone can create a podcast, from individual researchers to libraries to academic institutions. Podcasts likewise come with their own metrics, which will vary by platform, but include number of subscribed followers, podcast ratings, and written reviews.

E. Law School Strategies

Each of the methods and tools listed above can be employed by a law school’s media department as well as by the individual scholar. Law schools can use their own social media to advertise the latest scholarship from their faculty or

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89 Id., referencing Cassidy R. Sugimoto & Mike Thelwall, Scholars on Soap Boxes: Science Communication & Dissemination In TED Videos, 64 J. AMER. SOC. FOR INFO. SCI. & TECH. 663--674 (2013).
91 For tips on getting started with an academic podcast, see Carina Rampelt, A Beginner’s Guide to Academic Podcasting, GLOBAL ACADEMY JOBS, https://blog.globalacademyjobs.com/a-beginners-guide-to-academic-podcasting/.
draw attention to their latest presentations and accolades. Though it may seem redundant to have both an individual faculty member and their law school posting about their scholarly accomplishments, bear in mind that the audiences that follow the faculty member’s social media, compared to the law school’s social media, though they may overlap some, will almost certainly broaden the reach of the faculty member’s scholarship.

In addition, by gathering and disseminating data on all law school faculty scholarly accomplishments, the law school can also tell a broader story, not just of the individual, but of the faculty as a whole. This may be an important strategy in coordination with and responding to the US News scholarly impact ranking. If the school is satisfied with their position in the ranking, it can simply add its own data to the story; and if dissatisfied, the school can use the broader data collected about its faculty’s scholarship to complete the picture. The single most helpful strategy for law schools to employ, however, is to invest time in well-maintained faculty publication pages. These tend to be highly indexed by search engines and therefore very visible in internet searches, so maintaining an up-to-date list of faculty scholarship in all its formats will benefit the faculty member’s online scholarly exposure.93

F. Law Library Strategies

For the same reasons stated above, law libraries can assist in faculty scholarly exposure by posting new faculty scholarship on the library’s social media channels, but there are several additional library-specific strategies that should be strongly considered as well.

i. Institutional Repositories

Many law libraries today have institutional repositories or are considering developing one, whether by purchasing a commercial platform, like bepress, working with a not-for-profit platform, like arXiv, or creating their own. Institutional repositories today often host the law school’s student-run law journals and a vast collection of faculty scholarship.94 Many libraries also manage their school’s presence on SSRN, an online repository where many scholars publish preprints of their articles that are pending formal publication. The advantage of these repositories is two-fold. First, because institutional repositories are open access, faculty scholarship contained therein is far more discoverable in internet searches.

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94 Whether a faculty member can have their scholarship posted on their school’s institutional repository may depend on the copyright agreement they signed with the publisher.
searches.95 Google Scholar, a preferred search engine for many researchers, is known to index repository sites, including bepress and SSRN.96 The second advantage of library-maintained repositories of faculty scholarship is librarians’ familiarity with and use of metadata. When uploading an article to bepress or SSRN, the librarian can add metadata indicating, among other things, the keywords related to the scholarship’s subject. This metadata is mined by search engines to determine the relevancy of search results, so the better the metadata used, the better the rank in the search results.97

ii. Faculty Bibliographies

Creating and maintaining faculty bibliographies might be accomplished within an institutional repository, or even with faculty member’s bio pages on the law school website. If not, the library might consider using tools they may already have, like LibGuides, to create faculty bibliographies that capture all nature of faculty scholarship. Repositories and bio pages may focus more on traditional scholarship, whereas a comprehensive bibliography could take a broader direction, including congressional testimony, amicus briefs, blogs, social media channels, and more.98 If your school is focusing on how to control the narrative set by rigid citation-based scholarly impact measures, having these broader, more holistic pictures of a faculty member’s scholarly work could be a strong asset for the scholar and the school. Here again, library-controlled web pages and tools like LibGuides offer flexible metadata options to help with indexing and discoverability in internet searches.

iii. Scholar Profiles

Additionally, law libraries can assist their faculty members in setting up comprehensive author profiles, which can ensure both discoverability of faculty scholarship and improve accuracy of scholarly records. In law, arguably the most important scholarly profiles for a law professor to maintain are HeinOnline Author Profiles, owing to their involvement in the US News scholarly impact ranking; Google Scholar, because of its popularity among researchers and its visibility in internet searches; and ORCiD, because ORCiD profiles pull data from and push

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95 James M. Donovan & Carol A. Watson, *Citation Advantage of Open Access Legal Scholarship*, 103 LAW LBR. J. 553, 566 (2011). Discoverability of research is a common reason that an author will cite one source over another—citation by convenience. WEST, *supra* note 1, at 195.
96 Marks, *supra* note 90, at 87.
97 Marks & Le provide tips about metadata and search engine optimization. See *supra* note 90.
98 LibGuides, for instance, allow users to embed material, such as YouTube videos, onto a guide. Some social media platforms offer embed code as well. For a faculty member with a strong Twitter presence, for example, a faculty bibliography in a LibGuide could embed that scholar’s Twitter page as added exposure.
data to many major scholarly databases, including HeinOnline and Web of Science. An ORCiD ID is also a unique identifier, helping ensure the scholar receives accurate credit for the work they author. Librarians can set up ORCiD and HeinOnline profiles for faculty members; Google author profiles must be set up by the individual, though librarians could provide resources on the process.

iv. Teach Others

Finally, law libraries can assist by simply starting and continuing the conversation with their faculty and administrators. By the nature of our work, librarians are uniquely poised to drive this movement, and this should include guiding our constituents, not only on best practices, but on why these best practices should be adopted.

V. Conclusion

Regrettable though it may be to some, citation-based scholarly impact measures are likely here to stay. They have been a common method of scholar evaluation in other disciplines since the mid-20th century, so the only real surprise, perhaps, is that it has taken so long for them to darken law’s door in such a formal capacity. Whether a scholar publishes primarily in law journals, but especially for those whose scholarly output is elsewhere, citation measures grossly underrepresent a scholar’s scholarly influence. If citation-based scholarly impact measures are here to stay, the solution is not to retreat into the insular world of law journals, but to be more proactive, owning our narrative, and in so doing, demonstrate that citation counts are one small footnote in our scholarly impact story.

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99 For more about setting up ORCiD IDs, see Shucha, supra note 20, at 20–22.
100 Note that this is, initially, a time-consuming process. For libraries with limited resources, ORCiD IDs could also be set up by administrative assistants or other trusted individuals. Id.
101 Marks & Le, supra note 90, offer tips for selling best practices for scholarly visibility, starting at page 95.
## APPENDIX A: A Comparison of Altmetrics Services & Resources

### Altmetric.com, https://www.altmetric.com/

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<tr>
<th>Sources for &amp; Types of Data Collection</th>
<th>Features &amp; Cost</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Public policy documents</td>
<td><strong>Badges:</strong> Provide a colorful display of collected metrics for published content, included books. Prices vary, but individual researchers can get a free badge to display on their own works.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Mainstream media (4000+ outlets)</td>
<td><strong>Bookmarklet:</strong> Free plug-in for Chrome, Firefox, and Safari, showing online shares and mentions. “[O]nly works on PubMed, arXiv, or pages containing a DOI with Google Scholar friendly citation metadata.”</td>
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<td>• Saves on Mendeley</td>
<td><strong>More on free Almetric tools here:</strong> <a href="https://www.altmetric.com/products/free-tools/free-badges-for-researchers/">https://www.altmetric.com/products/free-tools/free-badges-for-researchers/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Peer review forums PubPeer and Publons</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Wikipedia (English language version)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Open Syllabus Project</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Patent applications (nine international patent offices)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Blogs (9000+)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Dimensions Citations</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Social media: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Reddit, Q&amp;A</td>
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### ImpactStory, https://profiles.impactstory.org/

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<th>Sources for &amp; Types of Data Collection</th>
<th>Features &amp; Cost</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Altmetric.com</td>
<td>Free and scholar-focused (rather than publisher or institution).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• BASE</td>
<td><strong>Tip:</strong> There’s a significant advantage to first setting up and maintaining your ORCiD profile and then syncing to ImpactStory.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Mendeley</td>
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<td>• CrossRef</td>
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<td>• ORCiD</td>
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<td>• Twitter</td>
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Plum Analytics, https://plumanalytics.com/

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<th>Sources for &amp; Types of Data Collection</th>
<th>Features &amp; Cost</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Citation metrics – a variety of citation indexes, including Scopus, CrossRef, and SSRN, as well as patent, clinical, and policy citations.</td>
<td>Plum Analytics are available to open-source journals and repositories, such as bepress. Their five different categories of metrics, listed in the box to the left, draw from an array of data sources to provide a broad picture of scholarly impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Usage metrics – abstract views, clicks, downloads, full-text views, holdings, plays, views</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Captures – bookmarks, favorites, readers</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Mentions – blog posts, comments, Wikipedia references, news media</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Social Media – tweets, likes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To learn more: <a href="https://plumanalytics.com/learn/about-metrics/">https://plumanalytics.com/learn/about-metrics/</a></td>
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Publish or Perish, https://harzing.com/resources/publish-or-perish

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<th>Sources for &amp; Types of Data Collection</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Retrieves data from a number of prominent sources, including Crossref, Google Scholar, Scopus, and Web of Science</td>
<td>PoP is a free software program that you can download and use to analyze citations from a variety of data sources. As such, the metrics it offers are fairly standard citation-based metrics, rather than alt-metrics.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Users can also import data from select resources as well, such as EndNote.</td>
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Additional Resources on Altmetrics


This resource directs the user to a variety of tools for measuring different types of metrics, from traditional citations to altmetrics, blog mentions, download counts, and more.

*Open Syllabus*, https://opensyllabus.org/

This open-source resource maps syllabi from all across the world, focusing on assigned texts. This could be helpful for identifying whether your casebook or other texts has been assigned by others’ courses. Note: This is a crowd-sourced project, so the sharing of your own courses’ syllabi strengthens the available data.
APPENDIX B: Checklist of Strategies for Promoting & Tracking Scholarly Impact

The following are suggested avenues for promoting scholarship in its many forms.

**Journal Articles**

When it comes to metrics, journal articles remain the easiest by far to track. The challenge, really, is deciding what you want to track: citation count, social media engagement, downloads, shares, bookmarks, the list goes on and on. When you have a forthcoming article, some methods and tools to consider include:

- **Social Media** – Post about your latest publication on your social media channel(s) of choice. Most articles today are available somewhere online, whether through the journal’s website, your library’s repository, or a pre-print on SSRN, so be sure to include a link to your article with your post.
- **Blog** – If you maintain a blog, provide a short write-up about your latest article, again making sure to provide a link to where the full-text can be acquired for further reading. This has a double benefit, both for you, as a means of advertising your latest publication, as well as for the reader, as a means of highlighting the main points of the article.
- **ORCiD & Google Scholar Author Profiles** – For tracking metrics on your scholarship, make sure your latest publications are included in your ORCiD and Google Scholar author profiles. Many altmetric tools gather data from both of these profiles, so if you are collecting altmetrics on your scholarship, keeping these two profiles up-to-date is an important scholarly exercise.
- **SSRN** – Consider posting the pre-print of your article on SSRN as a means of getting earlier metrics on your latest scholarship. *(Note: It is important to check with your publisher to make sure that posting to SSRN is permissible with them. Some do not allow this, or may only allow certain formats to be posted, such as the Word/PDF file submitted to the editor.)*

**Books & Book Chapters**

These can often be the hardest to garner metrics on, because they are rarely available in a traditional scholarly database, in e-book format, or open source. When a new book or book chapter comes out, consider the following methods of promotion and impact tracking:
• **Social Media** – Because books and book chapters are not as easily discoverable online as journal articles, be sure to post about your new book or book chapter on your social media channel(s) of choice.

• **Blog** – If you maintain a blog, write about your latest publication, including information on where the book or book chapter can be acquired. *(Note: If you work at a library with a blog, write about your faculty’s recent books and book chapters, or even consider interviewing the faculty member about the publication.)*

• **WorldCat** – Because traditional citation measures can be difficult to garner for books and book chapters, especially for books unavailable in e-book format, one method of garnering data on your book’s reach is to look to WorldCat to see how many libraries across the world have your book in their collections. URL: https://www.worldcat.org/

• **Publisher Metrics** – Depending on the publisher, metrics may be available from them for your book as well; it is certainly worth an inquiry, if you are interested in tracking metrics on your monographs.

**Presentations**

Presentations are another challenging area of scholarship to track for impact, but the following suggestions may help:

• **Social Media** – If you have an upcoming presentation at a conference, or even at your school, let your followers know. If the conference is online, provide the registration information. Afterward, if the presentation is recorded and available to share, make sure to follow up on social media with another post and link.

• **Blog** – This is another area where, if you maintain a blog, sharing about an upcoming or just-held presentation can be a way to advertise and share a piece of your scholarship with a wider audience than just those who were able to attend your presentation.

• **Organization Metrics & Feedback** – Often the host organization will have a way of tracking presentation views, live attendance numbers, and may receive program feedback from attendees afterward. These can all be helpful metrics to track when measuring this branch of scholarly impact.
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As this article has discussed, these are only some of the many forms that scholarship and scholarly impact can take. If you publish or express your scholarship in any other format, from opinion pieces to news articles to television and radio interviews to congressional testimony and more, many of these same methods of advertisement and acknowledgement may be beneficial for tracking your scholarly impact. Highlight them on social media. Blog about them. If they are available online, look for any metrics (views, likes, downloads) the host site offers. This is also where altmetric tools can come in handy, as they tend to scour these types of sites for mentions of scholarship (see Appendix A).