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### TECH CORNER

#### ALTMETRICS: MEASURING YOUR SCHOLARLY IMPACT WITH TWEETS, POSTS, CITATIONS, AND TEACHING SCORES

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I've recently had anthropologists ask how they can show that their books and articles are having an impact, whether for their own or a colleague's merit review. In this column, I'll share tips for anthropologists and sociologists (and their librarians!) on how to track your work in citation indexes as well as using newer "altmetrics." I'll also suggest how you might promote your work going forward, so you can show greater public impact in your next departmental review.

#### 1. Traditional Measures: Citations, Impact Factor, and the h-index

As you know, the basic way we measure scholarly impact is **citations**: the number of times your book or article is referenced in other scholarly works. Another approach, the **h-index**, compares citations per work to how many well-cited works you have. For instance, an *h-index of 5* means five of your articles were cited at least five times each, while an *h-index of 15* means 15 of your publications were cited at least 15 times each... no matter how many total publications you have. This is a good estimate of your broad impact, but can undervalue wildly popular articles. It may also under-credit you if you're working in an important niche but not being cited widely.

A final measure of impact is which journal you publish in, as a journal's **impact factor** measures how widely it is cited in the field (but this can be gamed, if journals only publish popular or contentious articles rather than featuring a broad selection of current scholarship in their field).

#### *Citations at Scopus (Library Subscription)*

Scopus allows you to do an "author search" to chart your co-authors and number of citations over time. Because Scopus is an expensive database, not all university libraries can afford it—but ask to see if you have it or if your library is considering it. As with all other databases, Scopus indexes only

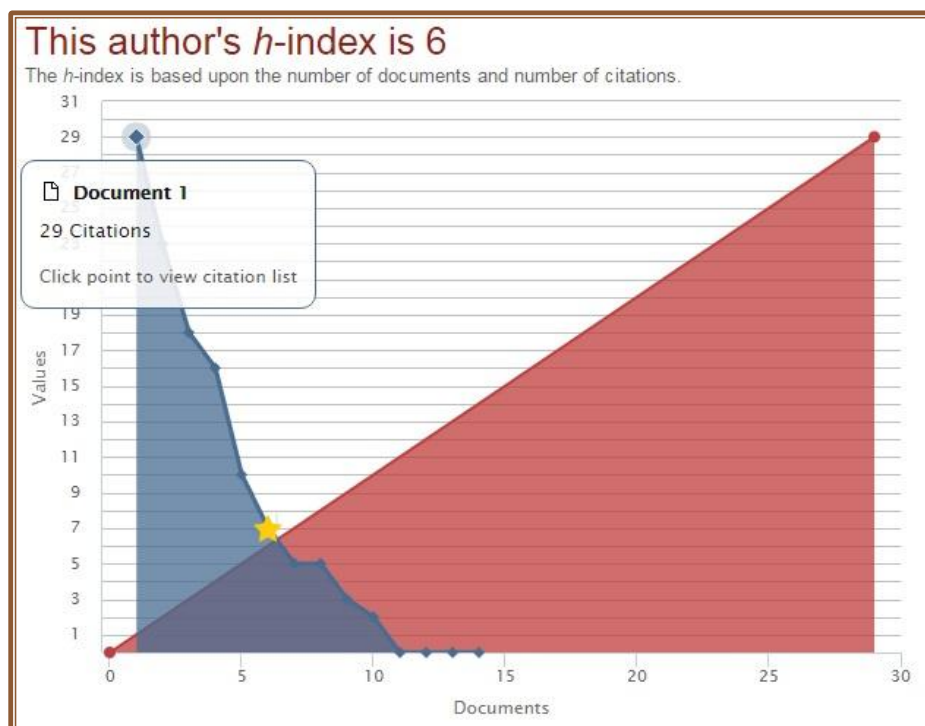


Figure 1: Example of *h-index* for Cynthia Werner from Scopus

some of an author's publications. For instance, it found 14 articles for anthropologist Cynthia Werner, cited a total of 118 times. This gives Werner an h-index of 6—in other words, at least six of her documents have been cited at least six times each (Figure 1). The higher the h-index, the more prolific and broadly recognized an author is likely to be.

#### *Citations on Google Scholar (Free)*

Google Scholar lets you set up a free profile listing all of your articles, books and chapters. It's a great way for readers to find your work, and for you to track new citations over time. For the same scholar, Google found 40 works and 475 citations, with an h-index of 13 (at least 13 articles cited at least 13 times each) (Figure 2). That's more than double the articles and impact that Scopus was estimating—and further evidence that it pays to check your metrics at a range of websites.

#### *Citations on Web of Science (Library Subscription)*

Web of Science is a subscription database; if your library has purchased access this year, you can search by author within the relevant social science indexes. Web of Science found just seven articles by Cynthia Werner, cited 25 times, with an h-index of only 2 (Figure 3)—quite an undercount compared to both Scopus and Google Scholar.



Figure 2: Google Scholar citation metrics for Cynthia Werner

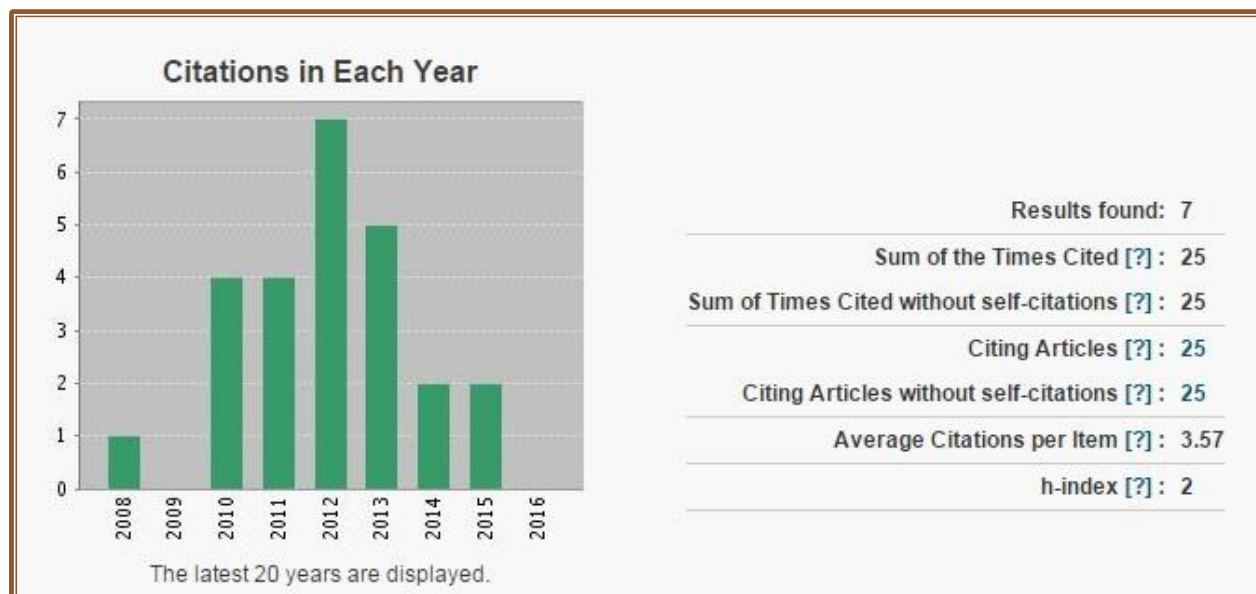


Figure 3: Web of Science citation metrics for Cynthia Werner

Each vendor has access to different article indexes, so your h-index and citation counts may be different on each site. It's worth tracking all the measurements you can get, and then sharing the individual or collective measures that put your work in the best light.

## 2. Altmetrics: New Measures of Public Impact

As scholarly conversations expand beyond the peer-reviewed article, there are other ways to tell the story of scholars' work. Major publishers have jumped in to sell alternative metrics, or **altmetrics** for short, alongside their regular databases of articles and citations. As Robin Featherstone [discusses](#), altmetrics connect you to the new "scholarly ecosystem" online, showing when you are cited in tweets, blog posts, Facebook shares, or citation websites like Mendeley, [etc.](#) Below are some current offerings, with screenshots and comments on their services.

See library holding and database views at PlumX (Departmental Subscription)

Plum Analytics tracks your citations and altmetrics, but also how many libraries purchased your book (WorldCat) and how often your articles were downloaded in EBSCO databases like *Anthropology Plus*, *Social Work Abstracts*, or *Women's Studies International*. This paid license is only available at the institutional level, so you'd need buy-in from an office of research, dean, or department head to view detailed statistics. See Figure 4 below for an example from one senior scholar:

Year	Title	Type	CAPTURES		CITATIONS		Usage: Holdings: WorldCat	Abstract Views: EBSCO	PDF Views: EBSCO
			Exports-Saves: EBSCO	Readers: Mendeley	Cited by: Scopus	Citations: Google Scholar			
2015	Negotiating Everyday Islam after Socialism	Entire Book/Book Chapter		1			99		
2015	Immobility and the re-imaginings of ethnic identity	Peer-reviewed article							
2015	The Unequal Burdens of Repatriation	Peer-reviewed article							
2014	Cold War Memories and Post-Cold War Realities	Entire Book/Book Chapter					650		
2014	Transnational migration, local economic change	Entire Book/Book Chapter					2		
2013	Discovering a sense of well-being through the revival	Peer-reviewe	4	9	1	1		141	
2010	The kazakhs of western mongolia	Peer-reviewe	39	3	5	15		515	230
2009	Ethics Training at Texas A&M	Non-Refereed Publications							
2009	Bride Abduction In Post-soviet Central Asia	Peer-reviewe	130	11	11	24		1101	584
2009	Mobility, Immobility and Return Migration	Peer-reviewed article				13			
2008	Modern Mongolia: Reclaiming Genghis Khan	Book review							
2008	Everyday Life in Central Asia	Book review							
2008	Patriotism, Profits and Waste	Entire Book/Book Chapter		2			246		
2007	Unraveling the Secrets of the Past	Entire Book/Book Chapter	2			4	364	23	
2007	Transnational Identities: Mongolian Kazakhs	Non-Refereed Publications				12			
2007	Perceived risks from radiation and nuclear testing	Peer-reviewe	40	29	13	26		316	131
2006	After the Cold War: International politics, domestic p	Peer-reviewe	39	10	2	6		473	176
2005	Markets and market liberalization	Book				3	902		
2004	Values and valuables	Book				8	257		
2004	Markets and Moralities: Ethnographies	Book Review							
2004	Women, Marriage, and the Nation-State: The Rise of	Entire Book/Book Chapter		11		38	453		
2004	Ethical Dilemmas of Bride Kidnapping in Central Asia	Non-Refereed Publications							
2004	Feminizing the new silk road: Women traders in rural Kazakhstan					15			
2003	Anthropological perspectives on economic developm	Book				3	145		

Figure 4: Example of altmetrics from Plum Analytics

See your public impact at ImpactStory (Free)

ImpactStory lets you view who is tweeting, blogging, or bookmarking your work using a handy map. You can import articles from Google Scholar and ORCID, code from GitHub, datasets on figshare, and Slideshare presentations to see how they're impacting the public (Figure 5). [As they note](#), tracking an article's impact corrects against the idea that journal reputation is the most important indicator of value.

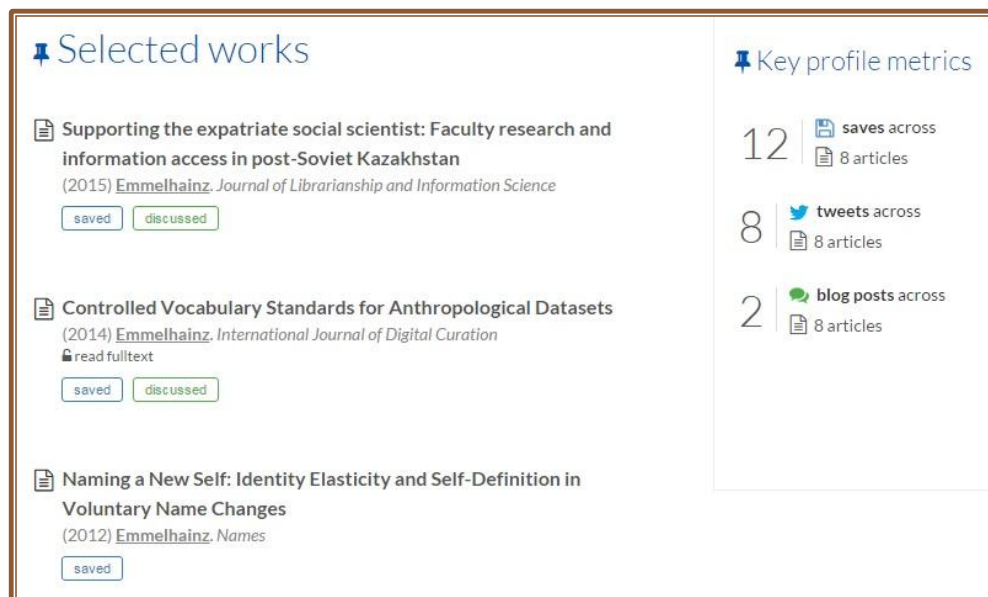


Figure 5: Example of almtetrics in Impact Story

### Track your most-taught articles at the Open Syllabus Project (Free)

The [Open Syllabus Project](#) uses a million public syllabi from department and university websites to give publications a “Teaching Score,” and their [Explorer](#) lets you search by field (anthropology, sociology) for articles, books, or authors to see how often your work is assigned as a course text. For instance, Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* is found on 2,710 syllabi in the sample (a teaching score of 99.5 out of 100), while Clifford Geertz’s *Notes on a Balinese Cockfight* is on 310 syllabi (scored at 39.4 out of 100). The Explorer also [lists texts](#) your work is taught alongside. If your syllabi aren’t public, consider asking department administrators to [submit old syllabi](#) and improve the accuracy of this useful project. Student exposure is an important way we get our ideas out to the public, so use of your work as a course text should definitely “count!”

### Track tweets and blog mentions at Altmetric Explorer (Subscription)

Altmetric is a paid service (but [free to librarians!](#)) which scores each article based on the number of people tweeting, blogging, or saving a reference on Mendeley and CiteULike. I only found a few of Cynthia Werner’s articles when searching by her name or article identifier (DOI), but what Altmetric did capture is useful.

As seen in Figure 6, one Twitter account linked to Werner’s article, someone referenced it on a Wikipedia page, and three readers saved it on Mendeley. Because Altmetric only “counts” links to an article’s permanent URL/DOI or a book’s Google Books or publisher page, do



Figure 6: Altmetric Explorer example for Cynthia Werner's article

your colleagues a favor and link to formal sources when you promote scholarly articles online!

### 3. Tips for promoting your books and articles, and tracking their citations:

**Get a free [ORCID](#).** Adding a researcher ID to your future publications makes it easier to track their impact, and easier for readers to find related work that you've written.

**Publish with a [DOI](#).** Before submitting your work, check if each article or book chapter gets its own "digital object identifier" (e.g.: [doi:10.1177/0961000615591651](https://doi.org/10.1177/0961000615591651)). DOIs let others find and cite your work, and let altmetrics track internet chatter around your work more effectively.

**Publish through [open access](#)** (or at least add preprints to your university repository). The more scholars who can access your work, the more likely you will be read and cited. Talk to your librarian.

**Get your book reviewed**, and have people recommend it to their libraries. The more reviews and library holdings your book has, again, the more likely it will be read and cited.

**Promote your work** on Twitter, blogs, or Facebook. If others write about you on blogs or news sites, have them link to your [book on a publisher's webpage](#) or your article's DOI. These digital traces become "altmetrics" that show your research is having an impact. Ridiculous? Yes. But the benefits of people talking about your work are real, and in today's 'attention economy' it increases the number of people who actually read and benefit from your work!

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## ORCID: AN IMPORTANT RESOURCE FOR ACADEMIC AUTHORS

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As librarians, we have experienced the difficulties of searching for authors with common names such as John Smith, which in APA format is "Smith, J." The issue of author ambiguity extends beyond common last names. Faculty who change their names after getting married will have articles under different names. In a similar vein, authors' middle initials are used inconsistently. With the increased globalization of scholarly research, a growing challenge in searching for researchers' works is transliterated names with different variations. The goal of ORCID (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) is to provide unique, numeric author identifiers that will make it easier to search for authors' works.

Researchers can obtain an ID by going to the [ORCID](#) Web site and registering for a free account. After registering, researchers obtain a 16-digit unique author identifier. In their ORCID profile, they can list their scholarly works, variations of their name, education, and employment history. ORCID, a nonprofit organization, lets researchers decide how much information they wish to reveal in their ORCID profiles. However, the ORCID profile will be more valuable to researchers if they provide as much information in their profiles as possible (Meadows, 2015). If an author lists their institution and several of their works, it will be easier for other researchers to identify them.

Of course, ORCID IDs will only be useful in connecting authors and their research work if publishers, funding agencies, and professional organizations incorporate ORCID as well. Here are some important partnerships:

- ORCID is working with Crossref, the organization that provides an extensive database of Digital Object Identifiers (DOI) which are used to identify scholarly documents. Users can search this database of 76 million