

Impact cannot be measured ***and other sad half-truths about impact measurement***

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Impact measurement: big quant vs. big qual

- The community is hyperfocused on quant methods
- Qual approaches
 - Donovan (2007), Gaunand et al. (2017), among others
 - See also ASIRPA and Overton.io
- This talk focuses on **fairness issues in quant methods**

Sad half-truths about impact measurement

- Impact cannot be measured
- Not everything that can be counted counts
- Not everything that counts can be counted
- Metrics will never be alt- enough
- Metrics are bound to be abused



Recipe for disaster: the quantitative fallacy

1. Measure whatever can be easily measured
2. Disregard whatever can't be easily measured
3. Presume that what can't be easily measured really isn't important
4. Presume that what can't be easily measured really doesn't exist

Attention vs. impact

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Roxana Quispe Collantes OBTIENE GRADO DE DOCTOR, TRAS SUSTENTAR TESIS EN LENGUA QUECHUA


Hace historia. Su tesis para obtener el grado de doctora en Literatura Peruana y Latinoamericana obtuvo una nota sobresaliente, de 20. letras.unmsm.edu.pe/noticias/roxan...





1,205 1:48 PM - Oct 15, 2019

443 people are talking about this











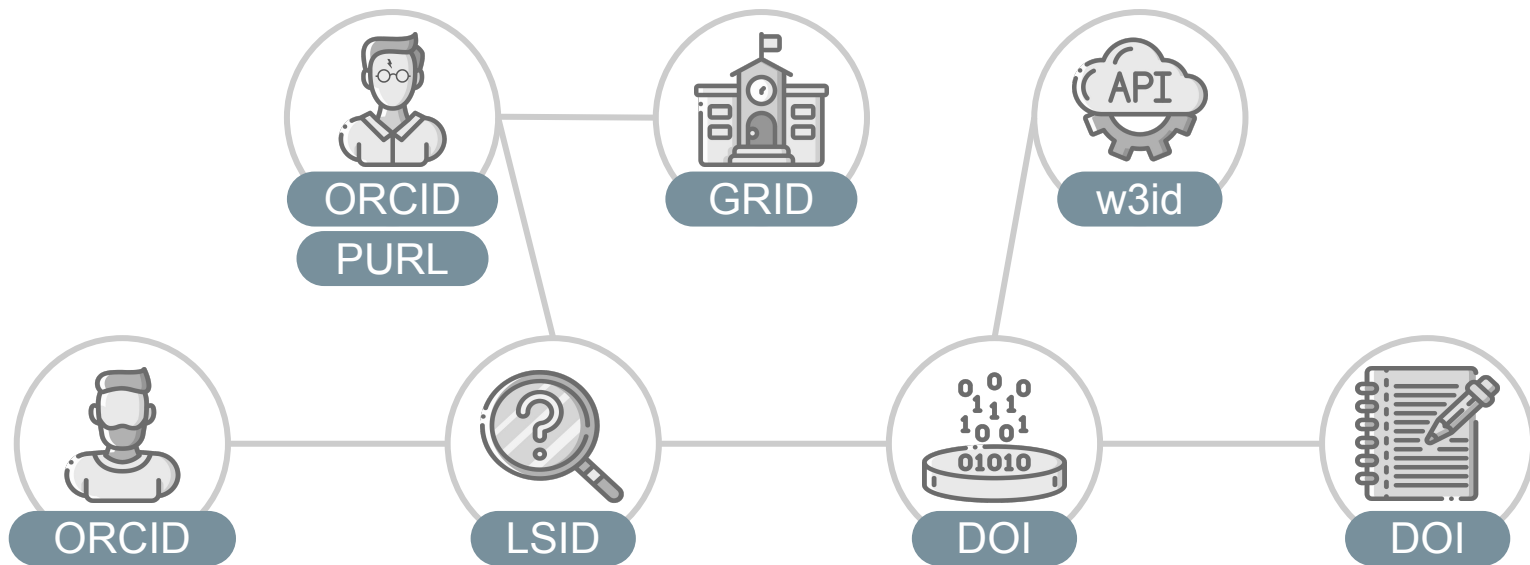
Attention vs. impact

- Citations, mentions, and altmetrics are **proxies** for impact
- Citations, mentions, and altmetrics measure attention
- Attention correlates with impact
 - So do influence and privilege
- See also Sugimoto's "Attention is not impact" (2015)

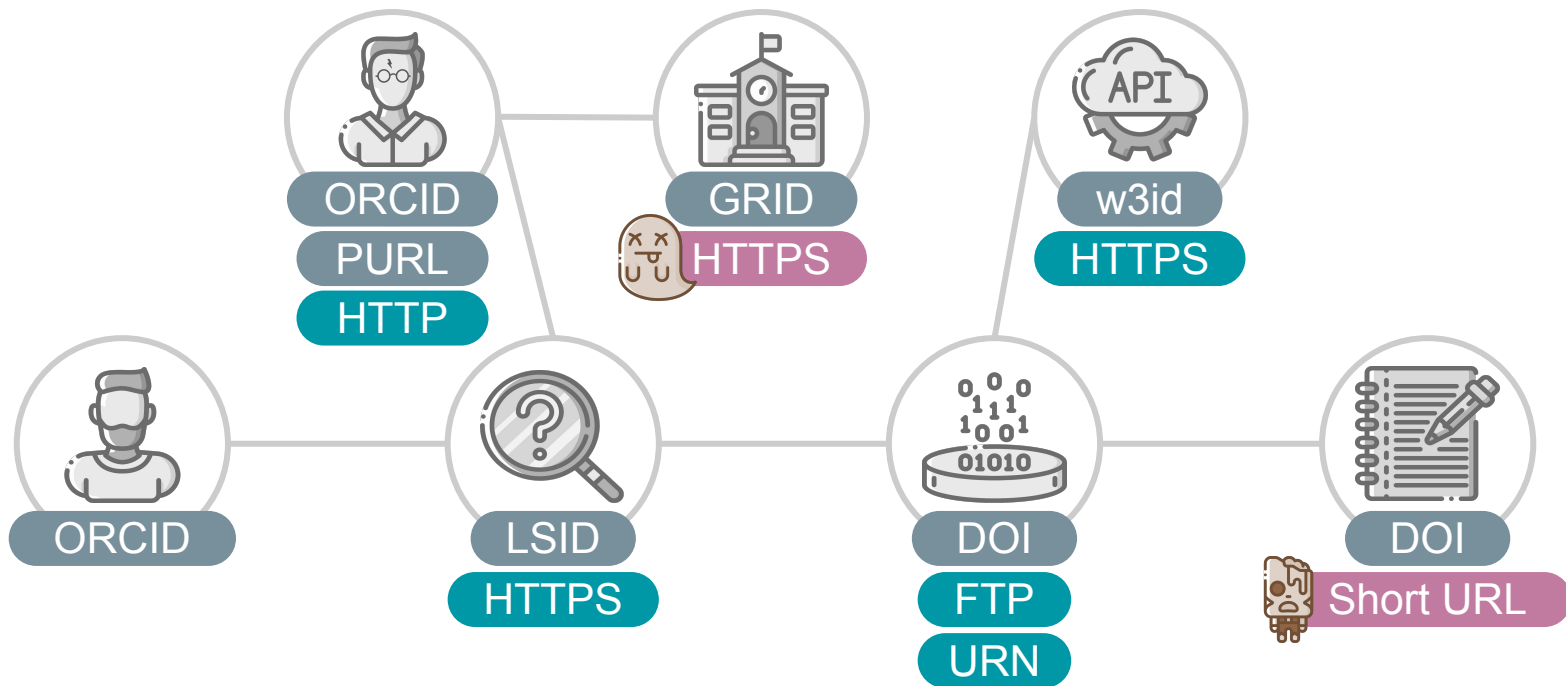
Cobaltmetrics

- “New kid on the block” of altmetrics
 - We try to **make altmetrics genuinely alternative**
 - We do not define what is citable
- Two complementary services:
 - Citation index: doi.org/10.25495/912q-yc02
 - URI transmutation API: doi.org/10.25495/qq9m-c669

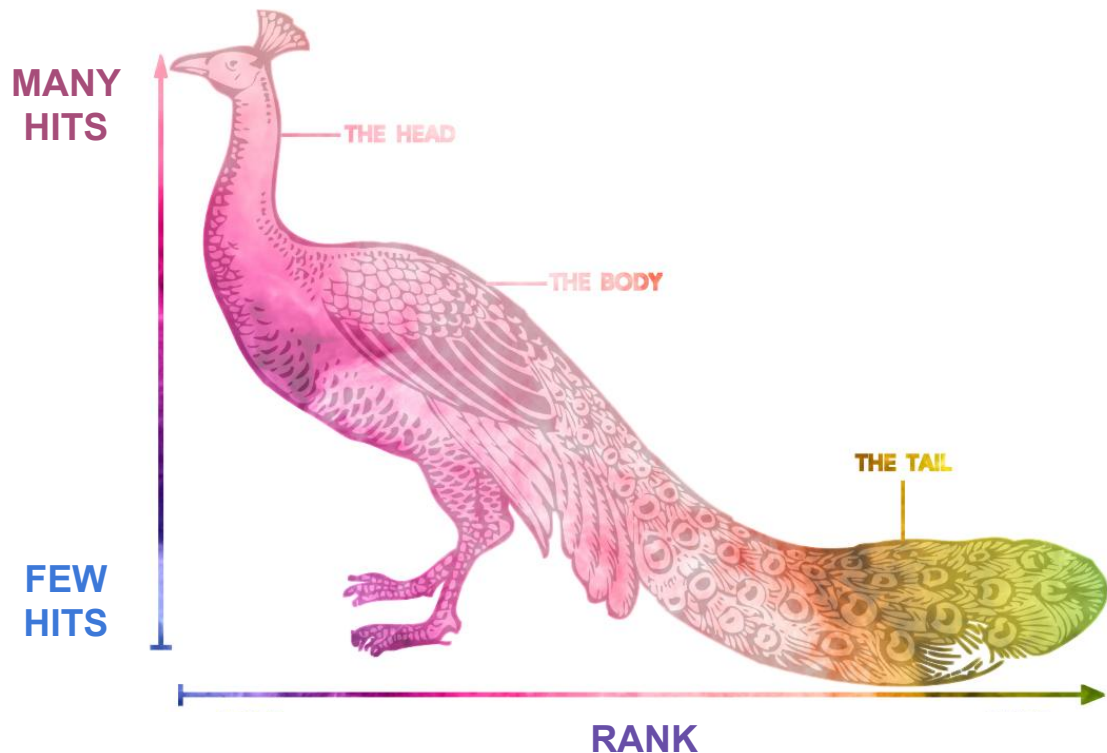
Cobaltmetrics: URI transmutation



Cobaltmetrics: URI transmutation



Cobaltmetrics: observing the long tail



Structural zeros vs. sampling zeros

Mohri & Roark (2015), among others:

- Sampling zeros: unobserved due to the sampling method
 - Example: resources without PIDs in PID-centric systems
- Structural zeros: unobserved due to their being inexistent
 - Example: my monograph on birds as surveillance drones

Cobaltmetrics: pay off your fairness debt

- Focus on the **alt-** part of almetrics
 - All types of web resources, from free and public sources
 - 300+ languages, 60+ types of (P)IDs
- Mostly limited by storage costs
 - We currently run Cobaltmetrics at a loss...
- Proof that other providers could be more inclusive

Where do we go from here?

- For the community
 - Adopt **design principles** that are verifiable (POSI/FAIR)
 - Improve **funding/resourcing** for open/fair infrastructure
- For Cobaltmetrics
 - We might focus on URI transmutation

Honesty is the best policy



- Disclose the **limitations** of your methods
 - Example: NISO self-reporting table for altmetrics
- Provide **audit trails** of how/when data was collected
 - Audit trails must be human- and machine-readable
- Ensure availability of audit trails to the **end users**
 - Inspiration: “viral” licenses and share-alike clauses?



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Recommended readings

