

## Don't talk to me about metrics! I write books!

Lucy Montgomery (Curtin University)

### *Abstract*

Quantitative measures of the 'quality' and 'impact' of research publications present real challenges for HSS scholars. Citation counting, impact factors, and h-indexes all have their origins in the measurement of scientific journal articles. In spite of the fact that monographs are a form of publication that is both respected and valued in the Humanities and Social Sciences, books are poorly captured in citation and altmetrics databases. At their best, these databases provide partial information about the existence and uses of books. At their worst, they become a source of damaging, misinformed comparisons between the performance of scholars working in very different fields. It is little wonder, then, that the mere mention of metrics to a room full of monograph authors generally elicits a collective groan!

In this talk I argue that quantitative approaches *do* have something to offer communities that value scholarly books. Changes in scholarly communications landscapes are making it possible to capture the digital traces of scholarly communication in new ways. Rich information about who connects with HSS books, and how books are found, used and discussed, is becoming available. As it does, authors, publishers and institutions are being presented with new opportunities to understand the role of books in increasingly digital communications landscapes. They are also gaining access to new sources of information that might help to inform publishing, marketing, and promotion strategies.

Recent developments in metrics for scholarly books are presented – including collaborative work now underway through the HIRMEOS metrics project. Particular attention is paid to how authors can make the most of changing possibilities for monograph metrics.

**Associate Professor Lucy Montgomery** – leads the Innovation in Knowledge Communication research program at the Centre for Culture and Technology at Curtin University in Australia. She is also Director of Research at KU-R. From 2013 - 2016 Montgomery was a key member of the small team responsible for developing and successfully piloting Knowledge Unlatched: a globally coordinated, collaborative model for enabling OA for specialist scholarly publications at scale. Knowledge Unlatched is now the world's single largest marketplace for OA scholarly books and services. Montgomery's research focuses on the ways in which open access and open knowledge are transforming landscapes of knowledge production, sharing and use, including in China. Her most recent, collaboratively authored, book *Open Knowledge Institutions: Reinventing Universities* is now open for community review MIT Press: [ow.ly/hmri50n5W43](http://ow.ly/hmri50n5W43)