

A stack of several books with different colored covers (brown, blue, yellow, grey) is shown in the top right corner, fanned out diagonally. The background is a light, neutral color.

Measuring Scholarly Impact

Are Citation Metrics
the Right Fit for Law Schools?



Association of
American Law Schools

The background features a stack of books in shades of blue and grey, partially visible in the upper right corner. A large, dark blue geometric shape, resembling a stylized 'V' or a folded piece of paper, is positioned in the upper right, overlapping the book stack. The rest of the background is a solid, dark blue color.

Impact on Law Schools & Law Libraries

Bonnie Shucha
University of Wisconsin Law School

Representation Problem

- Law Journals Only
 - Dismisses value of interdisciplinary scholarship and citations in non-legal publications
 - Scholarship that transcends a single discipline brings together diverse perspectives & broadens opportunities for new insights & innovations
 - Scholarship written by diverse groups receives more citations and has higher impact factors than scholarship where authors are not diverse

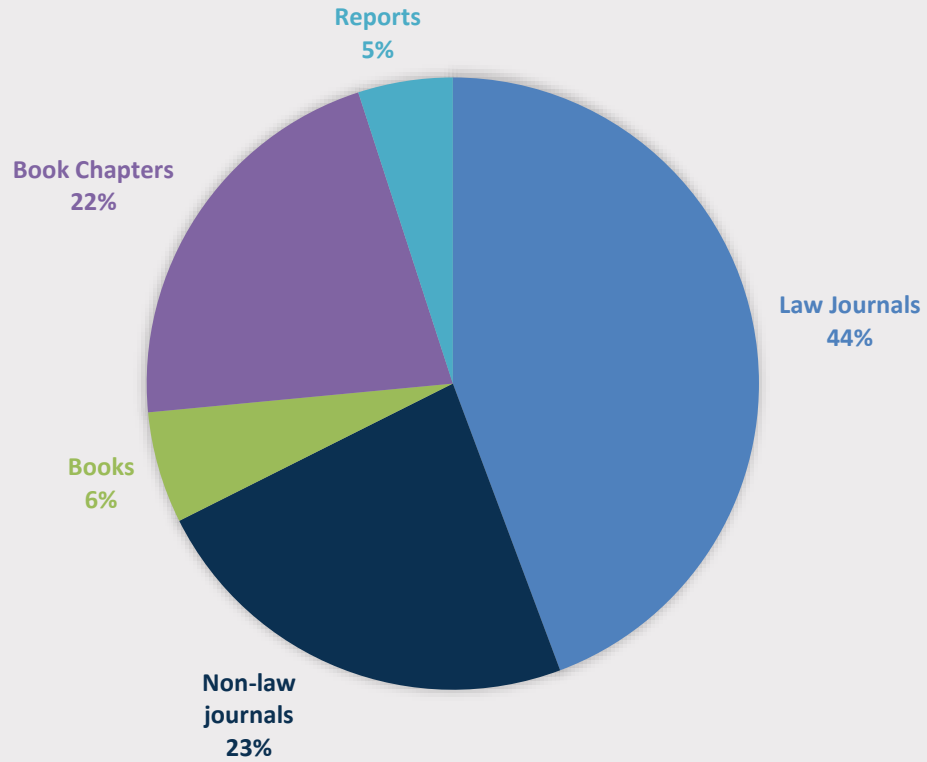
Freeman, Richard B. and Huang, Wai, "Collaborating with People Like Me: Ethnic Coauthorship within the United States." 33 Journal of Labor Economics (July 2015), <https://doi.org/10.1086/678973>.

Undercounting

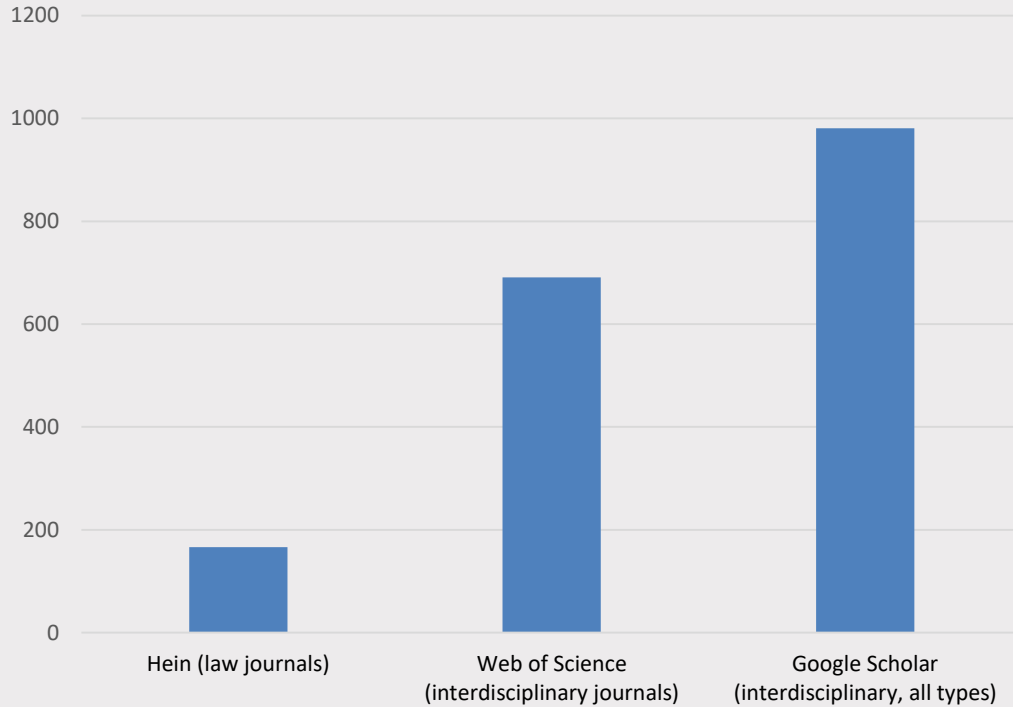
- Individual effect
- School-wide effect?
 - “Although some law professors publish in ‘pure’ out-of-field journals, the small numbers who do so tend to be scattered among many different law schools such that for the vast majority of schools, not counting these citations will have little effect on school-wide citation counts.”

Heald, Paul J. and Sichelman, Ted M., “Ranking the Academic Impact of 100 American Law Schools.” (December 4, 2019). *Jurimetrics* (Fall 2019, Forthcoming), <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3483325>.

UW Law Faculty Scholarship by Type



Mean Citations to UW Law Faculty Scholarship



Google Scholar
H-Index Calculator
for Chrome,

<https://www.mat.unical.it/ianni/wiki/ScholarHIndexCalculator>

Effect on School-wide Ranking

UW Law Faculty	Cited 12 mos. (mean)	Cited Total (mean)	Cited 12 mos. (median)	Cited Total (median)	Total Score (2 x means + 1 x medians)
Hein (law journals)	22	178	14	113	527

Heald, Paul J. and Sichelman, Ted M., "Ranking the Academic Impact of 100 American Law Schools." (December 4, 2019). *Jurimetrics* (Fall 2019, Forthcoming), <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3483325>.

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Hein (law journals)	22	178	14	113	527
Web of Science (non-law journals)	74	691	0	4	1534

Heald, Paul J. and Sichelman, Ted M., "Ranking the Academic Impact of 100 American Law Schools." (December 4, 2019). *Jurimetrics* (Fall 2019, Forthcoming), <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3483325>.

Ruhl, J. B., Vandenberg, Michael P. and Dunaway, Sarah, "Total Scholarly Impact: Law Professor Citations in Non-Law Journals." (September 10, 2019). Vanderbilt Law Research Paper No. 19-35, <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3451542>.

Scholarly Impact Ranking Principles

- I. A metric should identify and control for existing biases based on individual author's race, gender, sexuality, disability, age, ethnicity, class, or nationality.
- II. A metric should not reproduce biases based on institution or discipline/subject matter prestige.
- III. A metric should have a methodology that is chosen carefully, can be reverse engineered, and is openly documented.
- IV. A metric should not be based as a matter of convenience on the coverage of a single dataset. A metric's dataset, and all related documentation, should be transparent.
- V. A metric should not exclude scholarship based on format.
- VI. A metric should not place undue value on downloads received on a single platform.
- VII. A metric should prevent manipulation of results by self-citation at the author or institutional level.

Draft by AALL Academic Law Libraries Special Interest Section

Feedback? Contact Amanda Watson, University of Houston Law Center

Leadership Role of the Law Library

- Generating Awareness
- Improving Metrics Accuracy
- Promoting Scholarly Visibility

Generating Awareness

- Information about
 - citation metrics
 - proposed rankings & potential impact
- Importance of
 - each authors profile
 - promoting scholarly visibility
 - Working group on scholarly visibility

Improving Metrics Accuracy

- Verify author profile list from Hein
- Check HeinOnline author profiles for mistakes, missing publications (and citations?)
 - Review CVs
 - Meetings with faculty
- Create & Connect ORCID ids
- Inform Hein of any corrections

Promoting Scholarly Visibility

- Improve accessibility & findability
 - Post scholarship to repository, SSRN
 - Create & curate Google Scholar profile
 - Workshop on increasing findability
 - Hat tip to Caroline Osborne, Carol Watson, TJ Striepe's AALL 2019 presentation - <https://digitalcommons.law.uga.edu/speeches/172/>

Promoting Scholarly Visibility

- Create buzz
 - Promotion by library
 - Social media, blog
 - Podcast on new faculty scholarship
 - Workshop on #AcademicTwitter: Promoting Your Work



The screenshot shows the website for "WISCONSIN LAW IN ACTION" at the University of Wisconsin Law School. The navigation bar includes "ABOUT", "ARCHIVE", "LAW SCHOOL", and "LAW LIBRARY". Below the navigation bar is a large image of four people smiling, with the text "Wisconsin Law in Action: A University of Wisconsin Law School Podcast" overlaid. Below the image is a section for "EPISODE 3- MICHELE LAVIGNE". The text describes an interview with Michele LaVigne, a Distinguished Clinical Professor of Law and Director of the Public Defender Project, who discussed her article "Under the Hood: Brendan Dassey, Language Impairments, and Judicial Ignorance" (coauthored with Sally Miles). The article discusses the case of Brendan Dassey, one of the two subjects of the Netflix documentary "Making A Murderer," and whether his developmental delays contributed to his confession to the murder. The interview was conducted on October 7, 2019, and is 26:32 minutes long, published on November 1, 2019. A transcript file (PDF) is available. Links to the podcast are provided for SoundCloud, Apple Podcasts, Google Play, and Stitcher.

<https://wilawinaction.law.wisc.edu/>

Questions?

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