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(University of Copenhagen)

Inciting the Metric-Oriented Humanist

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Abstract: In the past few decades 'metric' studies of scholarly research performance have predominantly been sciento-metric in nature, due to the first commercial citation index created for scientific journals and articles (i.e., Eugene Garfield's 1964 Science Citation Index, originally launched at the Institute for Scientific Information in Philadelphia). The production of new citation indices for books - i.e., Thomson Reuter's Book Citation Index and the expanded index to monographs and book chapters in Elsevier's Scopus - implies that proper education related to their use is now becoming critical.

In this talk, Dr. Zuccala will reflect on the process of developing a bibliometric teaching program in Denmark, designed to initiate a new breed of bibliometric humanists. Since Denmark is one of few European countries with a national research performance evaluation system based on metrics (i.e., BFI points), it is becoming critical to now to provide humanities students and scholars with a strong foundation in mathematical indicator construction and to develop stimulating teaching environments dedicated to problem-oriented learning. Emphasis in this talk will be placed on the 'biblio' in bibliometrics (i.e., books), digital record keeping across the humanities, the work of humanists who have sought to explain the development of new knowledge through objective pattern-seeking, and the use of alternative metrics to complement traditional performance indicators.

Short Biography: Alesia Zuccala is currently an Assistant Professor at the Royal School of Library and Information Science, University of Copenhagen. In 2004, she graduated with a PhD in Information Science from the University of Toronto, Canada and has held research and teaching positions in Australia, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands. Her specialization is in the field of bibliometrics and scholarly research evaluation, though in recent years her focus has shifted towards assessing research outputs across the Humanities. From 2012 to 2014 Dr. Zuccala was employed at the University of Amsterdam under a Spearpoint Digital Humanities fellowship with the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research and carried out a series of collaborative projects financed by the Center for Digital Humanities. She has been an active member of the International Society for Scientometrics and Informetrics since 2007 and has published numerous research articles in journals such as the Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology and Scientometrics, including her most recent contribution to a special ASLIB Proceedings issue dedicated to Social Media Metrics.