Panel 3: Knowledge production and scholarly publishing: questions of integrity and representation[1]

Convener: Rita Hordosy, Martin Myers, Maria Castillo and Elizabeth Brown

Academic prestige is frequently judged by the authorship and publication of high-quality research outputs, with the aphorism "publish or perish" illustrating the pressure faced by scholars (Bridges 2011; Baccini et al. 2019; Fejes & Nylander 2014). The practice of assigning value to individual publications is longstanding, with citation databases like the Web of Knowledge ranking work across disciplines. However, this ranking system has faced criticism from various perspectives, raising concerns about gaming the system (Merton 1957, 1968; Brankovic 2018; Csiszar 2020). The unintended consequences could call into question the integrity of scholarly publishing, such as – for instance – self-citation, 'research-slicing', 'special issue-ization' or the open sale of author slots (Baccini et al., 2019; MacDonald, 2022; Mills et al., 2024).

Despite these issues, publication in peer-reviewed journals published by transnational corporations remains a cornerstone of knowledge production, playing a critical role in legitimizing or challenging institutional practices that perpetuate social inequalities. Shahjahan and Kezar (2013: 27) highlight the importance of the publishing industry, who are amongst the 'major players within interconnected social processes impacting higher education'.

At the same time the knowledge hierarchy has been consistently dominated by journals and publishers from Western contexts (Heilbron, 2014; Demeter, 2022; Mills, 2023; Brown et al., 2024; Bond, 2024). This dominance has raised concerns about inequalities in editing and authorship, prompting calls for more inclusivity and diversity in scholarly publishing (Shahjahan & Kezar 2013; RSC 2020; Liu et al. 2023; Liu et al. 2023; Gomez et al. 2022).

This session focuses on global inequalities and will first, explore one case-study journal's gender and geographical diversity in author networks and its editorial board. Second, it will focus on key integrity and quality issues with exponential growth through journal special issues. Finally, it will explore editorial board networks and broader practices to gatekeeping knowledge production.

Speakers:
- Melissa Bond
- David Mills
- Martin Myers, Elizabeth Brown, Maria Antonieta Vega Castillo & Rita Hordósy

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[1] Alternative title: *Gatekeeping to knowledge production and scholarly publishing: questions of integrity and representation*