



## CGHE Annual Conference 22-23 May 2023

### Session Details

#### **KEYNOTE 1 - An Index, a Publisher and an Unequal Global Research Economy**

23 May 2023, 9:15am - 10:15am (UK)

*Chair: Vincent Carpentier*

*Speaker: David Mills*

Academic knowledge in the contemporary 'global' research economy flows along channels owned by two commercial citation indexes: Elsevier's Scopus and Clarivate's Web of Science. In this keynote I explore the history of the journal index, the commercial transformation of academic publishing after World War II, and how, together, these developments underpin the bibliometric logics of a global science system.

Eugene Garfield developed the idea of a citation index in the late 1950s. His aim was to help scholars understand the genesis and transmission of ideas. Amidst the post-war expansion of science, he had set up his company, Information for Scientific Information, making money by copying and collating journal abstracts. At the same time Robert Maxwell was redefining academic publishing, building Pergamon as a 'global' business. Garfield's index initially had little commercial value, but gradually publishers and universities began to turn its measures into targets.

Today, academic journal publishing is largely defined by this bibliometric economy. The power of these citation indexes has been amplified by digitisation, computing power and financial investment. Scholarly reputation is measured by their metrics: journal rankings, 'impact factors' and 'h-indexes'. Non-Anglophone journals are rendered invisible by exclusion from these indexes, reinforcing the stratification of academic geographies and endangering regional knowledge ecosystems. The Open Science movement has sought to open up access to academic knowledge, but has (inadvertently) strengthened commercial academic publishing through the shift to 'author-pays' publishing models. I end by exploring academic and policy responses to what, from the perspective of the majority world, is experienced as 'bibliometric coloniality'.