

Building bridges^{*}

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I came to bibliometrics from physics. I used mathematical models to describe how researchers travel between existing fields and/or create new topics. A bit a decent modeler of course needs data to validate her/his models and this brought me to the quantitative studies of science. Reading *JASIST*, *Journal of Documentation*, *Scientometrics* and other LIS journals I discovered the fascinating world of studies about scholarly communication, and how to manage it in times of exponential growth. How for instance one can create in a library a collection of journals which as perfect as possible covers a topic distributed over a range of journals when in science or academia in essence everything is connected to everything else, a universe of knowledge in other words? This is why I liked Philipp's work so much, who tried to bring bibliometrics laws (such as Bradford's) into the very concrete organization of on-line collections. This is also why I was immediately convinced and pleased to have been asked to join an endeavor to bring IR and bibliometrics together—what culminated in the series of BIR workshops. Information retrieval, Wolfgang Glänzel would say, belongs to the very heart of bibliometrics, and indeed the famous science citation index was primarily designed as a tool to enhance the information retrieval, to make it easier to find the relevant items in the ever-expanding literature. But, at the time BIR started the Information Retrieval and bibliometrics communities had started to grow apart somehow. Bibliometrics, scientometrics were very much focused on indicators and research evaluation. At the same time, one could observe that whenever computer scientists, who designed new information systems and addressed IR for all kind of information, turned their interest to scholarly communication, they were often not in touch with the body of knowledge produced in bibliometrics so far. So, the start of the BIR workshops was very timely, and its continuing success—visible in submissions, attendance and publications proves that it fulfills a necessity, it belongs to those rare but important singular links to bring different bodies of knowledge together.

Da möchte man ausrufen: Weiter so!

Warmest regards
 Andrea

^{*} A companion video is hosted at <https://youtu.be/kNPVZZ7Mq0M>.