



Beyond Diversity and Inclusion:  
Challenging Structural Racism and  
Systemic Biases in Academic  
Knowledge Production

Leslie Chan  
Global Development Studies  
Knowledge Equity Lab  
University of Toronto Scarborough  
[@lesliekwchan](#) [@knowequitylab](#)

# What is FORCE11?

- Future of Research Communications and E-Scholarship
  - A grass roots effort to accelerate the pace and nature of scholarly communications and e-scholarship through technology, education and community
- Why 11? We were born in 2011 in Dagstuhl, Germany
- Principles laid out in the [FORCE11 Manifesto](#)
- FORCE11 launched in July 2012



Supported by a grant from the Sloan Foundation

## Main points

---

Contemporary inequity in knowledge production has deep historical roots – tracing back to colonialism and the spread of imperial science

---

Addressing compositional diversity doesn't address the underlying problems of structural racism and systemic biases rooted in whiteness

---

Structural racism is about the maintenance and reproduction of power

---

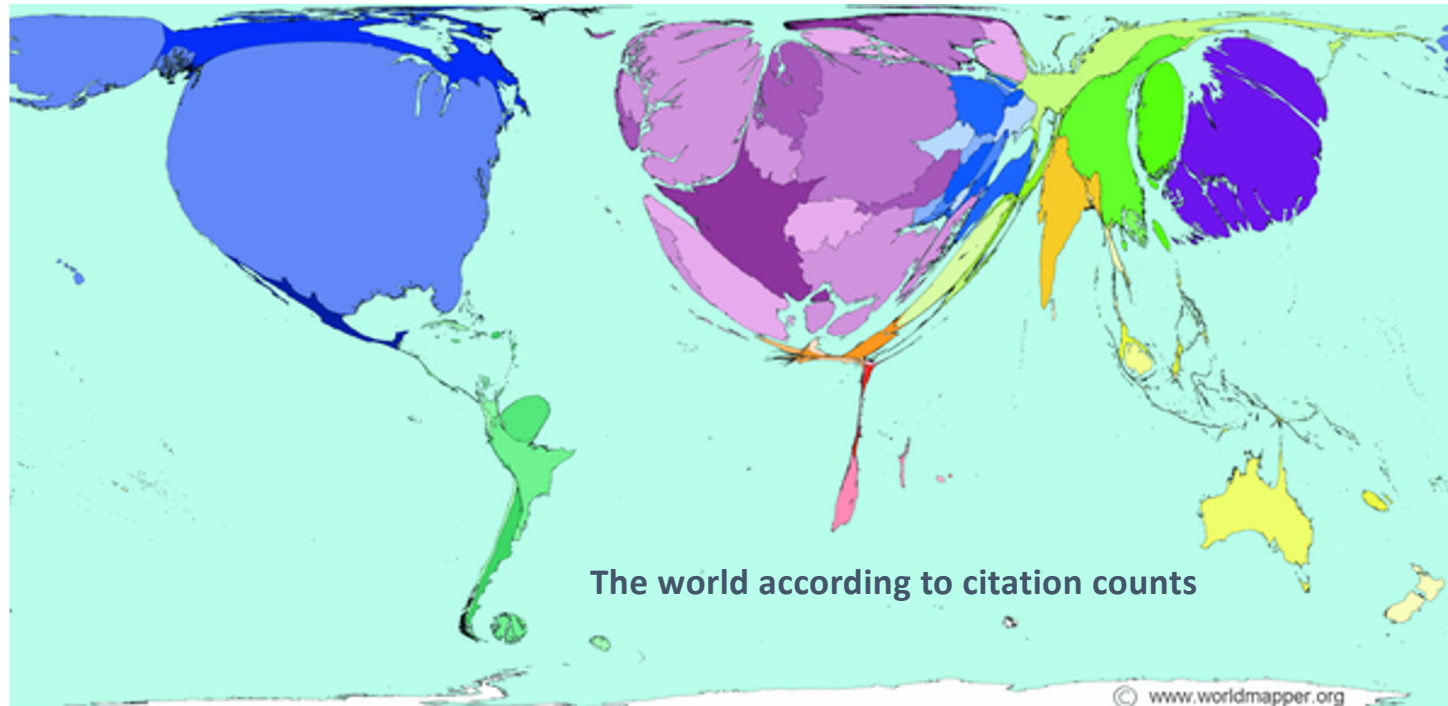
Uncritical acceptance of “openness” risks reproducing and amplifying existing inequities

---

Design principles based on epistemic justice and knowledge equity are possible – Centering Human Relations and Solidarity

Contemporary inequity in knowledge production  
has deep historical roots

## Unequal contribution and participation in Knowledge Production ?

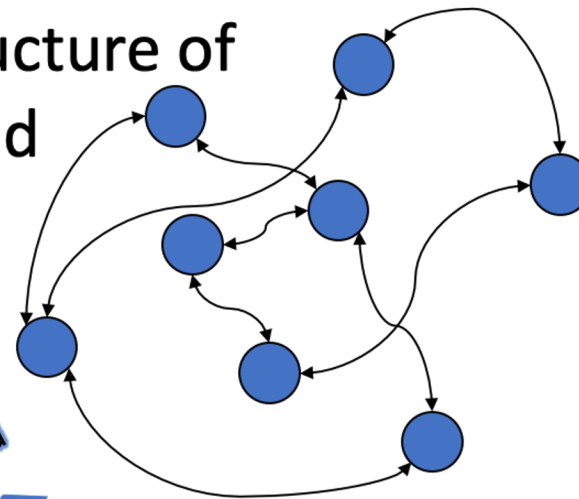
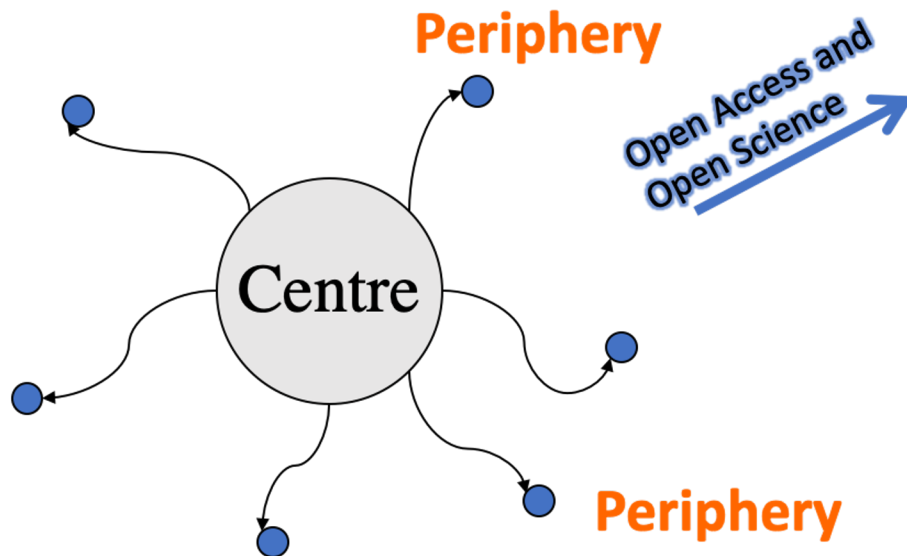


Chan L, Kirsop B, Arunachalam S (2011) Towards Open and Equitable Access to Research and Knowledge for Development. PLoS Med 8(3): e1001016. doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1001016

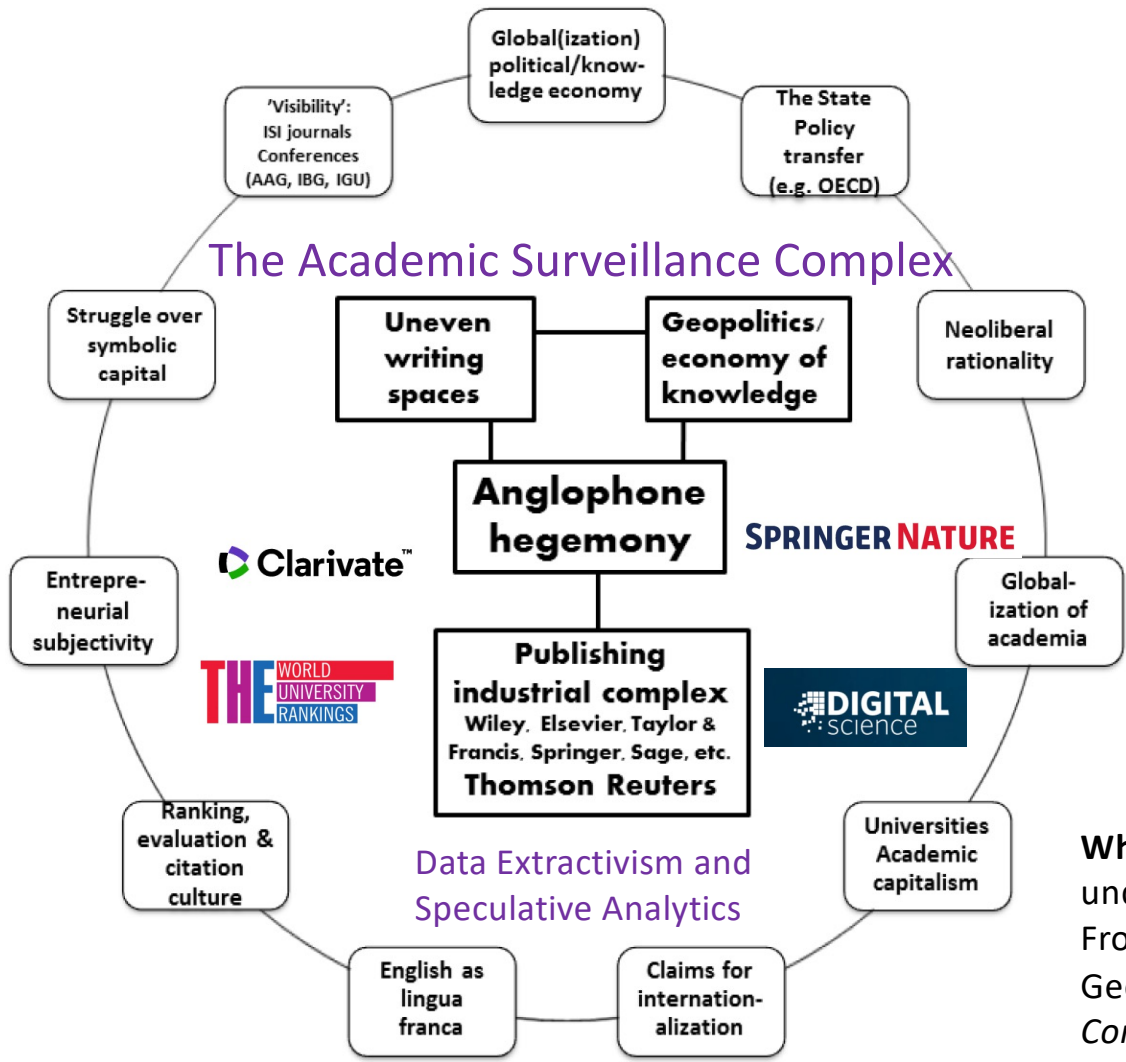
<http://127.0.0.1:8081/plosmedicine/article?id=info:doi/10.1371/journal.pmed.1001016>

Could Open Access and Open Science change the current power structure of global scientific production and dissemination?

History and Politics Matter



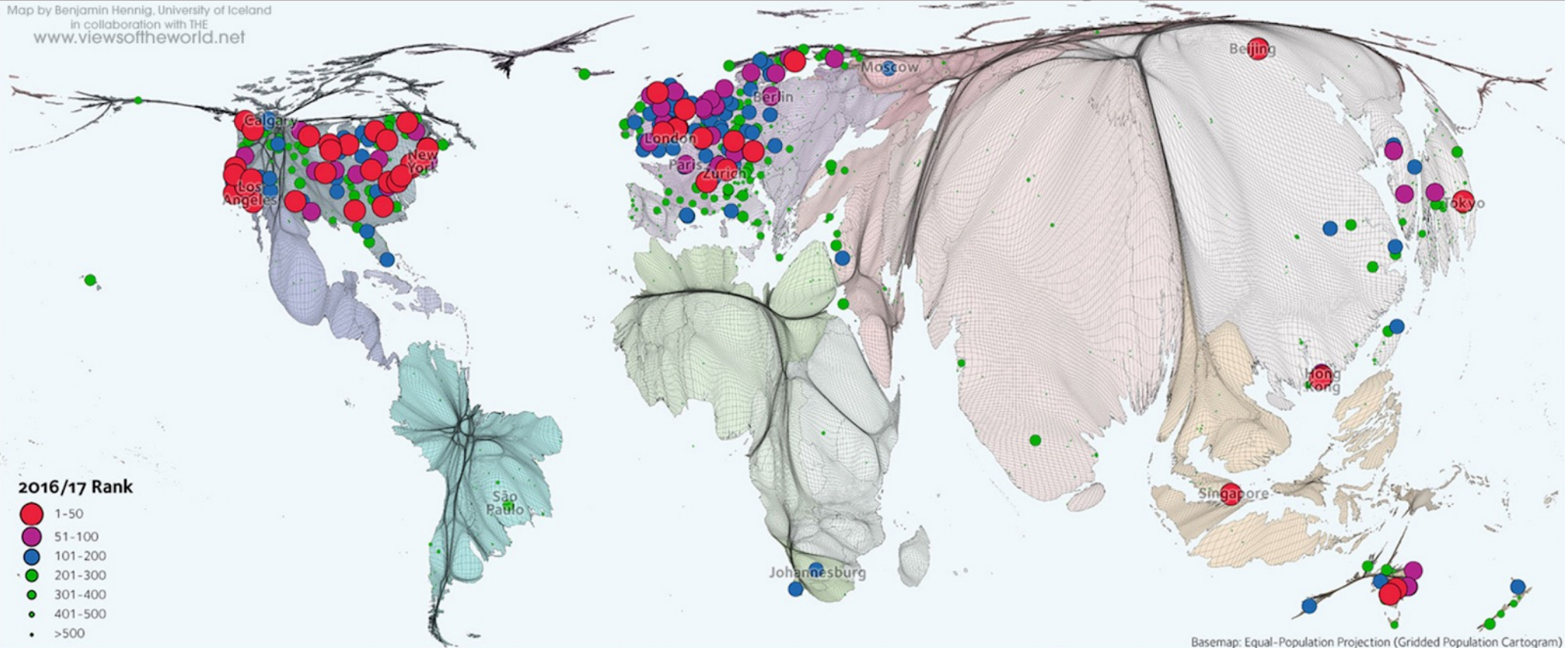
Could openness creates the potential for new spaces for collaboration and co-creation of knowledge?



**Wheel of power: a conceptual framework for understanding the Anglophone hegemony**  
 From Paasi, A. (2015). Academic Capitalism and the Geopolitics of Knowledge. In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Political Geography* (pp. 507–523). John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118725771.ch37>

# THE WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS IN A WORLD ADJUSTED FOR POPULATION SIZE

Map by Benjamin Hennig, University of Iceland  
in collaboration with THE  
[www.viewsoftheworld.net](http://www.viewsoftheworld.net)

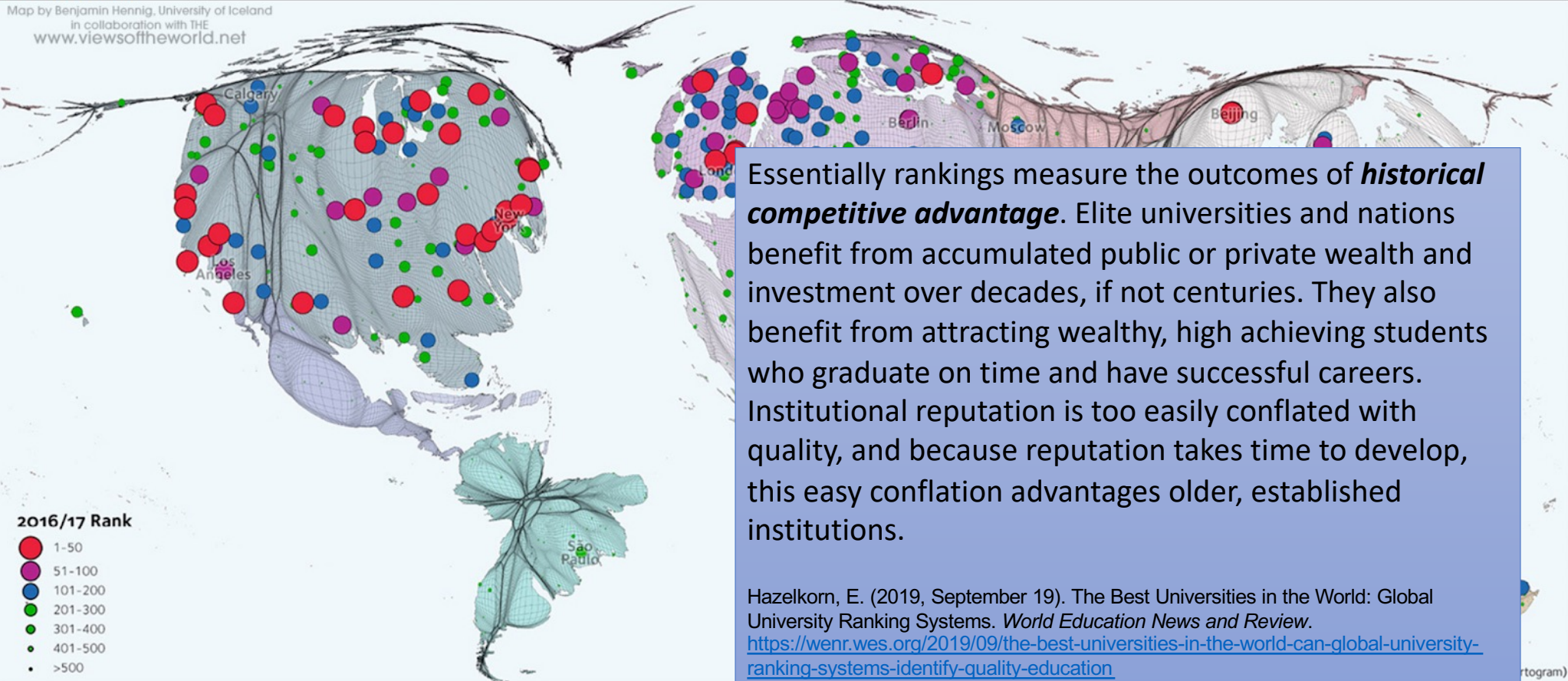


[http://www.viewsoftheworld.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/THE\\_WorldUniversityRankings201617\\_popmap.jpg](http://www.viewsoftheworld.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/THE_WorldUniversityRankings201617_popmap.jpg)



# THE WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS IN A WORLD ADJUSTED FOR NATIONAL WEALTH

Map by Benjamin Hennig, University of Iceland  
in collaboration with THE  
[www.viewsoftheworld.net](http://www.viewsoftheworld.net)

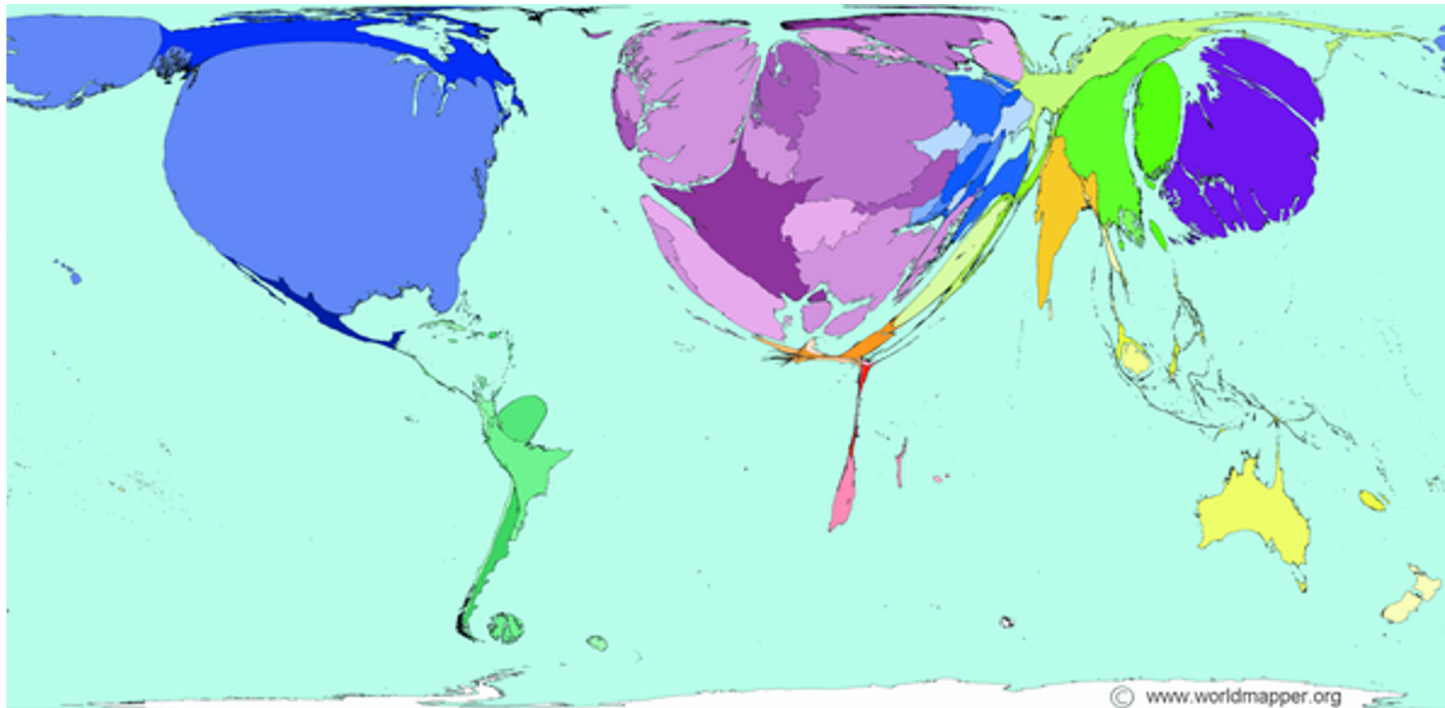


Essentially rankings measure the outcomes of *historical competitive advantage*. Elite universities and nations benefit from accumulated public or private wealth and investment over decades, if not centuries. They also benefit from attracting wealthy, high achieving students who graduate on time and have successful careers. Institutional reputation is too easily conflated with quality, and because reputation takes time to develop, this easy conflation advantages older, established institutions.

Hazelkorn, E. (2019, September 19). The Best Universities in the World: Global University Ranking Systems. *World Education News and Review*.  
<https://wenr.wes.org/2019/09/the-best-universities-in-the-world-can-global-university-ranking-systems-identify-quality-education>

[http://www.viewsoftheworld.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/THE\\_WorldUniversit](http://www.viewsoftheworld.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/THE_WorldUniversit)

This map reflects the legacy of colonialism and racism



Chan L, Kirsop B, Arunachalam S (2011) Towards Open and Equitable Access to Research and Knowledge for Development. PLoS Med 8(3): e1001016. doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1001016

<http://127.0.0.1:8081/plosmedicine/article?id=info:doi/10.1371/journal.pmed.1001016>

Addressing compositional diversity doesn't address the underlying problems of structural racism and systemic biases rooted in whiteness



**Nature News & Comment**  @NatureNews · Jun 10 ...

We recognize that Nature is one of the white institutions that is responsible for bias in research and scholarship. We commit to working to end anti-Black practices in research. [#ShutdownStem](#)



Chandan Khanna/AFP/Getty

Systemic racism: science must listen, learn and change  
Nature commits to working to end anti-Black practices in research.

[nature.com](https://www.nature.com)

 356

 888

 1.8K



## Systemic racism: science must listen, learn and change

*Nature* commits to working to end anti-Black practices in research.

- We recognize that *Nature* is one of the white institutions that is responsible for bias in research and scholarship. The enterprise of science has been — and remains — complicit in systemic racism, and it must strive harder to correct those injustices and amplify marginalized voices.
- At *Nature*, we will redouble our efforts to do so, and commit to establishing a process that will hold us to account on the many changes we need to make.
- In addition, we commit to producing a special issue of the journal, under the guidance of a guest editor, exploring systemic racism in research, research policy and publishing — including investigating *Nature's* part in that.

<http://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-01678-x>

# Editor-in-Chief of Nature since 1869

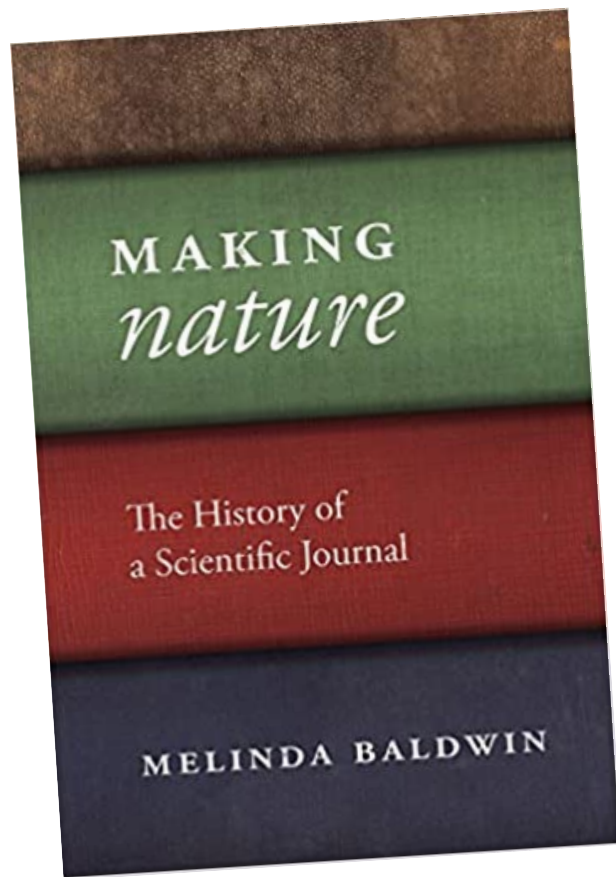
## Editor-in-Chief of Nature since 1869

- Sir Norman Lockyer (1869-1919)
- Sir Richard Gregory (1919-1939),
- co-editors agronomist A.J.V Gale (1939-1962) and botanist L.J.F. Brimble (1939-1965)
- physicist Sir John Maddox (1966-1973)
- geophysicist David Davies (1973-1980)
- physicist Sir John Maddox (1980-1995)
- physicist Philip Campbell (1995-present)



Magdalena Skipper, the new editor-in-chief of Nature  
IAN ALDERMAN

2018-present



“there is a powerful school of thought, chiefly represented by the editors of journals, which holds that the scientific literature is and should be a passive means of communication- a mirror held up to the face of research in which people other than its authors can discover what is happening in laboratories the world over.

***That, of course, is an idealization which is far from the truth.”***

(Maddox 1989, cited in Baldwin 2015:228)

Nature, as Baldwin demonstrates, helped define what science is and what it means to be a ***scientist***

## Too many senior white academics still resist recognizing racism



As a Black woman who is the chair of a university science department, people have questioned my right to exist at every stage. |

[Namandjé Bumpus](#) ✉

Namandjé Bumpus is director of the Department of Pharmacology and Molecular Sciences at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, Maryland.

✉ [Contact](#)

“Part of the centering of whiteness in academia is that white faculty members are deemed the arbiters of the existence, validity and impact of racism: racism exists when white people say it does. As a result, racism is often disregarded and excused in academic institutions, at the expense of Black people.”

“...looking inwards, to wake up to how the culture in academic science is exclusionary.”



Home / News & Opinion

## Top JAMA Editor on Leave in Fallout Over Racism Podcast

The move follows widespread criticism of the episode and its promotion, and the resignation of the podcast's host.



Shawna Williams  
Mar 26, 2021



**H**oward Bauchner, the editor in chief of *JAMA*, was placed on administrative leave yesterday (March 25) amid continued criticism of the way the top medical journal has discussed racism in medicine.

© ISTOCK.COM,  
MIXETTO

Earlier this month, Twitter erupted with criticism of a podcast episode and attendant tweet published by JAMA. The tweet, since deleted, read in part, “No physician is racist, so how can there be structural racism in health care? An explanation of the idea by doctors for doctors . . .” In the February 23 podcast episode, also since taken down, host Ed Livingston, then *JAMA*'s deputy editor for clinical reviews and education, said, “Structural racism is an unfortunate term,” according to [MedPage Today](#). “Personally, I think taking racism out of the conversation will help. Many of us are offended by the concept that we are racist.”

<https://www.the-scientist.com/news-opinion/top-jama-editor-on-leave-in-fallout-over-racism-podcast-68607>

---

“In plain terms, structural racism shapes and affects the lives, wellbeing and life chances of people of colour. It normalises historical, cultural and institutional practices that benefit white people and disadvantage people of colour. It also stealthily replicates the racial hierarchy established more than 400 years ago through slavery and colonialism, placing white people at the top and Black people at the bottom.”

---

Lander, V. (2021). Structural racism: What it is and how it works. *The Conversation*. <http://theconversation.com/structural-racism-what-it-is-and-how-it-works-158822>

# Structural Racism

---

“All definitions make clear that racism is not simply the result of private prejudices held by individuals, but is also **produced and reproduced** by laws, rules, and practices, sanctioned and even implemented by various levels of government, and **embedded** in the economic system as well as in cultural and societal norms. Confronting racism, therefore, requires not only changing individual attitudes, but also transforming and dismantling the policies and institutions that undergird the U.S. racial hierarchy.”

---

Bailey, Z. D., Feldman, J. M., & Bassett, M. T. (2021). How Structural Racism Works—Racist Policies as a Root Cause of U.S. Racial Health Inequities. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 384(8), 768–773.

<https://doi.org/10.1056/NEJMms2025396>

# Whiteness

---

“‘Whiteness,’ like ‘colour’ and ‘Blackness,’ are essentially social constructs applied to human beings rather than veritable truths that have universal validity. The power of Whiteness, however, is manifested by the ways in which racialized Whiteness becomes transformed into social, political, economic, and cultural behaviour.

---

White culture, norms, and values in all these areas become normative natural. They become the standard against which all other cultures, groups, and individuals are measured and usually found to be inferior.”

---

([Henry & Tator, 2006, p. 46-47](#), Cited by the Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre <https://www.aclrc.com/whiteness> ).

# Whiteness

---

"whiteness is considered to be the universal ... and allows one to think and speak as if Whiteness described and defined the world" ([Henry & Tator, 2006, p. 327](#)).

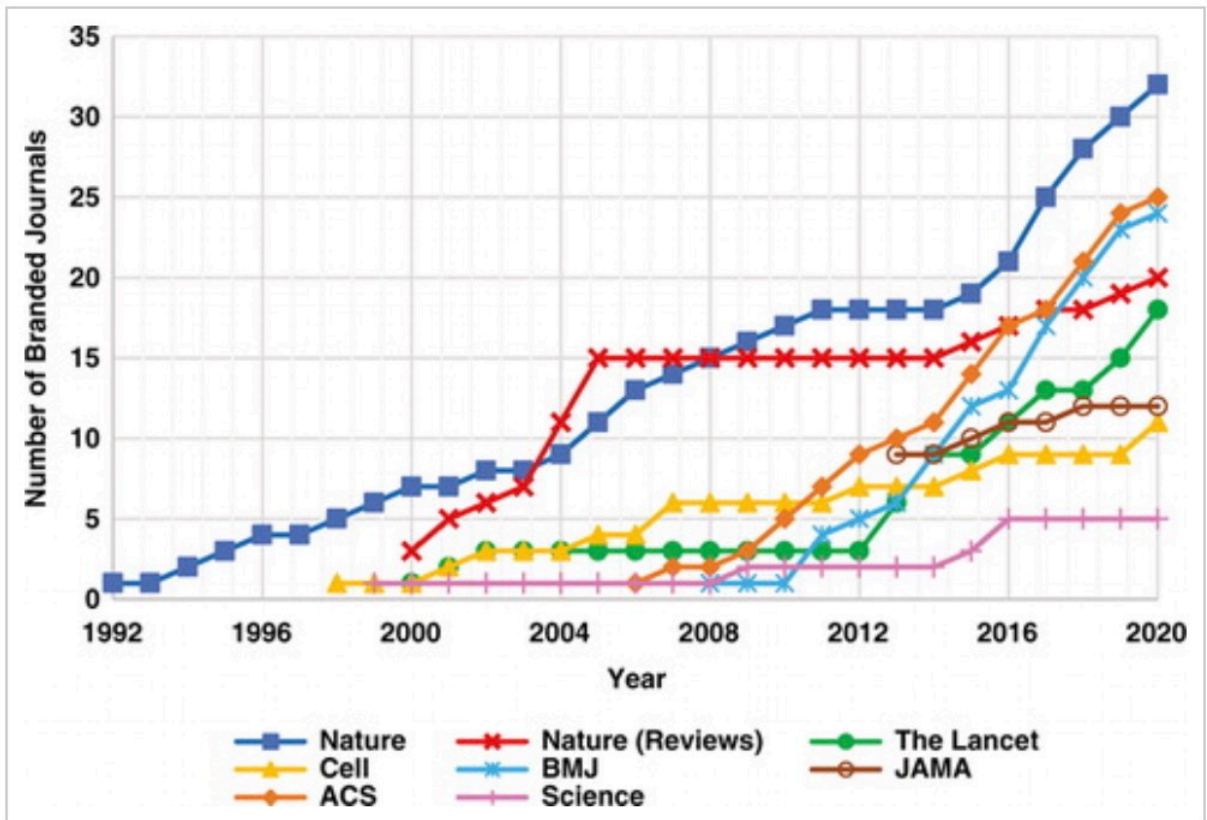
---

"**Science** is considered to be the universal ... and allows one to think and speak as if **Science** described and defined the world"

---

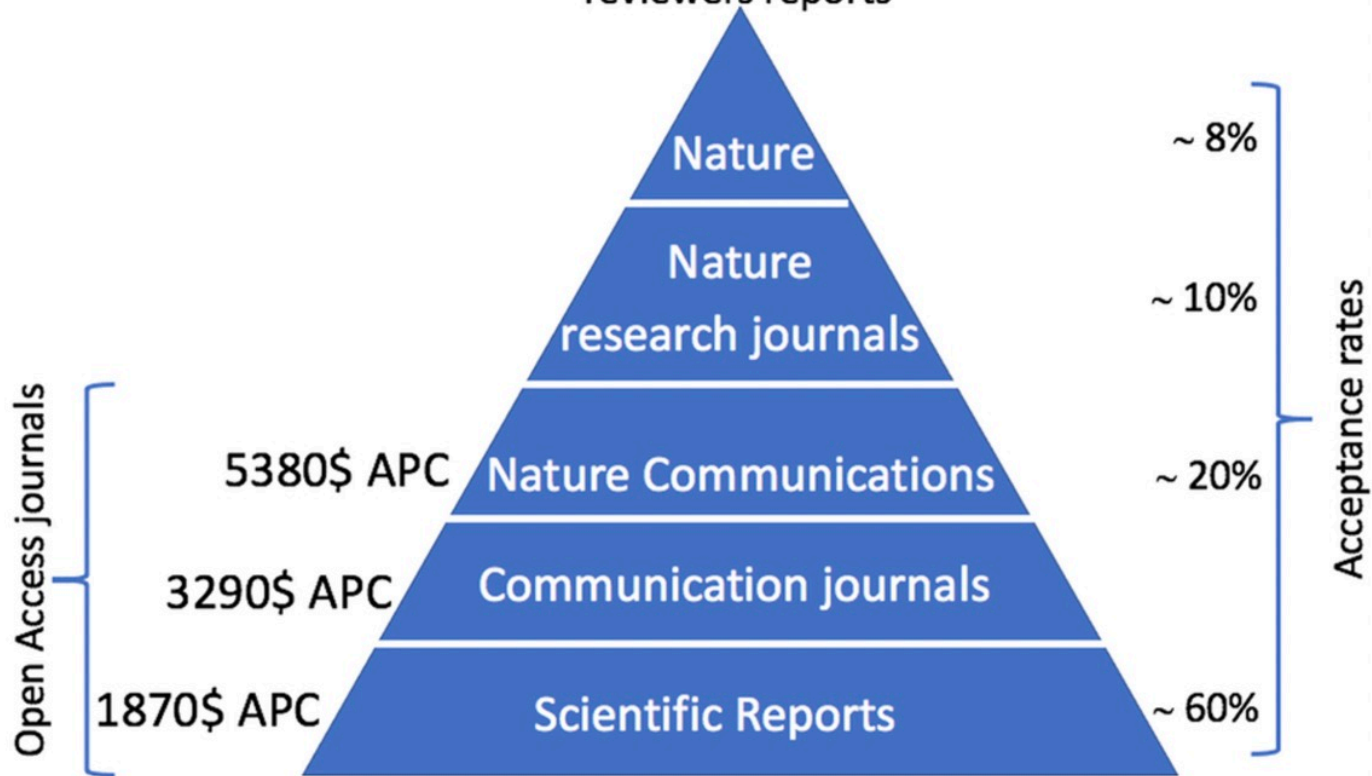
Structural Racism is about the Consolidation  
and Reproduction of Power

Khelfaoui, M., & Gingras, Y. (2020). Branding Spin-Off Scholarly Journals: Transmuting Symbolic Capital into Economic Capital. *Journal of Scholarly Publishing*, 52(1), 1–19.  
<https://doi.org/10.3138/jsp.52.1.01>



**Figure 1.** Trend in the number of branded journals derived from a prestigious parent.

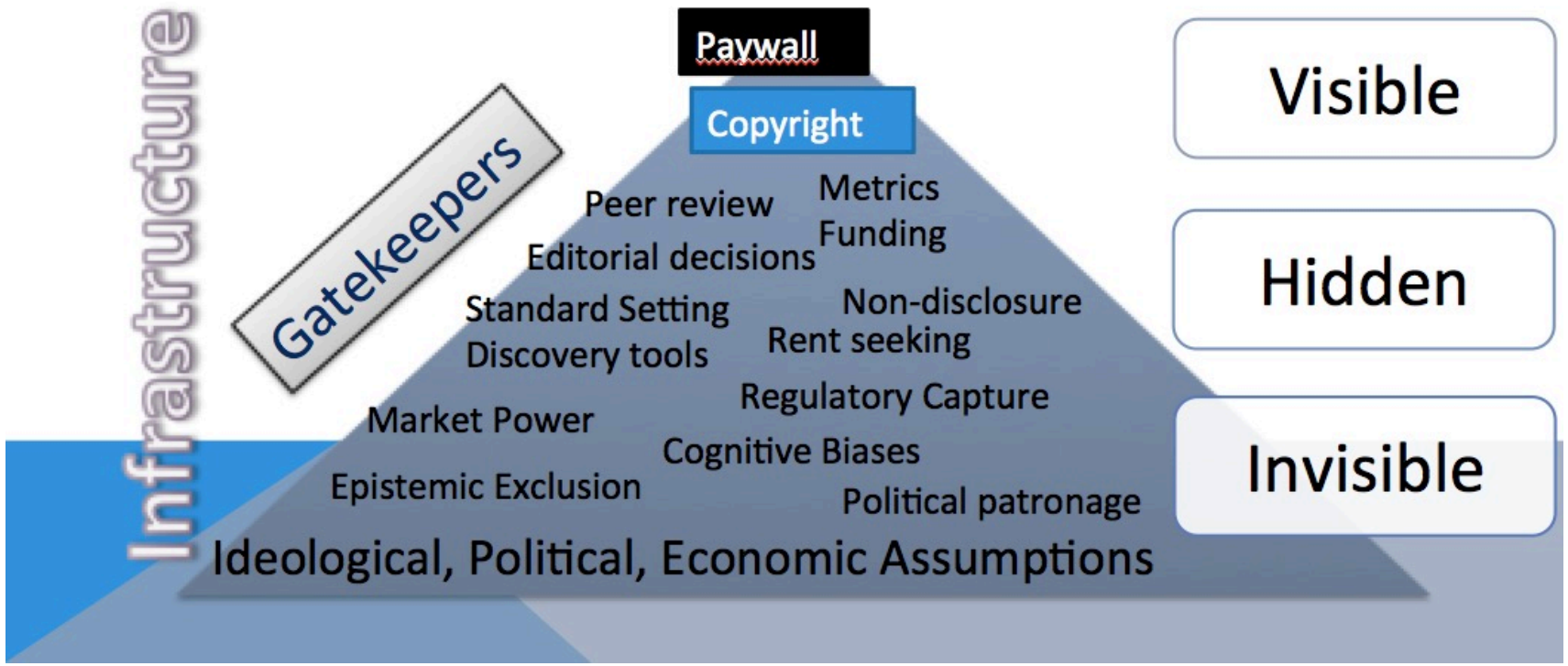
If a manuscript is not accepted, transfer to the lower levels with reviewers reports



Khelfaoui, M., & Gingras, Y. (2021.). Expanding Nature: Product line and brand extensions of a scientific journal. *Learned Publishing*, n/a(n/a).  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/leap.1422>



# SYSTEM OF POWER IN KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION



Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie | TEDGlobal 2009

# The danger of a single story



[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_ngozi\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story/transcript?language=en#t-37151](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story/transcript?language=en#t-37151)

---

It is impossible to talk about the single story without talking about power. There is a word, an Igbo word, that I think about whenever I think about the power structures of the world, and it is "nkali." It's a noun that loosely translates to "to be greater than another." Like our economic and political worlds, stories too are defined by the principle of nkali: How they are told, who tells them, when they're told, how many stories are told, are really dependent on power.

---

Adichie, C. N. (1254877200). *The danger of a single story*.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_ngozi\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story)

---

***“Power is the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definitive story of that person.*** The Palestinian poet Mourid Barghouti writes that if you want to dispossess a people, the simplest way to do it is to tell their story and to start with, "secondly." Start the story with the arrows of the Native Americans, and not with the arrival of the British, and you have an entirely different story. Start the story with the failure of the African state, and not with the colonial creation of the African state, and you have an entirely different story.”

---

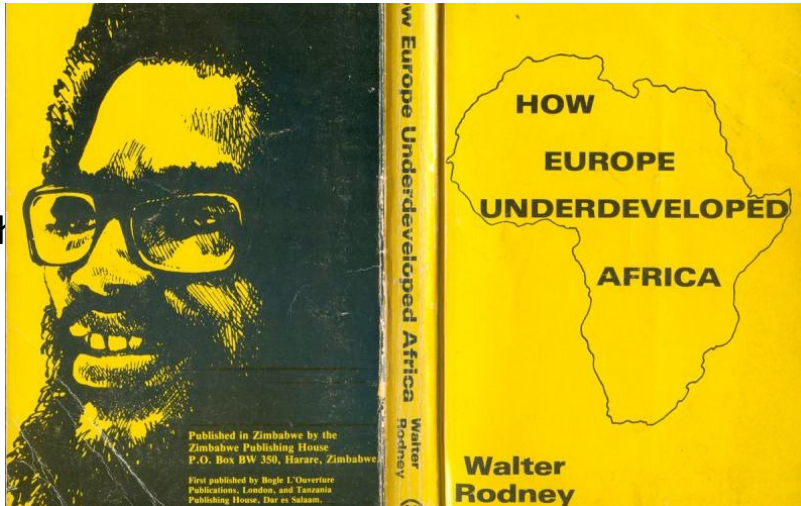
Adichie, C. N. (1254877200). *The danger of a single story.*

[https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_ngozi\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story)

- Development of “underdevelopment”

- India under colonial rule
- Africa under colonial rule

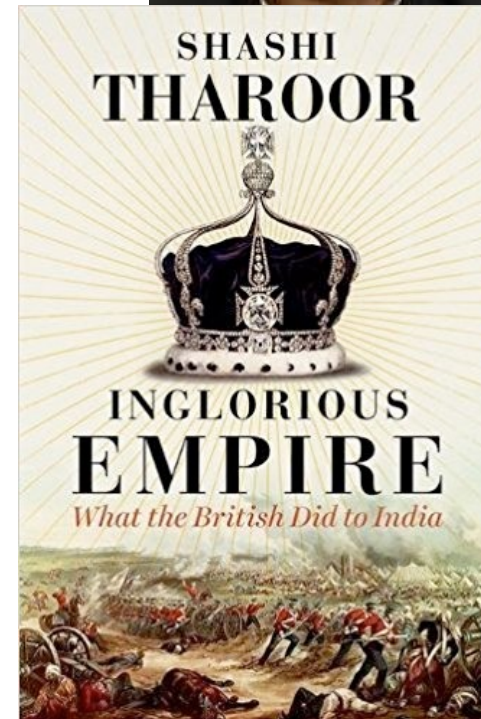
“common myth within capitalist thought that the individual through hard work can become a capitalist”



1972



“Britain came to one of the richest countries in the world and reduced it after 200 years of plunder to one of the poorest.”



2017



**Bioline International** is a not-for-profit scholarly publishing cooperative committed to providing open access to quality research journals published in developing countries. BI's goal of reducing the South to North knowledge gap is crucial to a global understanding of health (tropical medicine, infectious disease and international development). By providing access to journals from Chile, China, Colombia, Egypt, Ghana, India, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda and Venezuela. BI helps to reduce the global knowledge divide by making research community world-wide.

Find out more about:

- Journals in the Bioline International
- How to Support Bioline International



**Information**

**There is hope for Africa.** Despite the grim television pictures of starvation and human suffering, there is tremendous hope for a continent whose people are its greatest resource. Despite massive environmental degradation and neo-colonialism of continually redefined borders, Africa remains one of the best natural continents in terms of natural resources. Africa is a continent of great hopes and fears, a continent of great people and a continent that one finds so difficult to ignore.

**There is hope for Africa.** Despite the grim television pictures of starvation and human suffering, there is tremendous hope for a continent whose people are its greatest resource. Despite massive environmental degradation and neo-colonialism of continually redefined borders, Africa remains one of the best natural continents in terms of natural resources. Africa is a continent of great hopes and fears, a continent of great people and a continent that one finds so difficult to ignore.

This journal is meant to create awareness of the multiplicity of challenges facing Africa, the need to adopt poverty and distribution.

This journal strives to become the premier scholarly forum for sharing and debating information relevant and important to Africa. There is a lot of research and anecdotal information on Africa, in Africa, and by Africans which hardly find their way to the international arena.

Let us tell Africa's story here. Let us share our scholarly works with the rest of the world. We can do it.

**Hon. Prof. Ruth Oniang'o**  
Editor-in-Chief

ur survey's response analysis look at using Bioline International to put their research site in due course.

**Dr. James Tumwine**



**Bioline International**

**needs your support!**



scientists and **Dr. Ruth Oniang'o** (editor and software development). The project is jointly at the University of Toronto Scarborough and by the support of sponsoring libraries and p & sponsorship page for more details.

international@utoronto.ca



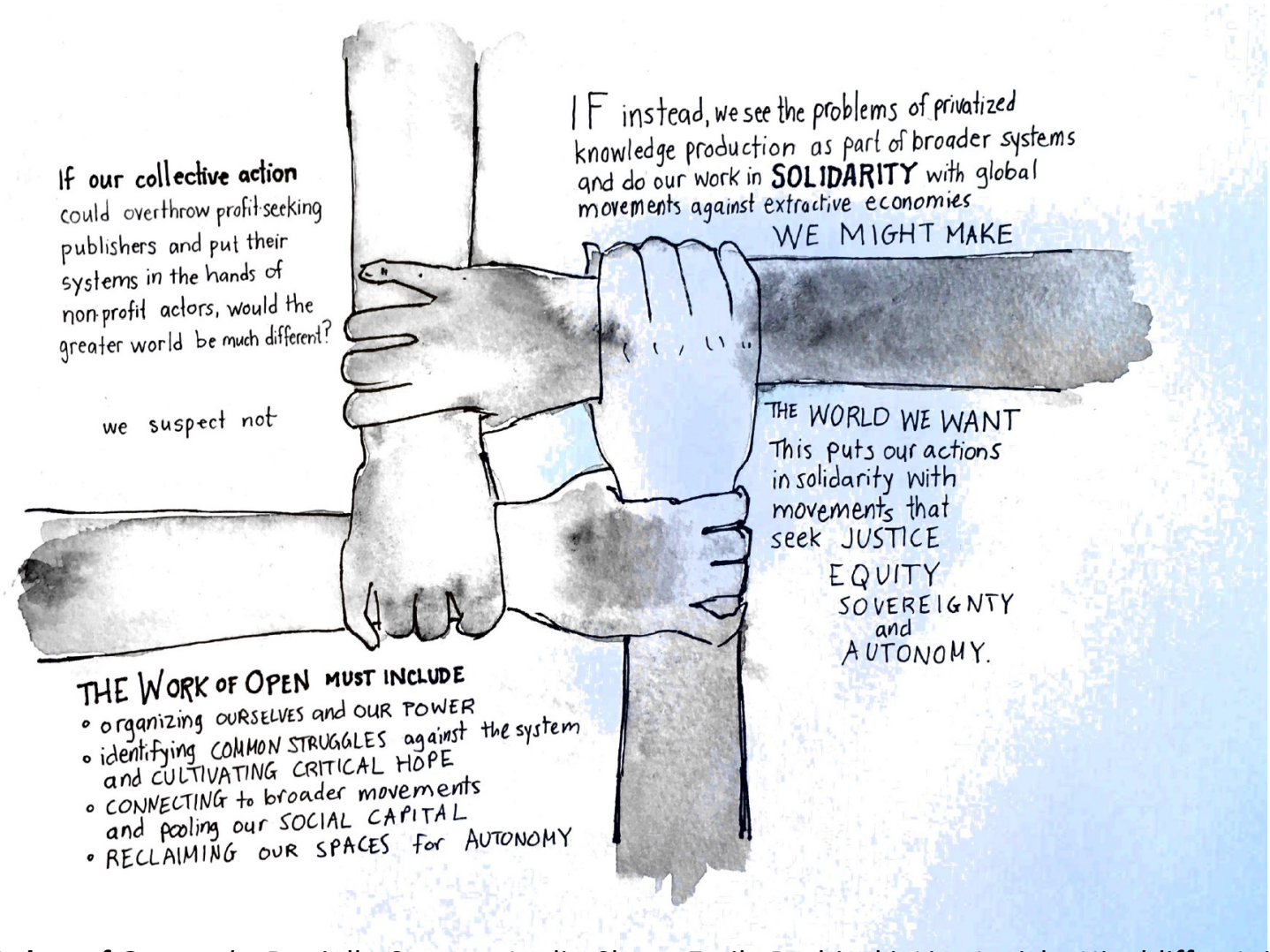
**What's new?**

- African Crop Science Journal, Vol. 28 (03)
- Rwanda Public Health Bulletin, Vol. 02 (01)
- International Journal of Reproductive BioMedicine, Vol. 18 (06)
- Zoological Research, Vol. 41 (03)

**347666**

**full text downloads in Nov 2020**





**The Labor of Open** by Danielle Cooper, Leslie Chan, Emily Drabinski, Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe, Jojo Karlin, Ela Przybylo (2019) <https://cuny.manifoldapp.org/projects/labor-of-open>



<https://www.gida-global.org/care>

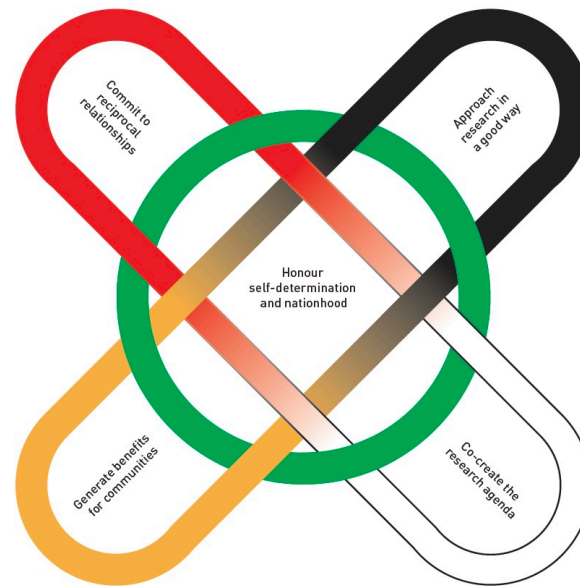


Figure 1 : Five Research Principles as Interwoven Knot (design by P. Friedrichsen)

Foundational principles for intercultural and international research with Indigenous and rural peoples: Connecting principles to Knowledge Mobilization

Maureen G. Reed  
James P. Robson  
Amanda Lindgren  
Peter Friedrichsen  
Tegan Brock  
Iain Davidson-Hunt  
Gabriela Lichtenstein  
Sheona Shackleton  
Liette Vasseur  
Holly Worthen

UNESCO Chair in Biocultural Diversity, Sustainability, Reconciliation, and Renewal, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan



# WE ENVISION



a publishing landscape that emerges from antiracist, feminist, and queer practices

a world of flourishing independent and scholar-led knowledge projects

EQUITABLE open access with an infrastructure built by and for knowledge-makers that challenges colonial legacies of knowledge as property

Knowledge production that refuses to be disciplined

approaches that focus on process over product and relationships over algorithms

Communities claim and control how they wish to MAKE and SHARE their KNOWLEDGE.

**The Labor of Open** by Danielle Cooper, Leslie Chan, Emily Drabinski, Lisa Janicke Hinchliffe, Jojo Karlin, Ela Przybylo (2019)

<https://cuny.manifoldapp.org/projects/labor-of-open>

Thank you!

Questions?