



The Social Impact of History Books: Citations, Reader Ratings, and the Use of Goodreads as an Altmetric tool

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Project Background



Elsevier:
Elsevier
Bibliometrics
Program
(EBRP)
Scopus History
Journal
Citations



Centre for
Digital
Humanities:
Amsterdam
Digital
Humanities
Grant



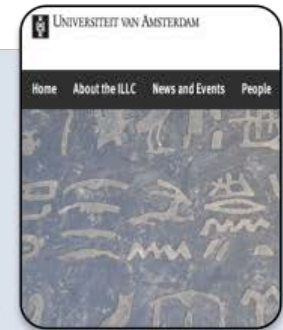
Spinque:
Relational
database design
(Roberto
Cornacchia)



WorldCat:
Publisher
data
(API)



Goodreads
Reader
reviews and
ratings
(API)



ILLC-UvA:
Querying and
analysing the
data
(Alesia Zuccala;
Frederik
Verleyesen)

Research Objectives

- 1. To what extent do scholarly History books cited in journal articles receive reader ratings on Goodreads?*
- 2. What are some of the main characteristics of History books that are both considerably cited in scholarly journal article and considerably rated on Goodreads?*



Goodreads

“The world’s largest site for readers and book recommendations”

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Historical Fiction, Book Club

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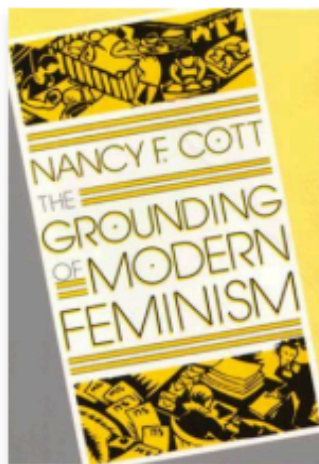
Goodreads

- Maintains a registry of both fiction & non-fiction
- As an interactive platform it runs akin to ancient days when citizens attending the Athens theatre were encouraged to discuss and judge which author had produced the best drama (Habib, 2005).



goodreads

Title / Author / ISBN

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The Grounding of Modern Feminism

by Nancy F. Cott

[Recommend it](#)

★★★★☆ 3.49 · rating details · 53 ratings · 5 reviews

In this landmark addition to scholarship, Nancy F. Cott, author of the 'The Bonds of Womanhood,' offers a new interpretation of feminism in the United States during the early decades of this century--a period traditionally viewed as one in which women won the right to vote and then lost interest in feminist issues.

Paperback, 378 pages

Published September 10th 1989 by Yale University Press (first published 1987)

[Want to Read](#)

Rate this book

**original title**

The Grounding of Modern Feminism

ISBN

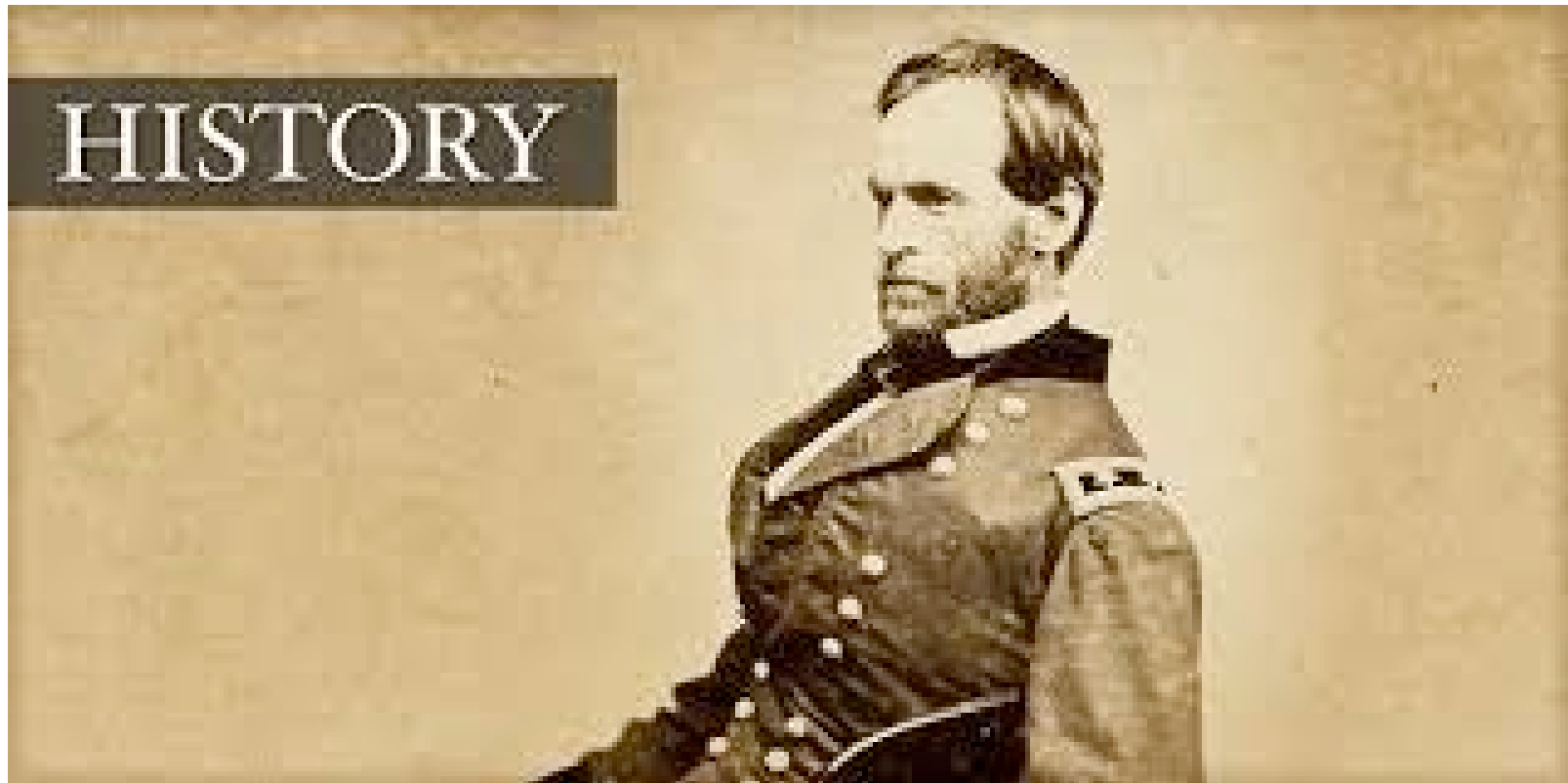
0300042280 (ISBN13: 9780300042283)

edition language

English

other editions (1)[all editions](#) | [add a new edition](#) | [combine](#)[...less detail](#)[edit details](#)**Genres**[History](#)[Non Fiction](#)[Feminism](#)

Subject Area: History



Why does History Matter?

- Explanations range from rationalistic or utilitarian to philosophical and psychological
- History helps us to better shape our present
- History can spark controversies about dealing with painful past episodes
- It can stimulate collective reflection and public debate
- Connect present to past; satisfying emotional, existential, and aesthetic needs



Publishing History

- A 'public history' or history that matters requires **cooperation between academics and publishers**, but there has been some *tension* in this regard.
- The inherent tension is **rooted in the economic logic of publishing** and the expectations that university faculties place on scholars.



Research Framework:

- **Technometric phase** (*Acadometric*) – root term 'academy'; hence academy standards for historical analysis
- **Sociometric phase** (*Altmetric*)
- **Case study**

Donovan, C. (2008), "The Australian Research Quality Framework: A live experiment in capturing the social, economic, environmental, and cultural returns of publicly funded research", in Coryn, C.L.S. and Scriven, M. (Eds.), *Reforming the Evaluation of Research. New Directions for Evaluation*, Vol. 118, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, pp. 47–60.

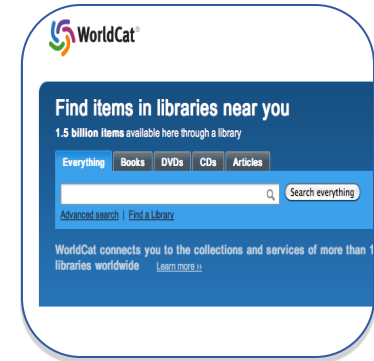


Identify Resources

A Journal Citation Index (i.e.,
Elsevier Scopus)



Bibliographic catalog of
publisher records (i.e.,
WorldCat®)



Social System of Reviews &
Reader Ratings (**Goodreads**)



Objects-to-Data



PT J
 AU Brewer, DA
 AF Brewer, David A.
 TI Counting, Resonance, and Form, A Speculative Manifesto (with Notes)
 SO EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FICTION
 LA English
 DT Article

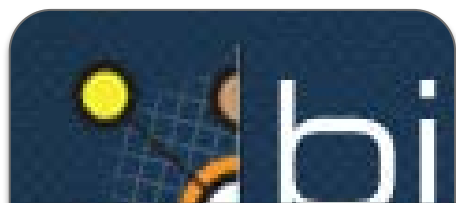
J: Journal Article published in
Eighteenth-Century Fiction

CR: Cited
 References

CR
 DICKIE S, 2011, CRUELTY LAUGHTER FOR
 FERGUS J, 2006, PROVINCIAL READERS 1, P85
 RUNGE L, 2005, COMPANION 18 CENTURY, P292
 MORETTI, 2005, GRAPHS MAPS TREES AB, P12
 RIZZO B, 2003, EARLY JOURNALS LETT, V4
 RAVEN J, 2003, FACES ANONYMITY ANON, P141
 MORETTI, 2000, MODERN LANGUAGE Q, V61
 MORETTI F, 2000, NEW LEFT REV, V1, P56
 COHEN M, 1999, SENTIMENTAL ED NOVEL, P23
 PEARSON J, 1999, WOMENS READING BRITA, P128
 AUSTEN J, 1995, J AUSTENS LETT, P43
 QUINE WV, 1957, P ADDRESSES AM PHILO, V31, P20
 TOMPKINS JMS, 1932, POPULAR NOVEL ENGLAN, pR8
 STUART L, 1930, PRIVATE LETT BOOKS W, P273
 RUNGE L, 1788, CRIT REV, V65, P486
 1778, EXAMPLE HIST L CLEVE, pR5
 LOWNDES T, 1778, LONDON CHRONICL 1126
 MACKENZIE H, 1771, MAN FEELING, pR8

Reference String for:
 Dickie, S. (2011). *Cruelty
 and Laughter: Forgotten
 Comic Literature and the
 Unsentimental Eighteenth
 Century*. Chicago: University
 of Chicago Press.

Bibliographic data matching



Cited books recorded in Scopus journals

- Book Title
- Date of publication
- Author



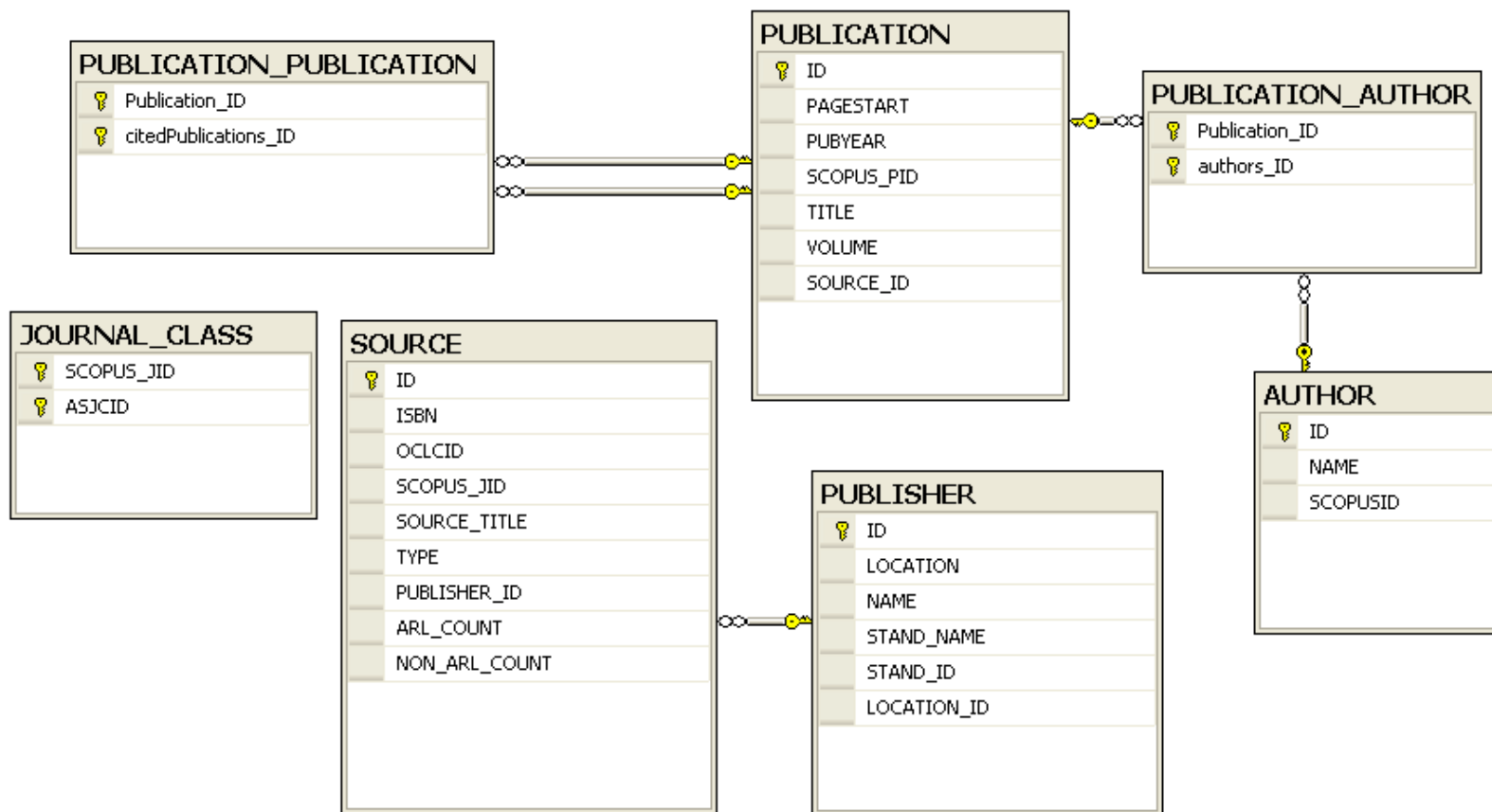
API developer key matches cited title to catalog title

- Book Title
- OCLC ID#
- ISBN#
- Publisher name
- Publisher location



Parsing the Data:

Database development



Standardizing the Data

DATABASE_ID	ISBN	TITLE (cited variations)	CITECOUNT
1631477	0804734194	European Feminisms	4
1631472	0804734194	European Feminisms 1700-1950	1
2136038	0804734194	European Feminisms 1700-1950. A Political History	2
5318151	0804734194	European Feminisms 1700-1950: A Political History	3
5177203	0804734194	European Feminisms, 1700-1950. A Political History	1
2150431	0804734194	European Feminisms, 1700-1950: A Political History	8
8340201	0804734194	European Feminisms, 1700-1950; A Political History	1
5519599	0804734194	European Feminisms,1700-1950: A Political History	1
MERGED_ID	ISBN	TITLE (merged variations)	CITECOUNT
8340201	0804734194	European Feminisms, 1700-1950; A Political History	21



Data Collection

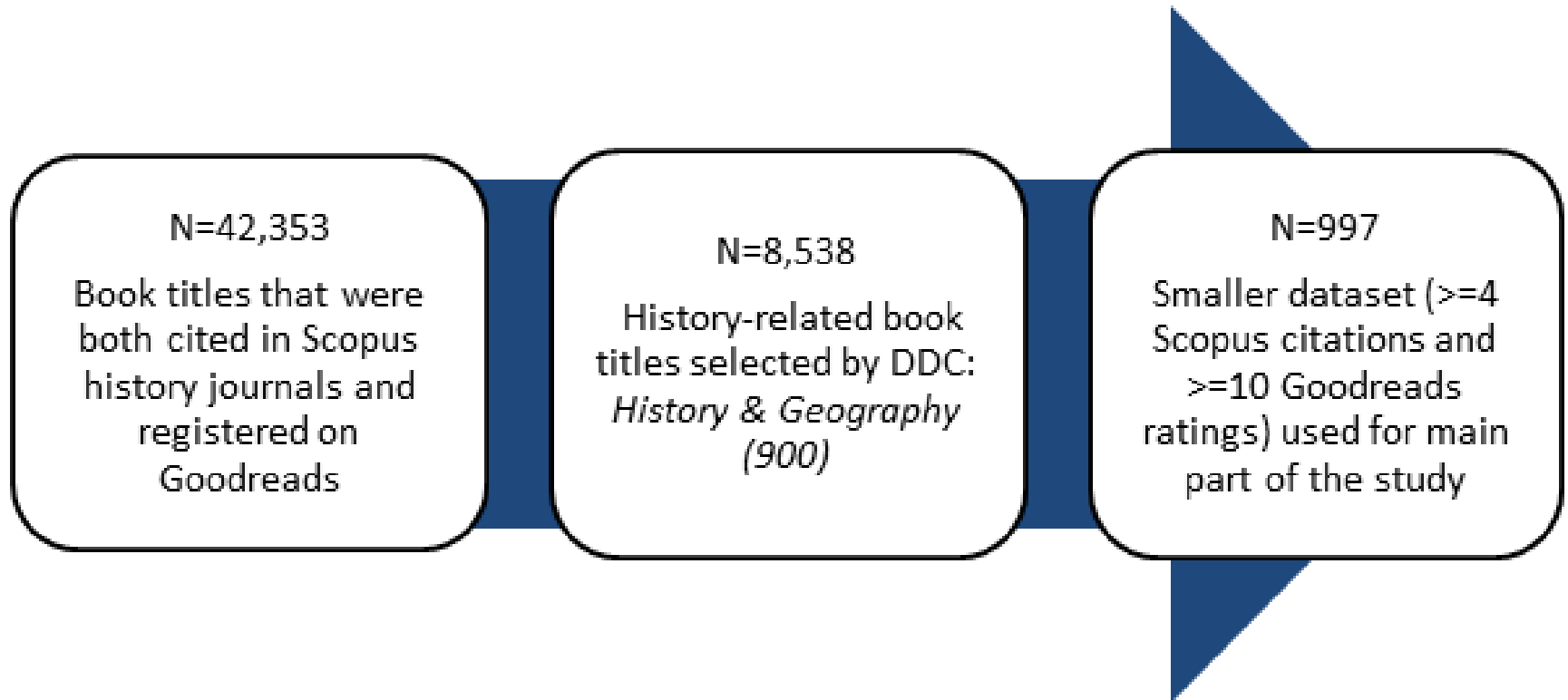


Figure 1. Stages of the data collection process.

Table 2. Division of the set of 8,538 history books into four partitions based on the 75th percentile values for Scopus journal citation counts and Goodreads ratings.

Book Titles Cited in Scopus <i>History</i> journals (2007-2011)	Rated by Readers on Goodreads (2006-2013)	
	Reader ratings below the 75 th percentile (<10)	Reader ratings at or above the 75 th percentile (>=10)
Citations below the 75 th (<4)	N=4,641 Low impact books	N=1,242 Social impact books
Citations at or above the 75 th percentile (>=4)	N=1,658 Academic impact books	N=997 Books under examination
Data Structure		
<p>SOURCE_ID: 618933 ISBN: 292775962 SOURCE_TITLE: Anglos and Mexicans in the Making of Texas, 1836-1986 CITE_COUNT: 20 RATINGS_COUNT: 32 AVGSTAR_RATING: 3.70 REVIEWS_COUNT: 2 PUBLISHER_NAME: University of Texas Press ARL_COUNT: 105 NON_ARL COUNT: 698 DDC: 976.4 MAIN CLASS: History and geography</p>		



Full Dataset: No Correlation

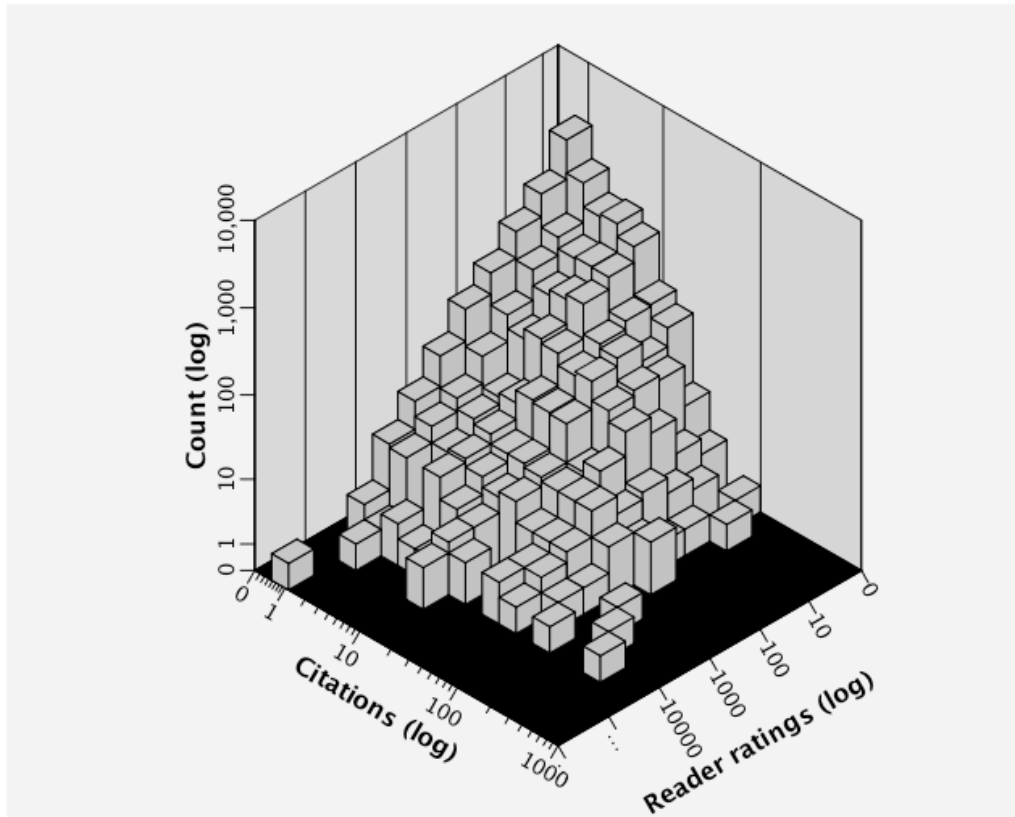


Figure 2. 3D histogram of citations and reader ratings on a log-log scale (N=8,538).

Group B

Books with high Scopus citations (≥ 4) and *high* Goodreads reader ratings (≥ 10)

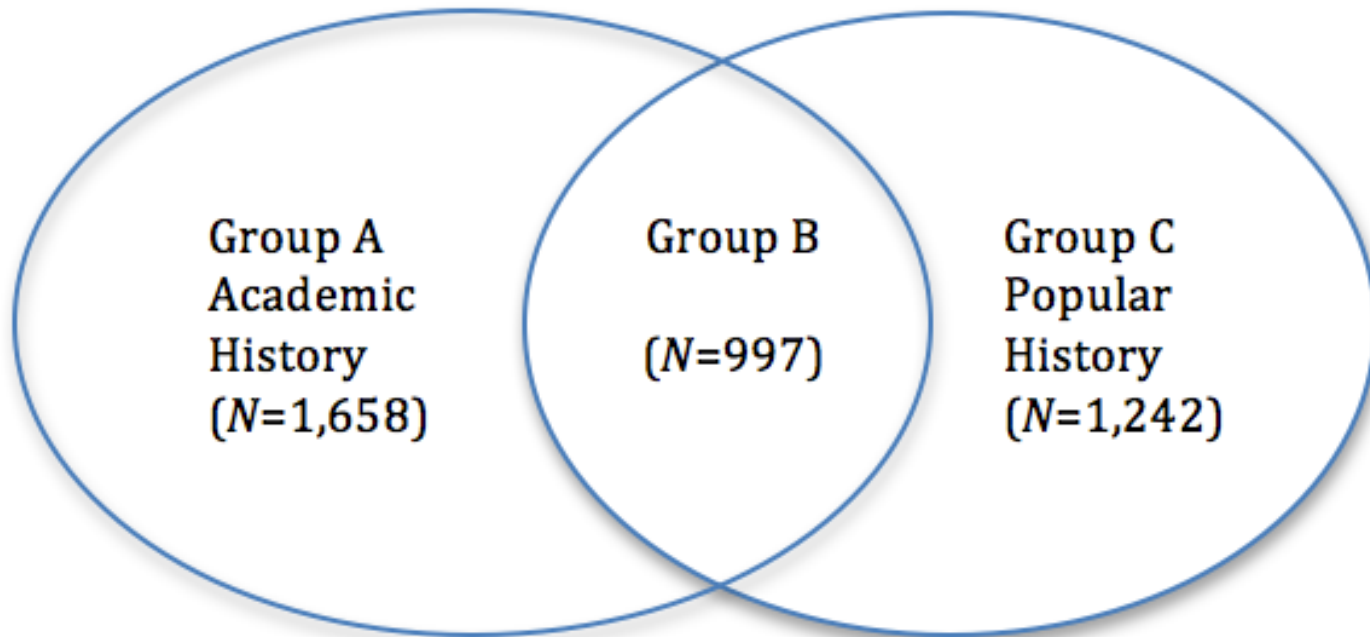
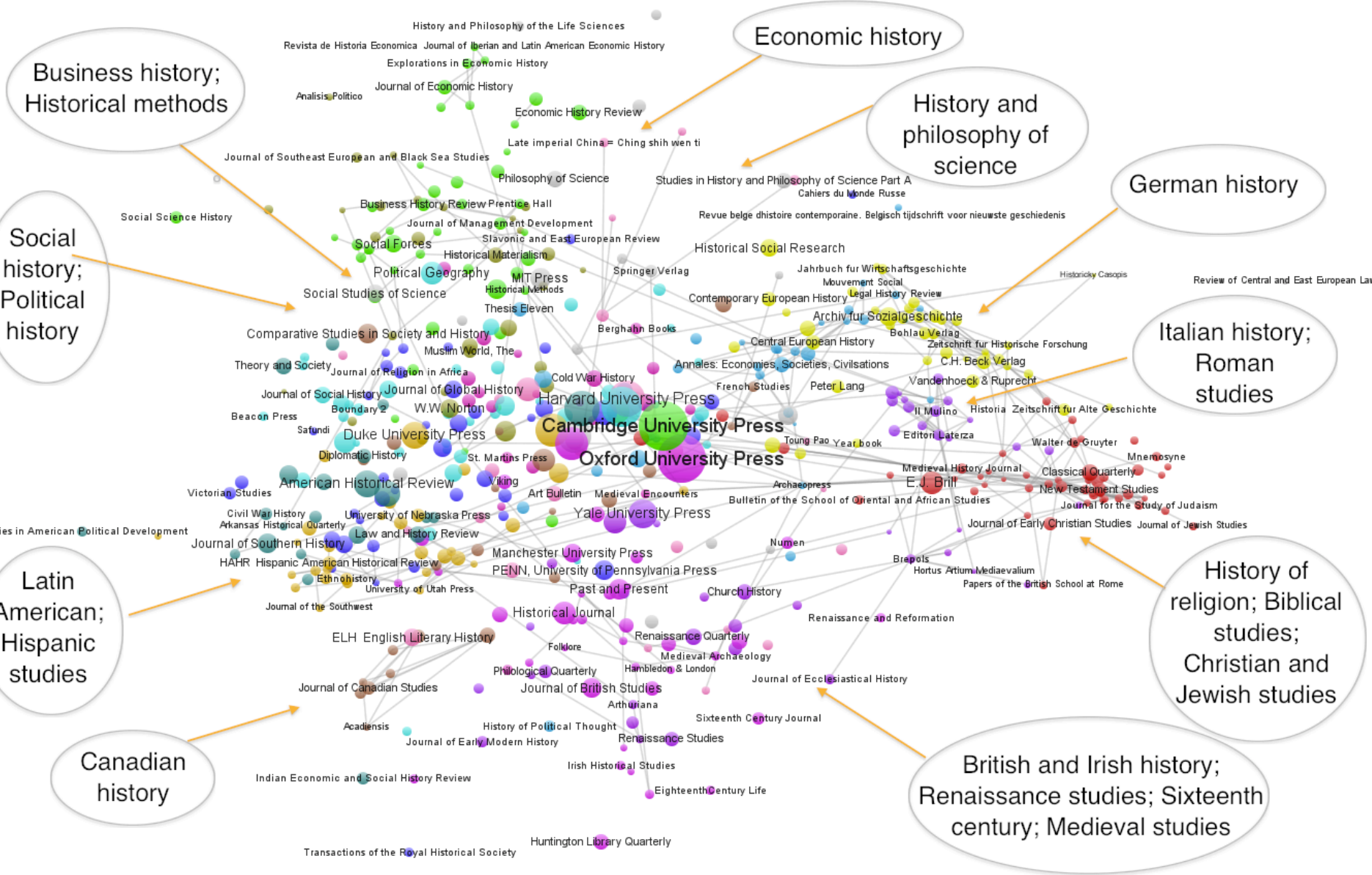


Table 3: Correlation measures for **Group B** based on reader rating counts, written reviews and library holding counts in libraries – ARL and non-ARL.

		Reader ratings	Reader reviews	ARL holdings	Non-ARL holdings
Citations	Rho	.190	.143	.208	.072
	Significance	<0.000000	<0.000000	<0.000000	<0.000000
Reader ratings	Rho	1.000	.871	.101	.467
	Significance		<0.000000	0.000669	<0.000000
Reader Reviews	Rho		1.000	.072	.448
	Significance			0.011453	<0.000000
ARL holdings	Rho			1.000	.566
	Significance				<0.000000

Table 3: Correlation measures for **Group B** based on reader rating counts, written reviews and library holding counts in libraries – ARL and non-ARL.

		Reader ratings	Reader reviews	ARL holdings	Non-ARL holdings
Citations	Rho	.190	.143	.208	.072
	Significance	<0.000000	<0.000000	<0.000000	<0.000000
Reader ratings	Rho	1.000	.871	.101	.467
	Significance		<0.000000	0.000669	<0.000000
Reader Reviews	Rho		1.000	.072	.448
	Significance			0.011453	<0.000000
ARL holdings	Rho			1.000	.566
	Significance				<0.000000



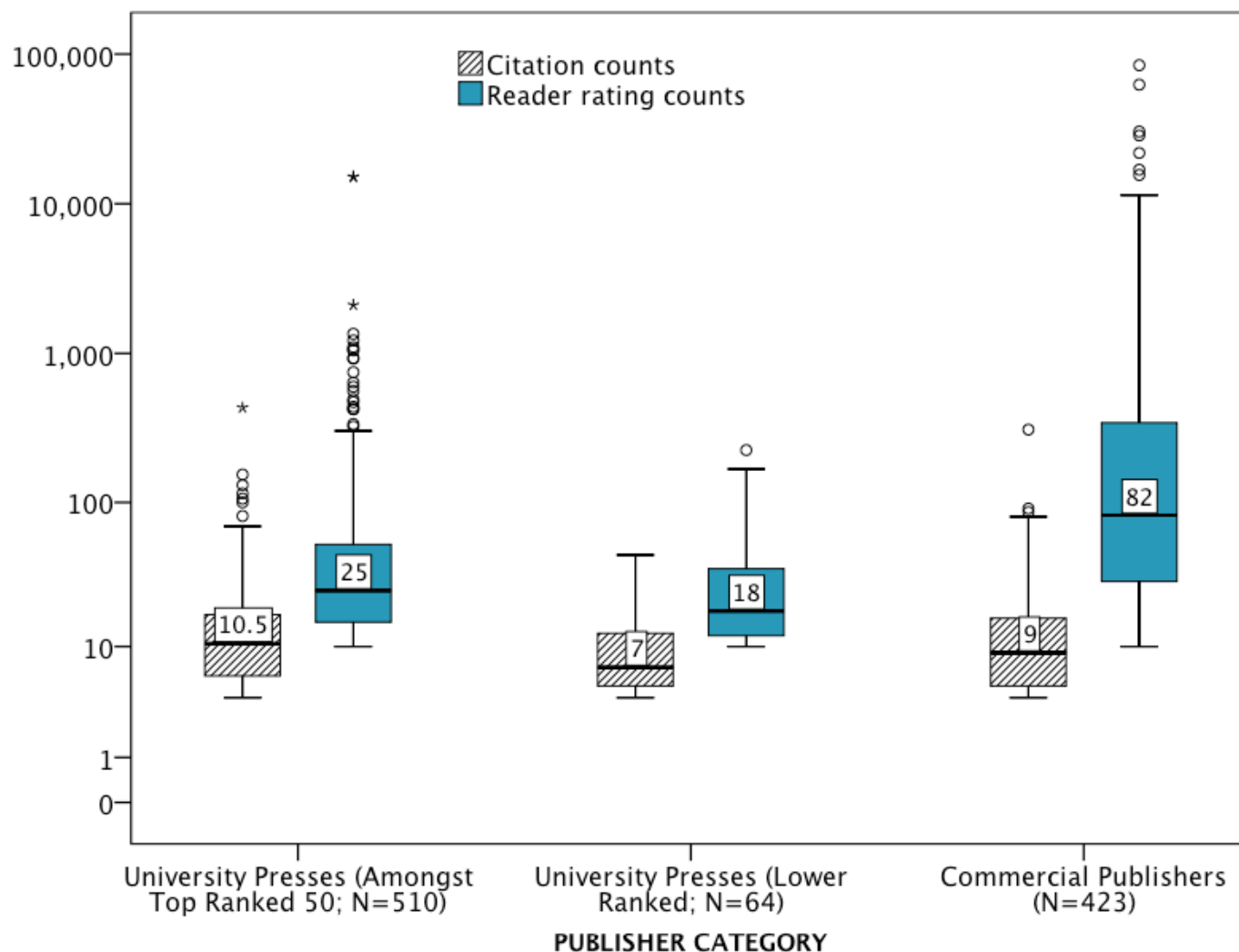
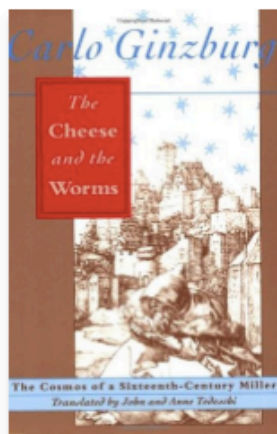


Figure 4. Boxplots of citation counts and Goodreads reader rating counts for book titles in group B (N=997) based on publisher category.





Want to Read



Rate this book



The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-century Miller

by Carlo Ginzburg, John Tedeschi (Translator), Anne Tedeschi (Translator)

★★★★☆ 3.94 · rating details · 1,819 ratings · 112 reviews

The Cheese and the Worms is a study of the popular culture in the sixteenth century as seen through the eyes of one man, a miller brought to trial during the Inquisition. Carlo Ginzburg uses the trial records of Domenico Scandella, a miller also known as Menocchio, to show how one person responded to the confusing political and religious conditions of his time.

For a common ...[more](#)

Paperback, 208 pages

Published March 1st 1992 by Johns Hopkins University Press (first published 1976)

original title Il formaggio e i vermi: Il cosmo di un mugnaio del '500**ISBN** 0801843871 (ISBN13: 9780801843877)**edition language** English**url** <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/history/ginzburg/>**characters** Domenico Scandella**setting** Montereale Valcellina (Italy)**other editions (30)**[all editions](#) | [add a new edition](#) | [combine](#)[...less detail](#)[edit details](#)

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About Carlo Ginzburg


Born in 1939, he is the son of of Italian-Ukrainian translator Leone Ginzburg and Italian writer Natalia Ginzburg. Historian whose fields of interest range from the Italian Renaissance to early modern European History, with contributions in art history, literary studies, popular cultural beliefs, and the theory of historiography.

[More about Carlo Ginzburg...](#)

Books by Carlo Ginzburg




Goodreads | The Cheese and the Worms: T... Reviews, Discussion, Bookclubs, Lists
 https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/71148.The_Chee Reader
 Humanities Wikipedia UPresses JobSearch Nederlands Dropbox Geni
 Goodreads | The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-century Miller by Carlo Gi...

 **Jan-Maat** added it · review of another edition Jun 13, 2011
 Shelves: early-modern-history, italy, 20th-century, religion

Fantastic study based on trial records of a sixteenth century Italian miller charged with heresy. The book offers a glimpse into an alternative (and generally unheard from) worldview that is full of so much imagination on the part of the miller that it should put many a fiction writer to shame.


That really is its strength and virtue, to be a reminder that the masses of people that now we label as Lutheran, Catholic or Anabaptist were a mess of individuals. While the beliefs of the hierarchies can...more

6 likes · like · comment · see review

 **Karen** rated it ★★★★★ Jul 25, 2011

The Cheese and the Worms is a ground breaking exposé into the field of microhistory and remains a foundational work for historians today. Ginzburg used the story of Menocchio, a sixteenth century miller who was twice prosecuted and ultimately condemned by the inquisition for holding and preaching egregiously heretical beliefs. As a miller and a literate man, Menocchio had a greater exposure to people and ideas than the average peasant-farmer, and apparently also a keen intellect which he used to...more

3 likes · like · comment · see review

 **Jen** rated it ★★★★★ Jan 12, 2013

As a medievalist, I run across this book all the time, which is funny considering it's not really a medieval book (it's more Renaissance/early modern). It's made a huge splash in The Study of Old Things, though, so I'm not surprised it finally showed up in a class of mine on the reading list.

So, the gist of the story (and it really does read like a story, which is kind of neat) is Ginzburg following the trials by the inquisition (no, not the one you didn't expect,

Fantastic study based on trial records of a sixteenth century Italian miller charged with heresy

The Cheese and the Worms is a ground breaking expose into the field of microhistory and remains a foundational work for historians today

Thank-you for your attention!

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spl465@iva.ku.dk

Zuccala, A. A., Verleysen, F., Cornacchia, R., & Engels, T. (2015). Altmetrics for the Humanities: Comparing Goodreads reader ratings with citations to history books. *Aslib Proceedings*, 67(3). <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/AJIM-11-2014-0152>

