



GL'9

The Use of Grey Literature in Historical Journals and Historical Research

Cees de Blaaij

Zeeuwse Bibliotheek, Netherlands
Academic Department

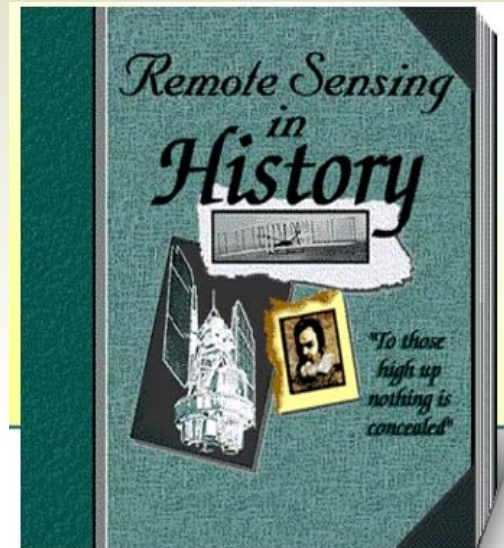


The position of History

- Situation before '60s
 - > Traditional literary format
 - > Focus on "Great Men" and politics
- The art of History after '60s
 - > Innovation
 - > Use of methods from social sciences
 - > Specialization

Result:

- > History in general **more interdisciplinary**
- > **Humanities or a Social Science** discipline depending on themes and theory used





Bibliometric characteristics of History

Peters :

“History: hard or soft science ?”

Findings: Monograph ratio to periodicals $1.21 < > 1.0$

- > Traditional disciplinary:
 - monographs >> 60.6%-88.5%
- > If interdisciplinary:
 - monographs >> 36.4%-64.1%
 - serials >> 11,6%-29.8%
- > Overall for history
 - Use of older material than in other disciplines
 - Relative low obsolescence





Use of Grey Literature in History

- Grey is not well known concept in discipline of history
- Distinction between primary and secondary sources
- Archival records are not grey in this study
- Methods:
 - Relevant scholarly journals researched
 - Printed and Open Access Journals
 - Relevancy on basis of impact factor and/or widely held by libraries
 - Use of Scopus as citation database





Core journals in history	Number of WorldCat Holding Institutions	JCR Impact factor
-------------------------------------	--	--------------------------

Printed Journals

American History Review	2291	1.623
Journal of Modern History	1638	0.568
Comparative Studies in Society and History	875	0.561
Journal of Interdisciplinary History	875	0.312
Social Science History	390	0.286

Open Access Journals

African Studies Quarterly	313	None
49 th Parallel	230	None
History of Intellectual Culture	262	None
Medical History	244	0.333
ERAS	254	None

Analysis History Journals

Issues:

History journals have a low impact factor compared with hard sciences

- Different communication: monograph
- Different output for international audience
- Absolute value of Impact Factor is meaningless

Steps in the analysis:

- Number of articles in issues
 - Number of references in articles
 - Number of grey references
 - Categorizing grey into groups
 - Analysis of numbers
- **Total of 156 research articles**
 - **18, 366 references**





References to GL in the articles in selected historical journals from 2005

	Journal of Modern History	Comparative Studies in Society and History	Journal of Interdisciplinary History	Social Science History	African Studies Quarterly	49th Parallel	Journal of Intellectual Culture	Medical History	ERAS
Impact Factor	1.623	0.516	0.312	0.286	none	none	none	0.333	none
Num. Ref	2339								
	4027	4595	2856	1182	349	256	211	2158	395
References to GL	54								
	67	169	114	142	169	43	11	170	53
	4.14%	3.68%	3.99%	12.03%	48.42%	16.80%	5.21%	7.88%	13.41%
Print	Print	Print	Print	Print	OA	OA	OA	OA	OA



Results for GL present in History

- Average number of references higher in printed than in OA
 - Median Ref. print 105.7
 - Median Ref. OA 42.2
- Strong presence of grey in Open Access history journals not in printed ones.
 - Median OA 13.4%
 - Median Print 4%
- Also stronger presence in
 - > journals researching contemporary political history themes
 - > journals using social science methods
- Other studies show presence of grey related material : 2-15.8%

Number of grey literature references by type

Journal title	Conf	Gov	Org	News	Diss /Thes	Misc	Total
Printed History Journals							
American Historical Review	9	22	44	14	24	78	191
Journal of Modern History	13	28	4		7	4	56
Comparative Studies in Society and History	8	11	43	5	23	23	113
Journal of Interdisciplinary History	9	20	41	14	25	60	169
Social Science History	14	66	43	4	19	4	150
Open Access History Journals							
African Studies Quarterly		8	37	1	1	12	59
49 th Parallel		24	6		1	12	43
History of Intellectual Culture		2	5		4	1	12
Medical History	32	34	66	1	19	18	170
ERAS	2	15	17	3		15	52
Total References	87	230	306	42	123	227	1015
Percent References	6.1	22.7	30.1	4.1	12.1	22.3	100

*Conf =conference; Gov=government; Org=organization; Newsb=newsbuletin; Misc=miscellaneous



Grey data: the future for history?

In the Netherlands:

- Dare project
- DANS: Data Archiving and Networked Services
- EASY: Electronic Archiving System

