

## The Humanities: Who Won the '90s in Scholarly Book Publishing

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**abstract:** The study of prizes awarded to books in the 1990s by leading humanities scholarly associations tells much about the disciplines, publishing, and libraries during that decade. This article examines data on prize-winners of the American Historical Association, the American Musicological Society, the College Art Association, and the Modern Language Association. For the prize-winners, it reports the distribution of winners among publishers and universities; extent of cross-disciplinary publishing; degree of co-authorship; trends in library acquisitions of print versions; and accessibility of electronic versions. The University of California Press and the faculty at the university's Berkeley campus ranked first; the American Historical Association awarded nearly half of its prizes to books classified outside history; there was little co-authorship; library holdings appeared to decline over the decade; and roughly 15 percent of prize-winners were available through netLibrary by the summer of 2001.

**A**cademic librarians, especially those who select materials for collections, have great interest in prestigious scholarly publications, authors, and publishers. To serve users well, librarians need to know what is happening in the disciplines, and acclaimed publications mark trends in different fields. The work of important authors is essential for good collections. Authors are so numerous it takes years for selectors to learn who are leaders, but a substantial majority of top authors works for a much smaller number of institutions that can be more easily remembered. Perhaps most important, librarians need to know about publishers who assure the quality of the books and journals libraries acquire.

A major indicator of prestige is prizes awarded to publications and their authors by scholarly associations. Awards for publications have a long history, and over time, among larger associations, at least, their numbers have grown. The present article reports about prize-winning authors and publishers in the humanities from 1990 through 1999. It covers awards given to books by the American Historical Association (AHA), the Ameri-

can Musicological Society (AMS), the College Art Association (CAA), and the Modern Language Association of America (MLA). It examines books, because books are the most important form of publication in the humanities.<sup>1</sup> It analyzes awards of the largest associations for history, musicology, art scholarship, and literary studies because these are the leading disciplines of the humanities. Some argue that history is a social science. While history has social scientific characteristics, the author of the present article thinks that librarians should differentiate areas of scholarship based on the sources of information used. The key difference between the basic (often called primary) sources of information of the humanities and the social sciences is that humanists study documents and artifacts created by other people, while social scientists participate in creating their basic information through experiments, field work, and surveys.<sup>2</sup> Given this distinction, history is a field in the humanities. Although some historians use interviews (a form of social scientific field work), all use documents and artifacts left by people from the past.

While the present article will focus on which publishers and authors (and the institutions with whom the authors are affiliated) won the most prizes during the 1990s, the compilation of a list of leading books in the four most important humanities disciplines provides an opportunity to address additional issues of interest to librarians. First, determining how many libraries have entered holdings on OCLC for books of different disciplines gives one sense of the influence of those disciplines during the decade. Second, numbers of OCLC holdings offer an index of the level over time of library acquisitions. Third, academic libraries are not the only libraries that acquire humanities prize-winners. Analysis of the percentage of nonacademic libraries among OCLC holdings suggests which publishers and disciplines attracted attention outside the academy. Fourth, analysis of netLibrary's listings of books on OCLC provides a measure of the availability, at the end of the 1990s, of electronic versions of leading humanities scholarship. In contrast, analysis of netLibrary's OCLC listings suggests which publishers had books available electronically and which disciplines were best represented with electronic books. Fifth, there is evidence that the extent of co-authorship is generally increasing in the scholarly world.<sup>3</sup> The data set gathered for the present study provides one recent measure of co-authorship in the humanities. Finally, by looking at the class numbers assigned to prize-winners, one can estimate cross-disciplinary interest in different fields and gauge the influence different disciplines have on each other.

### The Prizes

At one time or another during the 1990s, the AHA awarded twenty-two differently named prizes to 145 books; the CAA awarded two prizes to twenty-two books; the MLA eighteen to 148 books; the American Musicological Association one prize to thirteen books.<sup>4</sup> These amount to 328 awards in all. The median number of times each prize was awarded is eight; the average 7.6. Three were awarded only once (for example, an AHA prize given only in 1991); one nineteen times (the Lowell prize from the MLA, including honorable mentions and finalists). Two winners (H-NET and an historical society exhibit) were not books, and they are not included in the present analysis. Only twenty-four books (or 7 percent of all prize-winners) had co-authors, a total of fifty-



eight persons or 2.4 authors per co-authored book; 1.1 authors for all books. This reinforces the point, sometimes contested, that while humanists consult other scholars, normally they work alone.<sup>5</sup> Most authors won only one prize. Seven authors received two prizes; five of these (in history) were honored for the same book. The two authors who won prizes for two different books received the Mildenerger Prize of the MLA for an outstanding book about teaching foreign languages and literatures. That only two authors won prizes for more than one book reminds us not only how difficult it is to win a prize, but also how long it normally takes to write a book in the humanities, lessening the chances a given scholar will have two books eligible within a single decade. For literary studies, Clara Chu found that almost six years was the average period needed to write a book.<sup>6</sup>

### Institutional Affiliations of Prize-winners

The fact that more than 360 different authors won prizes points to the challenge librarians face in learning about individual scholars. Institutional affiliations show some predominant universities, although there is considerable scatter. In all, the investigator found 156 institutions with at least one winner. Fifteen prizes went to scholars identified as independent, and the investigator could not find affiliations for nineteen other winners. Only 52 percent of the affiliated winners came from the top 20 percent of the institutions – far from the classic distribution where 80 percent of the instances of a phenomenon come from 20 percent of the supplying

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sources. Among outstanding institutions, the University of California, Berkeley with fifteen prize-winners leads the way (table 1). California-Berkeley had at least one prize-winner in all four disciplines. Ten of these were in literature, the most for that field. Only two other institutions, Yale and the University of Chicago, had winners in all disciplines. University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) was second among institutions with twelve winners, including five for books in history, most for that field. Ten different individuals accounted for the twelve UCLA prizes, as both double winners of MLA's Mildenerger prize came from UCLA. Duke followed UCLA with ten prize-winners. Among institutions with six or more prize-winners, Duke had unusual disciplinary concentration. Eight of its prizes were in literature, the other two in history. Other institutions with more than six winners received at most two-thirds of their prizes from the same association. Nine of the universities with four or more prizes had winners in just two fields, usually history and literature. But (besides California-Berkeley, Yale, and University of Chicago) Harvard, University of California-Santa Barbara, New York University, Virginia, Brandeis, and Cornell had prizes from three associations. Overall, the data reinforce something that is well known. Most of the best research comes from large research universities.

While no one would measure the strength of an institution's humanities programs by numbers of prizes won, it is interesting to compare the present study's findings with

**Table 1**  
Prizes Awarded by Institutions

Institution	Total	CAA (Art)	AHA (History)	MLA (Literature)	AMS (Music)
California-Berkeley	15	2	2	10	1
California-Los Angeles	12		5	7	
Duke	10		2	8	
Yale	9	1	1	6	1
Chicago	8	1	2	4	1
Harvard	7	1	3	3	
California-Santa Barbara	6	1	1	4	
CUNY	6		2	4	
New York University	6	2	2	2	
Virginia	6		3	2	1
Columbia	5		2	3	
Pennsylvania	5		1	4	
Texas-Austin	5		3	2	
Brandeis	4		1	1	2
Cornell	4		2	1	1
Iowa	4	1	3		
Ohio State	4			4	
Stanford	4		1	3	
Wisconsin-Madison	4		3	1	
12 with 3	36				
24 with 2	48				
101 with 1	101				
Total	309				

In counting winners by institution, the investigator applied the following rules. If two or more co-authors from the same institution won a prize, the investigator counted one prize for that institution. If co-authors from different institutions won a prize, the investigator counted one prize for each institution (15 such cases occurred). If an author was affiliated with two institutions, the prize counted once for each institution (two such cases occurred). Two hundred ninety-two prize-winning books had one or more authors with an institutional affiliation; thirty-six prize-winning books had an author either identified as independent or for whom the investigator could not find an institutional affiliation.

Source: See endnote 4.

Table 2

## Research Doctorate Program Rankings

Institution	Rank of Program		Composite Score	Composite Rank	Prizes Won	Prize Rank (top 19 only)
	Art History	English History				
California-Berkeley	3	2	7	1	15	1
Yale	5	2	8	2	9	4
Harvard	4	2	10	3	7	6
Columbia	1.5	8.5	15	4	5	11 (Tie)
Princeton	6	13	22	5	3	
Stanford	14	5.5	26.5	6	4	14 (Tie)
Johns Hopkins	7	11	27	7	3	
Chicago	10	10	28	8	8	5
Pennsylvania	9	8.5	29.5	9	5	11 (Tie)
California-Los Angeles	13	12	31	10	12	2
Michigan-Ann Arbor	11	16	38	11	3	
Virginia	16	4	39	12	6	7 (Tie)
Cornell	23	7	43	13	4	14 (Tie)
New York University	1.5	20	44.5	14	6	7 (Tie)
Brown	18	14	46	15	0	
CUNY	12	18.5	48.5	16	6	7 (Tie)
Northwestern	8	29	53	17	2	
Rutgers	20	17	57	18	3	
Texas-Austin	19	21	61.5	19	5	11 (Tie)
Indiana-Bloomington	24.5	18.5	67	20	3	
Illinois-Urbana-Champaign	26	28	79	21	0	

Source: *Research-Doctorate Programs in the United States: Continuity and Change*, Marvin L. Goldberger, Brendan A. Maher and Pamela Ebert Flattau, eds. (Washington: National Academy Press, 1995).

an institutional ranking derived from the National Research Council's *Research-Doctorate Programs in the United States: Continuity and Change* (1995).<sup>7</sup> *Research-Doctorate Programs* has rankings for history and art history programs that parallel this study's coverage of AHA and CAA prizes. At the risk of oversimplification, *Research-Doctorate Programs'* ranking of English departments can be taken to parallel MLA's prizes. *Research-Doctorate Programs* ranks music programs, but such programs include so much more than musicology that their rankings cannot be included here. By assigning one point for each place ranking in *Research-Doctorate Programs* (e.g., three points for a third place ranking) for art history, English, and history, we can compile a composite ranking (table 2). The composite ranking includes only institutions that have all three programs in the top thirty.

Given the composite rankings cover only three of the four fields and given that awards for an institution's books are only one factor in judging a humanities program, there is remarkable coincidence between the composite ranking and the institutional prize totals. First, California-Berkeley heads both lists. Furthermore, Yale, Harvard, Chicago, and UCLA are in the top ten in both and places six through twenty on both lists are shared by Stanford, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Cornell, NYU, CUNY, and Texas at Austin. Columbia, fourth in the composite ranking, is tied for eleven in prizes. Most of the other institutions in the composite top twenty had at least three prizes. Of institutions, not in the composite ranking, that won more than one prize from a given association, Duke's history program ranked fifteen, its English 5.5, French third; and Spanish and Portuguese second. California-Santa Barbara's English program ranked 34.5; Ger-

man twenty-four, and Spanish and Portuguese 20.5. Iowa's history program ranked 29.5. Ohio State's English program ranked thirty-three, French 30.5, German seventeen; and Spanish and Portuguese thirty-three. Wisconsin-Madison's history program ranked tenth.

Noteworthy among the NRC composite and prize rankings is the predominance of private institutions, the high places of the University of California campuses notwithstanding. This is especially

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true among the top ten in tables 1 and 2. Private universities outnumber non-University of California public universities five to two in the top ten prize-winners and eight to zero in the top ten NRC composite. Among the nineteen listed prize-winning schools, ten are private and nine public, including the three California campuses. Twelve private and nine public (including Berkeley and UCLA) institutions constitute the top of the NRC composite.

### Prize-winning Publishers

The distribution of prizes among publishers is more concentrated than for institutions. Eighteen presses—20.5 percent of all prize-winning publishers—published 72 percent



## Table 3

### Prize-winners by Publisher

Publisher	Total	Art	History	Literature	Musicology
California	27	0	13	12	2
Cambridge	26	1	15	6	4
Princeton	23	4	13	6	0
Cornell	21	0	9	12	0
Chicago	20	4	4	9	3
Oxford	17	0	6	10	1
North Carolina	16	0	15	1	0
Stanford	16	0	7	9	0
John Hopkins	15	0	8	7	0
Harvard	12	0	9	1	2
Duke	8	0	0	8	0
Nebraska	8	0	1	7	0
Yale	8	1	3	4	0
Michigan	6	0	2	4	0
Columbia	4	0	1	3	0
Minnesota	4	0	0	4	0
Norton	4	1	3	0	0
Texas	4	1	0	3	0
6 with 3	18				
11 with 2	22				
54 with 1	54				
TOTAL	333				

For books published simultaneously in the U.S. and elsewhere, only the U.S. publisher is counted. Five books were co-published in the U.S. Thus the total is five greater than the number of prize-winners.

Source: See endnote 4.

of the prize-winning books. Table 3 summarizes the data. California leads the way again with the University of California Press publishing twenty-seven prize-winning books. Interestingly, only one trade publisher, Norton, is in the top eighteen. Two other trade publishers, Hill & Wang and Knopf, had three prize-winners, all in history. Remarkably, Hill & Wang published Linda Kerber's *No Constitutional Right to be Ladies* (1998), which won both the Kelly and Littleton-Griswold Prizes of the AHA; and Knopf published Laura Thatcher Ulrich's *Midwife's Tale*, which won the AHA's Dunning and Kelly prizes.

Other research reported in the library literature offers indicators of the quality of university press publications and those of trade publishers. Edward A. Goedeken found that between 1983 and 1992 the percentage of academic presses whose books received an "Outstanding Academic Book" award from *Choice* rose from 33 to 48 percent of all publishers.<sup>8</sup> In the present study university presses are 47 percent of all publishers whose books won prizes. But this proportion hides the fact that 84 percent of the books receiving prizes are from university presses. In late 1994/early 1995, Paul Metz and John Stemmer asked collection development librarians to rate the quality of sixty-four publishers, including six university presses.<sup>9</sup> Among the six were Cambridge, Oxford, Stanford, and Harvard, which each had twelve or more awards from the humanities associations, far more than any trade publisher. These four had the highest quality rankings. The other two university presses in the Metz/Stemmer study—Oklahoma and State University of New York—each had one prize-winner and their quality rankings are close to those of the trade publishers that won one to three prizes.

### Disciplinary and Cross-Disciplinary Trends

There is evidence that in the closing decades of the twentieth century, literary studies had great influence on other areas of humanities scholarship.<sup>10</sup> This may be true on some levels, but in terms of library acquisitions as seen in OCLC holdings, literature prize-winners are far behind the other disciplines (table 4). Furthermore, there is little recognition of books focusing on literary topics by the prize juries of other disciplines. The College Art Association awarded one of its twenty-two prizes to a book that classed in P-PZ, the Library of Congress (LC) classification for languages and literatures. The American Historical Association also awarded one prize (of 145) to a book that classed in P-PZ. The American Musicological Society awarded none. However, the Modern Language Association gave two prizes each to books in art and musicology and sixteen (11 percent) to books that classed in history (LC classification C-F). This suggests that history may have been having an effect on literary studies, but not the other way around. As for those who contend that the visual arts are taking an increasingly important role in society and scholarship (possibly at the expense of traditional texts), the comparatively strong OCLC holdings for prize-winners in art scholarship suggest this may indeed be true.<sup>11</sup>

**Table 4**  
OCLC Holdings of Prize-winners by Awarding Association

Awarding Association	Average Holdings	Median Holdings	Range of Holdings
AHA	558	433	3 to 2120
CAA	501	514	141 to 828
AMS	501	459	145 to 1232
MLA	367	310	26 to 1130

Source: OCLC, September 1, 2001.



The subject distribution as seen in the LC classification numbers assigned to prize-winners indicates there is a great deal of cross-disciplinary interest in history, but much less to none in other disciplines. In LC classification art is N-NX, history C-F, literature P-PZ, and musicology M-MT. Table 5 shows that a very substantial percentage of prize-winners in history class in social sciences (G-LT). Of these, a slightly higher percentage

**Table 5**  
**Subject Distribution of Prize-winners by Library of Congress Classification**

Awarding Assoc.	Art (N-NX)	History (C-F)	Literature (P-PZ)	Musicology (M-MT)	Social Science (G-LT)	Other
CAA	91%	0	5%	0	0	5%
AHA	1%	48%	1%	1%	41%	9%
MLA	1%	11%	73%	1%	5%	8%
AMS	0	0	0	100%	0	0

Not all row totals equal 100% because of rounding.

Source: OCLC

of books fall into economics (14 percent for HB-HJ) than into sociology (12 percent for HM-HX). The presence of economic topics is striking for some have contended that the quantitative turn in economic history to “cliometrics” lessened the interest in economic history among the larger discipline.<sup>12</sup> Literary prize-winners include about a tenth that class as history and 5 percent social science, but otherwise there is no noteworthy concentration outside the home field. Art prize-winners are almost entirely within the discipline, and musicology prize-winners are entirely within their discipline. Interestingly, more than half of the twenty prize-winners most widely recorded on OCLC classify in history, including one book that won a prize from the MLA

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recorded on OCLC classify in history, including one book that won a prize from the MLA (table 6). Four of the most widely recorded history prize-winners class among the social sciences in the LC classification (with LC classifications of GB, HQ, JK, KF), two in religion (BL, BX); two in music (both ML); and one in literature (PS). All this suggests that among broad areas of humanities scholarship history (C-F) has the greatest potential for large library acquisitions.

**Table 6**  
Publishers of Books with Greatest OCLC Holdings

OCLC Holdings	Publisher	Author	Title	Association Awarding Prize	LC Class	Date
2120	Macmillan	Israel Gutman	<i>Encyclopedia of the Holocaust</i>	AHA	D	1990
2086	Knopf	Laurel Ulrich	<i>Midwife's Tale</i>	AHA	F	1989
1792	Cambridge	Gerhard Weinberg	<i>World at Arms</i>	AHA	D	1994
1767	Norton; New Press	John Dower	<i>Embracing Defeat</i>	AHA	DS	1999
1674	Charles Scribner's	Barbara Tenenbaum	<i>Encyclopedia of Latin American History &amp; Culture</i>	AHA	F	1996
1288	Stanford	Friedrich Katz	<i>Life &amp; Times of Pancho Villa</i>	AHA	F	1998
1232	Harvard	Charles Rosen	<i>Romantic Generation</i>	AMS	ML	1995
1186	Farrar, Strauss, Giroux	Ann Douglas	<i>Terrible Honesty</i>	AHA	F	1995
1180	California	Scott DeVeaux	<i>Birth of Bebop</i>	AMS	ML	1997
1156	Hill & Wang	Linda Kerber <i>to be Ladies</i>	<i>No Constitutional Right</i>	AHA	HQ	1998
1130	Harvard	Eric Sundquist	<i>To Wake the Nations</i>	MLA	PS	1993
1129	Oxford White	G. Edward	<i>Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes</i>	AHA	KF	1993
1065	Oxford	Anthony Appiah	<i>In My Father's House</i>	MLA	DT	1992



1057	Harvard Island Press	Jon Butler Ann Vileisis	<i>Awash in a Sea of Faith</i> <i>Discovering the Unknown Landscape</i>	AHA AHA	BL GB	1990 1997
1031	Knopf	Alan Taylor	<i>William Cooper's Town</i>	AHA	F	1995
1013	Harvard	Richard Ryerson	<i>Adams Papers</i>	AHA	E	1993
979	Harvard	Evelyn Higginbotham	<i>Righteous Discontent</i>	AHA	BX	1993
975	Free Press	James Smith	<i>Idea Brokers</i>	AHA	JK	1991
967	Nebraska	Gary Moulton	<i>Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition</i>	AHA	F	1986

Source: OCLC, September 1, 2001.

### OCLC Holdings of Prize-winners

Trade publications appear to be heavily acquired by libraries. Of the twenty books with the most OCLC holdings, nearly half are from trade publishers (table 6). It is worth mentioning that in terms of OCLC holdings, the very top humanities prize-winners compare well with bestsellers. The top ten mid-decade (1996) bestsellers from infoplease.com averaged 2586 (median 2521) OCLC holdings on September 1, 2001, with a range of 1653 to 3587. Five of the prize-winners fall within this range. However, the typical humanities prize-winner is far from a bestseller: the overall average holdings for all awardees is 463, the median 365. (These numbers include all OCLC records, including those for translations, paperback editions, and the like.) Since most academic libraries belong to OCLC, the data found here reinforce the point that academic publishers can no longer count on substantial sales to academic libraries of any book they produce. Finally, OCLC holdings of prize-winners are in line with findings of John M. Budd and Catherine K. Craven about holdings of humanities titles of *Choice's* Outstanding Academic Books. Budd and Craven found significant declines in acquisitions by almost all sizes of academic libraries between 1984-1985 and 1995 of books in English and American literature and North American history. (The only exception was acquisitions of North American history by the largest libraries.<sup>13</sup>) AHA, AMS, CAA, and MLA prize-winners published in 1992 or earlier average 526 holdings (median 441); those published from 1993 to 1995 average 461 (median 367); from 1996-1998, 432 (median 337). In other words, those figures suggest library holdings have declined roughly 20 percent.

Examination of library holdings of prize-winners suggests that few books have numerous holdings unless there are a substantial number of nonacademic libraries among those holdings. At the same time, the extent of nonacademic library holdings suggests, among other things, how much a book appeals to and is accessible to the general public and how much a publisher markets a book outside the academy. Given that there are more than 330 prize-winners and each is held by an average of more than 460 libraries, the investigator had to limit analysis of nonacademic library holdings to selected books and a restricted group of libraries. (Nonacademic libraries here mean those that are not part of degree-granting institutions.) In selecting books the investigator had two principal questions in mind:

- 1) Did books that had a higher total number of holdings tend to have a higher percentage of nonacademic library holdings?
- 2) Did some fields have a higher percentage of nonacademic library holdings than others?

The investigator also divided the population into eight different levels of holdings with approximately forty books in each level. He then selected at random from each level 1) two trade books from any field; 2) two history and two literature books from university presses; and 3) one CAA and one AMS award winner from any kind of press. (Because trade, CAA, and AMS books could overlap, the number of books for each level could range from six to eight. The total was sixty-three.) If a given kind of book was not available for a particular level, the investigator returned to the unsampled members of

that kind (e.g. all AMS winners) not yet in the sample from the nearest higher level. To estimate the proportion of nonacademic library holdings, the investigator used holdings provided by OCLC's WorldCat for six midwestern states – Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Missouri and Wisconsin. These states include a good mix of urban, suburban, and rural populations and presumably library types. The overall results are depicted by figure 1, which shows that, in general, the larger the number of OCLC holdings, the higher the likelihood many of those holdings will be of non-academic libraries.

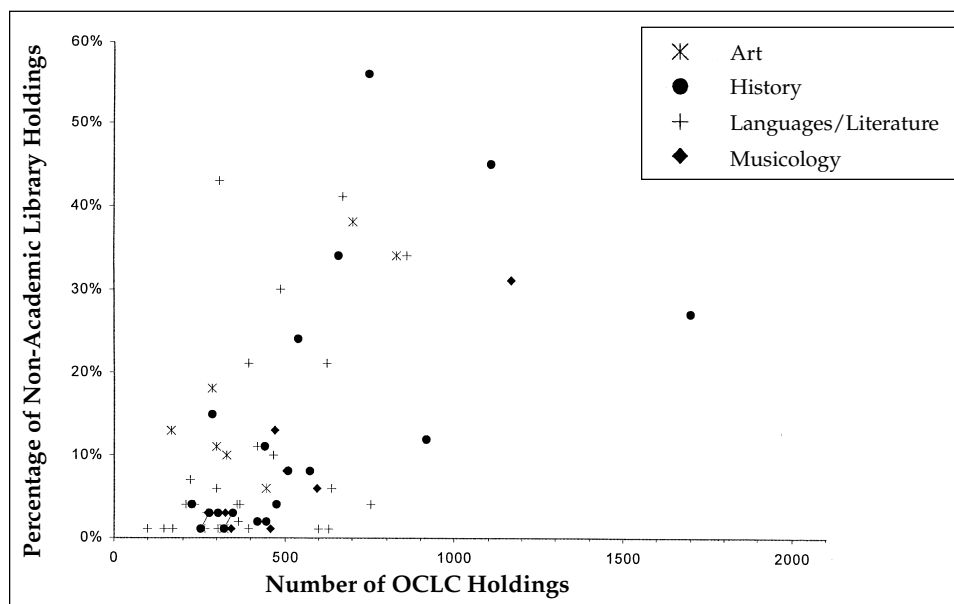


Figure 1. Percentage of Non-Academic Library Holdings on OCLC by Number of Holdings

Furthermore, examination of all books with more than 500 holdings and those with fewer than 400 shows that AHA, AMS, and CAA winners are disproportionately represented among those with greater than 500 holdings; while MLA awardees are disproportionately represented among those with fewer than 400 holdings. AHA books are 44 percent of the population and 56 percent of those with more than 500 holdings; AMS has 4 percent of the population, 5 percent of those with more than 500 holdings; CAA 7 percent of all, 11 percent of those with more than 500 holdings. MLA prize-winners are 45 percent of the population, and 58 percent of those with fewer than 400 holdings.

### Electronic Versions of Prize-winners

OCLC offers data on the availability of books through netLibrary. netLibrary, launched in 1999, then described itself as the "leading provider of eBooks." It aimed to provide "a comprehensive collection of reference, scholarly, and professional electronic books."<sup>14</sup> Overall, 15 percent of the prize-winners were among netLibrary's OCLC holdings on

September 1, 2001. (About a month later netLibrary reported financial distress.<sup>15</sup> In early December 2001, a systematic random sample of fifty of the 328 winning books revealed no titles acquired by netLibrary since September, but, for several already offered by netLibrary, the electronic edition had more OCLC holdings than in September.) Just as the University of California Press had the most prize-winners overall, so too it had the most accessible through netLibrary, twenty-two of its twenty-seven. California had by far the most, as the next greatest was five of the University of North Carolina Press's sixteen. netLibrary also mounted all three of the University of Pennsylvania Press's winners. Otherwise, most presses were represented, if at all on September 1, by just one or two books. Notably missing from the netLibrary collection were publishers that had more than five prize-winners: from Cambridge University Press's twenty-six to the University of Michigan Press's six. (See tables 3 and 7). Also notable among the missing were trade publishers. Among the forty trade prize-winners, only one of Routledge's two awardees was among OCLC holdings for netLibrary.

No AMS or CAA prize-winner was made available by netLibrary, but 15 percent of MLA and 19 percent of AHA winners were. Another way to view the subject distribution of netLibrary is in terms of LC class numbers. Thirty-three percent of prize-win-

**Table 7**  
Publishers Providing Award-Winning Books for netLibrary

Publisher	Number of netLibrary Titles	Number of Prize-winners
California	22	27
North Carolina	5	16
Pennsylvania	3	3
Indiana	2	3
Southern Illinois	2	2
Stanford	2	16
Yale	2	8
Chicago	1	20
Columbia	1	4
Harvard	1	12
Massachusetts	1	1
MIT	1	1
Nebraska	1	8
Oklahoma	1	1
Oxford	1	17
Routledge	1	2
SUNY	1	1
Texas	1	4

Source: OCLC, September 1, 2001

ners class were in LC classification P-PZ (literature); 26 percent in C-F (history); 21 percent in G-LT (social science); 7 percent N-NX (art); 5 percent M-MT (music); and 8 percent all others. (Percentages exceed 100 percent because of rounding.) Table 8 compares percentages of these class groups among all prize-winners with those made available from netLibrary. The most notable difference is that netLibrary did not mount a single book that classes in art (N-NX). Most art books contain a large number of images, and rights to reproduce them are usually held by their owners, not the copyright holder of the book. Perhaps the difficulty of contacting numerous rights holders dissuaded netLibrary from pursuing art books. Besides an absence of art books, literature prize-winners (P-PZ) are underrepresented (33 percent of all prize-winners; 27 percent of netLibrary offerings.) On the other hand, history (C-F) and social science (G-LT) titles are more heavily represented in netLibrary than among the population of prize-winners.

## Table 8

### Prize-winners Available through netLibrary by LC Class

LC Class Range	Percentage of Class among all Prize-winners	Percentage of Class among all netLibrary-available Prize-winners
C-F (history)	26	35
G-LT (social science)	21	29
M-MT (music)	5	2
N-NX (art)	7	0
P-PZ (literature)	33	27
Other	8	8

Column totals may exceed 100% because of rounding.

Source: OCLC.

## Conclusion

Study of prize-winning books from four major scholarly associations in the humanities reinforces some things that are well known, points toward recently identified developments, and offers insight into new phenomena. First, the data confirm there is little co-authorship in the humanities. Second, library holdings of prize-winners declined during the 1990s. Third, most prize-winning scholarship comes from major university presses and the largest, traditionally dominant research universities. Interestingly, there is greater concentration of prize-winners among university presses than there is among universities. And, through all the rankings, the University of California, especially its Berkeley campus and the university's press stand out. Geographically, one might say

that California and the eastern seaboard from Duke to Harvard dominate. Furthermore, except for University of California campuses, private universities outnumber public universities at the top of the prize list.

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**Interestingly, there is greater concentration of prize-winners among university presses than there is among universities.**

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While university press books overwhelm trade books in the total population of prize-winners, trade publishers are exceptionally represented among books with the greatest number of OCLC holdings. Trade books, on the other hand, are almost completely missing from the books that have been made accessible by netLibrary.

Prize-winners from the AHA, AMS, and CAA average greater numbers of OCLC holdings than those from the MLA. History books are preeminent among the most-held prize-winners. History prize-winners include many books with a social science focus (LC classification G-L) and the MLA gave about one-tenth of its prizes to books that class in history (LC classification C-F). Otherwise, most scholarly associations give prizes largely to books that class in their own discipline. (E.g. all AMS winners class in LC classification's M-MT.)

Receipt of a prize from the AHA, AMS, CAA, or MLA is cause for a winning humanist to celebrate, but two key findings of this study are no reason for general celebration among humanists. First, library acquisitions of books, the principal medium of communication in the humanities, appear to be in decline. Second, a major provider of electronic books filed for bankruptcy, and even when financially healthy, it supplied only 15 percent of, arguably, the most important humanities scholarship of the decade.

Certainly leaders in the humanities in the United States are well aware of the importance of making humanities books available online. The American Council of Learned Societies has launched "The History E-Book Project" to provide through the Web digital versions of books published on paper and create born-digital books that take full advantage of current technology.<sup>16</sup> Viewed from the perspective of the present study, the choice of history is wise. History is a larger discipline than art history and musicology—there are 111 ranked history doctoral programs in contrast to thirty-eight for art history and sixty-five for music that includes more than musicology. Literary studies surpasses history in size of discipline (127 doctoral programs for English alone).<sup>17</sup> But, if OCLC holdings are any index, books in literary studies attract a third less interest than do books of history (475 v. 308 median holdings for books in LC classification D-F [history] and P-PZ [literary studies] respectively). In short the size of the field of history and the greater library holdings of its books than those of literary studies suggests history books online will attract larger audiences (and presumably better revenue streams) than books from other humanities disciplines. Furthermore, because history books do not necessarily involve images, they do not generally require the extensive copyright permissions needed by books of art scholarship. The History E-Book Project will need all the advantages it can muster because the health of the scholarly book has declined as academic libraries spend an increasing percentage of their budgets on subscriptions for journals and licenses for electronic resources.





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## Notes

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