

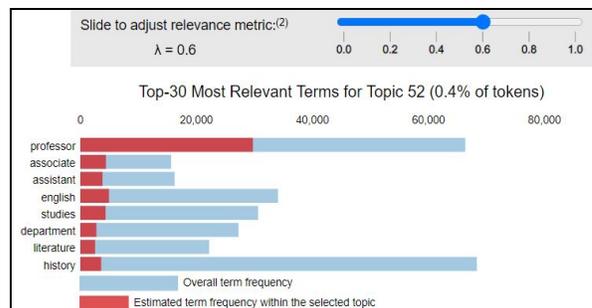
“History” gains more traction in public media discourse outside the academy compared to literature and philosophy.

Out of the three humanities disciplines we examined (history, literature, and philosophy), history seems the most successful at traveling outside the academy and into the public eye. In our topic model [C-1.250](#) of [Collection 1](#), *history* appears as a top word in 25 separate topics, far more than either *literature* (10) or *philosophy* (7). Furthermore, it tends to appear in comparatively more “non-academic” or public-facing topics. The table on the right compares the top topics for these three disciplinary top words, with **academic topics** (conversations largely internal to universities and the academic world) in teal and **non-academic topics** (relating to the public more broadly) in orange.

History is prominent in topics such as [1](#) and [230](#), which center on public lectures, museum exhibits, oral history projects, and announcements of grants and awards. (See also [KF-5-8](#) for how the humanities circulate in public discourse through activities and events.) An analysis of how the term *history* behaves in an academic topic as compared to *literature* reveals further insights. In the graph to the right, which shows top terms for topic [52](#), we can see that *literature* and *history* are both important. However, *history* is proportionally much more frequent in the model overall (represented by the blue bar) than within this particular topic (represented by the red bar). *Literature*, on the other hand, is more uniquely relevant to this topic--but not to the model as a whole. This suggests that in the public view *literature* is more tightly tied to academia, while *history* travels more easily into public discourse.

History		Literature		Philosophy	
Topic #	Label	Topic #	Label	Topic #	Label
1	History awards and announcements	166	Obituaries of writers and literary critics	123	Philosophy of science
230	History grants and events	220	Classics	52	Academic news in student discourse
188	Civil Rights Movement	52	Academic news in student discourse	138	Values in society and education
38	Culture wars	42	Debates on literary theory	220	Classics
202	Archaeology	195	Foreign language education	122	Curriculum changes at universities
52	Academic news in student discourse	196	Book events	25	College majors
86	Humanities grants	210	Writing and errors	42	Debates on literary theory
167	Speeches from National Arts/Humanities Medals	156	Poetry readings and obituaries	Academic topics	
(these are the top 8 topics for history, 25 total)		168	Chronicle of Higher Ed award announcements	Non-academic topics	
		122	Curriculum changes at universities	Co-occurring topics	

Comparison of top topics for history, literature, and philosophy; non-academic topics in orange



Relative uniqueness of terms “literature” and “history” to an academic topic. #52, in [pyLDavis](#)

Document collection studied: [C-1](#) ([start page](#))
 Topic model studied: [C-1.250](#) (250 topics)
 Interesting sample topics: 1, 230, 188, 52
 Evidentiary documentation: Documentation Note [ID# TBD]; [WE1S report](#)