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Altmetric for Books: Informing commissioning and data-driven decisions

Welzenbach, Rebecca; Demers, Elizabeth

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Altmetric for Books: Informing commissioning and data-driven decisions

Rebecca Welzenbach & Elizabeth Demers
Michigan Publishing | University of Michigan Libraries
Who we are:

Rebecca Welzenbach
Research Impact Librarian
University of Michigan Library

Elizabeth Demers
Senior Acquiring Editor for Political and Social Science
University of Michigan Press
The prompt: Focus on how Altmetric data for books can be used by editorial teams to make data-driven decisions.
How editors track engagement with monographs:

- Sales
- Awards
- Reviews
- Course adoptions
- Usage data: Google Analytics, data from aggregator platforms such as Project Muse, JSTOR, EBSCO, etc.
- Altmetric data?
How editors track emerging topics & scholars

● CONFERENCES
● Keeping up with new literature in the field
● Meetings, conversations, word-of-mouth
● Workshops
● Series editors (or journal editors, if applicable)
● Establishing and building on reputation of press & list
What can Altmetric data contribute to acquisitions work?
What's not really working (for us) (right now):

Tracking Altmetric engagement data for any given recently published title and using that data to inform strategy about what to acquire in the future.
Why not?

TIME is the most meaningful factor in all of this:

- Meaningful attention takes a long time to communicate
- Books take a long time to acquire and publish
- Insufficient differentiation among books? The most salient variable in terms of how much engagement they have, and which other books have comparable, is when they were published.
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What seems to be working:

Identifying timelessness. Altmetric data gives us valuable insights into how deep backlist titles continue to have an active, engaged life on the web. Especially interesting to our editors: representation on syllabi!
What we haven't tried -- yet!

Looking beyond Altmetric data on our own books--making use of the Altmetric Explorer to, well, explore what is getting attention in our disciplinary areas of strength.
Showing 4,154 research outputs from the results of your search query. Of those, 4,154 have been mentioned.

**Science Denial Across the Political Divide**
Article in *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, September 2017

**Exposure to opposing views on social media can increase political polarization**
Article in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, August 2018

**Does Media Coverage Drive Public Opinion?**
Article in *British Journal of Political Science*

**The Partisan Brain: An Identity-Based Model of Political Belief**
Article in *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, February 2018

**The Jackie (and Jill) Robinson Effect: Why Do Congresswomen Outperform...**
Article in *American Journal of Political Science*, April 2011

**The effect of partisanship and political ideology on close family ties**
Article in *Science*, May 2018

**Gendered Citation Patterns across Political Science and Social Science...**
Article in *Political Analysis*, July 2018

**Gender Bias in Student Evaluations**
Article in *PS, Political Science & Politics*, March 2018

**The science of being 'nice': how politicians can foster public support from compassion and empathy**
News story in *The Conversation*, August 2020

**Explaining the Trump Vote: The Effect of Racist Resentment and Anti-Immigrant...**
Article in *PS, Political Science & Politics*, April 2018

**Neutralizing the Effect of Political Worldviews by Communicating Scientific...**
Article in *Science Communication*, May 2018

**Bias in Perceptions of Public Opinion Elites**
Article in *American Political Science Review*
Altmetrics can help book publishers find interest in backlist titles, which can inform promotional strategies.

Not all altmetrics are equally valuable to university presses. The most valuable data are: monographs mentioned in syllabi, citations in public policy documents and social media discussions.

Journals are well-positioned to take advantage of altmetrics as journals have faster publication times, when compared to monographs, and journal platforms are designed in a way that makes it relatively easy to track altmetrics.

Last, but definitely not least: Good metadata is critical, and in the final section of the paper we are proposing some best practices for sharing metadata in a press website.
Conclusions

- **Monographs are still slow.** Even though Altmetric data can accumulate more quickly than citations, meaningful data accumulates too slowly, and books take too long to publish, for engagement with any given title to inform the next strategic acquisitions decision.

- **Altmetric data can signal timelessness/endurance.** Altmetric data, amazingly, tells us a lot about ongoing use of and engagement with deep backlist titles that perhaps we ought to pay some attention to!

- **There’s value to be mined well beyond data about the books you publish.** We could be doing more with Altmetric Explorer to supplement what acquisitions editors already do to track emerging trends and scholars. But we haven’t really tried this yet.