

Post-1923 Public Domain

When dealing with the HathiTrust public domain volumes, the makeup of the collection changes drastically. This is because US copyright law makes it difficult to ascertain rights post-1923, resulting in representation biases. There are proportionally less public domain works approaching the present day, but the drop-off is much quicker in some categories than others. For a valid understanding of the collection, one shouldn't compare pre-1923 and 1923-subsets of the public domain collection without additional context.

Figure: Proportion (in %) of collection represented by each LC Class, by Year. 1923 is marked with a vertical line.

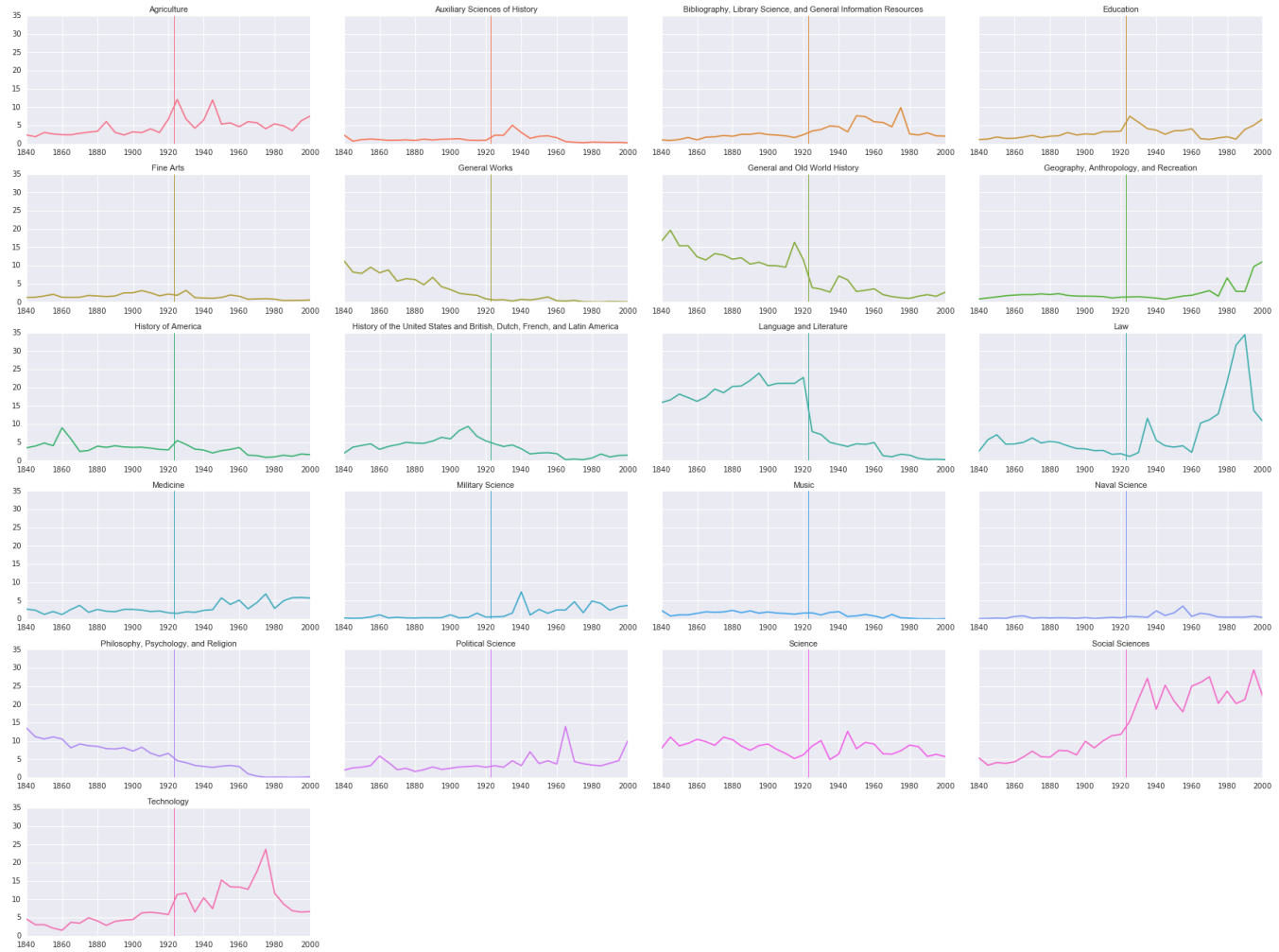


Table: Library of Congress class distributions for Public Domain data, in % of Collection

Library of Congress Class	pre-1923	1923-	Difference
Language and Literature	9.58%	1.84%	-7.74%
General and Old World History	6.02%	1.63%	-4.39%
Science	4.04%	4.31%	0.27%
Philosophy, Psychology, and Religion	4.01%	1.06%	-2.95%
Social Sciences	3.53%	12.01%	8.47%
General Works	2.74%	0.25%	-2.49%
History of the United States and British, Dutch, French, and Latin America	2.53%	1.06%	-1.47%

Law	2.34%	5.67%	3.33%
Technology	2.06%	6.47%	4.41%
History of America	1.75%	1.30%	-0.45%
Political Science	1.70%	2.45%	0.75%
Agriculture	1.48%	3.93%	2.45%
Education	1.22%	1.79%	0.57%
Medicine	1.06%	2.12%	1.06%
Bibliography, Library Science, and General Information Resources	1.01%	2.63%	1.62%
Fine Arts	0.97%	0.65%	-0.33%
Music	0.87%	0.46%	-0.41%
Geography, Anthropology, and Recreation	0.77%	1.38%	0.61%
Auxiliary Sciences of History	0.54%	0.81%	0.27%
Military Science	0.31%	1.49%	1.18%
Naval Science	0.16%	0.59%	0.42%

(HT PD-only, Spring 2015)