

Editorial

InterDisciplines – Journal of History and Sociology

Another journal for History and Sociology? Are there not plenty of established periodicals to provide a forum for discussions between historians and social scientists? Is the dialogue between the two disciplines really so vibrant that the scientific community needs another journal?

Looking at the current state of history and the social sciences, the proposition of interdisciplinarity has lost the revolutionary appeal of its heydays in the 1960s and 1970s. Today, historians take notice and make use of theories from the social sciences, and even the strongest advocates of quantitative social research basically accept that social facts are embedded in historical contexts. But while a reciprocal acknowledgement via footnotes is firmly established, actual collaboration in research projects, conferences and seminars is still rare. The respective attempts reveal that the interdisciplinary dialogue is fraught with difficulties and still challenging. Both disciplines have their own sets of questions, theories and methods, routines and loyalties, and this in turn makes a real engagement costly and potentially frustrating.

InterDisciplines recognizes the risks of interdisciplinarity but is convinced that a mutually irritating dialogue will lead to advanced results. *InterDisciplines* understands that institutions are required to make this happen, and that is why it supports research at the interface of history and the social sciences, featuring joint issues, articles and discussions.

As an online publication, it offers the speed that primarily project-based interdisciplinary work requires. Moreover, it provides opportunities to explore new forms of presenting findings as well as documents and data. Publishing films and audio-sources, images and tables that would have to be left out of a printed journal, *InterDisciplines* remains sensitive to the important interdisciplinary issue of how history and the social sciences

generate and organize knowledge. The online publication and analysis of images, statistics, audio- and video sources as well as intermediate data might also provide the opportunity to reflect upon the working process of the publication and the performativity of our sources and work material.

The international exchange of doctoral students and scientists is common practise today. An online journal offers the best opportunity to publish research results of multinational cooperations. In general, online publications have a wide outreach. This, together with its open-access policy, makes *InterDisciplines* available for researchers interested in and willing to contribute to interdisciplinary exchange.

Many features of the Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology have been incorporated into the concept of the journal, like interdisciplinary cooperation, international exchange and outlook, a critical, vivid and creative research atmosphere, soft disciplinary boundaries and flattened hierarchies. In this sense, *InterDisciplines* is a showcase for the graduate school. At the same time and like the school itself, *InterDisciplines* wants to attract new talents and give these researchers the opportunity to test their ideas and findings in the environment of a peer-reviewed journal.

In short

InterDisciplines is dedicated to work at the interface between history and the social sciences and to research discussing the relation of these disciplines. The journal's aim is to identify differences as well as the relation and interconnections between the disciplines, with a focus on areas where they can complement each other with respect to specific research problems. The journal is also open for related neighboring disciplines. First and foremost, the journal addresses historians and sociologists but also aims to appeal to a wider audience of interested scientists and students who are committed to interdisciplinary debate and exchange.

InterDisciplines publishes historical case studies that discuss theoretical and methodological issues from the humanities, the social and cultural sciences or articles that reflect on questions concerning the relation between the disciplines. It invites survey articles from the whole range of historical and sociological research as well as programmatic texts on basic questions of the cooperation between history and sociology. It presents empirical studies at the interface of history and sociology and research projects of current relevance.

InterDisciplines offers guest editors the possibility to publish themed issues covering a specific topic in more depth. All those who are interested are invited to submit proposals. The editing of the articles will be done in Bielefeld.

Generally, *InterDisciplines* will appear twice a year, with at least one themed issue per year.

InterDisciplines addresses an international audience and will be published in English.

InterDisciplines will be available on the internet free of charge. The e-journal offers readers easy access and is an ideal place for up-to-date discussions.

InterDisciplines is edited by the directors of the Bielefeld Graduate School in History and Sociology, Jörg Bergmann, Alfons Bora and Thomas Welskopp, as well as Peter Jelavich, Professor in the Department of History, Johns Hopkins University (Baltimore) and Kathleen Thelen, Professor of Political Science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Cambridge, Mass.) All submissions will be blind refereed by two peers.