

History 333 – Popular Culture in Nineteenth Century Canada

For this particular assignment, you are required to use a combination of primary and secondary sources to examine a particular event in Canadian history. Your ultimate goal is to determine the value and viability of the newspaper as a source for historical research.

To complete this assignment, you will have to take a two-pronged approach. You must locate books, periodical articles, or Web resources that will supplement your thesis and knowledge of the historical events. Additionally, you must use historical newspaper articles that discuss a particular event and demonstrate how they contribute to the understanding of the event.

LOCATING HISTORICAL NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

For this assignment, you are required to use historical newspaper articles. There are a number of ways to locate these.

LOCAL ARTICLES.

At the local level, you will be required to use the *Medicine Hat Times/News*. These resources are housed in the Vera Bracken Library's Microfilm Collection. This means that you will have to use special readers to print and review the articles.

Unfortunately, not all articles are indexed – you will have to scan the paper for related articles. Roy Wilson's *Medicine Hat Times/News 1885-1905* (Reference Collection; Call #: FC 3699 M4 W52 1987) has indexed some articles, but this resource might not be sufficient for your needs.

REGIONAL NEWSPAPERS.

To locate articles in regional papers, consider creating an account at *Paper of Record* (www.paperofrecord.com). This site contains a wide variety of free, full-text, searchable regional newspapers in Canada and internationally. There are other subscription services available via the Web. Like any subscription service, they do cost money, but free trials might be available. [NOTE: Paper of Record is no longer available – it was acquired by Google.]

Other sources for regional newspapers are regional online archives, such as *Our Future, Our Past: The Alberta Heritage Digitization Project* (<http://www.ourfutureourpast.ca/>). This resource contains a number of local Alberta newspapers that were published in the late 1800s.

To locate regional archives, perform a Web search (using Google, Yahoo, etc.) and use terms such as: archive, repository, collection, library, digitization, and records; combine those terms with regional terminology (e.g., British Columbia, Ontario, Nova Scotia, etc.). Some municipalities (e.g., Montreal and Toronto) will also have online archives – though newspapers are not always part of their collections.

NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS.

You have access to *The Globe and Mail: Canada's Heritage from 1844* database – formerly known as *The Globe*. This database provides full-text, searchable newspapers from 1844-2003. To access this resource, go to: <http://www.mhc.ab.ca/library/databases/newspapers.html> – review the access instructions, and ask for help for the Information Desk if you need assistance.

Information did not travel as fast or widely as it does now. In some cases, you might have to browse days, weeks, or months passed the initial date for articles.

BROWSE/PAN & SCAN FOR ARTICLES

As good as the newspaper search engines are they are not foolproof! You might have to browse the pages and manually scan for articles – whether on microforms or PDFs. If you have to browse, look for articles anywhere from 1 day to 1 year (or more) after the event occurred.

SEARCH TERMS FOR LOCATING ARTICLES/BOOKS

It is relatively easy to locate articles and books – whether they are located in the library (in electronic or print formats) or through the World Wide Web. In either instance, you will need to employ a series of terms that will help you locate the materials.

Keywords that you should consider employing to locate general sources include:

- ~ history, historical, histor* (= anything that begins with “histor”, but can end with anything else; the asterisk (*) is called a truncation symbol), past, record, “olden days”, past, etc.
- ~ newspaper, newspapers, newspaper*, paper, broadsheet, tabloid, daily, weekly, etc.
- ~ research, study, investigation, inquiry, etc.

Combine terms from each of the three preceding categories to help you narrow your search.

It is important to note that there is more than one way to describe anything, so mix and match your terms to yield the best possible search results.

In the library’s online catalogue (<http://darius.uleth.ca/search~S2>), use the word AND to connect terms from one list to another when employing a keyword search to find print resources in the library.

If you cannot find enough information in the library’s print resources, use the databases/online periodical indexes (<http://www.mhc.ab.ca/library/databases/>). Databases that you might want to use include:

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| ~ any under the <i>General/Multidisciplinary</i> heading | ~ any under the <i>Canadian Studies</i> heading (with the possible exception of <i>E-STAT</i>) |
| ~ any under the <i>English (Language and Literature)</i> heading | ~ any under the <i>Political Science</i> heading |

You might need to use the Interlibrary Loan Service (http://darius.uleth.ca/screens/illreq_s2.html) to order articles that are not full-text in the database or library.

Online search engines (i.e., A9, Google, Yahoo, etc.) do not require you to use AND to connect terms – those search tools assume that for you.

SEARCHING FOR HISTORICAL SECONDARY RESOURCES

All of the books in this particular assignment are centered in the midst of historical and political events. If you are unfamiliar with the general events of a particular era, consider employing a bibliographic dictionary (“Who’s Who” books), chronologies, or encyclopedias. From these types of sources, principle events, movements, and figures in particular eras can become more apparent.

Regardless of the search tool you employ, whether it is the library’s online catalogue, databases or Web search engines, you will need to locate historical resources to subjectively evaluate the accuracy of the books that you are reviewing.

You should consider the events, people and places that are depicted or mentioned in the book – context is all-important. Some names that some of you might consider employing include:

- ~ Irwin, May (Campbell, Ada May)
- ~ Riel, Louis
- ~ Macdonald, John [A.]
- ~ Laurier, Wilfred
- ~ Conservative [party]
- ~ Donnelly, James (of the “Black Donnellys”)
- ~ Hanlan, Edward “Ned”

Also consider employing geographic or event names, either singularly or in combination with a historic figure, to help define the dates and events mention in the books. Some terms for events that you could employ include:

- ~ trial of Louis Riel (1 August 1885)
- ~ the Donnelly murders (4 February 1880)
- ~ execution of Louis Riel (15 November 1885)
- ~ 8th General Election (23 June 1896)
- ~ reelection of John A. Macdonald (7th General Election; 5 March 1891)
- ~ John A. Macdonald’s death (6 June 1891)
- ~ *The Kiss* (a.k.a., *The May Irwin Kiss, or The May Irwin-John Rice Kiss*) projected in West End Park, Ottawa (21 July 1896)

GETTING STARTED – SOME ONLINE NEWSPAPER SOURCES & CHECKLISTS

- ~ *British Colonist*, 1858-1910 (Victoria, British Columbia)
<http://britishcolonist.ca> (via University of Victoria)
- ~ Google News Archive
<http://news.google.com/archivesearch/>
Some free and pay-per-article historical newspapers.
- ~ *Manitobia, Life and Times*
<http://manitobia.ca/cocoon/launch/en/newspapers>
A variety of Manitoba-based newspapers from various years.
- ~ *Our Future Our Past*
<http://www.ourfutureourpast.ca/newspapr/>
A digital archive of Alberta-based newspapers from as early as 1885.
- ~ *Saskatchewan News Index*
<http://library2.usask.ca/sni/>
Indexing and some full-text transcriptions of major events in Saskatchewan newspapers.
- ~ *Twillingate Sun*, 1880-1953 (Twillingate, Newfoundland)
http://collections.mun.ca/cdm4/browse.php?CISOROOT=%2Fmha_twill
From the Memorial University’s Digital Archive Initiative.
- ~ A list of online archive via the *British Columbia International Digital Library*.
<http://bcdlib.tc.ca/links-subjects-newspapers.html>

Still not sure of what Canadian Newspapers are available? Check out the *Checklist of Indexes to Canadian Newspapers Held by Library and Archives Canada*, this will give you an idea of the newspapers that could be out there – <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/8/12/index-e.html>.