American Cultural History
History 390

Consider Resources

Primary Resources: diaries, letters, speeches, newspaper articles, documents, photos
Secondary Resources: books, journal articles (scholarly vs. popular), theses, the Web

Check subject guide under: Research by Subject → History → by Region → American

Find Background Information

The following titles are shelved in the Stauffer Library Reference collection unless stated.

- Album of American History E178 .A2 A (5 volumes; Stauffer - Books)
- A Companion to American Cultural History E169.1 .C684 2008 (and Online)
- A Dictionary of American History REF E174 .A2 (and Online)
- Oxford Companion to United States History (Online)

Find Primary Sources

For general information about primary sources, go to: Research by Subject → Primary Sources

The primary source material in Stauffer Library will vary from topic to topic. It may be a diary, correspondence, letters, newspaper accounts, a law, a debate in Congress, editorials, a photo, etc. from the period of study, as well as electronic, microfilm, and printed collections of these documents published at a later date.

1. Use QCAT

The Library catalogue is a good place to start your search for primary source materials. Search QCAT to find books and magazine/newspaper titles from the time period about which you are writing, as well as published documents and collections. To find newspaper and journal articles, see Indexes below.

A. Search by Subject or Keyword

You can locate items in the library by searching QCAT by doing a keyword Boolean search and then adding one of the special subject terms to your search: correspondence, diaries, interviews, pamphlets, personal narratives, sources ...

"united states" and (social or society) and sources
"civil rights" and "united states" and sources
"world war" and diaries
Also browse subject headings and look for these special subject terms.

- Women--United States--History--Sources
- Women--United States--Social conditions--Sources
- World War, 1939-1945--Personal narratives

Collections of primary sources often have the word documents or papers in the title.

documents and "united states" and social and history

B. Look up Historical Figures, Organizations, and Agencies...

If you know of a person involved in the event or from the time period, look under that person’s name as an author (or subject) for memoirs, diaries, and correspondence. For example:

- king martin luther
- roosevelt franklin

Look up groups or organizations as an author (or subject).

- United States Congress

2. Use Journal and Newspaper Indexes Covering the Time Period

Newspapers are a good source of primary information. Stauffer Library has a few American newspapers from the 20th century on microfilm (located on the lower level).

To find out what newspapers the Library has, search QCAT by newspaper title or search by subject heading:

- boston mass newspapers
- new york n.y. newspapers

We have access to the following full text electronic newspapers via the link, Databases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
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<tr>
<td>Atlanta Constitution</td>
<td>1868-1945</td>
<td>Hartford Courant</td>
<td>1764-1985</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boston Globe</td>
<td>1872-1927</td>
<td>Los Angeles Times</td>
<td>1881-1987</td>
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<td>Chicago Tribune</td>
<td>1849-1987</td>
<td>Toronto Star</td>
<td>1894 to 3-4 yrs. ago</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Globe and Mail</td>
<td>1844 to 3-4 yrs. ago</td>
<td>Washington Post</td>
<td>1877-1994</td>
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For more information and other newspaper websites, check our Newspapers subject guide at:

Research by Subject → Newspapers
Periodicals published at the time are another type of primary source. To locate 20th century periodical literature, consult the following indexes:

**Humanities and Social Sciences Index Retrospective (Online)**
- Indexing of articles as far back as 1907 to 1984 and covering a broad range of subjects, including art, family studies, music, performing arts and more.

**JSTOR**
- A full text archive of core scholarly journal literature in the social sciences and humanities dating back to the 1850s.

**PAIS: 1915 - present (Online)**
- Covering all aspects of global public policy issues, public health, environment, housing, human and civil rights.

**Periodicals Archive Online**
- Facsimile page page images and searchable full-text for approximately 500 international and scholarly journals in the humanities and social sciences from 1802-1995.


**Some Popular Magazine Titles from the Time Period:**

- *Advertising Age*, 1950- on microfilm
- *Ebony*, 1955- on microfilm
- *Fortune*, 1930-1965 in print and on microfilm from 1960-
- *Harpers*, 1850-1988 in print and online from 1900-
- *Ladies Home Journal*, 1889-1914 in print (incomplete)
- *Life*, 1951-1972 in print and on microfilm from 1936-1950
- *Maclean's*, 1921- in print and on microfilm from 1905-
- *The Nation*, 1891-1965 in print and on microfilm from 1966-
- *New Republic*, 1914- online
- *New Yorker*, 1925- online
- *Newsweek*, 1947- on microfilm
- *Saturday Evening Post*, 1931- online
- *Saturday Night*, 1887-2000 on microfilm
- *Sports Illustrated*, 1954- online and on microfilm
- *Time*, 1923- on microfilm

**3. Use Government Documents**

Publications generated by a government body, public records, reports and statistics are excellent sources of primary materials. Reference assistance is available Monday through Friday from 2-4 p.m. or by appointment. You can also contact Jeff Moon at moonj@queensu.ca.

For information about the American congressional and legislative documents, check the web page
at: library.queensu.ca/webdoc/guides/uslegislative.htm

4. Search the Center for Research Libraries

For information about CRL and how to borrow resources, go to:

Research by Subject  →  Center for Research Libraries
This rich resource library holds over 4 million books, journals, newspapers and other primary source materials from all over the world.

CRL publishes topical guides, which gather in one place sources on a particular subject at:

www.crl.edu/collections/topics/

Check the United States History guide at:

www.crl.edu/collections/topics/united-states-history

5. Search the Web

To search the web for primary source collections, do an “Advanced Search” in Google:

“primary sources” women rights “united states” site:edu

Primary source materials and related websites can be freely searched on the Web as well as the links below that lead you to websites for which the Library pays.

Access the following via the Databases tab:

- Black Thought and Culture: African Americans from Colonial Times to the Present
- In the First Person: Index to Letters, Diaries, Oral Histories, and Other Personal Narratives
- North American Immigrant Letters, Diaries and Oral Histories
- North American Women’s Letters and Diaries
- Oral History Online
- Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600-2000

Some websites provide access to online versions of primary sources which may be digitized images, facsimiles or full text. See below for a selection of websites:

Ad*Access  library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/adaccess/
A collection of over 7,000 ads from the period 1911-1955

Amdocs: Documents for the Study of American History  www.vlib.us/amdocs/
Primary source documents, includes inaugural addresses, diaries, letters, speeches...

American Memory  memory.loc.gov/ammem/
Collections of primary source and archival materials relating to American culture and history.

American Women  memory.loc.gov/ammem/awhtml/
American Social and Cultural History (Smithsonian Institution)  
www.si.edu/encyclopedia_si/nmah/

Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy  avalon.law.yale.edu/

A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation: U.S. Congressional Documents and Debates  
lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lawhome.html

Digital History  www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/

Duke University Digital Collections  library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/#by-subject

Emergence of Advertising in America  library.duke.edu/digitalcollections/eaai/

History Online  www.history.ac.uk/ihr/Resources/Type/primary.html

This database links to hundreds of history Web sites, many of which contain primary sources. Browse, or search by keyword and limit by time period.

Internet History Sourcebooks Project  www.fordham.edu/halsall/

A collection of primary source documents from ancient to modern times, such as:

Internet Modern History Sourcebook  www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook.html

Modern Social Movements  www.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/modsbook56.asp

The library subscribes to a growing number of electronic databases that include primary source materials. For more information, check the American History: Primary Sources subject guide.

**Find Secondary Sources**

1. Books

To find books on your topic in QCAT, think of the words that best describe your topic and then connect them with Boolean operators: **AND, OR, NOT**.

For a selection of books on American culture during the Cold War, try this search:

```
culture and "cold war" and ("united states" or American)  Search by: Keyword Boolean
```

Select useful titles and look at the subject headings. Use them to provide more keyword ideas or as individual searches themselves.

```
(culture or civilization) and "united states" and "cold war"
```

**Search by Subject**

Relevant subject headings for this topic:

- Cold war in mass media
- Cold war--Influence

**Note the sub-headings, e.g. History...**
Cold war-- Social aspects--United States
Politics and culture--United States--20th century
Popular culture--United States--History--20th century
United States--Civilization--1945-
United States--Intellectual life--20th century

Other useful subject headings for an overview of the historical period include:

United States--Economic conditions--1945-
United States--History--1939-1945
United States--Politics and government--1865-1933
United States--Social life and customs--1918-1945
United States--Social conditions--1960-1980

2. E-Books

The library subscribes to a number of e-book packages. Packages that are of interest to history students are: ACLS Humanities E-Book, Blackwell Reference Online, Cambridge Histories Online, Canadian Electronic Library, Oxford handbooks Online and Scholar Portal Books.

Records for these e-books are in QCAT or Summon but one can directly go to these e-books packages and search them. Access is via Databases.

3. Articles

Use the following electronic journal database to find scholarly articles:

→ America: History and Life: 1954 - present

Also Useful: → Historical Abstracts: 1954-
→ Humanities & Social Sciences Retrospective Index: 1907-1984
→ PAIS: 1915-
→ Readers’ Guide to Periodical Literature: 1900- (REF AI3.R2)
→ Religion Database: 1949-

To search indexes, click the tab Databases and enter the title of the database.

America: History and Life covers the history of Canada and the United States from prehistoric times - present. It indexes articles from 1,700 journals, selected books and dissertations.

Search: advertising and women
Limit your Results: Year: 1939 AD to Year: 1946 (AD)
Modify to search other Subject Terms: women in popular culture

To find out if Queen's subscribes to the journal, click Get It! @ Queen's if full text not readily available.
Journals

Queen's Library subscribes to about 90,000 full text e-journals via various publishers' packages. Search QCAT or Journals A to Z to find specific titles.

One collection that is of particular interest to history students is JSTOR, a digitized collection of articles from key periodicals, excluding the most current 2 to 5 years of a title. Access JSTOR via the tab, Databases.

4. Summon

With Summon, you can search, discover and access information on any topic from the Queen's Library collections - print and electronic books, single articles to entire e-journals, newspapers, theses and more.

You can limit your results to peer-reviewed materials, filter by year and format, narrow by additional subject terms and then save, print or email references.

Summon is a good starting point to find material for your research but if you are doing higher level research, you will want to search relevant subject specific databases.

Search Other Library Catalogues

If you don't find what you need in QCAT and Summon, try searching other library catalogues, using WorldCat, a database of library catalogues around the world. It can help you identify materials in other libraries, which you may then request through Interlibrary Loan. To access, click on Find Information and then on Other Library Catalogues.

Request an Interlibrary Loan

Use interlibrary loan (ILL) to obtain loans or copies of items that Queen's libraries do not own. Click RACER on the library homepage. For more information, consult the brochure: RACER, Our Interlibrary Loan System.

Search the Web

Check our Search the Web guide: library.queensu.ca/research/guide/search-web

Try searching:

Google Advanced Search www.google.ca/advanced_search
...offers a variety of ways to structure a more precise search and improve the efficiency of your search results.

Google Scholar scholar.google.ca/
... searches for scholarly materials including journal articles, theses, books, preprints, abstracts and technical reports from broad areas of research.
TIP:
By searching Google Scholar through the Queen’s Library website, the "Get It! @ Queen’s" citation linker is activated (which allows you to click through to the Library’s subscriptions). To import citations into RefWorks choose Scholar Preferences, then Bibliography Manager. Select RefWorks. Save Preferences.

For assistance on writing a historiographical paper, check our guide at:

Research by Subject → History → Course Guides → Writing a Historiographical Paper

Evaluate Websites

Anyone can create a webpage so it is particularly important to analyze and assess information that you find on the Web before using it in a research paper.

Go to our Evaluating Web Sources page for a checklist of points to consider when analyzing a webpage:

How-to & Help → How-To Guides → Finding … → Web: Evaluate

Evaluate Sources

Evaluating all of your sources is a crucial step of the research process. Go to our Evaluating Sources page for criteria on how to judge information sources.

Cite Sources

Check our Citation and Style Guides page at: How-to & Help → How to Cite Sources

Chicago is the preferred style of documentation in history. Check QCAT for print copies in the library system. Also available online, via Databases.

Since there are many different citation styles, always check with your instructors to determine which style is expected for your courses.

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