

# Research essay Instructions

HIST 2600 AMERICAN HISTORY

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You will write a research paper of **12 double-spaced pages** in length (not including notes and using standard 1” margins and 12 pt. font). **Your paper is due online (via the link in Moodle) on Friday 26 February 2021.**

Researching and writing this paper will provide you with an opportunity to explore in depth a topic that is of interest to you. The **choice of topic is yours**, though your essay topic **must clearly focus on American History**. Additionally, *you cannot write on the same topic you chose for essay 1.*

For this paper, you will be required to do research and writing using primary and secondary sources. You must **use at least six primary and three secondary sources** for your paper. If they are relevant to your topic, you may include any of primary sources from the course, but must also use sources outside of the course materials. (That is, all of your sources cannot come from the assigned course materials.) Our course textbook, *Give Me Liberty*, can be used for background, but it (and other similar textbooks) cannot be used as one of your essay’s sources.

In writing your paper, **please follow the (mandatory) style guidelines outlined in the “Writing Guidelines for History Essays”** that I have posted on Moodle. As always, your essay should have a clear introduction that ends with your thesis (a succinct statement, preferably one sentence, of your overall argument); a well-organized body, including logically-placed supporting arguments/points and paragraphs with strong topic sentences; and a clear conclusion that briefly reviews the main arguments of the paper and restates the thesis.

Your paper will be graded using Turnitin Feedback Studio, an online grading program attached to Moodle. When your tutorial leader has graded your essay, you can check your detailed feedback and see comments on the paper by going back to the Turnitin page using the same link you used to submit the paper.

## HOW TO BEGIN

Like your first paper, this longer essay requires you to be the historian. The purpose of this research essay is to allow you to learn, practice, and display your skills in original historical research and interpretation.

After selecting your topic, you should **come up with a research question** to guide your investigation of the materials. Begin with something fairly broad or general that you can narrow down as you go along. Do not come up with your thesis before you do your research! You may have an idea of what you want to say, but think of it as a hypothesis that you will test by doing your research. Your arguments should be based on analysis of the primary sources, especially, but also your secondary sources.

To write your own analysis of your subject, you will need to do a careful, critical reading of your sources and then use those sources to make your own argument. The judgments and interpretations you make of the individual primary documents and secondary sources that you read are the first steps towards formulating your own approach and argument on the topic.

## KNOW YOUR SOURCES

In case you're (still!) uncertain about which sources are primary and which are secondary, here's a quick refresher:

**Primary sources** are:

- first-hand accounts of an historical event or a person's life or work
- original documents, records, data created at the time of a particular historical event
- documents created later by a participant or eyewitness to an historical event (e.g. autobiographies or memoirs)
- raw data

Letters, autobiographies, contemporary newspaper articles, posters, diaries, archival materials, and photographs are examples of primary sources. Primary sources can be in their original format or reproduced in a different format (e.g. book, microfilm, or on the Internet).

**Secondary sources** are:

- works (books, journal articles) written later about a subject
- usually written by those who were not participants or eyewitnesses to the historical event
- works that interpret, analyze and debate primary sources

## HOW TO ANALYZE PRIMARY SOURCES

Document analysis is a key skill in historical interpretation. A research essay is not merely a summary or description of the contents of primary documents (defined broadly as any type of historical source, including written documents, paintings, photographs, sound recordings, films, etc.). Instead, your essay should synthesize your conclusions and analyses of your individual primary sources to draw larger conclusions about them and your subject. In interpreting documents, you are seeking to **analyze the motivations, intents, and purposes of the documents within a particular historical context**.

Analysis of documents should focus on *both the texts themselves* (with attention to the specifics and nuances of language and/or imagery used) *and the context* (the broader picture of the history of that period that informed the documents' creation and reception). It is this dual approach that separates the methods of historians from those of other disciplines, such as literary criticism or other social sciences (e.g. sociology or political science).

In analyzing a primary source, you should **concentrate on discovering both the meaning and significance of the source as a piece of historical evidence**. In analyzing the *meaning*, you are trying to understand what the intention of the document was and how it might have been understood by the historical actors in that era. An analysis of the *significance* focuses on the source's importance or impact within its historical context, what it illustrates about the period in which it was produced, and how the evidence contributes to a particular interpretation of past.

Good historians are always making connections or finding relationships between the historical evidence they discover and the existing scholarship on the topic. In a similar fashion, *you will should draw upon the secondary sources* (articles or excerpts of books written after the events in question, usually by non-participants, especially historians) to help you analyze the meaning as well as the larger context and significance of your documents for your topic.

As much as possible, **you should make the primary sources the central sources of your paper**. That is, you should tell your story and build your argument or case largely based on the primary documents. Use the secondary sources to contextualize what you find in the primary sources and to provide further insights and fill in gaps.

### Examples of Questions to ask when analyzing a Primary Source

(Note that your essay must not simply be an answer to this list of questions. It should be an essay, i.e. an extended analytical argument about the source.)

#### 1. *What is the nature of the source?*

- What type of source is it?

- Where and when was the source produced?
- Who was the author and what was his/her position?
- Does it provide information about experience, ideology, and/or behaviour?
- Is it prescriptive, i.e. does it tell people how to behave (e.g. sermons, guide books, etc.)?
- Or is it evidence of lived experience (e.g. oral history interviews, autobiographies, letters, diaries)?
- Does it tell you about ordinary people or elites?

## 2. *Who is/was the intended audience?*

- Was the source produced for public consumption?
- Or was it originally intended to be private?
- How might this affect the presentation of the material and your understanding of it?

## 3. *What is the meaning of the source?*

- What was the purpose of the source? Why was it created?
- What does a close reading of the source tell you about the author's intentions?
- How does the source construct meaning through language, visual imagery, or music?
- What important metaphors and symbols does it use?
- Is the source accurate? Does it contain deliberate distortions or omissions?
- What silences are there in the source? What does the author leave out that is important?

## 4. *What is the historical significance of the source (is it significant?)?*

- What larger questions can you address by using the source?
- What questions can't be answered?
- What other sources could be used to supplement this one?

## DOING YOUR RESEARCH

Make sure that your secondary sources are authoritative and reliable. You'll *find the most reliable sources in the library's catalogue of books and journal articles*. **Do not use general internet websites or encyclopedias to write your papers** (esp. Wikipedia and other online encyclopedias). In addition, do not use encyclopedias, dictionaries, or general textbooks (e.g. *The Enduring Vision, Give Me Liberty!, America and Its Peoples*, etc.).

There are also many excellent research guides and help available on the library's website or in person at the library itself. Begin your research with the library's excellent **US History research guide**, available here:

<http://researchguides.library.yorku.ca/unitedstateshistory?hs=a>.

Still feel like you need some personal help? The library can help you with that, too! See <http://www.library.yorku.ca/web/ask-services/>.

### Searching For Secondary Sources

The best place to start looking for reliable, authoritative sources is the online database called ***America: History and Life***, which is available through the library [here](#). (If that link doesn't get you there, type the name into the library search bar, or cut and paste the URL below into your browser). AHL is a database of abstracts (i.e. short summaries) of academic journal articles from hundreds of journals.

Search by keywords to find what you're looking for, and then either click on the direct link to the PDF (if there is one) or the button that says "Find It @ York." (Note: York does not have subscriptions to all of the journals in AHL, so not all the articles you find in AHL will be available.)

Another good database is JSTOR, though most JSTOR articles (or at least the post-1964 ones) are also indexed in AHL.

#### **America: History and Life**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=17>

America: History & Life is an index of literature covering the history and culture of the United States and Canada, from prehistory to the present. With indexing for 1,700 journals from 1964 to present, this database is an important bibliographic reference tool for students and scholars of U.S. and Canadian history.

#### **JSTOR**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/1520855>

JSTOR is a full text digital archive of core scholarly journals with complete back runs of many titles. As part of JSTOR's agreement with publishers, current issues (usually the last 3 - 5 years) are not digitized by JSTOR and may be obtained elsewhere.

### Searching For Primary Sources

Below are some links to websites that host collections of online primary sources or links that will help you find some. There are many other websites that provide access to primary documents. Start your Internet search (using your preferred search engine) by typing keywords about your topic plus keywords such as "documents" or "sources." If you have any doubts about whether the sources you find are primary sources, don't hesitate to ask your tutorial leader.

In addition, the library has numerous edited collections of documents in American history published in book form (though these may remain inaccessible during the covid pandemic). The best way to search for document collections is to do a key word search in the library catalogue. (Use search terms such as "United States sources," plus a more detailed descriptor of your topic (e.g. Iran-Contra, cold war, Vietnam, etc.)

## Collections of online Primary Sources

For an annotated list of useful primary source collections available through York's libraries, consult the York Libraries **US History research guide**, available here: <http://researchguides.library.yorku.ca/unitedstateshistory?hs=a>

Below are a number of collections of (mostly) primary sources, listed in alphabetical order, followed by separate sections on the presidents and newspapers. A complete, up-to-date listing of the primary source collections available through York's libraries can be found at <http://researchguides.library.yorku.ca/c.php?g=679437&p=4792697>.

### **19th Century Masterfile**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=238>

Aggregation of various indexes to nineteenth century printed materials including journal, magazine, and newspaper articles. Depending on the index selected, coverage ranges from about 1774 to 1920.

### **Ad\*Access**

<https://repository.duke.edu/dc/adaccess>

"Funded by the Duke Endowment "Library 2000" Fund, presents images and database information for over 7,000 advertisements printed in U.S. and Canadian newspapers and magazines between 1911 & 1955. It concentrates on five main subject areas: Radio, Television, Transportation, Beauty and Hygiene, and World War II, providing a coherent view of a number of major campaigns and companies through images preserved in one particular advertising collection available at Duke University."

### **African American Communities**

<https://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2816117>

Focusing predominantly on Atlanta, Chicago, St Louis, Brooklyn, and towns and cities in North Carolina this collection presents multiple aspects of the African American community through personal diaries and scrapbooks, pamphlets, newspapers and periodicals, correspondence, official records and in-depth oral histories, revealing the prevalent challenges of racism, discrimination and integration, and a unique African American culture and identity. Also featured is a rich selection of visual material, including photographs, postcards, maps and ephemera.

### **African American Periodicals 1825-1995**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2266453>

Features more than 170 periodicals by and about African Americans, such as, African Repository, El Mulato, The Black Warrior, Pennsylvania Freedmen's Bulletin, Colored Harvest, Voice of the Negro, Horizon: A Journal of the Color Line, The Crisis: A Record of the Darker Races, Blue Helmet: A Magazine for the American Negro Soldier of All Wars, Harlem Pointer, Right On!, African World, Black Pride Newsletter.

### **Afro-Americana Imprints, 1535-1922**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2306327>

Created from the Library Company's acclaimed Afro-Americana Collection — an accumulation that began with Benjamin Franklin and steadily increased throughout its entire history — this unique online resource provides researchers with more than 12,000 printed works. These essential books, pamphlets and broadsides, including many lesser-known imprints, hold an unparalleled record of African American history, literature and culture.

### **American Broadsides and Ephemera, 1760-1900**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2270561>

Based on the American Antiquarian Society's landmark collection of American broadsides and ephemera, this full-color digital edition offers fully searchable facsimile images of approximately 15,000 broadsides printed between 1820 and 1900 and 15,000 pieces of ephemera printed between 1760 and 1900. These often rare printed documents vividly capture the daily lives of earlier Americans in a way that no other material can.

### **AMDOC—Documents for the Study of American History**

<http://www.vlib.us/amdocs/>

### **American History in Video**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/1921406>

Historical coverage in the collection ranges from the early history of Native Americans, to the lost colony of Roanoke, to the 1988 Vicennes Affair in the Persian Gulf. Semantic Indexing and searchable transcripts synchronized to video—give the ability to drill down in seconds to find the footage of interest.

### **American Indian Histories and Cultures**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2496916>

The wide range of material included in American Indian Histories and Cultures presents a unique insight into interactions between American Indians and Europeans from their earliest contact, continuing through the turbulence of the American Civil War, the on-going repercussions of government legislation, right up to the civil rights movement of the mid- to late-twentieth century. This resource contains material from the Newberry Library's extensive Edward E. Ayer Collection; one of the strongest archival collections on American Indian history in the world.

### **American Memory**

<http://memory.loc.gov/>

A gateway to rich primary source materials relating to the history and culture of the United States. The site offers more than 7 million digital items from more than 100 historical collections.

### **American Periodicals Series Online 1740 -1990**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=1012105>

Provides full-text access to a wide range of American magazines and journals. Titles include Benjamin Franklin's General Magazine, America's first scientific journal Medical

Repository, as well as popular magazines such as *Vanity Fair* and *Ladies' Home Journal*.

**American West: sources from the Everett D. Graff Collection at the Newberry Library, Chicago.**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2261448>

The story of the American West has exerted a powerful influence over the psyche of the modern world, helping to fashion senses of national identity as well as permeating literary and cinematic culture. Tales of frontier life, of Native Americans and of vigilantes and outlaws are of constant interest, and are matched by more recent interest in the growth of urban centres, the environmental impact of westward expansion and of life in the borderlands.

**Avalon Project at Yale Law School: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy**

<http://avalon.law.yale.edu/>

The Avalon Project will mount digital documents relevant to the fields of Law, History, Economics, Politics, Diplomacy and Government.

**Black Abolitionist Papers**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/1924990>

Covering the period 1830-1865, the collection presents the massive, international impact of African American activism against slavery, in the writings and publications of the activists themselves. The approximately 15,000 articles, documents, correspondence, proceedings, manuscripts, and literary works of almost 300 Black abolitionists show the full range of their activities in the United States, Canada, England, Scotland, Ireland, France and Germany.

**Black Freedom Struggle in the 20th Century**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/1924955>

**Module 1:** *The Black Freedom Struggle in the 20th Century, Federal Government Records.*

**Module 2:** *The Black Freedom Struggle in the 20th Century, Organizational Records and Personal Papers, Part 1*

**Black Studies Center**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=983801>

Black Studies Center brings together essential historical and current material for researching the past, present and future of African-Americans, the wider African Diaspora, and Africa itself.

**Black Thought and Culture**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=65625>

Black Thought and Culture provides approximately 100,000 pages of monographs, essays, articles, speeches, and interviews written by leaders within the black community from the earliest times to 1975. The collection is intended for research in black studies, political science, American history, music, literature, and art.



### **C19: The Nineteenth Century Index**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=983805>

C19 is exactly what scholars have been waiting for—an organizing force for the research collections of the 19th century that supports virtually every academic discipline. A super-index to more than 16.8 million documents that includes the Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, Poole's Index to Periodical Literature, and the Nineteenth Century Short Title Catalogue, C19 is a must for identifying new research sources.

### **China, America and the Pacific**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2514418>

This digital resource provides an extensive range of archival material for the study of the trading and cultural relationships between China, America and the Pacific region. Manuscripts, rare printed sources, visual images, objects and maps document this fascinating history from the 18th century onwards.

The project covers the following themes: Development of Hawaii as key American trading post before annexation; Chinese-American cultural exchange (including 19th century Chinese immigration); and Diplomacy and politics of America and the Far East

### **China: Trade, Politics and Culture, 1793-1980**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=1212042>

This project provides a wide variety of original source material detailing China's interaction with the West from Macartney's first Embassy to China in 1793, through to the Nixon/Heath visits to China in 1972-74.

### **Documenting the American South**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=58326>

Documenting the American South (DocSouth) is a digital publishing initiative that provides Internet access to texts, images, and audio files related to southern history, literature, and culture. Currently DocSouth includes ten thematic collections of books, diaries, posters, artifacts, letters, oral history interviews, and songs.

### **Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans, 1639-1800**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2270559>

Contains virtually every book, pamphlet and broadside published in America over a 160-year period. Digitized from one of the most important collections ever produced on microform, Early American Imprints, Series I is based on Charles Evans' renowned "American Bibliography" and Roger Bristol's supplement. Including more than 36,000 printed works and 2.3 million pages, Series I also offers new imprints not available in microform editions. [Publisher]

### **Early American Imprints, Series II: Shaw-Shoemaker, 1801-1819**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2270560>

Provides a comprehensive set of American books, pamphlets and broadsides published in the early part of the 19th century. It is based on the noted "American Bibliography,

1801-1819" by Ralph R. Shaw and Richard H. Shoemaker. With more than four million pages from over 36,000 items—including 1,000 catalogued new items unavailable in previous microform editions—this digital edition from Readex is an essential complement to Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans, 1639-1800, the definitive resource for researching 17th- and 18th-century America.

### **Early Encounters in North America: Peoples, Cultures and the Environment**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=78193>

Contains over 1400 authors and over 100 000 pages of primary works: letters, diaries, memoirs and accounts as well as images of early encounters.

### **Edward S. Curtis's the North American Indian: Photographic Images**

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/award98/ienhtml/curthome.html>

Includes the complete digitized set of historical photographs taken by E.S. Curtis in the early decades of the twentieth century and published in the 20-volume set The North American Indian, 1907-1930. The collection is searchable by keyword and browsable by geographic location, tribal affiliation, or subject term (for artifacts, activities, social status, etc.) and by volume number to correspond to the print version. Also included are a chronology of the life of Curtis, as well as maps and essays placing Curtis' work in context by Mick Gidley, David R.M. Beck, and Gerald Vizenor.

### **Emergence of Advertising in America: 1850 - 1920**

<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/ea/>

Presents over 9,000 images, with database information, relating to the early history of advertising in the United States. The materials, drawn from the Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library at Duke University, provide a significant and informative perspective on the early evolution of this most ubiquitous feature of modern American business and culture.

### **Everyday Life and Women in America**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=1172537>

Features texts of rare books, periodicals, pamphlets, tracts, and broadsides covering a variety of themes including popular culture, social history, family life, education, race, class, and employment. There is also an emphasis on advice literature, and on both women and men's issues.

### **Federal Response to Radicalism in the 1960s**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/1872282>

This product illuminates the enduring conflict in American history between the need of society to protect basic freedoms and the equally legitimate need to protect itself from genuine threats to its security and existence.

### **Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) Daily Reports 1974-1996**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=1194138>

Created by the U.S. Intelligence community to provide foreign views and perspectives on historical events from thousands of monitored (and often translated) broadcasts and publications.

### **Foreign Relations of the United States**

[http://www.state.gov/www/about\\_state/history/frusonline.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/frusonline.html)

Foreign relations series online from Truman to Johnson with volumes on Vietnam War.

### **Gallup Brain**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/78243>

The Gallup Brain is a searchable, living record of more than 70 years of public opinion. Inside, you'll find answers to hundreds of thousands of questions, and responses from millions of people interviewed by The Gallup Poll since 1935.

### **Geography of Slavery in Virginia**

<http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/gos/>

The Geography of Slavery in Virginia is a digital collection of advertisements for runaway and captured slaves and servants in 18th- and 19th-century Virginia newspapers. Building on the rich descriptions of individual slaves and servants in the ads, the project offers a personal, geographical and documentary context for the study of slavery in Virginia, from colonial times to the Civil War.

### **Gerritsen Collection, of Aletta H. Jacobs**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/1870032>

"... more than 4,700 publications from continental Europe, the U.S., the United Kingdom, Canada, and New Zealand, dating from 1543-1945. ... The broad scope of the collection allows scholars to trace the evolution of feminism within a single country, as well as the impact of one country's movement on those of the others. In many cases, it also provides easy access to primary sources otherwise available only in a few rare book rooms."

### **Gerritsen Collection-Women's History Online, 1543-1945**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/1870032>

In the late 1800's, Dutch physician and feminist Aletta Jacobs and her husband C.V. Gerritsen began collecting books, pamphlets and periodicals reflecting the revolution of a feminist consciousness and the movement for women's rights. By the time their successors finished their work in 1945, the Gerritsen Collection was the greatest single source for the study of women's history in the world, with materials spanning four centuries and 15 languages.

### **Home Economics Archive: Research, Tradition and History (HEARTH)**

<http://hearth.library.cornell.edu/>

An electronic collection of books and journals in Home Economics and related disciplines. Titles published between 1850 and 1950 were selected and ranked by teams of scholars for their great historical importance.

**Internet Archive**

<http://www.archive.org/>

The Internet Archive offers access to historical collections that exist in digital format. The Internet Archive includes texts, audio, moving images, and software as well as archived web pages in our collections, and provides specialized services for adaptive reading and information access for the blind and other persons with disabilities.

**Japanese American Relocation Digital Archive**

<http://jarda.cdlib.org/>

There are roughly 20,000 pages of electronic transcriptions of texts. These include oral histories; personal narratives, notes, and letters; government documents, publications, circulars, and reports; and other types of documents. And over 10,000 images, including photographic prints, negatives, drawings, and watercolor paintings, can be searched and browsed in JARDA.

**Jewish Life In America, c.1654-1954**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/1924874>

"...The material is based on a rich variety of original manuscript collections from the unique holdings of the American Jewish Historical Society in New York; we provide access to six major organisational collections and twenty-four collections of personal papers; all of which have been digitized in their entirety...."

**Making of America**

<http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp/index.html>

A digital library of primary sources in American social history from the antebellum period through reconstruction. The collection is particularly strong in the subject areas of education, psychology, American history, sociology, religion, and science and technology. The collection currently contains approximately 10,000 books and 50,000 journal articles with 19th century imprints.

**Media History Digital Library**

<http://mediahistoryproject.org/>

Over 200,000 digitized pages of public domain media industry trade papers and fan magazines, including Moving Picture World (1912-1918), Film Daily (1918-1936), Photoplay (1917-1940), Radio Broadcast (1922-1930), and much more.

**The National Security Archive, George Washington University**

<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/index.html>

On online archive of declassified national security documents, ranging from the Truman to the second Bush administrations. Subjects include Europe, Latin America, Nuclear History, China and East Asia, U.S. Intelligence, the Middle East and South Asia, September 11<sup>th</sup>, U.S. Humanitarian Interventions, and Government Secrecy.

**National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Books**

<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/index.html>

National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Books provide online access to critical declassified records on issues including U.S. national security, foreign policy, diplomatic and military history, intelligence policy, and more. Although these online documents represent only a small fraction of what is available at the Archive, there are many interesting insights one can uncover from these declassified documents.

### **Nixon Years**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2337332>

This project provides complete FCO 7 and FCO 82 files from the UK National Archives, Kew, for the entire period of the Nixon administration, 1969-1974.

Top level Anglo-American discussions and briefing papers dominate this project. There is also a wealth of material on social conditions, domestic reforms, trade, culture and the environment. FCO and British Embassy analyses of US policy decisions, White House staff appointments and UN discussions, views on Europe, the deployment of F111 aircraft on US airbases in the UK and Nixon's battles over funding from Congress, visits to the US by both Wilson and Heath, files on the internal situation in the US and domestic reform all feature strongly. There are detailed assessments of all the changes brought about by the Presidential Elections of 1972.

### **North American Immigrant Letters, Diaries, and Oral Histories**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=973022>

Provides a unique and personal view of what it meant to immigrate to America and Canada. Our goal is to include more than 100,000 pages of personal narratives including letters, diaries, pamphlets, autobiographies, and oral histories, providing a rich source for scholars in a wide range of disciplines. Much of the material is previously unpublished. Several thousand pages of Ellis Island Oral History interviews, indexed and searchable for the first time, are included.

### **North American Indian Thought and Culture**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/973023>

The collection is comprised of material that covers the entire history of North America; from 17th century accounts of the first encounters involving Indians and European colonists to the stories of aboriginals living in a 21st century world. ... Firsthand accounts reveal how Indians lived, thought, and fought to protect their interests; how the tribes interacted with each other and the white invaders; etc.

### **North American Women's Letters and Diaries**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=65623>

This resource includes the immediate experiences of 1,017 women, as revealed in approximately 120,000 pages of diaries and letters. This is a massive, ongoing project to catalog and index Canadian and American women's diaries and correspondence over centuries. Researchers will have access to 150,000 pages of materials, including more than 5,000 pages of previously unpublished manuscripts as facsimile images.

### **Oral History Online**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=973026>

Contains at present more than 30,000 pages of full-text content that is available nowhere else in electronic format, much of which is available nowhere else in any format.

### **Papers of the NAACP**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2302881>

This collection, offers the core materials of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People from 1909 through 1950 held in the manuscript division of the Library of Congress. Although this collection covers no more than a small fraction of the entire holdings (which run to thousands of file boxes), these materials are considered to be the heart of the collection, detailing the Association's structure, activities and development at the highest organizational level.

### **Political Groups, Movements and Organizations in the United States**

<http://www.keele.ac.uk/depts/por/usbase.groups.htm>

List of current groups compiled by the School of Politics, International Relations & Philosophy, Keele University, UK

### **Presidential Recordings Program**

<http://www.whitehousetapes.org/>

This site is designed as a service to the research community by making freely available all of the [United State] presidential recordings, along with relevant research materials, so that scholars, teachers, students, and the public can hear and use these remarkable tapes for themselves. The site is hosted and maintained by the Presidential Recordings Program at the University of Virginia's Miller Center of Public Affairs.

### **Rock and Roll, Counterculture, Peace and Protest: Popular Culture in Britain and America, 1950-1975**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2261444>

The resource will enable students and scholars to examine key issues and events of the period, including: Student Activism across Europe and the US, including the disturbances in France in Mai '68; The Vietnam conflict; The fight for Civil Rights; Women's Liberation; Fashion and Youth Culture; The Music Scene; Book, Magazine and Film Censorship

### **Sabin Americana, 1500-1926**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/1924733>

It features American and European views of the colonization of the Americas, the American Revolution, the days of the early Republic and Jacksonian period, the antebellum period, Civil War, era of Reconstruction and post-Reconstruction, the settlement of the West and the onset of the Gilded Age. [Includes] published pamphlets, tracts, memoirs, congressional legislation, correspondence, broadsides, biographies, histories, fiction and poetry, eulogies, sermons and innumerable other genres.

### **Samuel May Anti-Slavery Collection**

<http://dlxs.library.cornell.edu/m/mayantislavery/>

The Samuel May Anti-Slavery Collection gathers together over 8,500 of the important pamphlet and leaflets relating to the anti-slavery struggle at the local, regional, and national levels. Sermons, position papers, off-prints, local Anti-Slavery Society newsletters, poetry anthologies, Freedmen's testimonies, broadsides, and Anti-Slavery Fair keepsakes all document in an intimate manner the social and political implications of the movement.

### **Sixties: Primary Documents and Personal Narratives 1960 - 1974**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/1921408>

Brings the 1960s alive through diaries, letters, autobiographies and other memoirs, written and oral histories, manifestos, government documents, memorabilia, and scholarly commentary. With 150,000 pages of material at completion, this searchable collection is the definitive electronic resource for students and scholars researching this important period in American history, culture, and politics.

### **Slavery and Anti-Slavery, a Transnational Archive**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/1866536>

Slavery and Anti-Slavery now includes Part 1: Debates over Slavery and Abolition; Part 2: Slave Trade in the Atlantic World; and Part 3: The Institution of Slavery. It includes collections on the transatlantic slave trade, the global movement for the abolition of slavery, and the legal, personal, and economic aspects of the slavery system from the sixteenth through the nineteenth century.

### **Slavery and the Law**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2473869>

The Slavery and the Law collection provides invaluable insight to scholars, students, and general readers of the humanities into testimony on a broad range of subjects by a variety of southerners—Black and white, slave and free, slaveholder and non-slaveholder, man and woman. The documents vividly portray the contrasts, ambivalences, contradictions, ironies, and ambiguities that comprise southern history. They reveal not only what southerners were saying, but what they were doing; not only what happened to slaves, but how the slaves responded. They show how complex political, economic, legal, and social conditions affected the lives of southerners, Black and white, male and female, slave and free. [Publisher]

### **Slavery, Abolition and Social Justice, 1490-2007**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/1212047>

The history of slavery covers many different forms of human exploitation across many cultures and throughout human history. However, it must be acknowledged that the Arabic and Eastern Slave Trade, during which some 14 million people were sold into slavery, was well established by this time and dates back to the 7th century AD. The Atlantic triangular trade started much later.

### **Southern Life and African American History**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2473870>

It's one of the most fascinating and controversial topics of 19th-century American history. Debates over such questions as the extent of the political dominance of the large planters or the survival of African culture under the plantation regime have engaged historians for decades.

### **Underground And Independent Comics**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2266451>

[T]he first ever scholarly, primary source database focusing on adult comic books and graphic novels. Beginning with the first underground comix from the 1960's to the works of modern sequential artists, this collection will contain more than 75,000 pages of comics and graphic novels, along with 25,000 pages of interviews, criticism, and journal articles that document the continual growth and evolution of this artform.

The current release contains 293 comic series, 1,612 comic books totaling 101,391 pages.

### **US Serial Set Digital Collection, 1789-1969**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/1926730>

Begins in 1789 with the American State Papers and details Congressional business through 1969. It includes reports and documents either produced or ordered by Congress, as well as presidential communications and treaty materials.

### **Vietnam War and American Foreign Policy 1960-1975**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2272584>

Covering the U.S. involvement in the region from the early days of the Kennedy administration, through the escalation of the war during the Johnson administration, to the final resolution of the war at the Paris Peace Talks and the evacuation of U.S. troops. Along the way, documents in this module trace the actions and decisions at the highest levels of the U.S. foreign policy apparatus, as well as events on the ground in Vietnam, from the perspective of State Department officials, Associated Press reporters, and members of the U.S. Armed forces, including the Marines and the Military Assistance Command Vietnam. The content is taken from 104 collections (made up of 26584 files) and is approximately 1,736,000 pages of the UPA microfilm collections.

### **Vietnam-Documents Relating to US foreign Policy**

<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/vietnam.htm>

### **Vietnam War Bibliography by Edwin Moise**

<http://edmoise.sites.clemson.edu/bibliography.html>

Lists published secondary works and document collections relating to the war as well as some online document collections.

### **Virginia Company Archives**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=1172538>

Presents those Ferrar Papers which are in Magdalene College, Cambridge. They are reproduced by permission of the Master and Fellows of the college, with whom the copyright remains. The collection began as a business archive, consisting of papers of Nicholas Ferrar (d.1620) and those of the Virginia Company of London and its



subordinate, the Somer Islands Company. Few of old Nicholas's papers survive, but there are over five hundred items from the days of the Virginia Company.

### **Virtual Vietnam Archive**

<http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/virtualarchive/>

Texas Tech University site of Vietnam documents

### **Women and Social Movements in the United States, 1600 - 2000**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=973025>

Contains 65 document projects that interpret and present documents, most of which are not otherwise available online. Each document project poses an interpretive question and provides a collection of documents that address the question. Altogether these document projects provide more than 1,800 documents, approximately 740 images, and over 600 links to other websites. They demonstrate that historical analysis is an interpretive process based on documents.

### **The WWW Virtual Library: International Affairs Resources**

<http://www.etown.edu/vl/index.html#resourcecategories>

An Internet directory of over 2600 annotated links in a wide range of international affairs, international studies, and international relations topics. Most of the sites are in English and are carefully selected for their long-term value, favouring those with cost-free, high-quality information and analysis online. The most useful section will probably be the one on American Foreign Policy.

## **Presidential Documents**

### **GPO Access**

<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/pubpapers/index.html>

Searchable database of online presidential papers

### **The White House**

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/liblinks.html>

Contains links to presidential libraries, from Herbert Hoover onward, most of which have some limited online document and photograph collections. One of the best is the Franklin Roosevelt Library.

### **The American President Project: University of California, Santa Barbara.**

<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/>

This Site Includes Almost 30,000 historical documents from George Washington to the present, including presidential papers, streaming audio and video, fireside chats, party platforms, portraits, and materials related to the 2000 election dispute.

### **Presidential Recordings Program**

<http://www.whitehousetapes.org/>

This site is designed as a service to the research community by making freely available all of the United States presidential recordings, along with relevant research materials,

so that scholars, teachers, students, and the public can hear and use these remarkable tapes for themselves. The site is hosted and maintained by the Presidential Recordings Program at the University of Virginia's Miller Center of Public Affairs.

### **Franklin Roosevelt Library**

<http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/research.html>

Contains extensive photo collection and online reproduction of some documents from the archives in searchable database.

### **Truman Presidential Library**

<http://www.trumanlibrary.org/photos/av-photo.htm>

Online documents, photo collections, political cartoons, oral histories, etc. on subjects such as the Berlin Airlift, the Decision to drop the Atomic Bomb, Desegregation of the Armed Forces, Korean War, Marshall Plan, NATO, Truman Doctrine, United Nations, and the War Relocation Authority & the Incarceration of Japanese-Americans During World War II.

### **Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library**

<http://www.eisenhower.utexas.edu/>

Links to online documents, transcripts of addresses on limited range of subjects including D-Day and McCarthyism.

### **John F. Kennedy Presidential Library**

<http://www.cs.umb.edu/jfklibrary/index.htm>

Links to documents, speeches, photos, etc.

### **Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library**

<http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/archives-main.shtm>

Links to online holdings including speeches, documents, photos, oral histories, Johnson's daily diary, NSA memoranda.

### **Richard Nixon Library**

[http://www.nixonfoundation.org/Research\\_Center/PublicPapers.cfm](http://www.nixonfoundation.org/Research_Center/PublicPapers.cfm)

Public Papers of Richard Nixon

### **Gerald Ford Presidential Library**

<http://www.ford.utexas.edu/library/docs.htm>

### **Jimmy Carter Presidential Library**

<http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.org/documents/index.phtml>

### **Ronald Reagan Presidential Library**

Contains link to public papers of the president as well as some online images

<http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/resource.htm>

### **George W. Bush Presidential Library**

<http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/index.html>

Links to public papers of the president (searchable), as well as National Security Directives.

## Newspapers

### African American Newspapers

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/65361>

This database indexes African American newspapers that provide first hand accounts of the major events of the day including the Mexican War, Congressional Abstracts, Presidential and Congressional addresses. Also includes early biographies, vital statistics and creative writing all of which represents the African American experience.

### Atlanta Daily World (1931-2003)

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=1165709>

"W.A. Scott II founded the Atlanta Daily World at a time when most black Americans lived in the South. He felt that "the race problem" could only be solved in the South, which required an informed community. Rather than reading news about African-Americans "through the optics of a host of prejudiced white papers," he launched his own newspaper to educate, inspire, uplift, and promote the expression of the Southern black community."

### The Brooklyn Daily Eagle

<http://eagle.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/Default/Skins/BEagle/Client.asp?Skin=BEagle&AW=1296585713343&AppName=2&GZ=T>

Produced by Brooklyn Public Library's Brooklyn Collection and funded by the Library and the Institute of Museum and Library Services, this first phase of the project covers the period from October 26, 1841 to December 31, 1902.

### The Chicago Defender

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=983803>

The Chicago Defender has been a leading voice of the black community well beyond the Windy City, with more than two-thirds of its readership outside Chicago. The newspaper was a proponent of The Great Migration, the move of over 1.5 million African-Americans from the segregated South to the industrial North from 1915 to 1925. It reported on the Red Summer race riots of 1919, and editorialized for anti-lynching legislation and the integration of blacks into the U.S. military.

### Ethnic American Newspapers, 1799-1971

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/1924815>

More than 130 Ethnic American newspapers published in the 18th, 19th and 20th Centuries. Created in partnership with the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Ethnic American Newspapers from the Balch Collection chronicles nearly two centuries of many of the most influential Ethnic groups in United States History.

### Facts on File: World News Digest, 1940-

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/78250>

An archival record of domestic and international news, unrivaled for its depth, breadth, and accuracy, covers all major political, social, and economic events since November 1940. ... Its more than 1 million internal hyperlinks allow researchers to follow a story ahead in time and back in time, and lead to just the background information they need to understand its significance.

### **Factiva**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=63997>

Indexing and full-text access to hundreds of international newspapers and over 30 major American newspapers and news services from the United States including:

- New York Times (full-text 1996-; abstracts 1969-)
- Washington Post (1984-)
- Los Angeles Times (1985-)
- Wall Street Journal (Jun 13 1979-)
- Chicago Tribune (1985-)
- San Francisco Chronicle (1985-)

To check coverage for a particular publication, search the [publications database](#).

### **Los Angeles Sentinel**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=1165711>

From its earliest beginnings when it urged African-Americans to not "spend your money where you can't work," the Los Angeles Sentinel has exposed prejudice, promoted social change, and empowered the black community. By accessing more than 70 years of cover-to-cover reporting, today's readers view the Depression through the eyes of African-Americans in the 1930s. They can follow the grass-roots struggle against the racially restrictive housing covenants of the 1940s.

### **New York Times**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=61036>

A searchable archive of the new The New York Times, 1851-1999. Offers full page and article images with searchable full text back to the first issue.

### **Paper of Record**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=65491>

Paper of Record is an archive of historical newspaper articles from the early 1800s to the mid 1900s. [List of newspapers](#) with coverage dates.

### **Wall Street Journal. Eastern ed.**

<http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=62463>

The Wall Street Journal (Jan 2 1984-) from Proquest provides indexing and full-text access. Full text of the *Wall Street Journal* July 8 1889- also available in Bronfman Microtext. Current issues available in Bronfman Fireplace Lounge.

“The Following Procedure is Obviously an Unpleasant One:”

The Development of America’s Satanic Panic

Kayla Middleton

HIST 2600: United States History

26 February 2021

When different social movements and cultural developments intertwine, they can leave great impacts on many individuals' lives and perspectives. A growing concern about child abuse and changes in the family structure, a fear of supposedly rising involvement in cults and satanism, and developments in entertainment technologies throughout the 1980s all contributed to the development of what is now known as the 'Satanic Panic'; a decade-long, nation-wide moral panic, during which hundreds of individuals and facilities were accused of being pedophilic satanists. While the majority of Satanic Panic-related accusations would eventually be found to be false or overexaggerated, the Panic itself can now be used as an example of how moral hysteria has created change at various points in American history.

In the mid-1960s, Virginia McMartin founded the McMartin Pre-School in Manhattan Beach, California. Both family-owned and family-run, the preschool was popular among young, middle-class families in the surrounding area, often reaching its maximum enrollment early on each year. In 1983, a woman named Judy Johnson enrolled her two-year-old son in the school for the summer.<sup>1</sup>

Johnson's son only attended the school for a short while, however. One day, the boy had come home from school with blood in his diaper, which Johnson believed was a sign that he had been sodomized.<sup>2</sup> Having seemingly reached her conclusion already, Johnson still proceeded to interrogate her son, who eventually told her that Ray Buckey, grandson of Virginia McMartin and, at the time, the only male employee of the preschool, had taken his temperature using a "thermometer". Johnson believed that what her son described as a "thermometer" was really Buckey's penis, confirming her fear that her son had been sexually abused.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mary de Young, "The Devil Goes to Day Care: The Making of a Moral Panic," *Journal of American Culture* 20, no. 1 (2004): 20-21.

<sup>2</sup> Sarah Hughes, "American Monsters: Tabloid Media and the Satanic Panic, 1970-2000," *Journal of American Studies* 51, no. 3 (2017): 697.

<sup>3</sup> Debbie Nathan and Micahel Snedeker, *Satan's Silence: Ritual Abuse and the Making of a Modern American Witchhunt* (New York: Basic, 1995), 67-70, quoted in de Young, 21.

With supposed evidence to back up her fear, Johnson contacted the local police department, who had her son medically examined for signs of sexual abuse. This examination proved inconclusive, and the child did not tell investigators anything that aroused alarm or concern. However, just a few days later, Johnson contacted police again, this time claiming her son had told her that not only was he sexually abused at the preschool, but other children had been as well.<sup>4</sup> This time, police sent the child to be examined by researchers at the University of California, Los Angeles who were a part of the Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Team; these researchers agreed with Johnson, leading police to arrest Buckey on September 7, 1983<sup>5</sup>

The very next day, around two hundred parents of children who were attending McMartin or who had recently done so were sent a letter from the Chief of Police, Harry L. Kuhlmeier, Jr. The letter began by explaining that the police department was conducting an investigation involving child molestation, naming Ray Buckey as the accused. It proceeded by stating:

The following procedure is obviously an unpleasant one [...] Please question your child to see if he or she has been a witness to any crime or if he or she has been a victim. Our investigation indicates that possible criminal acts include: oral sex, fondling of genitals, buttock, or chest area, and sodomy, possibly committed under the pretense of “taking the child’s temperature.” Also photos may have been taken of children without their clothing.<sup>6</sup>

Kuhlmeier, Jr. then asked the letters’ recipients to keep the investigation “strictly confidential”, voicing concern about “the highly emotional effect it could have on our community.”<sup>7</sup>

Kuhlmeier, Jr. was correct in believing that a case like this would cause strong emotional reactions within the community — what he likely did not predict was that the ‘community’ would eventually include not just Manhattan Beach, but the nation overall.

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<sup>4</sup> de Young, 21.

<sup>5</sup> Hughes, 697.

<sup>6</sup> Harry L. Kuhlmeier, Jr., “Letter to McMartin Preschool Parents,” letter, 1983, <https://www.famous-trials.com/mcmartin/901-lettertoparents>.

<sup>7</sup> Kuhlmeier, Jr.

As the investigation continued, hundreds of charges were filed against not only Buckey, but Virginia McMartin, Buckey's mother and sister, and other McMartin employees.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, parents ignored Kuhlmeier, Jr.'s request to keep the investigation confidential. They began speaking to each other about the rumors they heard and the kinds of things their children told them, giving them new material to question their children about and contributing to both a growing number and a growing severity of accusations leveled against the preschool employees.<sup>9</sup>

Similar accusations were raised in communities nationwide throughout the following decade. In 1984, a Massachusetts day care employee named Gerald Amirault was accused of the same crimes Buckey had been. A New Jersey day care employee, Margaret Kelly Michaels, was convicted of sexually abusing children in 1988, and proceeded to spend five years in jail before her conviction was overturned in 1993<sup>10</sup> — this became a common occurrence once the Satanic Panic neared its end. Like the McMartin case, these and other accusations would gain both local and national attention throughout the eighties. Nevertheless, McMartin would stand out as the most notorious of all, both during and after the national hysteria.

The Panic began in February of 1984, when a local television news reporter first broke the McMartin story, bringing greater local and national attention to the McMartin Pre-School case, the sexual abuse of children, and satanic ritual abuse.<sup>11</sup> These issues seemed incredibly relevant to various Americans for a wide variety of reasons. Most of these reasons were based on prominent social and cultural changes that had been occurring across the past two decades prior to the McMartin allegations.

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<sup>8</sup> Hughes, 698.

<sup>9</sup> de Young, 21.

<sup>10</sup> Hughes, 698-699.

<sup>11</sup> Hughes, 21.



The 1960s and 1970s saw an increasing emphasis on social issues and civil rights. Personal values were given a new spotlight in both the public sphere and the world of politics. The Black Power movement, gay liberation, and the feminist movement received national attention, proposing major changes to the way American society viewed family, gender, race, diversity, sexuality, work, and more.<sup>12</sup> It was within this context that an increasing number of young mothers took up positions with the American workforce; some due to desire, others due to necessity. By 1980, around forty-five percent of mothers with young children were working outside the household. With their relatives also working, many parents of small children had to turn to day care centers when it came to supervising and teaching their children on a daily basis. But many parents were worried that the increasing reliance on day care would prove harmful to their children by exposing them to ideologies, lifestyles, and even religious beliefs that did not align with their family values. The notion that their young children's socialization was being placed in the hands of people outside of their families was not taken lightly.<sup>13</sup> The concern that was already surrounding day care centers would place the facilities in a position of public scrutiny in the years to come.

The changing conceptions of family and gender roles eventually placed more attention on the way children were treated by both their own families and society overall. The manipulation and physical and sexual abuse of children were by no means recent discoveries; these issues had been addressed in a multitude of ways previously. They were, however, being engaged with from new perspectives and an increasing amount of research and studies that were conducted to better understand the full extent of such acts and the damage they cause. Before the 1970s, it was

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<sup>12</sup> Philip Jenkins, *Decade of Nightmares: The End of the Sixties and the Making of Eighties America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 24-27.

<sup>13</sup> de Young, 20.

commonly believed that child molestation was an extremely rare event, and pedophilia was very rarely mentioned, even in academic literature.<sup>14</sup>

But the 1970s saw a shift in how child abuse was handled, both in the media and in politics and public policy. The 1974 Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act made reporting and investigating child abuse allegations mandatory, and created the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect. This then inspired the creation of many more agencies across the nation dedicated to investigating, preventing, and studying child abuse. Feminist campaigns against rape and sexual assault inspired similar campaigns against physical violence and sexual abuse enacted on children. Child pornography became a hot button topic in many newspapers, magazines, and television documentaries.<sup>15</sup> Child abuse, in particular child sexual abuse, was quickly gaining a reputation as one of the most heinous issues facing American families.

An example of this can be seen in a 1984 *Newsweek* magazine article, entitled “A Hidden Epidemic.” The article begins with a description of a three year old girl being kidnapped from her own front lawn to be sexually abused and left in an outhouse; it mentions the nightmares she has multiple times a week. It also highlights the McMartin case, and other allegations and convictions of a similar nature. It warns its readers that, while both individual cases and the sexual abuse of children as a whole may seem unbelievable, “parents must find ways to acquaint their children, as calmly as possible, with the new facts of life.”<sup>16</sup> The article is an excellent example of both the shift in perspective about child sexual abuse that occurred during the 1970s and 1980s, and the increased media attention being placed on such matters.

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<sup>14</sup> Jenkins, 108 and 111-112.

<sup>15</sup> Jenkins, 113-114.

<sup>16</sup> Russell Watson et al., “A Hidden Epidemic,” *Newsweek*, May 14, 1984, <https://advance-lexis-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:3SJ4-G010-0008-X26S-00000-00&context=1516831>.

Unfortunately, another sociocultural concern was gaining traction at the very same time — cult activities and satanic ritual abuse. Throughout the seventies and into the eighties, “neoconservatives, libertarians, economic conservatives, and evangelical Christians” often fought back against social movements they believed were destroying ‘good’ middle-class suburban areas, destroying the nuclear family model, and negatively influencing white youth.<sup>17</sup> Morality was to be a political issue, not just a matter of personal choice.<sup>18</sup> Shocking events like the Manson cult murders, the Unabomber, and Jonestown frightened citizens nation-wide and led many to question social understandings of morality, which in turn created opportunities for many prominent individuals to reinforce their conservative and/or Christian values.<sup>19</sup>

The mass cultural changes and social tensions of the 1970s led some Americans to turn to fringe religions for guidance and spiritual connections. The ‘New Age’ strand of spirituality was often more heavily associated with various progressive social movements of the time, such as feminism, which made it appealing to individuals who were dissatisfied with what mainstream society was offering. It was for this very same reason that many of these religions quickly gained the disdain of many conservatives, who proceeded to view loosely-defined ‘cult activities’ as an ever-growing danger to the fabric of American society. Groups such as the Children of God, Synanon, and the Way International found themselves a recurring subject in news media, with reports often criticizing the groups.<sup>20</sup>

Increasing public awareness of cults led to the development of a growing anti-cult movement that lasted through the 1980s and into the early 1990s. The common belief was that most cult members — particularly young adults and teenagers — did not join the groups of their

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<sup>17</sup> Hughes, 693-694.

<sup>18</sup> Jenkins, 76-77.

<sup>19</sup> Hughes, 713-714.

<sup>20</sup> Jenkins, 36 and 38-39.

own free will, but were pressured or coerced into doing so before being cut off from their families and communities. Families, journalists, therapists, and Christian communities began to raise awareness about and fight against the corruption of American youth by fringe religions.<sup>21</sup> A 1990 article published by Marcia R. Rudin, the director of the International Cult Education Program, in the National Association of Secondary School Principals' bulletin, instructed principals on how to protect their students from cult recruitment. In the article, Rudin explains how cults use "unethically manipulative techniques of persuasion and control" to promote their goals and entrap new members, and that various kinds of child abuse occur within them.<sup>22</sup> She goes on to list various qualities and hobbies that may indicate a teenager is dabbling in "satanic activity": playing fantasy or role-playing games, feeling alienated from their peers and family, listening to heavy metal or rock music, wearing black clothing, promoting social justice, and drug abuse are just a few examples.<sup>23</sup> The article exemplifies both the kind of information Americans were receiving about satanism, and the extent to which cult recruitment was viewed as a threat to the nation's youth.

Christian religious groups, particularly evangelical ones, had already become concerned about the state of American religion and morality. The progressive social movements of the 1960s and 1970s, combined with the reinvigorated fear of socialism and communism throughout the Cold War, led many to redouble their efforts to promote conservative Christian values and denounce liberal mindsets.<sup>24</sup> As tales of satanic cults spread, evangelical religious groups were quick to become some of their most fervent opponents.

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<sup>21</sup> Jenkins, 129-131.

<sup>22</sup> Marcia R. Rudin, "Cults and Satanism: Threats to Teens," *NASSP Bulletin* 74, no. 526 (1990): 46-47, doi:10.1177/019263659007452610.

<sup>23</sup> Rudin, 47 and 49-50.

<sup>24</sup> Hughes, 710-711.

Changes in middle-class family structures, increased reliance on day care centers, rising concerns about child abuse, and a growing anti-cult movement all contributed to the creation and maintenance of the Satanic Panic. But it was developments in entertainment and media that really brought it to life. Throughout the 1980s, more and more households began centering entire rooms around their televisions and related accoutrements. Wealthy families, particularly those living in the white, suburban communities that would become the epicenters of the Panic, could afford the largest television sets with the highest picture quality available.<sup>25</sup>

The increasing importance of televisions within American homes was accompanied by the expansion of infotainment: sensationalistic television programs that, while often based on some form of truth, exaggerated various social issues and cultural events and blurred the line between entertainment and news. According to historian Sarah Hughes, infotainment often successfully promoted conservative perspectives, as it “fueled and legitimated recent laws punishing those who seemed to violate the sanctity and morality of suburbia and the nuclear model.”<sup>26</sup> Talk shows like *The Geraldo Rivera Show*, documentary news programs like *Unsolved Mysteries*, and reality shows such as *America’s Most Wanted* all exemplify the kind of infotainment that was watched by Americans during the 1980s. Infotainment often reinforced and legitimized tabloid magazine stories that would otherwise be mostly ignored or read without belief; many dealt with themes such as criminal activity, drug abuse, sexual assault, and mental illness, and included interviews with professionals, eyewitness accounts, celebrity guests, and dramatized reenactments of events.<sup>27</sup> The harrowing accusations of satanic ritual abuse emerging across the country fit right in with infotainment shows’ regularly scheduled programming.

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<sup>25</sup> Hughes, 694-695.

<sup>26</sup> Hughes, 694.

<sup>27</sup> Hughes, 699-701.

A 1988 episode of the *Geraldo Rivera Show*, entitled “Devil Worship: Exposing Satan’s Underground,” is a prime example of the sensationalism and intensity of the Satanic Panic. Near the very beginning of the episode, the titular host mentions Charles Manson and ‘Son of Sam’ serial killer David Berkowitz after stating that “it’s said that a nationwide network of satanic criminals exists.”<sup>28</sup> He creates a ‘good vs. evil’ narrative, discusses grave robbing and churches defaced with graffiti of satanic symbols, and shows videos of various people supposedly experiencing demonic possession. The episode includes testimony from police detectives, religious officials, heavy metal musician Ozzy Osbourne, a convicted murderer who killed in the name of Satan, and Zeena la Vey the daughter of Anton la Vey, who Geraldo calls “the founding father of Satanism” in America.<sup>29</sup>

The episode also delves into child sexual abuse; notably, it features interviews with a few McMartin children and their parents, who by this point had formed an advocacy group called “Believe the Children.” The children, whose faces and names are not shown to protect their privacy, testify that Buckey “said that if we told [of the alleged abuse], that the devil would come and kill our parents and he said that we wouldn’t live to be the age nine,” and allege that Buckey and other McMartin employees had “touched” them in areas they did not want to be touched.<sup>30</sup> Via satellite, a group of eleven McMartin parents are shown gathered in a living room; before their chosen speaker gives his perspective, Rivera notes that at the time of airing, charges against all but two of the defendants had been dropped. Then, viewers were given the perspective of the McMartin parents:

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<sup>28</sup> Random Stuff I Find On VHS, “Devil Worship: Exposing Satan’s Underground: Part 1,” September 13, 2016, *Youtube* video, 14:48, [https://youtu.be/qocBf3\\_mmic](https://youtu.be/qocBf3_mmic).

<sup>29</sup> Random Stuff I Find On VHS, “Devil Worship: Exposing Satan’s Underground: Part 1.”; *Random Stuff I Find On VHS*, “Devil Worship: Exposing Satan’s Underground: Part 3,” September 13, 2016, *Youtube* video, 13:38, <https://youtu.be/qnM95xmLoMY>.

<sup>30</sup> Random Stuff I Find On VHS, “Devil Worship: Exposing Satan’s Underground: Part 4,” September 13, 2016, *Youtube* video, 10:32, <https://youtu.be/YTY0p-yEo70>.

When the children started talking, they started talking about robes and candles, they described an Episcopal Church. And once they started narrowing that down, you could see that it had to be satanic [...] the truth about Satanism is they truly do use blood and mix it with urine and then they also use the real meat, the real flesh [...] this is what 1,200 molested kids in the city of Manhattan Beach have told the Sheriff's Department, and it's an outrage that we are where we are with this case.<sup>31</sup>

This episode exemplifies the aspects that built the Satanic Panic: the perceived threat to suburban neighbourhoods, the fear of satanic activities and cults, the sensationalist accounts and speculations, the concern for the safety of children, and, above all, the role the media played in intensifying the rest of the aspects. By combining expert testimony, personal opinions, and dramatic imagery, *The Geraldo Rivera Show* and similar infotainment programs both created new fears and intensified old ones.

By the mid-1990s, the Satanic Panic had reached its end. In 1990, Ray Buckley was finally acquitted of all charges against him in a third criminal trial. In the decades that have since followed, many media sources, historians, and academics have condemned the Panic as a mass hysteria, sometimes likening it to the infamous Salem Witch Trials.<sup>32</sup> The spread of internet access and personal computers exposed individuals nationwide to new information and perspectives, which counter-acted some of the influence that conservative, Christian leaders had on American morality and values that led to the Panic in the first place.<sup>33</sup> Surveillance cameras became more common, and physical contact less so, in day care centers; state legislatures quickly passed laws mandating criminal background checks of day care providers. Developments like these led to a more ensured sense of safety and trust between parents and their children's day care providers.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Random Stuff I Find On VHS, "Devil Worship: Exposing Satan's Underground: Part 4."

<sup>32</sup> Hughes, 712.

<sup>33</sup> Hughes, 713 and 716-717.

<sup>34</sup> de Young, 19.

In 1994, a San Diego grand jury exonerated one of the Panic's alleged abusers. Joe Dolphin, the foreman of the jury, stated that, after reviewing various cases that had involved accusations of satanic ritual abuse, "there is no justification for further pursuit of the theory of satanic ritual child molestation in the investigation and prosecution of child abuse cases."<sup>35</sup> This explanation, which was then published in the *New York Times*, highlights the shift in opinions and beliefs that occurred in the 1990s and led to the end of the Satanic Panic. With media coverage related to the Panic taking a more critical approach, the fears of white, suburban, middle-class Americans were bound to be subdued.

During the decades that followed, now-grown-up children who had made allegations of abuse related to the Panic began to recant their statements, explaining that they had felt coerced by parents and social workers to provide the answers they wanted. In a 2005 *Los Angeles Times* article, previous McMartin Preschool student Kyle Zirpolo — who had been one of the forty-one children who testified at Ray Buckey and his mother's preliminary hearings, out of 360 who had claimed to be abused — explained:

Anytime I would give [the interviewers] an answer they didn't like, they would ask again and encourage me to give them the answer they were looking for. It was really obvious what they wanted. [...] I would listen to what my parents would say if they are talking, or to what someone else would say if we were being questioned at the police station or anywhere. And I would repeat things. Or if it wasn't a story I'd heard, I would think of something in my head.<sup>36</sup>

Confessions like this provided proof that most — but not all — alleged Panic abusers had been falsely accused. They also exemplified how convincing the Panic had been to many individual Americans, and how damaging it had been, even to the children it was supposed to save and protect.

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<sup>35</sup> Seth Mydanas, "Prosecutors Rebuked in Molestation Case," *New York Times*, June 3, 1994, <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/109365867/475D1FC488984226PQ/5?accountid=15182>.

<sup>36</sup> Kyle Zirpolo and Debbie Nathan, "I'm Sorry," *Los Angeles Times*, October 30, 2005, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2005-oct-30-tm-mcmartin44-story.html>.



When emotion-packed fears, moral panics, and conflicts over social values occurred within the same communities simultaneously, thousands of lives were permanently changed. The Satanic Panic can now be viewed as an example of the powerful effect that television entertainment, news media, religious morality, rising concerns about the safety of children, and clashing sociocultural values had on Americans throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

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