

HIST 3222 (Topics in Canadian Social History)
Winter 2015

Making the News: A behind-the-scenes look at the making of History

Class time: Wednesdays, 2:30 to 5:30
Location: McCain 2104

Instructor: Dr. Shirley Tillotson
Office: McCain building, room 1173

Office hours: Wednesdays 1:30 to 2:25, Fridays 2:30 to 3:25, or by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Historians have long used newspapers as a crucial research source, especially for political history. Editors and journalists were key participants in party politics. But in the work of social and cultural historians over the last forty years, other sources often replaced the newspaper. And over the same forty years, the practices of politics and of journalism also changed. In response, historians have begun to re-invent the study of political pasts, in ways that give more weight to the cultural and social contexts of politics, broadening political history out beyond the fight for electoral victory. Historians are returning to the newspaper, both for the material of a new political history and for social and cultural history projects, too. After all, newspapers not only fought elections; they also shaped the ideas of nation, they entertained and advertised, they made fortunes for a few, and they shaped the commonsense of daily life. They are as much a source for social history as for political history.

In this course, students will gain hands-on experience in using newspapers as a research source to do different kinds of History. In the process, you will learn about how newspapers developed between approximately 1870 and 1970, and you will see how those who made the news also played a part in making Canada and Canadian history. In weeks two to five, we will examine four kinds of newspapers, tracking how changes in technologies, markets, and cultural contexts shifted the emphasis in the kind of thing a “newspaper” was. During those weeks you will begin to develop your research focus for the major writing assignment. From examples presented by the instructor, and from practice exercises that familiarize you with the relevant methods, you will learn how to develop a research question related to newspapers as a source. In weeks 6 and onward, you will explore different elements of newspapers, consolidating your research plan and practicing several kinds of newspaper-based research.

READINGS

The assigned readings for this class are relatively few. This is to allow you time outside of class to work on a number of small assignments. The readings will be available through electronic course reserve.

RESOURCES

Many of the resources that you will need for the work of this course during class are available online. See the History Subject guide, tabs for Canadian Newspapers, References – Canadian, and Primary sources – Canadian. See also the links within the *List of online newspapers* on the class website.

ASSIGNMENTS

Unlike many upper year history classes, this one is mostly a workshop. About two-thirds of each class will be given over to research exercises and to discussion of the results of those exercises. Attendance is therefore extremely important. Please see **Note Concerning Academic Accommodation Policy**, below.

Description Exercises: 30% of grade. At each class. Varying lengths, usually a combination of point form, tabulations, and brief analysis. You will do these entirely in class, and at the end of each class, you will submit the assignment via the class website. The instructions for these will be posted on the class website each week on the day of the class, and will be explained in more detail in class. If you must miss class for any reason, it will be possible to do these on your own, but you will miss some of my instruction on how to do these, and you will also miss the benefit of comparing your results to those of other students. The challenge in each of these will vary, and I will assess them as a whole set at the end of term. I will give verbal feedback in class and an interim assessment (how you're doing so far) in writing by email on approximately February 8.

Research Question Exercises: 25% of grade. You will submit two of these for evaluation, on a date of your choice, in digital form, to the class website. The first one (RQE#1) will be worth 10%; RQE#2 will be worth 15%. RQE#2 may be submitted any time **before** or on **February 6**. RQE#2 may be submitted any time **before** or on **March 6**. I strongly advise that you wait for my feedback on the first one before you submit a second one. One of these will be the basis for your research paper. They may begin as an extension and development of one of the Description Exercises. Or they may begin with something you discover in your "free play" work in class. Whatever their beginning, they will require additional library and possibly additional online research. See the separate instruction sheet for details. These will be evaluated on 5 criteria: 1. clarity of presentation (can I follow your research trail by means of the information you provided?); 2. Precision and depth of the case you make for the historical interest of the subject; 3. Richness of the contextualization you develop; 4. Clarity and feasibility of the research question and research plan; 5. Quality of expression (grammar and style).

Note cards: 10% of the grade. Due at class Jan. 14, Jan. 21, Jan. 28, Feb. 4.

For the first four regular classes, you will submit on a 3 x 5 index card (blanks may be obtained from the professor), a statement of the main point of the assigned reading, one fact you found interesting from the reading, and one question for clarification or discussion. At the top of the card, write the last name of the author of the reading and the title of the article or chapter. With each of these worth 2.5%, these can be easy points – the only thing you can get wrong (aside from not doing part of the assignment) is that you might mis-state the main point of the reading. Even in that case, an otherwise complete submission will earn 1.5 points and even a partially correct statement of the main point will raise your mark to 2 out of 2.5.

Short research paper: 25% of grade. This will be based on one of your two Research Question exercises (RQE#1 and RQE#2). The paper will be **due two weeks after I send you the evaluation** of either RQE#1 or RQE#2. The paper will either address the research question you stated in part 4 of the RQE, or a revised version of that question that I will give you as part of my feedback on your assignment. The length of the research essay may vary depending on the topic you develop through that exercise. This

assignment is not meant to be a major research paper. It should be no less than 1,250 words, likely around 1,500, and no longer than 3,000 words. Like any essay in history, it must assert a thesis and present evidence and argument in support of that thesis. Documentation of source must include not only sources of direct quotations, but also sources of ideas and information. Please the link to the History department Style Guide in the “Various Quasi-Legal Bits” section below.

Attendance: 10% of grade. Your participation will be assessed on the basis of the description exercises. However, you also earn marks for attendance. Attendance is required; however, in case of illness or emergency, you may submit (before the next class) the description exercise for the class you missed.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Jan 7 Introduction

Part 1: News makers and gatherers in Canadian history

Jan 14 **The Partisan Press**

Reading: Brian P.N. Beaven, “Partisanship, Patronage, and the Press in Ontario, 1880-1914: Myths and Realities,” *Canadian Historical Review* 64, 3 (1983), 317-51.

Jan 21 **The Movement and Institutional Press**

Reading: Margaret Hobbs, “Introduction” in *The Women’s Pages of The Western Producer, 1925-1939* in “Women and Social Movements in the United States” (WASM) (WASM is a database accessible through Novanet. At the home page of the database search “women’s pages of the western producer,” and in the search results click on the [2 results](#) link next to Full Text.)

Jan 28 **The Commercial Press**

Reading: Gene Allen, *Making National News: a History of Canadian Press*, 2013. pages 3-16, 292-308

Feb 4 **The Alternative and Crusading Press**

Reading: Cecil Rosner, *Behind the Headlines: A History of Investigative Journalism in Canada*, Chapter 4.

Part 2: How to use newspapers in historical reserach

Feb 11 – The changing shape and style of newspapers

Feb 25 – The editorial page: political history source, and more

Mar 4 – Letters to the editor, advice columns, and other interactive features: an ear to the ground

Mar 11 – Contests and crime: circulation games and mass culture

Mar 18 – Advertising: documenting and driving desires

Mar 25 – Cartoons and cooking: amusements and useful knowledge

Apr 1 – Magazines: a microfilm field trip

Apr 8 – Conclusions

Various Quasi-Legal Bits

Plagiarism:

All students in this class are to read and understand the policies on plagiarism and academic honesty as referenced in the Undergraduate Calendar, University Regulations, Intellectual Honesty section. Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations. See further details at the end of this syllabus.

Bibliography and citation format:

Instructions on the required format and conventions can be found at <http://www.dal.ca/faculty/arts/history/current-students/style-guide.html>.

Letter to number conversion scale:

You can find this at <http://www.dal.ca/faculty/arts/history/current-students/departmental-grade-scale.html>

Late penalties: I am prepared to grant short extensions (up to a week) if asked in advance of an assignment's due date, but I reserve the right to impose a late penalty of 2 per cent per day from the assignment's mark on merit if an assignment is submitted late (either in relation to the standard deadline or an extended one) without permission and without what I think is a good reason.

Note concerning Academic Accommodation Policy: Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic under the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams should make their request to the Office of Student Accessibility & Accommodation (OSAA) prior to or at the outset of each academic term (with the exception of X/Y courses). Please see www.studentaccessibility.dal.ca for more information and to obtain the Request for Accommodation form.

A note taker may be required to assist a classmate. There is an honorarium of \$75/course/term. If you are interested, please contact OSAA at 494-2836 for more information.

Please note that your classroom may contain specialized accessible furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in the classroom so that students who require their usage will be able to participate in the class.

Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we respect the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect. As a student, you are a member of the academic community at Dalhousie and so are required to adhere to the policies that express those values.

What does academic integrity mean?

Academic integrity means being honest in the fulfillment of your academic responsibilities, and to participate in this way in establishing mutual trust. That trust is achieved through respect for the opinions and ideas of others.

Academic integrity also supports the fairness that is essential to the interactions of the academic community.

“Violations of intellectual honesty are offensive to the entire academic community, not just to the individual faculty member and students in whose class an offence occurs.” [[Intellectual Honesty section of University Calendar](#)]

Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. The Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student papers be submitted in both written and computer-readable format, and to submit any paper to an electronic check for plagiarism.

How can you achieve academic integrity?

- Make sure you understand [Dalhousie's policies on academic integrity](#).
- Give appropriate credit to all of the sources you use in any assignments.
 - Use RefWorks to keep track of your research and edit and format bibliographies in the citation style required by the instructor - <http://www.library.dal.ca/How/RefWorks>
- Do not download the work of another from the internet and submit it as your own.
- Do not submit work that has been completed through collaboration or previously submitted for another assignment, unless you have permission from your instructor to do so.
- Do not write an examination or test for someone else.
- Do not falsify data or lab results.

[These examples should be considered only as a guide and not as an exhaustive list.]

What will happen if an allegation of an academic offence is made against you?

I am required to report a suspected offence. The full process is outlined in the [Discipline flow chart](#) and includes the following:

- Each Faculty (Science, Arts and Social Sciences, etc.) has an Academic Integrity Officer (AIO) who receives allegations from instructors
- The AIO decides whether to proceed with the allegation. You will be notified of the procedure.
- If the case proceeds, you will receive an INC (incomplete) grade until the matter is resolved.
- If you are found guilty of an academic offence, a penalty will be assigned. The penalty will range from a warning to a suspension or expulsion from the University and can include a notation on your transcript, failure of the assignment, or failure of the course. All penalties are academic in nature.

Where can you turn for help?

If you are ever unsure about ANYTHING, contact me or the TA. See also:

- [Academic Integrity website](#)
 - Links to policies, definitions, online tutorials, tips on citing and paraphrasing
- [Writing Center](#)
 - Assistance with proofreading, writing styles, citations
- [Dalhousie Libraries](#)
 - Workshops, online tutorials, citation guides, Assignment Calculator, RefWorks
- [Dalhousie Student Advocacy Service](#)
 - Assists students with academic appeals and student discipline procedures.
- [Senate Office](#): Has a list of Academic Integrity Officers and coordinates the Senate Discipline Committee