ASSC 1200/HIST 1900  
Raiders of the Lost Archives:  
Historical Research in Halifax  

Dalhousie University  
Fall 2015  

Instructor:  Jerry Bannister  
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Office Hours:  Fridays, 1:30-3:30, and by appointment.  

Resource Archivist:  Creighton Barrett  
Digital Archivist, Dalhousie University Archives  
Email: Creighton.Barrett@Dal.ca  

Format:  Two seminars per week.  

Description:  This course introduces first-year students to the principles and practices of historical research. It gives students the opportunity to design their own research projects based on a local archival collection. The goal of the course is to develop effective research and writing skills that will assist students throughout their university education.  

During our weekly seminar meetings, we will read and discuss a selection of introductory studies on the elements of historical research and writing. We will also visit local archives during Week 5, and meet with professional archivists working in Halifax. For their first assignment, students will write a short analysis and commentary on a diary available online.  

For their major research projects, students will be able to choose from a range of primary sources available at the Nova Scotia Archives or the Dalhousie University Archives, such as diaries, newspapers, maps, collections of letters, business records, court cases, or government documents. Students are free to select a collection from any period and to focus on a topic of their choice, so long as they have the instructor’s approval. We will discuss the draft research projects thoroughly during our weekly meetings, and students will submit their final papers at the end of term.
Course Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diary Analysis</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>due October 15th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>in class on October 27th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Essay Proposal:</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>due November 10th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Grade:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Archival Source Oral Report</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>in class during Week 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>assigned at the end of term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Research Essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>due December 10th</td>
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Attendance is mandatory. If you have to miss a class due to illness or an emergency, please email me as soon as possible. Class participation grades will comprise a variety of elements, including reports on primary and secondary sources, as well as attendance and contributions to seminar discussions. Late papers will be penalized five marks per day (5%). For a breakdown of the university’s grading scale and assessment rubrics, see: [http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/student_services/academic-support/grades-and-student-records/grade-scale-and-definitions.html](http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/student_services/academic-support/grades-and-student-records/grade-scale-and-definitions.html)

Class materials will be updated during the term on the OWL/BbLearn system, so please check our site regularly. Once we get settled into the Fall term, I will post links to all the online material; in the meantime, you can click on the links contained in the pdf version of the syllabus. If you need to contact me at any time, please email me at jerry.bannister@dal.ca directly, rather than through the internal OWL/BbLearn web site. Staff at the Dalhousie University Archives provide reference services onsite and via email at duasc@dal.ca.

To protect others’ privacy, students may not do voice or video recordings of any activity that occurs within the classroom. During our weekly seminar discussions, please refrain from using electronic devices in ways that might be considered disruptive or disrespectful to other students. Please refrain from texting, emailing, or other online activities.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to register as soon as possible at the Student Accessibility Services. To do so, please phone 494-2836, e-mail access@dal.ca, drop in at the Killam G28, or visit their web site at [www.studentaccessibility.dal.ca](http://www.studentaccessibility.dal.ca)
Course Schedule

Week 1  
Course Introduction  
10 Sept  Discussion of seminar organization, readings, and assignments

Week 2  
Introduction to the Principles of Reading and Research  
15 Sept  Introduction to Reading and Research  
- Paul Edwards, “How to read a book,” available at:  
http://pne.people.si.umich.edu/PDF/howtoread.pdf  
17 Sept  Introduction to History and Historiography  
- “Introductory Principles of History,” available at:  
http://historiansgaze.blogspot.ca/2013/09/history-1701-reading-for-week-two.html

Week 3  
Introduction to Archives and Archival Practices  
22 Sept  Introduction to Archival Research  
- Laura Schmidt, “Using Archives,” available at:  
http://www2.archivists.org/usingarchives  
24 Sept  Discussion with Creighton Barrett, Digital Archivist, on using primary sources  
- Ann Penderson, “Understanding Society through its Records,” available at:  

Week 4  
Introduction to Primary Research: The Diary of Louisa Collins  
29 Sept  Interpreting Primary Sources: Case Study of a Diary  
- Diary of Louisa Collins:  
http://www.brookhousepress.ca/louisa/home.htm  
1 Oct  The Role of Intuition and Imagination  
- Louis Menand, “The Historical Romance,” The New Yorker (24 March 2003),  

Week 5  
Field Trips to Local Archives  
6 Oct  Nova Scotia Archives  
We will meet at the Nova Scotia Archives, located at 6016 University Avenue  
- NSA Homepage: http://novascotia.ca/archives/  
8 Oct  Dalhousie University Archives  
We will meet at the Dalhousie University Archives, located on the 5th floor of the Killam Memorial Library.  
- DUA Homepage: http://libraries.dal.ca/collection/archives.html  
- Creighton Barrett, “Guide to Archival Research,” available at:  
http://dal.ca.libguides.com/archivalresearch
**Week 6**  
**Selecting and Evaluating Sources**
13 Oct  
Dealing with Primary Sources  
• “How to Read a Primary Source,” available at:  
http://www.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/

15 Oct  
Dealing with Secondary Sources  
• “How to Read a Secondary Source,” available at:  
http://www.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/

**Diary Analysis Assignment due by 4:00 on Thursday October 15th**

**Week 7**  
**From Questions to Evidence**
20 Oct  
Crafting Questions  
• “Learning to do Historical Research”  
http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/questions.htm

22 Oct  
Converting Data to Evidence  
Review for Test  
• Jill Lepore, “Just the Facts, Ma’am,” available at:  
http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2008/03/24/just-the-facts-maam

**Week 8**  
**Transition Week**
27 Oct  
Test

29 Oct  
No Class: individual meetings to discuss research projects

**Week 9**  
**Reports from the Field: Archival Sources**
3 Nov  
Oral Reports on Archival Sources

5 Nov  
Oral Reports on Archival Sources  
Review for Essay Proposals

**Week 10**  
**From Hypothesis to Outline**
10 Nov  
Discussion of Essay Ideas  
**Essay Proposals due by 4:00 on Tuesday, November 10th**  
• Online Writing Lab, Purdue University, available at:  
https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/544/01/

12 Nov  
No Class: Study Day

**Week 11**  
**Writing: Some Unsolicited Advice**
17 Nov  
Principles for Organizing Essays

19 Nov  
Two Different Takes on Writing  
• Strunk & White, “Elements of Style,” available at:  
http://www.bartleby.com/141/  
• Pullum, “50 Years of Stupid Grammar Advice,” available at:  
Diary Analysis

The first assignment is a short commentary and analysis of a diary available online. The diary was written in 1815 by Louisa Collins, who lived in Dartmouth. It was edited by Dale McClare, is available online, and has some useful background information. Louisa Collins was around your age when she started writing her diary, which gives a rich account of life on a farm just outside Halifax. The diary is clearly written, and it won’t take you much time to read through all of the entries. My advice is to read it through fairly quickly the first time, and then go back and look more closely for patterns in her entries. Here is the link: http://www.brookhousepress.ca/louisa/home.htm

Your job is to write a brief essay that describes the diary’s principal features and patterns. What does Louisa focus on the most? What are the patterns in terms of family activities, work, leisure, and social life? In describing what the diary is about, please use specific examples to back up your claims. After you have described the diary, please add a short commentary on how it could be used for a history essay. What type of essay could you write based on the diary? What does it reveal about Louia Collins and the world in which she lived?

Your essay should be 1,000-1,500 words in length (roughly 4-5 pages). The only required source for this essay is the diary itself. While you are not required to pursue additional research, if you do consult secondary sources, you need to cite them. **Please ensure that your essay has complete citations, per the essay guidelines listed below.** We will discuss this assignment thoroughly in class at the start of term. The assignment is due by **4:00 on October 15th**.
Essay Guidelines

Assignments must conform to the History Department’s guidelines. Assignments should have a proper title page; the text must be double spaced, with standard margins and fonts; and all pages must be numbered. Students must ensure that their essays have sufficient references in the proper format, using footnotes or endnotes. Essays must have an introduction, a clear argument, a conclusion, and a bibliography. References must be inserted whenever a direct quotation is used and/or whenever the paper cites specific information drawn from a source. These references must include specific page citations. Assignments must be proofread, clearly organized, and written at a university level. Copies of the History Department’s guidelines are available online: http://history.dal.ca/Student%20Resources/Style_Guide.php

The criteria for the assignments will be discussed thoroughly in class. Plagiarism will be dealt with according to the university regulations. As a student in this class, you are required to keep an electronic copy of any assignment you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand. All assignments must be either handed to the instructor in person or placed in my drop-box (number 71), in the McCain FASS building. Do not push papers under the instructor’s door. Please note that the History Department’s main office does not accept student papers. Late papers will be penalized five marks per day (5%). Extensions will be given only for documented medical or personal emergencies.

Test

The test will be held in class on October 27th. It will consist of short essay questions based on the introductory concepts covered in class during weeks 1-7. Students will be asked to write brief explanations of key terms, such as “primary source” and “historiography.” The questions will be straightforward and based on the introductory lectures and readings. A list of terms and concepts will be circulated before the test, and a complete review will be conducted in class on October 22nd.

Essay Proposal

The major research assignment for this term will be broken into two parts: your proposal and your final research essay. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with the instructor early in the semester to discuss potential sources and topics. You are free to choose from any archival collection available at Nova Scotia Archives or the Dalhousie University Archives. Here are links to their online catalogues:

* https://memoryns.ca/nova-scotia-archives
* http://findingaids.library.dal.ca/

Every student must submit an essay proposal: final research papers submitted without a prior essay proposal will not be accepted.
Your first job is to select a primary source housed at either Dalhousie University Archives or the Nova Scotia Archives. Your essay proposal must clearly indicate the primary source that you have selected, and you need to provide the complete archival listing (e.g., fonds, record series, title, box, date), depending on the type of source that you select. This information can be copied directly from the archival description available via the online catalogue.

We will discuss your choices of primary sources during Week 9, so we will have ample opportunity to talk about your research in class, and address any concerns you may have, before the proposal assignment is due. The final essay proposal must include the following components:

1) Working title for your essay. The title should list the geography and chronology covered by the essay.
2) Short description, no less than 500 words, of the archival source(s) that you plan to research for your project. The number of primary sources depends on the length and complexity of the archival collection that you select.
3) Short summary, no less than 300 words, explaining the topic related to the archival source that you plan to pursue.
4) Question(s) that your archival research will address.
5) Working hypothesis, i.e., your tentative answer to your question(s).
6) Bibliography that includes a primary source(s) from an archival collection available in Halifax, plus four relevant secondary sources that meet the criteria for scholarly sources.

The criteria for this assignment, including the definitions of suitable primary and scholarly sources, will be discussed fully in class. The essay proposal is due by 4:00 on November 10th. Students are encouraged to meet with the instructor individually early in the term to discuss their primary source and their research proposal.

Research Essay

The research essay will be a paper of no less than 2,500 words in length. It should be between 2,500 and 4,000 words in length (roughly 8-12 typewritten pages). Essays up to 20 pages in length will be accepted. The final research essay should be based on the essay proposal.

The research essay must have a clear thesis. Essays must have an introduction, a sustained argument, a conclusion, and a bibliography. Your thesis must deal with an historical question relevant to the course material. Essays submitted without a prior essay proposal will not be accepted. Essays must draw on at least one appropriate primary source, approved by the instructor, as well as at least four scholarly sources related to the topic. Suitable primary sources can be chosen from the wealth of archival materials available in Halifax.

Assignments must conform to the History Department’s guidelines. Assignments should have a proper title page; the text must be double spaced, with standard margins and fonts; and all pages must be numbered. Students must ensure that their essays have sufficient references in the proper format, using footnotes or endnotes.
Essays must have an introduction, a clear argument, a conclusion, and a bibliography. **References must be inserted whenever a direct quotation is used and/or whenever the paper cites specific information drawn from a source.** These references must include specific page citations. Assignments must be proofread, clearly organized, and written at a university level. Copies of the History Department’s guidelines are available online: [http://history.dal.ca/Student%20Resources/Style_Guide.php](http://history.dal.ca/Student%20Resources/Style_Guide.php)

The criteria for the assignments, including proper referencing techniques, will be discussed thoroughly in class. Plagiarism will be dealt with according to the university regulations. As a student in this class, **you are required to keep an electronic copy of any assignment you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand.** All assignments must be either handed to the instructor in person or placed in my drop-box (number 71), in the McCain FASS building. Do not push papers under the instructor’s door. Please note that the History Department’s main office does not accept student papers. **Late papers will be penalized five marks per day (5%).** Extensions will be given only for documented medical or personal emergencies. All final research papers are **due by 4:00 on December 10th.**

**Student Accommodation**

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 Advising and Access Services Center (AASC) prior to or at the outset of the regular academic year. Please visit [www.dal.ca/access](http://www.dal.ca/access) for more information and to obtain the Request for Accommodation – Form A.

A note taker may be required as part of a student’s accommodation. There is an honorarium of $75/course/term (with some exceptions). If you are interested, please contact AASC 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, untouched, so that students who require their usage will be able to participate in the class.

**Academic Integrity**

All students in this class are to read and understand the policies on academic integrity and plagiarism referenced in the Policies and Student Resources sections of the academicintegrity.dal.ca website. Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations.

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. Plagiarism is considered a
serious academic offence which may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even to the revocation of a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived.

At Dalhousie there are University Regulations that deal with plagiarism and, prior to submitting any paper in a course, students should read the Policy on Intellectual Honesty contained in the Calendar or on the Online Dalhousie website. 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 be checked electronically for originality. As a student in this class, you are to keep an electronic copy of any paper you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand.

At Dalhousie University, we respect the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect. As a student, adherence to the values of academic integrity and related policies is a requirement of being part of the academic community at Dalhousie University. Academic integrity means being honest in the fulfillment of your academic responsibilities thus establishing mutual trust. Fairness is essential to the interactions of the academic community and is achieved through respect for the opinions and ideas of others. “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]

How can you achieve academic integrity?

- make sure you understand Dalhousie’s policies on academic integrity
- give appropriate credit to the sources used in your assignment such as written or oral work, computer codes/programs, artistic or architectural works, scientific projects, performances, web page designs, graphical representations, diagrams, videos, and images
  - Use RefWorks to keep track of your research and edit and format bibliographies in the proper citation style [http://www.library.dal.ca/How/RefWorks](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 without permission from your instructor
- 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 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 has an Academic Integrity Officer (AIO) who receives allegations from instructors
- The AIO decides whether to proceed with the allegation and you will be notified of the process
- 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 ranging 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 the course instructor
- 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
  - List of Academic Integrity Officers, discipline flow chart, Senate Discipline Committe