



Dolores Janiewski, Associate Professor at the School of History, Philosophy, Politics and International Relations, Victoria University of Wellington Te Whare Wānanga o te Ūpoko o te Ika a Māui

Cross-searchable, full-page images and article images of newspapers such as *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times* and *The Chicago Tribune* are available online. The digitisation of these historical resources is part of the *ProQuest Historical Newspapers* programme, an ongoing project that initiates the digitisation of key newspapers dating back to the 1760s through to 2003.

Dolores Janiewski is Associate Professor at the School of History, Philosophy, Politics and International Relations at Victoria University of Wellington. Her historical specialisation includes US History, 19th and 20th Century Social/Cultural History of the US, US Southern History, US Western History and Women's History. Her most recently published book is *New Rights New Zealand: Myths Market and Moralities*.

"I'm a historian, but I'm also interested in race, law, culture, politics and ideas, so I find *ProQuest Historical Newspapers* a useful database for looking at these issues. I first learned about it using the databases at the Library of Congress in Washington, and at other universities in the US during research trips. None of the American sources are easily available in New Zealand, so this makes research so much easier."

"I look for specific events, but also specific names, organisations, issues from a certain period – such as looking for coverage of the Watergate scandal or following the activities of the Better America Federation, or the Homestead

Strike of 1892. I find it extremely useful to cover events in US history from the 1840s to the present, and students also find it extremely useful and easy to use."

As well as using *ProQuest Historical Newspapers* to "find primary source examples for my lectures and to check up on my own knowledge of when something happened", Dolores says that she uses the resource for her students' and her own research purposes:

"For the first year, I provide a list of documents. For the second year, the students decide on the research topic, and can use *ProQuest Historical Newspapers* themselves to find materials about their topics, and even more intensely for third year papers and Honours research essays. It helps students get immersed in historical events, gives them a sense of period, how it was at the time they're researching."

"For example, this year one Honours student wanted to research the press coverage of Hillary Clinton between 1992 and 1994 when she first became First Lady. She used *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*, finding it much more comprehensive and with better search facilities than other databases that include newspapers." Asked about this, Dolores says that the resource comes up with more articles than other databases, and that you seem to be able to 'get more out of it'.

Dolores uses *ProQuest Historical Newspapers* intensively for her own research. "I find it an extremely useful



research tool, especially because of the electronic index/search that lets a specific term or a person's or organisation's name or phrase be tracked so that I can see when it's first being discussed, for example, checking on when terms like 'sexism' or 'Cold War' entered the American language. I have just been tracking the use of 'Reds' to denounce people and it was used in the 1870s, long before the Bolsheviks. Similarly, lots of the Cold War vocabulary was around long before the Cold War and terms like 'un-American' were also used before you'd expect. Before I had access to this database I would have only spotted this kind of thing after lots of reading. Using the *ProQuest Historical Newspapers* resource you can see how language evolves."

"I have researched issues dealing with Indians, and looked at the discussion around Sitting Bull, Custer's Last Stand, or the Massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890." Dolores says there are shifts between 1870 and 1890, and that depending on where a newspaper is located "I can compare coverage in several newspapers to see the range of coverage". Having a selection of newspapers so easily at her disposal enables her to see "different interpretations on events such as Wounded Knee. The newspapers that were anti-Indian use terms such as 'savages' to describe them. Others were overtly sympathetic, publishing letters to show events from Indians' perspective". This gives students a range of public opinion at the time. Dolores also says

that "images and photos are a useful aspect of it, rather than just text. Seeing the layout, headlines, how much priority issues are given, is much better than just text based databases".

Dolores says that she gives students demonstrations in class of how to use *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*, but that it "does seem quite easy to learn. They have to experiment a bit to see what it will produce, but it doesn't seem to need a great deal of training. Some databases produce far too much stuff, and aren't as sophisticated as ProQuest, where you can refine searches to make it more flexible".

Established in 1897, the year of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, Victoria University is one of the country's most respected and in-demand universities. Te Whare Wānanga, 'The place or house of higher learning', is the meaning of the first part of Victoria University of Wellington's Māori name. As befits the Te Whare Wānanga definition, Victoria is known for its far reaching and thorough research programmes. They ranked within the top three New Zealand universities for research quality by the Government's Performance-based Research Fund in the 2003 round. The History Programme was ranked first nationally for history in the recent round.



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