

# Best Historical Materials

## RUSA History Section Historical Materials Committee

**RUSA History Section Historical Materials Committee contributing members** are Shelley Arlen, Editor; Michelle Baildon; Brooke Becker, Assistant Editor; Patricia Clark; Jean Kiesel; Janalyn Moss; Jenny Presnell; Jennalyn Tellman; and Alica White.

Welcome to “Best Historical Materials,” the annual review of outstanding English-language resources in the field of history, as selected by members of the Historical Materials Committee, RUSA History Section. The Committee’s new name and charge reflect changes in both technology and publication trends. With the proliferation of websites devoted to historical research and the dwindling publication of print bibliographies, the scope of the late Bibliographies and Indexes Committee has been enlarged. Our new goal is to promote and recognize achievements in improving access to historical materials, regardless of format. This year, the group selected two print bibliographies and eight websites. The electronic resources chosen this year are freely available on the Web. Final reviews of these websites were made in April and May 2008.

Members of the library profession are invited to submit suggestions of print indexes and bibliographies as well as online resources to the committee for consideration. Nominations from any historical time period will be considered. Suggestions, with appropriate bibliographic information, should be sent to Brooke Becker ([babecker@uab.edu](mailto:babecker@uab.edu)). The next submission deadline is October 31, 2008.

The Bisbee Deportation of 1917, [www.library.arizona.edu/exhibits/bisbee](http://www.library.arizona.edu/exhibits/bisbee). University of Arizona. Reviewed Apr. 21, 2008.

Dedicated to a pivotal moment in Arizona mining and labor history, Bisbee Deportation of 1917 contains publications from Industrial Workers of the World, personal recollections, newspaper articles, court records, government reports, correspondence, journal articles, and a video. The contents focus on the vigilante roundup and forced evacuation of one thousand miners by both mine owners and complicit politicians and law enforcement officers. Materials are arranged topically and by type into History, Primary Sources, Resources, Deportees, and A Teacher’s Corner, which provides suggestions on using the materials to teach students how to gather and interpret historical evidence. This event had wide repercussions that affected unions and their nationwide formation, and the website serves as a basic resource for labor history. The site is most suitable for high school students and undergraduates. —Alica White, *Pennsylvania State University, Mont Alto*

Blackpast.org: An Online Reference Guide to African American History, [www.blackpast.org](http://www.blackpast.org). Quintard Taylor. Reviewed May 13, 2008.

Started as a course page for a 2004 University of Washington class, this site has been developed by Professor Taylor and

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a team of volunteers into a major online destination for information about African American history. Resources include an open-access encyclopedia of more than one thousand entries; primary sources, including speeches, court cases, audio recordings, and photographs; bibliographies; timelines; and lists of links to digital archive collections, museums, research centers, and other related resources. The site also includes a section on African American History in the West and a section (in development) on Global African History. Blackpast.org should prove an especially valuable resource to undergraduates, as well as appealing to a general audience.—*Michelle Baildon, Massachusetts Institute of Technology Libraries, Cambridge*

Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project, [www.densho.org](http://www.densho.org). Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project. Reviewed Apr. 25, 2008.

*Densho* is an outstanding effort to document the Japanese American experience. Begun in 1996, the resource focuses on the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II with segments on Causes of Incarceration, Learning Center (curriculum materials for teachers and online exhibits), Archive, and Other Resources (supplemental materials such as a glossary and a timeline). The Archive provides access to valuable primary-source materials including videos, oral histories, photographs, and documents; users can search or browse by format or topic, most notably by incarceration facility and camp newspaper. The Archive is continually augmented with new material. To gain access to the Archive, the user must register for a password, available via e-mail within two working days. Until 2001, the site was sponsored by the Japanese American Chamber of Commerce of Washington State; since then, it has been supported with donations from foundations and corporations.—*Janalyn L. Moss, University of Iowa Libraries, Iowa City*

Documenting the American South, <http://docsouth.unc.edu>. University Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Reviewed Apr. 22, 2008.

Documenting the American South is a rich, useful digital publishing initiative that provides Internet access to texts, images, and audio files related to southern history, literature, and culture. All areas once considered to be part of the region are included; slave narratives include all parts of North America. There are ten thematic collections of books, diaries, posters, artifacts, letters, oral-history interviews, and songs. Subject access is by Library of Congress subject headings. Material comes primarily from the University of North Carolina southern holdings. Guided by an editorial board, the website is committed to the long-term availability of these collections and their online records. Its value lies in its depth, breadth, and multiplicity of access tools. It is useful for scholarly research as well as for a source for teachers in K–12.—*Jennalyn Tellman, University of Arizona Library, Tucson*

Egan, David R. and Melinda A. Egan. *Joseph Stalin: An Annotated Bibliography of English Language Periodical Literature to 2005*. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow, 2007. 487p; \$85 (ISBN 0-8108-5948-3).

This comprehensive, annotated bibliography references not only the usual social and political assessments, but also short stories, works about film studies, and artwork concerning Stalin. Written for the nonspecialist and accessible to undergraduate researchers, the fourteen sections allow for browsing while a meticulous index provides detailed access. Annotations are summative and do an excellent job of placing the source arguments in context of the general academic discussion on Stalinism. Only one other English-language bibliography on Stalin exists (Marty et al., *Stalin: An Annotated Guide to Books in English* [Bloomberg, 1993]), but it is dated. The authors plan a second volume containing English-language books, essays, conference papers, and dissertations. Recommended for most undergraduate collections.—*Jenny Presnell, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio*

Goldman, Yosef. *Hebrew Printing in America, 1735–1926: A History and Annotated Bibliography*. 2 vols. Brooklyn, N.Y.: Yosef Goldman, 2006. 1188 pages; \$450 (ISBN: 0-5997-5685-4).

A look at little-known titles of American Hebraica, this catalog is organized into eighteen chapters on subjects such as Christian Hebraism; Drama, Fiction, Humor, and Poetry; Liturgy; Christian and Missionary; and Zionism. Goldman, a rare book dealer, provides helpful secondary sources, correcting errors as needed. Indices cover printer, imprint year, typesetter, as well as author and title, but there is no subject index. Based on *Koheleth Amerika* (1926), *Hebrew Printing* includes most pre–1927 titles (omitting those the author could not locate) and adds works of rabbinics, *derash*, and Americana not in *Koheleth Amerika*. Five major Hebrew collections were surveyed for holdings information. The indices are useful in locating multi-categorized works, and the book is well-illustrated. Recommended for libraries with collections in American Jewish culture.—*Shelley Arlen, University of Florida Libraries, Gainesville*

Irish History Online, [www.irishhistoryonline.ie](http://www.irishhistoryonline.ie). Irish History Online. Reviewed Apr. 30, 2008.

This bibliography on all aspects of Irish history is based on the annual “Writings on Irish History,” published in the journal *Irish Historical Studies*. More than sixty-three thousand citations cover periods from prehistoric times to the present and are comprehensive for works published since 1936. A particular strength of the collection is the coverage of local history publications. The site is enhanced by utilizing OCLC’s OpenURL Referrer to connect searchers to their local library’s databases for full-text options. For those without a local OpenURL resolver, the GetCopy service recommends links to such databases as Project MUSE, Blackwell Synergy, and Oxford Journals. Help pages are very detailed regarding

database idiosyncrasies. Recently, a substantial number of sources on the Irish Abroad/Irish Diaspora have been added. The newest version connects to the Royal Historical Society Bibliography for more sources.—*Patricia Clark, Texas Tech University, Lubbock*

Open Collections Program: Women Working, 1800–1930, <http://ocp.hul.harvard.edu/ww>. Harvard University Library. Reviewed Apr. 26, 2008.

Providing access to more than 7,500 manuscript pages, 3,500 books and pamphlets, and 1,200 photographs, Women Working focuses mainly on the role of women in the United States and their effect on economics. Taken from Harvard University's museum and library collections, the materials are searchable by title, name/creator, subject, form/genre, or keyword. The collection may be browsed by both genre and subject and includes a section for teacher resources. Combining all relevant resources in the collection on a particular subject, such as "What is the value of a Child?: Childhood and Child Labor," these smaller collections provide a cohesive structure for lesson plans or for the lay researcher. As a whole, this collection provides access to materials that might otherwise be difficult to obtain and is a worthy addition to any library collection or "favorites" page.—*Brooke Becker, University of Alabama at Birmingham*

The Proceedings of the Old Bailey, London, 1674–1913, [www.oldbaileyonline.org](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org). HRI Online Publications, Reviewed Apr. 22, 2008.

Published accounts of trials at the Old Bailey, London's criminal court until 1913, were originally intended for a popular audience, but evolved into a quasi-official court reporter. This database covers more than 190,000 trials from the period. The database is searchable by keyword, name,

place, offense, verdict, punishment, time period, or any combination. Results are displayed as transcriptions, linked to digitized images of the original pages. Lengthy scholarly essays discuss Crime, Justice, and Punishment; London and its Hinterlands; Community Histories; Gender; and the Old Bailey Courthouse. A massive bibliography of mostly British publications supplements the essays. Social historians will find a goldmine here; genealogists can learn exactly why great-granddad got transported. The April 2008 update extended coverage to 1913, doubling the size of the database. The bibliography was discontinued, but each essay includes suggested readings.—*Jean S. Kiesel, Edith Garland Dupré Library, University of Louisiana at Lafayette*

Urban Experience in Chicago: Hull-House and Its Neighborhoods, 1889–1963 [www.uic.edu/jaddams/hull/urbanexp/#](http://www.uic.edu/jaddams/hull/urbanexp/#). University of Illinois at Chicago, College of Architecture and the Arts and the Jane Adams Hull-House Museum. Reviewed Apr. 27, 2008.

This site contains primary resources (photographs, maps, letters, speech transcripts, and pamphlets, among others) as well as scholarly essays. The collection is fully searchable and includes a browsing section for documents as well as images. Under the Documents Browse section, one can browse all documents or limit the browse to only primary documents. The site includes a section on Historical Narrative, which contains the majority of the documents, a timeline, image section and a geography section, which focuses on maps of the area surrounding the Hull-House. The Teachers' Resources page contains concise summaries and links to primary sources that provide simple lesson plans for teachers. This site is a wonderful addition to any collection, K–12 through advanced researchers.—*Brooke Becker, University of Alabama at Birmingham*