

November-December 2011 E-Resource Notice

Greetings! Last summer, a colleague sent me an article that originally appeared in the *Edmonton Journal* that I thought would interest you, too. As a US Department of Education advocate for increased and improved study of Canada in US classrooms, I found the article motivating—as will all of you who teach Canada—to keep up the good work ... it's clearly needed.

Additional items below will help you teach and students learn about Canada in a variety of ways, including award-winning literature, teacher-created websites, and articles about the War of 1812 that can help classrooms celebrate 200 years of peace between Canada and the United States in the New Year.

Best wishes for teaching Canada and for a safe and happy holiday season! Tina

Please ensure your server accepts messages and notify me if you receive duplicate notices or wish to be removed from the Listserv. Western Washington University and University of Washington jointly perform K-12 STUDY CANADA outreach as a U.S. Department of Education-funded National Resource Center for Canada in the US. Annual Embassy of Canada grants also provide support.

1. ARTICLE: FEW AMERICANS KNOW CANADA'S CAPITAL

Few Americans know Canada's capital: poll – Postmedia News (May 12, 2011)

[Source: www.edmontonjournal.com/Americans+know+Canada+capital+poll/4768897/story.html]

A new survey shows that fewer than half of all Americans can name Canada's capital and that close to two-thirds of our neighbours to the south admit they learned nothing about this country's history in school.

The survey commissioned by the Montreal-based Association for Canadian Studies, part of the organization's broader probe of cross-border attitudes ahead of next year's bicentennial of the War of 1812, suggests younger Americans are the least informed about Canada and that the subject may be slipping further down the list of teaching priorities in the U.S.

More than 1,000 Americans were asked, among other questions, if they knew the name of Canada's capital. About 48 per cent of those surveyed said they did, while the rest said they didn't know or were "not sure" where the capital was. They were not asked to prove that they knew Ottawa was Canada's capital.

The 1,048 Americans were also asked: "Did you learn anything about the history of Canada in school?" Just 36 per cent of those surveyed - and only 12 per cent of those aged 18 to 20 - answered yes.

The survey was completed by the U.S. public opinion research firm ORC International. The web-based poll is deemed to have a margin of error of 3.1 percentage points.

2. NEW RESOURCE ON CANADA-US RELATIONS FOR HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOMS

Secondary-level teachers who examine (or want to include) the Canada-US relationship in their classrooms will definitely be interested in reading *Doing the Continental: A New Canadian-American Relationship* by Dr. David Dymont (political scientist at University of Ottawa and Carleton University). The book, published by Dundurn Press, was honored by the Toronto Library Foundation in 2011 as one of Canada's best recent publications (and by as the best books on Canada-US politics in the last twenty-five years). Plus, there's a FREE 33-page Teacher's Resource Guide at www.dundurn.com/sites/default/files/Doing_the_Continental_TRG.pdf!

Although originally intended for use in Canadian classrooms, it can be equally effective for use in US classrooms (especially since looking at the relationship from a Canadian point of view usually leads to a greater understanding of the important role of the United States in continental and international relations). As per the publisher, "Canada's relations with the United States are broad and deep, and with Obama in the White House,

the two countries are about to enter what could be a new era of hope and renewal. From water and energy policy to defense, environmental strategy, and Arctic sovereignty, David Dymont provides an astute, pithy analysis of the past, present, and future continental dance between two countries that have much in common, yet often step on each other's feet." Learn more at www.dundurn.com/books/doing_continental.

3. [100 MORE CANADIAN HEROINES](#)

October was "Women's History Month" in Canada and I was happy to learn that historian Merna Forster has written a new installment to her best-selling Canadian Heroines series called **100 More Canadian Heroines: Famous and Forgotten Faces** (published by the Dundurn Group with a foreword by astronaut Julie Payette).

This means there are 100 more incredible stories of great characters and wonderful images you can share with students. "The book is full of amazing facts and trivia about extraordinary women...Read on and discover 100 more Canadian heroines and how they've changed our country [Canada]." To learn more about the book and author, visit www.heroines.ca/about/100morecanadianheroines.html.

4. [MRS. MITCHELL, MR. DONN and "CANADA'S COOLEST CLASS" – 3 VIRTUAL CLASSROOMS TO VISIT](#)

A New Hampshire teacher, Kathi Mitchell, and two Maryland teachers, Linn and Don Donn, have created websites that serve as excellent student gateways to learning about Canada. See www.kathimitchell.com/Canada and <http://countries.mrdonn.org/canada.html>. Both offer connections to lesson plans on Canada for teachers as well. Mrs. Mitchell's site was compiled by/for students in her classroom and I hope it inspires other educators to provide links. Mr. Donn's site offers extensive links for social studies teachers that go beyond teaching Canada to other world regions and other eras of history. A favorite that I have mentioned before is the classroom resource developed by Bill Belsey and students in his Springback, Alberta classrooms. Every time I visit the site, it keeps getting better. I hope you'll visit www.coolclass.ca, too, to view their learning journeys and learning links!

5. [WAR OF 1812: CANADA'S HISTORY AND PBS RESOURCES:](#)

Canada's History has dedicated a "Special Feature" area on their magazine website at <http://canadashistory.ca/Magazine/Special-Feature--War-of-1812.aspx> that showcases all "War of 1812" documentaries, publications, events and historical research being released in the upcoming year. It includes links and work by the 26 leading authorities on the war—American, British, Canadian and First Nations historians—who were interviewed by PBS for "The War of 1812" documentary special that aired last month.

What I didn't know at the time is that a companion book, website, and comprehensive **bi-national educational resources** are available, too. It is rare, indeed, to find classroom materials that target classrooms on both sides of the border and, in this case, a set of NCSS standards and expectations was even specially developed for teaching about the War of 1812. I look forward to more such bi-national approaches to teaching in the future!

- PBS Website – www.pbs.org/wned/war-of-1812
- Bi-national Educational Standards and Expectations - <http://ec2-50-16-227-110.compute-1.amazonaws.com/media/store/page-media/wned-war-1812/23/Standards.pdf>
- "In the Classroom" Bi-national Educational Resources – www.pbs.org/wned/war-of-1812/classroom/?utm_source=Canada%27s+History+Newsletter&utm_campaign=65de0f3810-War+of+1812+Oct+2011&utm_medium=email
- PBS "War of 1812" DVD & Companion Book (\$34.99) - www.shoppbs.org/product/index.jsp?productId=11974606&cp=&sr=1&kw=the+war+of+1812&origkw=the+war+of+1812&parentPage=search

6. A HUMOROUS LOOK AT “THE MOST IRRITATING WAR OF ALL”

Below is a statement by Canadian cartoonist Kate Beaton [www.harkavagrant.com/index.php?id=166] that offers humorous “food for thought” in classrooms. It can also serve well as an introductory statement/motivator at the outset of a teaching unit on the War of 1812 (or as a writing prompt afterwards). What do you think?

The war of 1812 is little talked about but it is an excellent example for people from the US and Canada about how no event is recorded without bias. The US regards it, I believe, as almost a second war of independence, and Canada views it as an invasion by Americans. America declared the war, invaded, and we held our ground and staved off their attacks. Canadians don't learn in school about false impressment of American seamen or seizure of their vessels prior to the war that caused it. Both the Canadian parliament and the American white house burned to the ground. We don't learn about the Battle of Fort McHenry, they don't learn about Queenston Heights. Everyone disagrees on who won, even though it was a stalemate. Natives get royally screwed. Normally I am not annoyed by this sort of thing, but in this case, that isn't so. I watched an American produced documentary on the subject and it made me pull a face so many times it might have stuck that way. The War of 1812 is the Most Irritating War of All.

[Thank you to C. Gnojewski, a K-12 STUDY CANADA teacher associate in Washington, who pointed me towards Beaton’s cartoons and humorous reflections.]

7. “DAMN YANKEES” MACLEAN’S MAGAZINE ARTICLE

The attention-grabbing headline – “*Damn Yankees are trying to steal our victory in 1812: As plans are made to commemorate the War of 1812, the U.S. tries to re-write the ending*” – that appeared in Canada’s national magazine, *Maclean’s*, on October 11 (see <http://www2.macleans.ca/2011/10/11/damn-yankees>) was really used to draw Canadian attention to the “forgotten war” more than to report on any misguided revision of history by Americans. With both Canada and the US commemorating various battles and victories of the War of 1812, writer Peter Shaw Taylor provides an overview of plans underway and hopes that Canadians appreciate how this war-without-a-definitive-end was “a foundational moment for modern Canada...a burgeoning nation with a distinct Canadian identity.” He also points out, however, that with no clear winner, there has been considerable license with historical interpretation surrounding the War of 1812 over the years. To some extent, he relishes stirring the pot by comparing commemorative events and showing how various battles, heroes/heroines, and victories have been mythologized by all sides. His central example involving Colonel Joel Stone’s defense of Gananoque offers proof that Canada is not above myth-making, too. Most importantly, if it’s true that “Canada suffers from an excess of geography and a deficit of history”, then, as Shaw Taylor points out, “the anniversary is a rare and welcome opportunity for the entire country to celebrate a time of daunting heroes, dangerous invaders, grave perils and miraculous triumphs.”

I’d only add that all upcoming commemorative events are a great way for students to experience history and celebrate 200 years of peace and friendship between Canada and the US.

8. CANADIAN RECIPE OF THE MONTH: A REAL TASTE OF HISTORY FIVE VICTORIAN WINTER WARM-UPS

I found the following four recipes on the Parks Canada website about Woodside National Historic Site of Canada in Kitchener, ON, the boyhood home of William Lyon Mackenzie King, Canada's longest-serving Prime Minister: www.pc.gc.ca/eng/rech-srch/clic-click.aspx?cgi-bin/MsmGo.exe?grab_id=0&page_id=67239&query=recipe&hiword=RECIPES%20recipe.

Wouldn’t it be fun to celebrate the cold of winter as so many did in Victorian times? Mackenzie King’s former home has been restored to the Victorian style of the 1890s and its importance of this residence is best reflected in King's own words: "The years that left the most abiding of all impressions and most in the way of family associations were those lived at Woodside."

I hope you'll also want to learn more about William Lyon Mackenzie King and Victorian Canada by exploring the other education resources available online at www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/on/woodside/index.aspx.

Hot Mulled Cider

Ingredients: 1 gallon sweet cider / 1 - lemon cut into quarters / 2 - 3" cinnamon sticks / 1 C brown sugar / Add a bit of nutmeg, cloves and cinnamon.

Method: Combine all of the ingredients in a large saucepan. Heat thoroughly. Serve hot.

Pumpkin Cookies [Original Source: *Pioneer Cooking in Ontario*, 1981 p.42]

Ingredients: 1 C sugar / 1 egg / 2 C flour / 1 tsp baking powder / 2 tsp salt / vanilla / 1 C shortening / 1 C pumpkin / 1 tsp baking soda / 1 tsp cinnamon / 1 C raisins / 1 C nuts (optional)

Method: Cream together sugar and shortening. Add egg, pumpkin and vanilla and beat well. Sift the dry ingredients together and then into the sugar mixture. Add raisins and nuts. Bake on ungreased cookie sheets in a moderate oven (375 F) for 10 - 12 minutes. Ice when cool.

Icing: 1 C brown sugar / 2 Tbs butter / 4 Tbs milk / 1 C icing sugar

Icing Method: Combine brown sugar, butter and milk in a saucepan and boil for 2 minutes. Cool, add icing sugar and beat until smooth. Dip cookie tops in icing. Should icing thicken, thin it with a bit of milk.

Rich Soft Gingerbread [Original Source: *Smiley's Cookbook and Universal Household Guide*, 1894]

Ingredients: 3C flour / 1 C butter / 1 C sugar / 1 small C molasses / 2 eggs / 1 tsp soda / 1 tsp ginger / 1 tsp salt

Method: Make a stiff dough with flour, and bake in a square tin. (*Bake at 350F for about 40 minutes.*)

Orange Sauce: Use 1 cup hot water, 1 cup sugar, 2 cup butter, 1 heaping tablespoon of cornstarch wet in the strained juice of 2 acid oranges (the red, or blood oranges are the best). Boil the water, sugar and orange peel until the sugar is dissolved; then add the cornstarch and orange juice and let boil until it thickens; take out the orange peel and add the butter with 1 teaspoon of salt; stir well together, and serve.

Shortbread

Ingredients: 1 C sugar / 2 C butter / 4 C flour / Pinch of salt NB: Almond or vanilla extract may be added.

Method: Sift together the flour, sugar and salt and rub in the butter. Roll or pat the dough onto a cookie sheet and prick with a fork. Bake in a slow oven until pale brown. While still warm, cut into fingers.

Pomanders If celebrating a Victorian Christmas, see the "Pomander" craft activity at: www.pc.gc.ca/eng/lhn-nhs/on/woodside/activ/activ1.aspx

9. CANADIAN CHILDREN'S BOOK CENTER & 5 AWARD-WINNERS

Do you love children's literature? I highly recommend visiting www.bookcentre.ca – website for the Canadian Children's Book Centre (CCBC), a Canadian not-for-profit organization founded in 1976 dedicated to encouraging, promoting and supporting the reading, writing, illustrating and publishing of Canadian books for young readers. With book collections and extensive resources in five cities across Canada, the CCBC is a treasure-trove for anyone interested in Canadian books for young readers. Their programs, publications, and resources help teachers, librarians, booksellers and parents select the very best for young readers.

Last month, the CCBC announced the winners of five major children's book awards that it administers (see below). An online store was created by Chapters Indigo so that you can browse through information about all of the winners and nominees of the 2011 Canadian Children's Literature Awards (including last year's winners).

1. TD CANADIAN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AWARD *Sponsored by TD Bank Group*
Plain Kate written by Erin Bow; published by Scholastic Canada for ages 11 and up.

"*Plain Kate* is a triumph of imagination. With astonishing skill, Erin Bow creates the world of Kate, whose talents as a wood carver mark her as a witch. The fascinating, intricate plot bravely explores the wrenching complexities of cruelty and of love. Bow's prose is at once lyrical and raw, and her characters are indelible. This is a book that will be read for generations."

2. MARILYN BAILLIE PICTURE BOOK AWARD *Sponsored by A. Charles Baillie*

I Know Here written by Laurel Croza; illustrated by Matt James; published by Groundwood Books for ages 5-7.

"An authentic, personal voice captivates from the first line, in this leave-taking from a beloved childhood home. The centre of this child's universe is a trailer camp in the northern wilderness, rendered in all its details with brilliant harmony between Croza's affecting, naturalistic words and James's evocative, childlike paintings... Running throughout are bittersweet emotions, wonderfully narrated, that all will recognize."

3. NORMA FLECK AWARD FOR CANADIAN CHILDREN'S NON-FICTION *Sponsored by the Fleck Family Foundation*

Case Closed! Nine Mysteries Unlocked by Modern Science written by Susan Hughes; illustrated by Michael Wandelmaier; published by Kids Can Press for ages 8-12.

"A perfect combination of science, story and history, compellingly presented by Susan Hughes who shows with absorbing detail how modern science can shed new light on some of mankind's most beguiling mysteries... The book is replete with colourful graphic illustrations, maps, photographs and fascinating forensic notes to intrigue the curious child as well as adults... An exciting and entertaining read."

4. GEOFFREY BILSON AWARD FOR HISTORICAL FICTION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE *Sponsored by the Canadian Children's Book Centre's Bilson Endowment Fund*

The Glory Wind written by Valerie Sherrard; published by Fitzhenry & Whiteside for ages 11 and up.

"A very moving portrayal of both small town life and friendship... Sherrard beautifully conveys the small-mindedness and prejudice of the town, and the subsequent consequences... *The Glory Wind* effectively depicts life during the 1940s, but still manages to be a modern story that resonates with contemporary readers... It did everything for me that a good novel should do – it made me smile, it made me angry, it brought me to tears."

5. JOHN SPRAY MYSTERY AWARD *Sponsored by John Spray*

A Spy in the House (The Agency) Written by Y.S. Lee; published by Candlewick Press for ages 13 and up.

"In *A Spy in the House* Lee has got Victorian London right; this is what Dickens' world really smelled like, literally and morally... Interesting and unique, Mary Quinn is a strong character who can think on her feet... I loved this book from the first line to the very last... A great read for a young adult of any age... It worked from beginning to end."

10. RUTH WRITER'S REVIEW OF CANADIAN LITERATURE

The following fiction and non-fiction titles offer Veteran's Day connections in Ruth's review that follows.

- ***There It Is: A Canadian in the Vietnam War*** by Les D. Brown (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2000). ISBN—0-7710-1692-1
- ***Hell No We Won't Go: Vietnam Draft Resisters in Canada*** by Alan Haig-Brown (Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 1996). ISBN—1-55192-011-5
- ***The Sentimentalists: A Novel*** by Johanna Skibsrud (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 2011). ISBN—978-0-393-08251-7

As we approach November 11 – Veteran's Day in the U.S. and Remembrance Day in Canada –three authors provide very different perspectives on the Vietnam War and all are worth reading. One is a personal account written by a Canadian-born soldier while serving in Vietnam, another relates documented accounts by those who decided to leave the United States to live the rest of their lives in Canada rather than participate in the Vietnam War while the third is a fictional account of the events that shaped an era.

Les Brown, born in Canada, moved with his family to California when only a child. Since he was a U.S. resident, at age twenty, he was drafted and fought as both an infantryman and with the 101st Airborne. Brown's graphic description of events and coarse language in *There It Is: A Canadian in the Vietnam War* may prove offensive to some readers but it nonetheless provides a detailed and fascinating first-hand account of the dangers of war and life in the jungle. Brown also vividly explains how many in Vietnam resorted to substance abuse to cope with the diminishing morale of troops. Brown offers compelling details that cover his basic training and post-Vietnam experiences which include returning to Canada where he remains active in an organization of Canadian Vietnam Veterans.

Alan Haig-Brown interviewed twenty Americans who left their homeland during the Vietnam era as resisters, deserters, and conscientious objectors and relates their stories in his book *Hell No We Won't Go: Vietnam Draft Resisters in Canada*. These men and women retraced the steps of other Americans who fled their homeland for political reasons in the past—United Empire Loyalists and fugitive slaves. It became apparent while reading this collection of interviews how easily Americans crossed the border during that unsettled era. In February 1970, a CBC radio broadcast even reported how to evade the draft in three steps. Perhaps as many as 40,000 Americans followed these steps to Canada and a new life. One of those interviewed by Haig-Brown stated, "I knew virtually nothing about Canada, except that it was north of our border." Most of those interviewed were equally unaware of the country that offered a safe-haven but all quickly adapted and became part of the Canada's multicultural and complex social fabric.

In the foreword to Haig-Brown's book, popular historian Pierre Berton wrote, "The young men who came to Canada in the sixties and seventies to avoid the American draft were excoriated by many of their fellows as cowards, afraid to fight for their country. The truth is that their decision was an act of considerable bravery." While many who served their country well during this same period would disagree, this collection nonetheless provides interesting insight into the motivations of those who chose to emigrate.

Interestingly enough—and less well known—is that almost an equal number of Canadians served in U.S. uniforms in Southeast Asia during the same time. According to Brown, "young men continued to trickle over the border to enlist. National and international laws were being broken, but both governments looked the other way." Inevitably, some died there and 111 Canadians have their names inscribed on the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C.

Johanna Skibsrud's *The Sentimentalists: A Novel* is a fictional account of a Canadian who dies serving the US this way. In Skibsrud's novel, she delves into the sometimes permanent emotional conflicts shared by many who served in that war. She includes the impact on family members, as well, in her compelling fictional work.

According to journalist and Member of Parliament Peter Kent, in the Introduction to *There It Is*, "There are no official figures on the number of Canadian men—and women—who served in Vietnam.... Estimates range from five or six thousand to more than fifty thousand." Likewise, there were no official records on the number of Americans who left for Canada. Yet, all three of these accounts provide fascinating looks at a controversy that started almost fifty years ago. Regardless of values [then or now], these books permit a new look at events shaping a generation on both sides of the border.