The Present in Our Past: A Large-Scale Analysis of Canadian Historiography

by

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Dalhousie University is located in Mi'kma'ki, the
ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq.
We are all Treaty people.

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ABSTRACT

Using a bibliometric approach to understand the development of the Canadian history field, this research analyzes trends and characteristics as observed in articles published in eight major Canadian history journals from 1954 to 2021. Subject terms, geographic region terms, and citation counts are used as indicators of research attention in order to assess patterns from the articles on a macro-level. Central to this work is the idea that history is constructed and produced in various ways within contemporary contexts. While it is often evident how the past influences the present throughout history, this study aims to unearth ways in which the present actively informs our ideas of the past by documenting how Canadian history research is classified, and how that has changed over time. In applying quantitative methods to a portion of published works in the field, this research also proposes a new way of considering Canadian historiography.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

AHL   America: History and Life

CHA   Canadian Historical Association

CHR   *The Canadian Historical Review*

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 History as past and present

Academic history is a discipline rooted both in the past and the present. By virtue of researching events that have *already* taken place, there is an inherent temporal distance between the subject and the scholar; historians study the past, but they do so in the present. As a result there are varying interpretations of history, since individual scholars may have access to different theoretical frameworks, primary sources, and contemporary circumstances that inform the research they conduct. This has been a significant point of discussion in the discipline since the mid-twentieth century, as scholars have noted that certain historical events have been depicted in various ways over time depending on how historians frame their research (Scott, 2021; Tosh, 2015).

At the centre of this discourse is the understanding that the nature of historical research is speculative. From the very beginning of the research process, the sources made available to historians are, as argued by Tosh (2015), "an *incomplete* record, not only because so much has perished by accident or design, but in a more fundamental sense because a great deal that happened left no material trace whatever" (pp. 168-169). Primary sources are limited first by what was recorded and then secondly, by what was preserved. Archival institutions are finite spaces; they are limited in the materials that they can acquire and preserve, and not every record can be archived. In this context, archivists are restricted to preserving only "a slice of a slice" (Charlton, 2017, p. 6) of reality, and this necessary curation produces gaps in knowledge depending on what is prioritized at the time of acquisition. As Zinn (1977) identified, "knowledge has a social origin and a social use" (p. 2), and subsequently archives cannot claim to be neutral; there

is an element of subjectivity in the archival process that influences the sources researchers have access to. While archivists can strive to minimize these gaps and create repositories that reflect all aspects of society, a certain level of choice is still present in the archival process and it influences how historical research is conducted. Due to this subjectivity, historians cannot take primary sources at face value. In order to interpret meaning from the sources they use, historians must analyze them and situate them within larger contexts.

In doing so, historians become active agents; not only do they document history but they create it as well by prioritizing certain topics and approaches to historical research. Scott (2021) describes this role in her research, defining historians as "those who *make* [emphasis added] history in another sense, by creating a representation of the past that chooses and organizes what will count as history" (p. 2). As argued by Donnelly & Norton (2021), "[history] is not something that generates its own forms naturally" (p. 3), rather, historians make choices to designate meaning to certain events or figures, drawing on different theoretical frameworks, previous scholarship, and primary sources to inform their reasoning. Taking these factors into account, the study of history can be conceptualized as a dialogic relationship between the past and the present, where, in many ways, the past is understood through the lens of the present.

1.2 The Canadian historical landscape

Understanding that scholars possess an active role in creating history has been central to debates in Canadian history since this philosophy first emerged around the mid-twentieth century. Influenced in part by poststructuralism as an intellectual movement in

the 1960s and 70s, many scholars began writing works on Canadian historiography, documenting the trends in the discipline. One notable historian in this effort was Carl Berger, who studied English Canadian historiography in the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries (Friesen & Owram, 2011). Berger (1967) emphasized the link between the past and the present, stating:

> History has never been written with complete detachment; invariably it reflects and incorporates the ideological climate of the period in which it was conceived and composed. By studying the assumptions and guiding ideas which influenced the writing of history, one is really assessing the values and aspirations of the culture which produced it. (p. vii)

This marked a significant point of development in the discipline, coinciding with far higher student enrolment in Canadian universities and the expansion of higher learning institutions during the postwar period (Owram & Friesen, 2011). In this context the theoretical frameworks applied to Canadian history began to diversify; inspired by national and international political movements, scholars increasingly considered intersections and dimensions of class, race, and gender in their works, studying histories that had previously been excluded from academic institutions (Miller, 2004).

These ideas were highly impactful to the discipline, and understanding that historical narratives are produced in social contexts has remained central to the field since. Recently in the Canadian Historical Association's Presidential Address, P. E. Bryden urged scholars in the field to "acknowledge the ways in which the shape we give to the past affects the way that it is understood" (Bryden, 2022, p. 13). As emphasized by Bryden, it is crucial to consider the discipline and the narratives forwarded within it

through a critical lens, and acknowledge the responsibility historians have to reflect on the histories they are portraying. Given the significant shifts to the intellectual makeup of the field, as well as a substantial increase in the volume of historical works produced, the mid-twentieth century onwards marks an important point of Canadian historiography.

1.3 Bibliometrics

While there is a significant body of literature on Canadian historiography (e.g. Neylan, 2013; Osborne, 2002; Gagnon, 1987; Alan, 2010), especially in recent years, these studies tend to focus on the treatment of specific topics or figures throughout Canadian history rather than analyzing the field on a larger scale. Considering the sheer volume of works that are published in the field annually, it is not surprising that purely qualitative works cannot aim to capture trends in the field on a macro-level anymore (McKay, 2000). In this context, using bibliometric methods of analysis, which typically enable the use of large sample sizes, to assess characteristics of publications within the discipline of Canadian history can aim to contribute to understandings of the field on a large scale.

Defined as the statistical analysis of publications in a field (Pritchard, 1989), bibliometrics uses quantitative observations to assess certain dynamics within research communities. This stems from the understanding that bibliographic information generated by research within a field can be used to understand its demographics (Moed et al., 2002). As put by Wallin (2005), the purpose of bibliometric studies is typically to "transform something intangible...into a manageable entity" (p. 97), for example using citation counts as an indicator of research performance. Quantitative observations do not reflect

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every aspect of a publication; simply because a work is cited often does not mean it is inherently of high quality (Wallin, 2005), however, when applied critically, bibliometrics can be useful in understanding certain characteristics of a research community.

Bibliometrics has typically been used in connection with the science fields rather than those of social sciences and humanities (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016; Linmans, 2010; Franssen & Wouters, 2019), and this is in part due to the different research practices employed within those fields. Humanities research, for example, tends to cite monographs and edited books more often than sciences do, and collecting citation data from these sources is more challenging as they often do not appear in the typical databases used to inform bibliometric research (Linmans, 2010). Despite these challenges, there are a number of ways bibliometrics have been applied to humanities fields successfully, for example Igarashi & Riddell's (2019) study of commonly-used keywords to consider research topics within the British Romanticism field. These types of analysis can promote reflexivity within a discipline, as they are useful in unveiling the conceptual landscape of a field, in effect, identifying which areas have been studied.

In this way, using bibliographic data associated with Canadian history journal articles can inform large-scale analyses of the field. Although they do not depict the field in its entirety, peer-reviewed journal articles represent a significant amount of research within the discipline, and analyzing the ways in which they have been classified can contribute to larger understandings of the discipline. Applying bibliometric methods to Canadian history, which has rarely been done before, also proposes a new way of considering its historiography.

1.4 Research questions

Given the significance of the changeable nature of history, and the value of considering it through the lens of quantitative analysis, my research aims to consider Canadian history published in peer-reviewed journals, framed along three main research questions:

1. What are popular research topics in Canadian history?

    a. Which subject terms are the most frequently used to describe publications?

    b. What are the trajectories for the most frequently used subject terms?

2. What are popular geographic regions of study in Canadian history?

    a. Which geographic regions are most frequently studied?

    b. What are the trajectories for geographic region terms over time?

3. What are citation trends in Canadian history?

    a. Which publications have been cited with the highest frequency?

For the purpose of this study, data is retrieved from publications in major Canadian history journals and organized to assess characteristics and trends in the field. The journals included are: *The Canadian Historical Review, Acadiensis, Ontario History, BC Studies, La revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française, Journal of the Canadian Historical Association, Histoire sociale/Social History*, and *Labour/Le travail*, which represent a significant portion of Canadian historical research from the mid-twentieth century to the present day (Inwood, 1994; Baskerville & Inwood, 2020).

Using the database America: History and Life to collect information on these publications enabled the creation of a dataset complete with publications from 1954-2021. Spanning the second half of the twentieth century, which was a crucial point for the

development of Canadian history, this study investigates the metadata tags associated with this comprehensive set of records, including subject and geographic classifications, dates of publication, and citation counts. In tracking and analyzing these metadata tags, my research seeks to investigate topical trends in the field and contextualizes them using historiographic theories drawn from core literature on Canadian history.

1.5 Assumptions and limitations

In using database information from America: History and Life (AHL), this study assumes a degree of accuracy in its cataloguing. While "indexers, taxonomists, and subject experts" (EBSCO, 2018) attempt to accurately reflect the content of a publication, subject terms cannot be understood to portray all the intellectual content within a publication and this limits the types of conclusions that can be drawn from this analysis. There is, however, a reasonable amount of overlap between the subject terms and research topics that can be expected on a general level. In this way, while they do not tell the whole story, using subject terms to investigate the application of controlled vocabulary and its evolution can still indicate certain characteristics surrounding the categorization of Canadian history.

Additionally, a limitation to this study is that it analyzes Canadian history through the lens of what is indexed, which only represents a portion of the field overall. In prioritizing peer-reviewed Canadian history journals, this study excludes a number of other sources of historical research. Public history, popular history, and research published in small-scale, international, or interdisciplinary journals are not assessed specifically. Further, monographs are not included in this study. It is not unlikely that a

connection exists between research published in these different mediums, as scholars often publish multiple iterations of their works, but the exact level of commonality is unknown. Given the design of this study, which is limited to peer-reviewed journals appearing in AHL, the findings and arguments produced by it can only be considered to account for a moderate, though not insignificant, portion of the field as a whole. Despite these limitations, this study offers substantial exploration of the application of bibliometrics to Canadian history, and provides a number of areas for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a review on literature related to Canadian history and historiography, and general methods applied in bibliometric studies. For the purpose and scope of this study, "Canadian historical research" refers to research on topics in Canadian history published in peer-reviewed journals. Most often this research is generated by scholars affiliated with academic institutions, and as such, the development of Canadian historical research is linked to the development of the field within higher learning institutions. The first sections of this chapter give a brief overview of the field, and the context in which Canadian history journals emerged.

2.2 Canadian history and historiography

2.2.1 The development of Canadian history

Canadian history experienced a period of significant growth in the 1920s, when it became increasingly associated with Canadian universities. During this time, a number of concerted efforts were made to professionalize the field, which resulted in shifting research production from local historical associations and interested individuals to university-affiliated academics (Berger, 1986; Wright, 2005). Two main events signalled this shift: first, the publication of *The Canadian Historical Review* in 1920, and second, the establishment of the Canadian Historical Association in 1922.

The first edition of *The Canadian Historical Review* was published in March of 1920 with the intention to serve as a "full annotated list of recent publications relating to Canada, important and unimportant" (Canadian Historical Review [CHR], 1920, p. 2).

The Canadian Historical Review was a successor to *The Review of Historical Publications relating to Canada* which had been founded in 1898, and was meant to expand the initial journal's mandate. Published as a quarterly journal rather than an annual one, editors identified that *The Canadian Historical Review* was responding to a higher volume of relevant research being published on Canadian history, and to the growing "body of historical students" (CHR, 1920, p. 2) that it had as an audience. The journal was positioned to denote the validity of emerging scholarship through its annotations and reviews, and foster a growing community of intellectuals focused on Canadian history. As a platform to document and assess Canadian historical thought, *The Canadian Historical Review* was in many ways an attempt to professionalize the field by giving it certain standards scholars were meant to uphold.

The professionalization of academic disciplines was part of a larger trend in university culture in the 1920s and 30s. Due to a growing middle class, universities began admitting a higher number of students during this period and sought to "[enhance] their social and economic relevance by engaging increasingly in scientific research" (Axelrod, 1990, p. 11). By placing an emphasis on research, universities also increasingly defined "legitimate" scholarship as that which was affiliated with higher learning institutions. This resulted in the creation of a number of disciplines, including business, commerce, and agriculture, and the reconfiguration of other traditional humanities disciplines to become more professionalized and "scientific" (Axelrod, 1990).

It is in this context that a number of academic associations, including the Canadian Historical Association (CHA), were founded in order to strengthen and reflect these newly-formed academic communities. The CHA enabled communication and

collaboration between Canadian historians across the nation, which in part led to the establishment of certain social norms within the community (Wright, 2005). As argued by Wright (2003), the CHA was a major contributor to the transition of historical research from "local societies organized in the country's urban centres" to "national societies run by, and for, specialized scholars located in the country's universities" (Wright, 2003, p. 7).

As exemplified by the foundation of *The Canadian Historical Review* and the CHA, the professionalization of Canadian history in the 1920s reworked conceptions of "who could and could not be a historian" (Wright, 2003, p. 2), and resulted in limiting the practice of "legitimate" history to within academic institutions, which at this time, were highly exclusionary spaces. University students and faculty were in many ways expected to uphold nationalistic ideals, resulting in Canadian history written predominantly from a British, imperialist perspective. In many ways, this initial period of growth in Canadian history can also be characterized as a period of restriction.

As a result, the main areas of study in the discipline during this period were political biographies and teleological narratives of nation-building, to the exclusion of many other historical perspectives. As "Canadian history" was configured as having begun with European arrival, Indigenous histories were relegated to areas of mythology and archeology in an attempt to portray them as past and having no place in modernity. The first issue of the *Canadian Historical Review,* for example, grouped Indigenous histories into the section entitled "Archeology, Ethnology, and Folklore" (CHR, 1920, p. 125). In Groat & Anderson's (2021) article on Indigenous resistance to colonialist representations in public history, they note the tendency for commemorative statues and

plaques to portray Indigenous people as "defeated warriors or victims of fallen societies"
(p. 467), in doing so, erasing them as historical actors with agency and placing them
within a settler colonial narrative. This type of exclusionary storytelling was embedded in
this early period of Canadian history, which promoted narratives of European discovery
of North America. The impacts of this approach to Canadian history are still prevalent in
many commemorations today.

Writing history from a Eurocentric, male perspective resulted in many other
erasures from history as well. In early twentieth century historical writing, women were
notoriously underrepresented, both as historians and as subjects of history (Wright,
2003). Likewise the emphasis on "Great Men" largely discounted working class histories
in Canada. Studies of the working class risked lending credibility to labour movements
which would destabilize existent power structures, and universities often took an official
stance of censorship of labour studies which led many intellectuals to pursue careers in
the United States rather than in Canada (Kealey, 1995; Horn, 1980).

Finally, this approach was also limiting in terms of language. The development of
French Canadian historiography can be described "to a great degree a story of two
solitudes" (Baskerville & Inwood, 2020, p. 587), as French Canadian methodologies and
histories emerged somewhat separately from their English counterparts. English
historians tended to create accounts of nationalism that were a "mere extension of British
imperialism" (Dickinson, 1996, p. 149), and this excluded French Canadian perspectives
which typically took a very different view of English Conquest. Themes of *la survivance*,
which documented the survival of French Canadians after Conquest in an increasingly
English-speaking country, were at the forefront of French Canadian histories (Miller,

2004). While there were pledges to include French Canadian scholars in the CHA and editions of *The Canadian Historical Review*, they remained predominantly English-speaking spaces (Wright, 2003).

Hébert (2008) has noted these exclusionary practices in her research on university students in Montréal, arguing that in the early twentieth century, students sought to create an identity for themselves within existing elitist structures. Student newspapers and societies defined themselves as "tomorrow's elites" (Hébert, 2008, p. 70), and in doing so, they indicated no desire to question the status quo, rather, they saw their job as assuring its continuance. hampton (2020) highlights this continuation of elitism in her research as well, noting that "throughout the first decades of the twentieth century up to the Second World War, academics were among the greatest proponents of racial nationalism, anti-Semitism, and anti-immigration politics" (p. 45). While there were some members of the Canadian academic elite that favoured social change, these academics were met more often with censorship and hostility than any kind of institutional change (Horn, 1980). As a result, while the practice of history went through a process of professionalization in the early twentieth century, for the most part this meant that history was written by a select few; predominantly elite English-speaking men.

It was not until the 1960s that academic disciplines like history began to truly diversify, meeting demands of a much larger student body. The postwar period saw unprecedented funding for higher education within Canada, which led to the expansion of existent universities as well as the foundation of a number of others (Statistics Canada, 1979). During this period of university growth, "social groups who previously had been

excluded or underrepresented—women, working-class youth, 'New Canadians' and ethnic and racial minorities—began to flood into the academy" (Miller, 2004, p. 20). This increasing student body was also becoming more politically active, with higher success in forming student protests, achieving more institutional change than students had been able to in the past (Lexier, 2012). International movements, including the civil rights movement, second wave feminism, nuclear disarmament, and protests against the Vietnam War were especially influential in the development of intellectual philosophies and research interest during this time as well (McNaught, 1987).

The 1960s, characterized as a decade of "increased national awareness" (Friesen & Owram, 2011, p. 4), also prompted an increase of interest in Canadian history. Scholars applied international philosophical frameworks to Canadian history, especially influenced by intellectual thinking in Great Britain, Germany, France, and the United States which increasingly applied Marxist, neo-Marxist, and Gramscian philosophy to labour and social history (McNaught, 1987).

All this "intellectual excitement" (Wright, 2003, p. 28) led to the foundation of new journals which prioritized different philosophies. Journals like *Histoire sociale/Social History* (1968) and *Labour/Le travail* (1976) were founded at this time to foster research considering Canadian history through lenses of race, class and gender, and *Acadiensis* (1971), and *BC Studies* (1969) focused on specific and understudied regions within Canada. It has frequently been acknowledged that this turn towards social history was a significant one in the development of the discipline (Berger, 1987; Marquis, 2001; Miller, 2004).

As demonstrated by an increased student body, higher numbers of operating universities, and the foundation of multiple new peer-reviewed journals, the 1960s and 70s marked another period of growth in Canadian historical research, however this time it resulted in moderately more changes in perspective and consideration to different theoretical frameworks. Not only did the volume of research increase during this time, but the approaches used to discuss Canadian history diversified substantially as well, influenced by the civil rights movement, the rise of decolonization, second wave feminism, and other social and intellectual movements that emerged during that time. Documenting and analyzing research trends from this point onward is thus significant as this period marked meaningful expansion in intellectual thought in Canada. Many scholars have remarked on the continued specificity of Canadian historical research topics throughout the 1990s and into the twenty-first century, which is often documented and referred to in Canadian historiographical works.

2.2.2 Canadian historiography

In the 1960s, scholars began to develop a more coherent and self-reflexive understanding of *how* Canadian history was created. In the profession internationally, more scholars were increasingly aware of the constructed nature of history and the relationship between the historian and history (Carr, 1961; Tosh, 2015; Scott, 2021). Carl Berger was an especially notable scholar in applying these theories to Canadian history, and has been credited with fostering a sense of critical historiography amongst a generation of scholars (Owram & Friesen, 2011). Berger's (1976) book, *The writing of Canadian history: Aspects of English-Canadian historical writing* studied trends in

historiography in the first part of the twentieth century. In it, he identified the link between historical research and contemporary circumstances, noting the tendencies of scholars to focus on nation-building and political biographies following the First World War in order to construct and justify a national narrative. These interpretations often forwarded a vision of Canada as a whole, attempting to argue universal truths for the trajectory of history (Berger, 1987). Then in 1987, with *Contemporary approaches to Canadian history,* Berger revisited the field, addressing the rise in social history since the 1970s, with scholars increasingly using race, class, and gender theories to inform their research.

Acknowledging how contemporary circumstances influence historical research has become a crucial part of the discipline since. The CHA addressed this explicitly in 1994, when in the Presidential Address, Veronica Strong-Boag emphasized the importance for diversity among Canadian historians in order to better confront current-day prejudices in Canada. Strong-Boag cautioned historians: "unless we are prepared to take on this challenge, then we will indeed become fundamentally irrelevant to the construction of a meaningful memory for all Canadians" (1994, p. 17). Positioning historians as having a responsibility to construct history in a meaningful way speaks to how this generation of historians was increasingly aware of the power they possessed in commemoration, and the duty to do research diligently. It also marks the divergence from the idea that historians were meant to create understandings of Canada as a whole. While in the past, scholars may have had differing interpretations on historical events, there had largely been a widely-understood idea of what historians considered to be "central to their field of study and what was peripheral" (Berger, 1986, p. 259). Scholars in the

second half of the twentieth century called these ideas into question as Canadian historians became more inclined to consider areas of study that had once been dismissed or never considered in academic circles.

This shift did not come about without contention, as certain scholars were in favour of traditional schools of thought. One extreme example of this was J. L. Granatstein's opinion as discussed in his book *Who killed Canadian history?* Granatstein (1998) lamented the state of Canadian history, arguing that social historians had effectively "killed history" through their critiques of past scholarship, and this had resulted in national disharmony. This argument, however, was widely criticized for forwarding a single, English idea of nationalism, for oversimplifying history, and for overemphasizing unanimity as a necessity in the practice of history (Osborne, 1999; McKillop, 1999; Lorenz, 1999).

Since the 1990s, historiographical works typically accept the constructed nature of history and of the necessity for re-evaluating historical interpretations. Many scholars have considered the effects of English nationalism on the writing of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Canadian history (Dickinson, 1996). Others have approached historiography through particular figures, and how their commemoration has changed depending on contemporary political climates. Osborne (2002) examined different opinions on Louis Riel, and how "he has entered Canadian history variously as murderer or patriot, charismatic leader or lunatic, traitor or nation builder, and, most recently, as the embodiment of theories of pluralism and hybridity" (p. 304). Employing a similar approach, Alan (2010) considered the different ways in which Jacques Cartier was used

as a symbol to reify community and nationalistic ideas in both English and French Canada at various times throughout history.

Recent historiography has also studied different movements within Canada. These include works like Neylan's (2013) examination of recent historiography of Indigenous history in British Columbia and the influences it drew from broader political contexts and land claims litigation. Frenette's (2014) study focused on Stephen Harper's emphasis on Canadian military history in order to justify funding the contemporary military. Considering the anti-modernity movement in Nova Scotia in the twentieth century, McKay's (1994) *The quest of the folk: Anti-modernism and cultural selection in twentieth-century Nova Scotia* dissected how folklorists sought to construct a history that was meant to portray the region as the antithesis to the challenges of modern life. As these works exemplify, a number of Canadian historians have considered historiography through different movements in certain regional, cultural, and political climates.

Considering how history has been constructed in different ways depending on who is able to do history, which sources are available or considered valid, and which contemporary circumstances may prompt interest in subjects has been central to recent historiographical works in Canada. Since Carl Berger's scholarship, however, there have been few attempts to study the field on a larger scale, most modern works tend to focus on one region, figure, or event. This trend is not a surprising one, given the sheer number of publications in Canadian history that now exist, it is impossible to evaluate all Canadian history publications through a purely qualitative lens as Berger had. In this context, employing bibliometric methods to Canadian history presents an enormous opportunity to consider the field on a macro-level.

2.3 Bibliometrics

Bibliometrics is defined as the use of statistical methods to analyze publications in a particular field (Pritchard, 1969). There are a number of different ways to employ bibliometric methods, but typically the process involves taking quantitative observations based on metadata generated by publications and using them to inform subjective analyses about any given field on a larger scale. As identified by Donthu et al. (2021), there is an observational component to bibliometric analysis, for example counting the number papers generated by one institution compared to another, or the number of times a paper is cited. These observations are then substantiated with thematic analysis, and are interpreted to understand social and structural relationships that exist within the field. In a study conducted by Wang & Ho (2017), for example, they used bibliographic information from art exhibit reviews from 1994 to 2013 to understand authorship trends. In doing so, they found a number of trends, one of which being that authors tend to publish their works repeatedly in the same journals, denoting preference for those journals.

There are many different applications of bibliometric methods. Using bibliographic information and data analysis, scholars often make arguments about institutions or researchers that produce comparatively high volumes of work, or works that tend to be cited more or less than average. Often, bibliometric analyses are used to consider the contributions of "research constituents to a given field" (Donthu et al., 2021, p. 287) and interpret the performance of authors, institutions, or countries in any given research community.

2.3.1 Applying bibliometrics to the arts and humanities

As Mongeon & Paul-Hus (2016) have noted, the typical bibliometric databases, being Scopus and Web of Science, have limited coverage in the arts and humanities fields. In part, this is due to the characteristics of those fields, which require different considerations from STEM fields (Garfield, 1980; Thelwall & Delgado, 2015). Citation indexes, for example, are more difficult to construct in the arts and humanities fields. Literature in those fields tends to be produced by a single author, meaning there are fewer publications per author, and they tend to cite older literature than STEM fields do, meaning citation indexes need to account for a larger scope of literature overall, which can be difficult data to obtain (Nederhof, 2006). They also tend to cite monographs rather than serials, which are typically more difficult to find in databases (Nederhof, 2006).

Despite these limitations, there are applications of bibliometrics in the arts and humanities fields that offer meaningful research opportunities. Igarashi & Riddell (2019) made a compelling case for these methods when they tracked author-supplied keywords in publications on British Romanticism in order to unveil the field's main research focuses. Tracking keywords applied to articles linked to photography in America: History and Life, Buchanan & Hérubel (2012) created overarching categories by sorting these keywords into thematic clusters, which informed their analysis on the trajectory of photographic literature. These studies demonstrate potential applications of bibliometrics to the arts and humanities fields, in particular when considering how metadata tags like subject terms can be used to point to larger patterns and promote reflexivity within disciplines.

2.3.2 Keyword and co-word analysis

Keyword and co-word analysis in particular are useful methods when considering how fields have changed over time (Donthu et al., 2021). Subject terms, in that they are theoretically meant to describe the intellectual contents of a publication, can be used to indicate certain areas of interest in research, and mapping the use of these terms over time can point to trends within a field. This method is motivated by a philosophical understanding that disciplines are changeable, and that topics are "constantly being constructed, deconstructed and built again in the never-ending cycle of literary activity" (Callon et al., 1983, p. 198). Co-word analysis often uses frequencies to calculate the number of times a subject term is linked to publications in a field, and based on these observations, some terms become "macro-terms" as subjects, which are then specified in association with other words (Callon et al., 1983). In this way, identifying co-word patterns over time can produce a map of the conceptual changes in the field (Coulter et al., 1998). Analyzing terms that co-occur can link subjects of study together and provide scholars with the possible means to map themes and their relationships to other topics. The result of this type of analysis is the representation of the "conceptual space of a field" (Tupic & Čater, 2015, p. 435).

The accuracy of co-word analysis is contingent on the accuracy of descriptive keywords; with what is referred to as the "indexer effect" (Tupic & Čater, 2015, p. 435). Essentially, do the keywords actually represent the publication's content? Certain tags like subject terms appear as controlled vocabulary, meaning there are a certain set of words used to represent subject concepts. Controlling this type of descriptive language facilitates linking publications together, as concepts are assigned to specific words and

can be grouped together. This trait, however, often fails to account for variation and it can result in the terms themselves being very vague, making it difficult to accurately draw interpretations from these words.

There are also certain issues when using free text to inform co-word analyses, mainly that it may generate too many words to provide meaningful results. Author-supplied keywords, for example, are not controlled vocabulary, and while they may describe publications with more specificity it can hinder the ability for publications to be linked together as multiple authors may use different words to describe the same topic. Proper indexing is thus a crucial factor to conducting an accurate co-word analysis.

One way to strengthen the effectiveness of co-word analysis is to include text from abstracts, as this describes the publication using more words, which may account for possible limitations if an inaccurate description or synonym exists in the metadata. In some cases, however, this introduces additional synonyms, for example, with words like "left" which may occur in the context of leftist politics or as in the past tense of "leave." While it is not impossible to analyze and sort synonyms, using a computer to discern the difference in meaning can be challenging. In this way, incorporating free text from abstracts risks overcomplicating the analysis by introducing too many words for the algorithm (Tupic & Čater, 2015), but depending on the indexing of the data, may be necessary in order to properly conduct a co-word analysis. Understanding language and the subjectivity of meaning is particularly important to keyword and co-word analysis, especially in humanities fields when descriptive language can change drastically.

2.4 Conclusion

Canadian history and historiography experienced a number of different conceptual turns from the second half of the twentieth century to the present day. Generally, it has resulted in Canadian historians becoming increasingly aware of the importance of diversity within historical interpretation in order to better meet the needs of contemporary society. While many historians have studied the trajectories of particular figures, events, or movements in Canadian history, few since Carl Berger have attempted to analyze the field as a whole. In this endeavour, bibliometric methods of analysis are positioned to be useful, and citation indexes, keyword, and co-word analyses in particular can help to shed light on some of the characteristics and trends within the field.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

As described in the previous chapter, for the purpose of this study "Canadian historical research" refers to research appearing in peer-reviewed journals pertaining to Canadian history. The following sections outline the rationale used to collect data in order to inform the analysis of this thesis, and the methods employed in order to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. What are popular research topics in Canadian history?

    a. Which subject terms are most frequently used to describe publications?

    b. What are the trajectories for the most frequently used keywords?

2. What are popular geographic areas of study in Canadian history?

    a. Which geographic regions are most frequently studied?

    b. What are the trajectories for geographic region terms over time?

3. What are citation trends in Canadian history?

    a. Which publications have been cited with the highest frequency?

3.2 Data source

3.2.1 Journal selection

In order to answer the research questions, data was collected from eight major Canadian history journals: *The Canadian Historical Review, Acadiensis, Ontario History, BC Studies, la Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française, Journal of the Canadian Historical Association, Histoire sociale/Social History*, and *Labour/Le travail.* These journals were selected based on their relevance to the Canadian historical field. *The*

Canadian Historical Review and the *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* both publish research pertaining to Canadian history as a field in a broad sense. The *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* "publishes papers in English and French in any field that opens up new avenues of historical enquiry" with the intention to "represent historians working in Canada" (Érudit, 2023). These include papers presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Historical Association and other papers that make similar contributions to the field. In a similarly wide-ranging mandate, the *Canadian Historical Review* publishes papers and book reviews that offer "comprehensive analysis on the events that have shaped Canada into its current state" with the intention of being a "benchmark in the exploration of Canadian society and its institutions" (University of Toronto Press Journals, 2023).

Histoire sociale/Social History and *Labour/Le travail* publish papers with regard to the approaches applied by historians. *Histoire sociale/Social history* focuses on social phenomena in history, "whether cultural, political, economic, or demographic, without methodological, temporal, or geographic restrictions" (Histoire sociale/Social history, 2023). *Labour/Le travail* features articles and other documents considering Canadian workers, with an emphasis on "working-class history, industrial sociology, labour economics, and labour relations" (Canadian Committee on Labour History, 2023). Finally, *Ontario History*, *la Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, *Acadiensis*, and *BC Studies* publish historical research with a regional focus, studying issues relevant to Ontario, Quebec, Atlantic Canada, and British Columbia respectively.

Collectively, these journals publish research in the discipline which aim to represent research in the field as a whole, as well as with regional and thematic focus

relevant to trends in Canadian historiography. In previous studies conducted by Inwood (1994) and Inwood & Baskerville (2020), articles from these journals were used to document trends in the application of quantitative methods in Canadian historical research, considering the journals to "have been central to the writing of Canadian history" (Inwood, 1994, p. 141). In this way, the eight journals selected in this study can be considered to be actively operating within the Canadian academic community, as they publish research that is widely read by historians.

Table 1   Overview of Canadian history journals used in this study.

Journal	Publication frequency	Year founded	Current publisher
Ontario History	Bi-annually	1899	The Ontario Historical Society
The Canadian Historical Review	Quarterly	1920	University of Toronto Press
Journal of the Canadian Historical Association	Bi-annually	1922	The Canadian Historical Association
La revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française	Quarterly	1947	Institut d'histoire de l'Amérique française
Histoire sociale/Social History	Bi-annually	1968	Les Publications Histoire sociale / Social History Inc.
BC Studies	Quarterly	1969	University of British Columbia
Acadiensis	Bi-annually	1971	Acadiensis Press
Labour/Le travail	Bi-annually	1976	The Canadian Committee on Labour History

While the selection of eight journals aims to represent a significant amount of Canadian historical research, it is limited to journal publications within Canada. In focusing on research published within those journals, this study is missing Canadian historical research forwarded in smaller Canadian journals, in interdisciplinary journals,

international journals, and in monographs. The exclusion of monographs is a particular challenge when considering Canadian history, which tends to publish research in monographic format (McKay, 2000). This is in part due to the limitations of bibliometric methods of analysis, which use indexed publications as the basis for study. Currently, there are no databases that contain indexed information specifically on Canadian historical research in monographic format, and it would be difficult to maintain consistency while searching for Canadian history books in other sources. For example, since this study is focused on peer-reviewed research, it would be challenging to ascertain whether books are emerging from the academic community or whether they are popular history. There is also the likelihood for inconsistent indexing when using multiple databases to inform research, which may have negative impacts on findings generated from that type of research.

Arguments forwarded in study can thus only account for a portion of the Canadian history discipline; in excluding monographs and research in other journals, it does not represent the field in its entirety. It is not unreasonable to expect a certain level of overlap in monographic and periodical research, as scholars often publish on research topics that later appear in books, but the scale of this overlap is unknown. Considering the limitations of journal selection, the findings generated from this study refer to only a share of research produced in the field, rather than the field as a whole.

3.2.2 Index selection

Many frequently-used bibliometric databases, for example Scopus and Web of Science, typically focus predominantly on research in the STEM fields (Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). Coverage of historical journals is somewhat limited in those databases

(Mayhew et al., 2022), and as a result, other indexes were consulted while collecting data. To address the research questions, it was necessary to attain an indicator for subject matter, geographic region, and citation data for publications featured in the journals of study. There are a number of ways these concepts can be measured: for example, subject matter and geographic region can be indicated by words in titles, abstracts, author-supplied keywords, or subject terms (Buchanan & Hérubel, 2012). Citation information can be measured in citation counts, being how many times a work is cited, or in reference sections which denote the works cited within a publication (Donthu et al., 2021). This data is often used to create citation networks, which link publications together based on how often they are cited, and in which works. To assess trends, it was also necessary to gather information over time in order to span the period of study, which was designed to encompass research generated in the mid-twentieth century to present day.

A number of indexes were explored to create a database containing relevant information on publications from the eight journals featured in this study. America: History and Life (AHL), a database comprising an "index of literature covering the history and culture of the United States and Canada from prehistory to the present" (EBSCO, 2023), contains comprehensive coverage, as it featured titles, authors, abstracts, keywords, subject terms, and geographic region terms for publications in each journal. AHL's metadata is also freely-available for download, making it possible to use within this study.

Other indexes contained information on a selection of the journals focused on in this study, however, typically they comprised a shorter time period. For example, the Canadian Periodical Index contains publications from the *Journal of the Canadian*

Historical Association, but only from 1980 onward. Likewise, Historical Abstracts indexes certain publications from the *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, but only over the period of 1990-2010. In comparison to these indexes, AHL provided information on all the journals in this study, and spanned a significant duration with publications from 1954 to 2021.

As a "core database" (Buchanan & Hérubel, 2012) on Canadian historical research, AHL provided much of the information needed for this study, however, it was missing any form of citation information. In order to indicate citation patterns, it was necessary to consult other sources for this information. OpenAlex*,* an open catalogue of scholarly works, venues, institutions, and concepts (Priem et al., 2022) provided a partial solution to this gap, as it contains citation data for most of the journals featured in this study. OpenAlex's citation data is represented in "cited by counts" which counts the number of times a work is listed as a reference in a different publication. A publication with a "cited by count" of 20, for example, would have appeared in 20 other articles' reference sections. OpenAlex calculates citation counts using dois, and is continually updating its statistics, with about 50,000 works added every day (OpenAlex, 2023). OpenAlex had citation information for all the journals except for the *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, and so in order to attain that data, a third source, OpenCitations was used. OpenCitations also calculates citation counts based on dois, and the information downloaded on the *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* meant that "cited by counts" could be added to publications from that journal. Using a combination of OpenAlex and OpenCitations enabled citation counts for a sample of publications from each of the eight journals.

3.3 Data collection and categorization

3.3.1 America: History and Life

Metadata associated with publications indexed in America: History and Life was downloaded on October 27, 2021, resulting in an SQL database with information on all 1,520 history journals (Mayhew et al., 2022). Using RStudio, a development environment for the programming language R (Posit, 2023), the AHL database was tailored to contain only the eight journals studied in this thesis. This resulted in a table containing each publication's title, author, journal, publication date, publication type, notes, associated subject tags, keywords, geographic region tags, and doi. The publication date column was cleaned to contain publication year, and separate rows were applied to the columns that contained lists (being subject terms, keywords, authors, and geographic regions). Next, books reviews were removed from the publication type column so that the table would only reflect journal articles. This resulted in a final table containing 5,453 journal articles with dates ranging from 1954 to 2021. Publication ids were then assigned to each article in this table.

3.3.2 OpenAlex and OpenCitations

Information was downloaded from OpenAlex on February 17, 2023, which at this time, contained data on all the journals analyzed in this study except for the *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française.* For the journals present in the catalogue, metadata was downloaded using each journal's venue id. Similar to the process used while collecting data from America: History and Life, a csv file was created by accessing OpenAlex's publication information on each journal in the study which was then read in

RStudio. Information retrieved from OpenAlex was then condensed to reflect each publication's title, author, year of publication, publishing journal, "cited by counts" and OpenAlex id. This resulted in a table complete with 14,866 titles.

Finally, citation data on articles in the *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* was extracted from OpenCitations. OpenCitations, like OpenAlex, uses doi to doi citations and produces "cited by counts" according to how many times a work has been cited by another doi. Using citecorp in R, "cited by counts" were downloaded in a table linked to an article's doi. These dois were then joined with publication dois present in AHL, which resulted in the addition of 306 "cited by counts" for publications appearing in the *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française.*

3.3.3 Comparing coverage

There was a large discrepancy between the number of publications present in America: History and Life and OpenAlex, with OpenAlex containing a far higher volume of scholarship. In order to understand this gap in coverage, it was necessary to compare the contents of the two datasets. First, coverage was compared to investigate the overlap between the two datasets. To achieve this, the title columns from both datasets were formatted to match each other. Years of publication were also associated with each title at this stage, to account for articles that may have the same name (for example, "Notes and comments") but were published at different times. Of the two datasets, 1,673 journal articles were present in both.

Following this, the titles that did not appear in both datasets were investigated. AHL, contained 3,661 titles that were missing from OpenAlex. Inspecting this list of

publications further, it was evident that in addition to missing articles from the *Revue d'histoire de l'amérique française,* OpenAlex was also missing almost all of the articles present in *BC Studies*, and many from *Ontario History* as well. Articles from these journals represented the majority of the missing titles, but there were still 1,328 remaining from the other journals that were not present in OpenAlex. These titles were all from different journals, and were published in different years, so it was difficult to discern why they were missing from OpenAlex.

Then, titles were compared to reveal which appeared in OpenAlex and not in AHL. This resulted in an object containing 13,130 titles. Of the first 50 titles in this list, 48 were book titles. It seemed as though these may have been book reviews that were published in the journals and mistakenly tagged as journal articles instead of book reviews, or, that they were in fact books but were mistakenly tagged as being published by journals. Of the other two titles in this sample of 50, one was an article that had been published prior to 1954, which was the established period of study, and one was a critique and not a journal article. Then another sample of 50 was inspected. From this sample, there was a noticeable amount of titles that were misspelled. For example, Dagenais & Durand's (2006) article "Cleansing, draining, and sanitizing the city: Conceptions and uses of water in the Montreal Region" was misspelled in the OpenAlex dataset, where "cleansing" was written as "cleaning." The correct spelling of the title also appeared in OpenAlex, but the misspelled one created a duplicate that would not be found in AHL due to that error.

From this comparison, it is clear that OpenAlex has some tagging errors, both where books, monographs, and book reviews are mis-tagged as journal articles when they

are not, and where titles are misspelled. It is also missing significant coverage from certain journals. As a newer project that is continually updating, OpenAlex alone is not the most reliable source when considering complete journal coverage, journal titles, or publication type. That being said, the citation count that it provides is more reliable than its indexing information, and it was useful to add that information to the dataset containing publication titles from AHL. In this way, the database was created to encompass titles and associated metadata provided from AHL, and citation counts from OpenAlex and OpenCitations.

3.3.4. Creation of database

Publication metadata from America: History and Life, and citation data from OpenAlex and OpenCitations were the foundation for the database created for this thesis. The resulting dataset totalled 5,453 publications, and included the following information:

1. Publication id
2. Title of the publication
3. Publication author
4. Journal of publication
5. Abstract
6. Subject terms
7. Geographic region terms
8. Keywords
9. Year of publication
10. Doi

11. Cited by count (1,942 publications in the sample included cited by counts)

12. OpenAlex id

3.4 Bibliometric indicators

To ascertain characteristics and trends of research based on subject matter, region of study, and citation pattern, it was necessary to define measures for those three variables. The following section describes how these concepts were evaluated.

3.4.1 Measures of subject, geographic region, and citation

There are a number of ways to measure publication content. In bibliometric studies, this typically takes the form of using language, either as controlled vocabulary or free-text indexing, to discern a publication's subject matter. In the data gathered from AHL, both types of language were available: controlled vocabulary in the form of subject headings, and free text in the form of keywords, abstracts, and titles. Using either types of language to assess publication content presented its own unique strengths and weaknesses, and so it was necessary to review either strategy.

AHL subject headings appear in the format of controlled vocabulary, meaning they are indexed using a specific set of language terms meant to denote the intellectual material within a publication. This set of terms is created using EBSCO's Comprehensive Subject Index (CSI), which is based on Library of Congress Subject Headings and expanded by EBSCO-employed taxonomists, indexers, and subject experts (EBSCO, 2018). Library of Congress Subject Headings have been widely criticized for perpetuating biases and using outdated, offensive language (Howard & Knowlton, 2018;

Ros, 2019), which is a major flaw in the application of these terms. It is possible EBSCO's method of using its own taxonomists and subject experts to add new headings and revise "existing headings and hierarchies…periodically to ensure that their language matches current usage" (EBSCO, 2018) was designed to mitigate this flaw partially, however it is unknown how often or in what specific capacity the subject headings in AHL are reviewed.

Free text indexing, as in using natural language provided by keywords, abstracts, and titles can sometimes be considered to more accurately reflect a publication's content in that the words describing the publication are a product of the author's own choices. This, however, can provide its own challenges as authors may use synonyms to describe the same phenomena, or describe the same concept in a different way. This creates a far higher volume of words used which can make it difficult to derive meaning from them. Further, for this study specifically, only 1,600 papers out of 5,453 had keywords associated with them. At times, the specificity of keywords also implicated the ability to analyze meaning, for example Morton's (2000) article, "Faire le saut : la biographie peut-elle être de l'histoire sociale?," was only associated with the keyword "Wisdom, Jane." Jane Wisdom is the primary figure studied in the article, but the arguments made within it point to biography as a method of analysis in social history rather than focusing only on Wisdom's life specifically. In this way, it would likely be difficult to use keywords alone as a measure of subject matter as it would exclude a lot of crucial descriptive information, and significantly lower the sample size of the study.

To mitigate this, sometimes it is possible to use words provided in titles and abstracts as well, which are typically more detailed. In engaging in this type of analysis,

however, the issue of synonyms and superfluous words still remains. Using the same example, "Wisdom" in this case denotes a person's last name, not the concept of "wisdom," which would be difficult to distinguish using computer algorithms. Further, this study includes works published both in English and in French. In some instances, abstracts are provided in both languages, however often if a work is in French, the title and associated keywords are not translated, meaning the French works would have to be studied separately. In contrast, subject terms appear in English, making it possible to analyze works appearing in multiple languages.

One overall benefit to using the subject terms provided by AHL is that they are designed to link publications together. Each article is associated with two or more subject terms, and indexers use the CSI-provided thesaurus to assess the validity of the application of terms, attempting to capture the aboutness of each publication. Evidently, there is a significant element of potential error at this level of cataloguing works: the terms are only useful if they can accurately reflect the concepts they are meant to, and are applied properly. There is also a challenge in assessing subject terms based on popularity, as new terms are continually introduced in the vocabulary to ensure greater specificity (EBSCO, 2018). These specific terms likely only appear infrequently, and so a number of them may be missing from an analysis that focuses predominantly on popularity as a measure of research topics. It is important to note this error when considering the implications of findings generated from this type of research, however, due to the coverage of subject terms within the sample as well as the groupings of concepts, it was useful to use AHL-supplied subject headings as an indicator of publication content.

Similar to subject terms, geographic region terms were supplied by AHL's index. There is little information on how these terms are applied to publications by EBSCO indexers, however it appears as though they are also based on Library of Congress Subject Headings with certain expansions made to the vocabulary. There is an element of control to the application of these terms, for example, articles about Upper Canada are tagged with the term "Ontario." While this enables articles based on regions in what is now known as Ontario to be grouped together, this broad application of geographic terms can be problematic too as it does not necessarily indicate changing borders over time. In this way, using geographic region terms as indicators for general region of study can be useful, although it is important to note that it does not take changing borders into account very well.

Finally, due to the availability of data, "cited by counts" were used to indicate citation trends. As briefly discussed earlier, cited by counts indicate the number of times a work has been cited by another work using dois. This method prioritizes citations by journal articles with dois. This excludes grey literature, which can be useful in assessing the field as an academic discipline, however it excludes most monographs as well which in turn excludes a significant amount of scholarship within the discipline. It also does not indicate the works the publication cites, meaning it is not possible to create a citation network pointing to where sources are used in the field. In this way, "cited by counts" can only be understood to tell part of the story in terms of citation trends. This analysis is limited somewhat by citation information that is available, however "cited by counts" can still be understood to indicate certain characteristics about a certain amount of research in the field.

3.4.2 Periodization

　　To compare geographic and subject terms over time, publications were divided

into four main periods. These periods were determined based on time intervals and the

volume of research produced over the duration of those years. Over the entire period

from 1954 to 2021, the average number of publications produced annually tended to

increase rapidly from 1954 to 1975, then continued to increase steadily until around 2005

when it experienced a slight decrease. In order to reflect the changes in volume of

publications, the periods were divided into 1954-1974, 1975-1990, 1991-2005, and 2006-

2021. The lowest volume of scholarship produced is in the period from 1954-1974, due to

some of the journals in this study not being operational in the 1950s, and as such, it spans

a slightly longer duration than the other periods. The period of 1975-1990 is designed to

capture the increase in scholarship demonstrated during these years. 1991-2005 is meant

to reflect the period of steady average increase, and then 2006-2021 represents a period

of a slight downturn.

Table 2　　Time period distribution.

Time period	Years represented	Sample size	Percentage of publications represented
1954-1974	20	767	14.06
1975-1990	15	1564	28.68
1991-2005	14	1,666	30.56
2006-2021	15	1,456	26.70
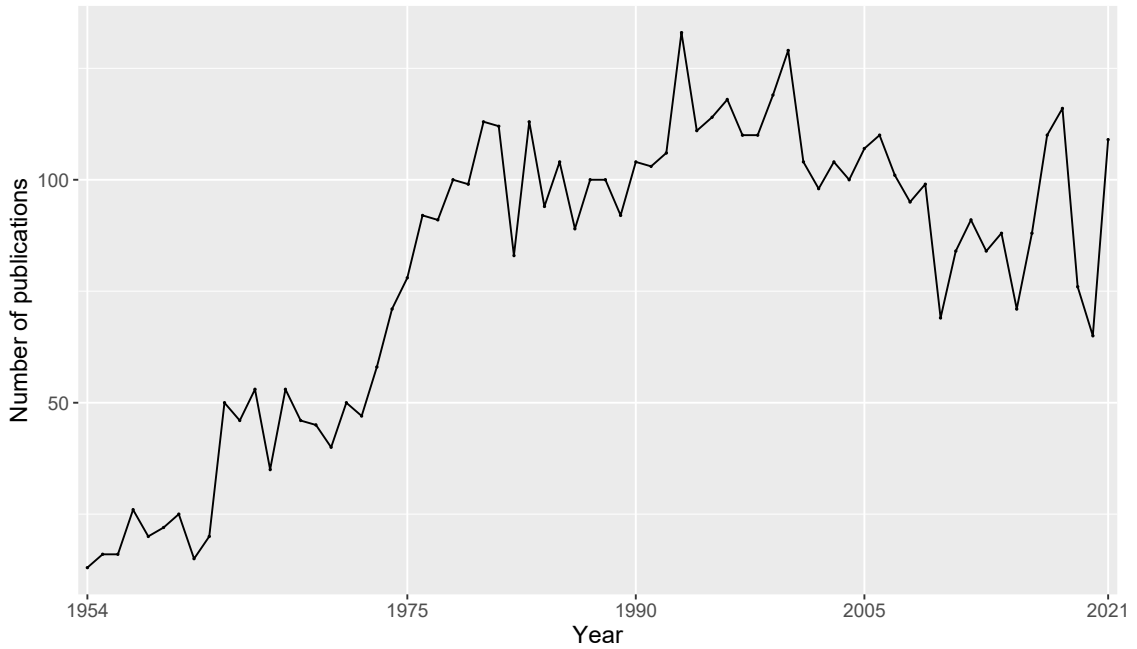
Figure 1   Canadian history publications by year.

3.5 Data analysis

The following sections outline the two main methods employed to answer the

research questions: frequency rankings and co-word analyses. It also describes the

process of creating analyses of the geographic region classifications.

3.5.1 Frequency rankings

Frequency rankings used the total number of appearances of a variable to create a

ranking. This was applied to both the subject and geographic terms associated with the

publications included in the dataset. The rankings were then arranged to display terms

with the highest number of uses to lowest. Rankings are represented in either the

frequency number or in percentages. In order to calculate percentages, the frequency

number of the term was divided by the total number of papers within the sample. This

method was used to determine the most popular subject and geographic terms. The citation analysis was conducted similarly, using "cited by counts" to arrange the publications in order of most-cited works to least.

Geographic region terms displayed a significant range in specificity, for example, listing cities or regions within provinces. Due to this overlap, in order to assess geographic region of study in a more cohesive way, terms were separated into Canadian and international regions. Canada was then sub-divided into provinces, which was the most common unit of analysis. The United States represented almost half of the international region terms (80 out of a total of 169), and so the international terms were divided into two categories: United States and other regions. The non-United States regions were then sub-divided by continent. The intention of dividing geographic areas in this way was to reflect frequencies of geographic region terms, the first of which being Canada, second being the United States, and then other international regions.

3.5.2 Co-word analysis

Frequency calculations were used to inform co-word analysis, which determined communities of subject terms. In this process, subject terms were sorted into groups based on how often they appeared together while describing a publication. In order to achieve this, subject terms were first sorted into edges and nodes. Nodes refer to what is being connected in the network, in this case it is subject terms, and edges are what connect them together. Edges were calculated based on the subject terms associated with each publication, creating a source and a target. A weight was then calculated according to the number of times the source and target appeared together. Uploading the weights

and the nodes in the data visualizing program Gephi enabled the creation of undirected networks that displayed subject terms and their connections.

The modularity tool on Gephi was then used to sort the subject terms into communities. The tool determines communities based on "the fraction of edges that fall within the given modules to the total number of edges that could have existed among these modules" (Devangana, 2015, p. 131). A network with high modularity indicates strong relationships within clusters with weaker connections across clusters. Applying this tool to the subject terms within this study created communities of terms, with the effect of linking terms together based on the frequency of their co-occurrence. The communities identified do not indicate that there are no overlaps between terms from different communities, only that the terms within clusters tend to co-occur with higher frequency. This was calculated to produce a network for the period of 1954-2021 overall, as well as for each of the four time periods featured in this study. In order to capture the main areas of subject research, each network was filtered to contain subject terms that appeared in at least 1 percent of publications within their sample.

Tables were then created to display the clusters, indicating the subject terms that were grouped together, the total number of publications that were associated with those terms, the percentage of papers that contained citation data, and the mean normalised citation score (MNCS). The MNCS was based on the average citation number, being the average "cited by count" for publications within that cluster and published in the same year. Each publication's "cited by count" within the cluster was then divided by the mean "cited by count" producing a score representing the relative "cited by counts." A score of 1 indicates the average, and above or below 1 represent above- or below-average.

3.6 Conclusion

Data was extracted from America: History and Life, OpenAlex, and

OpenCitations in order to create a dataset reflecting relevant metadata for each of the

eight journals included in this study. Coverage from both sources was contrasted and

ultimately the structure of AHL's data was used as a template which was then

substantiated with citation data retrieved from OpenAlex and OpenCitations. A number

of methods were used to clean the data in RStudio and then exported to SQL in order to

create a database with relevant information. To address the research questions, two main

methods of bibliometric analysis are employed: frequency ranking and co-word analysis.

Table 3, based on Skinner (2016, p. 47), outlines the specific approaches used for each

question in particular, the results of which will be addressed in the following chapter.

Table 3   Research questions and their analysis methods.

Data sources and research questions	Comparison points	Analysis methods
Subject terms 1. A. B.	A. Total frequency B. By time period	Frequency ranking Network co-word analysis
Geographic region terms 2. A. B.	A. Total frequency B. By time period	Frequency ranking
Cited by counts 3. A.	A. Citation frequency	Frequency ranking

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate trends and characteristics in the Canadian history field, considering the popularity and trajectories of subject terms and geographic terms, as well as certain citation characteristics as demonstrated by citation counts. Each of these areas are investigated in the following sections.

4.2 Subject terms

4.2.1 Popular subject terms in Canadian history

6,772 distinct subject terms were used to describe the sample of 5,453 publications. To determine the most popular terms, they were ranked by frequency according to how many times they were used to describe a publication. Subject terms that were associated with more than 2 percent of papers included in this study are displayed in Table 4, alongside the frequency count for the number of times a subject term was used to describe a paper.

Table 4   Subject term popularity.

Subject	Frequency	Percentage
Canada	563	10.3
History	453	8.3
Ontario	304	5.6
Historiography	298	5.5
Women	245	4.5
Indigenous Peoples of the Americas	205	3.8
Catholic Church	190	3.5
Twentieth Century	180	3.3
Labor Unions	171	3.1
Social History	167	3.1
Labor	154	2.8

Subject	Frequency	Percentage
French-Canadians	145	2.7
Practical Politics	144	2.6
Economic Development	136	2.5
Native American-White Relations	134	2.5
Emigration & Immigration	130	2.4
Economic History	128	2.3
Working Class	127	2.3
Nationalism	117	2.1

As indicated by Table 4, words that are synonymous with Canadian history, being "Canada," and "History" are unsurprisingly the top two words used to describe publications. Other terms that are broad in scope are also featured heavily in the list, likely because they can be associated with multiple works. Certain areas of specificity emerge, for example, "Ontario," as the third most-used term indicates research attention has been paid to that region specifically. "Historiography" and "Social History" appearing in this list indicate the prevalence of those approaches to history within the field, as they are associated with a high number of publications. Populations of people within Canada also appear with high frequency, these include the terms: "Women," "Indigenous Peoples of the Americas," "French-Canadians," and "Working Class." A number of socio-economic themes with high research attention appear as well, being "Catholic Church," "Labor Unions," "Labor," "Practical Politics," "Nationalism," "Economic Development," and "Native American-White Relations," "Emigration & Immigration." Finally, the term "Twentieth Century" appearing in the most-used subject terms also indicates that as a commonly-tagged period of study.

While the frequency ranking denotes the overall popularity of the subject terms, it does not indicate how they appear together or in which contexts they are used. The

relationships between subject terms can be investigated further with a network analysis, which points to words that frequently co-occur. The network in Figure 2 displays subject terms in regard to their modularity classes, or clusters, which are indicated by colour. Modularity classes are further broken down in Table 5.

Figure 2   Subject term network, 1954-2021.

Table 5   Subject term modularity classes.

Modularity class	Subject terms	Number of publications	Percentage with citation data	Mean normalised citation score
1	Canada; Ontario; Practical Politics; Provincial Governments; Federal Government; Elections; Business; Political Science; Letters; Political Parties; World War I; Toronto (Ont.); Railroads	1,169	19.2	0.87
2	Historiography; Indigenous Peoples of The Americas; Native American-White Relations; Historians; Canadian History; New France; Archives; Literature Reviews; International Relations; Imperialism; Law; Historical Research; Fur Trade	1,125	33	1.14
3	Women; Labor Unions; Labor; Working Class; Social Classes; World War II; Strikes & Lockouts; Universities & Colleges; Industrial Relations; Labor Movement; Capitalism; Gender	1,000	45.8	0.91
4	Catholic Church; French-Canadians; Emigration & Immigration; Nationalism; Immigrants; Human Settlements; Attitude (Psychology); Acadians; Ethnicity; Newspapers; Canadians	838	34.9	1.05
5	History; Twentieth Century; Education; Nineteenth Century; Government Policy; Religion; Quebec (Province) -- History	710	49.2	1.08
6	Social History; Economic Development; Economic History; Families; Social Change; Agriculture; Population; Rural Geography; Industrialization	682	38.5	0.94

The creation of subject term communities in indicates certain commonly-used concept associations in Canadian history. The highest-frequency modularity class tends to indicate political scholarship with terms like "Practical Politics," "Provincial Governments," "Federal Governments," and "Elections." It also tends to co-occur with Ontario and Toronto, as well as "Business." The mean normalised citation score (MNCS) is somewhat low at 0.85, meaning publications from that cluster tend to have a slightly lower than average citation count. Since it is a larger cluster, however, there is only citation data for about 19 percent of the papers included, meaning this score is not representative of the majority of papers in this cluster.

Considering populations in Canada, it is noticeable that "Indigenous Peoples of the Americas" tends to co-occur with "Native American-White Relations," "Imperialism," "Law," and "Fur Trade," potentially indicating scholarship dealing with the social and legal implications of colonialism, although since the subject terms do not describe exactly how these topics are treated it is difficult to draw firm conclusions from the clusters alone. Additionally this cluster may receive higher than average citation counts according the sample with counts provided, given the MNCS score of 1.14. Another cluster with a slightly higher MNCS score is displayed fifth in Table 5, featuring the terms "History," "Twentieth Century," "Nineteenth Century." This indicates that works tagged with "Twentieth Century" and "Nineteenth Century" tend to have a higher than average citation counts, which underscores prevalence of those time periods in Canadian history research.

In terms of other populations, "French-Canadians" as a term is grouped with "Catholic Church," "Human Settlements," and "Nationalism," pointing to the potential of

scholarship studying the demographics of that population. It is also grouped with "Attitude (Psychology)" which is a broad term that can refer to emotional or public attitudes toward a particular event. "Women" tends to be grouped with terms associated with labour history, including "Labor Unions," "Labor," "Labor Movement," and "Capitalism" as well as with "World War II."

Finally, "Social History" appears with "Economic Development" and "Economic History." This cluster represents a number of other varying terms, including "Rural Geography," "Industrialization," and "Agriculture" in addition to "Families" and "Social Change."

4.2.2 Frequency rankings over time

The results in the previous section indicate top subject terms throughout the entire period of study, being 1954 to 2021. To understand how these terms may have changed over time, it is necessary to consider the trajectories of subject terms, as well as the emergence of new ones. To do so, the period is divided into four main sections to reflect phases of Canadian history: 1954-1974, 1975-1990, 1991-2005, and 2006-2021. To initially examine how subject term use has changed over time, frequency rankings were calculated for each of the four phases. The top 15 subject terms are listed in Figure 3, according to the percentage of works in their sample that they describe.
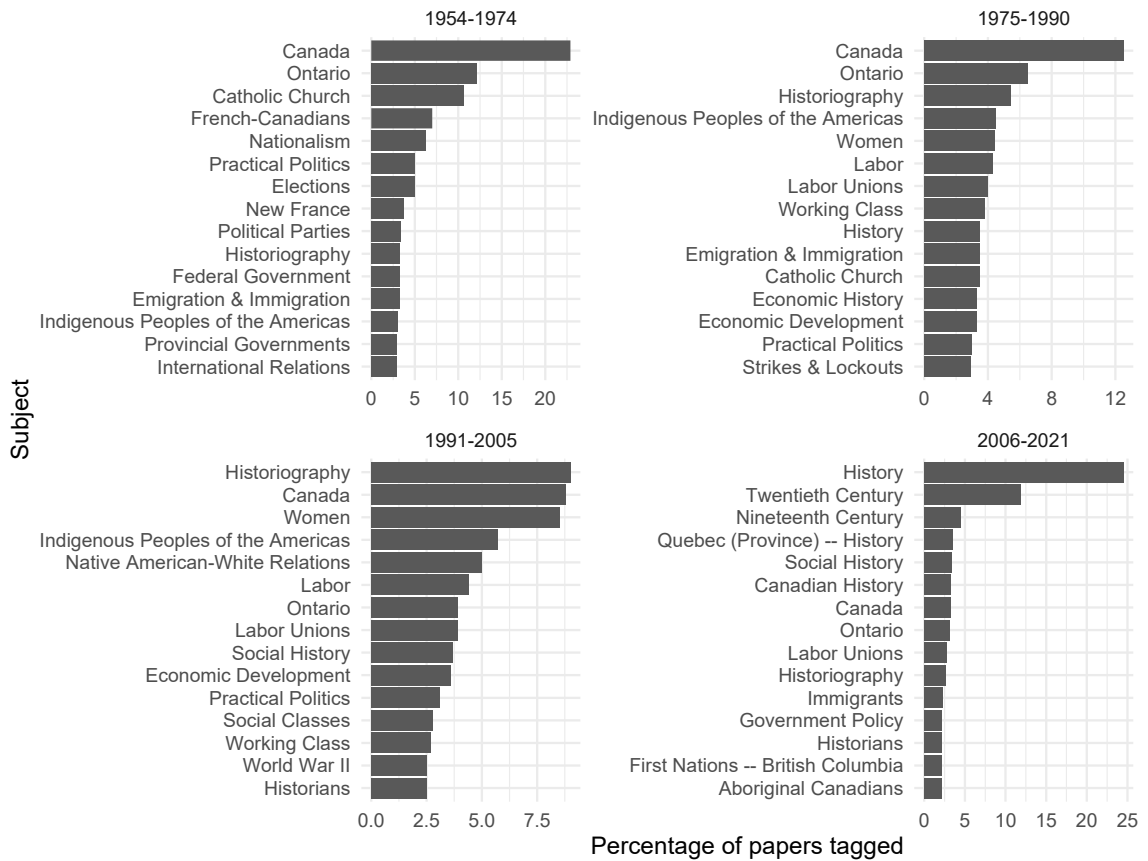
Figure 3   Subject terms popularity over time.

Examining the tables, certain words remain at the forefront of the field throughout all four phases, some fluctuate, and some rise in popularity. Words that are synonymous with the discipline like "History," and "Canada" unsurprisingly appear in almost all the tables, and in most cases are among the top 10 terms used. From 1954-1974, subject themes relevant to Ontario and Quebec are tagged with high frequency, as indicated by "Ontario," "French-Canadians," "New France," and "Catholic Church." Additionally, there appears to significant attention to political themes and governments, as indicated by "Elections," "Practical Politics," "Political Parties," "Federal Government," "International Relations" and "Provincial Governments."

A noticeable difference from this period to 1975-1990 is the emergence of studies surrounding labour. "Labor," "Labor Unions," "Working Class," "Strikes & Lockouts" all indicate research attention to working class struggles in the context of capitalism and industrialism rising during this period, although again, it is difficult to ascertain exactly how these topics have been treated, only that they tend to appear with relatively higher frequencies. It is also the first time that "Women" enters the frequency ranking. This coincides with the emergence of *Labour/Le travail* in 1976. "Indigenous Peoples of the Americas" also rises significantly between these two periods, going from being ranked as thirteenth to third. The percentage of papers it appears in rises less dramatically, however, going from only 3.1 per cent of papers in the first period to 4.5 in the second.

From 1991-2005, most of the subject terms stayed the same, with slight changes in rankings. One difference is the emergence of "Native American-White Relations" as the fifth most-used subject term. Coinciding with this term is the increasing prevalence of "Indigenous Peoples of the Americas" in the rankings, during this period reaching 5.7 per cent of papers. During this period, "World War II" also emerges as a frequent subject term. Finally, a significant aspect to this period is that it is the first time "Canada" is not the most-used subject term, being outranked by "Historiography."

The final time period, 2006-2021, changes significantly from its predecessor. Time periods, "Twentieth Century" and "Nineteenth Century," enter the ranking for the first time. "Quebec" also enters the ranking for the first time. This table also is the only one where "Indigenous Peoples of the Americas" is not present, however, other terms, including "Aboriginal Canadians" and "First Nations – British Columbia" enter the ranking for the first time. Another term that enters the ranking for the first time during

this period is "Immigrants," although "Immigration & Emigration" had previously appeared in the period of 1975-1990.

In terms of the characteristics of the frequency rankings, the use of subject terms demonstrate some interesting trends. All four graphs tend to display one or two subject terms that appear to describe a comparatively high portion of papers, followed by a number of terms that are used to describe less than 5 percent of papers. This appears on different scales, for example the disparity between the first few subject terms is greater in the period of 1954-1974 and 2006-2021 than it is in the other two periods. This speaks to the way publications are indexed in America: History and Life, as it appears as though often there are a large number of specific terms applied to a smaller number of papers overall, rather than a small number of vocabulary terms applied to a large amount of papers.

4.2.3 Network analysis over time

In order to contextualize the findings from the tables in the previous section, it is necessary to consider the co-word occurrences of keywords. To do so, networks were created for each of the four phases. Figure 4 displays the top subject classes for the period of 1954-1974.

Figure 4   Subject network, 1954-1974.

Table 6   Modularity classes, 1954-1974.

Modularity class	Subject terms	Number of publications	Percentage with citation data	Mean normalised citation score
1	Catholic Church; Elections; Practical Politics; New France; Political Parties; Federal Government; Provincial Governments; Letters; Colonial Administration; Newspapers; Archives; Revolutions; Liberal Party; Conservative Party (Great Britain); Recruiting & Enlistment (Armed Forces); Education; Bourget, Ignace, 1799-1885; Mackenzie, William Lyon, 1795-1861; Interpersonal Relations; Public Finance	991	33.3	0.93
2	Canada; Ontario; Emigration & Immigration; Human Settlements; Toronto (Ont.); Economic Development; Railroads; United Kingdom	921	13.5	0.89
3	French-Canadians; Nationalism; Historiography; Federations; Bibliography (Documentation); Geographical Discoveries; Bibliographical Citations; Political Leadership; Bourassa, Henri, 1868-1952	629	34.9	1.08
4	Economic History; Social History; Population	324	42.5	1.00
5	Business; Christian Missions; Missionaries; Native American-White Relations	238	24.1	1.81
6	International Relations; Fur Trade	121	45.9	0.82
7	Iroquois (North American People); American Revolutionary War, 1775-1783; Diary (Literary Form); War of 1812	119	21.3	0.65
8	World War II	103	35	0.99
9	Universities & Colleges	83	44.6	0.69

There are a few predominant areas of study from 1954-1974. Using the modularity tool, nine categories were calculated. The first one includes a high volume of subject terms, indicating the likelihood of those terms being associated with each other with a high frequency. Despite the high volume of subject terms within that class, most of the terms within it tend to point to either political or religious themes and figures. Other clusters are comparatively small, especially "World War II" and "Universities & Colleges," which appear as clusters of their own.

Evaluating the language used to describe publications produced during this time, Eurocentric biases clearly emerge, both present in the term "Geographic Discoveries," which frames Europeans as having "discovered" North America rather than arriving to a place with existent political and social structures, and in the term "Iroquois (North American People)" which is a racist term used to describe Haudenosaunee people. This points to the use of outdated language within America: History and Life's controlled vocabulary, as it privileges Eurocentric terminology.

The configuration of the subject term network changes somewhat significantly from 1954-1974 to 1975-1990, as indicated in Figure 5. While political subject terms are consistent, they appear as "Political Science" and "Social Problems" in addition to terms like "Practical Politics" and "Provincial Governments" which had been observed in the previous network. Other noticeable changes are the emergence of "Women" and subject terms pertaining to labour history and worker unrest.

Figure 5   Subject network, 1975-1990.

Table 7   Modularity classes, 1975-1990.

Modularity class	Subject terms	Number of publications	Percentage with citation data	Mean normalised citation score
1	Historiography; History; Attitude (Psychology); World War II; Ideology; Books -- Reviews	948	43	1.13
2	Canada; Ontario; Practical Politics; Provincial Governments; Business; Letters; Elections	943	14.7	0.77
3	Economic History; Social History; Archives; Historians; Families; Historical Research; Census	565	36.7	0.86
4	Women; Labor; Social Classes; Rural Geography; Capitalism	536	42.3	1.12
5	Labor Unions; Working Class; Strikes & Lockouts; Industrial Relations; Federal Government; Coal Mining	471	49.3	0.99
6	Catholic Church; Emigration & Immigration; French-Canadians; Immigrants; Social Structure	533	36.9	1.07
7	Economic Development; Agriculture; Industries; Industrialization;	303	34.5	0.92
8	Population; Human Settlements; Social Change	202	35.9.4	0.98
9	New France; Fishing; Colonization	151	31.4	1.01
10	Literature Reviews; Native American-White Relations; Bibliographical Citations; Fur Trade; Bibliography (Documentation)	288	29.9	0.94
11	Political Science; Social Problems	113	46.2	0.77
12	Universities & Colleges	83	44.6	0.69
13	Political Parties; Socialism	81	43.8	1.24
14	Government Policy	65	43.1	1.17

In addition to the emergence of some new thematic terms during this time period, "Historiography" appears as well. This, coupled with the MNCS score of 1.13, points to the prevalence of tagging publications with the subject term "Historiography" and of the citation counts for that cluster of terms being slightly higher than average. It is highly possible that this time period saw an influx of historiographical works. Both the frequency of the term and the moderately high MNCS score are observable in the following period of 1991-2005 as well, as demonstrated in Figure 6 and Table 8.

Figure 6   Subject network, 1991-2005.

Table 8   Modularity classes, 1991-2005.

Modularity class	Subject terms	Number of publicatio	Percentage with citation	Mean normalised citation
1	Historiography; Historians; History; Canadian History; Immigrants; Emigration & Immigration; Literature Reviews; Ethnicity; Nationalism; French-Canadians; National Characteristics; Political Science; Activism; Regionalism	1,453	41.6	1.07
2	Canada; Ontario; Practical Politics; Provincial Governments; Museums; Education; Federal Government	954	14.6	0.92
3	Labor; Labor Unions; Social Classes; Working Class; Universities & Colleges; Labor Movement; Strikes & Lockouts; Social Movements; Communist Parties; Industrial Relations	721	48.7	0.86
4	Women; Families; Catholic Church; Gender; Gender Role; Marriage	559	35.5	1.05
5	Social History; Economic Development; Economic History; Rural Geography; Human Settlements; Agriculture	549	37.2	0.84
6	Indigenous Peoples of the Americas; Native American-White Relations; Law; Imperialism; Courts; Christian Missions	315	26.2	1.59
7	Periodicals; World War I	106	41.5	0.95
8	Social Change	70	34.3	0.76
9	Black People	39	46.2	1.45

"Women" as a subject term becomes linked with "Gender" and "Gender Role" indicating an expansion of language used to index gender analysis in history. Similar to the previous network, labour remains to be a prevalent concept, in "Labor Unions," "Labor Movement," and "Strikes & Lockouts." Labour continually intersects with political themes, as shown by its association with "Communist Parties." "Indigenous Peoples of the Americas" begins to co-occur with political action, as evidenced by "Imperialism," "Law," and "Courts" in this network.

Considering populations within Canada, "Black People" emerges as a frequently-used term for the first time in this network. It appears alone, which likely indicates that the subject terms it most often co-occurs with are used to describe less than 1 per cent of the papers within the sample, and it is difficult to ascertain the context in which this term is studied.

Figure 7   Subject network, 2006-2021.

Table 9   Modularity classes, 2006-2021.

Modularity class	Subject terms	Number of publications	Percentage with citation data	Mean normalised citation score
1	History; Twentieth Century; Nineteenth Century; Quebec (Province) -- History; Social History; Government Policy; Quebec (Province) -- Politics & Government; Canada -- Historiography; French-Canadians; Collective Memory; Religion; Catholic Church; World War I -- Canada; Political Participation; Canada -- Politics & Government; British Columbia -- History -- 20th Century	1,130	46.1	0.94
2	First Nations -- British Columbia; Aboriginal Canadians; British Columbia -- History; Education; Imperialism; Indigenous Peoples; Acadians; Economic History; Native American-White Relations; First Nations of Canada; Fisheries; Indigenous Peoples of the Americas; Manners & Customs; Capitalism	844	28.5	1.42
3	Canada; Ontario; War of 1812; Universities & Colleges; Racism	719	10.1	0.67
4	Canadian History; Historiography; Historians; Metis; Riel, Louis, 1844-1885	682	36.8	1.11
5	Labor Unions; Industrial Relations; Labor Movement; Labor Unions -- Canada; Working Class; British Columbia -- Politics & Government; Social Movements; Strikes & Lockouts; Labor Laws	480	49	0.78
6	Immigrants; Women; Nationalism; Canadians; Emigration & Immigration; Tourism; National Characteristics; Ethnicity	477	38.5	0.96
7	International Relations; Canadian History, 1945-	86	53.4	1.12

The final period, 2006-2021, displays a significant change from the one previous.

Regional terms emerge in higher volume, and in greater diversity, including British

Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and "Acadians" which points to some research in Atlantic

Canada. The term "Indigenous Peoples of the Americas," which appeared in all subject

networks, is associated with a higher volume of terms used to describe Indigenous

populations in the period of 2006-2021. This includes "Indigenous Peoples," "First

Nations—British Columbia," "Aboriginal Canadians. "Métis" appears in this network for

the first time as well, associated with Louis Riel, "Canadian History" and

"Historiography." Another term that also emerges during this period is "Collective

Memory," clustered with "Canada – Historiography."

4.2.4 Subject term categorization over time

One noticeable feature of the 2006-2021 modularity class in Table 8 the high use

of specified terms that combine two larger subjects together, for example, "Quebec

(Province) — History." This indicates more specificity applied to how journal articles are

catalogued, as it joins two concepts together. Compared across the periods of study, this

appears to have been a trend that emerged more drastically in the most recent period, as

shown by Figure 8, when the percentage of subject terms that use subdivisions increases

from about 3 percent to over 12.
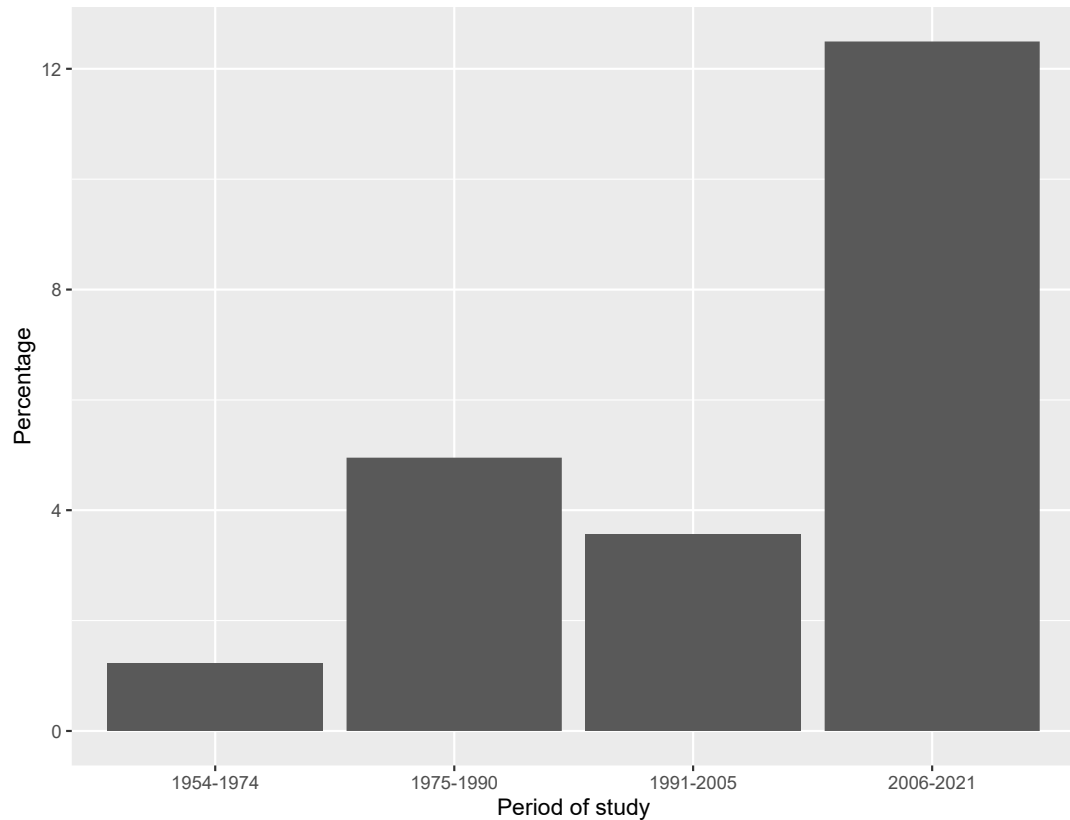
Figure 8   Percentage of subdivisions within subject terms.

Another feature that indicates higher specificity in subject term classification over time is the volume of distinct subject terms used to describe the publications. Overall the number of subject terms grew across all four periods, even when the number of publications decreased. This points to a trend in using more specific terms to describe the publications in AHL, which could possibly be linked with a higher number of research topics featured in the field, or simply to a more granular vocabulary applied in EBSCO classification.

Table 10   Number of distinct subject terms used to describe publications.

Period	Sample size	Number of distinct subject terms
1954-1974	767	733
1975-1990	1,564	1,999
1991-2005	1,666	2,499
2006-2021	1,456	4,554

4.3 Geographic regions

4.3.1. Popular geographic terms

Employing the same technique used to analyze the popularity of subject terms, the top geographic terms in the sample were calculated with regard to frequency and the percentage of journal articles they appeared in. Table 11 lists the terms that appeared in 1 or more percent of papers within the sample. It is worth noting that this sample is slightly smaller, as only 4,195 publications out of 5,453 were associated with geographic terms.

Table 11   Geographic region popularity

Location	Frequency	Percentage
Canada	3,641	86.8
Quebec (Province)	621	14.8
British Columbia	506	12.1
Ontario	256	6.1
Montreal (Quebec)	182	4.3
Great Britain	137	3.3
France	125	3
Nova Scotia	120	2.9
Newfoundland & Labrador	114	2.7
New Brunswick	103	2.5
Vancouver (British Columbia)	102	2.4
Toronto (Ontario)	85	2
Maritime Provinces	82	2
United States	78	1.9

Location	Frequency	Percentage
Atlantic Provinces	74	1.8
North America	59	1.4
Prince Edward Island	43	1
Quebec (Quebec)	43	1

"Canada" appears with the highest frequency, appearing to describe 86.8 percent of articles. Following "Canada" are "Quebec," "British Columbia," and "Ontario," and major cities from each of those provinces (Montreal, Vancouver, Quebec City, and Toronto) also appear on the list. Atlantic Canadian provinces appear both individually and grouped together as either "Maritime" or "Atlantic."[1] Outside of Canada, the regions that appear in the list are "Great Britain," "France," and the "United States."

4.3.2 Geographic regions over time

To consider how these geographic terms have changed in frequency over time, once again the publications are divided into four time periods. The period of 1954-1974 represents a sample of 563; 1975-1990 has a sample of 1,304; 1991-2005 has a sample of 1,430; and 2006-2021 represents a sample of 899. Figure 9 displays geographic terms appearing in 1 percent of more of each sample, with the exception of "Canada" which was the most used term across all four periods.

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[1] "Maritime" refers to only Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, whereas "Atlantic" includes Newfoundland & Labrador in that grouping as well.
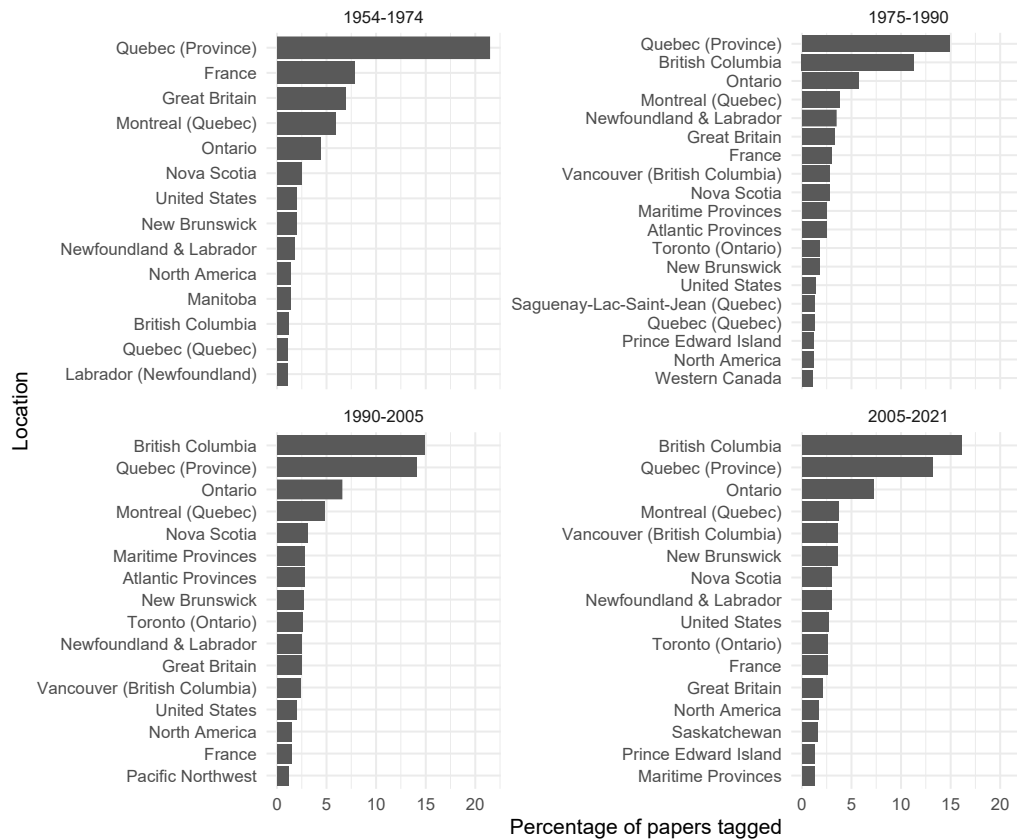
Figure 9   Popular geographic terms over time.

As shown in the in Figure 9, geographic terms that were tagged with the highest frequency shifted only slightly over time. While Canada remained the most-used geographic term across all periods, it was followed by Quebec in 1954-1974 and 1975-1990. Eventually, Quebec was surpassed by British Columbia, which remained the second-most frequently used geographic term for the periods of 1991-2005 and 2006-2021. Ontario also remained relatively stable throughout all four periods, rising from fifth in the ranking from 1954-1974 to third for the remaining three periods. Atlantic Canadian provinces appear both individually and grouped together as "Atlantic" and "Maritime." Prairie provinces specifically do not appear at all until 2006-2021 when Saskatchewan entered the ranking, although "Western Canada" was included from 1975-1990. Great

Britain, France, and the United States are the only regions outside of Canada that are
listed, and they appear in all four graphs.

4.3.3 Domestic and international geographic terms

To consider the differences between Canadian and international regions more
specifically, the geographic terms were divided. Canada was categorized into provincial
or territorial areas as they were most commonly-used delimiters to indicate place. This
meant that provinces with multiple geographic terms to describe them, for example
Toronto and Hamilton in Ontario, were combined to give an overall determination of
regional focus with regard to province or territory.
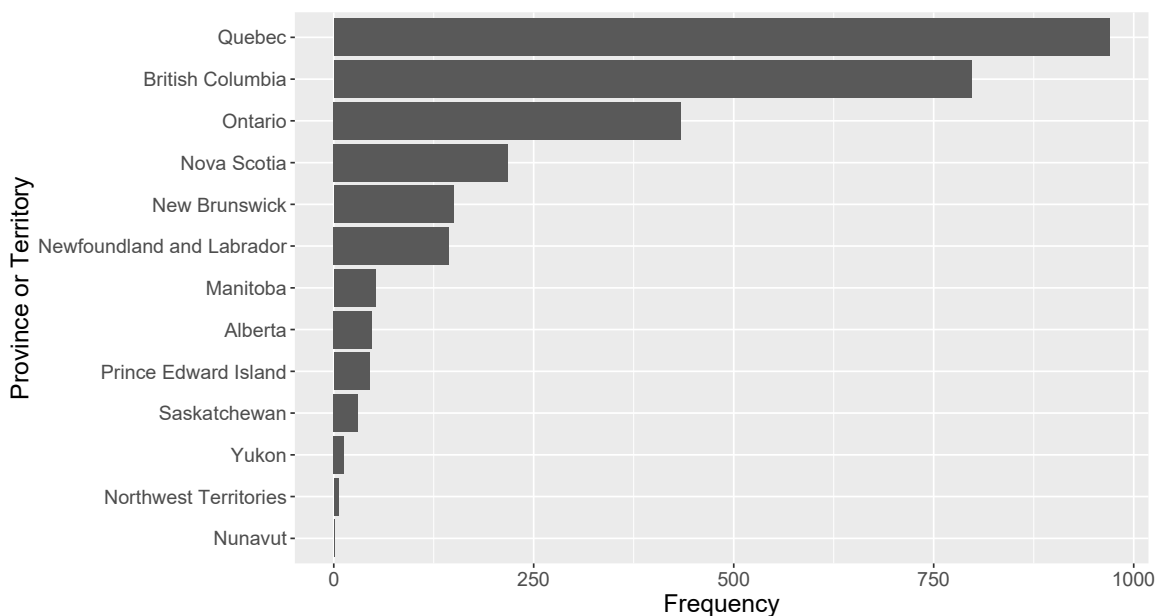

Figure 10   Geographic areas of study in Canada.

Quebec, British Columbia, and Ontario remain to be the geographic terms applied
most often to publications in this sample. They are followed by the Atlantic provinces,

although Manitoba and Alberta surpass Prince Edward Island. While Alberta did not

enter the initial frequency ranking calculated in Table 11, it outranks other provinces that

did (both Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan), indicating that Alberta tends to be

classified according to specific areas of the region rather than in using the term for the

province entirely.

There were 169 terms used to describe regions outside of Canada. 80 of those

terms referred to areas within the United States, and 89 of the remaining terms described

other international regions. International terms appear in Table 12, displaying their

individual and total frequencies.

Table 12   International region terms.

Geographic categorization	Categorized regions	Total frequency
Europe	Great Britain (151), France (139), Europe (17), Spain (10), Russia (10), Ireland (8), Scotland (7), Vatican City (5), Belgium (4), Germany (4), Portugal (4), Netherlands (3), Soviet Union (3), Western Europe (2), Italy (2), Atlantic Coast (Europe) (1), Channel Islands (1), Czechoslovakia (1), Denmark (1), Greenland (1), Hungary (1), Poland (1), Pyrenees (1), Romania (1), Sudetenland (Czech Republic) (1), Sweden (1), Switzerland (1), Ukraine (1)	382
United States	United States (347)	347
Oceania	Australia (20), New Zealand (3), Vanuatu (1)	24
Asia	Japan (5), China (5), India (3), Korea (2), Asia (1), Plain Of Jars (Laos) (1), South Asia (1), Vietnam (1)	19
North America (excluding Canada and United States)	Bermuda Islands (5), West Indies (4), Mexico (3), Guadeloupe (2), Barbados (1), Haiti (1), Saint Pierre & Miquelon (1), Tijuana (Baja California, Mexico) (1)	18
Africa	South Africa (4), East Africa (2), Egypt (2), Africa (1), Khartoum (Sudan) (1), West Africa (1)	11

Geographic categorization	Categorized regions	Total frequency
South America	South America (3), Latin America (2), Argentina (1), Chuquicamata (Chile) (1), El Salvador (1)	8
Middle East	Middle East (2), Afghanistan (1)	3
Other	Commonwealth Countries (1)	1

Given the categorization of geographic terms, the United States is a predominant area of study, on a country level alone it appears 347 times. The next highest-tagged country is Great Britain, appearing 151 times. This indicates that in terms of cataloguing journal publications at least, the United States appears with the highest frequency in connection with Canadian historical publications. Some countries in Europe display relatively high frequencies, including Great Britain and France, whereas other countries or regions were associated with far lower frequencies.

4.4 Citation analysis

To address the impact of publications used in this study, the citation count column in the dataset was used to rank the number of times each publication was cited, as detailed in the following section. Citation data was available for 1,942 publications, almost 36 per cent of the sample. Table 13 contains a list of publications from the sample that have been cited by other publications 30 or more times. The majority of them are from *The Canadian Historical Review,* although there is some representation from other journals as well. The list also represents publications from a wide range of years, with at least one publication from each decade of this study.

Table 13　Citation count ranking.

Title	Author(s)	Journal	Year	Cited by count
Administering colonial science: Nutrition research and human biomedical experimentation in Aboriginal communities and Residential Schools, 1942-1952	Ian Mosby	*Histoire sociale/Social History*	2013	140
"Limited identities" in Canada	J. M. S. Careless	*The Canadian Historical Review*	1969	73
Re-placing objects: Historical practices for the second Museum Age	Ruth Bliss Phillips	*The Canadian Historical Review*	2005	46
Canada's subjugation of the Plains Cree, 1879-1885	John L. Tboias	*The Canadian Historical Review*	1983	46
Ethnicity and occupational structure in Canada in 1871: The vertical mosaic in historical perspective	A. Gordon Darroch, Michael D. Ornsetin	*The Canadian Historical Review*	1980	45
Illusionary order: Online databases, optical character recognition, and Canadian history, 1997-2010	Ian Milligran	*The Canadian Historical Review*	2013	43
"No women need apply:" The ordination of women in the United Church, 1918-65	Valerie J. Korinek	*The Canadian Historical Review*	1993	43
Aboriginal health in Canada	Peter L. Twohig	*Acadiensis*	2002	43
Rough work and rugged men: The social construction of masculinity in working-class history	Steven Maynard	*Labour/Le travail*	1989	41
After the fur trade: The Aboriginal labouring class of British Columbia, 1849-1890	John Lutz	*The Canadian Historical Review*	1992	41

Title	Author(s)	Journal	Year	Cited by count
Gender history and historical practice	Joy Parr	*The Canadian Historical Review*	1995	40
"Horrible temptations:" Sex, men, and working-class male youth in urban Ontario, 1890-1935	Steven Maynard	*The Canadian Historical Review*	1997	39
The Round Table Movement in Canada, 1909-1920	James Eayrs	*The Canadian Historical Review*	1957	38
Professionalization and proletarianization: Medicine, nursing, and chiropractic in historical perspective	David Coburn	*Labour/Le travail*	1994	35
"She was skipper of the shore-crew:" Notes on the history of the sexual division of labour in Newfoundland	Marilyn Porter	*Labour/Le travail*	1985	35
An agnostic view of the historiography of the Irish-Americans	D. H. Akenson	*Labour/Le travail*	1984	35
Municipal colonialism in Vancouver: City planning and the conflict over Indian Reserves, 1928-1950s	Jordan Stanger-Ross	*The Canadian Historical Review*	2008	34
Race and recruitment in World War I: Enlistment of visible minorities in the Canadian Expeditionary Force	James W. St.G. Walker	*The Canadian Historical Review*	1989	32
The Creek-Negroes of Oklahoma and Canadian immigration, 1909-11	Harold Martin Troper	*The Canadian Historical Review*	1972	30

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter analyzed subject and geographic tags, as well as citation counts associated with Canadian history publications. Subject and geographic terms were ranked by frequency and co-word frequency to assess their popularity first as a whole, and then throughout four distinct periods to understand the prevalence of certain terms, their trajectories, and the emergence of certain terms during those times. Lastly, citation counts were ranked to create a list of articles that have been cited with the highest frequency.

Chapter 5: Discussion & Limitations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides interpretations of the findings outlined in the previous chapter with regards to subject and geographic popularity, and publication impact. It offers arguments regarding trends and characteristics of the Canadian historical research as it is has been catalogued since the mid 1950s, specifically addressing this study's research questions. It also highlights key limitations to this study.

5.2 Subject term analysis

5.2.1 Popular research topics in Canadian history

Q1a.: What are popular subject terms in Canadian history?

Using subject terms to assess the popularity of research topics presented certain limitations; since the terms that appear with high frequency tend to be relatively vague it is difficult to understand the specific contexts they appear in. Further, the exact degree of accuracy in their categorization is unknown, as it depends on how indexers classify the records in America: History and Life. While there is a significant level of error present in this type of analysis, it is also not unreasonable to expect a certain degree of overlap between the publication's subject term and its subject matter. Observing subject terms that appeared frequently, in particular when they were strongly associated with other terms and produced higher than average citation counts, can still be understood to point to some characteristics demonstrated by the Canadian history research included in this study.

When considering the network in Figure 2, which displays subject terms from the entire period of study, a number of terms are connected with political history, referring to both federal and provincial governments, as well as elections, political parties, and political science. Given the number of terms that describe political history, and their appearing to be co-occurring frequently, it is likely that this area represents at least a moderate amount of research attention. This is consistent with observations made by Canadian historians, who have underscored the prevalence of this area of study within the discipline even as other research topics of interest have emerged (Bangarth & Tunnicliffe, 2019; Dickinson, 1996).

Another cluster with significant frequency is the one with the terms "Indigenous Peoples of the Americas," " Native American-White Relations," "Imperialism," "Law," and "Fur Trade." The association of these terms together likely indicates some research attention focused on legal histories of Indigenous populations, as well as in connection with the fur trade. The citation counts for publications representing this cluster also point to its significance, as it had a mean normalised citation score of about 1.14, meaning works tagged with these subject terms tend to be cited slightly more than average.

While certain observations can be made about subject terms themselves within this analysis, it is more difficult to ascertain the theoretical frameworks applied to these topics, as they are often not explicitly stated within the subject terms themselves. One exception is the presence of "Social History," which refers to a school of historical thinking. As many scholars have identified, the turn toward social history in the 1970s was a significant one, and while it has evolved over time, it is still an approach employed often by Canadian historians (Marquis, 2001; Bangarth & Tunnicliffe, 2019). E. P.

Thompson's (1963) concept of 'history from below' is often used as a descriptor of social history, as it forwards a history of autonomous people acting within and influenced by social structures. In addition to the term itself, the concept seems to be present in the language used to describe labour history, with terms like "Working Class," "Labor Movement," "Strikes & Lockouts," and "Labor Unions" refer to actions undertaken by workers within structures of "Capitalism" and "Industrial Relations." While these terms may indicate possible approaches used to assess the larger topics, without a closer reading of the publications included in the clusters it is difficult to draw consistent conclusions from the subject terms alone.

Finally, the most frequent time periods that appear in the network are "Twentieth Century" and "Nineteenth Century" which indicates that research attention is paid mostly to those periods in Canadian history, both of which are relatively recent ones. This cluster also obtained a relatively high mean normalised citation score, at 1.08, indicating that publications associated with those terms tend to have higher-than-average citation counts. Both these factors point to the feature that historical works classified as focusing on post-Confederation topics tend to appear with higher frequency and citation counts within the sample.

As can be observed from the frequency ranking and co-word network, the field of Canadian history has been catalogued with a diverse variety of subject terms. Certain themes, being social history, political history, and the nineteenth- and twentieth centuries represent significant portions of subject tags. Populations including women, the working class, and Indigenous peoples have emerged as substantial areas of study as well. Themes connected to the practice of history, including archives, literature reviews, and

historiography, also appear with significant frequency. How these terms are applied is more difficult to discern, with the exception of "Social History" there are not a lot of indicators of theoretical frameworks applied to these areas of research. There is also a level of specificity missing from this network, as it represents subject terms that appear the most often. This tends to privilege subject terms that have been present in the controlled vocabulary index for a longer period of time, as they have the potential to be associated with the highest number of journal publications. In this way, the network cannot be said to represent *all* areas of high research attention in Canada, simply ones that have been tagged with high frequency.

5.2.2 Trajectories of research topics

Q1b.: What are the trajectories for the most frequently used subject terms in Canadian history?

The way subject term frequencies have changed over time also offers some insight into the evolution of the discipline. Considering impactful areas of study in 1954-1974, the largest modularity class deals predominantly with political and religious themes. Subject terms "William Lyon Mackenzie King" and "John A. Macdonald" reveal attention to politics through a focal point of one particular figure, following a tradition of "Great Man" history, which typically conceptualized history as having occurred due to the actions of one individual rather than as a product of various social and cultural factors (Ogburn, 1926). While there was a move away from "Great Man" history as early as the 1920s for some intellectuals, in Canada during the 1950s to 70s there was a "biographical

flurry" (Miller, 2004, p. 14) which tended to centre elite political figures as subjects, and may account for some of the person-based subject terms appearing in the network.

By the period of 1975-1990, this category tends to fracture a little, and political themes tend to appear as "Political Science" and "Social Problems" in addition to terms that had been present previously. This expands in 1991-2005 when political science is associated more with themes of immigration, nationalism, regionalism, ethnicity and activism. In the final phase, 2006-2021, political themes become associated more by region (appearing both with British Columbia and Quebec specifically), government policy, and collective memory.

Nationalism as a theme has appeared relatively frequently throughout most of Canadian history. During the first phase of study, it is associated with "Political Leadership," "French-Canadians" and "Geographic Discoveries" then expands significantly in connections by 1991-2005, where it is connected with "Regionalism," "Ethnicity," "National Characteristics," "Immigration," and "Activism." This turn in considering nationality is significant, as by the 1990s it appears that nationalism was understood to have many diverse contributing factors, and that Canada was made up of multiple different iterations of nationalism. This was in contrast with previous accounts of nation, which attempted to create overarching narratives accounting for Canada as a nation (Berger, 1976; Stanley, 2000). By the 1990s, this belief had been supplanted by a more popular approach in considering specific ethnic and social groups and their histories rather than attempting to create a history of Canadian nationalism as a whole (Mackey, 1999; Stanley, 1999; Bliss, 1991).

Remaining somewhat stable throughout the different periods considered in this study are labour history and economic development. Labour history, as discussed in previous sections, has most often been associated with working-class struggles, worker unrest, and collective action since the 1970s when it first appeared in the frequency networks. Economic development as well is usually associated with railroads, agriculture, and human settlements, although in the period of 2006-2021 appeared to be in connection more frequently with labour studies.

In contrast, "Women" as a concept has been far less stable. Absent from the 1954-1974 network, the term emerged in 1975-1990 as linked to labour themes, including "Capitalism" and "Social classes." This is consistent with observations about the discipline that women's history was not taken seriously in the field until the 1970s (Conrad, 1987; Sangster, 2011). Then in 1991-2005 it was associated with gender and gender roles, as well as "World War II," "Families," "Marriage" and "Catholic Church," and finally in 2006-2021 appearing with subject terms pointing to themes of immigration and nationalism.

It is possible that this variation observed in the networks is due to the development of women's history more generally, which has typically involved rethinking historical analysis to incorporate women and gender constructs. As Canadian historians have argued, it is impossible to consider women's history in Canada without also considering intersections of identity, with regard to class, race, and ethnicity, and as a result, women's and gender history is often studied in relation to larger societal power structures (Carstairs & Janovicek, 2016). Joan Scott's (1986) argument that gender is present even when women are not was a large contributor to this philosophy, and while

this argument was met with mixed reviews, for many scholars it facilitated a shift in conceptualizing women's history and is still frequently cited in historical research (Meyerowitz, 2008). As discussed earlier, it is difficult to ascertain theoretical frameworks from the subject terms supplied by America: History and Life, however, it is not unlikely that the subject term "Women" is connected to theories of women's history, in particular as it often co-occurs with "Gender" and "Gender Roles."

Another term that fluctuated throughout the four time periods is "Indigenous Peoples of the Americas." In 1954-1974, it was associated most closely with "American Revolutionary War, 1775-1783." Discourse during this period has typically been identified as having framed Indigenous history along two main themes: war, and "tragic but inevitable decline" (Countryman, 2012, p. 348). Recent scholarship has critiqued this, in particular ideas of inevitability, and more literature has focused on "accounts of mastery, resistance, accommodation, purposeful transformation, and creative survival even into the catastrophic years following the American Revolution" (Countryman, 2012, p. 349). As previously discussed in the literature review section, Canadian history emerged as a discipline intrinsically linked to settler-colonialism and structures of elitism within the nation, which is evident in the historiography of Indigenous people in Canada. This has long been a central theme in the discourse of national commemoration (Groat & Anderson, 2021). This is demonstrated as well by the subject term "Geographic Discoveries" in the 1954-1974 network, implying Europeans discovered the continent rather than arriving to a place with existent social and political structures.

In the 1975-1990 network, "Indigenous Peoples of the Americas" is associated with "Native American-White Relations," and then in 1991-2005 with "Law,"

"Imperialism," "Courts" and "Christian Missions" as well, likely pointing to scholarship focused on legal histories, and how Indigenous Nations have interacted with the settler-colonial state. Then in the period of 2006-2021, "Indigenous Peoples of the Americas" is associated with "Indigenous Peoples," "Aboriginal Canadians," and "First Nations – British Columbia." "Métis" appears as well, associated with Louis Riel and "Historiography."

Language has been central to this entire analysis, but is especially important when considering the trajectories of Indigenous histories. Controlled vocabulary, such as Library of Congress' Subject Headings, has been criticized for many years for perpetuating outdated language and prioritizing a white male perspective through the terminology that is created and how it is categorized (Howard & Knowlton, 2018; Ros, 2019). For Indigenous populations, this has often meant that nation names have been anglicized or misrepresented. Recent years have seen more of an effort to categorize using proper terminology, which has contributed to newer subject terms being created, although it is unknown how much this has been achieved in AHL's subject terms. Considering some of the terms that emerged with high frequency in this study, it appears as though a number of outdated, offensive terms remain in the database, which highlights the problematic nature of controlled vocabulary when it is produced under contexts of oppression.

Through the clusters identified in the co-word networks over time, a limited view of certain trends can be observed, both in terms of the overall frequencies of subject terms as well as in connection with their co-occurrences. While this points to some characteristics of the field, it also is worth noting that the clusters interact with each other

as well. The terms identified within communities are not exclusively associated with each other, and there is a level of overlap between communities as well. In this way, the subject networks point to some commonly associated subject terminologies, but they do not identify every single subject term interaction. Rather, the analysis considers some frequent trajectories for subject terms as they are associated with the Canadian history publications included in this study.

5.3 Geographic region analysis

5.3.1 Popular regions of study in Canadian history

Q2a.: What are popular geographic areas of study in Canadian history?

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the most popular regions of study in Canadian history are regions within Canada. As indicated by frequency rankings, the most commonly used categorization of region is by province, indicating that America: History and Life indexers tend to use provinces as units of analysis when considering geographic areas in Canada. In addition to this, densely populated cities, being Vancouver, Montreal, and Toronto appear as well, suggesting a division (or at the very least a distinction) in studies of urban and rural areas in Canada. Cross-provincial analysis occurs in the Atlantic region, grouping Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and sometimes Newfoundland & Labrador together. When combined to represent provincial analysis, it appears as though Quebec, Ontario, and British Columbia are associated most frequently with publications, followed generally by Maritime and Prairie provinces and then with far less representation of territories. This could be due to research attention, however it could also be due to categorization of region in Canada, since some provincial borders have

changed more than others over time, indexers may categorize places with more static borders with higher frequency.

In terms of research attention to regions outside of Canada, the most frequently associated regions are the United States, followed by Great Britain and France. This is possibly unsurprising given the long histories between these nations and Canada, especially considering this ranking encompasses a long period of scholarship, from the 1950s onward. Considering all international regions, the United States and Europe are consistently the highest-tagged geographic terms, and attention to other continents remains far lower. It is unknown whether this has to do with research topics or simply with how geographies are catalogued in AHL. For further research analyzing geographic regions of study, it might be useful to use keywords from titles, abstracts, and texts instead and contrast them with controlled geographic terms to determine the scope of their application. While there is a degree of uncertainty, it is likely that Canadian historical research focuses predominantly on regions within Canada and then in connection with the United States, Great Britain, and France.

5.3.2 Trajectories of regional topics

Q2b.: What are the trajectories for geographic region terms over time?

Unlike subject terms, geographic terms have remained relatively stable from 1954-2021. Analyzing the terms that appear in association with 1 or more percent of publications within the sample, while there is moderate fluctuation there is very little diversity in terms. Again, the degree to which this has to do with the indexing patterns of

AHL-supplied geographic terms is unknown, however, the higher likelihood that areas with larger populations and city centres are tagged with research publications is notable.

For international regions, only three regions enter the frequency rankings at any given time: Great Britain, France, and the United States. While it is not surprising that these regions would be studied in Canada, it is significant that they are tagged with a far higher frequency than other international regions. Even when this analysis was expanded to consider all international region terms, the United States, Great Britain, and France remained to be tagged with far higher frequency than other regions. Considering the prevalence of international subject themes that appear with high frequency, immigration and emigration being one such example, it is interesting that this does not coincide with the study of other regions in Canadian history. Especially given the most popular time periods of study as the nineteenth- and twentieth- centuries, where there are histories of international relations with a number of nations given immigration policies (Eastern Europe, China, Japan, the Caribbean, South-East Asia, to name a few).

This may indicate that scholarship in Canadian history tends to focus on people once they have arrived in Canada, rather than the larger international factors, maybe to do with actors outside of Canada, that created those contexts of immigration and emigration. It is worth noting, however, that the accuracy of geographic term application is unknown, meaning there could be higher attention to international regions that is simply not categorized as such. As mentioned in the previous section, further research on geographic regions of study would need to be undertaken in order to investigate that possibility further.

5.4 Citation analysis

5.4.1 Citation characteristics in Canadian history

Q3a.: Which publications have been cited with the highest frequency?

To address the citation characteristics of publications included in the study, a

ranking of citation counts was calculated. This produced a list that arranged the number

of times a paper was cited in descending order. There were several challenges attaining

citation counts for the journal publications, as outlined in the methodology section,

resulting in only 1,942 of the sample's papers being associated with citation counts. The

ranking, as shown in Table 13, includes 19 papers that have been cited 30 or more times.

13 of them are from *The Canadian Historical Review,* four are from *Labour/Le travail,*

one is from *Histoire sociale/Social history,* and one is from *Acadiensis*. All are written in

English, indicating a skew in impact toward English-language research, despite a

significant portion of it being produced in French. Due to *The Canadian Historical*

Review's representation of the majority of the list, it is possible that the journal is read by

Canadian historians the most widely. It could also, due to the limited coverage of citation

data in the sample, simply mean the citation counts are more accurately recorded for that

journal.

5.5 Limitations

As in any study that uses quantitative methods to understand conceptual ideas,

there are certain limitations associated with the choices made to answer the research

questions. The following sections address them in detail.

5.5.1 Journal selection

To conceptualize Canadian historical research production, eight journals and their publications were selected. As outlined in the methodology section, these journals were selected with consideration to their philosophical and regional focuses, which comprised a variety of relevant research interests in the field. They were also selected for their longevity; all the journals had been established and consistently in print since at least the mid 1970s. While this represented a substantial portion of scholarship within the field, by virtue of limiting the study to these journals, the study excluded certain areas of scholarship as well.

A significant amount of historical research is published in monographs, which evidently shapes the field as well. While it is unlikely that research topics are entirely different in monographs than in journal publications, data on the arguments forwarded in monographs would have contributed to the frequency rankings and co-word analysis created in this study. It would be difficult to include metadata on monographs in this study, however, as they are not included in databases like America: History and Life. Likewise, the inclusion of smaller-scale peer-reviewed journals, or ones that have not been in operation as long, may have influenced certain factors in this study as they may represent research that is more specific to certain areas in the field. In order to understand these impacts in more detail, it would be necessary to undertake further research, which could possibly use other databases or include popular history. Doing so would help to unveil the trends within the field with better coverage.

Ultimately in order to assess Canadian historical research using controlled vocabulary supplied on the AHL platform over a period of over six decades, data was

selected from eight major journals in the field that are widely read by the Canadian

history community. The inclusion of monographs and publications in smaller journals

would have contributed valuable information to this study, however, the sample that was

selected can still be considered to represent at least a significant portion of research in the

field, and findings associated with the analyses of these journal publications do

characterise aspects of the discipline.

5.5.2 Indexer effect

The indexer effect, defined by Tupic & Čater (2015) as "where the validity of the

map is dependent on whether the indexers captured all relevant aspects of the text" (p.

435), is a large factor to consider with this study. Using subject terms as representations

of research topics, this study relies on the accuracy of those subject terms to return

reliable findings. Since Library of Congress Subject Headings and EBSCO's

Comprehensive Subject Index are controlled vocabulary, they are generally designed to

be conducive to grouping concepts together under the umbrella of predetermined terms

(EBSCO, 2018). That being said, there are relative issues with controlled vocabulary as

well. As mentioned briefly in the discussion section, controlled vocabulary is often

flagged as problematic for being slow to change outdated language (Howard &

Knowlton, 2018; Ros, 2019). Using this language as an indicator of research topics can

be flawed; since the language can act to encompass such broad topics, it can be

challenging to accurately draw meaning from this type of terminology. Co-word analysis

mitigated some of this limitation, as it enabled the association of more specific terms

together, but it is worth noting that the bulk of the argumentation in this thesis is reliant on the accuracy of cataloguing.

5.5.3 How important *is* frequency?

EBSCO's indexing, which is influenced by Library of Congress Subject Headings, enables specificity by connecting multiple subject terms together to describe a work (EBSCO, 2018). This appeared in the subject term networks multiple times, for example, with "Quebec (Province) – History" which combines "Quebec (Province)" and "History." In addition to combining terms to create specificity, there are a large quantity of terms that are used when cataloguing a diverse array of scholarship. This was certainly the case for the publications included in this study as there were 6,772 distinct subject terms used to describe the 5,453 journal articles. As a result, many of the subject terms were used only a few times. In the subject term frequency rankings, subject terms were rarely used to describe more than 10 per cent of publications in each sample. Exceptions were very broad terms, "Canada," "History," "Twentieth Century," and "Ontario." The only conceptual term to be used in over 10 per cent of papers was "Catholic Church," and only for publications from 1954-1974. For the most part, subject terms were used to describe less than 5 per cent of publications.

This characteristic indicates a diversity of subject terms used in the field, and as a result "popularity" as quantified by frequency rankings only provides insight on some aspects of the discipline. Tracking the subject terms that are used less frequently might also provide useful observations on the field, as they may be used to describe impactful research or they may be new terms entirely. Discerning which new subject terms emerged

and when, for example, would supplement frequency analyses. Due to their appearing in such high volume over so long a time period, an analysis of this type falls slightly outside of the scope of this project, but would be interesting further research to undertake.

5.5.4 Citation data: what is available and what is not

One major limitation to this study was the difficulty in attaining publicly-accessible citation data. OpenAlex was an incredibly useful platform in this endeavour, as it presents a comprehensive amount of data on a free and accessible platform, although it is a new project and still has certain tagging issues. As outlined in the methodology section, there are errors with its classification of journal articles, monographs, and other publication types which can result in duplicates of certain titles. It also has some spelling errors with the titles it includes. Given these errors, it is not unlikely that some of the citation counts may be inaccurately categorized as well. Further, due to title misspellings, the majority of titles in America: History and Life were not included in OpenAlex, making the sample size of publications that had citation counts very low; only just over a third of them were associated with citation counts. The results produced at this level of the analysis are thus indications of a very specific slice of the Canadian historical research field, and are likely not extremely generalizable to the field as a whole.

Using citation counts also meant the citation analysis was based on how many times a publication was cited. Missing from this information is which works the article itself cites. Having access to this information could produce more definitive answers in terms of which publications have high impact value in the field, as it would point to which works have been cited, even if they exist outside of the dataset in the study. This

would include philosophical works, for example, or other sources used to inform research in the field. A study conducted by Hickey & Arlen (2002) found that over half of the books reviewed in major American and British historical journals were classified in sections outside of "History," pointing to the discipline's connections to other fields. Given their similarities, it is likely that a study of Canadian history book reviews would indicate similar findings, and a citation network with this data might produce more relevant findings when considering the impact of works on the Canadian historical research field.

Unfortunately, detailed citation data is relatively difficult to access for Canadian history, meaning the citation analysis in this study has been limited to citation counts for a small sample of publications. More comprehensive and publicly-accessible tracking of citation data for these works would also ensure greater ability to create networks of the discipline, and improve understandings of impactful research in the field. Doing so could contribute to efforts to make the field a reflexive one.

5.6 Conclusion

Building on the findings established in the results section, this chapter has identified popular subject and geographic terms in Canadian history from 1954-2021 and the trajectories for those terms. In terms of research topics central to the discipline, social history, labour history, nationalism, women, Indigenous peoples, and economic and political histories have remained at the forefront of the field, although they have all evolved in different ways given contemporary socio-cultural circumstances. Overall in recent years there appears to be a trend toward considering the nineteenth- and twentieth-

centuries in Canada with increasing specificity in topic, resulting in a higher number of subject terms applied to journal articles in the field.

Despite a diversity of subject term analysis, geographic regions of study have remained mostly stable throughout the period of study, with an emphasis on provincial analysis within Canada. Priority seems to have been focused on Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia, although Maritime and Atlantic provinces typically were studied with high frequency as well. Prairie provinces and territories tend to feature in geographic terms less frequently. The study of other nations is mostly restricted to Great Britain, France, and the United States. A concentrated citation analysis was also conducted, revealing the works in the study that were cited with the most frequency, although it should be noted this sample size only represented about a third of the works included in this study overall.

The limitations of this study were also discussed. The design of this study, by virtue of analyzing the frequency of subject terms from a particular set of journals created some limitations in excluding works outside of those journals, and the subsequent analysis is partially contingent on the indexer effect, being how well the publications were categorized. Other limitations stemmed from the inaccessibility of citation data available for Canadian history publications. One of the larger conclusions drawn from both the analysis and the limitations of this study is the importance and changeability of language, which is elaborated on further in the following and final chapter.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the findings identified in this study. It also points to some of the larger implications prompted by those findings and provides potential areas for future research.

6.2 Summary of findings

The aim of this thesis was to provide a quantitative analysis of the Canadian history landscape on a large scale, considering the field's development since the second half of the twentieth century. In this effort, the study was structured to investigate patterns along three main characteristics: subject terms, geographic terms, and citation counts.

6.2.1 Subject terms

The conceptual landscape of the Canadian historical research field as measured by its subject terms is a varied one. Notably, social history and political history have remained relatively prevalent themes in the field, which is consistent with observations made about the discipline in the 1980s. That said, political history has changed quite a bit since that period, favouring research associated with social structures rather than biographies on individuals. Economic history tends to be associated most frequently with research on railroads and agriculture, and in connection with community settlement. Since the 1970s, labour history has remained a fixture in the discipline, with scholarship most often based on themes connected to labour unrest. In terms of periodization, the two

most popular time periods studied in Canadian history are the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries, indicating that Canadian historians tend to study relatively recent events most commonly.

As a category, women's history has been applied to a number of various themes including rural geography, World War II, gender, and immigration, indicating that women and gender construction more broadly has been categorized in connection with many aspects of Canadian history. Likewise, nationalism has had many different associations over time, going from singular narratives in the earlier periods of the 1950s and 60s to being connected with ethnicity and immigration more strongly in recent years.

Given the significant shifts of certain subject terms over time, it is clear that while the field of Canadian history has some research topics that have remained consistently popular over time, many of them are continually shifting as histories are reconfigured and built upon. This is intrinsic to the unit of analysis employed in this study, being subject terms. A larger finding in this study was the continued increase in the number of subject terms used to describe the field, indicating a trend not only in the research topics completed in Canadian history, but the way they are categorized, which is becoming more specific. Since this study prioritized peer-reviewed literature in eight Canadian history journals, these findings can only apply to that sample of the discipline. Further research investigating other aspects of the discipline would be needed in order to draw larger conclusions about the field as a whole.

6.2.2 Geographic terms

Geographic regions of study in the field tend to be based in Canada, and are often divided provincially. Regional areas, like Atlantic Canada, are at time grouped together, but for the majority of the time, the most frequently used units of analysis are provincial. There is also a tendency to favour higher-populated regions, being Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia, and cities within those regions. Prairie provinces and territories are less represented in the frequency rankings.

When considering areas of study outside of Canada, most research attention is paid to Great Britain, France, and the United States. While these nations have an extensive history with Canada, it is notable that they were the only international regions to ever enter the top rankings of geographic terms. It is possible that this indicates that Canadian history, while extensively connected with international regions (especially considering themes of immigration), mostly consists of scholarship on people *once they have arrived* in Canada rather than taking an international approach. It also may indicate that geographic term indexing is less robust when applied to regions of study outside of North America. Further research considering geographies listed within publication abstracts and titles may investigate this claim further with greater certainty.

6.2.3 Citation analysis

Due to the difficulty in attaining citation data, the analysis for this section only represents a small sample of publications and is not highly generalizable to the field more broadly. That being said, the publications where citation counts were attainable demonstrated a diversity of years in publication, meaning that at least among this sample,

it appears as though the research community is a relatively active one. The majority of publications in this list were also written in English and appeared in *The Canadian Historical Review*. These findings may indicate that *The Canadian Historical Review* is widely-read among Canadian historians, however again due to the size of this sample, it could also simply mean that citations counts of articles from that journal are more accurately classified.

6.3 Implications of this study

Outside of the immediate findings, there are a number of implications generated by the research questions in this study and methods used to answer them. They are elaborated on in the following sections.

6.3.1 A return to initial framing: history is changeable

As an academic discipline, Canadian history has continually evolved, both in terms of the research topics that are studied and the approaches used to frame them. In this context, it is possible to understand historical narratives as being constructed within social settings, and that these social settings influence how scholars understand and create knowledge. This is not to say that all historical narratives are created equally nor are they equally credible; some are informed interpretations based on comprehensive research and lived experiences, while others are not. However, what they do share is that the author of the publication is a person who is influenced by the culture they operate within, and in some way, this influences how they process the information they receive. In this way,

ideas of the past are inherently tied to contexts of the present. Understanding how and why histories are told is central to understanding the culture that creates them.

Moving beyond this assertion, not only *is* history subject to change, but in some areas, it *must* be. This argument is grounded in considering the power dynamics present in the field, which have historically favoured the telling of Canadian history through Eurocentric lenses. To counter these settler colonial narratives, it is crucial that the field highlights anti-racist and anti-colonial historical research, and as a discipline encourages new methodologies to achieve this. Going forward, it is necessary to understand and promote other epistemologies that can produce rich scholarship and create better, more reflective understandings of the past. Canadian history, to contribute meaningfully to society, requires scholars to "[question] taken-for-granted assumptions of colonialism, deeply embedded in Canadian history and social thought." (Sangster, 2017, p. 33).

6.3.2 Practical contributions: bibliometrics and Canadian history

This study has considered the field of Canadian history through bibliometrics, which has very rarely been done. The methodology forwarded in this study is thus highly useful to scholars, relevant both to those in library and information studies as well as Canadian history. In terms of a methodological contribution, it forwards a possible way to analyze the field, using metadata provided from databases like America: History and Life, OpenAlex, and OpenCitations. The creation of the database used for this study provides a useful resource for others interested in employing similar methods, for example, those interested in using free text to measure subject matter or geographical

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focus. Further, it provides two methods of analyzing this metadata, both frequency

rankings calculated with RStudio and co-word networks created using Gephi.

The findings produced from this methodology offer insight into the most-used

subject and geographic terms in Canadian history, which is highly relevant information

for Canadian historians looking to study the dynamics of their discipline. The modularity

classes calculated in the study in particular offer useful avenues for historians to consider,

for example, investigating the links between subject clusters identified in the network, or

how these clusters interact with each other.

The design of this study also offers insight on the relative strengths and

weaknesses of assessing concepts in Canadian history using controlled vocabulary

created by EBSCO, which is highly inspired by Library of Congress Subject Headings. In

many ways, it appears as though EBSCO's controlled vocabulary index has continued to

expand, as demonstrated by a continued increase in the number of distinct subject terms

used to describe the research included in this study, and it will be interesting to note if

these trends persist. It will also be interesting to note how controlled subject terms will

respond to classification changes as outdated language continually gets replaced.

6.4 Further research

There are a number of possible avenues for further research generated by this

study. Firstly, other studies may build on the bibliometric methods forwarded in this

research, in a number of ways. As open-source organizations like OpenAlex continue to

update, more rigorous citation analysis might be made possible. The creation of a citation

network, using citing and cited ids would enable better representation of the impact of

research in the field. It could identify patterns of interactions between authors, between institutions, and between disciplines to provide a better understanding of the works cited in the Canadian history field. Additionally, the inclusion of monographs and other peer-reviewed journals that deal predominantly with Canadian history could help to substantiate these analyses as well as provide further information concerning subject and geographic trends.

Given the relative stability of geographic index terms used in Canadian history, possible future research might expand the type of analysis to encompass keywords provided in titles and abstracts as well. This might draw attention to whether any geographic regions are being under-represented in EBSCO's controlled vocabulary, and enable an expanded regional analysis of the field. Using keywords as indicators of subject matter may also be a useful approach to apply as well, as it may reveal different trends or more specific words to the discipline's context.

Additionally, further research could focus on innovation within the field rather than popularity. In doing so, research could examine the emergence of new subject terms and keywords to assess how and when new research topics appear. This is especially relevant given that subject terms were often applied to a very small percentage of publications within the sample, meaning that AHL tends to employ a large number of subject terms to index its publications.

This study identified the period of 2006-2021 as having demonstrated a significant conceptual departure from 1991-2005, and as such, a closer analysis of scholarship produced in 2006-2021 would generate interesting findings regarding more recent trends in historiography, and potentially explain these shifts in greater detail. In

engaging in this type of analysis, it would be useful to consider keywords as well as subject terms associated with the publications.

Finally, on this point, useful research could be produced in assessing the aptitude for classifying Canadian history using AHL's controlled vocabulary. In this vein of research, it would be necessary to consider language that might be more relevant to the Canadian context in particular. For example, further studies may explore the implementation of other classification systems to provide terminology for Indigenous Nations and use languages that better reflect the people and worldviews they depict. There are a number of ways in which the use of controlled vocabulary can be critically analyzed and evaluated, and these questions are highly relevant when considering how we categorize knowledge and make it accessible.

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