

## Primary & Secondary Sources in Newark Public Library's Charles F. Cummings NJ Information Center

### Definitions in Wikipedia

In the study of history as an academic discipline, a **primary source** (also called **original source** or **evidence**) is an artifact, a document, diary, manuscript, autobiography, a recording, or any other source of information that was created at the time under study. It serves as an original source of information about the topic.

Primary sources are distinguished from **secondary sources**, which cite, comment on, or build upon primary sources. Generally, accounts written after the fact with the benefit (and possible distortions) of hindsight are secondary. A secondary source may also be a primary source depending on how it is used. For example, a memoir would be considered a primary source in research concerning its author or about his or her friends characterized within it, but the same memoir would be a secondary source if it were used to examine the culture in which its author lived. "Primary" and "secondary" should be understood as relative terms, with sources categorized according to specific historical contexts and what is being studied.

### Primary Sources

ARCHIVES: Archival collections are listed in the library's catalog at <http://www.npl.org>. They can also be searched at the Newark Archives Project, <http://nap.rutgers.edu/>. If you search at the Archives Project you should search under the same subjects or keywords in the Newark Public Library online catalog to find books and other materials that are not cataloged as archives. At <http://www.digital.npl.org> you can see materials that have been digitized for the library's web site. For the NJ Information Center these especially relate to African Americans. See the listing of collections by subject, <https://cdm17229.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/custom/subject>. Requests for archives should be made in advance when possible because at times, such as Wednesday evenings, there is not enough staff to retrieve them from the File Room. Those listed in the catalog as offsite usually require several days for retrieval. You must put your belongings in a locker when using unique items such as archives and photos. The Van Buren Branch Library has the Environmental Justice History and Resource Collection, a project of the Ironbound Community Corporation, <http://npl.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/environmentaljustice.pdf>, with copies of primary documents. The Puerto Rican Community Archives may be accessed through the library's New Jersey Hispanic Research & Information Center, [njhric@npl.org](mailto:njhric@npl.org), 973-733-4791. Its collections are listed at <http://npl.org/collections-services/new-jersey-hispanic-research-and-information-center/puerto-rican-community-archives/>.

NEWSPAPERS: Most newspaper stories are considered primary sources. NJIC has clipping folders dating back to the early twentieth century. The oldest articles, many from the *Newark Evening News*, are in the Historic Information Files (IF) and generally have been pasted onto paper. Later clippings are in the Current Information Files. There is a list of the subject headings for these files at <http://npl.org/collections-services/charles-f-cummings-new-jersey-information-center/information-files-cfcnjl/>. If you can take photos of the articles it will be faster than photocopying them. If you do photocopy, there is a special setting to avoid having the newsprint copying very dark. Most current clippings come from the *Star-Ledger*, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Local Talk Newark*. The clipping morgue of the *Newark Evening News* from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to 1972, when the paper ceased to exist, are on microfilm. The subject headings are at <http://npl.org/collections-services/charles-f-cummings-new-jersey-information-center/information-files-cfcnjl/>. The digitized African-American

*Newark Herald* (and variant titles) for 1938-46 and 1965-66 is at <https://cdm17229.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p17229coll7>.

The *Star-Ledger* is available online in the library starting in early 1989, and the same database can be used to search the *Jersey Journal* and *The Trenton Times*. Genealogy Bank, to which the library does not subscribe, appears to have the *Star-Ledger* full text for 1947, 1964 and 1984. Other full text online newspapers include the *New York Times* and those in the Newspaper Source, such as *The Record* (Bergen and neighboring counties) back to 1998. From 1972, the end of the *Newark Evening News*, to 1989, the start of the online *Star-Ledger*, there is the Cummings card-file index to the *Star-Ledger*. From May 26, 1971, to 1982 this index is available online through the dropdown menu at <http://catalog.npl.org:81/> (indexing of the *Newark Evening News* for 1970 is also included). In addition to the *Newark Evening News* microfilm clipping morgue for major stories arranged by subject, there are annual handwritten indexes to the paper starting in 1914. These contain one-time stories, such as fires and obituaries, that reporters were less likely to refer back to than the continuing stories in the clipping morgue.

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS: These are also primary sources, although in recent years the City of Newark has not published the departmental annual reports required by the Revised General Ordinances (2:4-1.1.f). Most city documents are only listed in a card file, not in the library catalog, but extend back to the nineteenth century and should be requested at the NJIC reference desk. Those of the Newark Housing Authority, The Newark Human Rights Commission, and the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations were recently digitized and added to the online full text at <http://www.digital.npl.org>. We have some of the *Index to Current Urban Documents* microfiche collection from 1973 to 1998 for Newark, Camden, Hoboken, Jersey City, Paterson, Trenton. The fiche may be printed or emailed using our ScanPro scanners.

The library is a depository for State of New Jersey documents, although recently very few paper documents have been distributed, and those that have been are also available online. The New Jersey State Library has all the legislative hearings online since 1996, plus some additional that have been digitized as they are requested: <https://dspace.njstatelib.org/xmlui/handle/10929/207>. Other digital State of New Jersey documents are at <https://dspace.njstatelib.org/xmlui/handle/10929/9>. Most of our library's state documents prior to 1980 are only listed in a card file, not the library catalog, and must be brought from off-site storage. Some cataloged legislative hearings that are less relevant to urban issues must be brought from off site. Additional categories of documents are Essex County documents, and "quasi-official" (Q) documents, which are those of nonprofit organizations. Many of the quasi-official documents for Newark are listed in the online catalog. Others for Newark, and those for Essex County and for the state, are listed in a card file.

Outside of the NJ Information Center, federal documents may be requested through the second-floor General Reference desk. They are in the library's online catalog starting in July 1976, and also in the Government Printing Office's catalog starting at the same time: <https://catalog.gpo.gov/F>. A search in the latter may be narrowed to documents that are full text online: [https://catalog.gpo.gov/F/9TRYF5LBHL5M1T9VPHV13YPA7K5N87YUA89R6IBEFMYM2SVVMI-46926?func=file&file\\_name=find-inetp&local\\_base=ELTITLE](https://catalog.gpo.gov/F/9TRYF5LBHL5M1T9VPHV13YPA7K5N87YUA89R6IBEFMYM2SVVMI-46926?func=file&file_name=find-inetp&local_base=ELTITLE) (click a choice at "Internet Access.") There are a bound *Cumulative Subject Index to the Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications, 1900-1971*; and bound *Cumulative Title Index to U.S. Government Publications, 1789-1976*. Hearings mostly go back to 1963 when the library became the state's sole regional depository. The library's federal documents in microfiche or microprint can be viewed, printed and e-mailed on the ScanPros in the NJ Information Center.

AUDIOVISUAL: The Krueger-Scott African-American Oral History Collection, available to Rutgers and to Newark Public Library, is digitized audio of 109 interviews. Twenty-nine of these have transcripts available at the Newark Public Library's web site and are primary sources: <https://cdm17229.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/search/searchterm/krueger%20scott> . The NJ Information Center has additional audio and video listed in the library catalog. There are videos of Newark History Society programs at <https://www.youtube.com/NewarkHistorySocietyOrg>.

MAPS: The library's single-sheet maps of Newark, many of which are primary sources, were added to the library's digital collections in September 2017: [https://cdm17229.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/search/searchterm/Maps%20\(Documents\)/field/format/mode/exact/conn/and/order/nosort](https://cdm17229.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/search/searchterm/Maps%20(Documents)/field/format/mode/exact/conn/and/order/nosort). Bound atlases for the most part are not yet digitized, but have been preserved through encapsulation of the pages. You will need a camera to copy these. Maps for other areas of the state are often fragile and only listed in a card file. We have some Sanborn insurance maps, showing individual buildings, on microfilm for cities statewide. Princeton University has publicly-accessible online Sanborn maps, including atlases for Newark that are available to varying degrees of completeness for 1892 to 1922: <http://library.princeton.edu/libraries/firestone/rbsc/aids/sanborn/essex/newark.html>.

PHOTOS: NJIC has a large photo collection, built mainly on the photo morgue of the *Newark Evening News*, which went out of business in 1972, and more recently the donation by the *Star-Ledger* of their photographic prints from 1970 to 1999. The 1959 to 1968 snapshots by Samuel Berg show nearly every street in Newark: <https://cdm17229.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/search/searchterm/berg%2C%20samuel%2C%20dr.%2C%20Oca.%201898-1990!Photographs/field/subject!format/mode/exact!exact/conn/and!and/order/nosort/ad/asc>. Many photos are primary documents. The *Newark Evening News* most often kept photos of buildings and portraits of people, less of people engaged in their daily activities. Cataloged photos are in the NJ Newspaper, Periodical and Illustration Index of the library's catalog ("Newspaper and Periodical Index" on the initial screen of the catalog): <http://catalog.npl.org:81/>. Use the drop-down index to select illustrations.

### Secondary Sources

BOOKS; There are some books on New Jersey that can be borrowed, but most are in the New Jersey Information Center for reference use only. The largest and most used areas of the reference collection are the Dewey Decimal System 300s, social sciences, and the 900s, history. An unusual collection is that of Reference Authors & Imprints (RAI), which are mostly older books by New Jersey authors, not about New Jersey, and early books printed in New Jersey. An Excel spreadsheet at the reference desk provides additional details on the RAI authors and their works. There is also a reference collection of fiction set in New Jersey.

PERIODICALS: Periodicals are underutilized, due in part to limited indexing. The NJ Information Center indexed various titles statewide from 1950 to 2000. There is a list of titles of periodicals and the dates indexed at the reference desk. Recently the index has been brought up to date for some of the more important statewide publications for Newark articles only. The index is part of the library's catalog; at <http://catalog.npl.org:81/> use the drop down index to select periodicals.

In addition to New Jersey titles in the NJ Information Center, the library has a large collection of older bound and microfilm periodicals in its File Room (basement). These are requested at the second-floor Periodicals Desk. Holdings records in the main online catalog are incomplete, but you may ask the

General Reference desk on the second floor to check the listings in the library Kardexes:  
[reference@npl.org](mailto:reference@npl.org), 973-733-7779/7820.

Sometimes there is a link in our online catalog to free full-text pre-1923 U.S. articles or pre-1870 non-U.S. articles provided by JSTOR. We do not have links to JSTOR's more recent articles, except for some that the publishers have allowed to be made available for free.

Large numbers of older popular titles were subscribed to, but specialized were also, such as *Russian Literature Triquarterly*, and many art titles. We have the bound *Cumulative Index to Periodical Literature: March 1959-February 1970* and *March 1973-February 1978*, covering the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* volumes for those years. There are a few significant titles in *Reader's Guide* that we have in paper, microfilm or online that Rutgers Dana Library does not have. We do not have the online *Readers' Guide Retrospective: 1890-1982* or the *Humanities & Social Sciences Index Retrospective: 1907-1984*. Those are at Dana Library, where people who are not from Rutgers are allowed to use them there for one hour a day. Dana Library also has *Periodicals Index Online*, which covers humanities and social sciences journals up to 1995.

Our library has the 1973 bound cumulation of the *Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals*, plus 7 bound supplements to 1994. New Jersey Institute of Technology's Littman Architectural Library has the database version from 1930 to the present. Day passes for its use are available to outsiders. We have the *Art Index Retrospective: 1929-1984*. Our library's complete list of online indexes and full-text magazine, journal and newspaper databases are listed here: <http://npl.org/internet-electronic-resources/>.

### **Hours, etc.**

The New Jersey Information Center is open from 10:30 to 5:30 Monday to Saturday, except to 7:30 on Wednesday. Summer Saturday hours are 11 to 3. The library's online collections are at <https://cdm17229.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/>. The NJ Information Center's collections are described at <http://npl.org/collections-services/charles-f-cummings-new-jersey-information-center/>. An excellent research guide by Rutgers-Newark's Dana Library is *The Newark Experience*: <http://libguides.rutgers.edu/c.php?g=336802&p=2267308>.

George Hawley 11-14-17