

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY AT KINGSTON
Department of Economics
ECONOMICS 332—Economic History of North America Since 1865
Fall 2011/2012
Term Research Paper

Due Date: **November 17**

Instructions: Write a 12–15 page essay on one of the topics listed below. You are strongly encouraged to include an empirical component of original research in your essay, even if for illustrative purposes only. Some standard sources of data are listed in the topic explanation where relevant to that topic, or at the end of the list for general sources.

Each topic listing is a guideline for potential research, and more than one essay topic may be listed for each. For most topics, some specific direction for your research is provided. You are free to tweak these guidelines and explore each topic using an alternate approach, but you should link your approach with existing studies.

Your essay must be consistently formatted according to a standard style. For models, consult one of the journals cited in your bibliography.

Topics:

1. Wheat Boom and Canadian Economic Growth

There is no general consensus on the link between the wheat boom and the rate of income growth in Canada. Explore the impact of the wheat boom on the Canadian economy. You may choose to focus on a particular, individual linkage, or you may wish to explore the topic from a macro perspective. One particular interesting angle is the link among immigration, population expansion, and extensive versus intensive growth.

2. Industrialization in Canada

Did Canada industrialize late? Was industrialization influenced by the National Policy or other domestic policies? How productive was Canadian manufacturing compared to the U.S.?

3. Commercial Policy and Industrialization

Both Canada and the U.S. pursued a protectionist trade policies through the mid-20th Century. Explore the relationship between commercial policy and growth using the example of Canada and/or the United States. Another approach is to explore Canada's pursuit of trade negotiations with the U.S. (failed Reciprocity of 1911, Depression-era preferences, Autopact) and/or with Britain (Commonwealth agreement).

Aggregate trade data are readily available from Historical Statistics. Detailed trade data by commodity and trade partner are available in *Trade of Canada* in the library from 1919, and earlier reported in the Departmental Reports of the Minister of Trade and Commerce in the Sessional Papers in the library.

4. Railway Construction and Growth

What role did railway development and expansion play? Was the waterway network a viable alternative? As an additional piece of information, most of the grain exported from the Prairies during the Wheat Boom went by boat from Thunder Bay (Port Arthur and Fort William) east. Does that have implications for the value, private and social, of the rail expansion of the period?

5. Immigration

(a) Macroeconomic effects of immigration on the economy

Topics could include: examining the patterns, timing, and source of immigrants to Canada and/or the United States; discussing the relationship between economic growth and immigration; discussing the evolution of Canada's immigration policy; discussing the role of immigration in inducing non-immigrants to migrate within Canada or to the U.S.?

(b) Immigrant absorption into the labour market

Use the Census microdata for Canada and/or the U.S. to compare the distribution of the occupations for immigrants and non-immigrants. For Canada you may examine the distribution of earnings (earnings data are not available in this period in the U.S. Census). Census data include country of origin and year of immigration so you might explore how these influence occupation and earnings. You may explore differences by immigrant period of arrival and by province or region.

6. Agricultural Adaptation and Policy

While the Wheat Boom has been a focus of much research, agriculture in Ontario and Quebec were also changing during the Wheat Boom period. Crop mixes were shifting away from wheat to a broader mix of crops and livestock. Was the shift in agriculture in Ontario influenced by the growth of the wheat economy on the Prairies? Detailed data on agricultural output and prices are available for Ontario in the *Annual Report of the Bureau of Industries* in the library.

7. Resources and Resource Depletion

Explore the importance of resources to the Canadian economy. You might explore an example for a particular resource of stock management or depletion.

Historical Data Online

Historical Statistics of Canada are available in the library, and online here:

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-516-x/3000140-eng.htm>.

Historical Statistics of the United States are available in the library, and online here:

<http://hsus.cambridge.org/HSUSWeb/HSUEntryServlet>

Census microdata files and documentation are available as follows:

- Canada

1901: <http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/cfp/data/index.html>.

1911: <http://ccri.library.ualberta.ca/en1911census/database/index.html>.

Note: data are provided in SPSS format. Contact your course instructor for the data in Stata format.

- U.S.

Access to U.S. census data is available at www.ipums.org