

PROQUEST HISTORICAL NEWSPAPERS™

For Corey Seeman, director of the Kresge Business Administration Library at the University of Michigan, ProQuest Historical Newspapers serves a dual purpose.

ProQuest Historical Newspapers is an essential resource in teaching doctoral students how to effectively perform online historical searches, and – just as important for Seeman – it is the window through which he can see fascinating facts about his family's history.

In one telling incident, Seeman says he was able to combine his desire to learn more about his family history while fulfilling his professional teaching responsibilities. "I was developing the curriculum for a course to teach doctoral students how to use historical databases," he explains. "To find a specific reference that could show students how the search process worked, I used *ProQuest Historical Newspapers* to search *The New York Times* for information on 'The Clothes Closet,' an apparel store my father and uncle owned in New Jersey during the 1960s and 1970s."

Illumination ... Just a click away

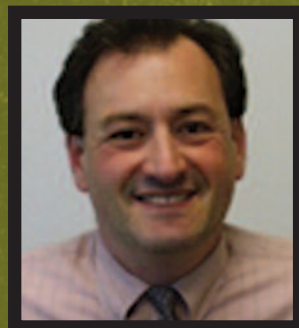
"In the course of my research, I found a very unusual advertisement that my father and uncle had placed in *The Times* just before the 1972 presidential election." In the ad, the two brothers said, "Why are two businessmen voting for George McGovern? We strongly believe that business can only benefit when the moral fiber of our country improves." It

listed the names of B Seeman and A Seeman and 'The Clothes Closet, Inc.'

"Finding the McGovern ad was quite unexpected and it shows that you can do some amazing things with *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*," he says. "Using *ProQuest Historical Newspapers* is a little like panning for gold. You stand a good chance of hitting a vein of very rich historical information."

Seeman says he also found his brother's wedding announcement and enjoyed reading the other news of the day. "This highlights one of the other key strengths of *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*," Seeman says. "I was curious about the other news of the time and, with ProQuest, I could simply click on the date and get the other information I wanted to see. It was a nice curiosity and very enjoyable to look at the articles," he says.

Seeman shared the revelations about the McGovern ad and other newly found family information with his brother and other friends and relatives. "Finding and distributing the advertisement and articles not only gave us new information and reminded us about things we had forgotten, it also triggered many conversations about past family events and activities."



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Corey Seeman, Director, Kresge Business Administration Library, University of Michigan

The power of search

Seeman says the value of *ProQuest Historical Newspapers* for both scholarly and genealogical research is due, in large part, to the power of the search capabilities. "The ability to simply throw a couple of words in a search box and then get relevant results is truly phenomenal," he says. "The fact that I could define how I wanted the research experience to be made it easy to tailor the process to meet my individual needs." Seeman's initial search of 'The Clothes Closet' uncovered nearly 3,000 documents. He was able to easily refine the search and zero in on the articles and advertisements that revealed information about his family's genealogy.

"In online search, there is always a perfect question with a perfect answer," he says, "but we almost never have that question. *ProQuest Historical Newspapers* makes up for this so you can really expedite the process."

"By having an optical character recognition layer beneath a very easy-to-use interface, and the ability to search for advertisements, editorials, and other content as well as news articles, you can find information that you might not have found using other methods." He also says the capability to search multiple newspapers at the same time sets the *ProQuest Historical Newspapers* collection apart.

Realise the full promise of historical research

The collection is also ideal for helping a researcher see longer-term trends. "Business students in our advertising program, for example, use *ProQuest Historical Newspapers* to analyse car

advertisements from earlier times like the 1940s and 1950s and then compare them to how automobiles are advertised today. This helps them better understand how companies change the way they define themselves and their products. This ability for students to look backward as they think about the future is a tremendous asset."

Seeman, the father of an autistic child, has also used *ProQuest Historical Newspapers* to gain valuable insight into the long-term trends in autism. "On a personal level, I'm very intrigued by autism and interested in learning how society has addressed the issue since the term was first coined in the 1940s. In particular, I was able to see the social approach to autism before and after the 1967 publication of *The Empty Fortress*, the single most important book on autism."

"Trends don't have specific start and stop dates, like specific sporting events and elections," he observes. "In researching a trend, you are just as likely to find an important reference, say, on October 1953 as you are on April 1970. This means you have to search on a continuum. The sophisticated search capabilities in *ProQuest Historical Newspapers* make it possible to do this quickly and efficiently."

"*ProQuest Historical Newspapers* is very flexible," Seeman says. "You can use it anywhere you can get online, including the local coffee shop. I think this flexibility along with the sophisticated search functionality is truly helping to realise the full promise of electronic search."

For more information on ProQuest Historical Newspapers or to request a FREE TRIAL, email newspapers@proquest.co.uk quoting reference code MKT 738 09.

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