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Robert F. Harney fonds
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Garron Wells, 2011

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Biographical note

Robert Forest Harney was born on March 5, 1939 in Salem, Massachusetts, the oldest of 8 children. He received his early education at St. James Elementary School in Salem, and St. Johns Prep in Danvers, MA. In 1957 he enrolled at Harvard University, graduating in 1960 with an A. B. (cum Laude) in history and literature. In the fall of that year he enrolled in the graduate programme at University of California (Berkeley) after marrying Diana Ohlsson on May 28, 1960. He received his M.A. in History in 1961, and then enrolled in the Ph.D programme.

It was while working on his Ph.D. in history at Berkeley that he was hired by the University of Toronto as Lecturer in the Department of History. He moved with his family to Toronto on September 4, 1964. In 1965 he was appointed Assistant Professor, a position he held until his promotion in 1971 to Associate Professor. During this period he completed his thesis entitled "the Last Crusade: the papal army of the 1860s" and was awarded his Ph.D. from the University of California in 1966.

While Associate Professor in the Department of History, Prof. Harney received a grant of \$3,000,000 to establish a multicultural history collection. The result was the formation of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario (MHSO) in 1976. As "founding and guiding genius" of this institution, Prof. Harney created what has been described as " a rich and vast collection of oral histories and archival materials".¹ As President and Academic Director of the MHSO until his death in 1989, Prof. Harney edited *Polyphony* and published essays relating to the use of such collections in the writing of the history of ethnic institutions such as theatres, churches and benefit societies. In 1979 he was promoted to professor of history by the University.

From the late 1970s to his death, Prof. Harney published numerous articles and six books as sole or co-author. While his initial research and teaching interest was Italian history, his exposure to the cultural diversity of Toronto eventually turned his attention to North American immigration and ethnic history. One of his earliest books, *Immigrants: Portrait of the Urban experience* (Toronto: Van Nostrand, 1975) was co-authored with Harold Troper. This book won the Toronto Book Award in 1975. He developed courses and wrote numerous papers on immigration in general, and Italian immigration to Canada in particular. He served on the editorial boards of more than nine associations including the *Canadian Ethnic Studies Journal* and the *Canadian Journal of Italian Studies*, *Journal of American Ethnic History* and American Italian Historical Association, among others. As well he continued to act as General Editor of all publications of the MHSO.

¹ "Robert Forest Harney" by Rudolph J. Vecoli. *Perspectives*. April 1990. American Historical Association.

His reputation in the fields of multiculturalism and immigration history made him much in demand for addresses and presentations, as well as a consultant to academic institutions, cultural centres, and governments at home and abroad. His work in this field garnered him several honours, including the already mentioned City of Toronto Book Award in 1975, the Francesco Bressani Award for the Italian language *Dalle Frontiera alle Little Italies* in 1986 and Certificates of commendation from the Canadian Historical Association and the American Association for State and Local History (both in 1987).

Prof. Harney's teaching, research and publishing in this field led to the establishment of the Ethnic and Immigration Studies graduate programme at the University of Toronto in 1977. Shortly before his death, he was appointed to the newly endowed Professorship and Program in Ethnic, Immigration, and Pluralism Studies, a collaborative graduate programme. Prof. Harney died on August 22, 1989 after the failure of a heart transplant. Following his death, the chair was re-named the Robert F. Harney Professorship, with Wsevolod Isajiw, Department of Sociology, as the first appointment in 1990.

Scope and content

Date range: 1959-1994

Extent: 1.24 m (# of boxes) of textual records

Scope and content: This fonds consists of one accession received in 2010 containing records created and collected by Prof. Robert F. Harney during his academic career. The records document to some extent his activities as a graduate student at the University of California (Berkeley), but mostly relate to his activities over 26 years in the Department of History at the University of Toronto. The fonds is organized into eight series and includes documentation relating to his doctoral education in the United States, correspondence with colleagues and students both at the University of Toronto and other academic and scholarly institutions and organizations, drafts of articles, papers, proposed books and research materials on Italians in Canada. Much of the correspondence from the mid 1970s on is signed in his capacity as President and /or Academic Director of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, an organization he helped to establish in 1976.

Series 5 and 6 provide only a sampling of the original scholarly work that he produced during his relatively short academic career. Series 6 does not contain any manuscripts for the six published books he authored or coauthored between 1975 and 1985. In Series 5 only a small percentage of his articles and papers listed on his curriculum vitae will be found. However, as a result of his untimely death, researchers will find the manuscript for *From the shores of hunger* consisting of a collection of previously published essays brought together by his son and published posthumously in 1990. No

complete manuscript for Prof. Harney's intended work on Italians in Canada has been preserved.

These records are important for their documentation of the development of one of the first programmes in ethnic, immigration and pluralism studies at the University of Toronto. Prof. Harney's shift from a specialist in European and Italian history, to immigration and ethnic studies is well documented in the correspondence files and in the sampling of manuscript articles and papers in this fonds.

Access: The following records are closed for 30 years. Please contact the University Archivist for additional information.

- Series 4: B2010-0001/003 (07)-(08)
B2010-0001/004

Boxes: B20XX-000X/00X - /00X

Related material:

- UTARMS: B2010-0001
- See [Multicultural History Society of Ontario](#)

Series 1: Personal

Date range: 1976-1991

Extent: 0.07 m (1 box) of textual records

Scope and content: This series consists of two files containing his curriculum vitae and clippings, some correspondence and published articles on or about Prof. Harney. Included are copies of newspaper clippings quoting his views on Italian Canadians, notices of awards and honours for his book *Dalla Frontiera alle Little Italies* among others, and a review of posthumously published essays entitled *If One were to write a history...Selected writings by Robert F. Harney*. Edited by Pierre Anctil and Bruno Ramirez.

Access: Open

Boxes: B2010-0001/001 (01) – (02)

Series 2: Education – University of California

Date range: ca. 1962-1966

Extent: 0.13 m (2 boxes) of textual records

Scope and content: As mentioned, Prof. Harney studied at the University California (Berkeley) for both his Master of Arts degree in History (1961) and his doctorate in History in 1966. This series contains only files relating to the production of his doctoral thesis *The last crusade: the Papal Army of the 1860s*. Files contain drafts of some of the chapters for this thesis, as well as one bound copy set of incomplete chapters of the thesis. There is no complete copy, although his thesis is available through the Library of the University of California.

Access: Open

Boxes: B2010-0001/001 (03)-(10)
B2010-0001/002 (01)

Series 3: Correspondence

Date range: 1965-1994

Extent: 0.20 m (2 boxes) of textual records)

Scope and content: This series contains a general file of correspondence which includes a single letter from a colleague who had read his recently completed doctoral thesis in 1965. Also included are subject files on various topics and with individuals. Subject files include, among others, the Australian trip (1986), Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Canadian Academic Centre in Italy (1988), outlines for the Little Italies conference [1979], and Italians (1977-1989).

Files relating to individuals include George Pozzetta (1943-1994) professor of history at the University of Florida, and Rev. Gianfausto Rosoli of the Centro Studi Emigrazione – Roma. A separate file of correspondence with Richard James B. Bosworth (Professor of History, University of Western Australia) documents arrangements made by Prof. Harney's widow, Diana Harney regarding his visit to Toronto in 1994. Also included in this series are three files relating to administrative activities at the University of Toronto including Ethnic and Immigration Studies programme and the Connaught Committee project on immigration history. Much of this correspondence was signed in his capacity as Director/President of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario, rather than as professor of history at the University of Toronto.

Access: Open

Boxes: B2010-0001/002 (02)-(09)
B2010-0001/003 (01)-(06)

Series 4: Correspondence- Letters of Recommendation

Date range: 1977-1989

Extent: 0.23 m (2 boxes) of textual records

Scope and content: This series consists of files of chronologically arranged correspondence with students, colleagues, employers, editors etc. relating to requests for formal and informal recommendations from Prof. Harney. Many of these are addressed to Professor Harney in his capacity as Director/ President of the Multicultural History Society of Ontario.

Access: Restricted. Closed for 30 years. Consult University Archivist for access.

Boxes: B2010-0001/003 (07)-(08)
B2010-0001/004

Series 5: Articles and Papers

Date range: 1975-1988

Extent: 0.13 m (1 box) of textual records

Scope and content: This series documents only a portion of Prof. Harney's more than 100 literary works, both published and unpublished. Many of these were undertaken as part of his duties as editor of the MHSO's bulletin, *Polyphony*, and as general editor of the Society's publications programme. Others appeared in many scholarly journals such as *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, as well as chapters in books. Unfortunately, only a few have survived in this series. Of these, many are undated drafts on various themes relating to predominantly Italian immigration.

Arrangement: undated works are arranged alphabetically by working title; dated works are in chronological order. See Appendix 1 for list.

Access: Open

Boxes: B2010-0001/005

Series 6: Books

Date range: 1974-1993

Extent: 0.20 m (2 boxes) of textual records

Scope and content: This series contains drafts, notes and correspondence relating to two books Prof. Harney was preparing before his death. The first of these relates to the history of Italians in Canada, to be prepared for the *Generations Series* of the Multiculturalism Directorate of Secretary of State of Canada. The files documenting this work include various drafts of chapters, and correspondence relating to the Generations project. Also included is the manuscript of *From the shores of hunger: Italians in Canada. Essays by Robert F. Harney* edited by his son Nicholas De Maria Harney, and published in 1993 under the title *From the shores of hardship: Italians in Canada. Essays by Robert F. Harney* by Centro canadese scuola e cultura italiana. This book contains essays previously published by Prof. Harney during the 1980s.

The files relating to *Terra Incolta e ghiacciato. Aspects of Italian immigration to Canada* contain drafts of articles previously published by Prof. Harney between 1974 and 1988. For example, "The commerce of migration" was reproduced in *From the shores of hardship*. This book of collected articles does not appear to have been published, and may have been an earlier version of his proposed book on Italians in Canada.

Access: Open

Boxes: B2010-0001/006

B2010-0001/007 (01)-(03)

Series 7: Teaching

Date range: 1959- 1984

Extent: 0.26m (2 boxes) of textual records

Scope and content: Prof. Harney taught both undergraduate and graduate courses in the Department of History from the mid 1960s when he was first appointed to the department. This series contains files for teaching mainly at the University of Toronto, but also one file at the University of California (Berkeley) where he delivered a University Extension course on Western Civilization (ca1963-1964). There is also one file on a course on Ukrainian emigrations offered through the Department of Slavic Languages and Literature taught in 1980-81. Files may contain notes, lectures, course outlines, bibliographies, reading lists, examinations etc.

Arrangement: Arranged by course number.

Access: Open

Boxes: B2010-0001/007 -/008

Series 8: Research materials

Date range: Ca 1976-1982

Extent: 0.20 m (2 boxes) of textual records

Scope and content: This series contains files relating to the production of Prof. Harney's proposed book on "Italians in Canada". It includes transcripts of interviews and other biographical information on identifiable individuals, notes, and some drafts documenting Italian Canadians in provinces across the country. It should be noted that some of the transcripts may be copies of records held at the Multicultural History Society of Ontario.

Access: Open. Permission to publish transcripts of interviews of the MHSO must be obtained from the MHSO.

Boxes: B2010-0001/009
B2010-0001/010

Appendix

Series 5: Articles and papers

File number	File title	Date range
B2010-0001/005 (01)-(02)	"Canadian multiculturalism, immigrants and ethnicity" Drafts of different papers on this topic	n.d.
B2010-0001/005 (03)	"Emigration of Jews of Eastern Europe" –notes, draft of part of manuscript	n.d.
B2010-0001/005 (04)	Italians and fascism – draft manuscript	n.d.
B2010-0001/005 (05)	"Lo Spirito propulsore: fascism and a Canadian 'Little Italy'	n.d.
B2010-0001/005 (06)	"Ambiente and Social Class in North American Little Italies." Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism 2 (1975). pp. 208-24. Copy of off print	1975
B2010-0001/005 (07)	"Baltic Identity Retention." Symposium on Baltic Identity Retention, the Association for the Advancement of Baltic Studies, Toronto, October 1980.	1980
B2010-0001/005 (08)	"Delle condizioni del Canada rispetto all'immigrazione italiana (1903). Un rapporto rivisitato" unpublished paper	Nov. 1981
B2010-0001/005 (09)	"Emigrants, the Written Word and Trust." Polyphony 3, no. 1 (Winter 1981), pp. 3-8.	1981
B2010-0001/005 (10)	"Toronto's Little Italy, 1885-1945" In Little Italies in North America Edited by Robert F. Harney and J. Vincenza Scarpaci Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1981, pp.41-62.	1981
B2010-0001/005 (11)	"E Pluribus Unum: Louis Adamic and the Meaning of Ethnic History." The Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota, May 1981.	1981
B2010-0001/005 (12)	"The jews of Toronto" – draft paper for Jews in North America: Immigration, Settlement and Ethnic Identity. Toronto, April 1983 ???	[1983?]
B2010-0001/005 (13)	Address to Ontario Ethnic Press Association	1983

File number	File title	Date range
B2010-0001/005 (14)	"Boarding and Belonging." <i>Urban History Review</i> 2 (October 1978), pp. 8-37. Reprinted in <i>The Canadian City: Essays in Social and Urban History</i> . Edited by A. Artibise and G. Stelter 2nd rev. ed. Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1984.	1984
B2010-0001/005 (15)	Emigration for IHRC Conference – drafts of paper – may have been for presentation under title "Italian Government and Emigrants -the New Law of Local Consular Committees." Centre for Migration Studies, Rome, Italy, April 19, 1985	1985
B2010-0001/005 (16)	"Anti-Italian Feeling in Canada: a History." York University Lecture Series on Italian History, February 1985.	1985
B2010-0001/005 (17)	"Ethnicity and Neighbourhoods." In <i>Gathering Place: Peoples and Neighbourhoods of Toronto, 1834-1945</i> (1985), pp. 5-24.	1985
B2010-0001/005 (18)	"Multiculturalism and Ethnic Persistence." An address given to the Annual Conference of the Canadian Multicultural Council, Ottawa, November 1986.	1986
B2010-0001/005 (19)	"If One Were to Write a History of Postwar Toronto Italia." A paper given at Societies in Transition: Italians and Italian Americans in the 1980's, Balch Institute, Philadelphia, 1985	1985
B2010-0001/005 (20)	"The Canadian Prairies as a Target of Italian Migration: Government Discourse and Peasant Lore." In <i>Society in Transition. Italians and Italo-Canadians in the Eighties</i> , Université de Quebec en Montreal, sponsored by the Centro Italiano di formazione europea, 9-11 June 1988.	1988
B2010-0001/005 (21)	"Caboto and Other Italian-Canadian Parentela." In <i>Arrangiarsi: Proceedings of a Conference on Italian Canadians</i> . Edited by R. Perin and F. Sturino. Montreal: Guernica, [1988].	1988
B2010-0001/005 (22)	"The Palmetto and the Maple Leaf: Patterns of Canadian Migration to Florida" In <i>Shades of the Sunbelt. Essays on Ethnicity, Race, and the</i>	1988

File number	File title	Date range
	<i>Urban South</i> . Edited by R.M Miller and G.E Pozzetta. Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1988, pp. 21-40. (Also University of Tennessee paperback).	
B2010-0001/005 (23)	"Political Discourse and Toronto's Slavic Ethnics" In <i>Multiethnic Studies in Uppsala. Essays presented in Honour of Sven Gustavsson</i> . Edited by I. Svanberg and M. Tyden Uppsala, Sweden: Uppsala University, 1988, pp. 31-46	1988

Series 7: Articles and papers

File number	File title	Course No	Date range
B2010-0001/007 (04)	University of California. University Extension. Western Civilization	XB4a	1962-1964
B2010-0001/007 (05)	University of Toronto. Department of History courses	Various	Ca 1968-1972
B2010-0001/007 (06)	Introduction to the study of history	HIS 120	n.d.
B2010-0001/007 (07)	The ancient regime and the great democratic revolution 1715-1848	HIS 201	n.d.
B2010-0001/007 (08) B2010-0001/008 (01)	Nineteenth century European politics, culture and society.	HIS 241	Ca 1973-1984
B2010-0001/008 (02)	The history of Europe since 1815	HIS 322	n.d.
B2010-0001/008 (03)-(04)	History of Italy	HIS 341/441	1967-1978
B2010-0001/008 (05)-(06)	European urban history. A collection of course materials collected from related courses taught by Prof. Harney at both U of T and U of California. Includes such courses as Risorgimento and the European and others relating to mainly 19 th century history.	HIS 349/426	1959-1972
B2010-0001/008 (07)	Emigration, immigration and ethnic settlement	HIS 390Y	1980-1981
B2010-0001/008 (08)	Studies in immigration	HIS 418	1974-1975

File number	File title	Course No	Date range
B2010-0001/008 (09)	Studies in immigration	HIS 1257S	Ca 1983
B2010-0001/008 (10)	Ukrainians in the diaspora from the eighteenth century to the present	SLA 328Y	1980-1981