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The origins of the Cold War

Deciphering open access primary sources

The surrender of Nazi Germany during World War II combined with the unresolved issues within the terms of Yalta agreements sparked the beginnings of the Cold War. The Soviet Union began to install totalitarian political ideology in Eastern European Countries during the early 1940s. The NATO alliances feared the notion of permanent Communist parties gaining complete control of both the eastern and western democracies, as warranted by continuous Soviet aggression. The greater concern became the threat of complete communistic creed. This article provides topographical primary source guidance to all researchers on the origins of the Cold War. The column begins with a general overview and becomes specific in nature (with sections pertaining to the Berlin Airlift, Marshall Plan, and Yalta Conference).

General sources: Overview

The nature of this current section reflects the overall landscape of the origins of the Cold War. This arose from the hostile blocs of the United States and the Soviet Union directly related to the outcomes of the Second World War. The period of initial investigation began with 1945 to 1953. This particular section provides a generalized resources list of Cold War resources.

- **Avalon Project (Yale University)-Cold War.** The Avalon Project at Yale University's Lillian Goldman Law Library provides an abbreviated list of Cold War events. A link entitled: "Decade of American Foreign Policy (1941-1949)" is broken down into

eight different categories. The topical list includes: Wartime Documents Looking for Peace, Conferences on the Peace Settlement, United Nations: Basic Organizations, and many others. *Access:* http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/coldwar.asp.

- **Cold War International History Project.** The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars provides the Cold War International History Project. The website provides full access to historical materials from all government-related agencies. The page entitled "Primary Sources on Cold War History" allows users to browse based on subject-related historiographical material, including the Sino Soviet agreements. *Access:* <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/program/cold-war-international-history-project>.

- **Cold War Museum.** This preservation website provides a vast timeline from the 1940s to 1990s concerning the Cold War. The 1940s-era section provides primary documents from the Czechoslovakia Cop, Marshall Plan, and additional related topics. *Access:* <http://www.coldwar.org/articles/40s/index.asp>.

- **Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System Online.** The Social Systems Online

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program provides access to digital materials from the Harvard Soviet Social System. The repository contains more than “705 transcripts conducted from refugees from the USSR during the early years of the Cold War.”¹ *Access:* <http://hcl.harvard.edu/collections/hpsss>.

- **National Security Archive.** The National Security Archive supplies a large quantity of Cold War primary source material accessible by country listing, including topics of the Soviet Estimate U.S. Analysis of the Soviet Union (1947–91). *Access:* <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/>.

- **Origins of the Cold War.** The Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum allows users full access to original digital documentation, including the Containment and Marshall Plan with additional topographic information from the Truman Administration. *Access:* <https://www.trumanlibrary.org/hst/g.htm>.

- **Prelude to McCarthyism: The Making of a Blacklist.** The National Archives provides original newspaper sources on the Attorney General’s List of Supervise Organization in connection with McCarthyism. *Access:* <https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2006/fall/agloso.html>.

- **The Wilson Center Digital Archives–Cold War Origins.** This site dispenses a list of international relations documentation. A highlighted resource being the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (signed in 1939). The collection ranges from minute meetings to diary entries to military reports. *Access:* <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/collection/27/cold-war-origins>.

Government manifestation documentations

The government manifestation documentation section provides foreign relation policies concerning declassified government documents. These resources provide users with the opportunity to familiarize themselves with origins of the Cold War concerning legislative documentation.

- **Cold War Intelligence.** This collection of “2,360 formally classified United States government documents” provides both open

and closed access focusing on the United States Intelligence Assembly.² *Access:* <http://primarysources.brillonline.com/browse/cold-war-intelligence>.

- **Cold War Politics (1945–1991).** Provided by the University of San Diego, this site breaks down periodical political timeline sections, including Negotiation 1945, Demonstrations 1946, and Containment 1947. *Access:* <http://history.sandiego.edu/gen/20th/coldwar0.html>.

- **Documents Relating to American Foreign Policy: The Cold War.** This site disseminates pre-1945 to 1991 primary documentation for the entirety of the Cold War, including a detailed section on the Marshall Plan. *Access:* <https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/coldwar.htm>.

- **Foreign Relations of the United States.** This digital repository features the Foreign Relation of the United States, including the CIA Analysis of the Soviet Union from 1947 to 1991. *Access:* <https://sites.fas.harvard.edu/~hpcws/declassified.htm>.

- **Ideological Foundations of the Cold War–Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum.** The focal point of the collection provides ideology based on U.S. policy towards the Soviet Union. The Ideological Foundation of the Cold War section provides imagery and oral histories to help inform users. The documentation spans from the years 1945 to 1952. *Access:* https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/coldwar.

- **National Security Achieve–Debriefing Books.** This collection encapsulates national security, foreign policy, military proceedings, and provides additional topics. The highlighted material includes The SOLO File: Declassified Documents Detailing the FBI’S Most Valued Secret Agents of the Cold War. *Access:* <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/>.

Yalta Conference

The conference took place in Crimea in February 1945 during the Second World War.

The political leaders included U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and Soviet Union Premier Joseph Stalin discussed the progression of the current war and future post world war possibilities. The accomplishments included the share of Manchuria operations, southern portions of Sakhalin, and the charter of Port Arthur (presently Lushunkou).

- **Address to Congress on the Yalta Conference (Franklin D. Roosevelt).** This detailed speech from March 1, 1945, provided Congress with an update post-Yalta Conference hearing. *Access:* <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=16591>.

- **Crimea (Yalta) Conference, 1945.** The initial documentation from February 11, 1945. *Access:* <http://www.loc.gov/law/help/us-treaties/bevans/m-ust000003-1005.pdf>.

Berlin blockade and airlift

This crisis during the Cold War forced the Western Powers (United States, United Kingdom, and France) to abandon the post-World War II hegemony in the western section of Berlin, thus causing major blockades by air, road, and water communications during the years of 1948 to 1949. The airlift continued for 11 months in western Berlin until May 1949, when the Soviet Union lifted the initial blockade.

- **Berlin Airlift (Harry S. Truman Presidential Library).** This specific collection on the Berlin Airlift is broken down monthly and covers the years 1948 to 1952. The website provides a mixture of supporting materials, including audio recordings and oral histories. *Access:* https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/berlin_airlift/large.

- **Berlin Blockade 1948-1949.** This specialized section of the National Archives website supplies a copy of the Berlin Blockade map from the Office of Foreign Affairs, providing the outworkings of the Blockade. *Access:* <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/coldwar/G4/cs1/cwar.pdf>.

- **Berlin Blockade (June 24, 1948–May 12, 1949).** Provides maps, images, and documents concerning the Berlin Blockade,

including the Economic Hardships in Berlin (1948), Verbal note sent to Joseph Stalin from France, the United Kingdom and the United States (August 3, 1948), and additional documentation. *Access:* <https://www.cvce.eu/en/education/unit-content/-/unit/55c09dcc-a9f2-45e9-b240-eaef64452cae/bdcccacc-734a-4742-96d8-9775a0e94bdb/Resources>.

- **The March Crisis and the Berlin Airlift.** Produces primary source documents and information on the intelligence war in Berlin. The documents included the Memorandum for the President (16 March 1948), Direct Soviet Military Action During 1948, and other forms of evidentiary material. *Access:* <https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/books-and-monographs/on-the-front-lines-of-the-cold-war-documents-on-the-intelligence-war-in-berlin-1946-to-1961/art-4.html>.

Marshall Plan

This plan created by George C. Marshall (Secretary of State, 1947–49) feared communistic expansion during the economic collapse of the winter months from 1946 to 1947. Therefore, the plan was designed to provide sustainable economic recovery for all affected personnel. Later, the plan was strictly applied to western Europe (especially western Germany). The action plan was later validated as a conceptual turning point for the U.S. Foreign Aid Programs.

- **George C. Marshall (The Marshall Plan).** This site outlines the details surrounding the Marshall Plan and the Foreign Assistance Act of 1948 and provides access to the general history of the plan, speeches and oral interviews, posters, and films. *Access:* <https://www.marshallfoundation.org/marshall/the-marshall-plan>.

- **Marshall Plan Exhibit.** Provides the original digitalized image of the Marshall Plan document. *Access:* <https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/marshall-plan>.

- **Publicizing the Marshall Plan: Records of the U.S. Special Representative**

in Europe, 1948-1950. Provides original documentation for the Records of the US Special Representative in Europe during 1948-50. The Economic Cooperation Administration oversaw the Marshall Plan's technical and economic aspects of the detailed document. *Access:* <https://www.archives.gov/publications/record/1998/09/marshall-plan.html>.

• **Truman and the Marshall Plan.**

From the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, this site furnishes direct correspondence documentation from 1946 to 1954. The correspondence included individuals, such as Charles Kindleberger and Mike Mansfield. *Access:* https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/marshall/large/index.php.

Conclusion

The aim of this article is to provide unique

user population groups with primary documentation for issues pertaining to the origins of the Cold War. Each section provided a unique insight into natural security, foreign policy, and military proceedings. The sections provide users with a variety of primary source material, including original documentation, oral histories, and many other forms of topical correspondence for future investigation.

Notes

1. The Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System Online—Harvard College Library,” Harvard Project on Soviet Social System Online, accessed June 8, 2018, <http://hcl.harvard.edu/collections/hpsss/>.

2. “Cold War Intelligence,” BrillOnline Primary Sources, accessed June 08, 2018, <http://primarysources.brillonline.com/browse/cold-war-intelligence>. ❧

(“Librarian sabbaticals,” continues from page 609)

with their faculty about their teaching and research face-to-face when they can. For my part, I feel much more confident now asking a faculty counterpart to describe their research and to point out where the library could perhaps be useful. I recognize from my own experience where I struggled and how little things like having articles I needed available and organized was a huge help when it came to getting started.

Conclusion

For me, a sabbatical provided a much-needed midcareer pause that I found refreshing and rejuvenating. In addition, the project I completed will have long-lasting benefits for my library and my department. If you are still unconvinced, a good overview of the types of projects, additional advice from those who have taken sabbaticals, and other benefits, is “Exploring the Sabbatical and Other Leave as a Means of Energizing a Career” by Marlis Hubbard.⁵ If you are fortunate enough to be at an institution that supports and encourages librarians to take sabbatical, what are you waiting for?

Notes

1. Molly R. Flaspohler, “Librarian Sabbatical Leaves: Do We Need to Get out More?,” *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 35, no. 2 (2009): 152-61 152-61; David Fox, “The Scholarship of Canadian Research University Librarians,” *Partnership: The Canadian Journal of Library & Information Practice & Research* 2, no. 2, <https://journal.lib.uoguelph.ca/index.php/perj/article/view/305/562#.Wk-KA7BG270>.

2. Tamara Weintraub, “Sabbatical in Paradise,” *Community & Junior College Libraries* 14, no. 3 (2008): 153-60 153-60.

3. Anna Marie Johnson, “Connections, Conversations, and Visibility: How the Work of Academic Reference and Liaison Librarians is Evolving,” *Reference and User Services Quarterly*, [accepted].

4. Cal Newport, *Deep Work: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World*, First edition. ed. (New York: Grand Central Publishing).

5. Marlis Hubbard, “Exploring the Sabbatical or Other Leave as a Means of Energizing a Career,” *Library Trends* 50, no. 4 (2002): 603-13. ❧