

Countering Distorted Pasts: Interactive Documentary as Public Service in Far-Right History Wars

John W. Bessai

Práticas da História, n.º 22 (2026): 251-293

www.praticasdahistoria.pt

This journal is funded by National funds through FCT — Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P., under the projects UID/HIS/04666/2013, UID/HIS/04666/2019, UIDB/04666/2020 (https://doi.org/10.54499/UIDB/04666/2020), UIDP/04666/2020 (https://doi.org/10.54499/UIDP/04666/2020), UID/4666/2025 (https://doi.org/10.54499/UID/04666/2025), UIDB/04209/2020, UIDP/04209/2020, UID/4209/2025 (https://doi.org/10.54499/UID/04209/2025) and LA/P/0132/2020 (DOI: https://doi.org/10.54499/LA/P/0132/2020)

Práticas da História, n.º 22 (2026): 251-293

John W. Bessai

Countering Distorted Pasts: Interactive Documentary as Public Service in Far-Right History Wars

State-linked interactive documentary can strengthen public historical judgment during far-right "history wars" that circulate mythic pasts through platform media and contest scholarly authority. This article analyzes four National Film Board of Canada (NFBC) digital works—Do Not Track (2015), Circa 1948 (2014), Bear 71 (2012), and Supreme Law (2019)—as public-service infrastructures for evidence, memory, and temporal orientation. The analysis shows how interface sequencing, exploratory navigation, and plural address train repeatable practices: tracing provenance, assembling chronology, weighing perspectives, and recognizing the institutional conditions that shape archives. Methodologically, the study combines close interface analysis with reception traces from press coverage, curator notes, and educational packaging. The four cases demonstrate a shared design logic: public media can organize slow forms of historical attention that platform economies discourage. The article closes with commissioning guidelines for digital public history that support democratic discourse under conditions of polarization: transparent sourcing, plural testimony, participatory authorship, accessibility planning, and maintenance strategies that keep public resources available across technological change.
Keywords: far right, history wars, interactive documentary, public service media.

Contrariando passados distorcidos: o documentário interativo como serviço público nas "guerras da história" da extrema-direita

O documentário interativo patrocinado por poderes públicos pode fortalecer a consciência histórica no contexto das chamadas "guerras da história", nas quais a extrema-direita circula passados míticos através de plataformas digitais e contesta a autoridade do conhecimento histórico. Este artigo analisa quatro obras digitais do National Film Board of Canada (NFBC) – Do Not Track (2015), Circa 1948 (2014), Bear 71 (2012) e Supreme Law (2019) – entendendo-as como infraestruturas de serviço público para evidência, memória e orientação temporal. A análise demonstra como a sequenciação da interface, a

navegação exploratória e o seu direcionamento plural treinam práticas repetíveis: o rastreamento da proveniência, a montagem de cronologias, a ponderação de perspetivas, e o reconhecimento de condições institucionais através das quais os arquivos são construídos. Metodologicamente, o estudo combina a análise próxima da interface destas obras com a sua receção na imprensa, notas curatoriais e materiais educativos. Os quatro casos revelam uma lógica de design comum: os media públicos podem organizar formas lentas de disseminação histórica que a economia de plataformas desvaloriza. O artigo termina com algumas diretrizes para a produção de história pública digital em contextos de polarização: uso transparente das fontes, testemunhos plurais, autoria participativa, acessibilidade, e estratégias de manutenção que mantêm os recursos públicos acessíveis apesar da transformação tecnológica.
Palavras-chave: extrema-direita; guerras da história; documentário interativo; media de serviço público.

Countering Distorted Pasts: Interactive Documentary as Public Service in Far-Right History Wars

John W. Bessai*

Introduction

Far-right political projects treat the past as a resource for mobilization. They circulate claims of civilizational decline, manufacture heroic genealogies, and attach moral authority to selected episodes of national history. Scholars of memory politics track these practices as strategic interventions in public culture, with parties and movements casting themselves as guardians of authentic tradition and as arbiters of legitimate belonging.[1] Platform media amplify these interventions through design logics that reward speed, outrage, and repetition. Viral circulation then turns compressed historical fragments into durable political cues.

* John W. Bessai (john@bessai.com). https://orcid.org/0009-0003-2755-6623. Independent scholar. Original article: 8-02-2026; revised version: 27-04-2026; accepted: 21-05-2026.

1 Stefan Couperus, Pier Domenico Tortola, and Lars Rensmann, "Memory Politics of the Far Right in Europe," *European Politics and Society* 24, no. 4 (2023): 435–444, https://doi.org/10.1080/23745118.2022.2058757 (accessed January 24, 2026).

History wars unfold within these conditions. Contested statues, school curricula, museum labels, border myths, and "heritage" rhetoric become sites of struggle over authority and public reason. The struggle involves disputes over facts. The struggle also involves rules of credibility, attention, and evidence. Platform interfaces place primary sources, secondary scholarship, rumour, and propaganda in a shared visual field. That field encourages "credential levelling," a practice that grants similar status to materials with sharply different provenance.[2] The condition supports authoritarian styles of persuasion that treat tradition as a timeless moral warrant.

Canadian history wars concentrate on the authority of institutions that curate records of settler-colonial violence and its afterlives. Residential school history provides a central site of contestation because public disputes turn on archives, testimony, burial-ground investigation practices, and the evidentiary status of institutional findings. The Standing Senate Committee on Indigenous Peoples reports on ongoing residential school denialism and describes a backlash pattern that seeks to undermine Survivors' accounts, deny intergenerational harms, and cast the search for unmarked burials as fabrication. The committee calls for federal action to counter the rise of denialism. Canadian far-right media ecosystems and influencer networks intensify these dynamics through platform distribution that rewards compression and repetition, and public safety frameworks describe ideologically motivated violent extremism as a continuing threat environment that includes white supremacist, xenophobic, and anti-authority forms. This analysis positions interactive documentary as public service within this conjuncture by treating interface procedure as an institutional resource for addressing denial, distortion, and provenance collapse.[3]

2 Claire Wardle and Hossein Derakhshan, *Information Disorder: Toward an Interdisciplinary Framework for Research and Policy Making* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2017), https://rm.coe.int/information-disorder-toward-an-interdisciplinary-framework-for-researc/168076277c (accessed January 24, 2026).

3 Canada, Parliament, Senate, Standing Senate Committee on Indigenous Peoples, *Honouring the Children Who Never Came Home: Truth, Education and Reconciliation* (interim report, July 2023), 18–20, https://sencanada.ca/content/sen/committee/441/APPA/Reports/APPA_Report_InterlocutorNCTR_e.pdf (accessed February 8, 2026); Greg Elmer and An-

Canadian public discourse organizes around enduring institutional tensions that shape belonging, legitimacy, and authority. This article reads those tensions through the concept of the Canadian aporetic condition, a recurring configuration in which constitutional order, plural citizenship, Indigenous sovereignty claims, and state narratives of national unity produce governance questions that recur across media, policy, and cultural debate.[4] In history wars, instrumentalized narratives compress contested authority into a single story of origin and destiny, narrowing the space for public judgment about responsibility, evidence, and institutional accountability.

The aporetic condition also clarifies why the interface procedure carries political weight. Platform circulation can weaken provenance cues and compress historical time into shareable fragments. An interactive documentary can respond by organizing access to evidence chains, prompting temporal assembly, and staging standpoint evaluation through guided navigation. In this argument, public-service interactive documentary functions as a civic method that keeps institutional tensions legible while supporting disciplined interpretation.

An interactive documentary offers public service resources for this condition. An interactive documentary organizes attention through procedural encounter. Designers can structure how users move through archives, encounter competing voices, and revisit evidence over time. The National Film Board of Canada (NFBC) provides a clear site for this inquiry because it has a statutory mandate to produce and distribute audiovisual works that interpret Canada to Canadians and to other publics.[5] The NFBC also articulates a contemporary commitment

thony Burton, "Rebel Personalities: Canada's Far-right Media," *First Monday* 27, no. 5 (2022), https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v27i5.12546 (accessed February 8, 2026); Public Safety Canada, "Government of Canada Announces Funding to Help Counter Ideologically Motivated Violent Extremism," news release, March 12, 2024, https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/news/2024/03/government-of-canada-announces-funding-to-help-counter-ideologically-motivated-violent-extremism0.html (accessed February 8, 2026).

4 John W. Bessai, "Art as a Public Service: The National Film Board of Canada's Role in Shaping Democratic Dialogues and Societal Transformation" (PhD diss., Trent University, 2024).

5 Canada, National Film Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. N-8, Justice Laws Website, https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/n-8/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

to public access and cultural inclusion through its mandate and values framework.[6] This article analyzes four NFBC interactive works as practical infrastructures for historical judgment: *Do Not Track* (2015), *Circa 1948* (2014), *Bear 71* (2012), and *Supreme Law* (2019). Each work addresses a distinct domain of public reasoning that history wars exploit. *Do Not Track* trains habits of provenance tracking under datafied surveillance. *Circa 1948* offers a spatial archive that foregrounds contested urban memory and racialized erasure. *Bear 71* stages environmental history as a relation between living beings and monitoring systems. *Supreme Law* stages constitutional memory through a guided sequence of viewpoints and deep dives, including Indigenous perspectives on constitutional recognition and political action.

The analysis advances three claims. First, an interactive documentary can function as historiographical infrastructure by aligning its interface procedures with practices of historical inquiry. Second, public-service media can develop durable competencies in source evaluation and temporal reasoning through participatory encounters. Third, these competencies matter for democratic discourse because far-right mobilization depends on epistemic shortcuts that flatten provenance, simplify causality, and mobilize mythic chronology.

The article proceeds in six steps. The next section situates interactive documentary within a public-service tradition that includes participatory media experiments at the NFBC. The method section outlines interface analysis and reception tracing. A subsequent section describes the strategic pattern of far-right historical distortion under platform conditions. The four case studies follow. A concluding synthesis proposes commissioning guidelines for digital public history that support durable public access, plural testimony, and accountable archival practice.

6 National Film Board of Canada, "Mandate and Values", last modified October 9, 2025, https://www.nfb.ca/about/mandate-and-values/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

Conceptual frame: interactive documentary as public service infrastructure

Public discourse relies on infrastructures that organize access, credibility, and return. Infrastructure names the durable arrangements—technical, institutional, archival, and material—that make public encounter possible. Jussi Parikka's work on media materiality and Kyle Stine and Axel Volmar's account of media infrastructures and digital time help specify why interactive documentary depends on servers, formats, platforms, preservation systems, institutional mandates, and maintenance labour.[7] Archives, museums, libraries, and public broadcasters shape these infrastructures through selection, metadata, sequencing, and interpretive framing. Interactive documentary extends this infrastructural field by combining documentary address with user navigation. Scholars of interactive documentary describe the form as a "living" documentary that unfolds through participation and interface procedure.[8] Interface designers can align that procedure with practices of historical inquiry.

Interactive documentary scholarship emphasizes three properties that matter for public history: database organization, narrative sequencing, and participatory address. Database organization shapes what materials appear as evidence and how users traverse that evidence. Narrative sequencing shapes causal inference and temporal orientation. Participatory address shapes stance by positioning users as witnesses, co-investigators, or caretakers of memory.[9] These properties create opportunities for public-service design. Public institutions can embed accountability into metadata, licensing, educational packaging, and preservation planning.

7 Jussi Parikka, *A Geology of Media* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015); Kyle Stine and Axel Volmar, eds., *Media Infrastructures and the Politics of Digital Time: Essays on Hardwired Temporalities* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021).

8 Sandra Gaudenzi, "The Living Documentary: From Representing Reality to Co-Creating Reality in Digital Interactive Documentary" (PhD diss., Goldsmiths, University of London, 2013), http://research.gold.ac.uk/7997/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

9 Judith Aston, Sandra Gaudenzi, and Mandy Rose, eds., *i-Docs: The Evolving Practices of Interactive Documentary* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017).

The NFBC has a long institutional history of public-service documentary and recurring experiments in participatory filmmaking. The *Challenge for Change/Société nouvelle* program (1967–1980) placed production capacity in community contexts and treated filmmaking as a civic method. Program architects linked documentary practice with social learning through local dialogue, screening circuits, and participatory collaboration.[10] Contemporary interactive works extend these commitments through interface design that organizes encounter, access, and facilitation, with clear continuities to earlier practices of portable projection and locally hosted discussion.

A public-service approach to interactive documentary requires durable public access across technological change, collaborative plural representation that recognizes unequal capacities and unequal risks for participants, and accountable documentation of editorial decisions, including selection, editing, and omission. These commitments align with public history practice, which treats interpretive authority as a negotiated relation among institutions, communities, and audiences. Digital public history extends that negotiation into the domain of platform governance, since software standards and distribution infrastructures shape what publics can access and how publics can reuse materials.

Contemporary media environments intensify the need for procedural historical reasoning. Research on civic online reasoning shows that expert evaluators often rely on lateral reading strategies: they leave a source, consult multiple references, and assess provenance across sites.[11] Interface design can scaffold these practices through visible sourcing, outward links to archival holdings and independent research resources, and prompts that guide users toward verification through exploration. Feed-based platform design privileges immediacy and affect, which compresses time for cross-checking; verification cues and navigational

10 Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton, eds., *Challenge for Change: Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010).

11 Sam Wineburg and Sarah McGrew, "Lateral Reading and the Nature of Expertise: Reading Less and Learning More When Evaluating Digital Information," *Teachers College Record* 121, no. 11 (2019): 1-40 (accessed January 24, 2026).

prompts reopen time for inspection and support a habit of provenance testing that carries across contentious historical claims.

In this article, the term public-service infrastructure refers to design decisions that organize the circulation of responsibility. Responsibility circulates among those who can speak with institutional standing, who bear the burden of proof, and who have the means to verify claims. NFBC interactive works can create public-service infrastructure when interface procedures strengthen users' capacity to evaluate sources, assemble chronologies, and recognize institutional contexts that shape evidence. The case studies that follow treat the interface as a civic form. Each interface designs a mode of historical attention that structures how the past becomes legible in the present.

Public-service media theory treats publicly funded cultural production as a civic good that depends on independence, universality, diversity, and accountability. Public broadcasters and public film institutions often frame these commitments in terms of "public value," a term that points to benefits markets rarely supply at scale. Documentary occupies a central role in this tradition because documentary links representation with evidence practices. John Grierson, an early architect of documentary institutions, emphasized documentary as a method for interpreting collective life through creative treatment of actuality.[12] The NFBC emerged within this institutional lineage, with a mandate that links production to public circulation.

The NFBC's statutory framing grants the institution a public interpretive task. The National Film Act authorizes the NFBC to produce and distribute films and audiovisual works designed to interpret Canada to Canadians and to other nations.[13] The NFBC's contemporary mandate statements emphasize access, innovation, and inclusion, placing public reach alongside artistic experimentation.[14] These state-

12 John Grierson, "First Principles of Documentary," in *Grierson on Documentary*, ed. Forsyth Hardy (London: Faber and Faber, 1946), 79–83.

13 Canada, National Film Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. N-8, s. 9–10.

14 National Film Board of Canada, "Mandate and Values".

ments help position interactive documentary as a public-service form and as a digital art practice with public reach.

An interactive documentary also connects with scholarship on publics and counterpublics. Publics form through attention, circulation, and shared interpretive reference points. Counterpublics form through alternative circulation routes and alternative norms of address. Digital platforms provide infrastructure for both publics and counterpublics, with algorithmic sorting shaping which materials gain prominence. Public institutions can intervene by building public-facing infrastructures that prioritize verification, context, and return. The case studies examined here operate within these conditions and can function as public-facing infrastructures that support verification and contextualization through interface design.

Interface sequencing shapes historical reasoning. Historians establish claims through source criticism, contextual interpretation, and narrative composition. An interactive documentary can translate these practices into navigational tasks. When an interface discloses provenance, marks temporal uncertainty, and presents multiple testimonies with contextual anchors, the design scaffolds historical judgment. That scaffolding carries pedagogical force even when the project does not rely on explicit classroom framing.

Three dimensions of interface design deserve attention in this context: provenance cues, temporal affordances, and participation protocols. Provenance cues include visible attribution, links to institutional holdings, and documentation of editorial decisions. Temporal affordances include timelines, spatialized chronology, rhythm of revelation, and opportunities for return across sessions. Participation protocols include consent systems, moderation rules, collaboration modes, and credit structures that recognize contributors. These dimensions connect with institutional responsibilities because public-service organizations can document and maintain these design elements across a project's lifespan.

An interactive documentary also intersects with preservation politics. Web projects face technical obsolescence through browser standards, plugin deprecation, and hosting costs. Public-service institutions can address this challenge through platform migration plans, open documentation, and partnerships with archival organizations. The NFBC has pursued several such migrations, including shifts from Flash-based works to contemporary web formats. These migrations matter for public discourse because historical pedagogy depends on durable access and repeatable encounter.

Methodology: interface-centred historical analysis

This study treats each interactive documentary as a designed encounter with evidence. The analysis maps interface pathways by documenting entry points, navigation options, and sequencing logic. It identifies the evidentiary materials each project mobilizes, including archival documents, testimonial fragments, data visualizations, and audiovisual scenes. It evaluates how interface procedure shapes historical reasoning through prompts for comparison, verification, and temporal orientation. The term interface refers here to a mediating arrangement of screen design, database structure, code, user action, and institutional framing. Alexander Galloway, Branden Hookway, Lori Emerson, and Lev Manovich each clarify that interfaces organize relations among users, technical systems, and cultural forms; interfaces shape evidence, movement, and interpretation within the documentary encounter.[15]

The study draws on two bodies of material. One body consists of the projects themselves, accessed through NFBC collection pages and associated platforms. A second body consists of reception traces, including institutional press kits, curatorial descriptions, festival notes, critical reviews, and scholarship on interactive documentary. Reception traces clarify the public-facing aims institutions and critics assign to

15 Alexander R. Galloway, *The Interface Effect* (Cambridge: Polity, 2012); Branden Hookway, *Interface* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014); Lori Emerson, *Reading Writing Interfaces: From the Digital to the Bookbound* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2014); Lev Manovich, *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001).

each interface, thereby strengthening the explanation of how design choices target public encounter.

Interface analysis relies on repeated walkthroughs. The walkthrough method developed by Ben Light, Jean Burgess, and Stefanie Duguay provides a useful model because it treats an app or digital object as a structured environment whose screens, prompts, defaults, and pathways reveal embedded assumptions about use.[16] Each walkthrough records screen order, the placement of source citations, the location of credits, and the availability of outward links. When a project offers multiple pathways, the analysis tracks routes structured by default prompts and highlighted buttons, since these cues guide attention for most users. The analysis also examines participation-framing text, including consent prompts, privacy statements, and moderation language.

The method aligns with established approaches in interactive documentary studies that treat database structure and user agency as constitutive elements of documentary meaning.[17] Public history scholarship also treats archives, museums, classrooms, and media platforms as sites where publics encounter evidence, authority, and disagreement.

Two boundary conditions shape the study. Web access and platform stability influence the public reach of interactive works. Interface encounters vary across devices, screen sizes, and accessibility settings. The analysis focuses on the published versions available to the general public at the time of writing, with attention to institutional statements about platform versions. Each section names the relevant actor—interface, institution, platform, designer, user, or political movement—when describing agency. Clear attribution of responsibility supports the article's core argument, and interface design supplies an arena where attribution becomes visible.

16 Ben Light, Jean Burgess, and Stefanie Duguay, "The Walkthrough Method: An Approach to the Study of Apps," *New Media & Society* 20, no. 3 (2018): 881–900.

17 Kate Nash, "Clicking on the World: Documentary Representation and Interactivity," in *New Documentary Ecologies: Emerging Platforms, Practices and Discourses*, ed. Kate Nash, Craig Hight, and Catherine Summerhayes (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 50–66.

The evaluation uses five analytic dimensions that recur across the four cases. Provenance transparency concerns how each project signals the origin of its materials and documents editorial decisions through citations, archival identifiers, and descriptive metadata that support verification. Evidence assembly concerns how the interface asks users to assemble meaning through selection, juxtaposition, and navigation, including routines that resemble historical practice such as source comparison, timeline placement, and attention to gaps or uncertainties. Plural address concerns how each project stages multiple perspectives and frames authority through testimonial sequencing, narration, voice positioning, and opportunities for participant contribution. Temporal orientation concerns how the project configures relations among past, present, and future through cyclical return, anticipatory framing, futurity, and affective pacing that shape attention. Maintenance and accessibility concerns institutional commitments to access through version updates, device compatibility, captioning, and educational packaging, since civic learning depends on durability across technological change.

These analytic dimensions support cross-case synthesis. They identify stewardship principles that connect interface design with public obligations: visible sourcing, durable access, accountable voice design, and evidence pathways that users can inspect.

Ethical considerations guide the discussion of participation. Interactive projects that involve user data or user-generated contributions raise questions of consent, privacy, and reuse. The analysis treats privacy prompts and consent workflows as integral elements of documentary form. When projects mobilize tracking systems or data visualizations, the analysis evaluates how each interface clarifies data flows and frames user agency.

The method maintains a cautious stance toward impact claims. Public discourse outcomes arise from multiple causal factors, including institutional distribution, platform dynamics, media amplification, and audience uptake. The article uses the term public-service function to refer to design features that can support historical reasoning, and it uses reception traces, when available, as contextual evidence for those

functions. The argument concentrates on interpretive capacities and procedural features and avoids assigning broad political outcomes to any single work.

Distortion strategy: mythic chronology, symbolic capture, and platform circulation

Far-right memory politics operate through selective narration. Movements elevate episodes that support heroic lineage, suppress episodes that complicate lineage, and reframe violence as defence. Scholars describe this pattern as a new frontier in history wars because it engages interpretive infrastructures alongside factual claims.[18] Parties and movements pursue these interventions through speeches, commemorations, museum controversies, and digital campaigns. Digital campaigns matter because platform media offer rapid circulation, and these routes reward repetition and emotional salience.

Mythic chronology supplies one core technique. Umberto Eco's account of "Ur-Fascism" highlights a cult of tradition that treats the past as a timeless reservoir of Truth. Jason Stanley describes a related dynamic: authoritarian movements narrate a lost past to frame a plural society as in decline.[19] Mythic chronology compresses complexity into morality tales. The tales stabilize identity through simplified origins and simplified threats.

Symbolic capture supplies a second technique. Far-right actors appropriate medieval and early modern imagery—crusader iconography, Viking motifs, runic scripts, and heraldic aesthetics—because these symbols signal antiquity and purity. Medievalism scholarship has traced how white supremacist movements mobilize an imagined premodern Europe as an ethnic fantasy and as a claim to ownership of "Western civilization."[20] Such appropriation often appears in memes

18 Couperus, Tortola, and Rensmann, "Memory Politics of the Far Right in Europe," 435–444.

19 Umberto Eco, Ur-Fascism, *New York Review of Books,* June 22, 1995, https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1995/06/22/ur-fascism/ (accessed January 24, 2026); Jason Stanley, *How Fascism Works: The Politics of Us and Them* (New York, NY: Random House, 2018).

20 Amy S. Kaufman and Paul B. Sturtevant, *The Devil's Historians: How Modern Extremists*

and in performative displays at rallies. The practice works through recognition. A symbol can signal belonging even when a claim lacks documentary support.

The January 6 attack on the United States Capitol provides a widely documented North American instance of this symbolic repertoire, while Canadian far-right online spaces show how comparable imagery circulates through national symbols, settler heritage cues, and claims about belonging. Teaching materials from the Populist Publics project at Carleton University describe the far-right use of Canadian historical images and Canadiana iconography in online spaces as frequent and increasing, especially around immigration, Indigenous peoples, and LGBTQ+ rights. These materials show how maple leaves, frontier imagery, settler heritage signs, and national symbols can carry claims about belonging, exclusion, and historical ownership. Historical imagery then functions as a shortcut for political identity. The image gives the claim an inherited national atmosphere before any evidentiary argument appears.[21]

Platform circulation supplies a third technique. Platform systems translate political communication into engagement metrics. Engagement metrics then shape visibility. Disinformation research emphasizes coordinated manipulation, attention hacking, and iterative testing of messages for maximal spread.[22] Alternative influence networks further accelerate circulation by linking creators across channels and by sending audiences along recommendation pathways that connect main-

Abuse the Medieval Past (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020).

21 "Vikings, Crusaders, Confederates: Misunderstood Historical Imagery at the January 6 Capitol Insurrection," *Perspectives on History*, January 2021, https://www.historians.org/perspectives-article/vikings-crusaders-confederates-misunderstood-historical-imagery-at-the-january-6-capitol-insurrection-january-2021/ (accessed January 24, 2026); Populist Publics, "Canadian Identity: The Use and Misuse of Nationalist Imagery Online," lesson plan, Carleton University, https://carleton.ca/populistpublics/wp-content/uploads/Lesson-Plan-1-Nationalist-Imagery-Online.pdf (accessed February 8, 2026); Elmer and Burton, "Rebel Personalities".

22 Alice E. Marwick and Rebecca Lewis, *Media Manipulation and Disinformation Online* (New York, NY: Data & Society Research Institute, 2017), https://datasociety.net/library/media-manipulation-and-disinfo-online/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

stream content with more radical content.[23] This circulation style favours condensed claims that travel easily through short videos, thumbnails, and captions. The style also privileges claims that require little prior context.

These three techniques intersect with a platform condition of provenance ambiguity. Platform interfaces privilege immediacy and affect, and many timelines and feeds provide thin signals of source origin, editorial context, and evidentiary chain. Such interface design enables a recurring far-right practice: the attachment of institutional aesthetics to materials that originate in ideological propaganda. Disinformation researchers describe this practice as "source laundering," in which repetition and reposting across accounts obscure the origin and produce a false sense of credibility.[24] History wars turn on procedure. Publics require tools for evaluating provenance, placing fragments within chronology, and recognizing how institutions assemble archives through selection, description, and circulation. An interactive documentary can supply these tools by translating historical methods into navigational tasks that organize attention, comparison, and return. The four NFBC works examined here stage that translation through distinct registers—data literacy, urban microhistory, environmental witnessing, and constitutional memory, including Indigenous perspectives on constitutional recognition and political action. Each register engages pressure points that far-right historical politics also mobilize in public discourse, and the projects can support public capacities to evaluate those pressures through interface procedures.

Platform governance shapes these conditions. Platforms curate through recommendation systems, search ranking, and moderation rules. Tarleton Gillespie characterizes content moderation as a set of hidden decisions that define platform publicness and shape what counts

23 Rebecca Lewis, *Alternative Influence: Broadcasting the Reactionary Right on YouTube* (New York, NY: Data & Society Research Institute, 2018), https://datasociety.net/library/alternative-influence/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

24 Wardle and Derakhshan, *Information Disorder*, 20–26.

as acceptable discourse.[25] Moderation regimes affect far-right history content in uneven ways because extremist framing can appear as cultural commentary, satire, or "heritage" advocacy. The ambiguity allows political movements to circulate historical insinuation while avoiding explicit slogans that trigger enforcement.

Scholars of the platform society emphasize that platforms have become core infrastructures for civic communication. José van Dijck, Thomas Poell, and Martijn de Waal describe platforms as institutional actors that shape social life through datafication, commodification, and selection.[26] These dynamics influence historical discourse by shaping which archival resources circulate, which voices gain visibility, and which publics form around narratives.

Platform search and ranking also shape how the public encounters evidence. Safiya Umoja Noble's work on search engines demonstrates how ranking can reproduce racial hierarchies and provide credibility to discriminatory narratives through seemingly neutral outputs.[27] When historical claims circulate through such systems, ranking and recommendation become interpretive forces. These forces rarely provide users with transparent reasoning.

The contemporary attention economy intensifies these effects. Shoshana Zuboff describes surveillance capitalism as a system that extracts behavioural data for prediction and modification, turning attention into an economic resource.[28] In such environments, historical content that provokes anger and identity affirmation can gain disproportionate reach. Historical fragments then operate as affective tokens that anchor political identity.

25 Tarleton Gillespie, *Custodians of the Internet: Platforms, Content Moderation, and the Hidden Decisions that Shape Social Media* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018).

26 José van Dijck, Thomas Poell, and Martijn de Waal, *The Platform Society: Public Values in a Connective World* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018).

27 Safiya Umoja Noble, *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2018).

28 Shoshana Zuboff, *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power* (New York, NY: PublicAffairs, 2019).

Public institutions confront these conditions with limited leverage over platform infrastructures. Public-service media can still intervene by producing alternative infrastructures that train habits of inquiry. Civic online reasoning research underscores the value of teaching evaluative practices through repeated exercises.[29] Interactive documentaries can deliver such exercises outside formal schooling by embedding them in cultural encounters.

These considerations help specify the stakes for public-service interactive documentary in history wars. Public-service institutions can design interfaces that foreground provenance, contextual anchoring, and temporal assembly. They can also document design decisions in ways users can inspect, provide outward links to archival holdings and research resources, and plan for maintenance that sustains access across technological change. Taken together, these practices position interactive documentary as civic infrastructure that supports historical judgment under conditions of polarized circulation.

Do Not Track: data epistemologies and provenance habits

Do Not Track presents privacy and surveillance as lived conditions of contemporary media use. The interactive web series, conceived and directed by Brett Gaylor, launched in 2015 as a seven-episode project released on a biweekly schedule. The production involved an international co-production network that included the NFBC, ARTE, Bayerischer Rundfunk, and Upian.[30] The project's core pedagogical move involves personalization. Users can grant limited access to browsing data and location cues, and the interface then generates real-time demonstrations of how ad-tech ecosystems assemble profiles. Government press releases describing the series emphasized this "eye-opening personalized look"

29 Stanford History Education Group, "Evaluating Information: The Cornerstone of Civic Online Reasoning," by Sam Wineburg, Sarah McGrew, Joel Breakstone, and Teresa Ortega (Stanford University, 2016), https://purl.stanford.edu/fv751yt5934 (accessed January 24, 2026).

30 National Film Board of Canada, *Do Not Track*, interactive project page, https://www.nfb.ca/interactive/do_not_track/ (accessed January 24, 2026); Media Impact Funders, Case Study: Do Not Track, Media Impact Festival (2016), https://mediaimpactfunders.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/DoNotTrack.pdf (accessed January 24, 2026).

and linked the design to public education about the web economy.[31] The interface thus connects an abstract political economy of data with a concrete evidentiary experience.

That evidentiary orientation is clearly relevant to history wars because far-right campaigns often treat platform infrastructures as neutral conduits for "common sense." *Do Not Track* turns infrastructure into a subject of inquiry and equips users with repeatable routines for examining capture, inference, and circulation. Each episode follows a recognizable inquiry rhythm: a provocation that frames the problem, a live demonstration of tracking, interviews with researchers and activists, and an optional "dig deeper" layer that extends the episode's claims through explanatory text, outward links, and short interactive tests.[32] In combination, these elements approximate historical source criticism by asking users to move from claim to trace, from trace to context, and from context to judgment.

The project also trains lateral verification through outward movement and return. The "dig deeper" materials route users to organizations, research studies, and policy debates beyond the series. Users leave the episode space, consult external sources, and re-enter the interface with expanded context. That movement mirrors civic online reasoning practices associated with skilled evaluation, and it frames verification as an action users can perform rather than a posture of deference. The interface supports networked evidence work by structuring routes to corroboration and contextual enlargement.[33] The agency enters the evidentiary field through user choice. The interface offers options for data sharing, optional exploration, and privacy settings, and connects those decisions to institutional claims about regulation and responsibility. Evidence becomes proximate to daily judgment because the project links knowledge to settings, consent prompts, and policy language.

31 National Film Board of Canada, "Take Back Control of Your Digital Identity with *Do Not Track,"* news release, April 9, 2015, https://www.canada.ca/en/news/archive/2015/04/take-back-control-your-digital-identity-do-not-track.html (accessed January 24, 2026).

32 Media Impact Funders, "Case Study: *Do Not Track*," 1–2.

33 Wineburg and McGrew, "Lateral Reading and the Nature of Expertise," 1–40.

The series thereby aligns evidence work with practical decision-making, which has a direct bearing on politicized disputes in which actors treat information as spectacle rather than as material for accountable choice.

Reception traces reinforce this interpretation of public-service pedagogy. A *First Monday* article reporting conversations with interactive documentary practitioners described an audience of approximately 800,000 for *Do Not Track*, a scale that signals substantial reach for an experimental digital work.[34] Awards and festival visibility further amplified its circulation, including recognition from the Peabody Awards, which framed the series as an explanation of the political economy of the "free" web.[35] Within the article's argument about historical distortion, *Do Not Track* contributes in three interlocking ways. It cultivates a transferable habit of provenance tracing by training users to reconstruct origin through capture and circulation, a skill that aligns with the pathways through which disinformation hides or launders its source. It frames expertise as practice grounded in repeatable actions—demonstration, inspection, verification—while still acknowledging credentials as one signal among others. It also anchors critique in experiential demonstration: users watch profiling processes unfold, test how different choices affect outcomes, and connect abstract claims to visible procedures.

Episode-level design clarifies how those functions accumulate. Early episodes introduce tracking as a commercial practice tied to advertising markets. Subsequent episodes address personalization, algorithmic sorting, and political consequences of data-driven targeting. Later segments shift toward the labour of content moderation and the uneven distribution of privacy harms across social groups. This progression builds a temporal arc that carries users from basic mechanics

34 Giuliana Cucinelli, Émilie René-Véronneau, and Belinda Oldford, "Interactive documentaries and the connected viewer experience: Conversations with Katerina Cizek, Brett Gaylor, Jeff Soyk, and Florian Thalhofer," *First Monday* 23, no. 5 (2018), https://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/6182 (accessed January 24, 2026).

35 Peabody Awards, *Do Not Track*, award profile, https://peabodyawards.com/award-profile/do-not-track/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

to institutional consequences, and it resembles historical narration that moves from source description toward explanatory account.

The release schedule contributes an additional temporal layer by inviting iterative engagement across several weeks. Public-facing documentation for the project described weekly public sessions hosted by the Mozilla Foundation, where audiences discussed each episode and exchanged strategies for privacy action.[36] The social framing supports public service by situating evidence work inside dialogue and return, with learning distributed across conversation and re-entry rather than confined to a single encounter.

The interface also fosters reflexivity about evidence through its personalization. When the series adjusts content using user data, it demonstrates how systems infer identity from traces and how classification converts traces into categories that carry consequences. Evidence arrives through institutional and technical procedures that sort, label, and rank. The analogy extends to historical archives, where cataloguers, curators, and archivists classify materials through institutional vocabularies that shape legibility. An interactive documentary can disclose classification as a procedure, thereby strengthening public understanding of archival conditions.

Do Not Track makes classification visible through graphical panels, pop-up explanations, and selective disclosures that show which data points drive profiling. These design elements connect a trace to an interpretive claim in real time. Users can observe how a click becomes a behavioural signal, and how a signal becomes a predicted preference. The resulting chain resembles historical inference, where a document becomes a trace within a broader explanatory account assembled through context, comparison, and corroboration.

The series also clarifies how narratives travel through infrastructures optimized for frictionless consumption. Personalization influences what appears in the user's field of attention, sorting shapes what registers as relevant, and recommendation structures shape perceived

36 Media Impact Funders, "Case Study: *Do Not Track*," 2–3.

authority. By rendering these systems legible, the project supplies a vocabulary audiences can carry into encounters with politicized historical content on platform feeds.

Taken together, these design choices illustrate the public-service capacity of interactive documentary. *Do Not Track* offers an experiential pathway toward literacies that support democratic discourse: provenance tracing, lateral verification, temporal sequencing, and reflexive awareness of classification regimes. These literacies strengthen public judgment in contexts where mythic chronology and source laundering circulate as a political technique.

Circa 1948: urban microhistory, spatial archive, and contested memory

Circa 1948 offers a digital encounter with Vancouver's postwar history, focusing on two sites: Hogan's Alley and the Old Hotel Vancouver. The interactive work emerged from a collaboration between artist Stan Douglas and the NFBC Digital Studio, including co-creator Loc Dao, combining documentary fragments with a navigable three-dimensional environment.[37] The project positions users within a reconstructed urban space and invites exploration across streets, rooms, and archival traces. Audio fragments, photographs, and documentary scenes appear as discoverable nodes. This spatial structure supports microhistorical reasoning. Users build a sense of context through movement, encounter, and accumulation of detail.

History wars frequently operate at the scale of place. Urban redevelopment debates, memorial controversies, and racialized erasures often hinge on who controls public memory in specific locations. *Circa 1948* addresses these stakes by staging the city as an archive. The interface treats streets and interiors as containers of memory. Users encoun-

37 National Film Board of Canada, *Circa 1948*, interactive project page, https://www.nfb.ca/interactive/circa_1948/ (accessed January 24, 2026); National Film Board of Canada, *Circa 1948* Press Kit (Montreal: NFB, 2014), PDF, https://www.nfb.ca/press-kit/circa-1948/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

ter stories of policing, vice regulation, displacement, and community life that shaped the district in the late 1940s.

The project's spatial archive also foregrounds contested memory through inclusion and omission. One crucial context involves Hogan's Alley, a historically Black neighbourhood in Vancouver that later faced demolition through redevelopment and freeway planning. The press kit and companion materials situate the project's urban reconstruction within broader histories of racialized urban transformation.[38] The project thus operates as a prompt for public historical reflection on how cities produce archives through demolition and rebuilding. Three design mechanisms illustrate the project's historiographical function.

First, the interface aligns evidence with exploration. Users do not receive a single linear narrative. Users gather fragments and assemble a coherent account as they navigate. This structure parallels historical research practices that rely on partial traces. Fragment-based exploration also cultivates a careful stance toward claims. The interface encourages users to treat each fragment as a piece of a larger puzzle, with each fragment offering a partial explanation.

The interface uses atmosphere to convey historical conditions. The reconstructed cityscape presents dim lighting, constrained spaces, and auditory textures that evoke postwar urban life. Atmosphere works here as a sensory entry into history, guiding experiential imagination while keeping attention oriented toward documentary fragments and archival traces. In history wars**,** extremist narratives often operate through atmospheric myth, where mood substitutes for evidence and repetition substitutes for interpretation. *Circa 1948* offers an alternative atmospheric register anchored in trace, context, and place-based documentation.

Third, the project foregrounds institutional mediation. The press kit and credits identify archival sources and production collaborators. Users can trace how the project assembled historical materials. This

38 National Film Board of Canada, *Circa 1948* Press Kit, 3–6.

transparency supports accountability. It also provides a model for public history work that acknowledges curation as an interpretive act.

Reception contexts reinforce the project's public-service orientation. The NFBC framed the work as part of its digital innovation portfolio and released versions for web and mobile platforms.[39] Such distribution strategies extend reach beyond a single exhibition context.

Circa 1948, therefore, offers a distinct contribution to public reasoning about distorted pasts. The project positions historical understanding as an act of assembly rooted in place. Users confront the consequences of policing, moral regulation, and redevelopment through an archive that becomes legible through exploration. That design supports democratic discourse by cultivating patience with complexity and attention to the material conditions that shape memory.

The NFBC described the work as a film noir-inspired, historically based immersive art project that evolved from a feature pitch into a non-linear environment presented as an iOS app and as a projection-mapped installation.[40] Two locales anchor the experience. The first locale places users in a grand hotel occupied by homeless war veterans. The second locale presents Hogan's Alley as a muddy lane shaped by ethnic diversity, vice economies, and police corruption.[41] These locales connect postwar demobilization and urban inequality with racialized spatial politics.

The project's design encourages listening as a historical method. Users encounter characters and voices that appear as "ghosts" within the reconstructed environment. These voices anchor archival fragments in social life. The interface thereby links documents to lived experience, a central practice in public history interpretation.

39 App Store, "*Circa 1948*: The Experience," Apple App Store listing, https://apps.apple.com/ca/app/circa-1948-the-experience/id881289366 (accessed January 24, 2026).

40 National Film Board of Canada, "Vancouver | 2 Ways to Experience *Circa 1948* this Fall," *NFB Blog,* September 16, 2015, https://blog.nfb.ca/blog/2015/09/16/circa-1948-vancouver/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

41 National Film Board of Canada, "Vancouver | 2 Ways to Experience *Circa 1948* this Fall."

Spatial navigation also supports a form of chronological assembly that differs from conventional timelines. Users build a sense of sequence through movement between rooms and streets, and through the accumulation of clues across repeated visits. This design can cultivate a "return" practice. Users can re-enter the environment, explore alternative routes, and assemble a richer understanding of the district's historical tensions.

The NFBC's description of the project emphasizes the research process that supported the reconstruction. Stan Douglas drew on maps and photographs, and the NFBC's digital team converted these materials into an explorable virtual world using Autodesk Maya. This documentation supports historiographical transparency by showing how production choices translate archival materials into a navigable environment.

Circa 1948, therefore, functions as a public-service archive of place. The project helps the public think about urban history through redevelopment and the politics of erasure**.** In history wars, far-right discourse often frames cities as sites of decline and moral disorder. *Circa 1948* offers a grounded archive of the social conditions that shaped urban life, including policing and poverty. That archive supports democratic discussion of the responsibilities cities bear toward marginalized communities.

Microhistorical scholarship emphasizes how small-scale investigations can reveal broader structures through careful attention to detail and to everyday life. Carlo Ginzburg's work on microhistory illustrates how fragmentary traces can support rigorous inference when researchers situate traces within a social context.[42] *Circa 1948* translates a comparable sensibility into a public interface. The project invites users to build context through fragments that accumulate across exploration.

The project also intersects with memory studies that emphasize place as a container of collective remembrance. Pierre Nora's concept of

42 Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*, trans. John Tedeschi and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).

lieux de mémoire points to sites where memory crystallizes through social practice and institutional framing.[43] *Circa 1948* constructs such a site through digital simulation. The reconstructed streets and interiors become a locus where users can rehearse a relationship to contested urban pasts.

This rehearsal carries democratic significance. Public debates about heritage and belonging often hinge on whose experiences count as part of the city's story. By centring spaces shaped by poverty, racialized regulation, and postwar displacement, the project enlarges the archive of civic memory available to publics. That enlargement supports a public discourse that can recognize structural conditions alongside individual narrative.

Finally, *Circa 1948* illustrates how public institutions can use interactive media to create durable points of return. The availability of an app version, a web version, and an installation context indicates a multi-channel public circulation strategy. Such circulation increases the likelihood that educators, curators, and community organizations can integrate the work into broader interpretive contexts.

Bear 71: environmental history, surveillance aesthetics, and cross-species witnessing

Bear 71 situates viewers within Banff National Park and presents wildlife under conditions of technological monitoring. The interactive documentary, created by Leanne Allison and Jeremy Mendes, launched in 2012 and combined documentary footage, a narrative voice, and an interactive map populated with data points for animals and humans.[44] The project uses a surveillance interface as its primary aesthetic. Users navigate a map that resembles a control room screen, with moving points representing animals and people. At launch, the interface could access the user's webcam and place the user's face within the surveil-

43 Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," *Representations* 26 (1989): 7–24.

44 National Film Board of Canada, *Bear 71*, interactive project page, https://www.nfb.ca/interactive/bear71/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

lance field. This design choice frames surveillance as a shared condition. The interface implies that monitoring shapes both wildlife management and human social life.

Bear 71 operates as public history through environmental witnessing. The project follows a female grizzly bear as park authorities and automated systems track her movements. That tracking produces the archive that the documentary invites users to read: GPS collar logs, camera-trap images, and monitoring records become documentary traces. The project treats these traces as a form of environmental history that extends established practices of natural-history documentation into the logics of contemporary management and computation. Three dynamics carry the project's historiographical work.

The interface treats data as story material. The map renders the bear's movement as points and trajectories, and each point opens a short clip and an accompanying description of an encounter or event. Users move from trace to trace and assemble a narrative sequence through their own selections. The design ties quantification to interpretation, which is directly relevant in contemporary history wars, where actors circulate statistics and graphics as self-evident proof. In *Bear 71*, classification and visualization shape meaning at the moment of encounter, and the interface makes that shaping visible.

The archive also takes a relational form. The webcam feature and the map's navigational logic place users inside the monitored landscape, and the system returns the viewer's image as part of the documentary field. The interface turns the act of viewing into a disclosed position within the same surveillance ecology that structures the bear's world. This gesture connects with platform critique that treats monitoring as a governing condition of contemporary media environments, and it gives the user a concrete experience of that condition rather than an abstract claim.

A final dynamic concerns cross-species witnessing as an ethical stance. The voiced narration adopts a first-person register for the bear and guides attention through managed space as the bear encounters

fences, roads, tourists, and institutional observation. This narrative choice invites viewers to practice proximity as interpretation: users attend to movement, constraint, and exposure as historical facts of governance. The resulting orientation can widen moral imagination to include non-human life within public discourse. That widening matters in history wars because far-right memory politics often organizes a civilizational storyline around property, sovereignty, and human exceptionalism, thereby narrowing the space for ecological relations and shared vulnerability.

The NFBC later supported adaptations of the project into newer formats as web standards changed. In 2017, the NFBC highlighted a new WebVR version presented at IDFA DocLab, a release that responded to platform change and preservation needs.[45] This migration underscores the public service requirement for maintenance. Historical pedagogy depends on continued access.

Bear 71 also offers a practical model for integrating environmental history into public discourse. The project frames Banff as a lived space shaped by tourism, infrastructure, and management. Users can observe how roads, rail lines, and visitor movement intersect with animal habitats. The interface thus teaches that environmental history involves human institutions, technological systems, and non-human agency.

Within the frame of far-right history wars, *Bear 71* contributes by widening the scope of historical responsibility. Far-right nostalgia often depends on a purified national landscape that erases Indigenous presence and ecological complexity. *Bear 71* counters this tendency through a design that foregrounds entanglement, monitoring, and consequence. The project encourages the public to treat land management as a historical process with ethical stakes.

Surveillance studies provide language for this design. Kevin Haggerty and Richard Ericson describe a "surveillant assemblage" that

45 National Film Board of Canada, "Interactive docs & VR at IDFA DocLab," *news release*, November 16, 2017, https://www.canada.ca/en/national-film-board/news/2017/11/interactive_docs_vr_atidfadoclab.html (accessed January 24, 2026).

gathers heterogeneous monitoring practices into a distributed system of observation and classification.[46] David Lyon emphasizes how surveillance organizes social sorting, shaping how institutions categorize populations.[47] *Bear 71* adapts these concerns to an environmental register, showing how monitoring practices shape wildlife management, tourism governance, and public perception of nature.

The interface procedure supports this adaptation. The map provides a panoramic view that resembles a managerial standpoint. Users can zoom, click, and track movement. This standpoint signals power. It also creates a pedagogical opportunity: the project can expose how a standpoint produces knowledge. When a user clicks a moving point and receives a clip or a text, the interface demonstrates how a system translates motion into an "event" through classification.

The webcam insertion intensifies this lesson. A user's face appears as another data point inside the monitored landscape. The inclusion prompts a recognition that surveillance operates through participation as well as through coercion. Users often grant camera access through everyday app prompts. *Bear 71* turns that familiar act into an interpretive moment, linking consent, observation, and classification.

Scholarship on interactive documentary has treated *Bear 71* as a key case because the project integrates documentary voice with game-like navigation while sustaining documentary commitments to evidence and ethical address.[48] *Bear 71* offers a model for public-service environmental history that remains legible within digital vernaculars of maps, interfaces, and user-driven navigation.

These features address far-right historical distortion through the politics of land. In history wars, far-right discourse often mobilizes land as a symbol that organizes purity claims and exclusionary belonging.

46 Kevin D. Haggerty and Richard V. Ericson, "The Surveillant Assemblage," *British Journal of Sociology* 51, no. 4 (2000): 605–622.

47 David Lyon, *Surveillance Studies: An Overview* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007).

48 Simo Hakalisto, "Immersion in Interactive Documentaries: A Game-Studies-Driven Approach in a Case Study of Bear 71" (master's thesis, University of Tampere, 2017), CORE repository PDF, https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/250151346.pdf (accessed January 24, 2026).

Bear 71 frames land as a monitored relation shaped by infrastructure, tourism, and management regimes. That framing supplies a public vocabulary for discussing ecological responsibility and institutional consequence, and it strengthens democratic discourse by linking historical imagination to ongoing practices of environmental governance.

Environmental history scholarship has increasingly treated the Anthropocene as a condition that blurs boundaries between natural history and political history. Dipesh Chakrabarty argues that climate change forces historical thinking to integrate planetary processes with human institutions.[49] Christophe Bonneuil and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz similarly emphasize the political choices that produced the Anthropocene, highlighting the need for historical narratives that connect infrastructure, extraction, and governance.[50] *Bear 71* offers a public-facing translation of this scholarship by situating animal life within monitoring systems that respond to human expansion.

The project's narrative voice, delivered as the bear's perspective, organizes affect and responsibility. Users encounter the bear's movements across seasons, through encounters with roads and rail corridors, and under the pressures of human presence. Each click on the map becomes a small act of witnessing. The interface thereby trains an attentive stance toward ecological consequence.

Interface-based training directly affects contemporary politics. Far-right discourse often frames environmental governance as a threat to sovereignty and a constraint on freedom, placing environmental narratives at the center of disputes over legitimacy and public authority. *Bear 71* engages these disputes through evidentiary practice by tying ecological claims to visible traces and situating those traces within the institutional systems that manage land. The interface allows users to see the spatial relationship between infrastructure and habitat, and the tracking record shows how institutions convert movement into

49 Dipesh Chakrabarty, "The Climate of History: Four Theses," *Critical Inquiry* 35, no. 2 (2009): 197–222.

50 Christophe Bonneuil and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz, *The Shock of the Anthropocene: The Earth, History and Us*, trans. David Fernbach (London: Verso, 2016).

knowledge through collars, cameras, and logs. Public reasoning develops through inspection, spatial comparison, and repeated review of the record.

In that sense, *Bear 71* contributes to democratic historical discourse through an expanded archive of responsibility. The work frames the monitored landscape as a historical product and as a shared future concern. This framing complements the other cases in the article by extending provenance reasoning into ecological governance.

Supreme Law: constitutional memory, Indigenous perspectives, and procedural legitimacy

Supreme Law frames the 1980–1982 patriation and Charter moment as a conflict over procedure, authority, and recognition. The interactive documentary, directed by Katerina Cizek and produced with the NFBC in partnership with the Centre for Constitutional Studies, launched in 2019 and presents the constitutional story through a set of "points of view" anchored by prominent internet creators.[51] Festival preview contexts demonstrate early public circulation. The project appeared in Canadian documentary circuits in 2019, which positioned the work within a broader field of public history and documentary pedagogy.[52] The project organizes constitutional history as a navigable evidence environment. Each point of view functions as an interpretive gateway, introducing a storyline and a set of stakes, while the site's Deep Dives, glossary, and educational materials provide a second layer of docu-

51 National Film Board of Canada, "Stars! Scholars! Canada's Constitution! Katerina Cizek's NFB Interactive Documentary *Supreme Law* Launches May 2," Government of Canada news release, May 2, 2019, https://www.canada.ca/en/national-film-board/news/2019/05/stars-scholars-canadas-constitution-katerina-cizeks-nfb-interactive-documentary-supreme-law-launches-may-2-with-a-lively-look-at-the-stories-behind.html (accessed January 24, 2026); National Film Board of Canada, Supreme Law, NFB Collection page, https://collection.nfb.ca/interactive/supreme_law (accessed January 24, 2026); Centre for Constitutional Studies, *Supreme Law,* resource page, https://www.constitutionalstudies.ca/resources/supreme-law/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

52 National Film Board of Canada, "Ten NFB premieres and a tribute to Studio D women pioneers coming to the 2019 Hot Docs Festival," *Government of Canada news release*, March 19, 2019, https://www.canada.ca/en/national-film-board/news/2019/03/ten-nfb-premieres-and-a-tribute-to-studio-d-women-pioneers-coming-to-the-2019-hot-docs-festival-opening-night-film-by-tasha-hubbard-premieres-by-jo.html (accessed January 24, 2026).

mentation for users to consult during viewing.[53] Within the context of far-right memory politics, *Supreme Law* carries particular force because constitutional myths operate as political instruments. Authoritarian movements can treat a constitution as a sacred origin that guarantees a singular national identity and naturalizes exclusions. *Supreme Law* positions the constitution as a negotiated artifact produced through conflict, bargaining, and public pressure. That positioning widens the public's capacity to treat constitutional memory as contested history.

Supreme Law stages a direct Indigenous intervention into constitutional memory. Its "Indigenous Perspectives on the Constitution" pathway follows Indigenous political action during patriation through advocacy, international appeals, and strategic engagement with parliamentary procedure. That emphasis on action and procedure performs a public-service function: the project clarifies how rights claims entered constitutional text through sustained organizing and institutional contestation. Users encounter constitutional recognition as a practiced politics that drew on community mobilization, committee testimony, media visibility, and international advocacy.

The interface enables historical judgment by connecting narration, documentation, and pedagogy. The point-of-view structure organizes plural address by assigning distinct voices to different perspectives, each carrying a specific narrative position. These voices anchor competing standpoints or differing interpretations of the same topic. The navigation guides users through positions in a clear sequence. The "Deep Dives" expand the documentary form by providing contextual explanation (background information) and definitions (clarifications of key terms) within narrative segments. Glossary terms and background materials accompany story claims and support provenance reasoning

53 National Film Board of Canada, "*Supreme Law* | Engage Students with an Interactive Website on Canada's Constitution," *NFB Blog*, May 1, 2019, https://blog.nfb.ca/blog/2019/05/01/supreme-law-engage-students-with-an-interactive-website-on-canadas-constitution/ (accessed January 24, 2026); *Supreme Law*, Indigenous Perspectives on the Constitution, navigation item accessible via point-of-view pathway, https://supremelaw.nfb.ca/ (accessed January 24, 2026); National Film Board of Canada, *Supreme Law*, NFB Collection page, https://collection.nfb.ca/interactive/supreme_law (accessed January 24, 2026); Centre for Constitutional Studies, *Supreme Law*.

(assessing the source and credibility of evidence) alongside the video. Educational materials integrate the method into classroom routines through guided questions about authorship, voice, and historical representation. The materials begin with the Indigenous pathway, which centers Indigenous experiences and provides a foundation for discussing constitutional recognition and political struggle.

The project also makes temporal re-entry part of its architecture. Users can return using several gateways: video segments, deep dives, and glossary terms. Each return can shift interpretation as users gain more context. This cumulative encounter echoes constitutional politics as a recurring public problem. Civic learning develops through revisiting evidence and re-reading institutional claims. It helps refine judgment over time.

The project's vernacular casting contributes to public reach. Internet creators can mediate procedural history in accessible language, while constitutional scholars and archival clips maintain documentary accountability. The interface keeps these elements in relation through navigation that invites viewers to move from narrative into documentation when questions arise.[54] Within this article's comparative frame, *Supreme Law* links the struggle over historical knowledge to the struggle over institutional legitimacy. Far-right history wars depend on delegitimizing critical historiography and presenting authority as self-evident tradition. *Supreme Law* presents authority as contested procedure, documented evidence, and accountable interpretation. That presentation strengthens democratic discourse by training the public in constitutional reasoning amid polarization.

The work also clarifies the Canadian aporetic condition at the level of constitutional memory. The project keeps tensions among national unity claims, rights language, and Indigenous sovereignty claims visible within a single encounter. Users encounter these tensions through pro-

54 National Film Board of Canada, "Stars! Scholars!"; Centre for Constitutional Studies, Supreme Law, resource page.

cedural history, which can support careful interpretation in polarized environments.

Finally, *Supreme Law* highlights the institutional stakes of maintenance. The project depends on stable hosting, platform compatibility, and ongoing educational circulation. These conditions determine whether constitutional memory remains available as a civic resource, and they define a core responsibility for public institutions that commission digital public history.[55]

Synthesis: a public-service design logic for digital history under polarization

The four case studies show a shared design logic: an interactive documentary can function as public-service infrastructure when its interface procedures support historical judgment. Historical judgment involves provenance, chronology, plural perspective, and reflexive awareness of institutional mediation. Each project implements this logic through different materials and sensory registers.

Across these cases, the Canadian aporetic condition supplies a unifying analytic frame. Each interface turns a durable tension into a procedural learning environment: data capture and civic autonomy; redevelopment and racialized belonging; ecological governance and institutional surveillance; constitutional legitimacy and Indigenous sovereignty claims. Far-right instrumentalisation can convert these tensions into mythic continuity and selective evidence. The NFBC works keep the tensions visible through documentation, sequencing, and plural address, which supports responsible historical reasoning in public space.[56] *Do Not Track* trains provenance habits within data infrastructures. It reveals chains of capture, classification, and targeting, then prompts users to verify claims through outward linking. *Circa 1948* trains the spatial assembly of microhistorical memory. It situates archival fragments within a navigable cityscape, thereby linking evidence to place

55 National Film Board of Canada, *Supreme Law*.

56 Bessai, "Art as a Public Service".

and to redevelopment politics. *Bear 71* trains ecological witnessing through surveillance aesthetics. It connects data points to narrative consequence and frames management systems as historical forces. *Supreme Law* trains in constitutional reasoning through a guided sequence of perspectives and deep dives, including Indigenous perspectives on constitutional recognition and political action.

Across the four cases, five commissioning principles emerge for public-service institutions that aim to address history wars.

Integrate provenance cues into the interface: place citations (references to the source), archival identifiers (unique codes assigned to archival records), and source notes (additional context or explanation about the materials) close to the items they support. When allowed by the rights environment, provide outward links to institutional holdings (the official collections where the materials reside), finding aids (tools that describe the content and structure of archival collections), and research resources. By enabling audiences to test claims and follow evidentiary chains beyond the immediate encounter, these cues strengthen public reasoning.

Design temporal affordances that support return. Temporal affordances let users control when and how they interact. Episodic release structures, clear navigational maps, and revisitable environments invite users to return. Public history grows through repeat encounters and dialogue. Interface design should make returns simple, clear, and rewarding.

Stage plurality through accountable voice design. Voice design concerns how an interface presents perspectives and testimony. Include multiple testimonies and interpretive frames through practices that sustain responsibility. Accountable plurality requires transparent crediting, consent workflows that respect participant agency, and attention to unequal risk, particularly when participation increases exposure to harassment or surveillance.

Treat classification and metadata as civic design. Show how categories shape meaning and how vocabularies distribute legitimacy. Use

alternative labels when institutional language obscures experience or compresses conflict into neutral terms. In history wars, classification shapes what counts as evidence, whose voice registers as authoritative, and which pasts remain legible.

Plan for maintenance and accessibility from the start. Budget for platform migration, captioning, multiple-device support, and archival partnerships. Maintenance ensures public resources stay usable as technology changes. Accessibility broadens participation in historical discourse.

By working together, these principles clarify a practical contribution of interactive documentary to democratic life. Public-service media shape how publics learn to evaluate historical claims, and they help people imagine responsibility across time. When circulation is polarized, design-oriented commissioning offers a means to strengthen historical discourse through cultural practice.

Each case illustrates these principles concretely. Provenance cues appear through *Do Not Track*'s external resources and through its disclosure of tracking technologies. Temporal return appears through the biweekly episodic schedule and through the possibility of revisiting demonstrations with new privacy settings. Spatial return appears through *Circa 1948*'s revisitable cityscape and its fragmentary archive, which rewards multiple paths. Ecological return is evident in *Bear 71*'s map, which keeps movement visible and invites users to connect clips across the monitored landscape. Constitutional return appears through *Supreme Law*'s points of view and deep dives, which invite repeated consultation as users build context across visits.

Plural address also takes distinct forms. *Circa 1948* uses a chorus of voices situated within the city's social geography. *Do Not Track* uses interviews with technologists, activists, and scholars to connect experience with analysis. *Bear 71* uses cross-species address to widen the ethical field of historical discourse. *Supreme Law* stages constitutional memory through a plural perspective and includes Indigenous activism as documented procedural history.

Maintenance concerns are most evident in format migration. The NFBC's work to support new versions of interactive projects illustrates an institutional commitment to access. Such commitments shape the public value of digital history, since civic resources depend on durable access. Commissioning and preservation thus become elements of democratic media policy.

Taken together, the case studies support a normative claim: interactive documentary can contribute to democratic resilience when public institutions treat interface design as public policy. Design decisions about navigation, metadata, sourcing, and preservation shape how publics assemble knowledge. Public institutions hold a distinct capacity to align these decisions with civic obligations, given their mandates and their accountability structures.

Conclusion

Far-right history wars place procedural pressure on democratic discourse. The pressure involves provenance ambiguity, mythic chronology, and symbolic capture accelerated by platform circulation. Platform governance involves multiple actors, and public institutions can build alternative infrastructures that train historical judgment.

The dossier's framing emphasizes anti-intellectual attacks on historical scholarship, the relativisation of historical crimes, and rapid digital dissemination through algorithmic environments. The four cases analyzed here engage these dynamics at the level of practice. They provide accessible evidence environments, maintain institutional context throughout the encounter, and train interpretive routines that make epistemic responsibility visible to users.

The four NFBC works perform this infrastructure-building in distinct registers. *Do Not Track* links data infrastructures to experiential evidence and trains provenance tracing. *Circa 1948* stages urban microhistory through a spatial archive that foregrounds contested memory. *Bear 71* frames environmental history as a monitored relation that binds institutions, ecologies, and consequences. *Supreme Law* stages

constitutional memory through documented procedure and plural perspective, including Indigenous political action during patriation.

Across these cases, the interface procedure functions as civic pedagogy. The projects train repeatable habits: tracking origin, assembling chronology, weighing perspectives, and recognizing institutional mediation. These habits strengthen the public capacity to evaluate historical claims in polarized media environments.

The article also offers guidance on institutional stewardship for public-service organizations seeking to address history wars through digital media. It identifies design commitments that travel across the cases: interfaces that disclose provenance at the point of encounter, structures that support return over time, voice design that sustains accountable plurality, metadata practices treated as civic infrastructure, and early planning for maintenance and accessibility. Taken together, these commitments define a practical agenda for interactive documentary as public service. That agenda supports experiential learning that operates across public culture, including settings that extend beyond classrooms and conventional broadcast distribution.

One limit also requires direct acknowledgment. Public-service media can build interfaces that support provenance, chronology, and plural testimony, yet those capacities depend on public trust in the institution that hosts and circulates them. Far-right media actors have worked to weaken trust in public-sector media by framing public institutions as ideological authorities rather than civic infrastructures.[57] This distrust can restrict the reach of NFBC projects among audiences already drawn into anti-institutional media ecologies. The argument, therefore, rests on a measured claim: interactive documentary can strengthen conditions for historical judgment, while institutional trust shapes whether those conditions become publicly usable.

Future research can extend this account through audience studies that examine how diverse publics use these projects over time, and through policy analysis that tracks how cultural institutions fund

57 Lewis, *Alternative Influence*; Elmer and Burton, "Rebel Personalities".

maintenance and accessibility for digital public history. Such work can deepen understanding of how public storytelling infrastructures shape democratic life in an era of polarized circulation.

Bibliography

App Store. "*Circa 1948*: The Experience." Apple App Store listing. https://apps.apple.com/ca/app/circa-1948-the-experience/id881289366 (accessed January 24, 2026).

Aston, Judith, Sandra Gaudenzi, and Mandy Rose, eds. *i-Docs: The Evolving Practices of Interactive Documentary*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2017.

Bessai, John W. "Art as a Public Service: The National Film Board of Canada's Role in Shaping Democratic Dialogues and Societal Transformation". PhD dissertation, Trent University, 2024.

Bonneuil, Christophe, and Jean-Baptiste Fressoz. *The Shock of the Anthropocene: The Earth, History and Us*, trans. David Fernbach. London: Verso, 2016.

Canada. National Film Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. N-8. Justice Laws Website. https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/n-8/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

Canada. Parliament. Senate. Standing Senate Committee on Indigenous Peoples. *Honouring the Children Who Never Came Home: Truth, Education and Reconciliation*. Interim report, July 2023. https://sencanada.ca/content/sen/committee/441/APPA/Reports/APPA_Report_InterlocutorNCTR_e.pdf (accessed February 8, 2026).

Centre for Constitutional Studies. "*Supreme Law*," resource page. https://www.constitutionalstudies.ca/resources/supreme-law/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. "The Climate of History: Four Theses." *Critical Inquiry* 35, no. 2 (2009): 197–222.

Couperus, Stefan, Pier Domenico Tortola and Lars Rensmann. "Memory Politics of the Far Right in Europe." *European Politics and Society* 24, no. 4 (2023): 435–444. https://doi.org/10.1080/23745118.2022.2058757 (accessed January 24, 2026).

Cucinelli, Giuliana, Émilie René-Véronneau, and Belinda Oldford. "Interactive documentaries and the connected viewer experience: Conversations with Katerina Cizek, Brett Gaylor, Jeff Soyk, and Florian Thalhofer." First Monday 23, no. 5 (2018). https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v22i5.6182.

Eco, Umberto. "Ur-Fascism." *New York Review of Books*, June 22, 1995. https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1995/06/22/ur-fascism/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

Elmer, Greg, and Anthony Burton. "Rebel personalities: Canada's far-right media." *First Monday* 27, no. 5 (2022). https://doi.org/10.5210/

fm.v27i5.12546 (accessed February 8, 2026).

Emerson, Lori. *Reading Writing Interfaces: From the Digital to the Bookbound*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014.

Galloway, Alexander R. *The Interface Effect*. Cambridge: Polity, 2012.

Gaudenzi, Sandra. "The Living Documentary: From Representing Reality to Co-Creating Reality in Digital Interactive Documentary." *PhD diss., Goldsmiths, University of London*, 2013, http://research.gold.ac.uk/7997/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

Gillespie, Tarleton. *Custodians of the Internet: Platforms, Content Moderation, and the Hidden Decisions That Shape Social Media*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018.

Ginzburg, Carlo. *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*. Translated by John Tedeschi and Anne Tedeschi. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980.

Grierson, John. "First Principles of Documentary." In *Grierson on Documentary*, edited by Forsyth Hardy, 79–83. London: Faber and Faber, 1946.

Haggerty, Kevin D., and Richard V. Ericson. "The Surveillant Assemblage." *British Journal of Sociology* 51, no. 4 (2000): 605–622.

Hakalisto, Simo. "Immersion in Interactive Documentaries: A Game-Studies-Driven Approach in a Case Study of Bear 71" (master's thesis, University of Tampere, 2017), CORE repository PDF. https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/250151346.pdf (accessed January 24, 2026).

Hookway, Branden. *Interface*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014.

Kaufman, Amy S., and Paul B. *Sturtevant. The Devil's Historians: How Modern Extremists Abuse the Medieval Past*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020.

Lewis, Rebecca. *Alternative Influence: Broadcasting the Reactionary Right on YouTube*. New York: Data & Society Research Institute, 2018. https://datasociety.net/library/alternative-influence/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

Light, Ben, Jean Burgess, and Stefanie Duguay. "The Walkthrough Method: An Approach to the Study of Apps." *New Media & Society* 20, no. 3 (2018): 881–900. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816675438.

Lyon, David. *Surveillance Studies: An Overview*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007.

Manovich, Lev. *The Language of New Media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001.

Marwick, Alice E., and Rebecca Lewis. *Media Manipulation and Disinformation Online*. New York, NY: Data & Society Research Institute, 2017. https://datasociety.net/library/media-manipulation-and-disinfo-online/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

Media Impact Funders. "Case Study: Do Not Track." Media Impact Festival, 2016. https://mediaimpactfunders.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/DoNotTrack.pdf (accessed January 24, 2026).

Nash, Kate. "Clicking on the World: Documentary Representation

and Interactivity." In *New Documentary Ecologies: Emerging Platforms, Practices and Discourses*, edited by Kate Nash, Craig Hight and Catherine Summerhayes, 50–66. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. https://link.springer.com/book/10.1057/9781137310491

National Film Board of Canada. "*Bear 71*," interactive project page. https://www.nfb.ca/interactive/bear71/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

National Film Board of Canada. "*Circa 1948*," interactive project page. https://www.nfb.ca/interactive/circa_1948/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

National Film Board of Canada. *Circa 1948*, Press Kit. Montreal: NFB, 2014. https://www.nfb.ca/press-kit/circa-1948/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

National Film Board of Canada. "*Do Not Track*," interactive project page. https://www.nfb.ca/interactive/do_not_track/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

National Film Board of Canada. "Interactive docs & VR at IDFA DocLab," news release, November 16, 2017. https://www.canada.ca/en/national-film-board/news/2017/11/interactive_docs_vr_atidfadoclab.html (accessed January 24, 2026).

National Film Board of Canada. "Mandate and Values," *last modified October* 9, 2025. https://www.nfb.ca/about/mandate-and-values/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

National Film Board of Canada. "Stars! Scholars! Canada's Constitution! Katerina Cizek's NFB Interactive Documentary *Supreme Law* Launches May 2." Government of Canada news release, May 2, 2019. https://www.canada.ca/en/national-film-board/news/2019/05/stars-scholars-canadas-constitution-katerina-cizeks-nfb-interactive-documentary-supreme-law-launches-may-2-with-a-lively-look-at-the-stories-behind.html (accessed January 24, 2026).

National Film Board of Canada. "*Supreme Law* | Engage Students with an Interactive Website on Canada's Constitution." NFB Blog, May 1, 2019. https://blog.nfb.ca/blog/2019/05/01/supreme-law-engage-students-with-an-interactive-website-on-canadas-constitution/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

National Film Board of Canada. "Supreme Law." NFB Collection page. https://collection.nfb.ca/interactive/supreme_law (accessed January 24, 2026).

National Film Board of Canada. "Take Back Control of Your Digital Identity with *Do Not Track*," news release, April 9, 2015. https://www.canada.ca/en/news/archive/2015/04/take-back-control-your-digital-identity-do-not-track.html (accessed January 24, 2026).

National Film Board of Canada. "Ten NFB premieres and a tribute to Studio D women pioneers coming to the 2019 Hot Docs Festival." Government of Canada news release, March 19, 2019. https://www.canada.ca/en/national-film-board/news/2019/03/ten-nfb-premieres-and-a-tribute-to-studio-d-women-pioneers-coming-to-the-2019-hot-docs-festival-opening-night-film-by-tasha-hubbard-premieres-by-jo.html (accessed January 24, 2026).

National Film Board of Canada. "Vancouver | 2 Ways to Experience

Circa 1948 this Fall." NFB Blog, September 16, 2015. https://blog.nfb.ca/blog/2015/09/16/circa-1948-vancouver/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

Noble, Safiya Umoja. *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism*. New York, NY: New York University Press, 2018.

Nora, Pierre. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire." *Representations* 26 (1989): 7–24.

Parikka, Jussi. A Geology of Media. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2015.

Peabody Awards. "Do Not Track." Award profile. https://peabodyawards.com/award-profile/do-not-track/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

Populist Publics. "Canadian Identity: The Use and Misuse of Nationalist Imagery Online." Lesson plan. Carleton University. https://carleton.ca/populistpublics/wp-content/uploads/Lesson-Plan-1-Nationalist-Imagery-Online.pdf (accessed February 8, 2026).

Public Safety Canada. "Government of Canada announces funding to help counter ideologically motivated violent extremism." News release, March 12, 2024. https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/news/2024/03/government-of-canada-announces-funding-to-help-counter-ideologically-motivated-violent-extremism0.html (accessed February 8, 2026).

Stanford History Education Group. "Evaluating Information: The Cornerstone of Civic Online Reasoning." By Sam Wineburg, Sarah McGrew, Joel Breakstone, and Teresa Ortega. Stanford University, 2016. https://purl.stanford.edu/fv751yt5934.

Stanley, Jason. *How Fascism Works: The Politics of Us and Them*. New York, NY: Random House, 2018.

Stine, Kyle, and Axel Volmar, eds. Media Infrastructures and the Politics of Digital Time: Essays on Hardwired Temporalities. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021.

Supreme Law. "Indigenous Perspectives on the Constitution," navigation item accessible via point-of-view pathway. https://supremelaw.nfb.ca/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

van Dijck, José, Thomas Poell, and Martijn de Waal. *The Platform Society: Public Values in a Connective World*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018.

"Vikings, Crusaders, Confederates: Misunderstood Historical Imagery at the January 6 Capitol Insurrection." *Perspectives on History*. American Historical Association, January 2021. https://www.historians.org/perspectives-article/vikings-crusaders-confederates-misunderstood-historical-imagery-at-the-january-6-capitol-insurrection-january-2021/ (accessed January 24, 2026).

Wardle, Claire, and Hossein Derakhshan. *Information Disorder: Toward an Interdisciplinary Framework for Research and Policy Making*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2017. https://rm.coe.int/information-disorder-toward-an-interdisciplinary-framework-for-researc/168076277c (accessed January 24, 2026).

Waugh, Thomas, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton,

eds. *Challenge for Change: Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010.

Wineburg, Sam, and Sarah McGrew. "Lateral Reading and the Nature of Expertise: Reading Less and Learning More When Evaluating Digital Information." *Teachers College Record* 121, no. 11 (2019): 1–40 (accessed January 24, 2026).

Zuboff, Shoshana. *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power*. New York, NY: PublicAffairs, 2019.

Referência para citação:

Bessai, John W. "Countering Distorted Pasts: Interactive Documentary as Public Service in Far-Right History Wars". *Práticas da História, Journal on Theory, Historiography and Uses of the Past*, n.º 22 (2026): 251–293. https://doi.org/10.48487/pdh.2026.n22.45410.