

# H-Net Reviews

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*Canadian Foreign Relations Index (CFRI), 1945-2002.* Canadian Institute of International Affairs.

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## An Index of Sources on Canadian Foreign Policy

The Canadian Institute of International Affairs (CIIA) performs many useful services for people interested in international affairs and Canada's role in the world. Among the most valuable, however, is its publication of the Canadian Foreign Relations Index (CFRI), an index of the more than 46,000 items on the subject of Canada's foreign relations that were published between 1945 and 2002. Available on CD-ROM and updated annually, this database is immensely beneficial to specialists in the field but it also complements other more general bibliographic tools on Canadian history. What makes this index particularly valuable is the extent of its coverage. Not only does it include books and articles on Canada's foreign policy published since 1945 but it also contains references to less accessible resources including government publications, speeches, press releases, theses and dissertations, and even some unpublished conference papers held by the CIIA's John Holmes Library in Toronto. As with any bibliography that aspires to be comprehensive, there are some lapses in its coverage. Random sampling discovered, for example, that while the index included Steven Lee's dissertation completed at Oxford University in 1991, it neglected the book based on that dissertation, *Outposts of Empire*, published by McGill-Queen's University Press in 1995. In a similar manner, the index referenced several of the reviewer's own publications but not his dissertation, com-

pleted at the University of Calgary in 2001. Despite these types of oversights, which hopefully will be corrected in future updates, the CFRI remains the most complete bibliography of sources on Canada's diplomatic history and foreign relations available. Users can search for records in French or English and by author, title, publication year, topical or geographical subject, corporate author or subject, journal, series, keywords, and/or ISBN. Searches can thus be very broad or increasingly refined. Although the results are not easy to manipulate, they can be viewed in one of two formats, saved to a disk, or printed. Despite the flexibility of the search tool, it takes time to understand the purpose of each of the functions. Fortunately, the CD-ROM comes with a user's guide that should help eliminate much of the initial confusion. At \$199.99 (Canadian), this is not an inexpensive CD-ROM, though it is available to members of the CIIA at the substantially discounted price of \$149.99. Still, for those individuals with research or other interests in Canadian foreign policy and international affairs in the decades since the end of the Second World War, it is well worth the expense. It also helps fulfill the mandate of the CIIA by increasing accessibility to information about, and encouraging interest in, Canada's role in world affairs. At a time when there has been much public discourse on the subject, a tool such as the CFRI is welcome indeed.

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