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## From “a great counter attraction to the ale-house and low music hall” to “the one place everybody goes”: the public library in The Globe and Mail, 1860-2016

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# From “a great counter attraction to the ale-house and low music hall” to “the one place everybody goes”: the public library in *The Globe and Mail*, 1860-2016

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Canadian public libraries champion high-level values to their users and stakeholders through a variety of means. Previous research has shown that different stakeholders prioritize different values and purposes (McKenzie, Burkell & Allen 2020), sometimes resulting in conflict, tension, or social exclusion (McKenzie & Stooke 2012). As constrained budgets require public libraries to justify their value, it is crucial to examine what is communicated to stakeholders and users.

We explored *Globe and Mail* articles from 1860 to the present. We narrowed our items to a sample of 144 articles (news stories, features, columns, editorials, letters to the editor). We then followed Nelson and Irwin’s (2014) two-step analytic strategy to evaluate and assign themes to each article. We found that discursive responses (e.g., “The public library is a place for community,” “The public library is a place for quality,”) have developed, adapted, disappeared, and persisted through an interwoven relationship over time.