



*Puerto Rican  
Genealogy Group*  
**Instructor:** Sylvia  
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# Looking for Ancestors in Historical Puerto Rican Newspapers

## Lesson 3: Puerto Rico's Own Free Portals

**Estimated Time:** 40 minutes

**Difficulty:** Intermediate

**Prerequisites:** Lessons 1 and 2

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### Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

1. Navigate the Archivo Digital Nacional de Puerto Rico (ADNPR) to locate newspaper holdings
2. Use the Biblioteca Digital Puertorriqueña at UPR to find digitized periodicals
3. Search the Digital Library of the Caribbean (dLOC) for Puerto Rican and Caribbean newspaper content

4. Access the El Mundo Digital Archive for twentieth-century research
  5. Begin using WS-01 (Newspaper Search Log) to track your searches across multiple platforms
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## Section 1: Why Puerto Rico's Own Portals Matter

Chronicling America (Lesson 2) is an excellent starting point, but it holds only the titles that U.S. institutions chose to digitize under the National Digital Newspaper Program. Puerto Rican and Caribbean institutions have built their own digital collections, some of which overlap with Chronicling America and many of which do not.

Searching only Chronicling America means missing newspapers that are held exclusively in Puerto Rican or Caribbean institutional archives. For certain time periods, certain municipalities, and certain types of records, the portals in this lesson are the only place to find what you need.

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## Section 2: Archivo Digital Nacional de Puerto Rico (ADNPR)

**URL:** <https://adnpr.net/>

The Archivo Digital Nacional de Puerto Rico is a searchable repository of Puerto Rican archives, maps, newspapers, government gazettes, and periodicals. It is particularly useful for finding newspaper titles and issues that are not on Chronicling America.

### What ADNPR Contains

- Digitized issues of Puerto Rican newspapers across multiple time periods
- Government gazettes and official publications
- Maps and historical documents
- Periodicals and community publications

### Navigating ADNPR

1. Go to <https://adnpr.net/> and select your preferred language (English or Spanish available).
2. Use the search bar at the top to enter a surname, town name, or keyword.
3. To browse by newspaper title, look for the **Periodicals** or **Hemeroteca** section in the navigation menu.
4. Within a specific periodical collection, you can filter by date range if the interface supports it.
5. When you find a relevant page, note the full citation: newspaper title, issue date, page number, and the URL.

**Research tip:** ADNPR’s search results sometimes include items from multiple collections. Review the source information carefully so you know whether you are looking at an original newspaper image, a transcription, or a metadata record.

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## Section 3: Biblioteca Digital Puertorriqueña (UPR)

**URL:** <https://upr.contentdm.oclc.org/>

The University of Puerto Rico’s digital library holds newspapers, manuscripts, photographs, maps, and rare books. For genealogical research, the newspaper and periodical collections are most directly useful.

### What the UPR Digital Library Contains for Genealogists

- Digitized runs of historical Puerto Rican newspapers
- Rare and locally held periodicals not available on U.S.-based platforms
- Community and organizational publications
- Links to related library guides for Puerto Rican periodical research

### Navigating UPR Digital Collections

1. Go to <https://upr.contentdm.oclc.org/> and browse by collection.
2. Look for collections labeled **Periódicos** (Newspapers) or **Hemeroteca**.
3. Within a collection, use the date filter and keyword search to narrow your results.
4. Note: The interface is primarily in Spanish. If your Spanish is limited, use your browser’s built-in page translation tool.

**Research tip:** The UPR Libraries maintain research guides (LibGuides) for Puerto Rican genealogy and newspaper research. These are separate from the digital collections themselves and list additional resources. Search for “Puerto Rico newspapers LibGuide UPR” to find the current guide.

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## Section 4: Digital Library of the Caribbean (dLOC)

**URL:** <https://dloc.com/>

The Digital Library of the Caribbean is a partnership of more than 90 institutions, including the University of Florida and Florida International University. Its Caribbean Newspaper Digital Library (CNDL) holds more than 130 eighteenth- and nineteenth-century newspapers from 22 Caribbean islands, covering the period from 1718 to 1876.

For Puerto Rican genealogists, dLOC serves two purposes:

1. **Puerto Rican content:** Some Puerto Rican newspaper titles and issues are held in dLOC that are not available on Chronicling America.

2. **Caribbean migration research:** Puerto Rican families moved between islands. If your ancestor's trail disappears in Puerto Rican records, they may appear in a Cuban, Dominican, or other Caribbean newspaper available through dLOC.

## What dLOC Contains

- Newspapers in Spanish, English, and French
- Holdings from Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, and other islands
- Government publications and official gazettes from multiple Caribbean jurisdictions

## Navigating dLOC

1. Go to <https://dloc.com/> and select **Caribbean Newspaper Digital Library** or use the main search bar.
2. Filter by **Country** to narrow results to Puerto Rico or another island.
3. Filter by **Language** if you want only Spanish-language content.
4. Use the keyword search with a surname, town name, or event type.
5. Browse by date if keyword searches return limited results.

**Research implication:** If your ancestor migrated between Puerto Rico and Cuba, the Dominican Republic, or another Spanish-speaking island before 1900, dLOC is where you look for Caribbean newspaper evidence of that migration.

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## Section 5: El Mundo Digital Archive

**URL:** Search “El Mundo Digital Archive UC Berkeley” or use: <https://update.lib.berkeley.edu/2023/05/25/el-mundo-digital-archive-puerto-rico-1919-1990-open-access/>

*El Mundo* was Puerto Rico's major conservative daily for most of the twentieth century, published from 1919 to 1990. In 2023, UC Berkeley and the Center for Research Libraries opened the complete *El Mundo* archive as free, full-text searchable open access.

This is an exceptional resource for twentieth-century genealogy: obituaries, vital notices, community events, and local news across 71 years of Puerto Rican history.

## What El Mundo Contains for Genealogists

- Detailed obituaries naming parents, spouse, children, occupation, birthplace, and church affiliation
- Birth and marriage announcements
- Community events and organizational notices
- Political and social coverage that provides context for family history

## Accessing the Archive

1. Follow the link from the UC Berkeley announcement page to the archive access point.
2. Use the keyword search or date-range browser to find relevant issues.
3. For obituary research, search for the surname combined with terms like *falleció* (died) or *sepelio* (funeral).

**Research tip:** *El Mundo* is most useful for ancestors who died or had notable events between 1919 and 1990. For earlier research, return to the *Gaceta*, *Boletín Mercantil*, *La Correspondencia*, or *La Democracia* on Chronicling America.

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## Section 6: A Note on *El Imparcial* and Other Titles

*El Imparcial* (1918–1970s), which covered the political and economic impacts of U.S. control in Puerto Rico, is available through the Eastview Global Press Archive, a subscription service at <https://gpa.eastview.com/eida/>. This course focuses on free resources; access to *El Imparcial* requires either an institutional subscription or a university or public library card.

The Hemeroteca Digital of Spain's Biblioteca Nacional (BNE) at <https://bdh.bne.es/bnearch/Search.do> holds some colonial-era Spanish-language newspapers with Caribbean coverage. It is fully free and searchable, and worth checking if you exhaust the other platforms.

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## Section 7: Tracking Your Searches with WS-01

At this point in the course, you have been introduced to five free newspaper platforms. Keeping track of which platform you searched, what terms you used, and what you found (or did not find) is essential to good research practice.

Use the **Newspaper Search Log (WS-01)** included with this course to document:

- Every platform you search
- The newspaper title and date range
- The search terms you used
- Whether you found anything, and if so, what
- The URL or other citation for any results

A documented absence – a search that found nothing – is genealogical data. It tells you and anyone who reviews your work what has already been checked, so the same ground is not covered twice.

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## Key Terms

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Term	Definition
ADNPR	Archivo Digital Nacional de Puerto Rico; free searchable repository of Puerto Rican newspapers, archives, and documents
dLOC	Digital Library of the Caribbean; holds 130+ Caribbean newspapers from 22 islands, 1718–1876
CNDL	Caribbean Newspaper Digital Library; the newspaper section within dLOC
<i>El Mundo</i>	Puerto Rico’s major conservative daily, 1919–1990; now fully digitized and open access
BNE	Biblioteca Nacional de España; Spain’s national library; Hemeroteca Digital holds historical Spanish-language newspapers
<i>Falleció</i>	“Died” in Spanish; useful search term for obituary research
<i>Sepelio</i>	Funeral; may appear in death and obituary notices

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## Reflection Questions

1. You are looking for a great-grandmother who died in Puerto Rico sometime in the 1940s. Which platform from this lesson would be your first choice, and why?
  2. Your family’s oral history says an ancestor moved from Puerto Rico to Cuba around 1895. Which platform would you use to search for Caribbean newspaper evidence of this migration, and what would you search for?
  3. You search ADNPR for a surname and find several results from different collections. How do you determine which results are newspaper pages versus other types of documents?
  4. Why is it important to use the Newspaper Search Log (WS-01) even when a search returns no results?
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## Class Exercise

Open ADNPR at <https://adnpr.net/>. Search for a common Puerto Rican surname from your research (or use the surname *Rodríguez* if you do not have a surname to try).

In your Newspaper Search Log (WS-01), record:

- The platform (ADNPR)
- The search term you used

- The date range of any results you found
- The newspaper title, if identifiable
- Whether the result was a newspaper page, a government document, or another type of record
- The URL of one result, or note “no results found”

Then repeat the same search in dLOC at <https://dloc.com/> and compare what you find.

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## **What's Next**

Lesson 4 teaches the search strategies that make all of these platforms more productive: name variation techniques, date range planning, when to browse instead of keyword search, and how to document what you have already tried. It applies these strategies to a real 1872 case study from Rincón, Puerto Rico.

[Continue to Lesson 4: Search Strategies and a Case Study]

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