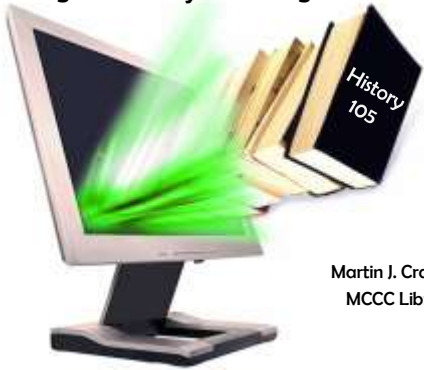# Using the library & finding information

History 105

Martin J. Crabtree
MCCC Library

Agenda

- Basic Library Information
- Library catalog including ebooks
- What makes some resources scholarly?
- Electronic searching – Becoming more *effective* searchers
- Databases available from the library
- Using web information

The MCCC Library

- Library hours:
  - Monday – Thursday 8:30* AM – 9 PM
  - Friday 8:30* AM – 5 PM
  - Saturday 12 PM – 4 PM at WW
  - Saturday 9 AM – Noon at JKC
- You will need your ID card/library card
  - To borrow books, etc.
  - To use the library computers

*-JKC Library opens at 9 AM

Shameless plug for the library

- The MCCC Library has many resources for you to use both in print and online.
- The library staff can help you find useful information for your research.
- Do ask us to help you find info, it's what we do.

Fall 2009
$5

Featuring
Highly Logical: A Better Way to Travel in Cyberspace
By
George Boole

Untapped Research Help:
The College Librarian- 21st Century Search Engines

The Task at Hand

- Locate and use book and/or academic journal sources on an American History topic of your choice.
- Use the MLA formatting style.
- So where do I find the information I need?

HELP

Finding books in the library
Using the online card catalog

- The catalog is available online. Used to find books, videos and other materials both in the MCCC collection and the Mercer County Public (MCL) libraries.
- You can have materials from MCL brought to the college. Deliveries arrive Tuesday and Friday afternoons.
- Catalog also contains e-books *but more on that later.*
- Your MCCC ID card is also your library card

Getting to the library's home page from mccc.edu

Link to the catalog is on the library's web pages.

So what are scholarly resources?

Scholarly Information

- Information that has been written by experts in a given field (scholars) using proven research methods.
- This information can take many form both in print and electronically.
- When doing *college level* work, you are expected to rely on scholarly information for your research.

The generic scholarly or peer reviewed journal article

- Written for and by scholars in a particular field.
- Assumes you know the jargon of the discipline.
- Tends to be lengthy sometimes with charts and/or graphs (but rarely photographs).
- Lacks a slick/eye catching appearance
- Has a bibliography
- Has a bibliography

Hold it!

You said bibliography twice!
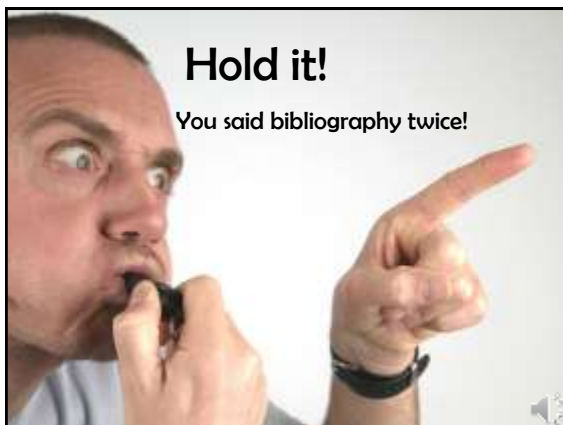
You're darn right!

- That list of sources (citations) can make your work a whole lot easier.

Following the citation trail...

- Always check out the bibliography (references/works cited) in the "good" articles.
- This lists the books, articles, websites, etc. that the author used in preparing the article.
- The author has done much of the work for you.

Question:

What is your personal record for the most hits from a web search?

100,000?
1,000,000?
10,000,000?
100,000,000?
MORE???

Do you really want to look through all those hits???

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Starting your search – selecting a topic

- Your searches can only be as good as the topic you use.
- The first step is to have a good topic in mind.
- Don't worry if your topic is a bit broad or vague at first.
- Expect to revise/refine your topic as you go.
- Your research comfort level will increase in time.

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Have you ever thought about how computers find information?

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Finding information - Keywords

- Computers only match the letters you give it.
- Type in "Trenton" the computer matches anything that contains t-r-e-n-t-o-n
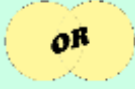- The word(s) you use for a search are called

Keywords

- The first step to an effective search is to develop a list of words that describes or would commonly be used when discussing your topic. Write this down if it helps.

Manipulating your keywords for a more effective search

- Boolean searching - Connecting keywords with:
  - and
  - not
  - or

- For example
  - eagles NOT football
  - (air or water) and pollution
- To search for a phrase, use quotation marks
  - "survival of the fittest"
- More Terms = Fewer "Hits"

Now wait a minute!

You said you'd talk more about ebooks.

More on ebooks

- Ebooks are included in the library's catalog
- We have two ebook collections
  - ebrary (about 30,000 titles)
  - EBSCO Ebooks (5,000 titles)
- Library's print book collection - 60,000 titles
- You can also search the ebook collections separately if you choose.

Ebook Viewing Options - ebrary

- Using your web browser
  - Use the ebrary reader for easier reading
- Download to your computer or many other readers (not Kindle) using Adobe Digital Editions
  - Adobe Digital Editions is a free downloadable program
  - You "keep" the book for 14 days (some books 7 days)
- Download a portion of a book in pdf format
  - Often 40-60 pages, limited by the publisher
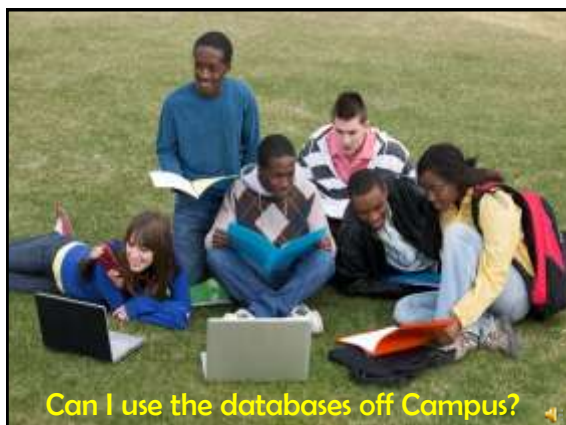 - Can use with a Kindle
- Let's take a look at ebrary

Electronic Databases at the Mercer Library

Electronic Databases
In General

- Over 60 databases available
- Not every article is available full text though many are
- Abstracts (summary) is often available when full text is not
- Accessible at any computer on the MCCC/JKC campus network
- Can print/e-mail/download articles

Can I use the databases off Campus?

Accessing Databases Remotely

- You can access most of the databases from any computer with internet access with your ID and password.
- For the ID, use your mccc email name. The part before the @ symbol:

    smithj@student.mccc.edu

- Your password is you *full* last name.

Remote Login Screen

email name goes here

Last name goes here

Searching More Than Just Keywords
Field Limiters

- Database field limiters allow you to specify your search within varied parameters for example:
  - Only full-text articles
  - Only peer reviewed (scholarly) publications
  - Date (or date range)

The database page

Click here to go to the database page

Database name & link is here.

Brief description of the database is here.

Some useful databases

EBSCOhost - Academic Search Premier
Proquest Central
- Broad database covering everything from science to the humanities including many scholarly journals
- Not every article full text
- Listed in the General section of the database page
- New York Times Historical
  - N.Y. Times articles from 1851-2007 (newer articles are in ProQuest Central).
  - Listed in the News section of the database page

...plus many databases will help with MLA formatting.

A different type of database
JSTOR

JSTOR:
- contains exclusively scholarly journals
- strives to have every issue of a journal from it's very first issue
- does not always have the most recent 3-5 years of a title.

JSTOR - different than other databases

- Every article is full-text in pdf format
- You can not directly email articles only citations with a link to the actual article.
- When off campus, you will need to use your MCCC password to access these article links
- Abstracts are not always available
- JSTOR has no citation generation tools
- Also listed in the General section of the database page

Why can't I just use the web?

Using The Web

Web searching may be,
- familiar
- free
- convenient
- "easy" to use

However search engines,
- will generate millions of irrelevant hits
- can miss 200% or more of the web's content*
- Though articles will show up on web searches, you may need to pay to see the actual articles.

*Source: The Invisible Web by Chris Sherman

So how can I find some more scholarly things on the web?

Have you tried Google Scholar?

Google
scholar beta

Google Scholar (GS)

- GS attempts to pull together scholarly information that's available on the web.
- This is not just some sort of Google clone, the content differs greatly from "regular Google".
- Publishers have made the full-text of many journal articles available to GS... though not always to the general public.

Google Scholar the good...

- Can do a good job of locating citations to articles from bibliographies
- Can be a good "extra resource" when you need more than just the databases
- Also includes books from Google books.
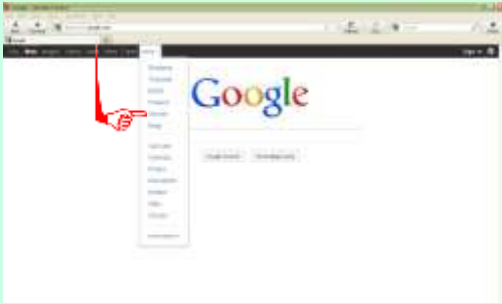 - Many books published before 1923 are full-text.

Google Scholar the not so good

- Many articles available in full-text for free.
- Can be hard to focus on a specific subject
- Also includes books from Google books.
  - Most books published after 1923 are not full text.

scholar.google.com

Google

Using the information you find

...and giving credit where credit is due.

Using the Information You Find

- Always give credit to the author or creator of the information that you use.
- This includes the actual facts, conclusions, and ideas that an author presents.
- It also includes actual the words that he/she has used.

Using the MLA format

- You will be using the MLA (Modern Language Association of America) style.
- The latest MLA manual is available in the library:
  - MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers at: LB 2369 .G53 2009 (in the reference collection & on reserve).
- The manual is not available on line.

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers

Added MLA (& APA) info is at the Citation Guides link

So much to choose from…

e-books Internet Websites Books Reference EBSCOHost Scholarly Information Magazines Academic Print Periodicals Newspapers Database Encyclopedias ProQuest Journals

… so little time!

Using your time effectively

- Books are a great source of information
- Though a book may be 400 pages long, you will likely need of read/use only a fraction of the book.
- The table of contents & index can help you identify the pages you may want to use.

Efficient Computer Research

- Craft a good search using good keywords, Boolean searching, phrases, etc.
- Use the databases not just the web!
- Article abstracts, when available, will help you to quickly identify the useful ones.
- Use the database citation tools.

Need more help?

- Contact the library:
  - Phone (609)-570-3560 [during library hours]
  - email library@mccc.edu [24 hours a day]
  - or just stop by...

Now it's your turn...

Remember!
- Phone: (609)570- 3560
- email: library@mccc.edu
- ...or just stop by