

Library OneSearch: Beyond Basics
Library instruction for
History 4980 – Colonial New England (Fall 2021)

-- Dominique Daniel --

Welcome. My name is Dominique Daniel and I am the librarian for history at Kresge Library. My role is to help you find and use the sources that you need for your research. Today I would like to give you a few quick tips on how to find secondary sources (that is to say books and articles), or rather how to make your search easier and more productive for your research projects.

There are many ways to do that, but in this video, we'll focus on Library OneSearch, the library's search system.

To do effective searches, you first need to know exactly what OneSearch can and cannot do. So **what is Library OneSearch?** OneSearch allows you to search all of the library's collections. Absolutely everything. Books and journals, but also newspapers, maps, audiovisual materials, musical scores, and much more. Remember, it's for print resources that are in Kresge Library in the building. And online resources, electronic resources that are provided by the library as well. But OneSearch also includes some materials from outside the library which are freely available online. For example, you might come across electronic books that are in the Hathi Trust, which is a large digital library. And typically they will be older books like this one from 1904. And they are not useful to find current scholarship.

Library OneSearch, in fact, is designed for easy keyword searching, but it also offers many tools and can be used in a wide variety of ways. In fact, keyword searching is for beginners. With keyword searching, you simply enter a word or several words and you're sure to find some results. But will they be the right results? Will they be relevant, credible? Will they reflect the most recent scholarship on the topic? Will they be resources that will make your own research easier? These are some of the questions that we'll try to address.

My first tip, therefore, is
Try to mine the information provided in the results you get when you search.

In other words, if you do a simple keyword search, don't just look at the titles on the results page.

Example:

Let's say you're searching for Puritans' views, and practices, of enslaving indigenous peoples in America, in the English colonies of America. So you can search for Puritans, Indians, and slavery, and search. You're going to get pretty lucky in this case because you're getting relevant results right at the top. Look at the titles and see that they do correspond to the

keywords that you searched for. However, note that when you scroll down, you'll see a book here for which the word slavery is not in the title. Or rather, it is -- sorry, this one, "Faithful Bodies" - the word slavery is not in the title. However, if you click on the title, you open up the entry and you can find out more. In this case, there's a pretty extensive description of the book. If you read it you learn that the book focuses on Bermuda, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and that it does address the question of slavery, even though that word is not in the title. Looking at the list of subjects here can also be useful to determine whether the book is relevant for your topic - more on that later. So it's worth scrolling down and opening up each one of these results to get more information.

This one, for example, "Roots of American Racism, Essays on the Colonial Experience" The title does not clearly say that it tackles anything relevant for our search. But you can learn more by looking at the description. Down here. You see some references to slavery, Indians, and Puritans. That's why that result came up.

In other words, when you're getting the results after a search, do take the time to explore each result in more detail and scroll down the list. That's what I mean by mining the information provided in the results. The best source is not necessarily the top one or the one that contains your keywords in the title. And again, open up each result to find information you can use for more searches.

Tip number 2: Try to limit your search to recent works for best results.

OneSearch always has a list of facets on the results page, and one of them is to filter by date. So you can limit your search results to, say, the last 10 years.

For example, in my results list here, I can look at the date facet here, and enter 2010 to 2021. I hit refine, so that I get only the results that were published, roughly in the last 10 years.

This is going to eliminate most of the older books that would not be of any interest in this case.

Tip number 3, use the "type" facet. With this facet, you can view only books in your results, or only scholarly articles.

So let's go back to my search.

The "type" facet is here and you can select any of those, or even more. You can limit your results to books. And in this case, as you can see, I'm getting only 8 results, 8 books that come up on the topic that I looked for, that were published in the last 10 years.

When it comes to books, it's always a good idea to check who the publisher is. And you can do that again by clicking on the entry.

You can see [here](#) Visible Ink Press. That doesn't sound quite right. Let's look at the one that we already saw earlier. Cornell University Press. Now that's better!

If it's a university press, it is a good sign that the book is credible. And if it's not a university press, you might have to dig a bit more to find out who the author is, what the intended audience of the book is. For example, this could be a children's book. There are lots and lots of children's books on the Puritans, and we do have some of them in the library.

So you can use the facet "type" to try and limit your results to books or to articles.

Tip number 4: Keep the filters that you selected for your searches.

I searched for books about Puritans, Indians, slavery in the last 10 years. And let's say I would like to change the word "Indians" and use the word "indigenous" instead, but still limit my search to books in the last 10 years.

To do that, I can click on "Remember all Filters." Then you can start a new search. I get four results. Some of them are the same. Others, however, aren't and it might be worth exploring. But you can see that my filters have been preserved right here. Again, when you do this you can start examining your results closely, to see if there's anything worth reading. For example, you can see some chapters in this book might be of interest. And again, this is a university press: the University Press of Florida.

Searching is not a one time process. Don't expect to do a quick keyword search and get the source you need. Even if your first search gets you some good results, you can't be sure that there isn't a fantastic article right on your research topic that you missed. So do more searches by using the facets, modifying the search terms the way I just did, and anything else you might think of. So remember, **search is an iterative process**, meaning you do it several times. You try different strategies. You're learning from your results every time you improve your search.

Tip number 5: Did you know that you can also browse the shelves virtually through Library OneSearch.

When you have found a book on your topic, you can scroll down to the bottom of its description and you'll see a list of the books. It is sitting next to on the shelf.

For example if I take this book and scroll down to the bottom I can see what they call "virtual browse", or in other words, a shelf, a virtual shelf corresponding to the real shelf in the library. Here is the book that we're just looking at. And you can look at the books sitting right next to it like this one. You can see that this book is also on the enslavement of Native Americans. And you'll still have to open this record to learn

more and to find out whether it's a recent, credible, and relevant source, of course. But this will be an opportunity for you to find another relevant book.

And remember, you can keep scrolling down that virtual shelf as long as you need, or as long as is relevant. Note however that this works only for books. not journal articles, and not electronic sources.

Tip number 6, use the Library of Congress number browse feature.

Each book has a call number which allows you to find where the book is located on the shelves. If you've ever been in Kresge Library and tried to find a book, you must know that. So the call number is indicated on each book. Call numbers allow you to browse as well, to see all the books under a specific call number range.

For example, I know that call numbers beginning in F, F7 specifically, deal with colonial New England. And I can use that to do a search. For this I go to the "browse" option, here at the top. And I select Browse by Library of Congress call numbers. And then I can enter "F7", and now I can see all the books that have this call number, call numbers that start with F7. And I can see that they all deal with colonial New England. So you can scroll down and browse this list and just explore and see if there's anything that -- any title that interests you. Again, if you do this, you will have to open up the ones that seem interesting to learn more and see if it is indeed what you think it is.

So, you can do this "browse by Library of Congress numbers" for colonial New England using F7.

Tip number 7, browse by subject.

You can also browse by subject. Be careful, subjects are not keywords. Subjects are assigned by librarians to each physical book. So you need to first find out what the subjects are for your topic. And the best way to do this is to look at a book that you found.

So again, let's take a look at one of these books. "Saints and Strangers: New England in British North America." Scroll down, you'll see here under "subjects" there are two of them. New England history - the colonial period, or Puritans - New England history Each of these links can give you access to more books. Clicking on them takes me to a new page where I can view all the books cataloged under that subject. Note that the search that the system did when I clicked on the subject, takes me to the advanced search by subject. feature. It searched for that exact subject that I indicated. So you can now browse and explore all the books listed here. the same way you did before.

Again, be careful, this does not mean that these are the only books on colonial New England that Kresge Library has, only those that are under that subject. Still, it is a useful way to discover some of the books that we have in the library or online.

To conclude, I gave you seven tips you can use to find books or articles in different fashion. Each of them has its own value. First, mine the information provided in the results. Two, limit your search to recent works. Use the "type" facet. Keep the filters for new searches, or different searches. Browse the shelves virtually. Use the Library of Congress number browse feature. And finally, browse by subject.

These are the main tips I wanted to share today to help you become more sophisticated and efficient searchers. If you have any questions, or for more information, feel free to contact me directly at the email address listed here. Thank you and good luck with your projects.

For more information:

Dominique Daniel

daniel@oakland.edu

Kresge Library, room 244

<https://library.oakland.edu/people/bios/index.php?bio=Daniel>