

## The Research Process & Tips for Students

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### Finding research materials at Saint Mark's Library, through THEOLOG, and UBC libraries

Finding a comprehensive research materials is easy when you follow the *ABCD's* of research:

- A) Determine your topic and keywords that describe your topic.
- B) Use the St. Mark's library catalogue or UBC Library homepage *SEARCH* box to access general information about your topic such as reference (encyclopaedias, interpretations, commentaries, handbooks) and books.
- C) Search the *UBC Subject Resources pages* in your subject area for online resources in your subject area.
- D) Access online Academic databases (academic and peer-reviewed articles and research) through Subject Resources guides on the UBC library homepage.

### A. Identify and Topic and Search Terms:

First define your topic area and scope: you want to be able to reasonable discuss your defined topic area in a paper:

I.e., "the roles animals play in popular theatre" is too broad and almost impossible to cover. If necessary, continue to define your topic until it is something you can handle:

I.e., "the roles dogs play in Shakespearean theatre".

Once you have defined your topic, you can then select key words to use in your research.

### **Procedure: Starting a search/creating keywords and search terms from scratch: Interests: dogs and Shakespearean plays**

- a. State your topic as a question:  
i.e., what roles do dogs play in Shakespearean dramas?
- b. Identify main concepts or keywords in your question (words that should tag what you want to find).  
Dogs/drama/Shakespeare
- c. Identify synonyms and other related words from your keywords.  
Dogs/Canines  
Drama/Theatre/Plays  
Shakespeare/Shakespearean/1500's

\*These keywords can now be used as your search terms to use in library catalogues and online databases.

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## **Procedure: Creating keywords/Search terms for given specific questions:**

e.g., Question: "Analyze the following: *Commentary on the Gospels* by Ronald Knox (1954): "7/36-8.3. *A lesson in penitence; women who followed in our Lord's company.* This section is peculiar to Luke; for parallel incidents, see notes on Matthew 26.1-16."

**Keywords:** women, Luke, penitence, Matthew

We can now search for more background, contextual, information about this quote using a combination of these keywords:

- Women and Luke
- Women and penitence
- Luke and penitence
- Matthew and women and penitence, etc.

\*Tip: A great way to get a general overview on your topic is to search in print or online reference. One great non-academic source for getting ideas about main issues, key figures involved, ideas and keywords you can use in your research + *references* to sources used is Wikipedia: you should not cite this source (as it is a collaborative and changing authorship), however it does provide a handy snapshot of an idea, time period, event or individual.

## **THEOLOG & the Consortium of Theological Schools on UBC Campus**

THEOLOG is the shared catalogue of the consortium of Theological Schools: Regent, the Vancouver School of Theology, Carey Theological School and Saint Mark's College.

Registered Saint Mark's students are able to access resources in Theolog's member institution's libraries: Regent College/Carey Theological College library and the Vancouver School of Theology library.

Theolog allows you to search all collections, or you can select one collection to do your searches by title, author, ISBN, keyword or subject.

\*Catholic Titles are held by all three libraries.

### B. Using Key Terms to Find General Information in Library catalogues:

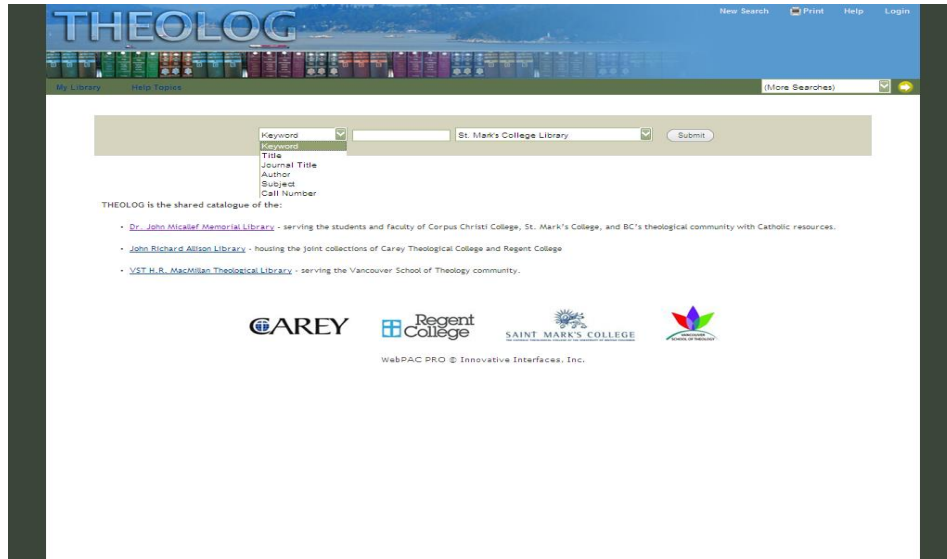
Looking in the online catalogue, *THEOLOG*, for books. *THEOLOG* is accessible in the library and from home at the following link <http://library.stmarkscollege.ca/> or via the Saint Mark's Library homepage, under search catalogue <http://stmarkscollege.ca/library>.

Using the keywords, synonyms and related words identified in Step 1, begin your search with printed and online encyclopaedias and other reference sources (dictionaries, handbooks, annuals) and general book titles:

You can search under: Keyword, Subject, Author, Title, ISBN or Call Number.

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St. Marks Catalogue, **THEOLOG**: type in your keywords: [i.e., search "jesuit and dictionary"]



## \*Types of Searches:

**Keyword:** this is like a 'Google' Search and will bring up anything that matches your search term (relevant and non-relevant).

**Subject:** this search brings up everything categorized under the term you enter:  
i.e., Subject: MERTON - will bring up everything we have 'about' Merton (more defined than keyword searching).

**ISBN:** the identification number on the back of the book.

**Author:** Last name, First name.

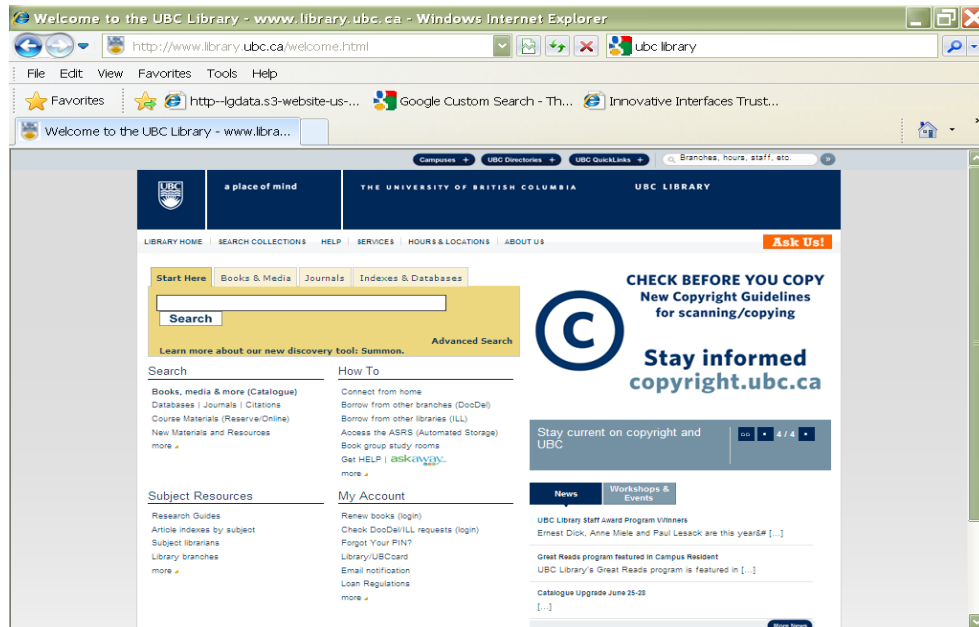
**Call Number:** the letter-number combination on the spine label of the book.

\*Tip: When you find the book on the shelf, remember:

1. Books with similar subjects will be sitting together on the shelf.
2. You can review a book's bibliography for further titles of potential sources.

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**UBC Libraries Online Catalogue:** type in your keywords in the yellow SEARCH box: [i.e., search "huron and missionaries"]



Note the circulation status (ie. Checked-in or checked-out) and the item location (what library is it in?).

## C: Search the UBC Subject Resources pages

UBC librarians have put together online pages of collected online resources (databases, indexes, webpages, other electronic materials) for different subject areas.

To access:

- 1) Go to the UBC library homepage.
- 2) Scroll down to *Subject Resources* and click on the heading.
- 3) On the *Resources by Subject* page, scroll down to a general subject area, i.e. *Arts (Humanities and Social Sciences)* link and click.
- 4) On the *Subject Guides* page, scroll down to *Arts (Humanities and Social Sciences)* subheadings: scroll down to the *English* link (or any other subject link such as *Psychology, Environmental Studies, Political Science*, etc.) and click.
- 5) Welcome to your Subject Resources by Subject page! From here you can click on any link under:
  - Indexes and Databases
  - Online Reference [i.e., Dictionary of Canadian Biography; Historical Atlas of Canada]
  - Web and Internet
  - e-Books
  - other miscellaneous materials

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D) Access Academic databases through the Subject Resources pages to search:

You can access databases/indexes – basically two different kinds of containers for electronic information (in this case, academic journal articles) - through the *Subject Resources* pages, always listed in the top left corner of the page. Database information is the most recent academic research for you to access.

\*Tip: 4 very popular databases for General Arts are:

- 1) Arts & Humanities Citation Index (Web of Science)
- 2) Academic Search Complete
- 3) ATLA Religion database
- 4) JSTOR

\*Tip: If you know the name of the database/index you want to access, or Journal title, you can search for them using the *Electronic Resources* tab on the top left of the UBC libraries homepage.

## Database Searching

How does a database or index work? Just like Google, but much, much better ☺

Type in your keywords in the search box. Remember, you can use *AND* or *OR* to expand or decrease the number of "hits" you get from your search queries:

- **AND** - (women AND food systems) will retrieve articles that only use both the keywords, "women" and "food systems". This means you will get fewer hits.
- **OR** – (women OR food systems) will retrieve articles that use only the keywords "women" OR articles that use only the keywords, "food systems". This means you will get many more hits.

### \*Final Tips

If you are having trouble finding articles, try:

- expanding by using different keywords.
- checking for spelling errors.
- checking that in your database search boxes, you are searching what you want to be searching for: Author, Subject or Title, or keyword.

## Formatting Help & Research Tutorials

Wichita Kansas Information Literacy tutorial

<http://library.wichita.edu/empower/>

## Library Services

We assist students with topic research, locating print and online resources and formatting help.

**Tel: 604.822.4463**

**Fax: 604.822.4659**

**Email: [library@stmarkscollege.ca](mailto:library@stmarkscollege.ca)**