**Step 4:** Find other resources

**Opinion polls**
Go to [http://www.libraries.psu.edu](http://www.libraries.psu.edu), click on “Databases,” then choose:
- iPoll
- Odum Institute
- Polling the Nations

**Video**
See [https://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/researchguides/communications/streaming.html](https://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/researchguides/communications/streaming.html)

**Beyond Penn State**
Go [http://www.libraries.psu.edu](http://www.libraries.psu.edu), click on “Databases,” then choose:
- WorldCat and/or
- ACCESS PA
Order items through ILLiad, Penn State’s Interlibrary Loan System, [https://ill.libraries.psu.edu](https://ill.libraries.psu.edu)

**Why search outside Penn State?**
If your professor expects you to find “all” the information on your topic, you need to search many libraries. WorldCat is a database of more than 10,000 college libraries. ACCESS PA includes all types of libraries in Pennsylvania.

**Citation help**
Many databases can create citations in APA, MLA, or other formats. Ask a librarian to show you how.

Also see the library’s site on citation styles: [http://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/researchguides/citationstyles.html](http://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/researchguides/citationstyles.html)

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**Step 5:** Evaluate your sources

**Currency?**
- When was this published or posted?
- When was it last updated?
- Is this up-to-date enough for your topic?

**Relevance?**
- Does this answer your question or relate to your topic?
- Was it written for college students or professionals? (or for other people with needs like yours)?
- Can you understand what you are reading? Is the reading level too easy or too hard?

**Authority?**
- Who is the writer, publisher, and sponsor?
- Does the URL tell you anything about who created or supports it?
- What is the writer’s education and profession? Where does (s)he work? Does this make her/him an expert on your topic?
- Can you contact the writer and/or publisher to learn more about this?

**Accuracy?**
- Is this “peer-reviewed,” “refereed,” or edited for quality? By whom?
- Is it backed up with evidence — citations to other books, articles, data, interviews, etc.?
- Can you find the same information in other sources? How does the information relate to your own experiences?
- Does this have any obvious grammar, spelling, or factual mistakes?

**Purpose?**
- Is this fact or opinion?
- Why are the writer and publisher providing this information? To entertain, inform, teach, or sell to you?
- Are there biases — cultural, political, religious, or other points of view that cause the writer to emphasize some issues or ignore others?

*The “CRAAP Test” was created by California State University—Chico*
**Step 1:** Find basic facts, encyclopedias & handbooks
(some online; some on 1st floor of Harrisburg Library)

**Start with**
http://www.libraries.psu.edu, click on "Databases," then choose:
- CQ Researcher
- Gale Virtual Reference Library
- Oxford Reference Online
- Sage Reference Online

Next, try "Reference" on 1st floor:
- Addiction & crime: REF HV
- Gender & LGBTQ: REF HQ71-HQ77 & HQ1075-HQ2030
- Disabilities: REF HV1568
- Genocide & terrorism: REF HV6322
- Race & ethnicity (U.S.): REF E184-E185
- Social theories: REF HM426 & HM 1001
- Statistics: REF HA
- Other areas recommended by the librarian

**Why use encyclopedias and handbooks?**
They help you:
- Focus on important ideas & people
- Explore related topics
- Find more keywords to use further searches
- Identify best sources for researching your topic
- Put together a "bibliography"

With this background information, it's much easier to decide which books & journal articles are going to be helpful & understand how they all fit together in your project.

**Step 2:** Find books
(some online; some on 2nd & 3rd floors of Harrisburg Library)

**Start with**
- The CAT, http://cat.libraries.psu.edu/
  Use the CAT's "Advanced Search" to look for books from certain dates, or to choose audio, video, or other formats.

**Where to find them at Harrisburg**

**Most books:**
- 2nd floor: "E" section (American History)
- Other areas recommended by the librarian

**Why use books?**
Books add to basic information that you learned from encyclopedias & handbooks. They bridge between beginner's information & scholarly articles. Books may discuss:
- History or theories
- An overview: the "big picture" and related parts
- Best practices or recommendations
- Recent research

Look for a “Table of Contents” or a list of chapters in each book. Read the parts that most interest you.

**Step 3:** Find magazines & journals (most online)

**Start with**
- LionSearch, http://www.libraries.psu.edu

**If you need to focus, or need better search abilities**
Go to http://www.libraries.psu.edu, click on "Databases," then choose:
- America: History and Life
- Criminal Justice Abstracts
- Ethnic Newswatch
- LGBT Life
- PsycINFO
- Sociological Abstracts
- Women's Studies International
- Other databases recommended by the librarian

**Articles beyond Penn State**
- Google Scholar, http://scholar.google.com

**Why use databases?**
Databases empower you to search thousands of journals at one time. They also allow you to limit results by date, type of article, & other criteria. Use the "Get It" button to see Penn State’s online copy of a journal (if it exists), check if Harrisburg Library owns a paper copy, or order a free copy through ILIiad (interlibrary loan).

**Some search tips**
- child* = finds any word that begins with a root
- child OR youth = finds either word (good for synonyms)
- child AND gang = finds both words (good for linking two different ideas together)
- sort by relevance = puts "best" items at the top of your results list

If you need help at any time, just ask:
Bernadette Lear, BAL19@psu.edu, (717) 948-6360, Room LIB 102G