GETTING STARTED IN THE LIBRARY

So you have an assignment in this class to find information on some aspect of “the frontier” and its impact on American culture, history, and national character. How do you get started?

First of all, you will need to go to the library web page. Second, unless you are already an expert on this topic, some background information or a general overview might be useful. The print titles listed below (in call number order), all located in the reference section of Kelly Library, and the online reference databases (accessible by the A – Z Databases list, have good articles on the historical, mythical, and popular culture aspects of the American frontier. They are examples of specialized encyclopedias—they focus on a particular subject, as compared to general encyclopedias, such as Americana or World Book. The online reference databases can be accessed by going to the library’s A -Z Databases list, or by the links built into this guide, if you are viewing it online via Moodle or the Guides link on the library page. Of course, if at any point you need assistance locating or using any of the resources mentioned in this guide, please speak with a librarian!

General Background Information

*Encyclopedia of American Indian History* REF E 77 .E48 2008


*Greenwood Encyclopedia of American Regional Cultures* REF E 161 .G74 2004

Vol. 1: Great Plains; vol. 3: The Midwest; vol. 4: Pacific; vol. 6: Rocky Mountains; vol. 8: Southwest

Volumes 1 and 3, Great Plains and The Midwest, are available online through Credo Reference


Articles on “The Frontier and the West,” “Expansion and Empire,” “Native Americans”


Also available online through Credo Reference

*Dictionary of American History* Ref E 174 .D52 2003 Also available online through Gale Virtual Reference Library


Article on “Westerns”


Article on “Settlement and Migration


*New Encyclopedia of the American West* REF F 591 .N46 1998 Also available online through Credo Reference

*Encyclopedia of Exploration* REF G 80 .W33 2004

Article on “North America, Exploration of


Article on “American Western Novel"

*Schirmer Encyclopedia of Film* REF PN 1993.45 .G65 2007 Also available online through Gale Virtual Reference Library. Article on “Westerns”


Article on “Western Fiction”

*Biography in Context*

*Credo Reference*
Finding Information in the (Almost) Whole Library Collection

An easy way to search most of the library’s resources that are actually in the building, or full-text in its databases, is through E&H OneSearch. Take a look at the following example--- a search on “frontier myth” AND (“United States” OR America*):

Notice the checkbox limiting the search results of 2200+ items to “Available in Library Collection.” This search includes everything on the A – Z List except the databases on the right side of the screen shot. This is an easy way to make a first pass in your research, and find a substantial number of full-text items.

When the box is unchecked, the list of results expands to almost 3000 items.

Can I Look at Individual Databases?

You may prefer to look at some of these databases individually. Let’s look at the catalog and a few databases.

Catalog

Emory & Henry College belongs to a group, or a consortium, of four libraries called Holston Associated Libraries, and they share a common catalog. Sometimes you will hear library staff members refer to the catalog as HAL. All types of items are in our catalog; besides books, there are DVDs, CDs, streaming video,
maps, electronic books, and other electronic resources. You can request items held by the other HAL libraries through the catalog, and have them sent to Kelly Library for pick up. You can search for material in several different ways: by subject, author, title, or keyword. The following screenshot is from a subject search on West (U.S.—history).

What Are These Strange Letters and Numbers?

After you have found books and other material in the catalog, how do you find these things in the library? The call numbers don’t look like what you are used to in your school learning resource center or local public library. That’s because Kelly Library uses the Library of Congress classification system, and your school or public library probably used the Dewey Decimal system. Both classification schemes do the same thing: group library materials together by subject. To help make things clearer, take a look at this tutorial from the University of Rhode Island to help you decipher Library of Congress call numbers. Please do not attempt to contact URI library staff. If you are having a tough time finding items on the shelves, do not hesitate to ask any Kelly Library circulation staff member or reference librarian for help.

In general, most of the circulating items on are on the top floor of the library. The reference collection, periodicals, newspapers, DVDs, CDs, and new books are on the main floor. The ground floor houses the IT Help Desk, an open computer lab (Kelly Lab), the McGowan Lab, maps, microfilm and a government documents collection. The top floor contains most of the circulating collection and special collections. Please feel free to ask any library or IT staff member for directions or help.

Databases

You may prefer to search most of the library’s online resources at one time through E&H OneSearch, or you may prefer to look at some of them separately. Following are some good databases for the subject matter of this class, if you would like to search them individually. The example in the screen shot on the next page is a
search in Academic Search Complete on “frontier myth” AND (America* OR “United States”). Note that it’s the same search as the one in the E&H OneSearch screen shot above.

Some other databases that would be helpful in addition to E&H OneSearch and Academic Search Complete are America: History & Life and JSTOR. Depending on your topic, you might want to look other specialized databases. Please speak with a librarian about this.

In general, most of the circulating items on are on the top floor of the library. The reference collection, periodicals, newspapers, DVDs, CDs, and new books are on the main floor. The ground floor houses the IT Help Desk, an open computer lab (Kelly Lab), the McGowan Lab, maps, microfilm and a government documents collection. The top floor contains most of the circulating collection and special collections. Please feel free to ask any library or IT staff member for directions or help.

WHAT DO YOU DO IF AN ARTICLE IS NOT FULL-TEXT IN A DATABASE?

If you’re looking, for example, in Academic Search Complete, and you find an article that is not full-text, what do you do? Go to our Journals by Title list! An article citation that may not be full-text in one database may very well be full-text in another one of the library’s dozens of databases. For example, in the Academic Search Complete query, there is an article, “Leatherstocking in ‘Nam: Rambo, Platoon, and the American Frontier Myth” in the Spring 1991 issue of Journal of Popular Culture. Does Kelly Library have it? Yes, it’s in the JSTOR periodical database.
What Does “SCHOLARLY” Versus “POPULAR” Mean?

Throughout your college career, you will hear professors and librarians mention popular magazines and scholarly journals. Or, your professors may tell you to rely on scholarly, not popular sources. What does that mean? Generally, articles in popular magazines, such as *Time, Sports Illustrated, Glamour, Psychology Today*, etc. are geared toward a large, diverse audience. Scholarly journals, such as the *American Historical Review, American Journal of Psychology, Mind, International Journal of Ethics*, etc. are aimed at scholars and students in specialized fields. *People* is a magazine about celebrities and popular culture; the *Journal of Popular Culture* studies and analyzes it. Here is a helpful chart on the Skidmore College’s Library website that will help you distinguish the differences between the two types of publications.

*CQ Researcher* (not included in *E&H OneSearch*)

**Documentation and Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is serious academic misconduct. The *E&H Academic Code* clearly states that it is a student’s responsibility to give credit to another person’s exact words or unique ideas. The *Honor Code* reinforces this concept with the statement that one of its elements is “A commitment to abstain from all forms of cheating and plagiarism.” Documenting sources correctly will help you avoid this mistake in your papers and presentations. In high school, you may have already had some experience with the Turabian style of documentation. Your professors will talk to you more in-depth about this issue. Three other common styles you may hear your professors mention are *MLA* (Modern Language Association), *APA* (American Psychological Association) and the *Chicago Manual of Style*. The library has guides for all of them. Also, on the library’s *Research Tips*
page, there are links to several helpful sites. The **Long Island University** and the **OWL** (Online Writing Lab at Purdue University) websites are especially helpful.

**Your Best Resource**

Your best resource in the library is the people who work here! **If you are having problems** locating or using any of these resources, **please ask a library staff member for assistance**. We’re here to help you with your information needs. Kelly Library is open **90+ hours** a week during the regular semester, and reference librarians are available 8am – 7pm Monday – Thursday and 8am-5pm Friday.

**Librarians:** Jane Caldwell, Jody Hanshew, Janet Kirby, and Ruth Castillo  
**Circulation Staff:** Adam Alley, Cindy Goodson, Christine Mitten, and Melissa Phelps.

Another valuable resource available to you on this campus is the E&H **Writing Center** in McGlothlin-Street 233. The tutors there can work with you to improve your papers by giving you advice on grammar, organization and documentation matters; it is not an editing service. For information on operating hours and tutor schedules, call ext. 6723 or check the Writing Center webpage. **Note:** in the Fall 2018 semester, Kelly Library is hosting a WC tutor on the main floor. Also, you may want to consult with **Academic Support Services** in the **Powell Resource Center** at ext. 6144.

One more resource that will help you with your research: Diana Hacker’s grammar and composition book **A Writer's Reference**. It contains an excellent section on doing research—how to set realistic deadlines, form a topic and refine it, etc. as well as giving you some practical tips.

**Remember:** We’re here to help you with your information needs. Please don’t hesitate to ask us for help. You can reach us by:
- calling the Circulation Desk at ext. 6208
- emailing askalibrarian@ehc.edu
- visiting the library in person

---

library.ehc.edu  
askalibrarian@ehc.edu  
276.944.6208  

[https://www.facebook.com/KellyLibrary](https://www.facebook.com/KellyLibrary)