A Guide to
Electronic Resources for History Majors

Introduction

The Mack Library offers many databases to help history majors with their research. These databases provide access to five types of information: biographies, book reviews, journal articles, dissertations, general reference works. The resources for biographies will give you brief overviews or in-depth essays about the lives of historical figures. They can also introduce you to the work of historians, so that you know the background of authors. The book review indexes will point you to reviews that evaluate works of history, so that you know how a book has been received by the scholarly community. Journal articles contain information about historical topics not covered in books, or they give detailed information about a topic that a book on the subject may not discuss. Dissertations contain detailed scholarship by doctoral students on topics for which there might not yet be books or journal articles. General reference works overview historical periods and events, providing an introduction to the period or region being studied.

This guide mentions only subscription databases, that is, databases that the Mack Library pays for to provide to you. In general, these sources are more authoritative, accurate, and comprehensive than anything you will find available for free online. Of course, the Internet contains many other sources that might be useful.

All the databases mentioned in this guide are available from the Mack Library’s website. You can find them listed alphabetically (http://www.bju.edu/library/resources/alphabetical.html) or topically (http://www.bju.edu/library/resources/subject.html). You can also enter the URLs for each database directly into your browser. The databases can be used anywhere on campus, or they can be accessed from home by asking a library worker for a password.

Biography


Gives biographical information on more than one million people throughout history, around the world, and across all disciplines. Combines 250,000 biographies from Gale Group sources with nearly one million biographies from The Complete Marquis Who’s Who. This source is also useful for searching Contemporary Authors to find profiles of historians.


The American National Biography Online is the premiere biographical resource on over 18,000 people from all eras who have influenced and shaped American history and culture. Also included are nine hundred articles from The Oxford Companion to United States History for context.


The Oxford DNB is a collection of 56,521 specially written biographies, which describe the lives of people who shaped the history of the British Isles and beyond. The dictionary is an essential resource for British history.

Book Reviews


This database indexes books reviews in thousands of periodicals, from 1965 to the present. Over five million reviews have been indexed, and about ten percent of the reviews are available in full
text. To find the text of the rest of the reviews check the periodicals print collection or use EBSCO’s A to Z to find the periodical in a database. (For reviews earlier than 1965, you can use the print edition of Book Review Index.)

**Journal Articles**


This database is an index of the historiography of the Americas from the earliest times to the present. It abstracts articles from about 1,700 journals from 1964 to present, and it includes citations for dissertations and book reviews as well. Full text articles are linked to, where available. It is the single best source for finding articles about American history.


A to Z lists all the journals either indexed in the library’s electronic databases or available in its print collection. You can search for a journal by title and find what issues are available in print and which are available in the different databases. You can also search or browse by subject to find a list of all the journals that treat a given topic.


EBSCO is a major provider of databases. By going to the main EBSCOhost page, you will be asked to select which database(s) to search. Check the boxes of the databases that you want to use. The list below describes the databases that are most useful for historians.

**Academic Search Premier.** This multi-disciplinary database provides full text for more than 4,500 journals, including full text for more than 3,700 peer-reviewed titles. It includes many history journals, such as Church History, the Journal of American History, the New England Quarterly, and the American Historical Review.

**ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials.** This database indexes journal articles, book reviews, and collections of essays in all fields of religion, with full text for many of the journals. It covers biblical studies, world religions, church history, and religious perspectives on social issues. The database is valuable for the study of church history.

**MLA International Bibliography.** A bibliography of journal articles, books, and dissertations. Though this source is intended for the study of literature, it is useful to historian as an index to secondary sources on authors, philosophers, and other literary figures.

**Humanities International Complete.** A comprehensive database of humanities content, providing full text of hundreds of journals, books and other published sources from around the world. This database includes all data from American Humanities Index and Humanities International Index, plus unique full text content.

**World History Collection.** A collection of full-text journals covering history around the world.


Gale’s InfoTrac is a collection of databases. By going to the main InfoTrac page, you will be asked to select which database(s) to search. Check the boxes of the databases that you want to use. The list below describes the databases that are most useful for historians.

**Expanded Academic ASAP.** This databases indexes periodicals in nearly every field, including many history journals. (Many journals are indexed in Expanded Academic ASAP and in Academic Search Premier, but the collections do not completely overlap.)
LegalTrac. Use this database to find articles in all major law reviews, law journals, specialty law and bar association journals, and legal newspapers. Included are articles on federal and state cases, laws, and regulations, as well as resources for international, British, and European law. This resource is valuable for the study of legal history.

OneFile / Academic OneFile. The two OneFile databases are general indexes of periodicals in a wide varied of topics, with many of the articles available in full text. Some history journals are included.

Dissertations


This database has the most comprehensive coverage of theses and dissertations from universities around the world. Over two million publications are included, many in full text and all abstracted.

General Reference


The Cambridge Histories series provide authoritative historical overviews of most regions, periods, and themes. Every title in the series is available in full text at this website.


Salem History is the online version of print reference works. The titles include Milestone Documents, The Decades, Great Lives from History, and Great Events from History.

Gale Virtual Reference Library. Gale.
http://find.galegroup.com/gvrl/start.do?prodId=GVRL&userGroupName=bju_main

A database of encyclopedias and specialized reference sources for multidisciplinary research. The history sources are the Encyclopedia of Espionage, Intelligence and Security, the Gale Encyclopedia of U.S. Economic History, the St. James Encyclopedia of Popular Culture, and Fashion, Costume, and Culture: Clothing, Headwear, Body Decorations, and Footwear through the Ages.


These two databases from Gale offer primary sources, timelines, maps and atlases, academic journals, reference works, and links to other primary source collections. Search by subject or person to get an overview. The databases also include helpful subject guides, which gather primary and secondary sources on a given topic.


This database is a gateway to standard reference works about art.


The meaning of words changes, so the historian needs to know what a word meant at a given time. The OED is invaluable for finding the historical meaning of words.


This database is a gateway to standard reference works about music. It is valuable for the study of musicians and music history.
Campus Research. Westlaw.

Campus Research provides full-text of news, legal, and business sources. The news coverage goes back at most a couple decades, but it may be useful for historians of recent America. Its primary use for historians is accessing federal and state statutes and case law. The database has powerful tools for finding cases.