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Resource List – History of Science

(Compiled from material available at the University of Florida,
George A. Smathers Libraries website <http://www.uflib.ufl.edu>)

UF Library

- **Library Catalog:** books, journals, government documents, maps, and video/audio. Be aware that the Rare Book Room and Government Documents collections are best consulted in person. The rare book collection still relies on its card catalog that you can search by author/title and keyword. The government docs are best searched using printed indices available in the area, with the most important being the Congressional Serial Set (starts in 1789). You might also find helpful to use the LexisNexis U.S. Serial Set Digital Collection available online. For the rare books and gov. docs. you should consult the reference librarians on call. They are experts in their collections and will help you find the material.
- **Digital Library Center** and its PALMM (Publication of Archival, Library & Museum Materials) is a resource for digitized historical material on the state of Florida. Note in particular the Florida Natural Heritage section. (<http://palmm.fcla.edu.lp.hscl.ufl.edu/fh/>)
- **Electronic Resources for the Historian:** The first step to learn about the resources available is to familiarize yourself with the History Subject Guide (<http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/cm/historyguide/>). This page contains a collection of the most important databases, online sources and collections for a historian. The history of science subject specialist at the Smathers Library is Vernon Kisling. Check out his subject guide at <http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/msl/subjects/vk/histsci.html>.
- **Dictionaries and Encyclopedias:** These invaluable sources are not online but you should consult them for general reference information. You'll find the call number using the catalog. They are in the reference section of the library. *Dictionary of the History of Science, Information Sources in the History of Science and Medicine, Dictionary of Scientific Biography, An Encyclopaedia of the History of Technology...*
- **Microfilm:** Before the internet there was microfilm. Don't overlook these rich collections. For example Landmarks of Science (1600s-1900s) is a collection of the most important scientific books and journals published. Unfortunately, its index is only available in printed form. The American Periodical Series has copies of principal periodicals and newspapers from 1800-1850.
- **Printed Bibliographies:** For 19th century scientific publications you must refer to the Royal Society's index (*Catalogue of Scientific Papers, 1800-1900*. Cambridge: University Press, 1908.)
- **Good ol' Browsing.** You won't be able to do this online, you'll actually have to go to the library and scan the books in the vicinity of those the catalog selected. Do the same with journals.

UF-accessible Databases

The following databases are the most useful for the historian. UF students have access to them online once you log into the library using your GatorLink ID (Remote Logon). Many offer the convenience of full-text access, but disregard at your own peril sources that require you to go to the library and read the actual journal or book. The list of databases the university subscribes to is always changing. Start with a look at the list of all databases at <http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/quick.html> and start a systematic search using keywords. Keep track of the databases you have searched. Here are some of my favorites:

- **19th Century Masterfile** "is a vast "Index of Indexes", and is the largest resource for historical research prior to 1925."
- **History of Science, Technology and Medicine. (RLG Eureka)** "...describes journal articles, conference proceedings, books, book reviews, and dissertations in the history of science, technology, and medicine and allied historical fields."

- **America: History and Life.** 1964 to date. “covers United States and Canadian history from prehistory to the present.”
- **CQ Electronic Library** (Congressional Quarterly Electronic Library)
- **ArchivesUSA** “is a current directory of 5,581 repositories and over 160,000 collections of primary source material housed across the United States.”
- **Declassified Documents Reference System, US**
- **Digital National Security Archive**
- **Early English Books Online (EEBO)** “will contain over 125,000 titles listed in Pollard & Redgrave's Short-Title Catalogue (1475-1640), Wing's Short-Title Catalogue (1641-1700), and the Thomason Tracts (1640-1661).
- **Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans, 1639-1800**
- **Eighteenth Century Collections Online.** “150,000 books published during the 18th Century.”
- **Francis.** “Contains records from more than 3,000 journals, books, dissertations, and other American and European sources covering the humanities, social sciences, and economics.”
- **GPO Monthly Catalog** -- 1976 to date. Records of the US government’s General Printing Office. “Includes references to congressional committee reports and hearings, debates, documents from executive departments, and more.”
- **History E-Book Project (ACLS).** “Over 500 books of high quality in the field of history. “
- **History Resource Center.** “an integrated collection of primary documents, secondary reference sources, and journal articles covering all areas of U.S. history from pre-colonial times to the present day.”
- **Historical Abstracts.** 1964 to date. “Abstracts and indexes literature covering countries other than the United States and Canada in the subject areas of history, the social sciences and humanities.”
- **LexisNexis Primary Sources in U.S. History.** “Includes Primary Sources in African American History; Primary Sources in American Women's History; Primary Sources in U.S. Presidential History; Guides to Microforms. Formerly known as "History Universe".
- **LexisNexis Academic.** “Full-text documents from over 5,600 news, business, legal, medical, and reference publications.”
- **Library of Congress:** catalogs; THOMAS, American Memory
- **North American Women's Letters and Diaries.**
- **PAIS International.** 1972 to present. “Materials on public affairs from 1972 to date.”
- **ProQuest Historical Newspapers.** “Includes New York Times (1851-2001); Wall Street Journal (1889-1986); Washington Post (1877-1988); and Christian Science Monitor (1908-1991).” Also includes the complete American Periodical Series.
- **Social Sciences Citation Index (In Web of Science)**
- **Academic Search Premier.** “Includes full text for more than 4,550 scholarly publications, including more than 3,525 peer-reviewed. In addition to the full text, this database offers indexing and abstracts for all 8,052 journals in the collection (6,688 peer-reviewed). Coverage spans virtually every area of academic study and offers information dating as far back as 1975.”
- **Expanded Academic ASAP.** “Includes full-text articles from over 2,000 journals. Indexes and abstracts a total of over 3,300 titles; 2,000+ are peer-reviewed. Covers virtually all academic disciplines. 1980 to date.”
- **InfoTrac OneFile.** “Includes full-text articles from over 4,900 journals. Indexes total of over 8,500 titles; 2,500+ are refereed. Covers virtually all academic disciplines. From 1980 forward.”
- **OmniFile Full Text Mega.** “This multi-disciplinary database provides the complete content - indexing, abstracts, and full text - from six of Wilson's full-text databases, and full-text articles from five additional periodical databases available on WilsonWeb. Indexing begins in 1982, abstracts in 1984, and full-text coverage in 1994. Full text from over 1,700 journals; indexing/abstracts from over 3,000.

- **Biography Resource Center** + The Complete **Marquis Who's Who**. "Biographical information on more than 1 million people from throughout history and around the world."
- **Encyclopaedia Britannica Online**
- **Gale Virtual Reference Library (GVRL)**. Database of encyclopedias.
- **NetLibrary**. "Thousands of E-Books covering a full range of subjects."
- **OCLC FirstSearch**. This database contains three of my favorite sources: **ArticleFirst** "Multi-disciplinary index of articles from the contents pages of 12,000+ journals." **WorldCat** Largest database of books in the world. **ECO** scholarly journal articles.
- **ProQuest Dissertations and Theses**. "Dissertation Abstracts (1861 to date) -- The single, central, authoritative resource for information about doctoral dissertations and master's theses."
- **Web of Science**. "Science, Social Science, and Arts & Humanities Citation Databases."

Internet

Approach web sites with a bit of healthy skepticism. Evaluate your sources. The best insurance is to use specialized directories to locate scholarly websites. Use **Subject Directories** to find more specific directories. Here are some tips from libraries at UC Berkeley:¹

- Check out UF library's selection of quality internet sources:
<http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/hss/ref/readyref.html>
- In the Librarians' Index (<http://lii.org/>), Infomine (<http://infomine.ucr.edu/>), or Academic Info (<http://www.academicinfo.net/>), look for your subject as you would for any other purpose, and keep your eyes open for sites that look like directories. Read through the descriptions. Sometimes these resources are identified as "Directories," "Virtual Libraries," or "Gateway Pages." These three directories are small enough that you can read through the results of a search.
- In Yahoo! Search and Google directories, try adding the terms *web directories* to your subject keyword term.
- In About.com, search by topic and look for pages that are described as "101" or "guides" or a "directory." About.com is written by "Guides" who, themselves, often are experts in the sections they manage. Sometimes they write excellent overviews of a topic, although the historical material might be on the "light" side.
- Historians of science should consult the ECHO research center (<http://echo.gmu.edu/index.php>) currently hosted by George Mason University.

And finally a word about **Wikipedia**... Yes, it's a quick way to get "facts" fast, but "buyer beware." I will not allow you to use it to gather material for your in-class presentations and you may not cite from it in your final paper. Go the extra mile (to the library) and get a book that backs up the "wiki" fact.

¹ UC Berkeley Teaching Library Internet Workshops, "Evaluating Web Pages: Techniques to Apply & Questions to Ask," April 6, 2005, accessed May 8, 2005; available from <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/SubjDirectories.html>; Internet.

