

Research Approaches and Resources

Here are some ways to find primary and secondary sources that you can use as evidence for your project.

Suggested Readings

Look for specific books that seem to be important for the topic you're working on.

- ▶ One place to find some are the lists of suggested sources that follow each topic in the research project handout. Remember that these are only suggestions, and some of them may be more available than others.
- ▶ At the very end of each chapter in Spielvogel, there is a section called "Suggestions for Further Reading." These sections mention key books on the subjects covered in the chapter.
- ▶ If there's a primary source except in the Core 2.2 Reader that seems very useful, you might want to track down a fuller version of that writer's work.
- ▶ Finally, once you track down a book that might be useful, look for other, maybe more important books that are mentioned in that book. Is your author talking about someone else as being the authority on the subject you're interested in? If so, look for that person's books. Check the footnotes and bibliography in the book you have for references to other authorities.

Searching at CUNY

The first thing you'll want to do is to see what's available on campus.

- ▶ **BROOKLYN SEARCH.** To do a catalog search, go to the Library web site (see URL at the bottom of the page) and click on Catalog under "Search Our Collections" at the top of the page. Here you can do a keyword search. If you're writing about Napoleon being a Martian, narrow your search by using both keywords ("Napoleon and Martian").
 - Note down the Call Numbers for a few books that look interesting and go to the shelves where those Call Numbers are, and see what's there.
 - Research tip: Browse the shelves around the Call Numbers you find. Most of the time when I am doing research, the book that's most useful to me is not the one that came up in the catalog search, but the one down the shelf from it I found by browsing.
 - Narrow your choices before checking out. Your book might seem to be about your topic but might turn out to have nothing useful for your particular issue. Check the Table of Contents and the Index to see if key concepts for your topic are discussed.
- ▶ **CUNY-WIDE SEARCH.** If the Brooklyn College Library doesn't seem to have what you need, try a CUNY-wide search. In the Catalog search, click on "All CUNY Libraries" on the top right and rerun your search.
 - If a book comes up that seems very useful that's at another CUNY library, you can click on the yellow "Request this Copy" button (It's on the detail screen for any given book). The librarians at the other CUNY school will send the book to Brooklyn College for you to check out.

Inter-Library Loan

If there's a particularly book you know you'll want to use, but it's not available in the CUNY library system, you can still request it by Inter-Library Loan. This way you can have books delivered from non-CUNY libraries. On the main Library screen, click on Interlibrary Loan under "Services We Offer." Note that ILL takes a good two weeks for delivery, so do this early.

New York Public Library

Another source of materials not in the CUNY system is to spend an afternoon at the main NYPL at Fifth and 42nd Street. In the third floor reading room, you can request a book by Call Number and read it or photocopy the sections you'll need for your paper. You can't check out books, but they have resources other libraries do not have. Remember to do your catalog search (see URL below) and check their hours beforehand.

Journal Articles

In addition to books, you may look for articles in scholarly journals. Articles have a narrower focus than books, often addressing only a single specific question. If someone has written on your topic, you may find that article very useful.

- ▶ One of the best ways to do that is to use the online database called JSTOR. From the Brooklyn College Library home page, click on Databases under "Search Our Collections." Click on J and then JSTOR.
- ▶ Once you are in JSTOR, you can do a keyword search like you did in the catalog, and it will return articles that match your search.
- ▶ The nice thing about JSTOR is that it provides the complete text of the article in a downloadable PDF.

Final Reminder about Sources

- ▶ You need at least three sources for your final paper.
- ▶ You MAY NOT USE tertiary sources (encyclopedias or textbooks).
- ▶ Also, you MAY NOT USE internet sources of any kind, with the exception of scholarly articles found in online journals and databases.
- ▶ Use of tertiary or unapproved internet sources will have catastrophic effect on your grade.

WEB ADDRESSES

Brooklyn College Library	http://library.brooklyn.cuny.edu/
Inter-Library Loan	http://dewey.brooklyn.cuny.edu/resources/?view=service&sub_id=75
Link to JSTOR	http://dewey.brooklyn.cuny.edu/resources/?view=databases#J
New York Public Library Catalog	http://catalog.nypl.org/
WorldCat (Multi-Library Database)	http://www.worldcat.org/