America: History & Life

Provided by EBSCO, America: History and Life (AHL) is an index of literature covering the history and culture of the United States and Canada, from prehistory to the present. The database includes citations and links to journal articles, dissertations, primary documents, and book and media reviews.

Basic and Advanced Searching

The Basic Search interface is similar to all EBSCO database interfaces. You can enter the search phrase you have created, either using keywords or Boolean logic, and limit your search with a number of predefined limiters.

AHL also offers an Advanced Search option, located below the search bar, where you can combine terms using Boolean operators and limit your search to specific fields. If
you are not comfortable creating search strings, using the advanced search interface is a useful alternative. You are also able to limit your search to scholarly publications and by publication type and date as well as other limiting parameters.

**Search Tips**

Phrase searching (“xxxx”) is utilized by AHL. However, if the phrase contains a “stopword,” most often an article or preposition, the results will contain variations on the stopword. For example, if you were looking for the movie “In America” you might get results that include “On America,” “About America,” etc. The system will search for plurals and possessives of any singular term entered.

You can use Boolean operators to limit your search either in the Advanced Search tab using the drop down choices or by creating a search string in the Basic Search field.

| Quotation marks “ “ | Searches for words between the quote marks exactly as they appear.  
  *Example:* “information literacy” |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **AND**             | Searches for items where all of the terms appear. More inclusive with fewer results.  
  *Example:* university AND achievement |
| **OR**              | Searches for all the search terms listed. The more terms listed the more results you get.  
  *Example:* information OR literacy OR media |
| **NOT**             | Removes certain words from the search. Allows you to limit result you might not want.  
  *Example:* “information literacy” NOT K-12 |
| **Nesting ()**      | Groups similar terms together for better search results.  
  *Example:* “information literacy” AND (college OR university) |

Wildcards allow you to search for multiple terms at one time.

- The asterisk (*) represents any number of characters including no characters at all at the end of a word. For example, searching environ* will return results containing environment and environmental.
- The pound sign (#) represents any single character (e.g., wom#n)
The question mark (?) represents from zero to nine additional characters. You can include a specific number after the question mark to indicate the maximum number of characters to replace.

Take care when using wildcards as you may not want to use one with all searches.

**CLIO Notes**

Accessible at the top of any page, **CLIO Notes** guide you through subjects in United States history by allowing you to browse through chronologies and brief summaries of significant events and themes in American history. On the main screen you will find a list of majors time periods and events. Each of these is further divided into subtopics that display informative essays and suggestions for further research. Linked subject terms are also provided that will allow you to search the entire AHL database for articles, book and media reviews, and dissertations.

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Search Results

There is a great deal of information contained on the search results page. If you see PDF Full Text or HTML Full Text below an item’s title, you know that document is available to you in full text. Simply click on the link to the article. If a journal article is not available in full text from this database, clicking on the UMM Find It button by or below the article’s title links you to a page indicating where the article is available.

If you determine you want to further limit your search after you see the results you can choose to see only specific types of publications by clicking on the links in the left pane under Source Types. You can also limit the results to Full Text, Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals or by publication date.

Clicking on the title of the article will open up the complete record for the article. This will include all the necessary items need to correctly cite the article including the article title, author(s), source (journal name), and date information. The record will also include subject headings which are terms that describe what the article is about, many of
which are hyperlinked to other articles with the same heading. An abstract (summary) of the article may also be present.

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This button links you to a page indicating where the article is available. In this case, the library does not have a print subscription or availability in another database. Therefore, the article must be requested through ILL.
To continue the process, click the **Find or Request** icon. If you haven’t logged into your university account yet, you’ll need to do so now. Once you’ve logged in, click on the **Interlibrary Loan** icon below the Find or Request tab to be taken to the request form.

The request form will be autofilled in with the citation information, but it’s a good idea to double-check that everything is accurate. You must also check the box at the bottom of the form indicating that you understand the copyright information. Finally, click the Request button at the bottom of the page. You will receive a confirmation that the request was submitted and an email with instructions for accessing the item.