

**COMP 101 – Donna Smith-Raymond**  
**Fall 2009 – Day 2 Assignment**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**FINDING INFORMATION ON A TOPIC – Continued**

**From Day One:** Your Historical Topic/Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of your topic/Event: \_\_\_\_\_

*Popular Magazines – Historical*

Many full-text databases (that is, services that reproduce electronically the articles that originally appeared in paper magazines), do not extend back past 1980. Why?

Thus, when looking for material printed before 1980, we may need to go back to pre-computer methods and use print indexes. You will use a set of green books in the reference stacks which are an index by subject to the articles printed in a particular set of magazines. It is:

Readers Guide to Periodical Literature, call number **Ref AI3 .R48**

Select the volumes that correspond to the date of your event. Look up your event. You may need to be creative in your vocabulary. When you find your event, copy into the box below the citation for a relevant article exactly as written, abbreviations and all:

Now, using the information found at the beginning of each volume, decode it and fill in the blanks below for the same article:

Periodical title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Author listed?      Yes      No      If Yes, Author: \_\_\_\_\_  
Article Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Pages: \_\_\_\_\_  
Anything else included (e.g. illustrations, portrait...) \_\_\_\_\_

Remember day one's assignment when you had to figure out if the library had an article that was listed in the references of your encyclopedia article? Well, refresh your memory, and determine if we have this article for your event:

Does SUNY Potsdam "own" or have access to this?	If Yes, give the name of the service through which it is available (there may be more than one) and the call number if we have it in print	If Yes, now click through to one of the services and search using the article title. In what format was the article available? (circle)
Yes      No		PDF  Text only  Text & graphics

*Popular Magazine Articles and Scholarly Articles – more recent*

SUNY Potsdam subscribes to a great many databases to assist in finding articles. Some are general, some are focused on a particular subject area. From the library home page, click on the subject box and go to the page for your major (which is what again? \_\_\_\_\_). What is the first database listed in the articles section of the page?

\_\_\_\_\_

For today, we are doing a general topic, so we want a general database, one that covers popular as well as scholarly material. From the library home page, click on “general search databases”. What is the first database listed?

\_\_\_\_\_

What does it contain?

Click into it. The first few searches in any new database should be aimed at learning how the database works and locating better search vocabulary, not to locate resources

Why?

The general process for searching a “bibliographic” database is as follows:

1. Try a title or keyword search
2. Some databases have a list of suggested subject words on the initial results page. Look at them and copy the useful ones. If there is no list, then look at a number of potentially useful records and copy down words and phrases from the “subject” area of single records.
3. Go back to the search screen and search BY SUBJECT using the words you learned about as a result of your first search.
4. Be sure to connect terms correctly using AND for different concepts, OR in parens for synonyms and quotation marks for phrases. Example: *Fish and (chips or “french fries”) and health*

**Search for your topic** in this database using the process above until you have a good subject search. By the way, “good” has nothing to do with how many total results you have, it has to do with what percentage of the results are relevant to you.

List some of the useful subject terms here:

When you are satisfied, print out one sheet of your results page and turn it in – this will also show your search at the top. How many total results did this search get you? \_\_\_\_\_

How many results were there (you’ll need to click on the appropriate links) for:

Academic Journals	_____
Magazines	_____
Newspapers	_____

Out of the first ten, how many had the article immediately available? \_\_\_\_\_ And for how many was article linker the only choice? \_\_\_\_\_

Click on the article linker for the first article to see how it is available and list all ways here:

## *Books*

Searching a library catalog for books works by exactly the same process as searching for articles EXCEPT that books tend to cover broader topics than articles so you must try to consider your search vocabulary in that light. So while nothing may result from a search using the words “invasion and Normandy”, we may very well have something on “world war II and battles” which would contain information about the invasion of Normandy.

Go to BearCat and search for your topic. You will need to look at individual records to see what the appropriate “subject” terms are.

List some of the useful subject terms here:

When you finally get a “good” search, print out and turn in the results page – this will also show your search at the top.

Choose a relevant book from the list and look at the record: Copy the following information:

Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Author: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Subject Heading(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Now click on the “View Circulation Status” link at the top of the record:

Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
Call Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Item Status: \_\_\_\_\_  
Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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What was the most useful thing you learned from this assignment?

What was the most tedious?

What suggestions do you have?