Sources for US History

Jane Rawson

Vere Harmsworth Library
Summary

• **Finding publications**
  – Books, journals, journal articles, theses, electronic resources

• **Primary sources**
  – E-resources, printed publications and microfilms in Oxford
  – Freely available on the web
  – Special collections and archives in Oxford and elsewhere
Finding secondary sources

Do you know what you’re looking for?

Yes

What type of publication?

- Book or book chapter
- Journal/journal article
- Thesis
- Other

No

- SOLO
- Bibliographic database
- Google Scholar
Finding books

- **WorldCat**
  - [worldcat.org](https://worldcat.org)

- **COPAC**
  - [copac.ac.uk](https://copac.ac.uk)

- **British Library**
  - [explore.bl.uk](https://explore.bl.uk)

- **SOLO**
  - [solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk](https://solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk)
    - All libraries/collections

Enter your search here

- **Search Everything**
  - All libraries/collections
  - Articles
Finding journals & journal articles

- Journals
  - Print
  - Electronic
  - Bibliographic databases
- Journal Articles
  - SOLO: Articles
  - Google Scholar
- Search SOLO
  - SOLO or e-Journals A-Z
  - (SOLO or) Databases A-Z

Useful links
- Bodelian Libraries Home Page
- Digital.Bodleian
- LibGuides
- ORA
  - e-Journals A-Z
  - Databases A-Z
  - Special collections catalogues
  - Chinese Catalogues
  - Subjects & Libraries
  - User Guide

Enter your search here

Find it @Oxford
Finding dissertations & theses

Oxford
- SOLO
- ORA
  ora.ox.ac.uk

UK
- ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (UK & Ireland)
  (via SOLO)
- EThOS
  ethos.bl.uk

US
- ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (Global Full Text)
  (via SOLO)
SOLO search tips: before you search

DISCOVER THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD'S WORLD-CLASS LIBRARY RESOURCES

Enter your search here

Use with caution!

More search options

Search Everything
- All libraries/collections
- Articles
- Online Resources
- Physical Resources (not Online)
- All Bodleian Libraries
- Alexander Library
- All Souls College Library

SOLO status
- New April 2019: renew selected loans
- New April 2019: citation trail links in brief results
- New April 2019: improved facet display

SOLO community
- The latest feedback, discussions on our conversations with the SOLO classic update
  - You said...we did
  - What am I searching?

NEW SEARCH  BROWSE  MAP SEARCH  HELP  TAGS

SIGN IN
Limit your search by library or ‘All collections’ or ‘Articles’

Use to be more specific in what you are searching
- Search by material type – journals/theses etc…
- Restrict to search by exact phrase or starts with
- Search title/author/subject etc only
SOLO search tips: after you search

- Change sort order to view by date oldest or date newest.
- Refine after you search to limit results.
- Click on a title to get further details, including location and shelfmarks.
- Click to view alternative editions (including print/electronic).
More SOLO: using subjects

Use to find other books with the same subject heading.
America: History & Life
Finding primary sources

Published sources
- Print
- Microform
- Eresource/database
- Online/web

Unpublished/manuscript
- Where is the original/archive?
  - Oxford
  - UK
  - US
- Is there a reproduction available?
  - Print
  - Microform
  - Eresource/database
  - Online/web
Online Guide to US History Sources
libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ushistory

Finding books and journals
Use SOLO to search for books, journals and databases held in Oxford libraries (Bodleian, faculty libraries and college libraries).

Use author and/or title searches to find books:

author = carwardine + title = lincoln.

Use subject searches if you don't know the title or author:

subject = United States - History - Civil War, 1861-1868

Key journals via OU ejournals
- American Historical Review
- Early American Studies
- Journal of American History
- Journal of American Studies
- Journal of the Early Republic
- Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era
- Massachusetts Historical Review
- William & Mary Quarterly

Finding journal articles
Don't search for journal articles in SOLO Oxford Collections! If you know the journal it was published in, search by journal title. If you don't know where an article has been published in, the best way to locate journal articles by a particular author or on a particular subject, is to use a bibliographical database.

1. America: History & Life (c. 1450-current)
2. Bibliography of British & Irish History (useful for colonial American history)

Many journal articles may be found in SOLO Articles & More, but this is not comprehensive. If you cannot find the article you are looking for in Articles & More, try searching in one of the bibliographical databases.
Think strategically...

- **When?** Timeframe (NB copyright)
- **Where?** Location/geographic focus
- **Who?** People – individuals, organisations, groups
- **Why?** Aspect – social, political
- **What?** Type of source – newspapers, letters, memoirs, official publications, images, audio-visual, ephemera, statistics/data

... but also laterally – where else?
Search tips

IT’S DANGEROUS TO GOOGLE SOLO

• **Trial and error!** Get to know the database/index
• What will bring back the right results? What terms does the database/index use?
• Try alternatives: historic terminology, spelling (US/UK)
• **Always look for advanced search options, especially limiters**

TAKE A LIBRARIAN WITH YOU
Use of Oxford e-resources

• Oxford subscribes to a wide range of e-resources, e-journals and e-books to support your research and study. Use of these is governed strictly by licence agreements.

• Remember:
  – E-resources may be used for study and research but NOT for commercial purposes
  – You may NOT share your password or pass content from e-resources to anyone else
  – Systematic downloading or viewing of excessive amounts of data is strictly forbidden

• Failure to comply may result in:
  – Referral to the University Proctors
  – Publishers withdrawing content from the whole university
Books as primary sources

• Via SOLO/Databases A-Z
  – Early American Imprints I: Evans (1639-1800)
  – EEBO (1475-1700) and ECCO (1701-1800)
  – The Making of the Modern World (1450-1914)
  – The Making of Modern Law (1800-1926)

• In the library:
  – Print – search SOLO; pre-1920 books in VHL stack
  – Microforms
    • Travels in the Old South, New South, West & South west

• On the web (generally pre-1922):
  – Google Books, Hathi Trust (www.hathitrust.org), Internet Archive (www.archive.org)
  – Making of America (http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/moagrp/)

Note: if no URL given for an e-resource, then it's purchased / subscribed () Use SOLO & Databases A-Z to find it.
Newspapers

- Early American Newspapers (microfilms, e-access from British Library)
- 19th Century US Newspapers
- Historical Newspapers
- Chronicling America (chroniclingamerica.loc.gov) (1789-1963)
- African American Newspapers, series I (1827-1998)
- Ethnic American Newspapers from the Balch Collection (1799-1971)
- Ethnic NewsWatch (1959-)
- Nexis UK, Factiva (c. Last 20 years)
- Elsewhere in the UK and on the web eg. Google News Archive (news.google.com/newspapers), newspapers.com (subscription required £)
Magazines and Periodicals

- American Antiquarian Society Historical Periodicals Collection (1684-1912)
- American Periodicals (1740-1940)
- Periodicals Archive Online
- News magazines
  - Print in BOD: Time, The New Yorker, Newsweek, LIFE, Fortune, The Atlantic, Saturday Evening Post…
  - Factiva, Business Source Complete, ABI/INFORM, Nexis
- Reader’s Guide to Periodical Literature, 1890-1982
- Black Journals (microfilm) (early 20th C)
- Making of America (http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/moagrp/) (19th C); Hathi Trust (www.hathitrust.org)
Official Papers, Government Publications etc.

• General and finding aids
  – US Government Publications guide: libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/us-govpubs
  – North American legal resources guide (Bodleian Law Library) libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/law-usa
  – Monthly Catalog (Print in VHL (1933-) and online at catalog.gpo.gov (1976-)
  – govinfo (www.govinfo.gov) (mainly 1990s- but increasingly also older materials)
  – HeinOnline

• Colonial State Papers/Calendar of State Papers
• Early State Papers eg Virginia, Massachusetts, South Carolina, Pennsylvania (VHL and via Early American Imprints)
Official Papers, Government Publications etc.

- Congressional publications
  - Journals and Papers of the Continental Congress (www.loc.gov/collections www.fold3.com/browse)
  - American State Papers (1789-1838)
  - US Congressional Serial Set (1817-)
  - House & Senate Journals
  - ProQuest Congressional: Congressional Record & predecessors; Congressional Committee Hearings
  - Roll Call (VHL xJK 1 .C6635) (1969-)
  - Congress.gov (www.congress.gov) and Govtrack.us (www.govtrack.us)
Official Papers, Government Publications etc.

- Presidential Papers
  - Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents
  - Public Papers of the Presidents, 1929-
  - Published papers (search SOLO)
  - Online/microfilm collections (Library of Congress)
  - American Presidency Project (www.presidency.ucsb.edu)
  - Presidential Libraries (www.archives.gov/presidential-libraries)
  - Miller Center Presidential Speech Archive and oral histories via millercenter.org/the-presidency
- American Founding Era Collection (ROTUNDA)
- Departmental publications – search SOLO or online/in Serial Set
- Other papers of statesmen – online, microfilm (particularly 19thC), published
Official Papers, Government Publications etc.

• Foreign Relations
  – Foreign Relations of the United States (1861-)
    https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments
  – Diplomatic Instructions and Despatches (19th C)
  – Treaties: Serial Set, US Treaties & other international agreements
  – Digital National Security Archive (1945-) 
  – US Declassified Documents Online (1945-) 
  – CIA FOIA Electronic Reading Room
    www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/
  – Foreign Broadcast Information Service (1974-1996) 
  – Confidential Print North America (1824-1961) 
  – Papers of British Ambassadors to the US/British statesmen
    (Bodleian Special Collections)
Censuses, Statistics, Data

• Decennial census (1790-)
  – Reports: print volumes in VHL (early censuses in Serial Set); online via census.gov/library/publications.html
  – Data: Social Explorer, 1790-
  www.socialexplorer.com
  – Full census records: partial 1860, 1900-1930 via www.fold3.com/browse/ (under non-military records); 1940 at 1940census.archives.gov

• Other census reports (thematic, non-population) www.census.gov/library/publications.html
Censuses, Statistics, Data

- Historical Statistics of the United States
- Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1878-: Print in VHL, online at www.census.gov/library/publications/time-series/statistical_abstracts.html
- Datasets: from ICPSR www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/ or data.gov
- Opinion polls:
  - iPoll (1933-)
  - Gallup Analytics (1933-) – ‘Gallup Brain’
- Bodleian Data Library: www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/data
Biographical sources

• American National Biography
• World Biographical Archive
• Who’s Who in America
• Biographical Directory of the United States Congress (bioguide.congress.gov)
Papers, Archives, Special Collections

• In Oxford
  – VHL microfilm collections
  – VHL Elections Archive [link to website]
  – Weston Library [link to website]

• Finding aids
  – A guide to manuscripts relating to America in Great Britain and Ireland VHL Ref. E 178 .C74 1979
  – ArchivesHub (UK) [link to website]
  – ArchiveGrid [link to website]
  – SNAC [link to website]
  – National Archives Catalog (US) [link to website]
  – Guide to visiting US archives [link to website]
Archives Online

- Virginia Company Archives
- Early Encounters in North America
- The American Revolution from a British Perspective, 1763-1783
- North American Immigrant Letters, Diaries, and Oral Histories
- North American Women’s Letters and Diaries
- The War of 1812: Diplomacy on the High Seas
- Migration to New Worlds, 1800-1924
- Slavery in America and the World: History, Culture and Law [via HeinOnline]
- Electing the President: Proceedings of the Democratic and Republican National Conventions (1832/56-1988)
- The American West
- African American Studies Center
Archives Online

• VHL’s Diigo page (www.diigo.com/user/vhllib)
• Library of Congress (www.loc.gov/collections)
• State digital libraries and Historical Associations (www.digitalstatearchives.com/)
• Hathi Trust (www.hathitrust.org)
• Flickr Commons (www.flickr.com/commons)
• Digital Public Library of America (dp.la)

Tips for finding sources on the web
blogs.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/us-studies/2012/04/27/finding-primary-sources-on-the-web-for-us-history-some-tips/
For more help

• Online guide to US History Sources (libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ushistory)
• US Studies Resources at Oxford blog (blogs.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/us-studies)

jane.rawson@bodleian.ox.ac.uk