

ACC Library *Research Guide*

AMERICAN HISTORY

Primary & Secondary Sources



Primary sources are first-hand historical accounts and records created by the participants and observers of events.

Letters, Diaries, Speeches, Autobiographies, Treaties, Census Data

Secondary sources include books and journal articles that explain history through commentaries and interpretations of primary sources.

Biographies, Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, Textbooks, Commentaries

ACC Library homepage arapahoe.edu/lrc.

- Books:** *Aquabrowser*: visual representation with word associations
Traditional Catalogue: author, title, subject, browse, Boolean search
ebooks: NetLibrary, click Online Books (must register on ACC computer first).
- Journals:** *Proquest*: Index to 2,000 journals, many full text and peer-reviewed
EBSCOhost: Various databases with index to over 6,000 journals
Infotrac: General reference center with 27,212,889 articles updated daily
- Newspapers:** *Newsbank*: 30 newspapers from across the country
- Other databases:**
CQ Researcher: Single-themed 12,000 word report on current issues
Fact on File: Issues and Controversies in American History
Encyclopedia Britannica: Access to over 700 articles

Hardcopy Periodicals:

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <i>Journals:</i> | American Heritage | Colorado Heritage |
| | Current History | National Geographic |
| | Smithsonian | Vital Speeches |
| <i>Newspapers:</i> | Colorado History Now | Historic Denver News |

Library of Congress Subject Headings - E and F

E - United States

Colonial history (1607-1775)
The Revolution, 1775-1783
Revolution to the Civil War, 1775/1783-1861
Nineteenth century
Early nineteenth century, 1801/1809-1845
Mexican War, 1846-1848
Middle nineteenth century, 1845/1848-1861
Slavery in the United States
Civil War period, 1861-1865
Late nineteenth century, 1865-1900
Twentieth century
Later twentieth century, 1961-2000
Twenty-first century

F - United States local history

New England
Atlantic Coast
The South
Gulf States
Old Southwest
Old Northwest
The West
Rocky Mountains
New Southwest
Pacific States
Territories of the US
Insular possessions of the US
Central America and other affiliated countries

Reference Books—ACC Collection

Album of American history / James Truslow Adams, editor in chief. REF E178.5.A48 v.1-6
American decades / edited by Richard Layman. REF E169.12.A419 1994
American heritage cumulative index : v. 6, no. 1-v. 33, no. 6, Dec. 1954-Oct. 1982. REF E171.A5 1983
The American Heritage encyclopedia of American history / general editor, John Mack Faragher. REF E174.A535 1998
The Annals of America. REF E173 .A793 2003 v.1-3
The Civil War dictionary : Maps and diagrams. / by Allen C. Northrop and Lowell I. Miller. REF E468.B7
A dictionary of contemporary American history: 1945 to present/ Stanley Hochman; Eleanor Hochman. REF E174.H6 1993
Dictionary of American history. REF E174.D52 1976
The encyclopedia of American facts & dates / Gorton Carruth. REF E174.5.C3 1987
Encyclopedia of American history / edited by Richard B. Morris, associate editor, Jeffrey B. Morris. REF E174.5.M847 1976
Great events from history: American series. Edited by Frank N. Magill. Associate editor: John L. Loos. REF E178.3.M25 v.1-3
The timetables of history : a horizontal linkage of people and events / Bernard Grun. REF. D11 .G78 1991

AMERICAN HISTORY

Primary & Secondary Sources



Keywords and Search Terms

Time Periods: 18th Century
19th Century
20th Century

Subject (general): Economic conditions
Social life and customs
Politics and government

Subject (specific): Popular culture
Technology

Railroads
Child labor

Events: Mexican War, 1836-1838 (Mexican-American War)
Civil War, 1861-1865 (American Civil War)
World War, 1914-1918 (World War I)
World War, 1939-1945 (World War II)
Depressions - 1929 (Great Depression)
Watergate Affair, 1972-1974

Geographic: Southwestern states
Southeastern states
Northwestern states
Northeastern states
Southern states
Great plains

When searching in a library catalog (title or keyword search) or in an Internet search engine it is recommended that you include both "united states" and "america" in your search phrase. For example, ("united states" OR america) AND history AND technology.

Online search strategies for using keywords and subject terms

Use the following types of **search terms**:

city, country, continent, time period, event, war, battle, name of person, group of people, social movement, religion

Examples of **keywords** found in titles, subjects, notes:

Revolutionary War, Civil War, Abraham Lincoln, Colonies; Boston Tea Party, Bay of Pigs, Puritanism, Iraq War,

To find **primary sources**, combine above terms with the following:

autobiography, biography, documents, journals, letters, narrative, personal narratives, reports, sources, speeches.

Examples: *civil war sources, American revolution documents, Witches diaries, Truman speech*

GOOGLE TRICKS:

Put phrases in quotes, use the + as the Boolean operator AND, the — as the Boolean operator NOT , () for OR

After your search term add Site:.gov or .edu to limit your search results to government or educational sites

Use Define: to get a definition of a word. Example: Define: primary sources

Use Link: with a web address to find out who links to a particular website. Good evaluation tool

DIRECTORIES: Organize website into subject areas by reputable groups

Yahoo Directory <http://dir.yahoo.com/>

Google Directory <http://www.google.com/dirhp>

Internet Public Library <http://www.ipl.org>

Librarian's Internet Index <http://www.LII.org>

Web sites

American Memory, <http://memory.loc.gov> A gateway to rich primary source materials relating to the history and culture of the United States. The site offers more than 7 million digital items from more than 100 historical collections.

Historical Maps of the United States, www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/histus.html Historical maps of the United States concerning Native American tribes, exploration, settlement, and territorial growth dating back to the 16th Century.

United States Historical Census Data Browser, <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus>

The data presented here describe the people and the economy of the US for each state and county from 1790 to 1970. Each decade is searchable by various demographic and economic characteristics.

Making of America, [www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp](http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/moa), <http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/moa> Making of America (MoA) is a digital library of primary sources in American social history from the antebellum period through reconstruction. The University of Michigan collection contains 8,500 books and 50,000 journal articles with 19th century imprints. The Cornell University collection provides access to 267 monograph volumes and over 100,000 journal articles.

Heritage Colorado, Colorado Historic Newspaper Collection, www.cdpheritage.org Heritage is a database that brings to the people of Colorado the special collections and unique resources of Colorado's archives, historical societies, libraries and museums in digital format. The Colorado Historic Newspaper Collection provides full-text access to 44 Colorado newspapers dating from between the years 1859 and 1880.

Best of History Web Sites, www.besthistorysites.net Best of History Web Sites contains links to over 800 history-related web sites that have been reviewed for quality, accuracy, and usefulness.