

Getting Started on Research - History Day

To succeed in solving your History Day “case,” you are going to become a detective. The old-fashioned, pre-CSI kind of detective, digging for information to solve the mystery of how your target event or person explored, encountered or exchanged ideas, places, or people.

The tested strategy is to think of something in the target person’s life or a part of the event that would be recorded, would make news, would be noticed by others. Each file, story, record, article you find is a clue; each clue may lead to another. A general biography tells you the person served in the Army >> you search military records. Military records tell you he was buried in San Diego >> you search San Diego newspapers and find an obituary.¹ The obituary mentions he was a dock worker after the Korean War. You look at the ILWU² web site, find their telephone number. You phone and ask if he was a union member >> you find out. . . .

HOW TO START

Your first thought is to jump on the web and look at **Wikipedia**. If you do, treat Wikipedia articles only as background. Read carefully and be cautious. Remember, no one is sure who wrote the Wikipedia article. Did the writer have a point of view? Did they leave out information that didn’t support that point of view? Did they add information to make the story sound better? Go to the bottom of the article and see if sources are cited. Can you find those sources? Who wrote those articles? When? Does the source article have sources?

Google Scholar <http://scholar.google.com/> lets you quick start a search of scholarly literature across topics and sources. The search looks at materials from academic publishers, professional societies, universities, and other scholarly groups. If the search leads to a document controlled by “JSTOR,” you can access the article through the Hawaii State Library databases (see below).

Libraries and other places to dig up information:

A good place to start your History Day project is at your school library.

Libraries have online **catalogs** of books and serials (what librarians call magazines) so you can plan your trip and make good use of your time. They also have databases and indices that will help you find information on your project topic. The two major, state-wide library systems in Hawai’i are the Hawai’i State Library and the University of Hawai’i Library.

¹ An obituary is a short biography written after a person’s death, usually published in a newspaper in a city where the person was known or a magazine of interest to people who would have known the deceased (examples: a union newsletter, or a scientific journal).

² International Longshore and Warehouse Union

Hawai'i State Library

You'll want to know where your own neighborhood library is located.

At the **Hawai'i State Library** (HSL) web site <http://hawaii.sdp.sirsi.net/client/default>

Click on **Locations** then on **Library Branches**

Look for your Island, then a city or place name near your house.

When you click on a library's name it takes you to a page with photograph, phone number, address, and hours for that library.

You need a library card to check out books and use many on-line databases, but **without a card** you can look at the catalog and you can read books inside the Library. For information about getting a card go to

<http://hawaii.sdp.sirsi.net/client/default>, look for "How To" in the list on left side of screen; click on that. "[get a library card; determine PIN](#)" is usually at the top of the list. Click & follow instructions. You need a parent's signature to get a library card.

Public libraries have a **reference desk** in addition to the counter where you check out books. Ask the reference librarian for help. At your neighborhood or school library ask the librarian if there is a **bibliography** on your topic. A bibliography is a recommended reading list on a topic (example: "Statehood").

Hawaii State Library Hawaiian & Pacific section has a web site with helpful links http://hawaii.sdp.sirsi.net/custom/web/hawaii_and_pacific/index.html including a list of bibliographies

http://hawaii.sdp.sirsi.net/custom/web/hawaii_and_pacific/bibliography.html

Look for books **on the general subject** you're researching. These tell you what is generally known about your subject.

The author of a book or article on the general topic has done research for you!

Find the list of sources or bibliography at the end of the book or article

This list tells you where the author got the information to write that book or article.

Try to find some of those books, articles, or primary sources in the library catalog. Some of those books / articles may also have bibliographies. Keep following the sources of each book/article until you get as many primary or first person stories as you can.

****** If the general book has NO bibliography or list of sources you want to notice that and be cautious and evaluate what is written there.

Hawai'i State Library continued:

On the web the **Hawai'i State Library** has a **catalog, databases, and indices.**

Online Catalog <http://ipac1.librarieshawaii.org/#focus>

You can see catalog records of the books, CDs, and DVDs in all the libraries in the state. Without charge, you **can order any book³ sent to your neighborhood library** where you can check the book out.

When you find a book remember to **start your bibliography** by copying and pasting the key information from the catalog entry into a document on your computer. If you aren't able to copy & store the catalog information, print it out or use the ancient method of recording the information on a piece of paper using a pen or pencil.

It is also a good idea to keep track of places, books, web sites you looked at, but that did not provide useful information. You don't want to forget you looked there and waste time going back to the same place.

Databases (Electronic Subscriptions)

<http://www.librarieshawaii.org/Serials/databases.html>

The Hawai'i State Library has access to approximately 50 databases, journals, newspaper indices, and a ton of other sources on many topics. Some are directed at students. A few databases only work if you are **IN** the public library (example: MarciveWeb DOCS). A few only allow one user system-wide at a time (this has to do with how much the State Library paid for the use of the database). If you are told "not now," try later. Most databases need a library card number to connect to them. Examples include Academic Search Premier, and JSTOR.

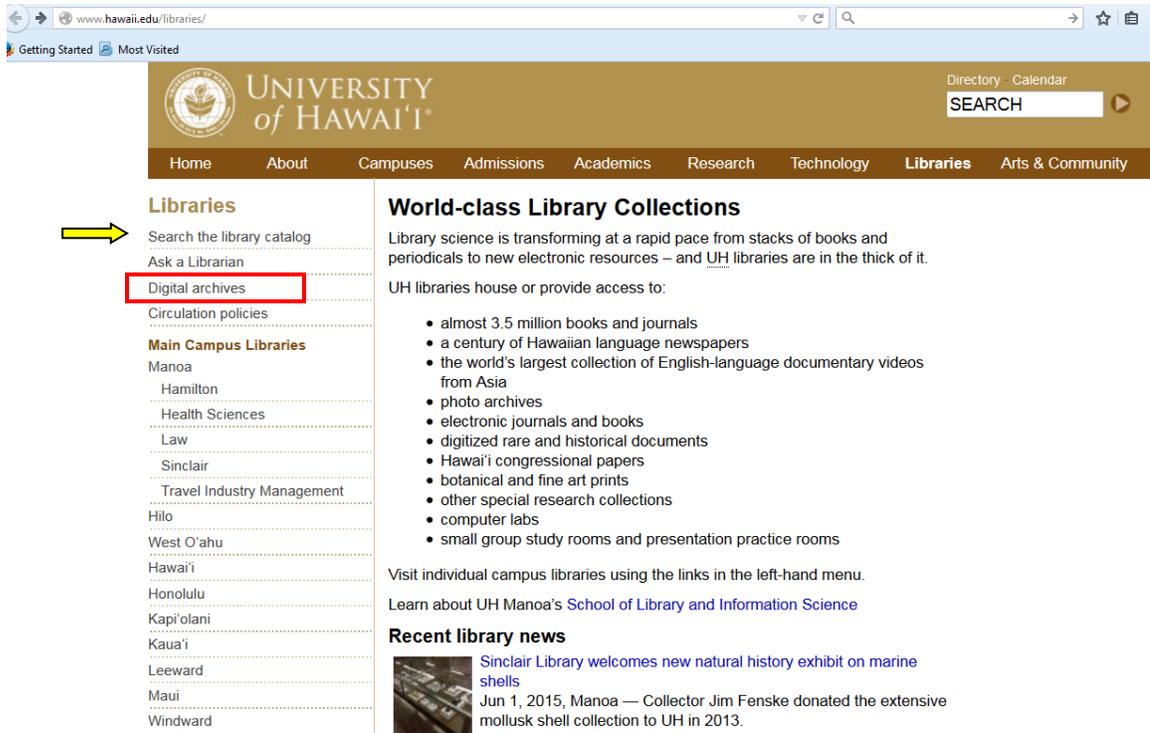
³ Reference books, and non-book items like microfilm and bound magazines are not eligible to be lent library to library.

University of Hawai'i Library System

University of Hawai'i Library O'ahu <http://library.manoa.hawaii.edu/>

University of Hawai'i Library Hilo <http://guides.library.uhh.hawaii.edu/home>

Explore the University of Hawai'i web site for many helpful research tools and information about the University and Community College libraries.



At the **UH Libraries** web page: **Search** (yellow arrow below) accesses cataloged materials from all islands and all UH system libraries. Also provided is quick access to Digital Archive collections (red box).

NOTE: although the library has removed the past years' Construction Alert information box from their web site, the UH Mānoa campus continues to have active construction / renovation work, especially some buildings around the Library. Expect noise, parking challenges, blocked sidewalks, etc.

Home | University of Hawai'i at Mānoa | library.manoa.hawaii.edu/index.php

Getting Started | Most Visited

UNIVERSITY of HAWAII at MĀNOA LIBRARY

Home Services Research Support About the Library Give to the Library

OneSearch Mānoa (Learn more...)

Search books, media, articles, e-books, and Voyager

Research Support

- Electronic Journals / eBooks
- ~~Online Databases / Indexes~~
- Digital Collections
- ScholarSpace
- UH Catalog (Voyager)
- UH Libraries
- Other Libraries
- Subject Guides
- Scholarly Communication
- More Tools...

Services

- Your Account/Renew Books
- Course Reserves
- Purchase Suggestions
- Loans from Other Libraries
- For Faculty & Instructors
- Library Instruction
- English 100 Students
- Study Rooms
- Computing
- More Services...

About the Library

- Hours
- Directions
- Maps (Floorplans)
- Virtual Tour
- Staff Directory
- Departments/Collections
- Library Exhibits
- Work at the Library
- Calculate the Library's Value
- More About the Library...

Selected Resources ▾ Ask Us ▾ Frequently Asked Questions ▾

At the UH Mānoa campus page you can access the Voyager Catalog (yellow arrow above): <http://uhmanoa.lib.hawaii.edu/webvoy.htm>

Also special collections and tools. Scholar Space has many useful electronic copies of journals, documents, newspapers, etc. in open access.

UH continued:

The screenshot shows the Hawaii Voyager library website. The top navigation bar includes links for 'New Search', 'My Account', 'My List', 'My Searches', 'My Library', 'Online Resources' (circled in red), 'HPJI' (boxed in red), 'Mobile', and 'Help'. Below this is the 'Basic Search' section with tabs for 'Basic', 'Advanced', 'Subject', 'Course Reserves', and 'New Books and Media'. A search input field is on the left, and a 'Search by:' dropdown menu is on the right, listing various search methods like 'Keyword', 'Title Keyword', etc. A yellow arrow points to the search input field. At the bottom, there are 'Search' and 'Reset' buttons, and a 'Search Tips' section. The footer contains copyright information and a link to the mobile site.

In addition to catalog entries, **HPJI** (red box below) connects you to the **Hawai'i Pacific Journal Index** that will help you find many articles about Hawai'i in magazines.

“Online Resources” (red circle below) gives you access to many databases, but most databases now require a UH student ID number for searches. Check in your circle for a family member or friend who can help you in your searches.

UH continued:

FAST START

The University of Hawai'i, Mānoa, Hamilton Library, microfilm collection has a great fast start to searches: the Hawaii Newspaper Agency clippings morgue. A newspaper morgue is a **file of clippings** organized by topic and name, and added to over time. The Honolulu Advertiser and Honolulu Star-Bulletin morgue was copied onto microfiche (small cards of microfilm). You can print from this microfiche, or save to a thumb drive at some viewers. Ask for help to start.

There is no paper or online index, rather, the morgue is **self-indexing**. Each microfiche is filed by a title typed at the top (example: Poindexter, Joseph or Pearl Harbor Shipyard). There are two files: "Biographical," indexed by person's name, and "Subject." When searching the morgue strain your brain to think of all the names or words the people making the file might have used to describe your topic at that time⁴. One film card may hold 1, 5, or 30 articles on your topic published from the 1920-1970s. This can save finding and accessing dozens of reels of microfilm. Be sure to get bibliographic information for the article.

The Library of Congress Chronicling America digital newspapers now fill this role in part. HOWEVER, not all issues of Hawai'i papers are online. AND a morgue is organized by TOPIC. Online digital searches, however, are by word. You must know the topic well to decide the words to search on or get 10,000 hits.

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's CENTER FOR BIOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH <http://www.hawaii.edu/biograph/> provides many links to resources on biography (the 'technical term' is life writing).

Biographical sources are at http://www.hawaii.edu/biograph/res_linkstp.html

OTHER LIBRARIES & ARCHIVES

For a review of archives and libraries **in Hawai'i** see the guide "Primary Resources in Hawai'i" and "Directory of Historical Records Repositories." Both are in the Hawai'i History Day web site Student Toolkit.

You may need resources at libraries too far away to visit. If the story happens **outside Hawai'i**, find a **historical society, archive, or library** in that state or country. Find most library catalogs world-wide with a search engine entry "state name" archives, library, or "historical society."⁵ Many archives or historical societies have time lines, or "Today in our state in history" postings. Many agencies have primary documents on-line. Example: Indiana Historical Society <http://www.indianahistory.org/our-collections/digital-image-collections/lincoln-collections> has on-line many Abraham Lincoln images and documents.

⁴ Example: In 1950 there would not be a card titled "African Americans in Hawaii"; the word would be Negro. Voting Rights might be under Suffrage. Know the era; know the words.

⁵ Example: "New Jersey" library or Iowa "historical society"

Other Libraries continued:

The **Library of Congress** links to libraries worldwide (too many to count). Go to <http://www.loc.gov/z3950/> - roll down to see an alpha list of libraries by name.

The **U.S. National Archives** <http://www.archives.gov/> and the **Library of Congress** <http://www.loc.gov/index.html> both have databases and primary sources [manuscripts] on-line.

Get the real thing. Original documents online at the National Archives tell stories <http://www.ourdocuments.gov/content.php?flash=true&page=milestone> (examples: [Jefferson's Secret Message to Congress Regarding the Lewis & Clark Expedition \(1803\)](#) and [President Andrew Jackson's Message to Congress 'On Indian Removal' \(1830\)](#)). Online exhibits that can help jump-start your thinking are at <http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/> [example: [The National Archives: Documented Rights](#)]

The Library of Congress web site includes a topic option <http://www.loc.gov/topics/> with a heading for “American Indian History”, “Immigration & Ethnic Heritage,” and others that may be helpful. Also explore the Exhibits tab <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/all/> for topics such as “The African American Odyssey: A Quest for Full Citizenship,” and other subjects.

If your topic involves a **non-US location**, an unexpected source of starter information is the **Central Intelligence Agency** of the United States. The CIA maintains a **World Factbook** on the countries of the world with map, flag, and information on people, government, economy, etc.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>

Also online are a Suggested Reading List” and some PDF publications.

<https://www.cia.gov/library>. . [Remember this web site has a point of view]

An important resource may be the US State Department web site <http://www.state.gov/> with tabs on Policy Issues, Countries & Regions, Economics Energy & Environment, and more. Also look at the State Department’s Office of the Historian tab <http://history.state.gov/> for tabs like “Historical Documents.”

To get cross perspective – try the equivalent web site for the ‘other side’ of the issue you are researching. What does the XYZ country’s equal to the state department web site say on this program / topic ????

Other branches of government also have digital archives.
The U. S. Navy has extensive records at the Naval History and Heritage
Command web site <http://www.history.navy.mil/>

Find the US Army at <http://www.history.army.mil/>

Note: Information was correct when collected, but time passes and so do web addresses
Please report errors and omissions to Anita Manning manninga001@hawaii.rr.com.