

## **AN INITIAL GUIDE FOR RESEARCH**

Look in the textbook. Very often textbooks contain basic bibliographic information.

Consult a generalized encyclopedia for background reading.

Move to a specialized encyclopedia once you learn more.

Review a local online library catalog (PALY, Palo Alto). Search for topics if you are unclear on leading author names. These are the books that are most accessible to you right away.

Look to online databases from other, larger libraries (Stanford, SJSU).

Be sure to browse the nearby shelves once you arrive at a quality library and have found a particular book on your subject.

Review government databases, like the Library of Congress.

Review the NY Times database. Look at relevant LibGuides and other specialized databases.

## **STATE THE PROBLEM AS A QUESTION**

Try stating your topic as a question. For example, if you are simply interested in Dr. Samuel Burchard's remark about "Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion," you might pose the question, "What effect did the phrase, "Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion" have on the election of Cleveland as president?" Or simply, "What role did religion play in Cleveland's election?"

## **EVALUATE WHAT YOU HAVE FOUND**

Not all the sources you find will be ones that you will ultimately select. If you have found too many or too few sources, you may need to narrow or broaden your method. Have you only looked at one kind of source? One period? Is your question too broad? Too Narrow? Check with a reference librarian or your instructor.

## **CITE WHAT YOU FIND USING A STANDARD FORMAT**

Give credit where credit is due; cite your sources.