Searching STL for Information: A Guided Exercise

For this exercise, imagine that you are doing a report about Human Rights. Since this topic is so general, you first want basic information that will serve as foundational knowledge from which you can then narrow and focus your report.

1. Finding basic information about your topic in the STL reference collection

   a. Using the STL online catalog, identify the total number of reference sources that are about any aspect of subjects relevant to the topic (i.e., human rights):

      Total # reference sources found ________________

   b. Select any one reference book about your topic and provide a proper citation for it. [For help see Citation & Style, <http://lib.newpaltz.edu/assistance/citation_guides.html>].

   c. Note its location:

      Location:

      On which floor of the library will you find that book [refer to Library Locations handout]?

      _____ Main Floor (Top level)
      _____ Middle Floor (Concourse level)
      _____ Ground Floor (Bottom level)

   d. Note its call number

      Call#:

   e. If you browsed items on the shelf near this book, what Library of Congress Classification Subject subclass would you be browsing through? [For help see STL Library Collections: Library of Congress Classification Outline for this call # at <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/cpso/lcco/lcco.html>].

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2. Finding expanded information from Opposing Viewpoints (Gale)

For this part of the exercise, imagine that you now want varied information, beyond reference sources, about the more specific subject of Civil Rights. The Opposing Viewpoints database offers such social issues information. From the STL home page, click on the Databases button and then, from the QuickLinks pull-down menu, go to the Opposing Viewpoints database homepage. From the list of popular topics on that page, click on the link for Civil Rights. Then,

- Ignoring the results for the moment, click on the link Civil Rights from the “Subject terms” list in the left-hand column of the page
- Now, stay with the results for that general subject or click on one of the Narrower Terms or Broader Terms or Related Terms that interests you.

Specify the narrower, broader or related term you selected _______________________

a. Looking at the tabs across the top of the results for the subject you selected, note the following:

   Total number of Viewpoints essays about the topic ________
   Total number of Reference items about the topic ________
   Total number of Magazine articles about the topic ________
   Total number of Academic Journal articles about the topic ________
   Total number of Primary Source items about the topic ________
   Total number of Statistics items about the topic ________
   Total number of Multimedia items about the topic ________

[Note that some subject terms may be too specific to yield results for all of the items above. For those items, the number would be zero. However, to see the kinds of information you would get with those items, move back to a more general subject term and look at the items under the different tabs.]

b. Select one of the items from your results lists and give a proper citation for that item.
   [For help, click on the database’s link to “How to cite” listed below the item.]