

# Using the Online Catalog-U.S. History



**northwestern**  
STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Reference Division  
Watson Memorial Library  
Northwestern State University  
Natchitoches LA 71497

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The **Online Catalog** provides access to books, periodicals, audio-visual materials, government documents, etc. available in the library. A quick search version is available on the library homepage and a more extensive version is on the menu under "Library Catalog."

## **Finding Biographies:**

To locate biographies in the catalog, use the subject search and type in the last name and then the first name in the search box. This will give you materials about a person.

## **To find materials on a particular topic, you have three ways to search:**

- 1) **Keyword or words and phrases**—type in the topic that you for which you are looking and press enter. Remember that the computer is just searching the words. For example, the terms "civil war" may bring up the United States Civil War, the English Civil War, or Spanish Civil War.
- 2) **Title Search**—type in terms you would expect to see in the title. This is a very specific search and you may not find what you need.
- 3) **Subject search**—this is the most specific and sometimes the most difficult. To be successful at subject searching, you will need to know the Library of Congress subject heading for your topic. A copy of the subject headings is available in the reference room on top of the short bookcase in the middle of the room in 5 red books. For example, topics in United States history are listed chronologically:

United States History—Colonial Period, ca. 1600-1775

United States History—Revolution 1775-1783

United States History—Civil War, 1861-1865

**Note:** When looking at catalog records, be sure to notice locations:

GovDoc is the Government Documents Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

Louisiana Collection, Rare Books, or Spec-Coll is the Cammie

Henry Research Center on 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

REF at the end of the call number indicates the Reference Room

Stacks is the circulating book collection on 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor