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Federated Search Option American Social History Online

Preliminary Findings from Usability Interviews

Historian's Search Preferences

- Specific to general

“I don't use the internet until I've developed a framework for teaching a class and then I incorporate primary sources into the outline to validate points and engage students.”
- Search and browse within Collections
- Used every date feature available on the site and even asked for additional features.
- Look for controlled vocabulary to choose from, especially for narrowing search.



WELCOME!

Aquifer American Social History Online - Find and use 19th and 20th century primary resources from unique historical digital collections.

- search diverse digital content from 175 American Social History research [collections](#)
- find more than 514,708 digitized objects in 9 formats, including images (photographs and [postcards](#)), and pamphlets, journal articles, maps, sheet music, videos, data sets, political cartoons and [oral histories](#)
- collect, manage, and cite the digital sources you find with [Zotero](#)

Aquifer American Social History Online is a research project of the [Digital Library Federation](#) and is focused on finding, gathering, and collecting distributed and disparate scholarly content in American Social History.

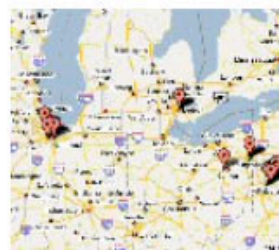
Featured Collection



UC Irvine, Special Collections and Archives: Rober

This collection comprises materials accumulated during Walsh's involvement with the Overseas Refugee Program for Southeast Asian refugees in the Philippines and Thailand, and also materials that he collected regarding the education and resettlement of

What's New



Visualize Your Search Using Map View

Aquifer American Social History Online now offers another way to visualize the results of your search. The first 100 records from your search will appear on a map of the United States so that you can view the geographic distribution of your search. The titles of the records will appear to the right of the map. Access to Map View is

Browsing Shortcuts

Subjects
Places
Times
1600's (279 records)
1700's (13571 records)
1800's (115300 records)
1900's (361078 records)
2000's (1307 records)

- Users began by either browsing by date or limiting by date after browsing collections or using the quick search box.
- Begin with very specific keywords (begin narrow and broaden only if no relevant hits).



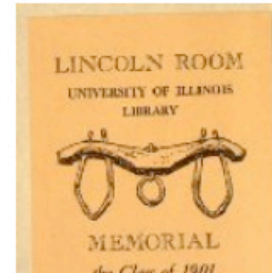
1893 Chicago World Columbia Exposition
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
[Academic library]

[Go to Collection](#) [Browse Records](#) (30)
[View Details](#) [View Headings](#)



The 1906 San Francisco Earthquake and Fire Digital Collection
California Digital Library [Academic library]

[Go to Collection](#) [Browse Records](#) (8,961)
[View Details](#) [View Headings](#)



Abraham Lincoln, Slavery, and the Civil War
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign [Academic library]

[Go to Collection](#) [Browse Records](#) (641)
[View Details](#) [View Headings](#)



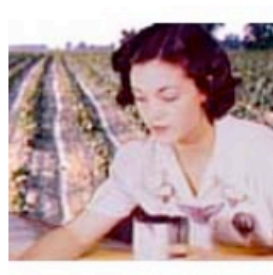
African American Photographs Assembled for 1900 Paris Exhibition
Library of Congress [National Library]

[Go to Collection](#) [Browse Records](#) (480) [View Details](#)
[View Headings](#)



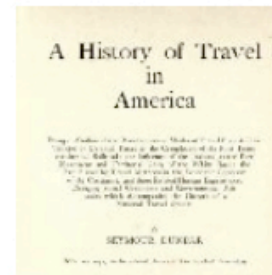
Albany Library: Historical Photograph Collection
California Digital Library [Academic library]

[Go to Collection](#) [Browse Records](#) (537)
[View Details](#) [View Headings](#)



America from the Great Depression to World War II: Color Photographs from the FSA-OWI, 1939-1945
Library of Congress [National Library]

[Go to Collection](#) [Browse Records](#) (1,615)
[View Details](#) [View Headings](#)



American History
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign [Academic library]

[Go to Collection](#) [Browse Records](#) (43)
[View Details](#) [View Headings](#)



American Notes: Travels in America, 1750-1920
Library of Congress [National Library]

[Go to Collection](#) [Browse Records](#) (254) [View Details](#)
[View Headings](#)




Thumbnails

- Thumbnails on results pages loved (and commented on) by all and used for determining usefulness of resource.
- “The great strength is the visuals. There are lots of ways to get text, but not a lot of easy ways to get images.”
- Good look and feel - very inviting and useful way to determine value of site quickly. “

Additional Resources of Possible Interest

Academic Search Premier  37879 items

Scopus  44486 items

Web of Science  13262 items


Historical Abstracts  5038 items

America: History and Life  8998 items

UIUC Catalog  10000 items

Google Book  Google is Blocking our Access items

Amazon Book  126989 items

Google News  50970 items

Internet Archive Books  738 items

Some resources may have access restrictions unless you are at an institution with a subscription.

Immigration statistics: effects of immigration upon the United States and reasons for further restriction 

Immigration Restriction League (U.S.) Immigration Collection of Prescott Farnsworth Hall (Harvard College Library) Harvard University Library Virtual Collections: Immigration to the United States (1789-1930)

tag this! | full record | mods record (xml)

Do our states desire further immigration?: what classes of immigrants do they want? 

Immigration Restriction League (U.S.), creator Immigration Collection of Prescott Farnsworth Hall (Harvard College Library) Harvard University Library Virtual Collections: Immigration to the United States (1789-1930)

tag this! | full record | mods record (xml)

Bulletin of information for immigrants 

California, Commission of Immigration and Housing., creator Harvard University Library Virtual Collections: Immigration to the United States (1789-1930)

tag this! | full record | mods record (xml)

The law and regulations of Canada respecting immigration and immigrants 

Immigration Act Canada, creator Canada, Superintendent of Immigration. Harvard University Library Virtual Collections: Immigration to the United States (1789-1930)

tag this! | full record | mods record (xml)

Report on Fresno's immigration problem: with particular reference to educational facilities and requirements 

Fresno's immigration problem California, Commission of Immigration and Housing., creator Harvard University Library Virtual Collections: Immigration to the United States (1789-1930)

tag this! | full record | mods record (xml)

Immigration: statistics and charts illustrating the proposals of the National Committee for Constructive Immigration Legislation 

National Committee for Constructive Immigration Legislation, creator Harvard University Library Virtual Collections: Immigration to the United States (1789-1930)

tag this! | full record | mods record (xml)

Disposal report of the Board of Immigration to the General Assembly of the State of Iowa 

Federated Search Feature

- “You know what I love – Google Books is beginning to digitize the key text sources for American History that are published. When I was putting together a reading packet for my students I was able to download many of the sources from Google books.”
- “I actually use Amazon books in a number of different ways – to remember a quote, check a footnote, or to check the way someone’s talked about a topic.”

Federated Search continued...

- “I like this. Amazon has changed my whole life. That, and programs like Ancestry.com that allow you to search newspapers across the country with keyword searches. It means I can really quickly access a much broader source.”
- “You might want to divide the secondary and primary sources in this.”
- “This could be useful in teaching undergraduates about the difference between primary and secondary

Use (or not) of tools

- Don't use tagging services
- Don't use Zotero but asked for the services Zotero provides (need the ability to download image and metadata.)
- Don't use Collectus
- Don't use OpenID
- Would use the Timeline and Maps view for teaching

Future tasks for improvement of the ASHO site:

- Homepage must be redesigned so that users can determine the usefulness/reliability of the site within a few clicks:
 - I'm going to spend about 5 minutes looking at a new source and the main thing I want to see is its breath and depth.”
 - “With all digital collections, I'm like – what's in there?”
 - “I would probably ignore all this stuff on the home page and go right to the collections.”

- Quick search box too small/not in a prominent place and use is not clear (does it search individual collections or the ASHO web site?)
- Current subject clouds not useful because terminology is too general and not grouped together by related topics (Ex: campaign can mean presidential campaign or military campaign).
- Unclear terms need to be disambiguated (Ex: *subject*, *topic* for winnowing facets; *name* under advanced search drop down box choice.) Users would like a popup boxes to explain limiting search facet terms
- Users want suggestions for controlled

value of Aggregated Collections

- “I think there’s merit to providing collections that have an intellectual coherence.”
- “Here’s my dream resources – the LoC digitized materials, the Google books stuff like these documentary histories that have been digitized, and you put them together and say here is the key edited primary sources that are digitized for Early American History....suddenly you have a resource that early American historians will find useful. All this stuff exists out there already, but it’s not organized.”
- “I’m less bothered by if they’re organized by collection than if they’re organized by theme.”
- “Good way for undergraduates to develop topic from within, especially since the resources are readily available.”
- “This is neat stuff – I got 40 hits and I didn’t expect any. I

Value of Facets for Browsing and Winnowing

- “This is good if you were interested in a narrative of events for a particular year”.
- “You could use this for post hole research – if you wanted to check sources for 1900, then 1910. You don’t worry about the in between years, you’re looking for characteristics over time.”
- “What I really like is being able to browse by time, by decade and by individual times within decades. You could even add months to this feature”.
- “Historians usually know when someone died so