Conducting Public History:

What Sources are Available and Where Do I Find Them?

2014 Ohio Local History Alliance

Annual Meeting & Conference

October 4, 2014

OHIO HISTORY CONNECTION

Tutti Jackson

Reference Archivist

Research Services

Museum and Library Services Division

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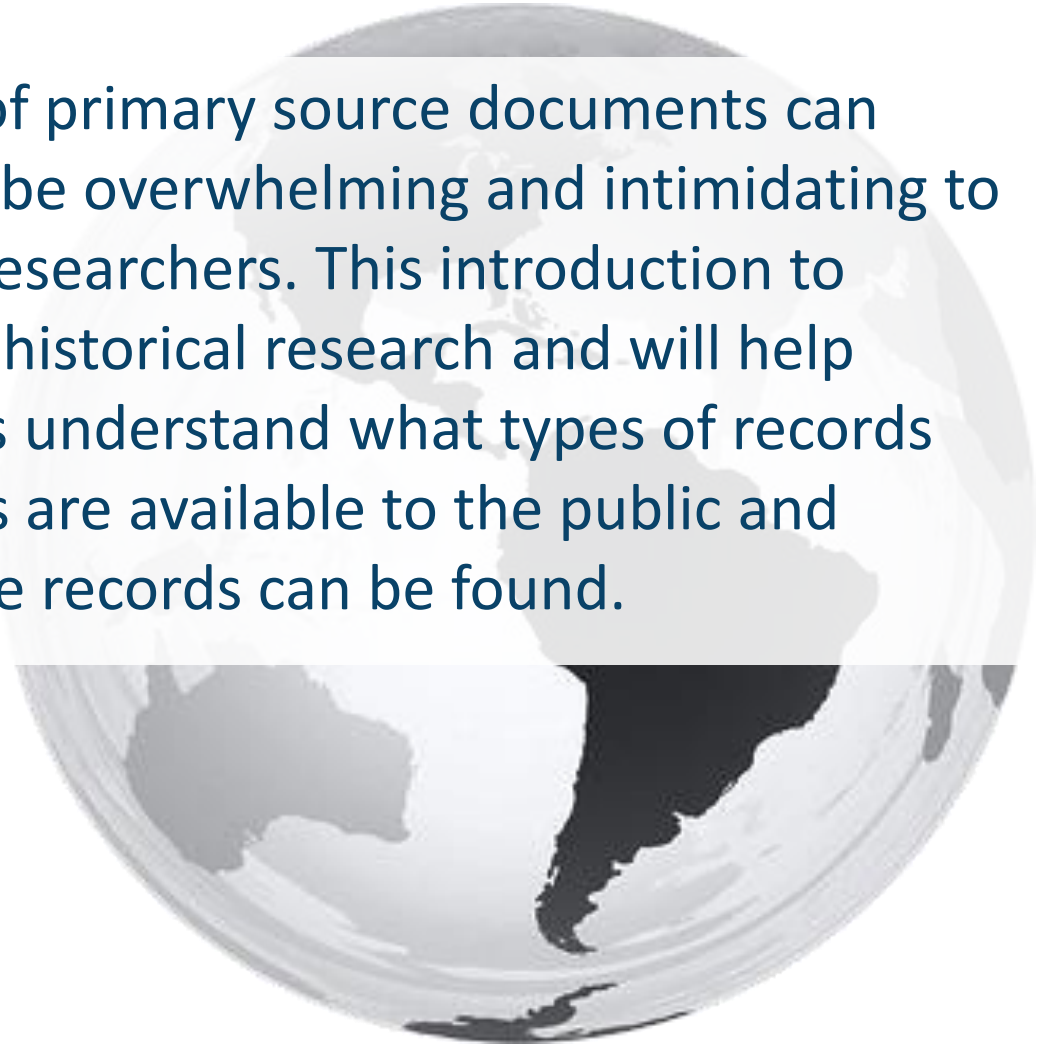
Session Description

- The world of primary source documents can sometimes be overwhelming and intimidating to beginning researchers. This introduction to conducting historical research and will help participants understand what types of records and sources are available to the public and where those records can be found.



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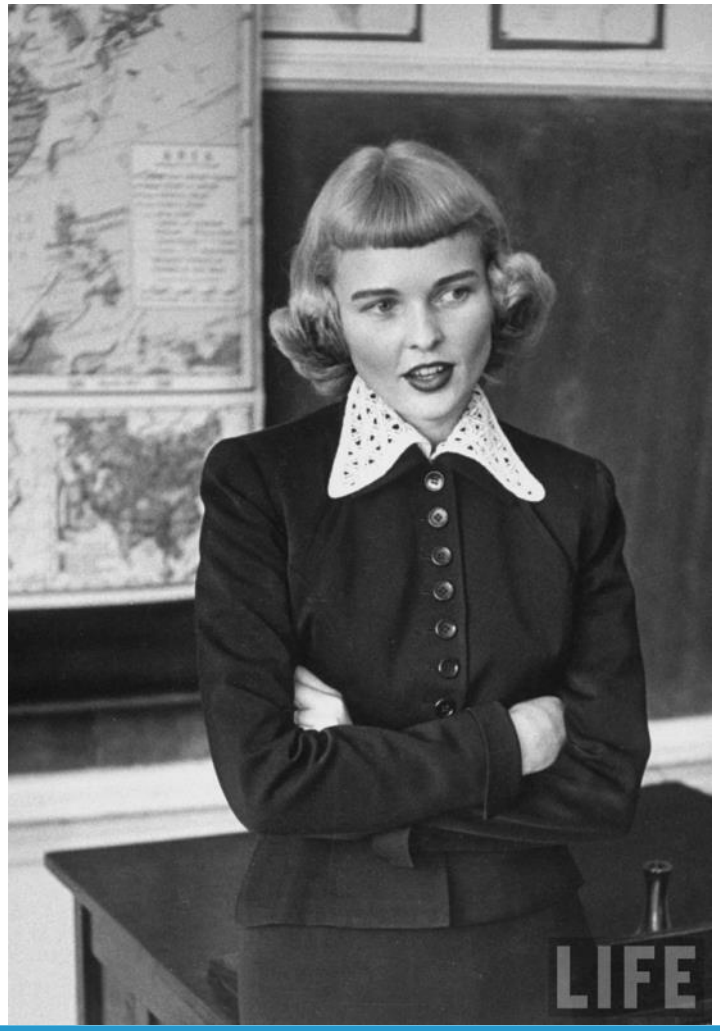
Goals



- Research 101
- Skills and Strategies
- (Re)Searching Online
- Super Resource Round-Up

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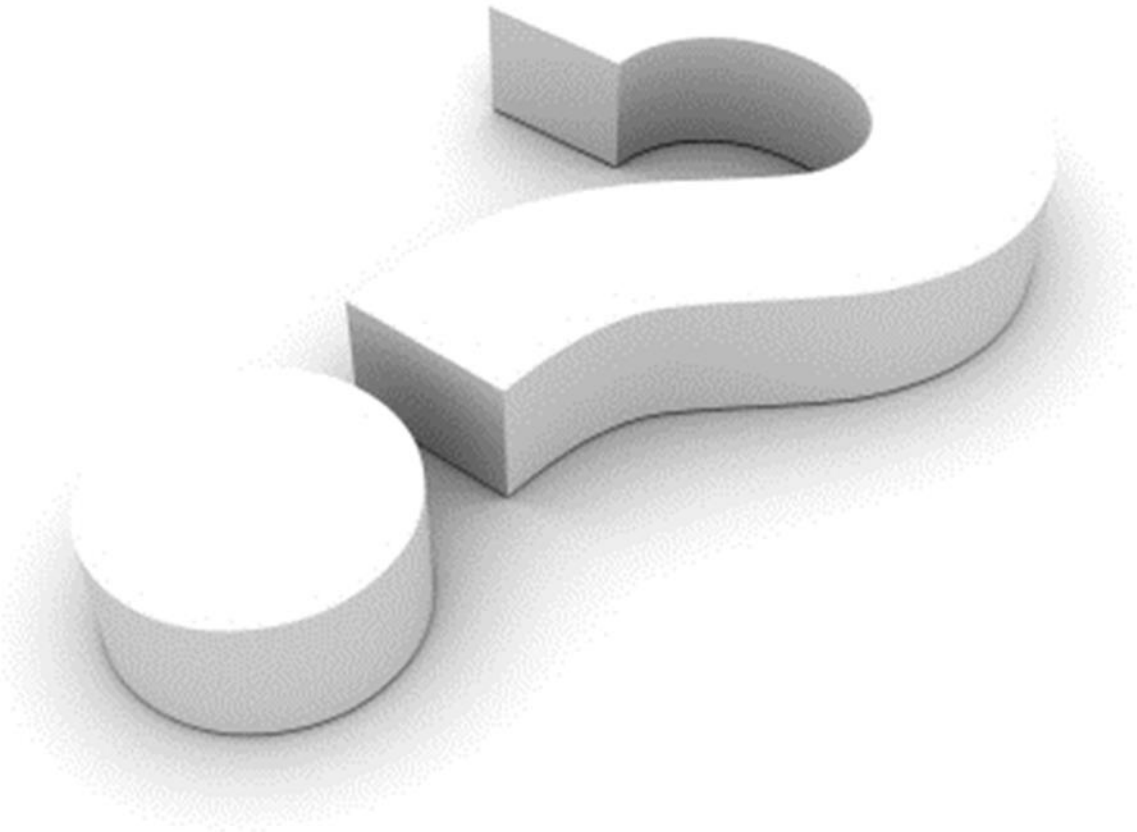
What is Research?



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Research is the quest for knowledge

- Noun and a Verb
- From the French *recerche*, from *recercher*, to seek, to search again

Research holding the torch of knowledge (1896) by Olin Levi Warner
Library of Congress, Thomas Jefferson Building, Washington, D.C.
Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

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Scientific Method

Aristotle door panel. National Academy of Sciences, Washington, D.C. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.

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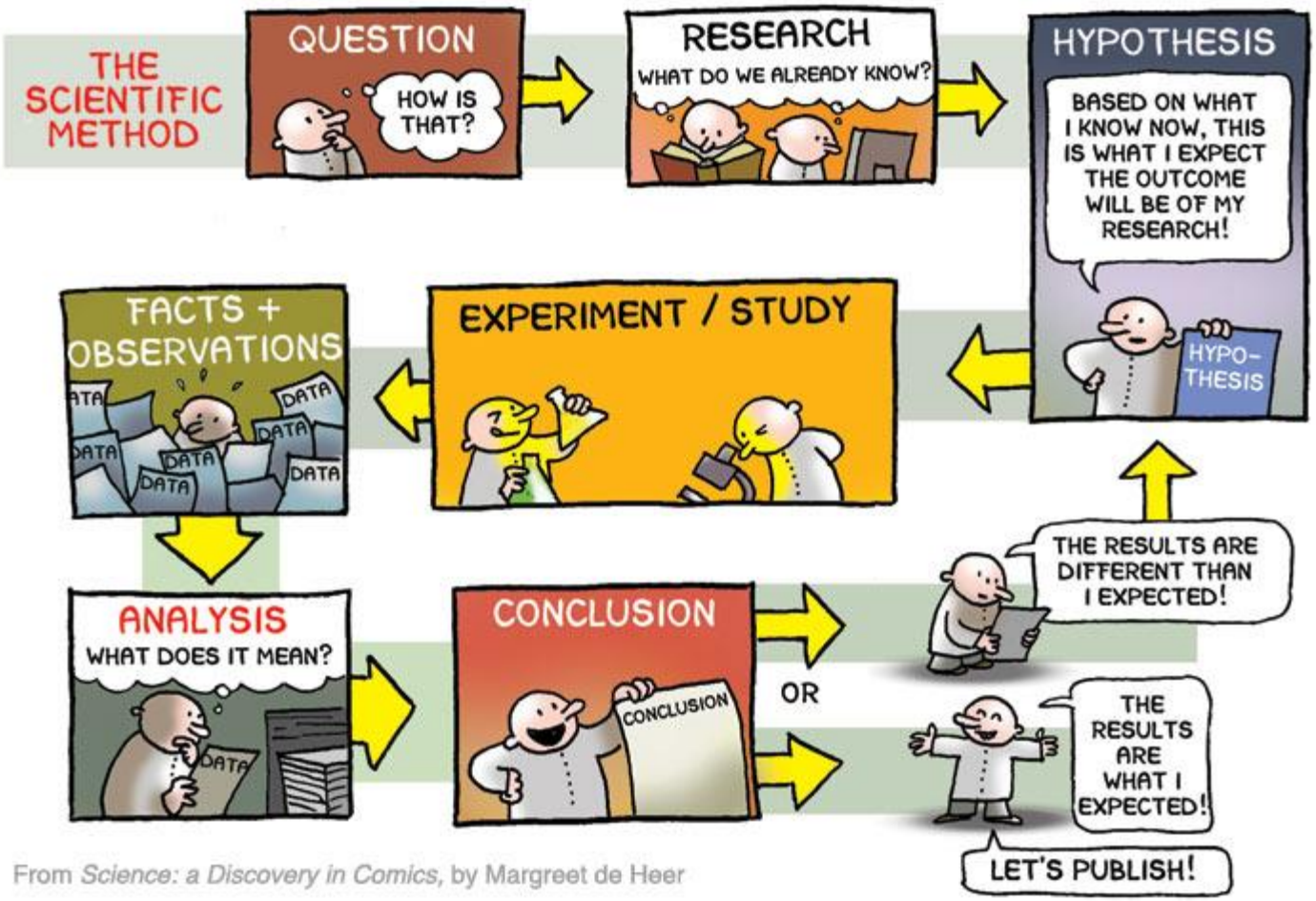
Scientific Method



http://nbmpub.com/blog/2013/05/06/the-scientific-method/

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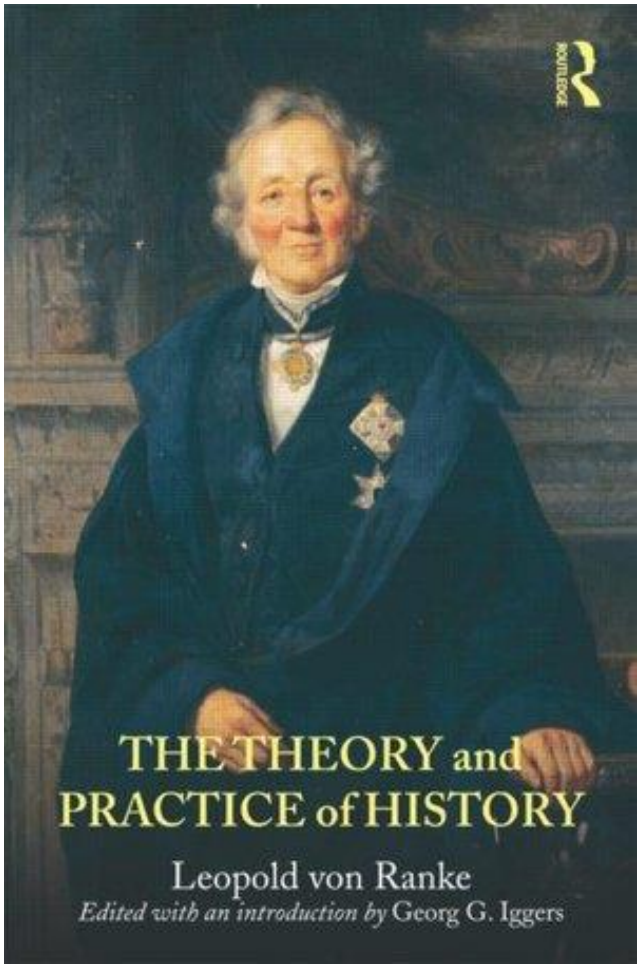
Historical Method



- Construction of a narrative
- Synthesis of knowledge
- Dependent on archival research
- Analysis of primary sources
- Question the source

"I see the time approaching when we shall base modern history, no longer on the reports even of contemporary historians…but rather on the narratives of eyewitnesses, and on genuine and original documents."

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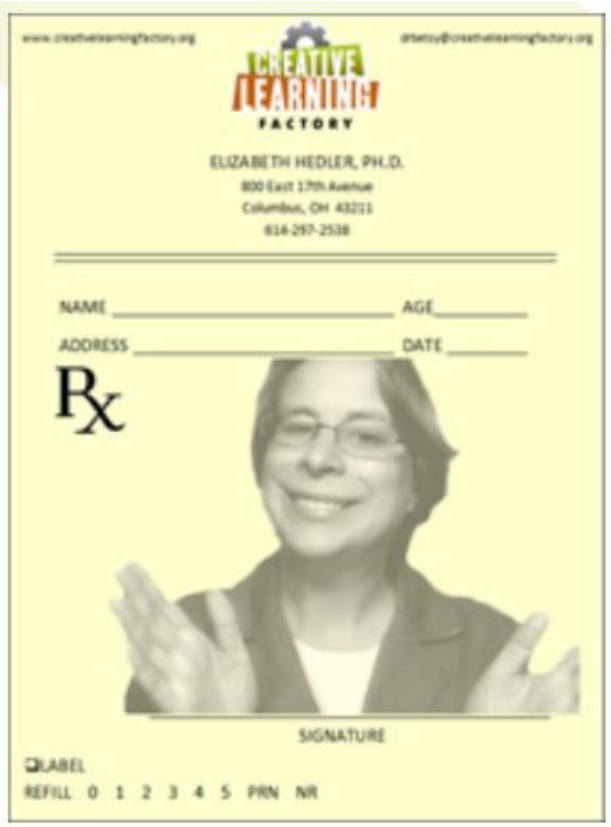
Historians have been practicing 21st century skills since the 19th century.



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Primary Sources

- An artifact of its time
- A first-hand account of a historic event

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Secondary Sources

- A commentary or analysis of a historic event based on primary sources

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Secondary sources tell us

- Context
- Who is that?
- What's going on here?
- Clues to find out more

CDV of Circus Performer Col. Noah Orr, "The Ohio Giant" Cowan's Auctions

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Public History

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Skills and Strategies

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Research is a Process

1. Identifying a Research Problem
2. Reviewing the Literature
3. Specifying a Purpose and Research Questions
4. Collecting Data
5. Analyzing and Interpreting Data
6. Reporting and Evaluating Research

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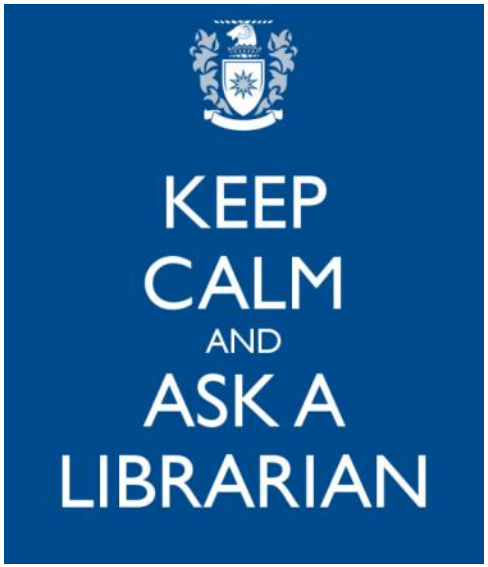
Creswell, J.W. (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (3rd). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. 2008.

Research Skills

- Plan Your Research Approach
  - Are there sources for my topic?
  - What are the best sources?
  - What keywords will I use?
  - Ask a librarian!



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Research Like a Librarian: Using "Big6 Skills" for Better Grades!
http://www.nypl.org/blog/2013/11/18/research-using-big6-skills-better-grades

Research Skills

- Location of Sources
  - Where are the best sources?
  - Can I access them?
  - Can I access them online, or will I need to visit the library?
  - Is there an index?

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Research Like a Librarian: Using "Big6 Skills" for Better Grades!
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Research Skills

- Explore, Evaluate and Extract
  - Read, consider, reread
  - Does the source support my thesis?
  - Take notes
  - Keep track of citations

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Research Like a Librarian: Using "Big6 Skills" for Better Grades!
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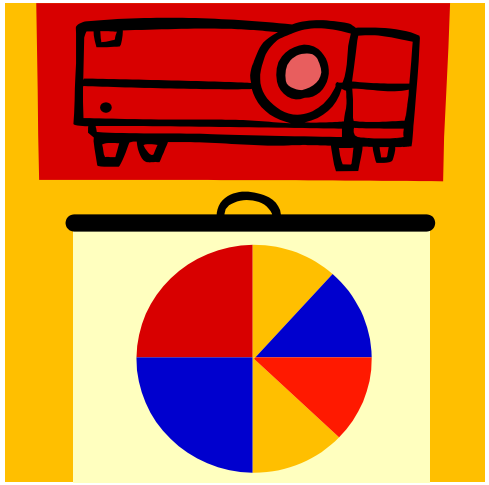
Research Skills

- Synthesize
  - Organize multiple sources
  - Draw conclusions
  - Revise!
  - Present information



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Smarter (Re)Searching:

Tips and Tricks

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(Re)Searching Online

- There are an estimated one trillion Web pages*

*Kelly, Kevin. 2010. *What technology wants*. New York: Viking.

(Re)Searching Online

- Visible Web (Good information vs. Good enough)
- Invisible Web (not indexed by Google)

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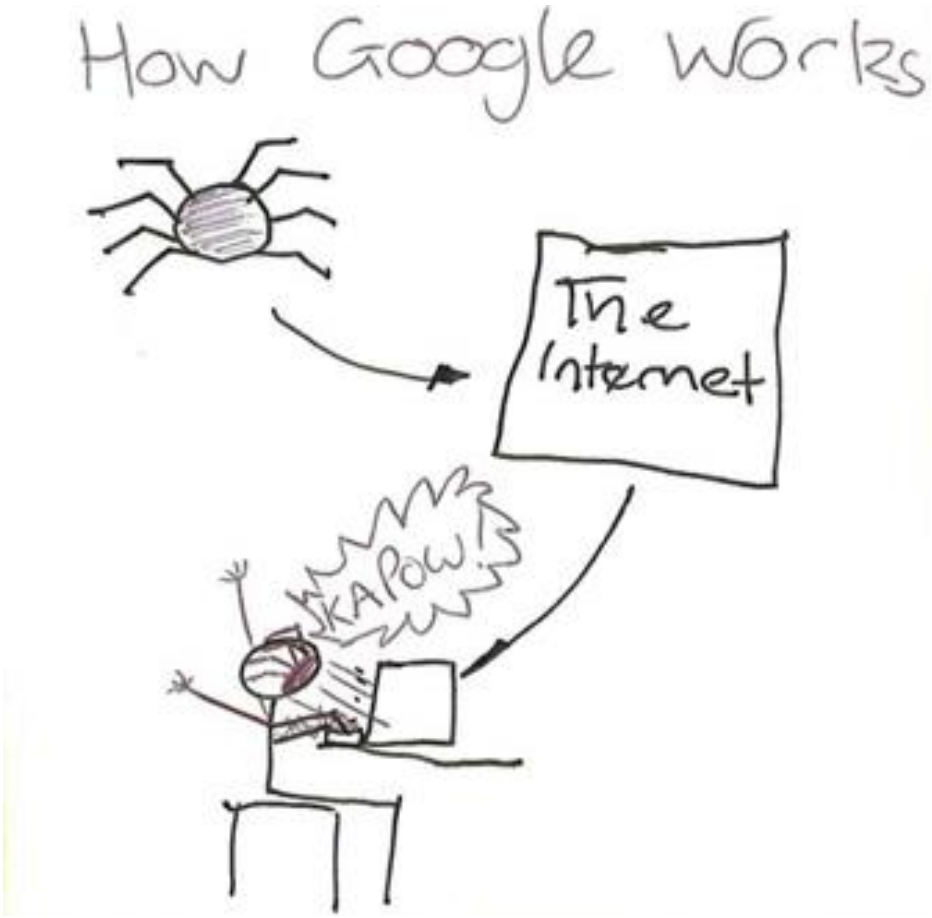

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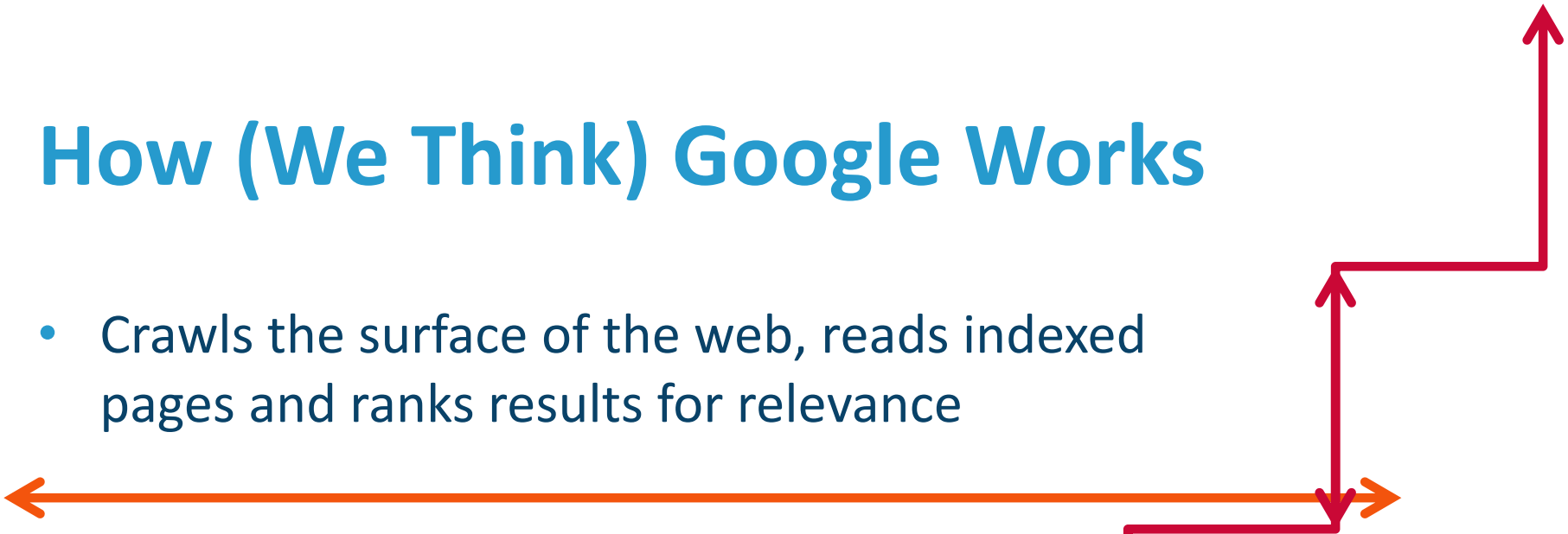
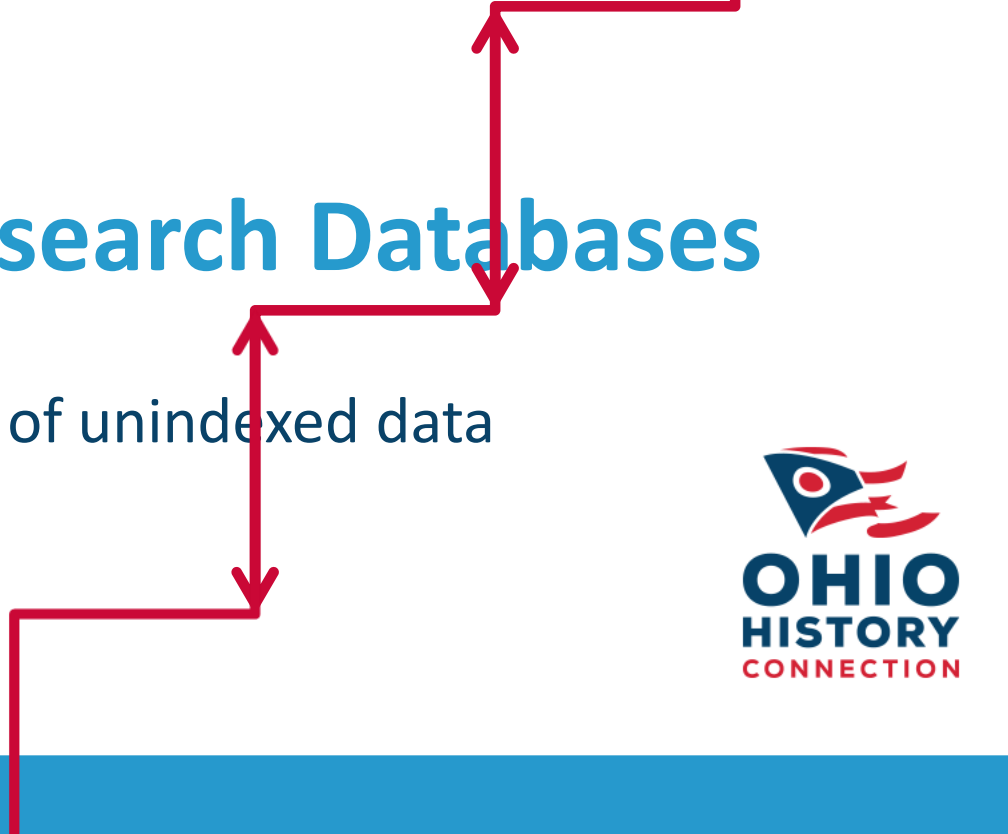
How (We Think) Google Works

- Crawls the surface of the web, reads indexed pages and ranks results for relevance



How We Build Research Databases

- Many hierarchical layers of unindexed data



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Myth of the Digital Native

- “Just because you’ve grown up searching things in Google doesn’t mean you know how to use Google as a good research tool.” - Anthropologist Andrew Asher, Bucknell University

What Students Don't Know, **Inside Higher Ed,** August 22, 2011
ERIAL (Ethnographic Research in Illinois Academic Libraries) Project

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Myth of the Digital Native

- *The prevalence of Google in student research is well-documented, but the Illinois researchers found something they did not expect: students were not very good at using Google. They were basically clueless about the logic underlying how the search engine organizes and displays its results. Consequently, the students did not know how to build a search that would return good sources.*

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What Students Don't Know, **Inside Higher Ed,** August 22, 2011
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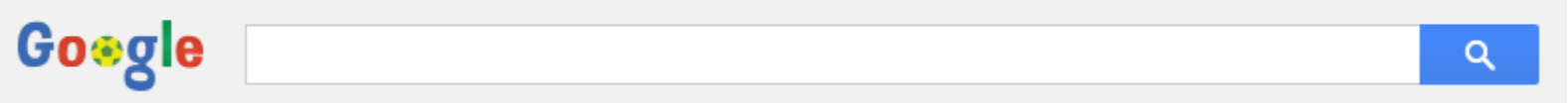
Searching: Where to Begin



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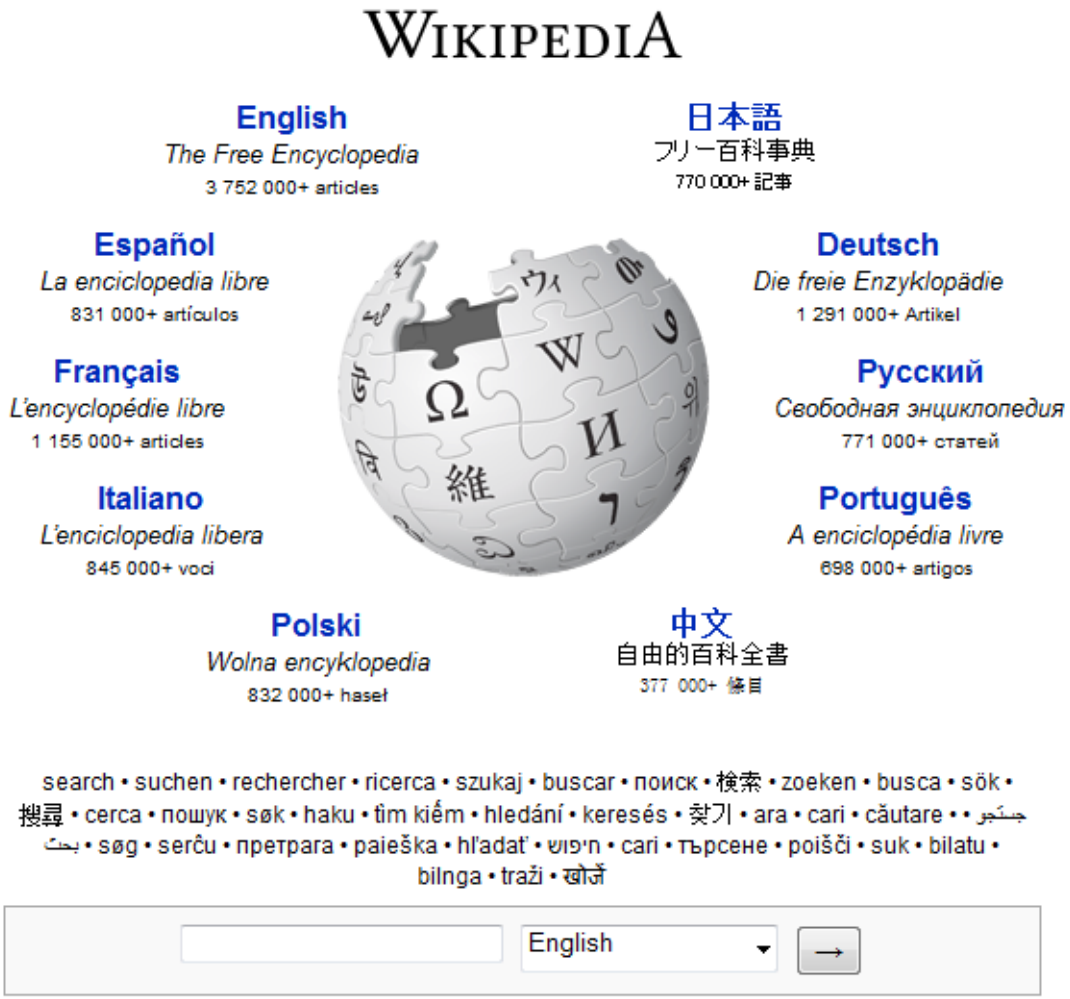
Reality Check



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Reality Check

Using Wikipedia Responsibly

- Understand what it is and how it works
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia
- Look (critically) at the citations
- Links to more information?

- *Caveat: Don't cite Wikipedia. Seriously.*

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Wikipedia

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Super Resource Round-Up

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Ohio History Connection

15,000 Maps

85,000 Rolls of Microfilm

20,000 Volumes of Newspapers

142,555 Books

14,000 Cubic Feet of Gov't Records

Over 50 Historic Sites

1 million Historical and Archaeological Artifacts and Natural Specimens

45,000 Cubic Feet of State Archives, Manuscripts, Photographs, and Special Collections

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Going Local

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Going Local

- Ohio Local History Alliance
  http://www.ohiolha.org/members/
- Local Chapters of the Ohio Genealogical Society
  http://ogs.org/chapters/index.php
- OPLIN Find a Library:
  http://www.oplin.org/content/find-a-library

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Know Before You Go

- Procedures
- Hours
- Costs
- Copy/Photo/Scan Policies
- Cash/Credit?
- Restrictions?
- Items Available?

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Going National

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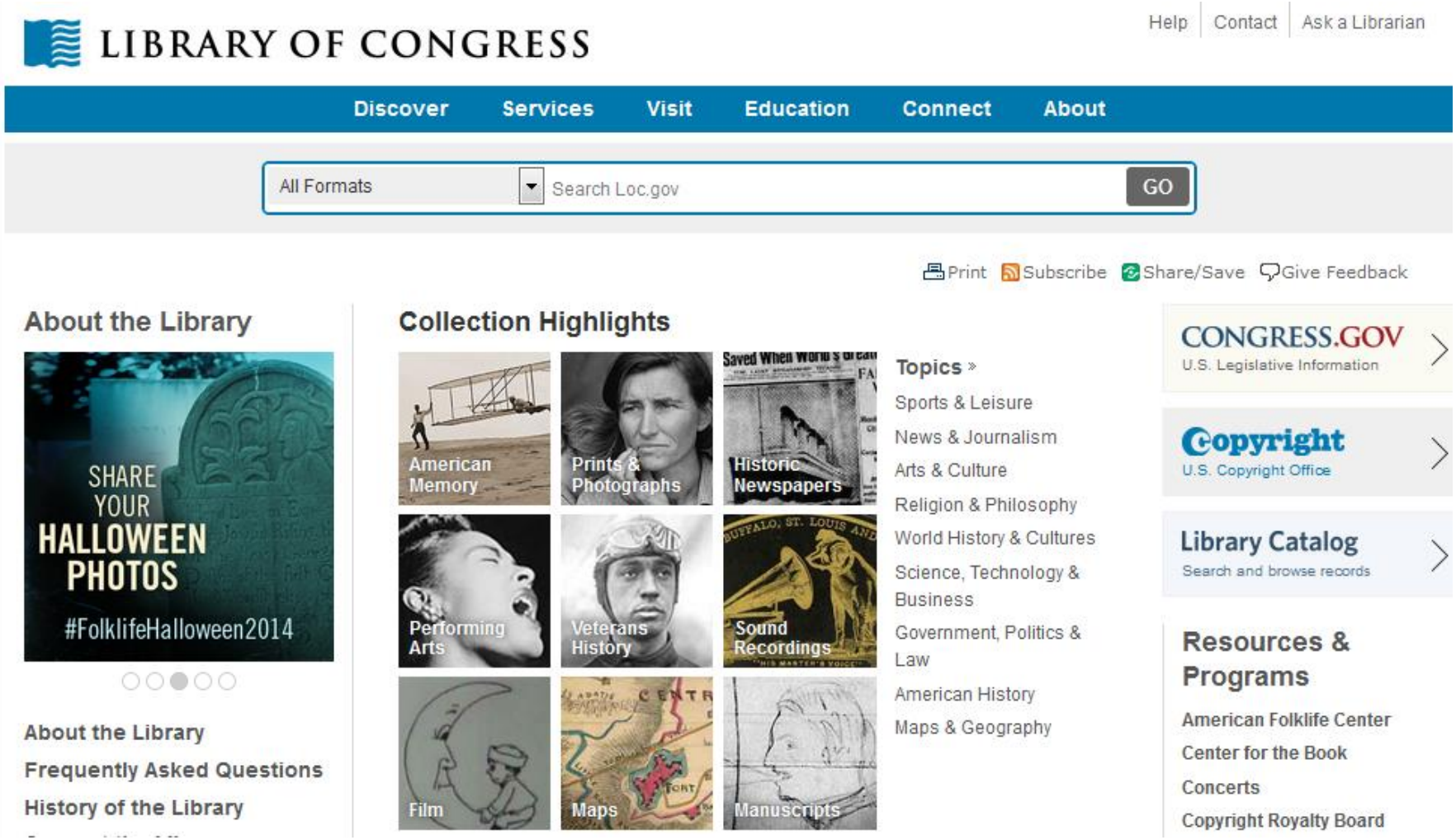
Library of Congress



Chronicling America

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS | ASK A LIBRARIAN | DIGITAL COLLECTIONS | LIBRARY CATALOGS | Search | Search Loc.gov | GO

The Library of Congress > Chronicling America

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

CHRONICLING AMERICA
Historic American Newspapers

Search America's historic newspaper pages from 1836-1922 or use the U.S. Newspaper Directory to find information about American newspapers published between 1690-present. Chronicling America is sponsored jointly by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress. Learn more »

Search Pages | Advanced Search | All Digitized Newspapers 1836-1922 | US Newspaper Directory, 1690-Present

All states + from 1836 to 1922 + enter one or more search words GO

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- About Chronicling America
- About the Site and API
- Recommended Topics
- Help

More Resources

- National Digital Newspaper Program
- NDNP Award Recipients
- Newspaper and Current Periodicals Reading Room
- Ask LC Newspaper & Current Periodicals Librarian
- Historic Newspapers on Flickr (part of the LC Flickr Commons photostream)

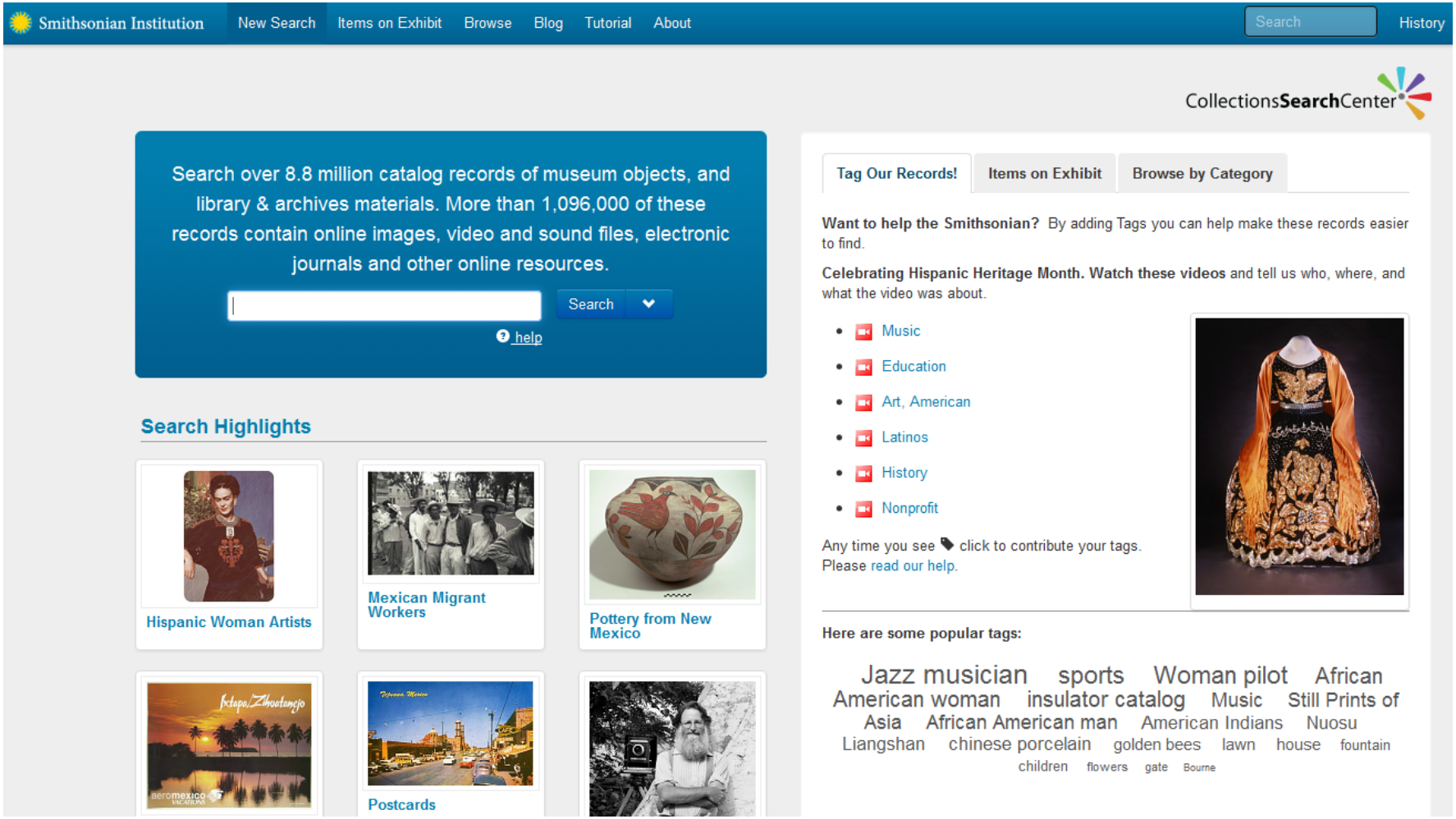
100 Years Ago Today: 10/3/1914 (73 issues)

New-York tribune. (14pp.)
New York [N.Y.]

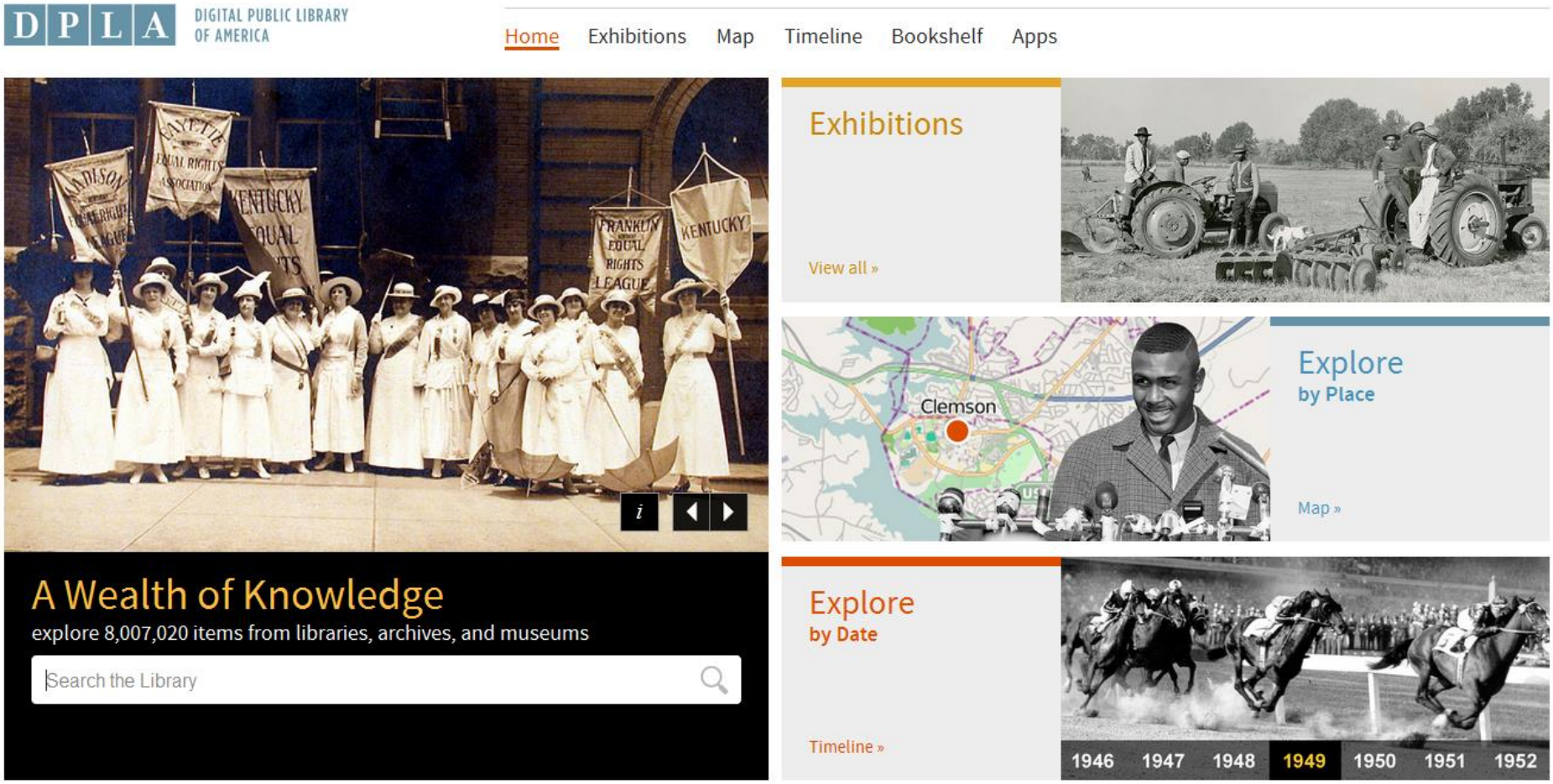
Fair play. (4pp.)
Ste. Genevieve [Mo.]

The evening herald. (8pp.)
Albuquerque, N.M.

Smithsonian Institution



Digital Public Library of America



Family History Pals

ancestry.com

FIND A GRAVE

FamilySearch

HERITAGE QUEST

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US Federal Census on Ancestry

ancestry.com

Welcome OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY Help

Home | Search | Message Boards | Learning Center | Charts and Forms | New Collections

Search > Census & Voter Lists

U.S. Federal Census Collection

Search

Show Advanced

First & Middle Name(s) | Last Name

Birth
Year | Location

Lived In
Location

Arrival
Year | Location

Any Event
Day | Month | Year | Location

+ Add family members *(mother, father, spouse, siblings, children)*

Keyword

e.g. pilot or "Flying Tigers"

About this collection

The U.S. has taken a census of its population every ten years since 1790. The most recent census available to us at present is the 1940 census, due to a 72-year privacy restriction. While the questions in U.S. census records varied from year to year and in state censuses, from state to state, you can find information like names of other household members, ages, birthplaces, residence, occupation, immigration and citizenship details, marriage information, military service and more. The 1890 census was largely destroyed in a fire, but we have compiled a "substitute" with various other records to help bridge the gap.

See Amelia Earhart living in Des Moines, Iowa in the 1910 U.S. Federal Census.

View all collections included in this search

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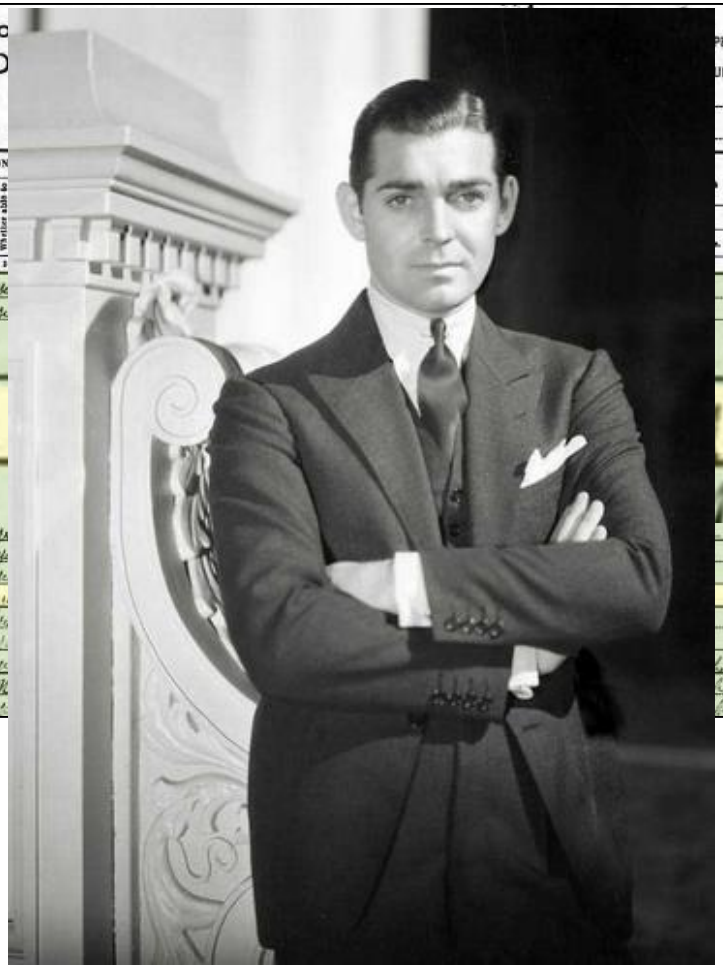
US Federal Census



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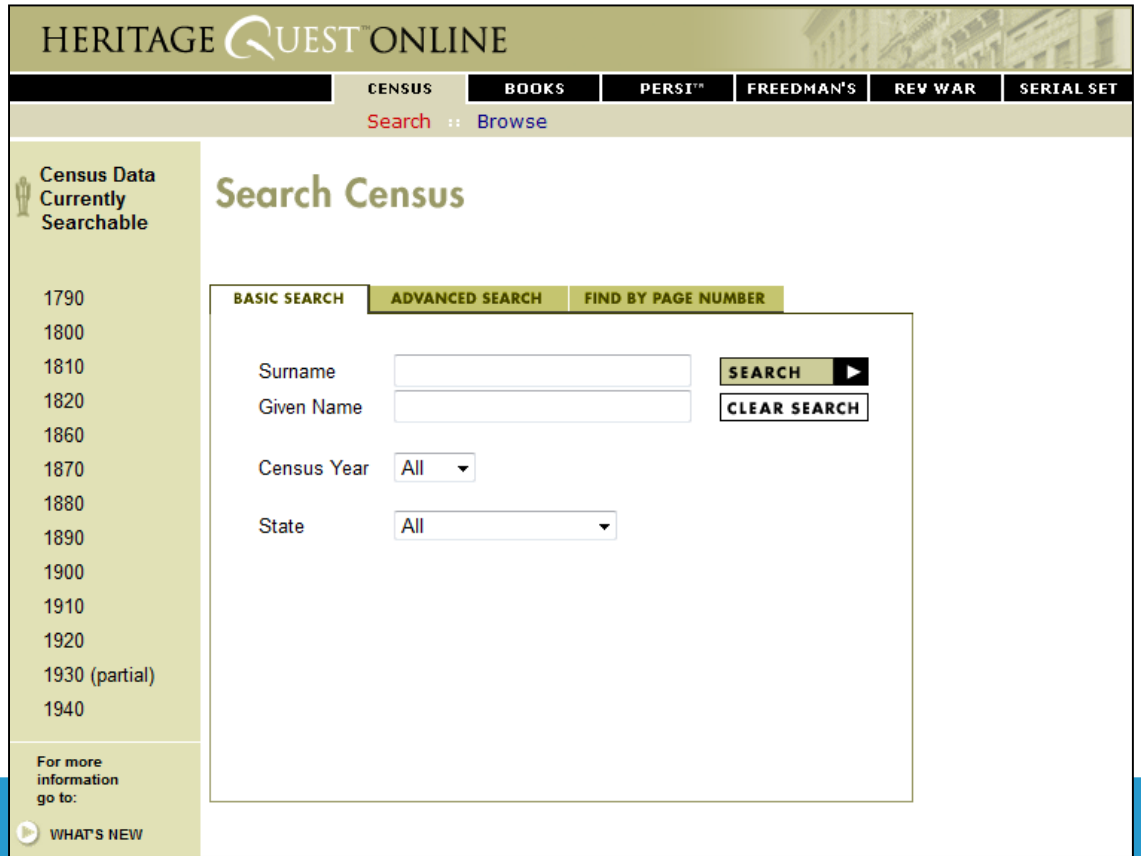
Heritage Quest

- OPLIN Free access with an Ohio library card
- http://www.ohioweblibrary.org/heritagequest



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Find A Grave

FIND A GRAVE

Actions

Begin New Search
Refine Last Search
Cemetery Lookup
Add Burial Records
Help with Find A Grave

Find all **Orrs** in:

- Oakdale Cemetery
- Marysville (Union County)
- Union County
- Ohio
- Find A Grave

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Success Stories
Discussion Forums
Find A Grave Store

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Noah B Orr

Memorial | Photos | Flowers | Share | Edit

Learn about sponsoring this memorial...

Birth: Sep. 19, 1836
Union County
Ohio, USA

Death: Jul. 1, 1881
Marysville (Union County)
Union County
Ohio, USA

Noah B. Orr was born to William Orr and Mary. At the age of 18 Noah joined the Barnum and Bailey Circus where he was known as the Union County Giant and The Ohio Giant. He was 550 pounds and stood 9 feet tall with high top shoes and a top hat. Noah toured the U.S. and Europe as a performer from the 1850's to 1882. He even performed for Queen Victoria of England. From 1878 to 1882 he traveled with the Liliputian Opera Company, a group of midget actors who performed musical comedies. He could hold up to eight men.

Family links:
Parents:
William Orr (1801 - 1866)
Mary Orr (1802 - 1840)

Siblings:
Garrett Orr (1823 - 1847)*
Abraham Orr (1833 - 1904)*
Noah B Orr (1836 - 1881)
Joshua Orr (1856 - 1926)**

*Calculated relationship
**Half-sibling

Burial:
Oakdale Cemetery
Marysville (Union County)
Union County
Ohio, USA

Added by: Stephanie DeFreeuw

Added by: TedByus

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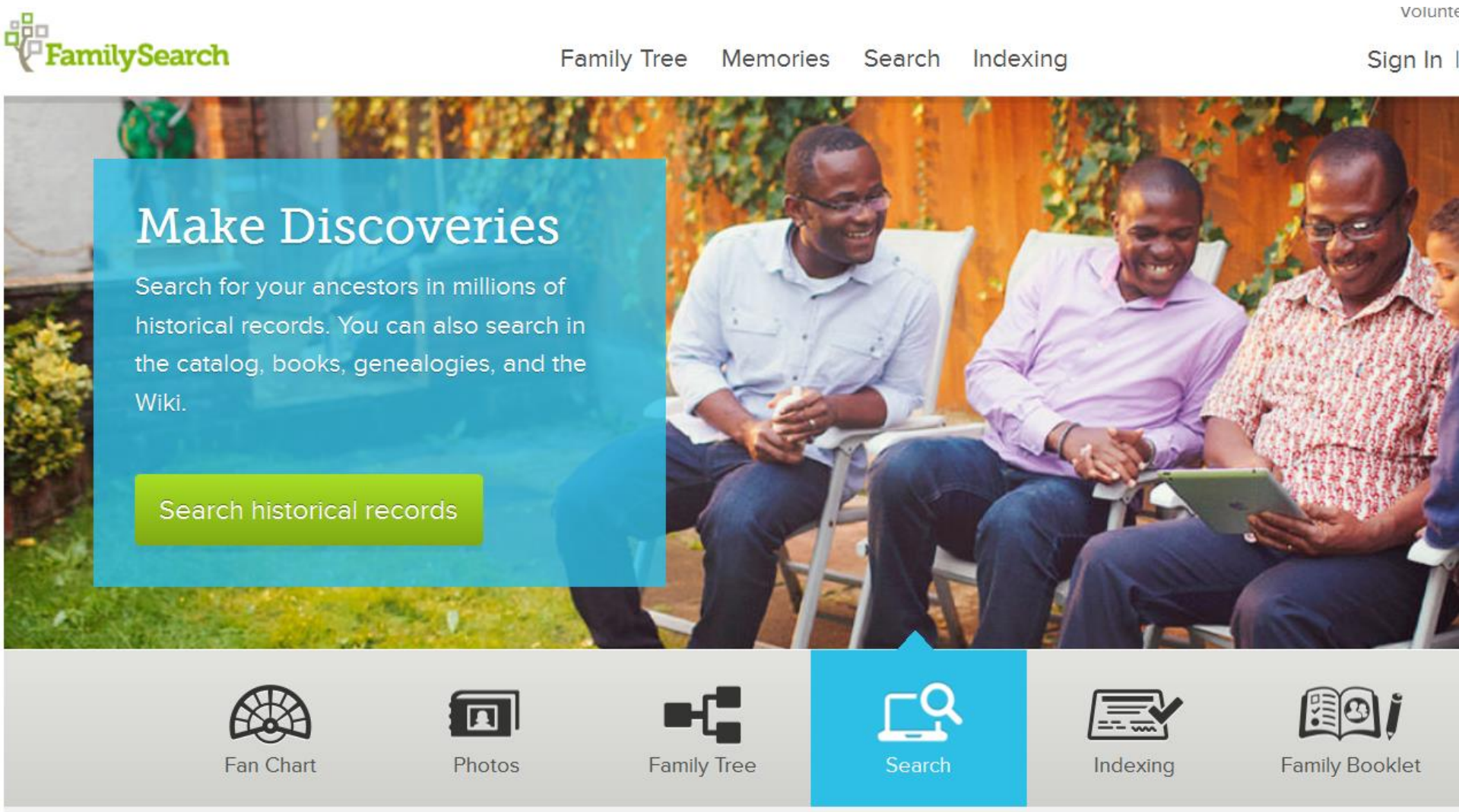
Family Search



Ohio Digital Resources

- Ohio Memory
- OhioPix
- Cleveland Memory
- Cleveland Public Library Digital Gallery
- Columbus Memory
- Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County Virtual Library
- Southeastern Ohio Digital Shoebox Project
- Toledo's Attic
- And so much more!

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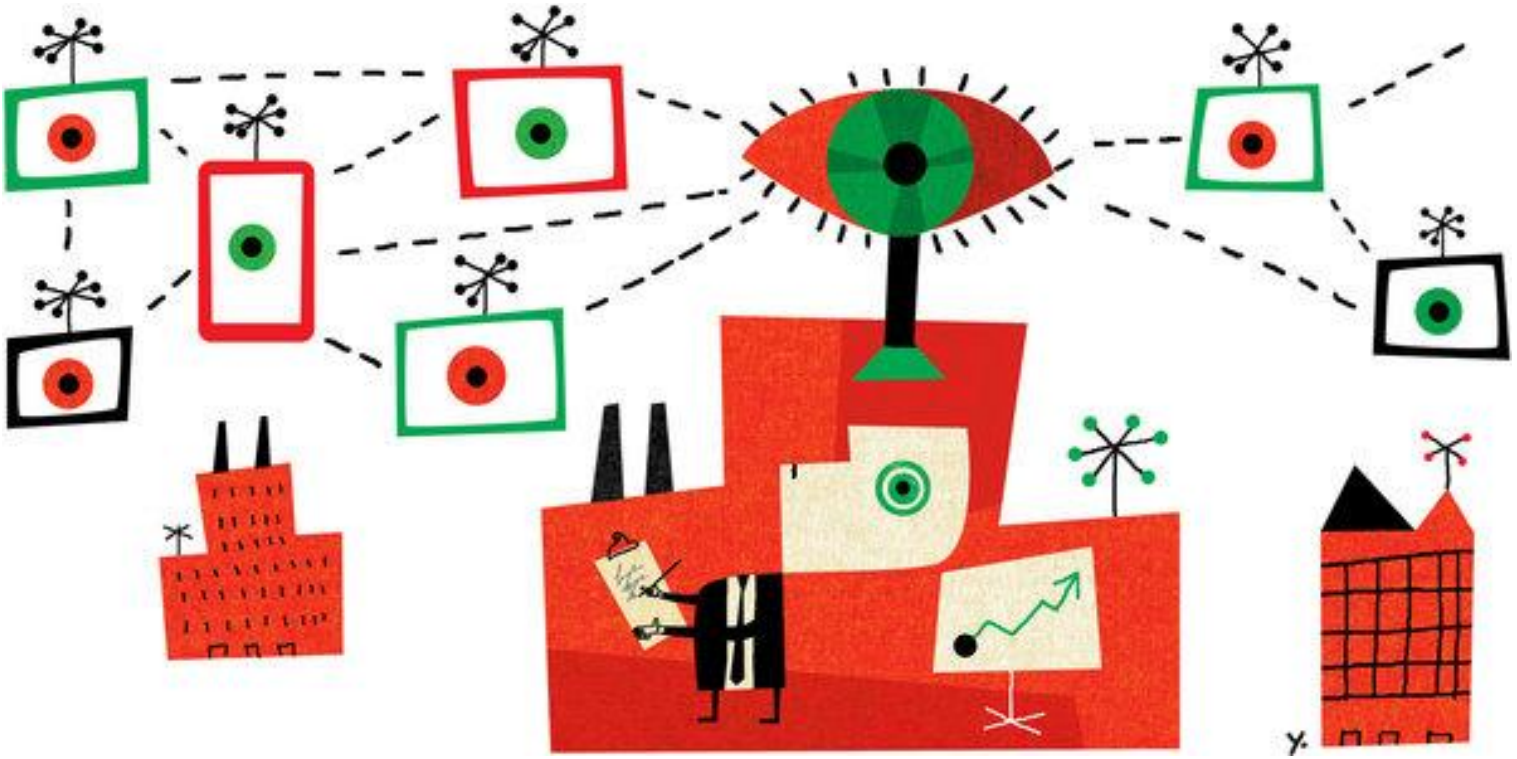
Too Much Information?



OHIO HISTORY CONNECTION

Contact us!

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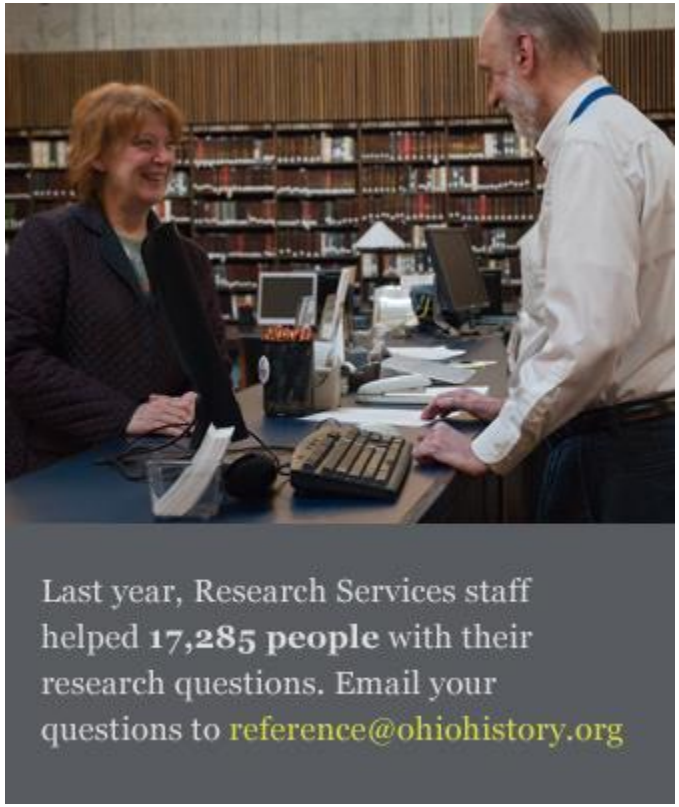
614.297.2510
reference@ohiohistory.org
www.ohiohistory.org



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