So glad you have picked your topics! That can sometimes be the hardest part! As the research process begins, take the topic, in its broadest form, and use it as a search term. This will give you information sources that have an overview of the topic. (Another place to find an overview is Wikipedia. You do not cite it though!) If there are books, do not forget to use the index!! Another great source, especially for finding primary source materials, would be a bibliography of the topic. If you are dealing with a particular person, then look for a biography or autobiography on that person. If dealing with correspondence among people, find the published letters of those individuals.

Where do you find these sources? The Steen Library Home Page (https://library.sfasu.edu/) is where!

To do the best search, create a search strategy. To aid in the process, put your topic in the form of a question that your research will attempt to answer.

What are the similarities and difference in two women rulers: Catherine the Great of Russia, and Elizabeth I of England?

1. What are the key words in this question?
2. Are there synonyms for any of the words?
3. Link the terms together using the Boolean operators: AND, OR, NOT.
4. Use the nesting feature with quotation marks and parenthesis as appropriate.
5. Put it in a search box and see what happens!

Do the same with your topic.

Use that search strategy as you begin your search for information. Put it in the search box on the Library Home Page and see what happens! Break it down into smaller pieces and try it again! Work on the search strategy to perfect it.
Doing a search using SteenFind will give both books and articles.

The Articles & More listing is actually the compilation of the searching of many of the Steen Library databases at one time. It sounds really good, but with a very long list (1021), you might want to search the best History databases on their own.

So, click on RESEARCH at the top of the Steen Library Home Page, go to the History Research Guide for a list of the best databases and other History resources.

Steen Library does not have everything! To get an idea of what is out there on your topic, try out the WorldCat database.

Be sure and use both Google Scholar and Dissertations & Theses. Maybe someone has already done work on your topic, use their list of References to find more good stuff!
What If The Article I Need Is Not Available?

Citation information example for a journal article:


1. Enter the journal title in the search box on the Library home page and select Journals@Steen from the SteenFind pull down list. Top of Form
2. On the list retrieved, find the exact journal title you need. The journal title list will be in alphabetical order.
3. Below the journal title, review the list of databases.
4. Child development (0009-3920)

from 03/01/1930 to 1 year ago in Academic Search Complete
from 03/01/1930 to 1 year ago in Professional Development Collection
from 03/01/1930 to 1 year ago in Psychology & Behavioral Sciences Collection
from 03/01/1930 to 1 year ago in SocINDEX with Full Text
from 03/01/1930 to 11/30/2009 in JSTOR Arts & Sciences IV
from v. 1, 1930 to v. 76, 2005 in Stephen F. Austin State University's Print Holdings

5. Compare the date needed with the available dates listed for each database, and choose the database that will provide the date needed.
6. Follow the link to the appropriate database; use the year list on the right side of the screen and select the year and volume needed. Now look for the article title or the page numbers for the article.
7. If there is not an electronic match for your journal title and date:
   a. Look for a link that says “in Stephen F. Austin State University's Print Holdings.”
   b. Note the dates listed for the print journal housed in the Steen Library print holdings.
   c. If we have the year needed, then click on Stephen F. Austin State University’s Print Holdings, find the call number, and retrieve the journal. Issues of the journals are upstairs: A-N call numbers on 4th, P-Z call numbers on the 3rd.
8. If you need the article and we do not have it, use Interlibrary Loan (https://illiad.sfasu.edu/illiad/logon.html). Register with the SFASU interlibrary loan system called ILLiad. It is FREE! Then, you can request the article you need.

Remember, Interlibrary Loan (ILL) is available for any type of material you might need for your research. Just make sure we do not have it before you order it via ILL!

Need more assistance? Contact me for an appointment, or come by my office!

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Created 02/7/2017, TAO