



FINDING LITERARY CRITICISM AT THE HSU LIBRARY

ABILENE LIBRARY CONSORTIUM CATALOG

The electronic catalog is used to look up the materials held by the libraries in the Abilene Library Consortium, including the HSU Library. You use it to find **books** and other materials but NOT journal articles. There are five libraries' holdings included in catalog--Hardin-Simmons, Abilene Christian University, McMurry University, Howard-Payne University, and the Abilene Public Library. The catalog defaults to search all the materials that the libraries in the Consortium own. To search Hardin-Simmons only, use the pull down menu to change your search options.

Do a word or phrase search (the keyword radio button should be marked above). Type your author's first and last name and add the word **criticism**. You put the word criticism because you are looking for materials that analyze the works of a particular author not necessarily the actual works of literature themselves (Example: Emily Dickinson criticism).

You may also do a search on the type of literature for which you wish to find criticism. This search will find all the items that have the word(s) or phrase you want searched (Example: early american literature).

EBSCO: ACADEMIC SEARCH PREMIER and the MODERN LANG. ASSOC. INTER. BIB.

To find journal articles (both citations and full-text) click on the **EBSCO** group of databases and choose the EBSCOhost Web—All Databases option. Then check **Academic Search Premier** and/or the **Modern Language Association (MLA) International Bibliography**. You may search each of these databases separately or both at the same time.

Academic Search Premier is a multi-disciplinary database that indexes thousands of periodicals. Much of the database has full text or full page images of articles. It includes some literature journals such as the *Explicator* and *Short Story Criticism*. Type your search terms into the FIND box on the screen. You might search the name of the story/poem (Example: Cask of Amontillado) as a phrase or you could search it by combining the author's last name and some words from the title--leave out words such as "and" "of" or "the" (Example: Poe and Amontillado). This is a useful strategy if the title of the story/poem is short or not very unique.

The **MLA International Bibliography** is the most comprehensive electronic database for finding literary criticism. It contains citations to journal articles, essays, books, and dissertations. It is not a full-text database but does link to full-text that is available in the Academic Search Premier database. If you don't find very much on your topic, ask a librarian for help searching the database.

TEXSHARE DATABASES

In TexShare group of databases, there are a number of full-text databases that focus on literature. The Gale **Literature Resource Center** includes Contemporary Authors, Contemporary Literary Criticism, and the Dictionary of Literary Biography. **Twayne's Author Series** and **Scribner Writers Series** are electronic books.

FIRSTSEARCH — HUMANITIES ABSTRACTS and AH SEARCH

Humanities Abstracts and **Arts and Humanities Citation Index (AH)** are databases in **FirstSearch** group of databases. Click on FirstSearch and then choose *List all databases* heading on the left side of the screen to find them.

These databases have citations (with links to some full text) to periodical articles. In FirstSearch, you can easily find out what libraries own an item by clicking on the "Libraries Worldwide" link.

JSTOR

JSTOR is a trusted archive of scholarly content offering high-resolution, scanned images of journal issues and pages as they were originally designed, printed, and illustrated. Contains back issues in the disciplines of the arts, sciences, humanities, business, and mathematics. There are no current issues in it but most of it is full-text. Be sure to click on the PDF link under the entry to get a properly formatted copy of the article.

REFERENCE MATERIALS AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Refer to the **yellow literary criticism** handout available in the library.

The materials on this handout include bibliographies (list of books and articles on a particular topic) and other reference sources. Many of these bibliographies include citations to the core criticism on a piece of literature. Most bibliographies are organized by the name of the author and then by the particular works. It lists books and articles that are criticism of that work. It will be necessary for you to go back to the computer terminal and search in the catalog to see if the books or journal titles are available. If you are using one of the books that are listed under the heading "Excerpts of Criticism" on the yellow handout, such as *Poetry Criticism*, *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, etc...be aware that these books are not primary sources and many college professors will not allow you to use them as a reference because they do not contain the complete article, only an excerpt. However, they are useful as background information on the criticism that has been written on a piece of literature.

STEP 5--REMINDER

The library staff is here to help--DON'T BE SHY about asking for assistance!