THE LITERATURE REVIEW DEMO 2020

Contents

Mapping the Literature: 2
Subject Encyclopaedias 2
SCOPUS, the Citation Indexes, and Harzings 4
Hardcore scholarship: 14
PRIMO: the Basics of Survival on the UCT Catalogue 14
A digression into Boolean Searching 24
Searching National and International Book Catalogues 26
Searching for Theses 28
Selecting and searching specific Journal Databases 31
More Boolean Searching, this time with Command Language 35
Newspapers, for the voice of the people 36
Official reports and facts and figures 38
Finding research techniques and tools for your study 44
Literature reviews: writing with authority & sounding like you belong in the discipline: 46
Evaluating stuff: 52
Referencing it all: 57

Your starting point for everything library is the library homepage at www.lib.uct.ac.za

On this you can find the library catalogue, the databases and a direct contact for your subject librarians.

Mapping the Literature:

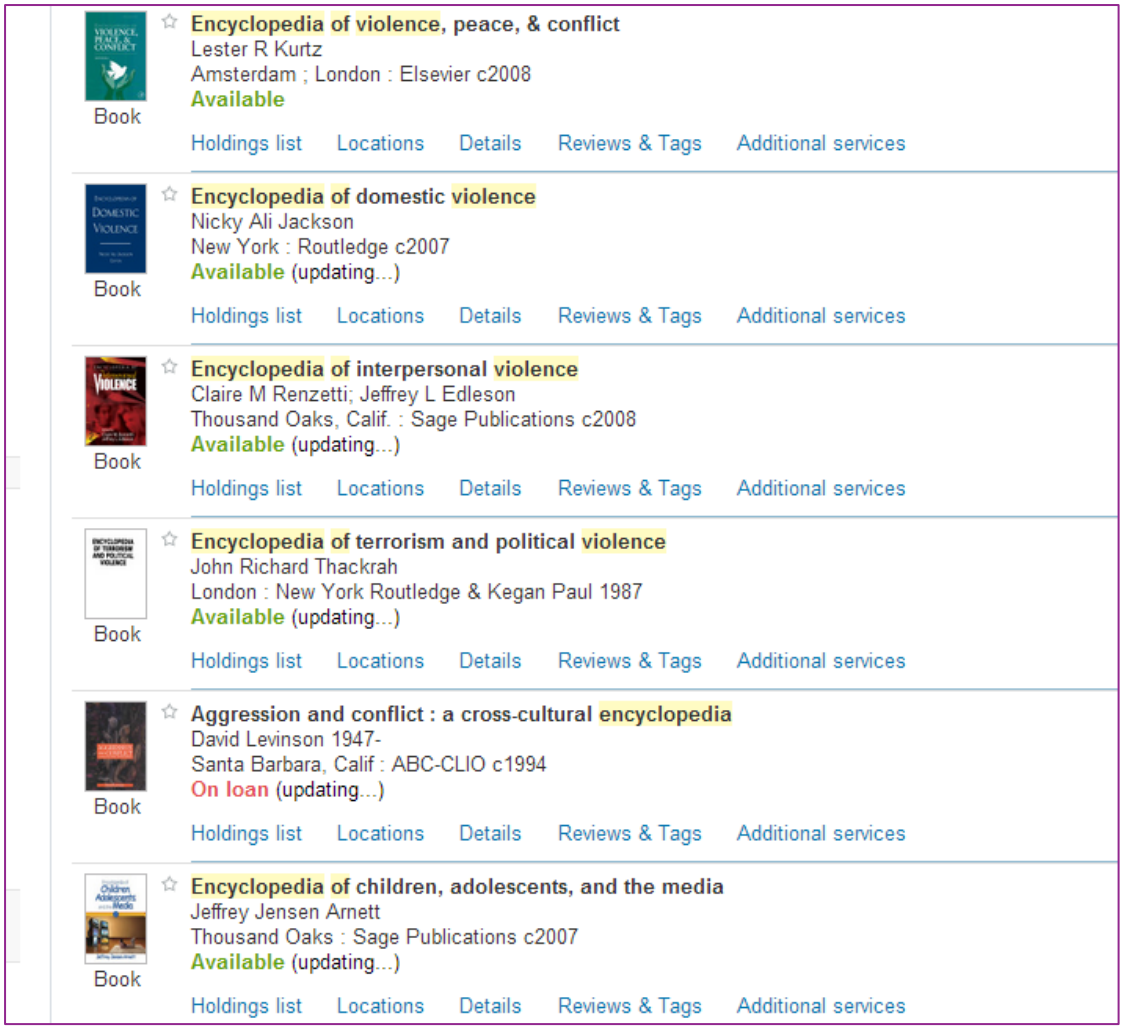
The most useful thing you can do at the start of any research is to get a sense of the *shape* of the literature. When did people really start writing on this topic. Who is the most highly cited writer? What is the shape of the literature over time – is it growing, were there particular periods of strong activity, do these correspond to major world events or to the publication of particularly important books or articles?

It is particularly important to be aware of “seminal” (literally “seed”) articles – influential articles that start, or shape, or angle, a whole surge of growth in research in a topic.

I’d recommend two ways of getting a handle on this – one traditional and one technological.

Subject Encyclopaedias

Traditionally, the best way to get that kind of overview was through a subject encyclopaedia - I’m talking about thousands of *genuinely specialized* reference works – all narrowly focused and with each section written by an expert in that field.



An entry in a good subject encyclopaedia can give a background history of research trends (i.e. *the history of academic thought on that subject*), as well as outlining likely issues for current and future research.

Above all, a good subject encyclopaedia entry will have a short bibliography which usually lists the seminal works, or at least most commonly read works, on that subject.

Indeed, some exist to do nothing but this task:

BookData Description: This volume is the first to aim at summarizing all of the scientific literature published so far regarding male-female differences and similarities, not only in behaviour, but also in basic biology, physiology, health, perceptions, emotions, and attitudes. In this title, results from over 18,000 studies have been condensed into more

> than 1,900 tables, with each table pertaining to a specific possible sex difference. Even research pertaining to how men and women are perceived (stereotyped) as being different is covered. Throughout this book's eleven years in preparation, no exclusions were made in terms of subject areas, cultures, time periods, or even species. The book is accompanied by a CD containing all 18,000+ references cited in the book. "Sex Differences" is a monumental resource for any researcher, student, or professional who requires an assessment of the weight of evidence that currently exists regarding any sex difference of interest.

At any rate – references from works like these can form the core of a research bibliography – the past sources which you can't *not* read if you want to be taken seriously.

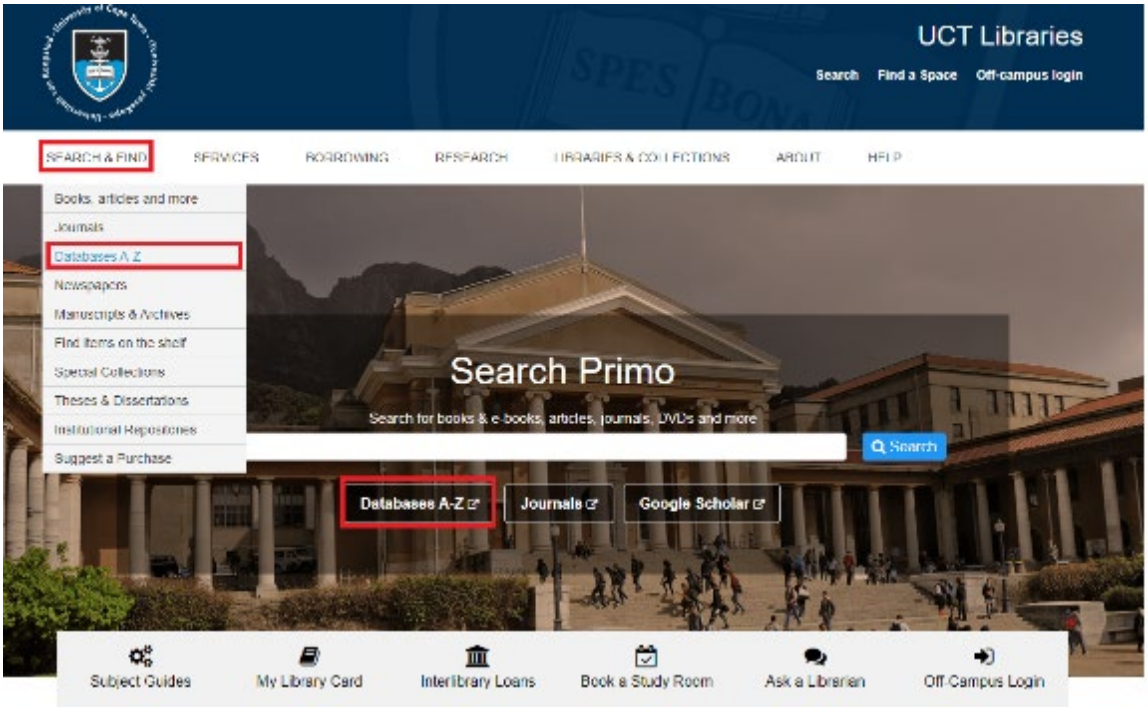
They can also be a very useful starting point in a citation search. We'll come to a citation search later, but in essence it involves finding a really key article or book and seeing who has cited it more recently – either because their research supports it, or disagrees with it, or takes it forward by adding a new dimension to it.

It might also be a good idea to do a search for any other/more recent books or articles by one of these key authors, or by the writer of that section in the encyclopedia – experts tend to write a number of other books or articles on their topic of expertise, and, if contemporary writers, may still be at it.

How to find subject encyclopedias? Ask the subject librarians, or search for things like "Encyclopedia and violence" on the catalogue.

SCOPUS, the Citation Indexes, and Harzings

Scopus is available from the UCT Libraries A-Z Database List.



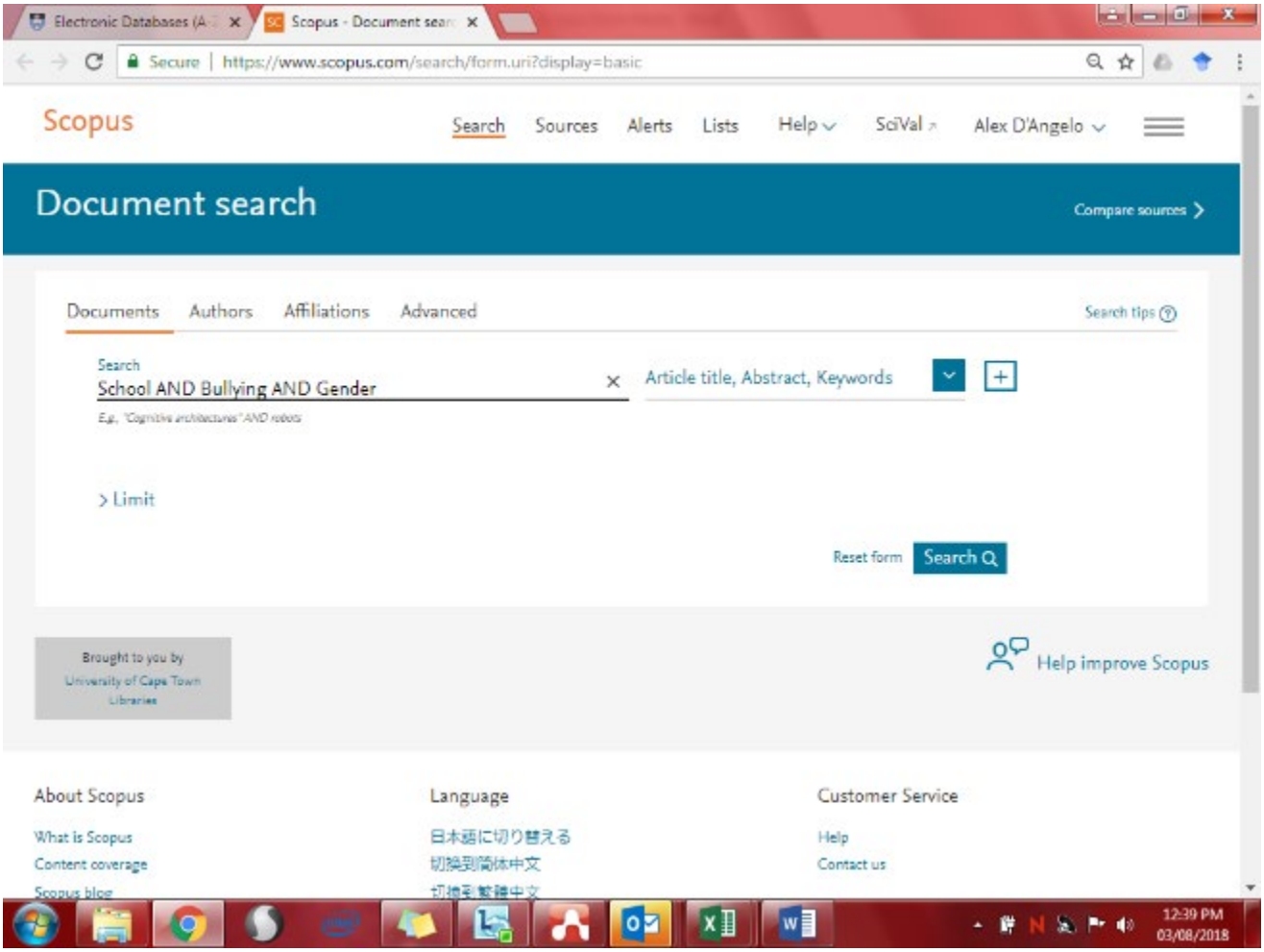
Scopus has many uses, both for academics wishing to track their own academic footprint, or decide where to publish, and for university administrators evaluating research outputs across institutions and finding international partners.

For Honours, Masters and PhD students working on cutting edge research, it is a particularly powerful tool for gathering together the *articles and book chapters written by a particular seminal scholar and finding out who that scholar's co-authors are. This can often be the core of a bibliography if you are focussing on cutting edge topics.*

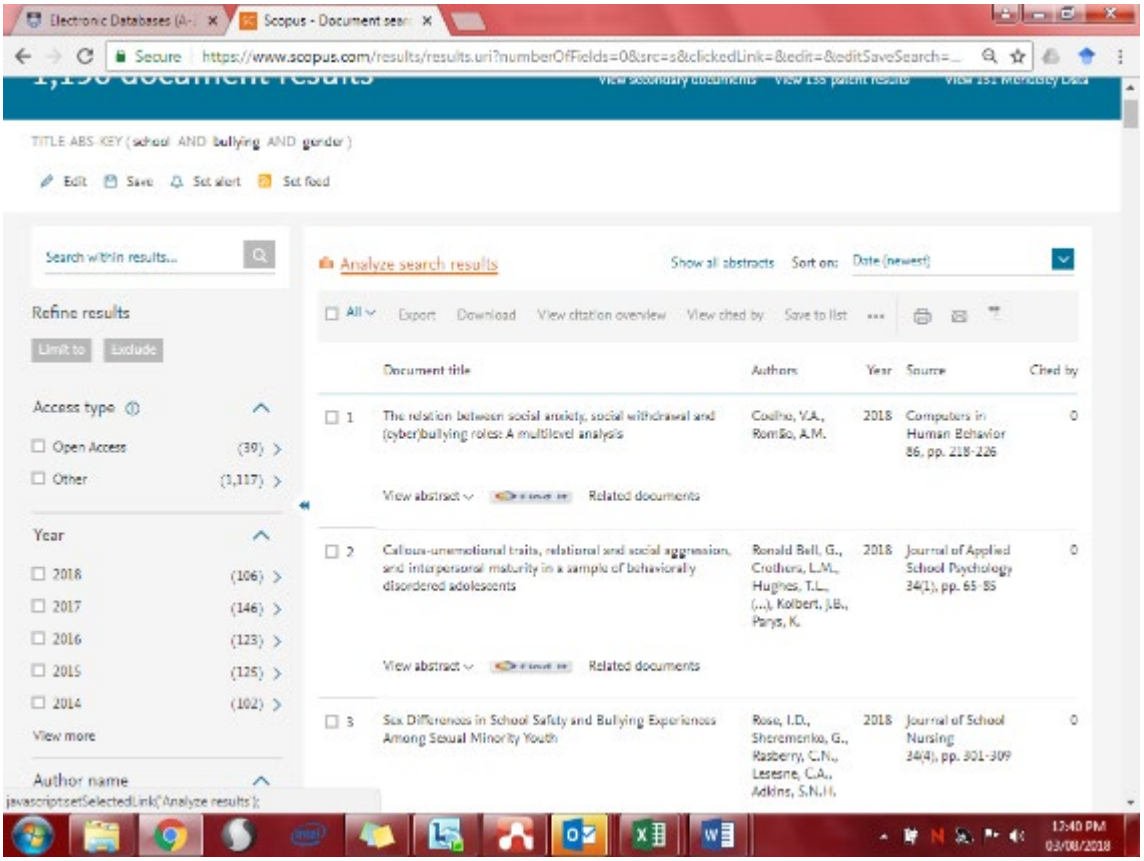
But, above all, it is a tool for getting a picture of the shape of the literature over time, the most highly cited (seminal) articles, the major journals covering the topic, and the various disciplines which share a converging interest on the topic.

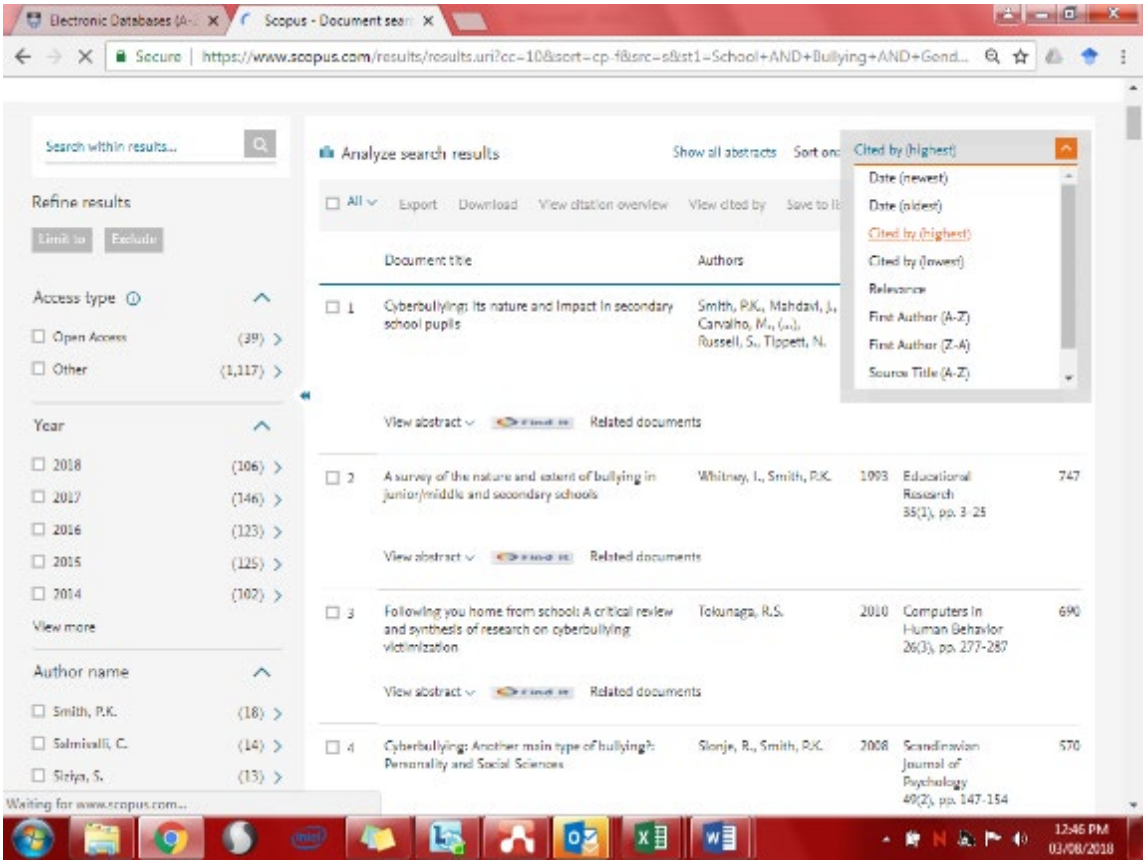
To start with, open Scopus on our A-Z database list and type in your search topic.

In this example *School AND Bullying AND Gender*



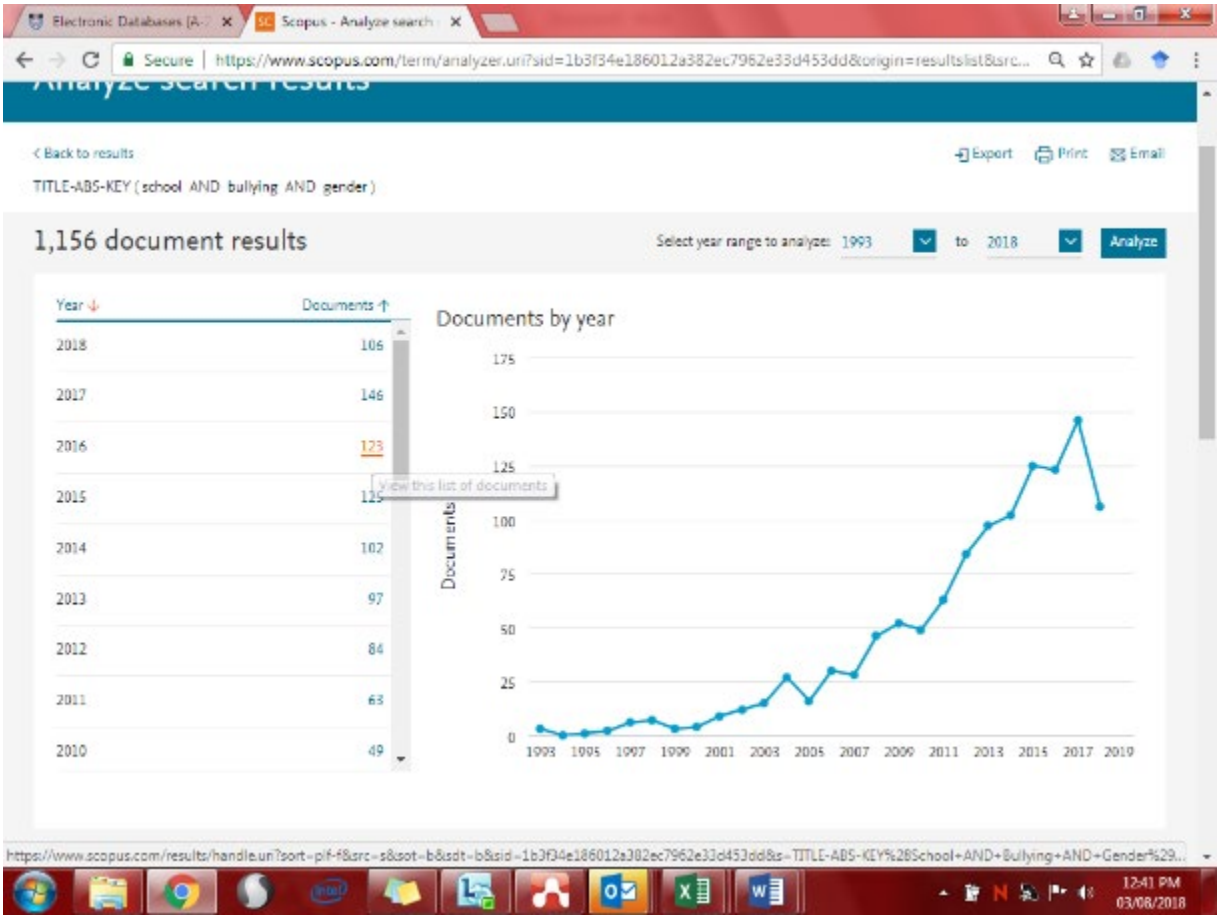
The results come up in date order by default on this database – but you can use a drop down menu to rank them by the most highly cited – i.e. the most influential articles on that topic:



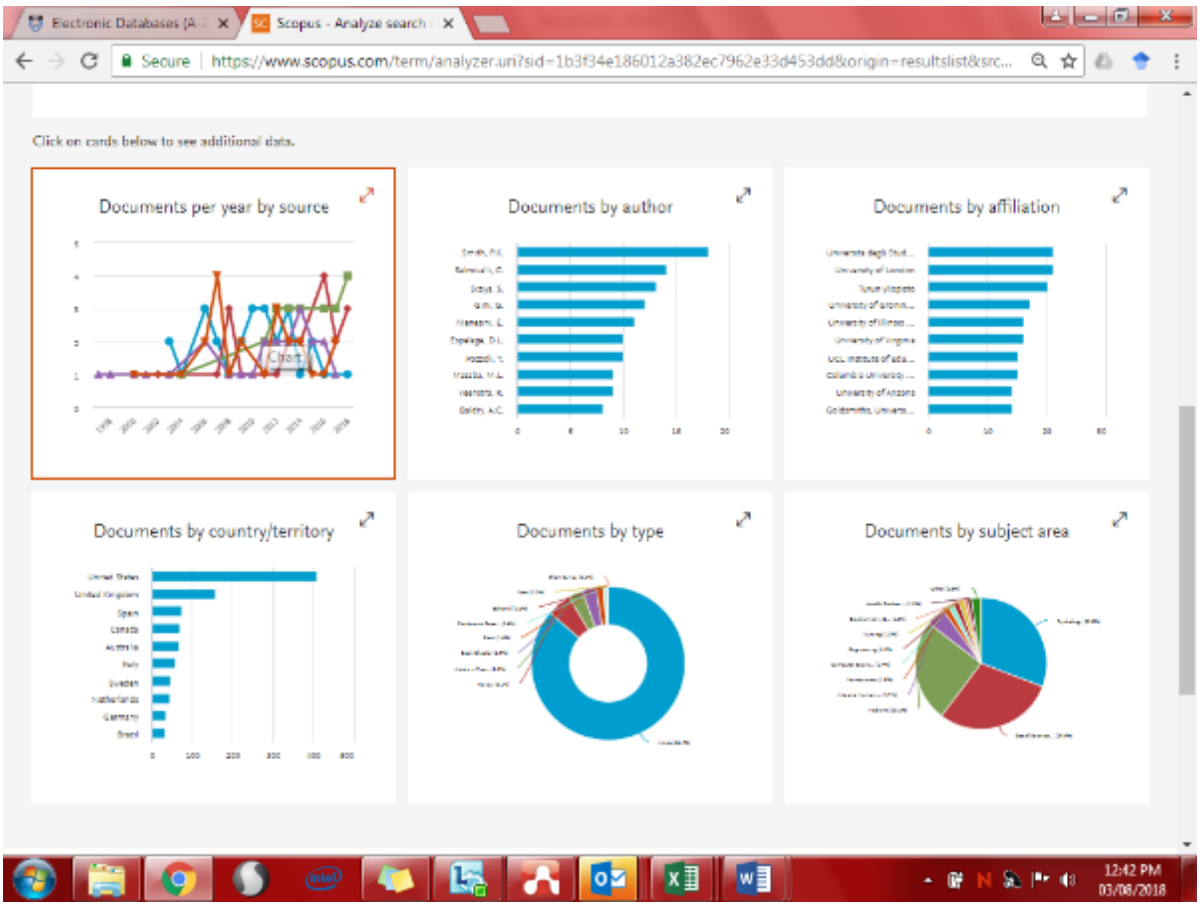


The next thing is to click on the Analyse Search Results link.

This brings up a map of the literature over time, showing its growth and dips and climbs over time. Clicking on any point on the line, or on the year-linked documents to the left, brings up the documents for that time.

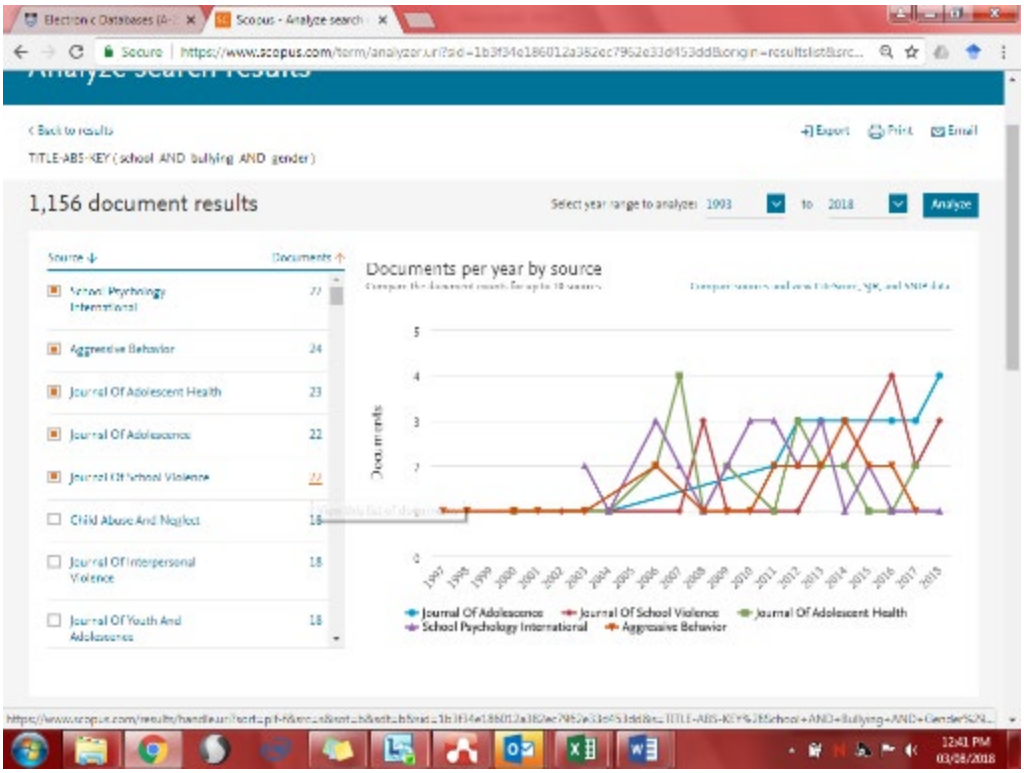


Below this are the other options.



The Documents by Source option brings up the journals which most often publish articles on that topic: These are the journals most likely to feature debates, or at least, focussed examination of the topic.

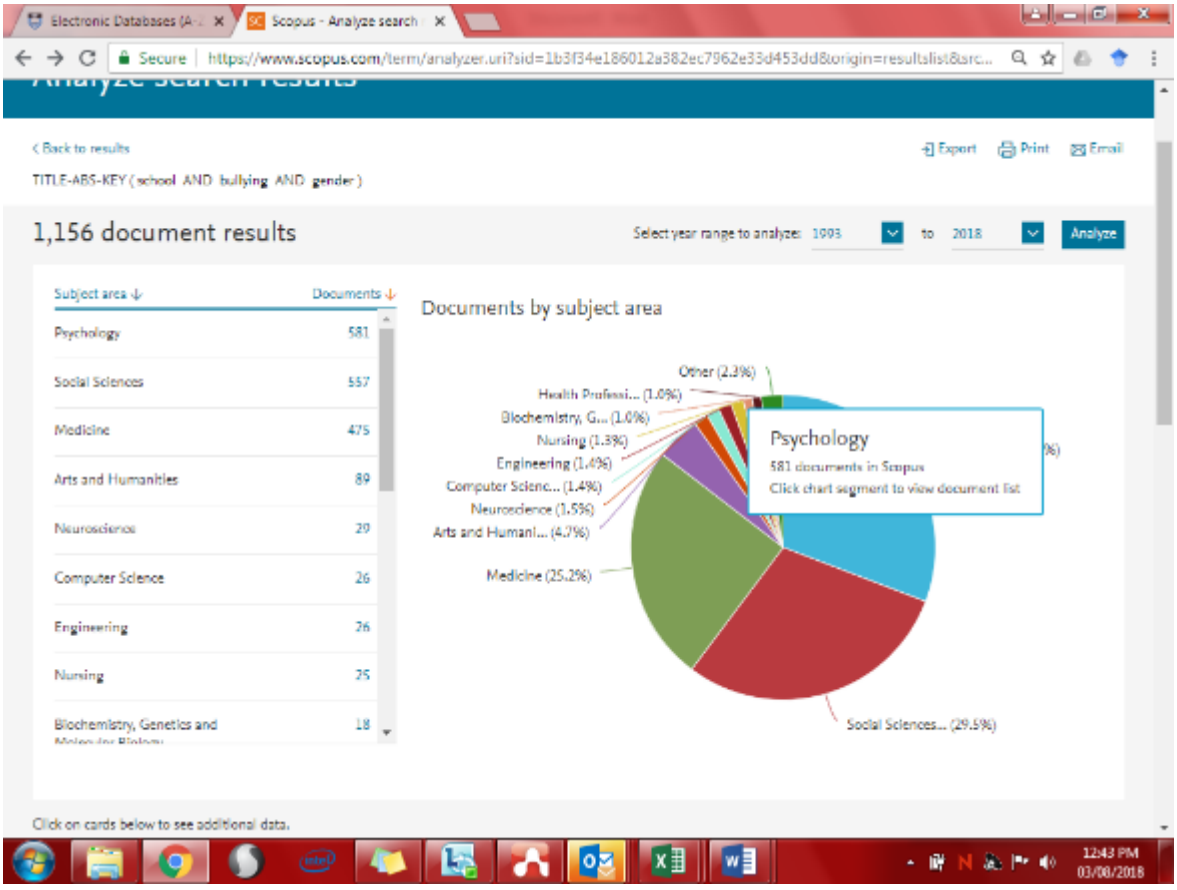
You can click on the articles associate with each journal. Or perhaps even “hand search” the journal – which nowadays means going through it electronically - issue by issue, to look for editorials or articles of interest but not picked up by your keyword search.



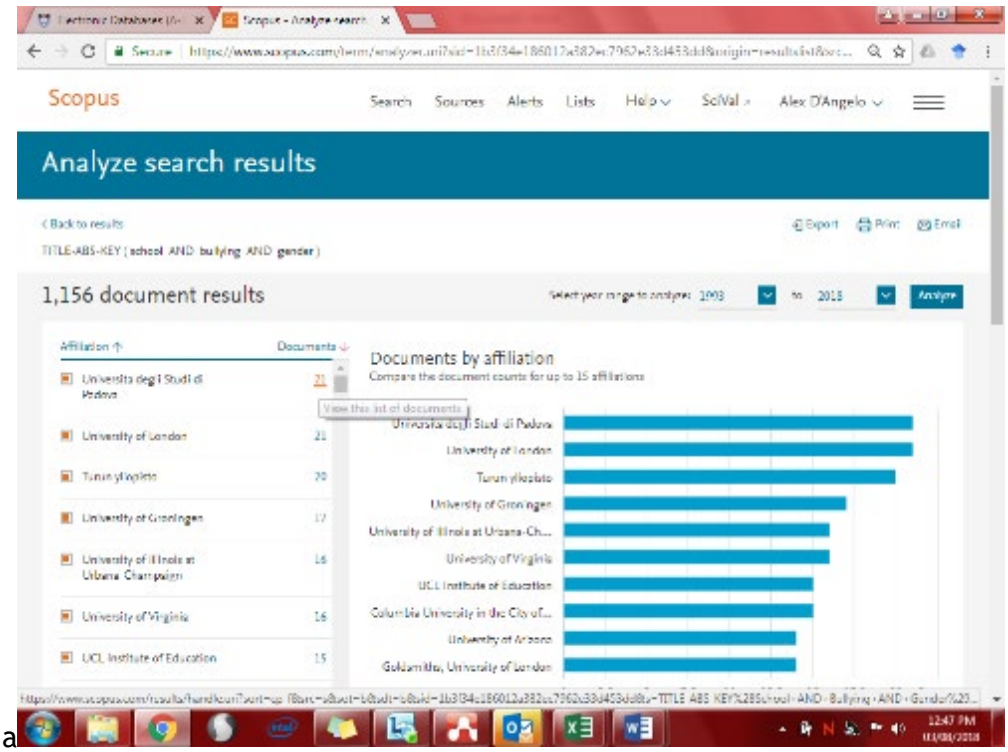
While the most highly cited articles, and hence author, was picked up early on in the search, you can also dig up the most prolific authors – not always the same thing, but often of interest.

And particularly you can sort the documents by subject area – often very handy indeed in organising a literature review, and either weeding out or exploring more deeply the activities of another discipline in this field. Interdisciplinary or ‘transdisciplinary” work (work beyond the confines of a traditional

discipline) is a growth area in academe, and tools like this option on Scopus both reflect and make possible this trend.



You can also see the major contributors by nationality or institution – again, often a handy sorting mechanism in a literature review. *It also allows you to state with some confidence that "While a great deal of work has been done on this topic in the United States and Europe, little has been done in the Global South…."*



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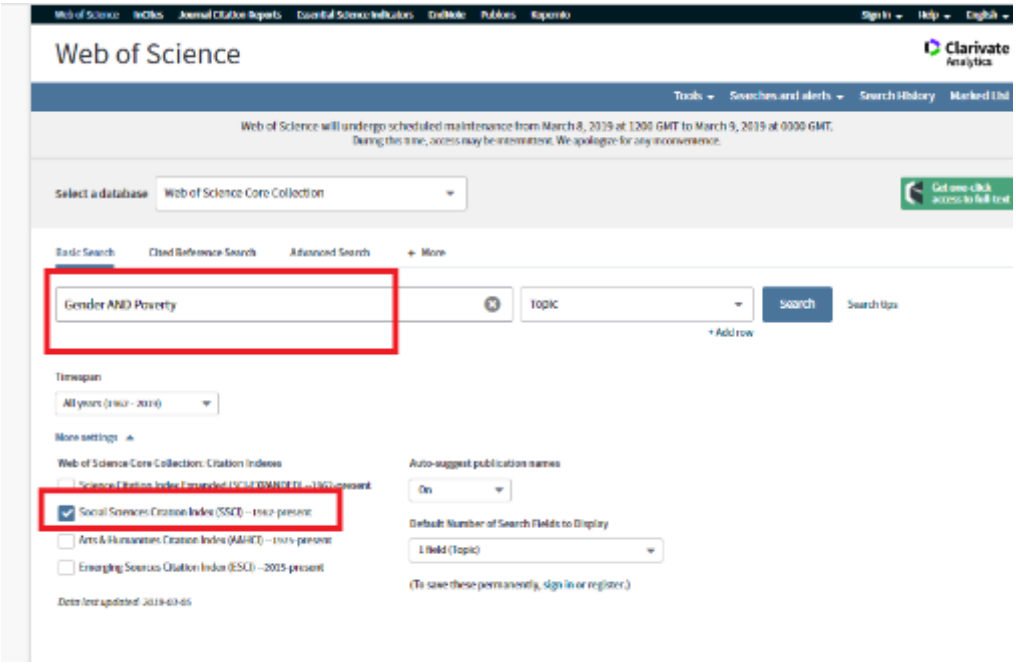
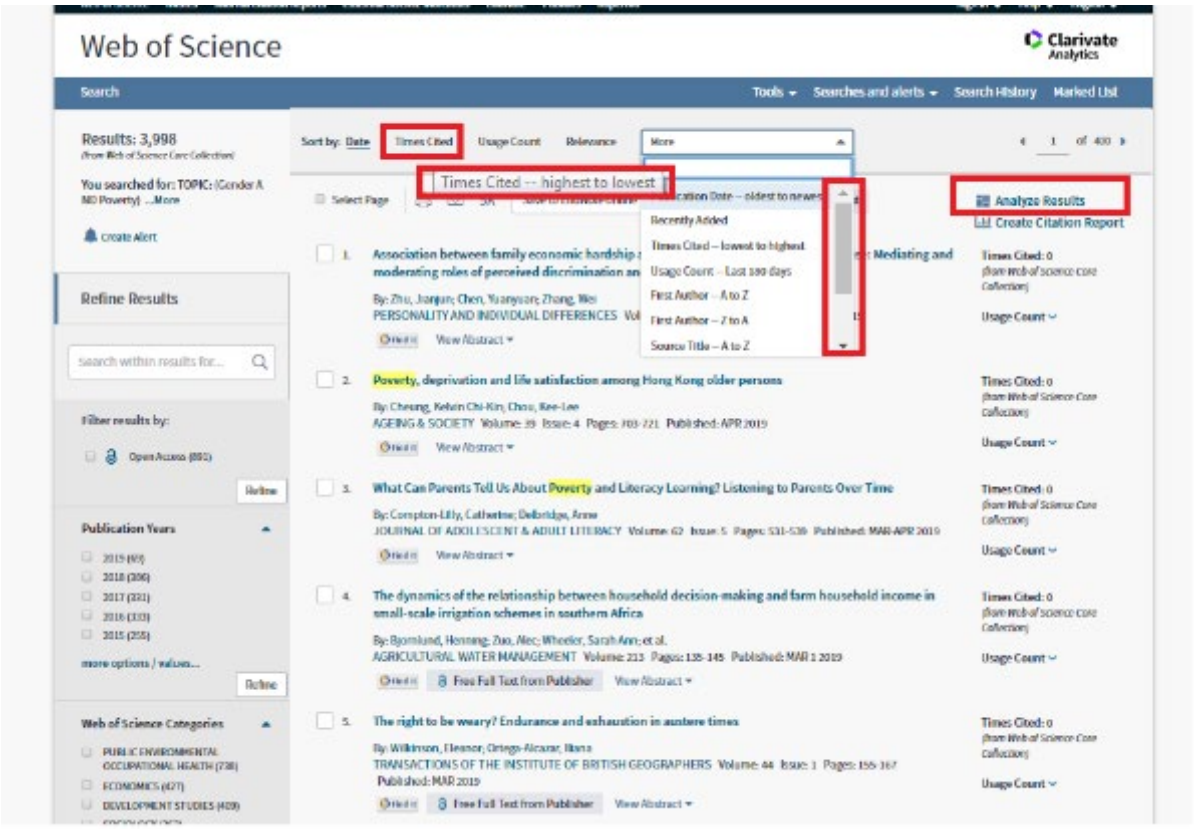
Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) via Web of Science

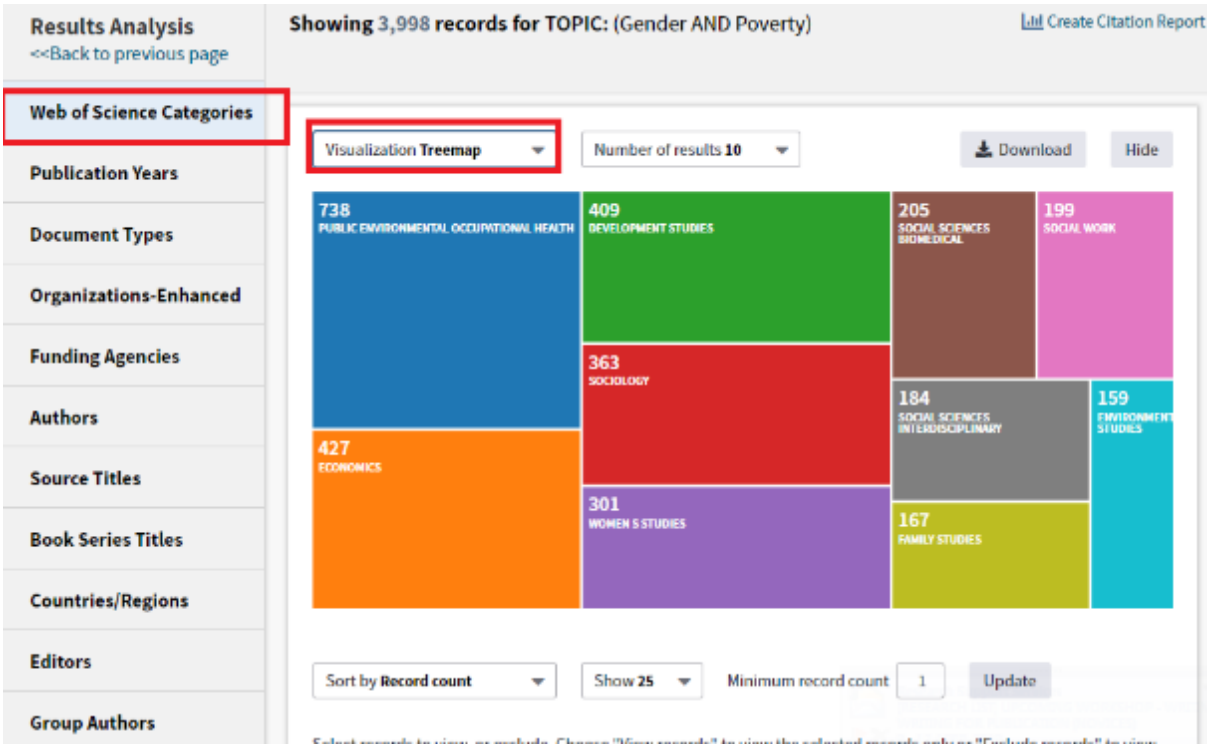
Similarly, the Social Sciences Citation Index on the Web of Science platform, and its siblings the Arts & Humanities Citation Index (A&HCI) on Web of Science , and the Science Citation Index on Web of Science, also develop from a standard subject search into an analytical tool:

Do a search as normal:



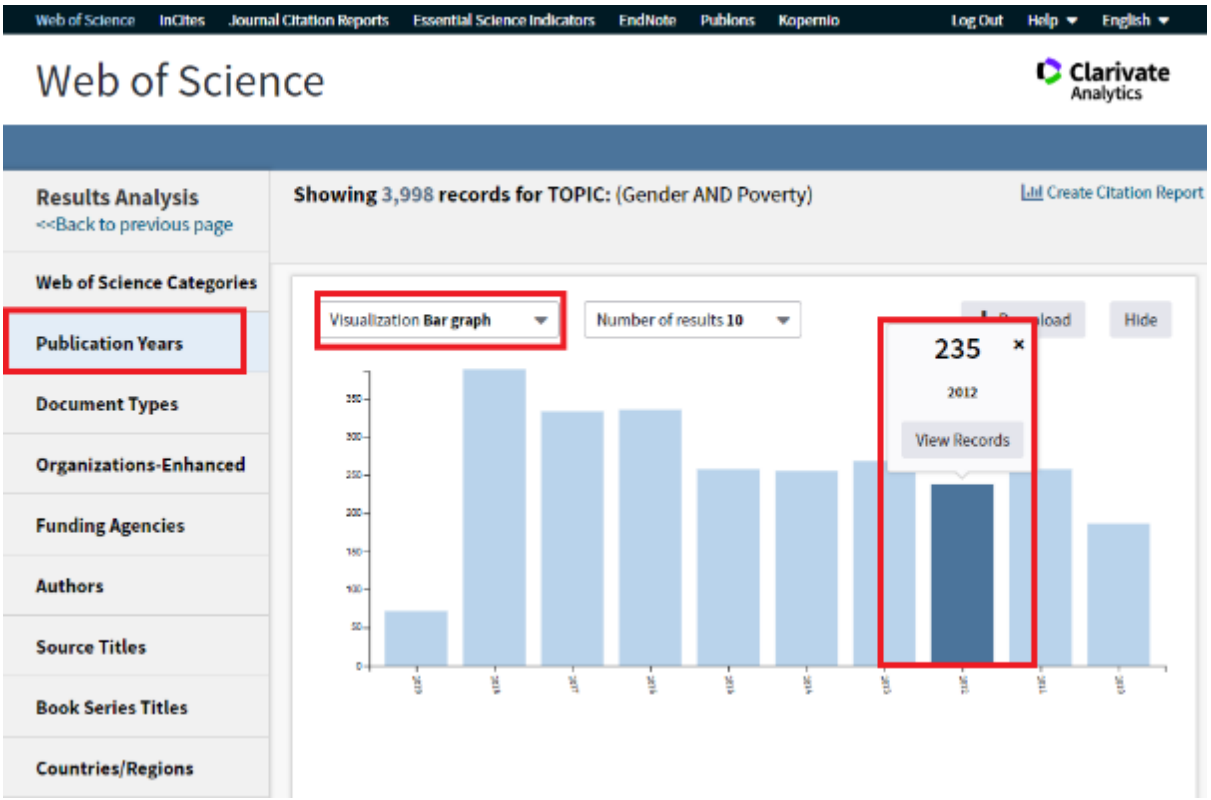
As with Scopus, you can rank the results by highly cited or press Analyse:



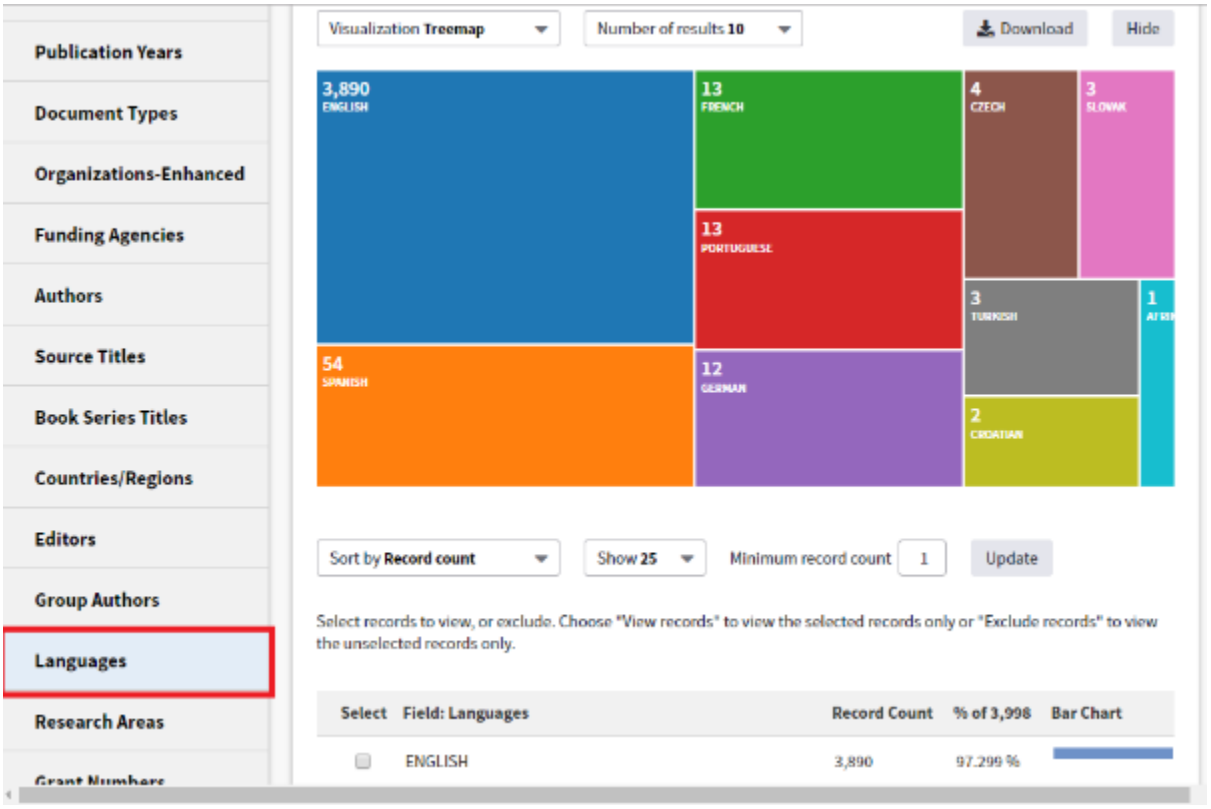


The first display of Analyse is the subject categories into which the results fall and can be displayed as either a treemap or bar graph. Other displays can be selected from the list on the left.

Publication Years is best show by bar graph, for example, and this is the default display.



Languages, as distinct from Countries/Regions, can be interesting also:

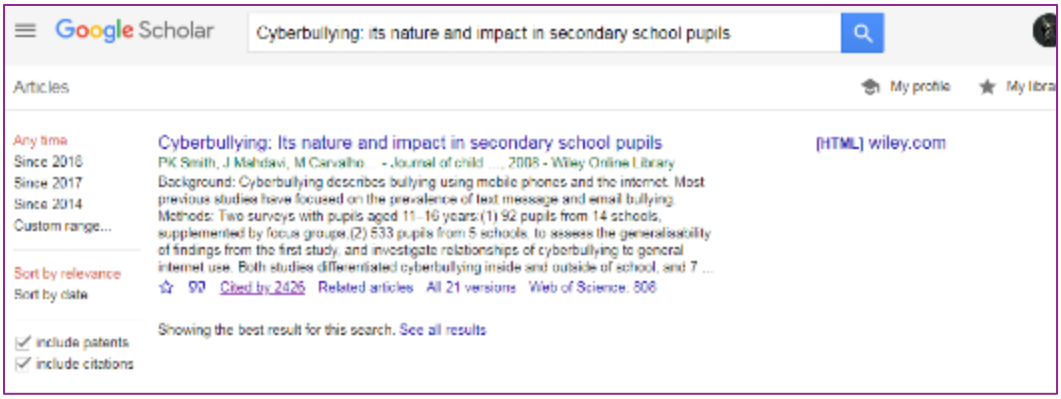


Both Scopus and the Citation Indexes on Web of Science are worth examining, the holdings of each are massive, but while Scopus and the Citation Indexes know a lot about a lot, they don't know everything about everything, by any means. Any database is only as good as its holdings.

When it comes to tracing the influence of a major seminal work or author, it is often convenient to leverage the sheer breadth of scope of Google Scholar (not least because it lists books and book chapters) and particularly its *Cited By* option.

Scopus listed the most highly cited article in its search above, [Cyberbullying: Its nature and impact in secondary school pupils], as cited by 1006

Google Scholar lists it as cited by 2462….



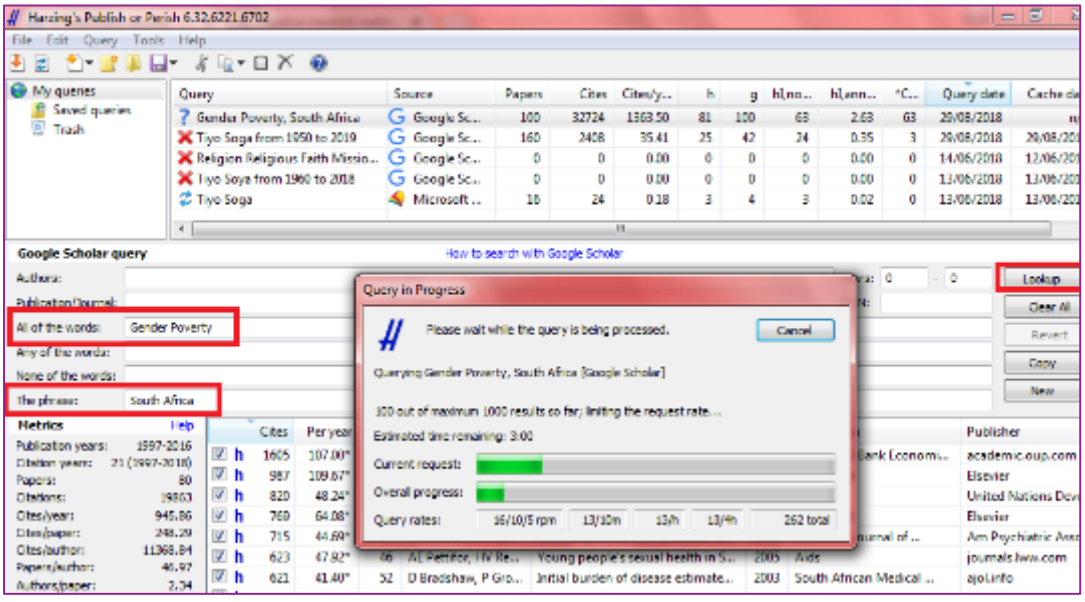
The most highly cited one of which, by the way, being a rather nice-looking **review article** on the whole subtopic of school cyberbullying.

On the downside of Google Scholar – the sheer quantity of its holdings can be unmanageable and counter-productive when considered *en-masse*.

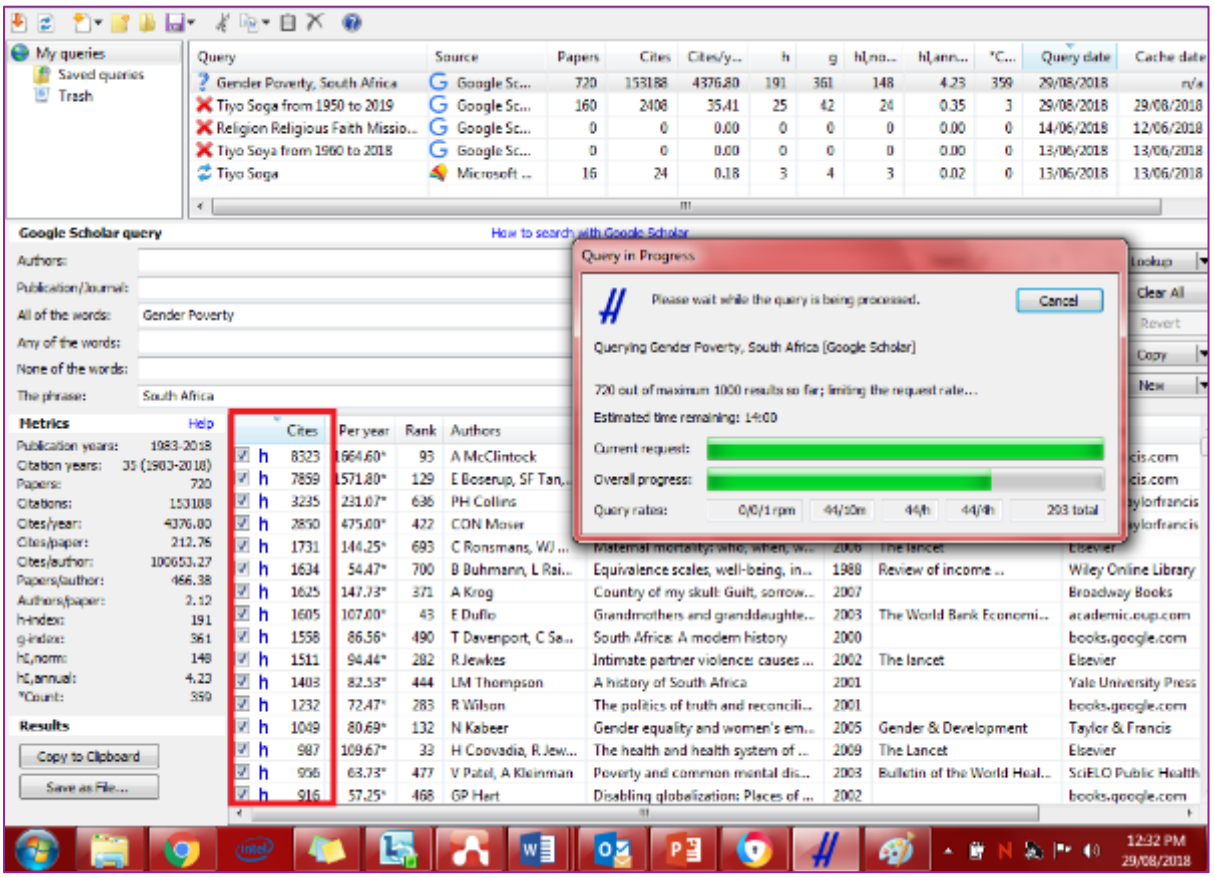
It is sometimes helpful to search Google Scholar through an interface called Harzings Publish or Perish.

Download it from the internet and install it on your PC. (just search for it or go directly to https://harzing.com/resources/publish-or-perish)

It allows you to search Google Scholar in the manner of a Google Scholar advanced search…..



This brings up the top 1000 sources on Google Scholar, *sorted by the most highly cited*, in other words, the most influential sources listed across the whole breadth of books and articles and conference papers and chapters on Google Scholar….



However – we are still dealing with a shed-load of very varied literature, and a fairly rigid/limited set of searching options.

So this is where it pays to narrow down you focus to more precise tools such as databases specific to your discipline (or those of other disciplines likely to be of interest - Political Studies, Economics, Psychology - as well as key African databases such as Africa Wide or African Journal (previous SA e-Publications), if your work has an African focus.

In addition, you will find it useful to search national or perhaps international book catalogues, and perhaps to find official reports and statistics, as well as any Masters of Doctoral theses, which often provide unique survey data, as well as providing good examples to follow.

But to get these sources, we will need to go back to the tools and techniques of ….

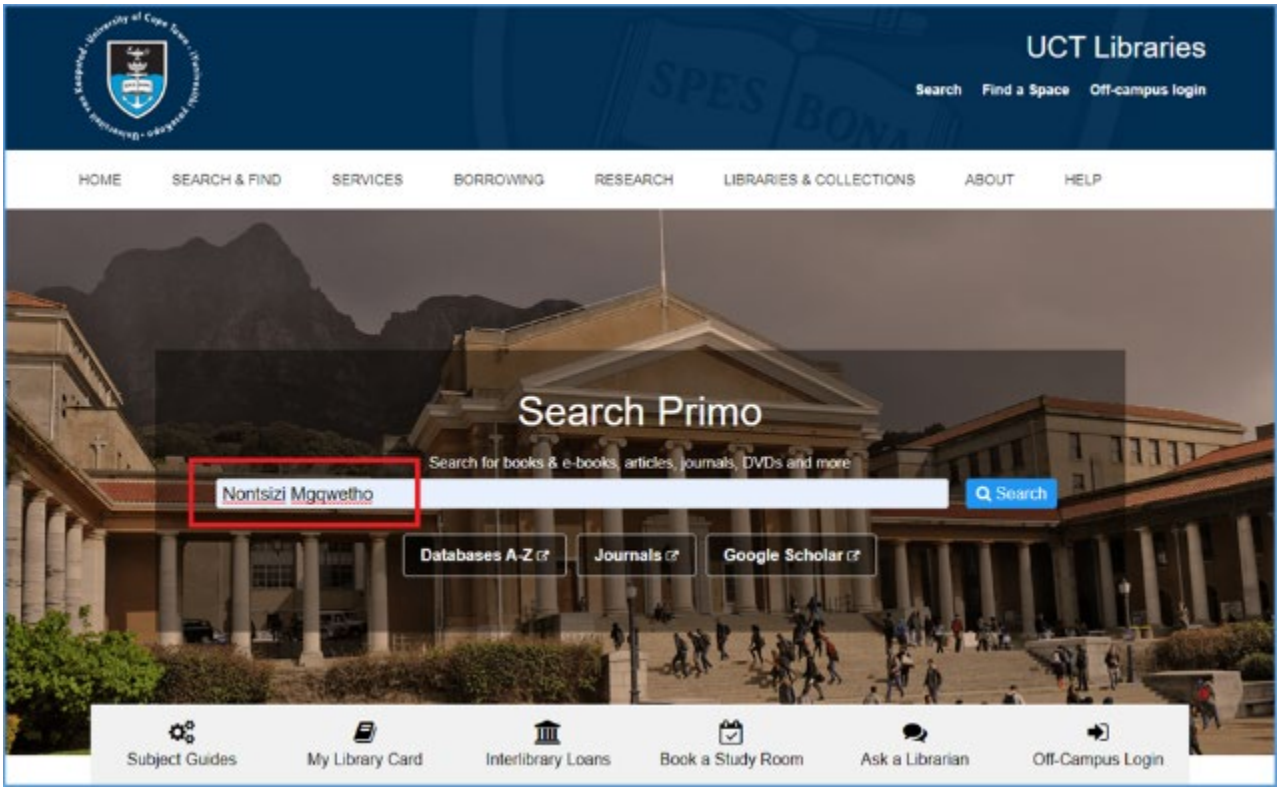
Hardcore scholarship:

Starting with the basics of our new book catalogue – (and it is amazing how many people miss a core book or reference work on their topic just by jumping past this step.)

PRIMO: the Basics of Survival on the UCT Catalogue

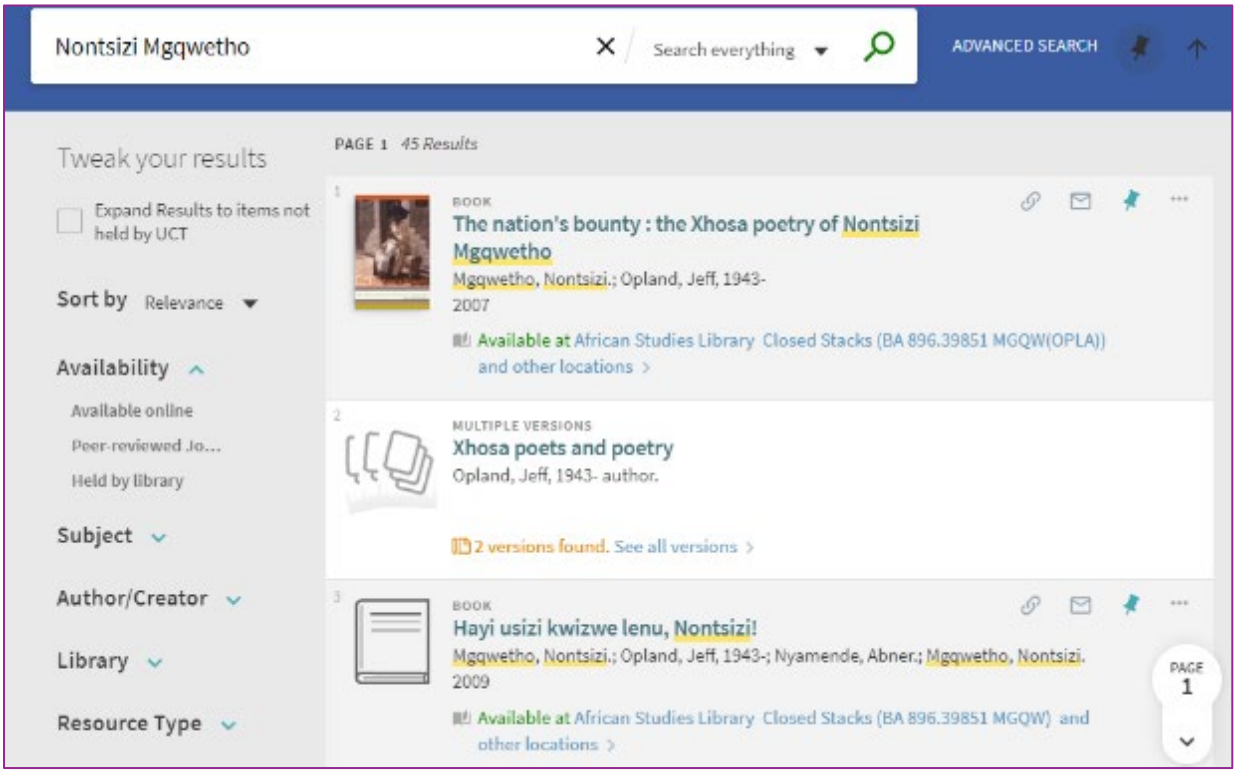
PRIMO is a tool for searching across the UCT library book catalogue as well as a selection of our databases of full text journal articles, all with one query.

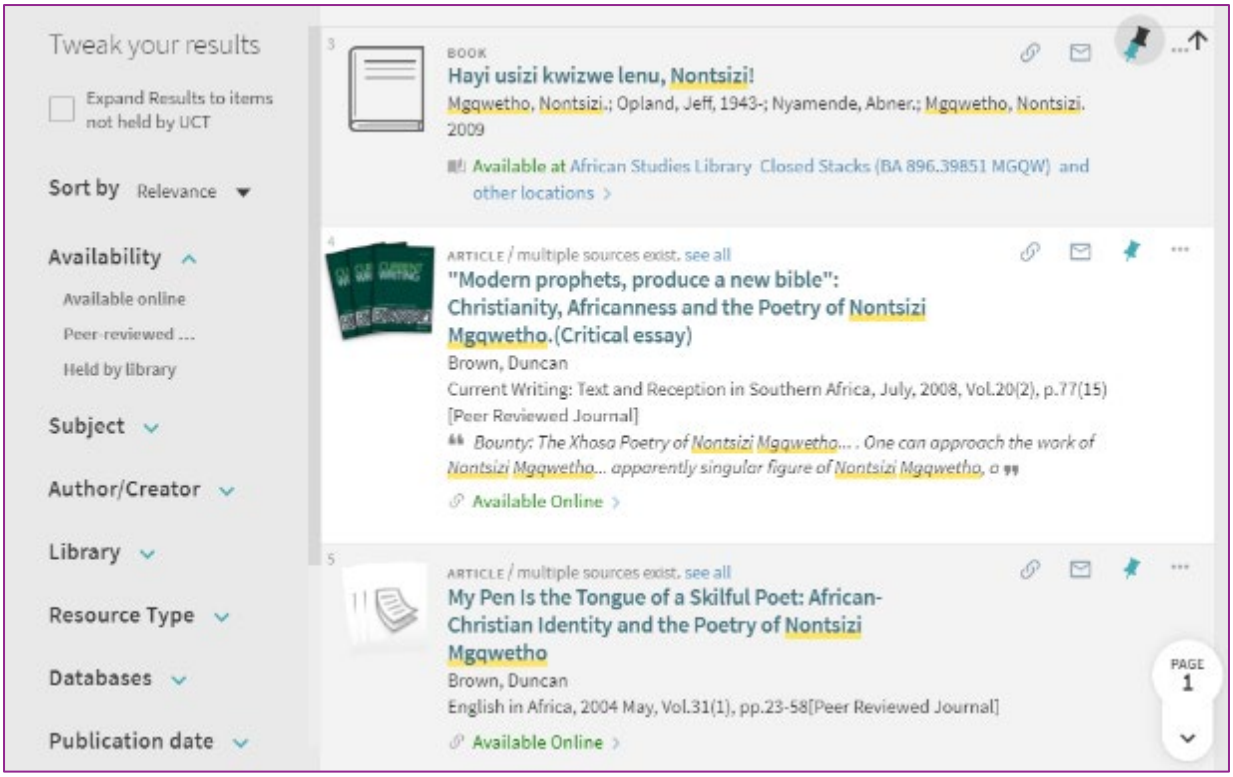
You can find it on the library homepage at www.lib.uct.ac.za



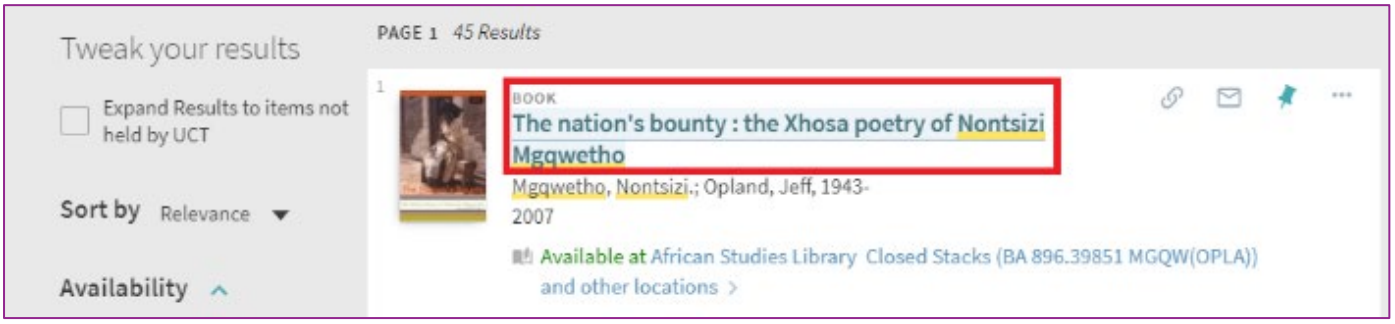
In this example I am going to look for a particular author – Nontsizi Mgqwetho.

This quick search brings up the copies that we have of her work, as well as books and articles *about* her work. ☺



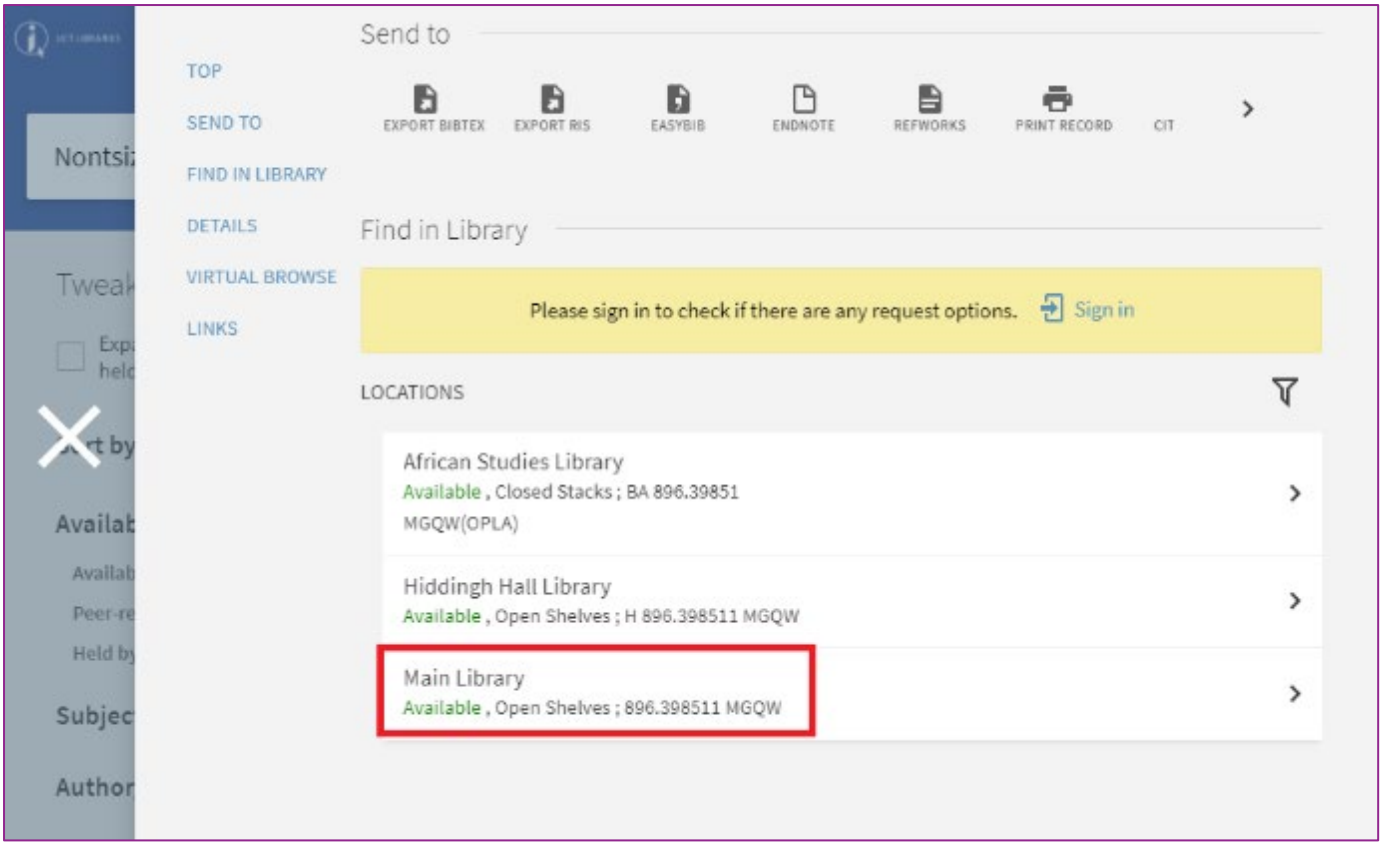


Clicking on the TITLE of the top record takes me to the records for the printed books and gives me the shelf number so I can find them on the shelves: It says the book is available at the African Studies Library and other locations.



The African Studies Library is a research and archive collection, which collects and preserves books in stock for the generations yet to come and attracts researchers from around the world. In consequence the African Studies collection books can only be read in that library, and may not be borrowed.

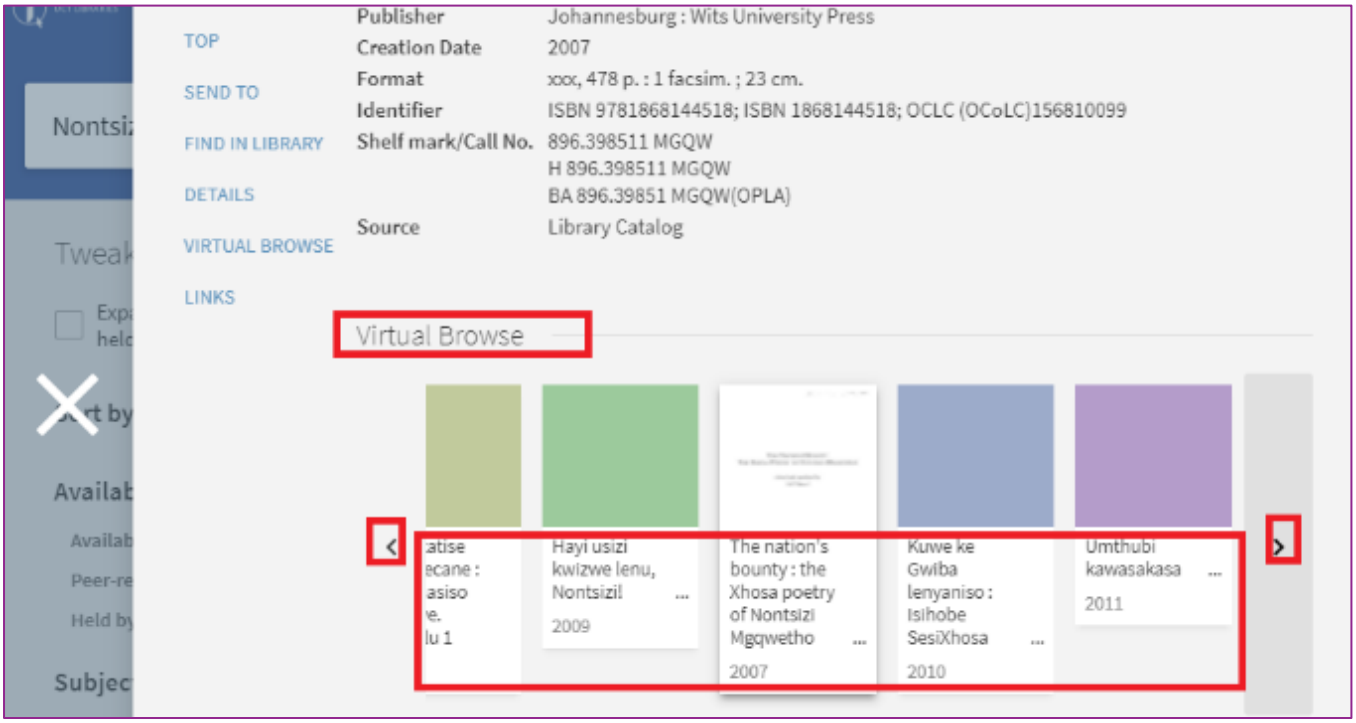
The Main Library copy is the one that can be borrowed, but you have to get into the full record to finds its specific shelf number.



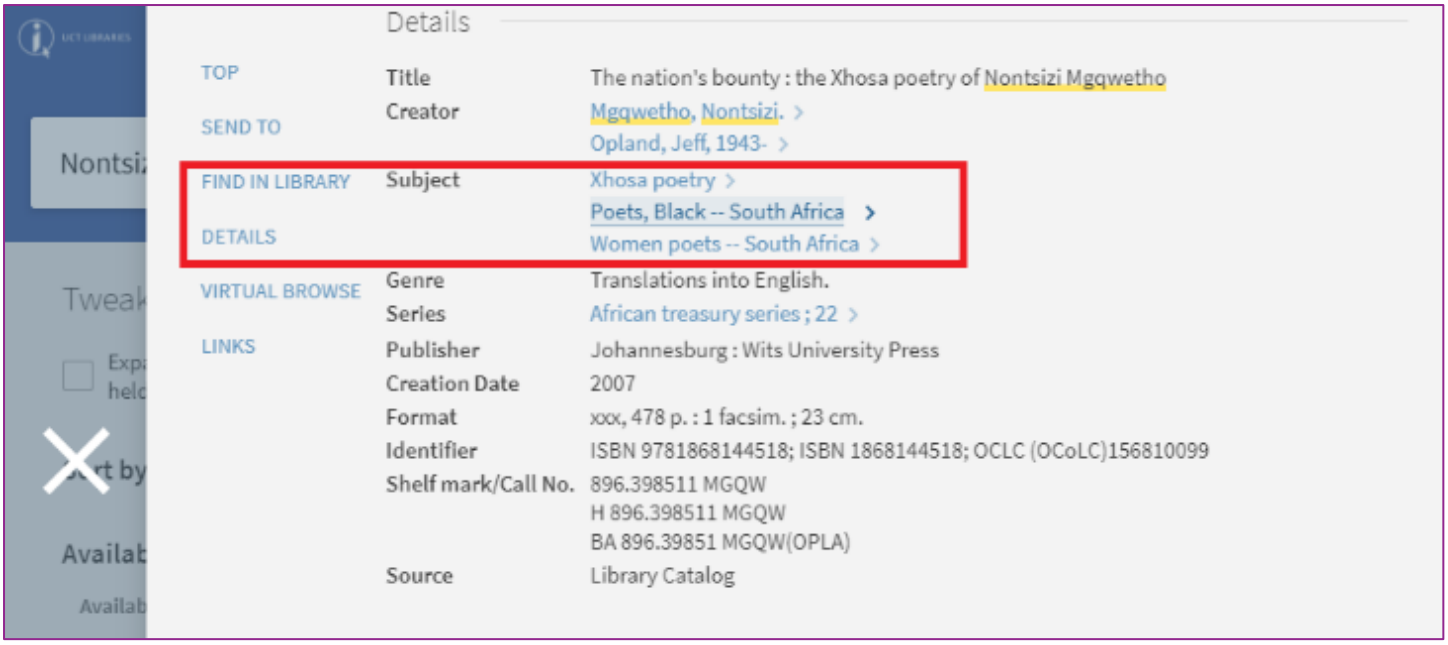
The shelf number works like a street address – just follow the numbers up or down until you get to the address you want. Shelf numbers keep related books together, so once you have found your book, it is often useful to browse the books on either side of it as well.

In fact, you don't even have to physically be in the library to do it… If you again click on the title of one of the results, you will be taken to the full record for the book – *which has a virtual browse option* – so you can see all its neighbouring books…. You never know what you will discover that way.

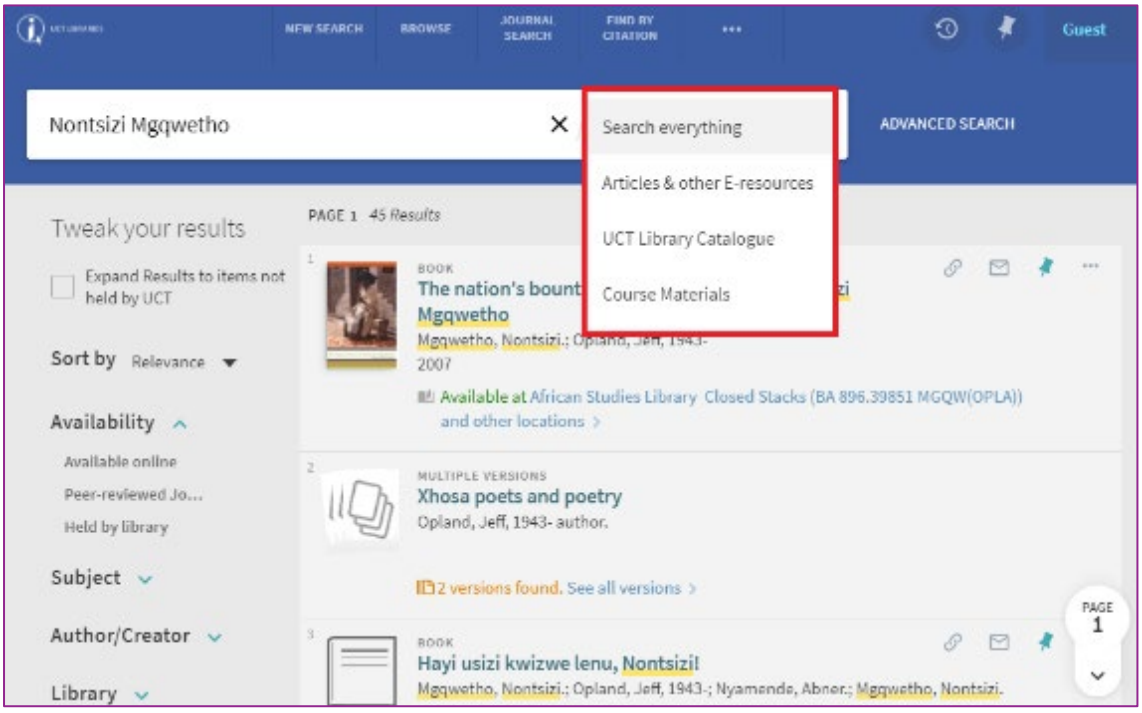
In fact, it is now particularly important to use the virtual browse, since so many of our newest books are electronic and do not show up on the physical shelves at all….



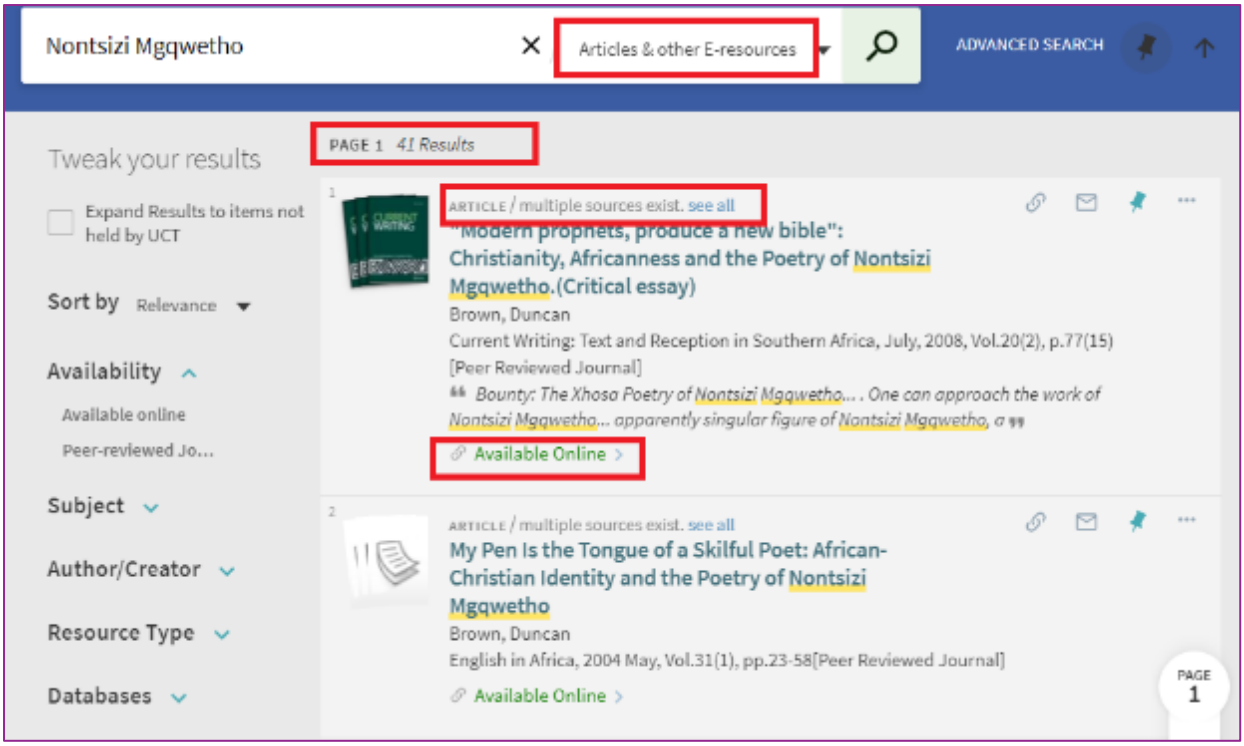
By clicking on the blue subject headings in the record you can also call up similar books which share that subject heading.



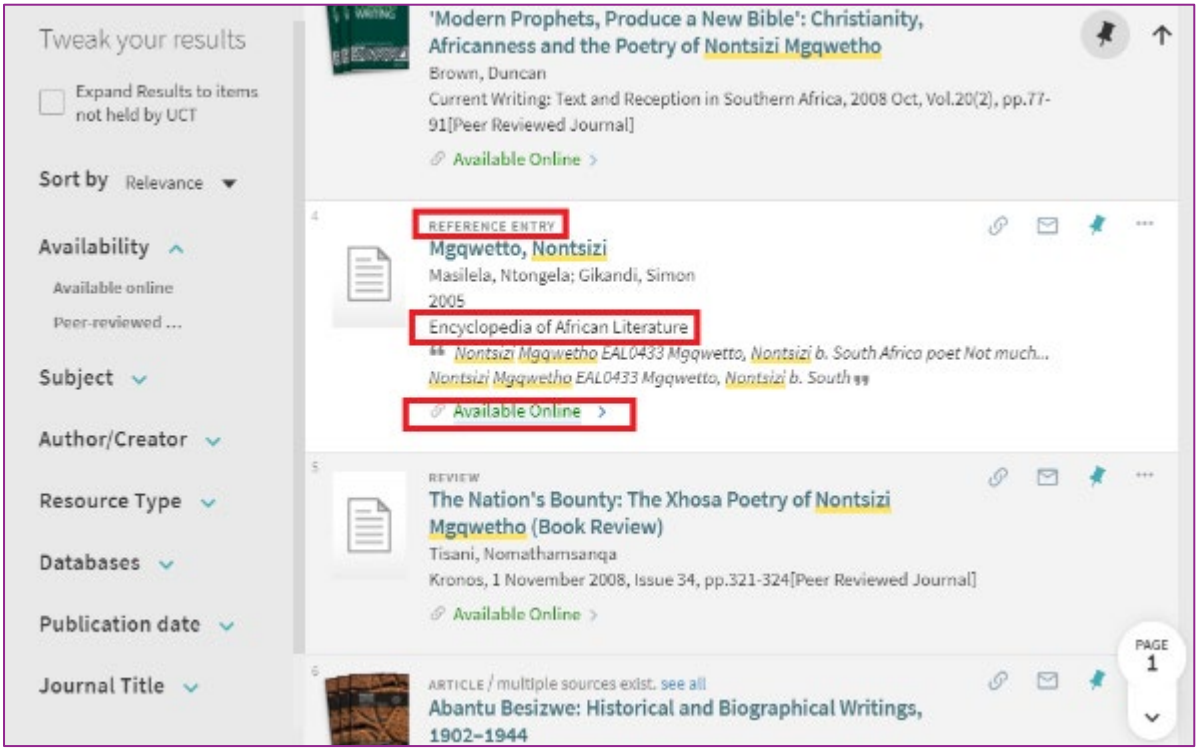
On the search screen you can use a drop-down arrow to search only for electronic journal articles or electronic books or reference works.



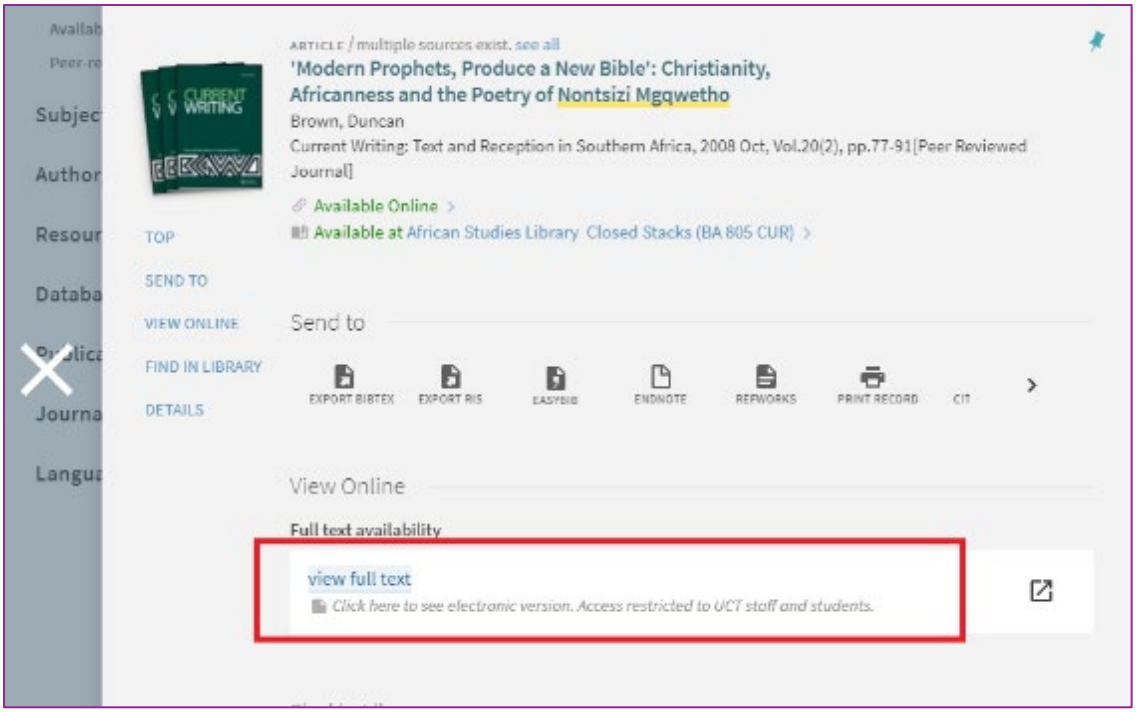
In this example, restricting the search to Articles & other Electronic Resources, the top results are for electronic journal articles…



And further down we have an electronic encyclopaedia entry for her, also available online.

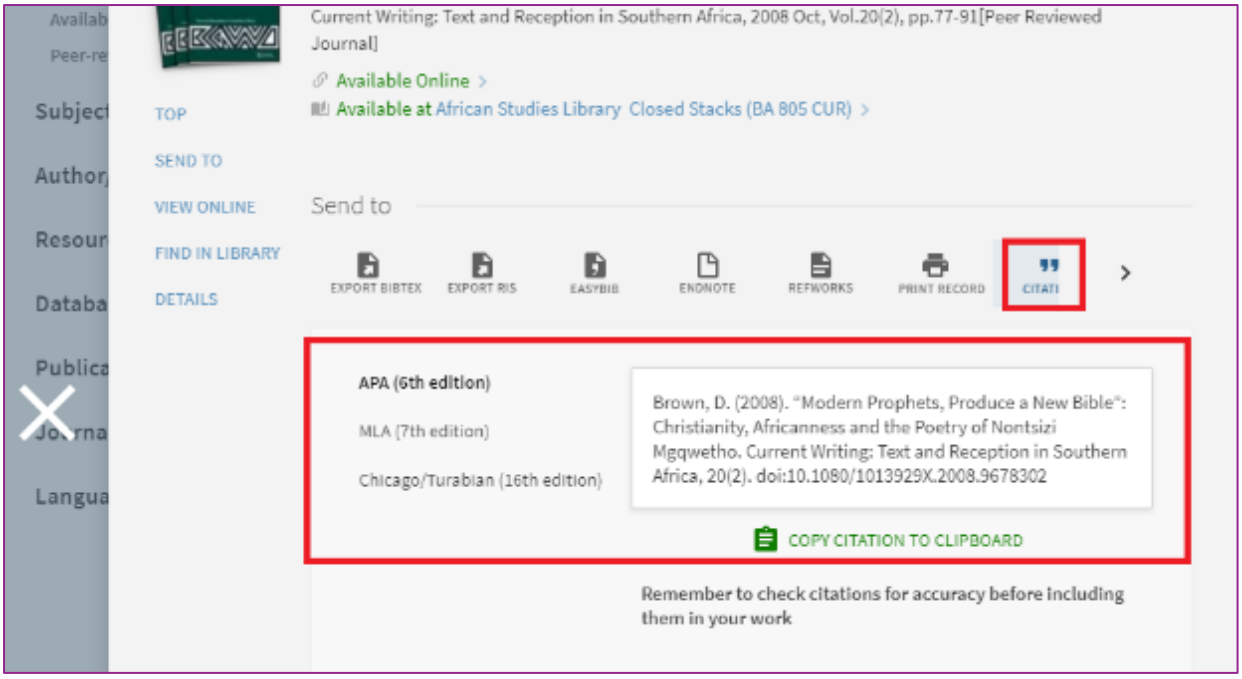


If I click on the title I will be taken to a full record for the article or electronic book, and a link to the database on which it lives:

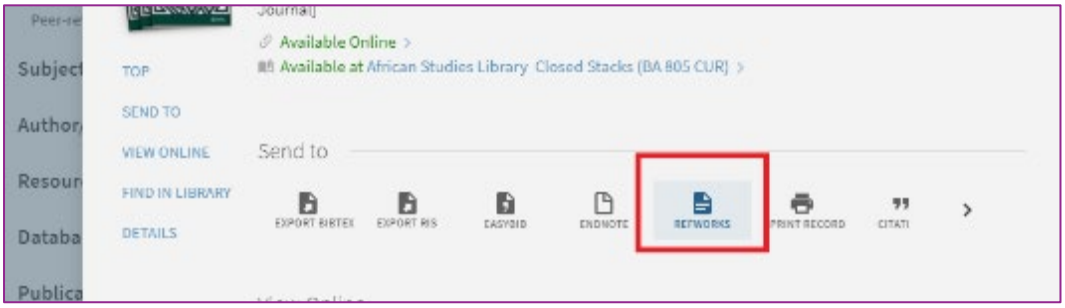


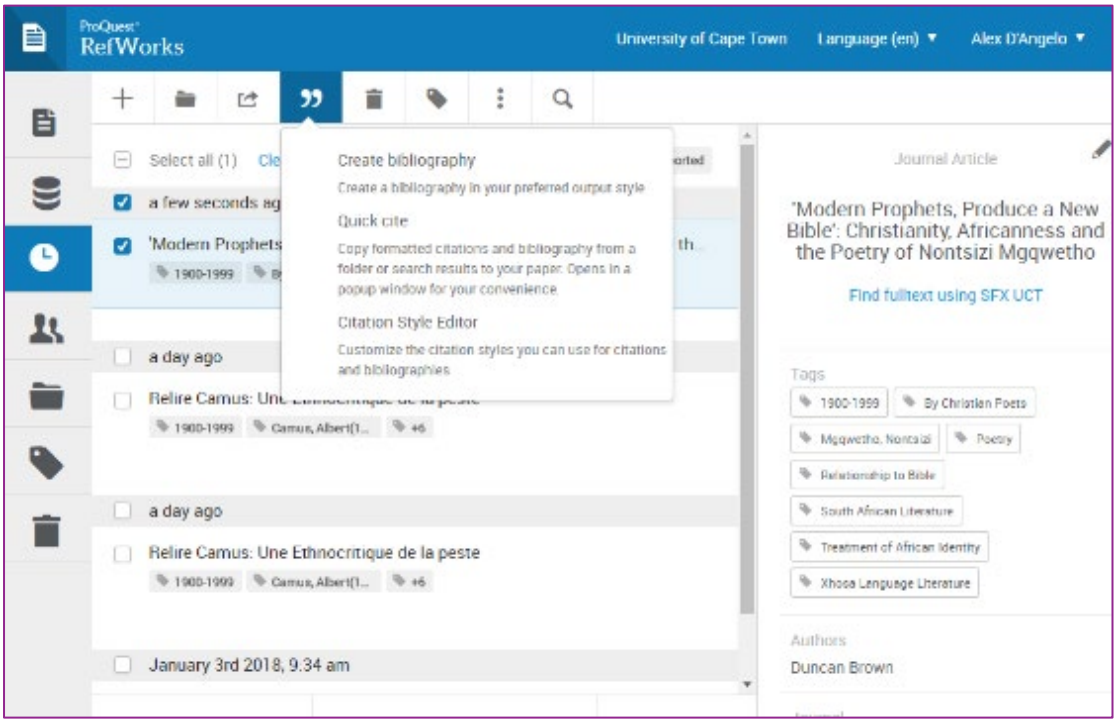
And so to download the article:

The record also shows me how to cite the book or article – which I will need to do if I am going to use it in an essay:

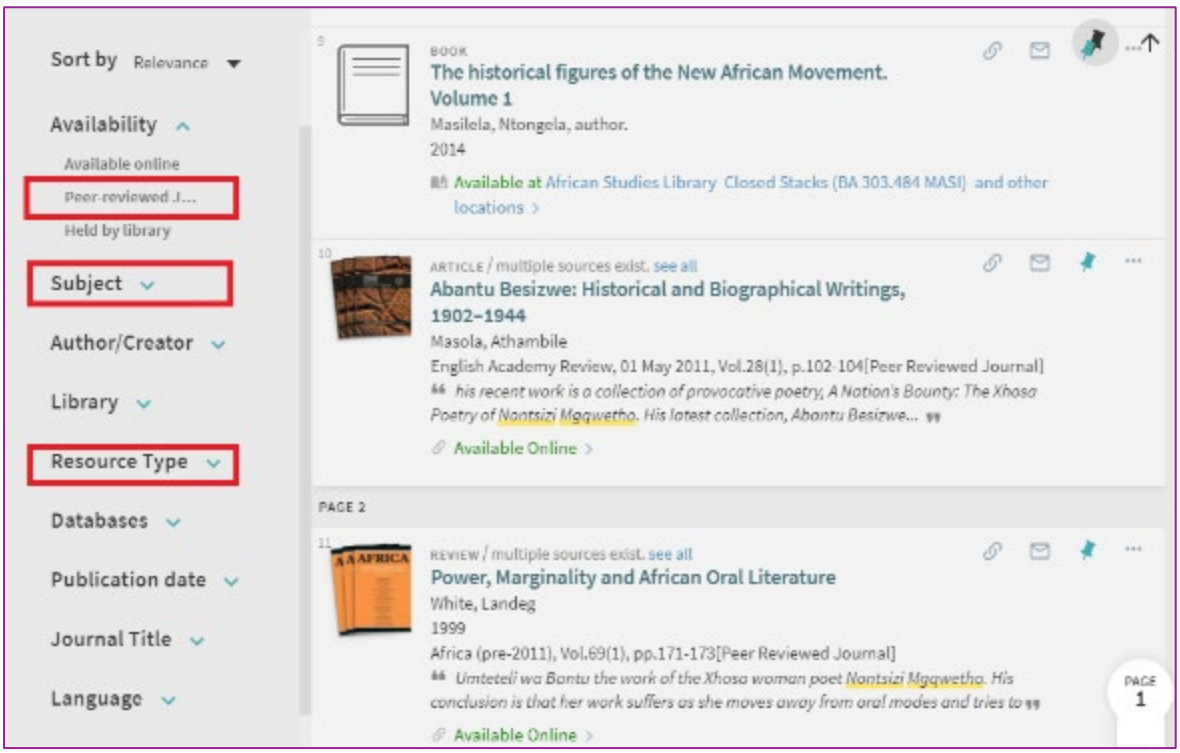


Or, even better, it allows me to send the record to a program like RefWorks or Endnote, which does my citing for me, automatically, at the touch of a button….



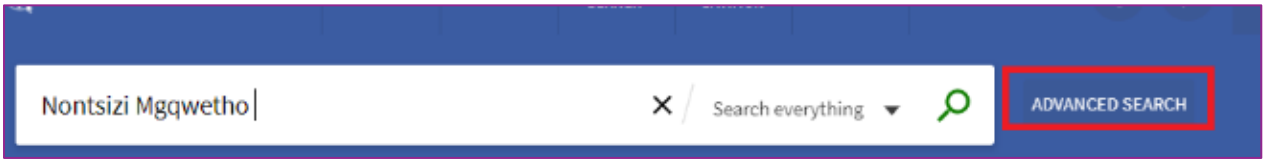


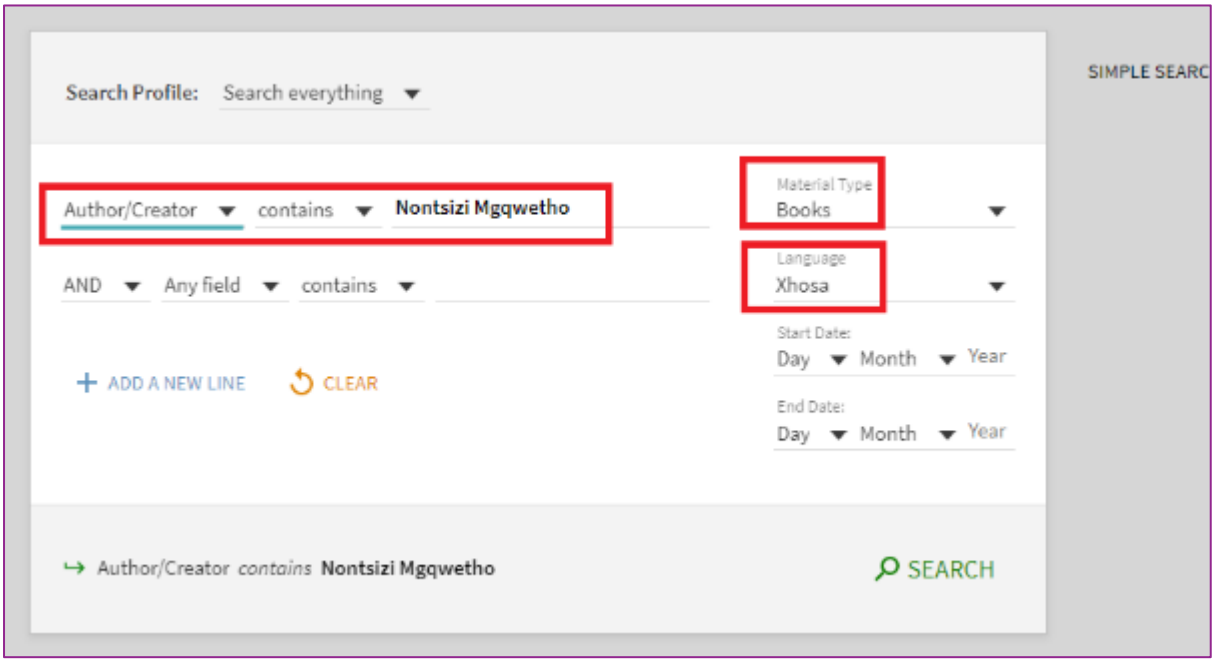
The left hand side of the screen has all sorts of options for refining or restricting your results:



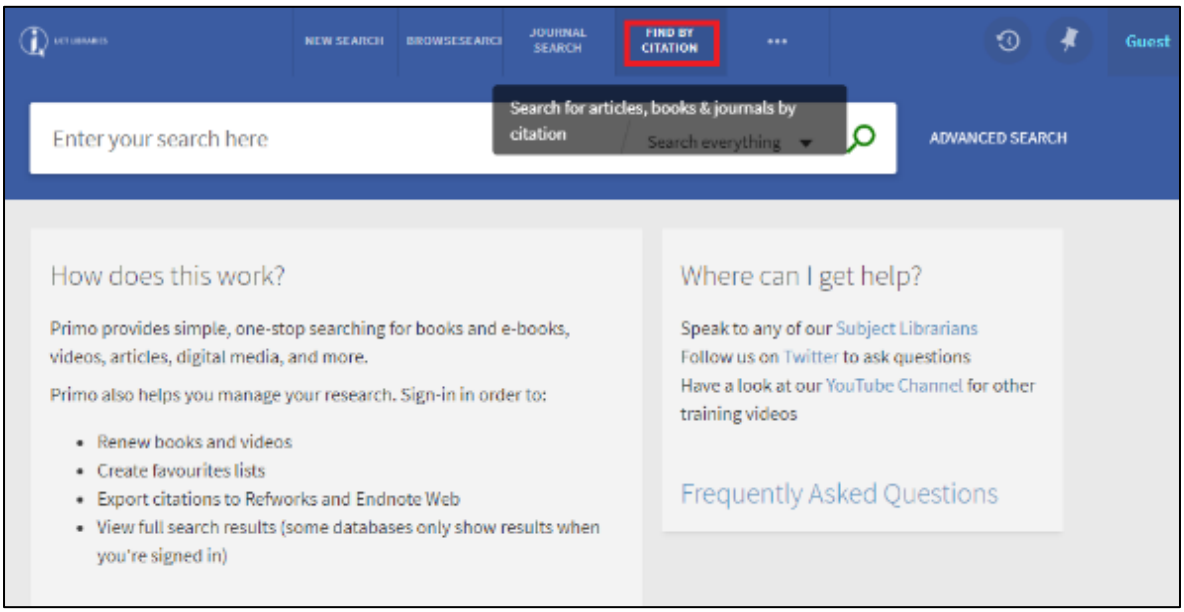
The most useful are probably Peer-reviewed Journals (the most respectable journals, I which every article is vetted by other academics), Subject or Resource type:

If you are getting too many results – and PRIMO can bring up *a lot* of results – you can use an Advanced Search to search more precisely:



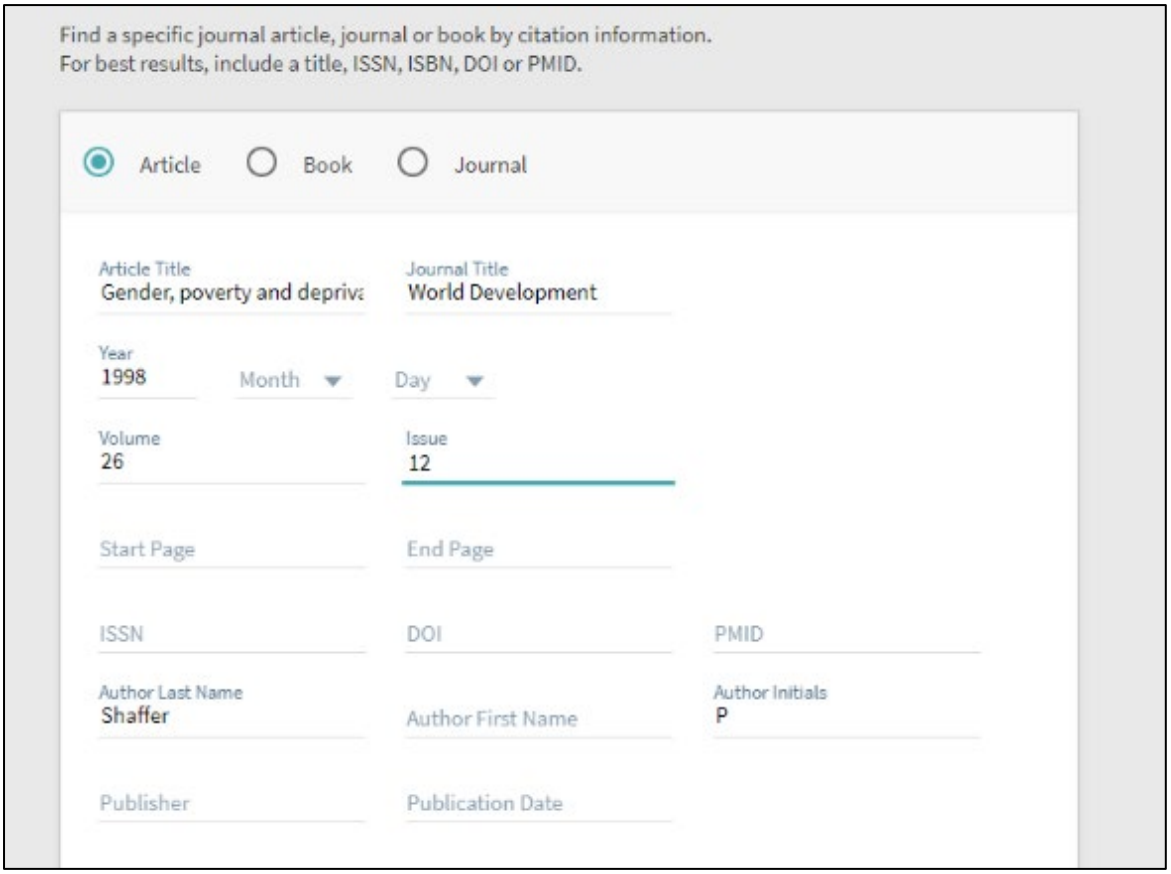


And if you are looking *for a very specific book, journal or article* – for example from a reading list - PRIMO has a *Find By Citation* form which can help you find exactly that reference. I'll use a good social science example here:



Just put in as much information as you have on the reference:

> Shaffer, P., 1998. Gender, poverty and deprivation: evidence from the Republic of Guinea. *World Development*, 26(12), pp.2119-2135.



And this will bring it up in both print and electronic versions:

And clicking on the full text or database link will take you to it.

A digression into Boolean Searching

It is possible to create very precise searches just using keywords.

The trick is to combine them with *Boolean Operators*, *wildcards and brackets*. Most of our databases, including our library catalogue, take Boolean operators.

Consider this search string:

(child* OR wom?n OR gender) AND poverty AND Africa* NOT "African American"

The * is a wildcard – it calls up anything that follows the root "child" – so it will being up child and children or childhood……

The ? is a mid-word wildcard – calls up women and woman…

The OR expands you options – women or gender must come up in the results, it doesn't matter which….

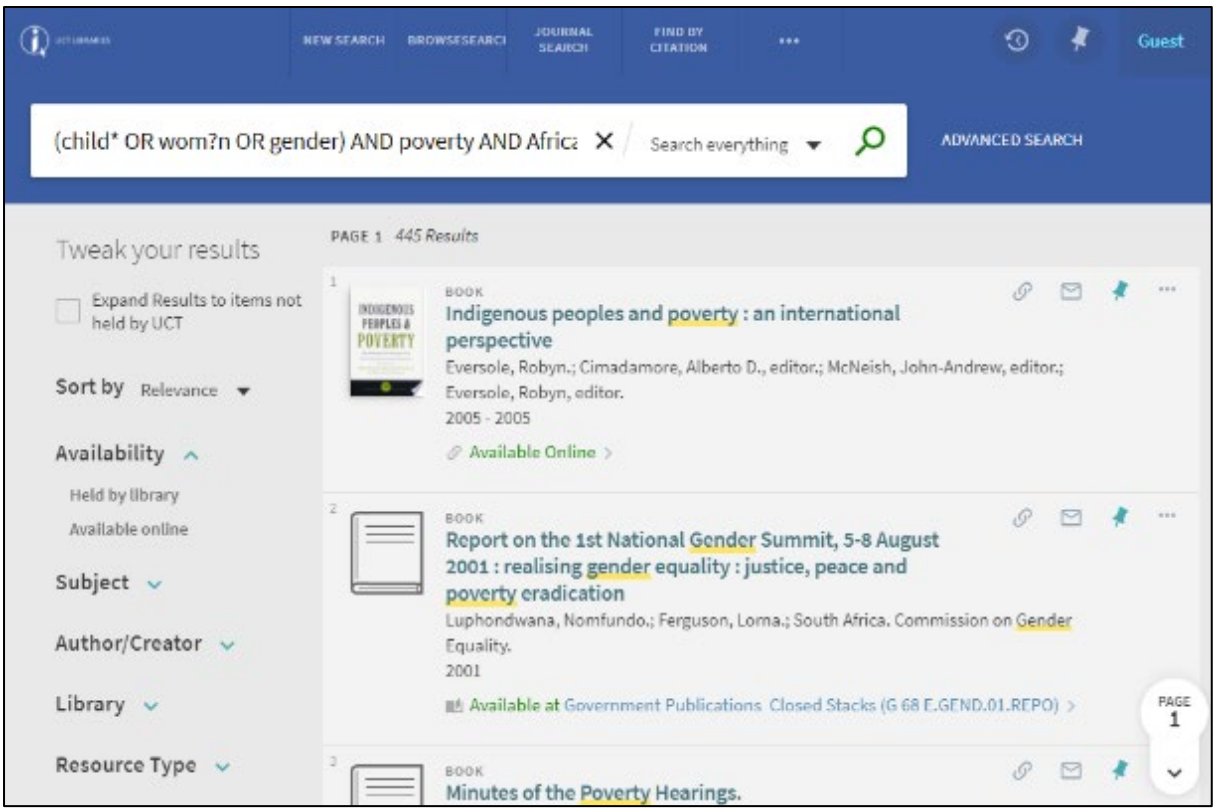
The (brackets) keep the OR words together and relate them to the AND which follows – otherwise the search would call up anything to do with women, regardless of whether it had to do with poverty and Africa….

Any words linked with AND must be included in the search results - OR broadens a search, AND tightens it.

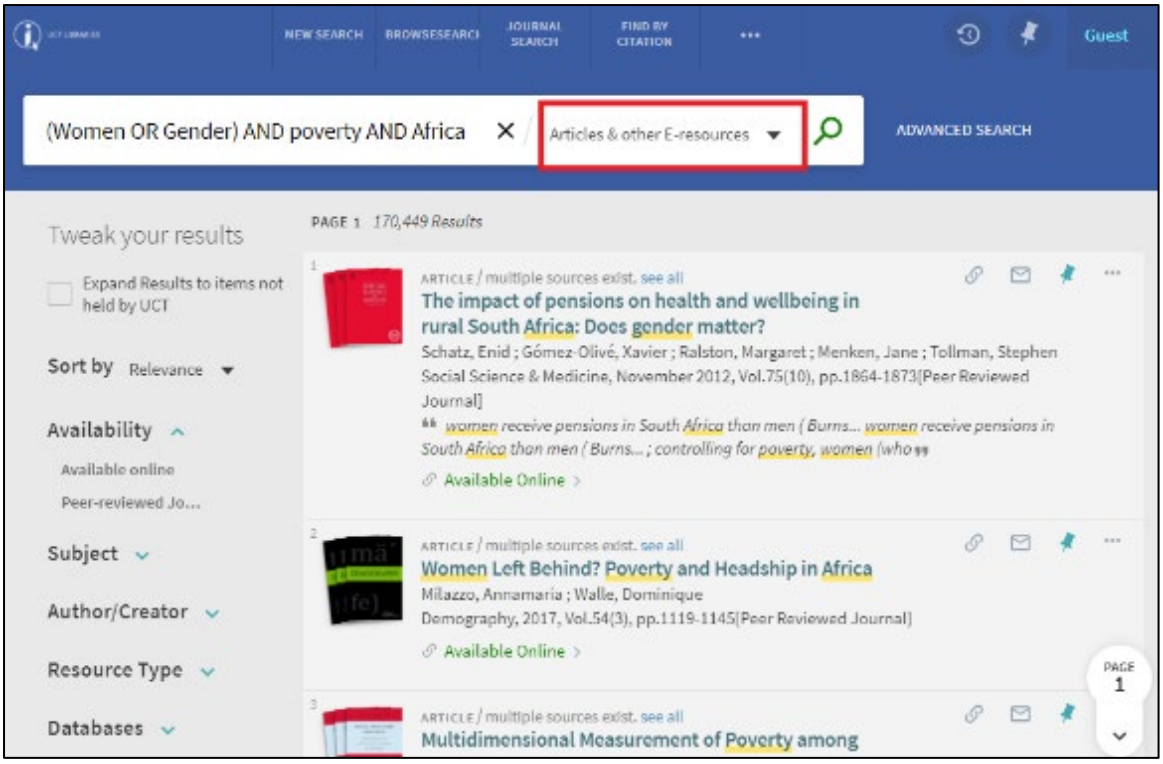
NOT excludes a term. *Be careful of this*. First search without it, to get an idea of what you are missing.

"Inverted commas" enclose a *precise phrase*.

To use Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT) in PRIMO, you must enter them in CAPITAL LETTERS, otherwise PRIMO ignores them.



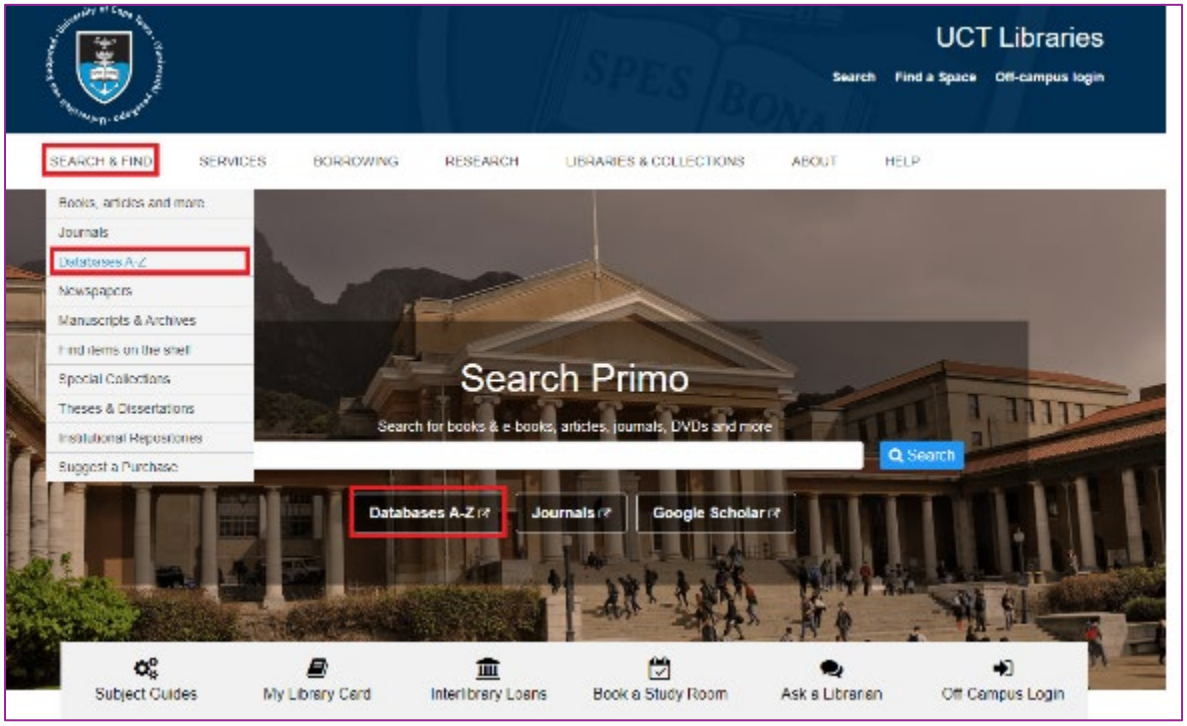
Don't forget that you can restrict the search to electronic journal articles or electronic books only, using the drop down arrow – *useful if you are off-campus*.



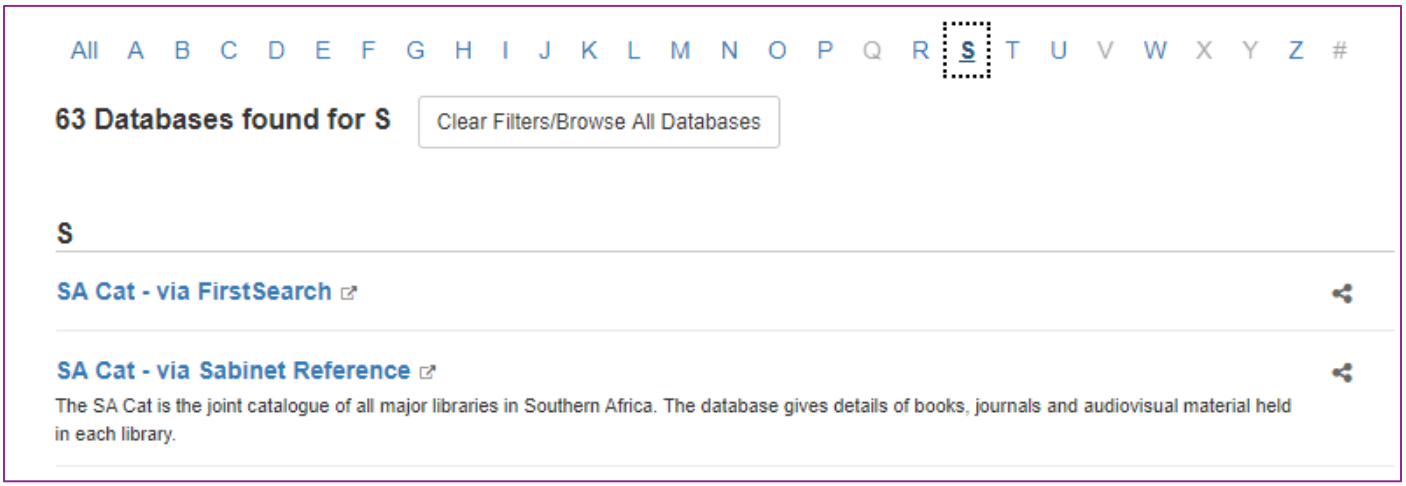
Searching National and International Book Catalogues

Having done a search on the UCT catalogue, it might be a good idea to repeat it on the National Catalogue, SA Cat, found in various manifestations under S on our databases list. Books not at UCT can often be obtained by our inter-library loans dept. at (ill@uct.ac.za)

From the Library homepage, mouse over **Search & Find** and select **Databases A-Z**



The South African catalogue is very handy for picking up local research studies or small print-run pamphlets held only at one or two other libraries in SA – Wits for example, or UWC.



SA Cat covers the holdings of all the major libraries, including university and major research institution libraries in South Africa.

You will pick up titles of books, reports, papers, theses, etc. which UCT does not have, but which can usually be obtained by inter-library loans, at no cost.

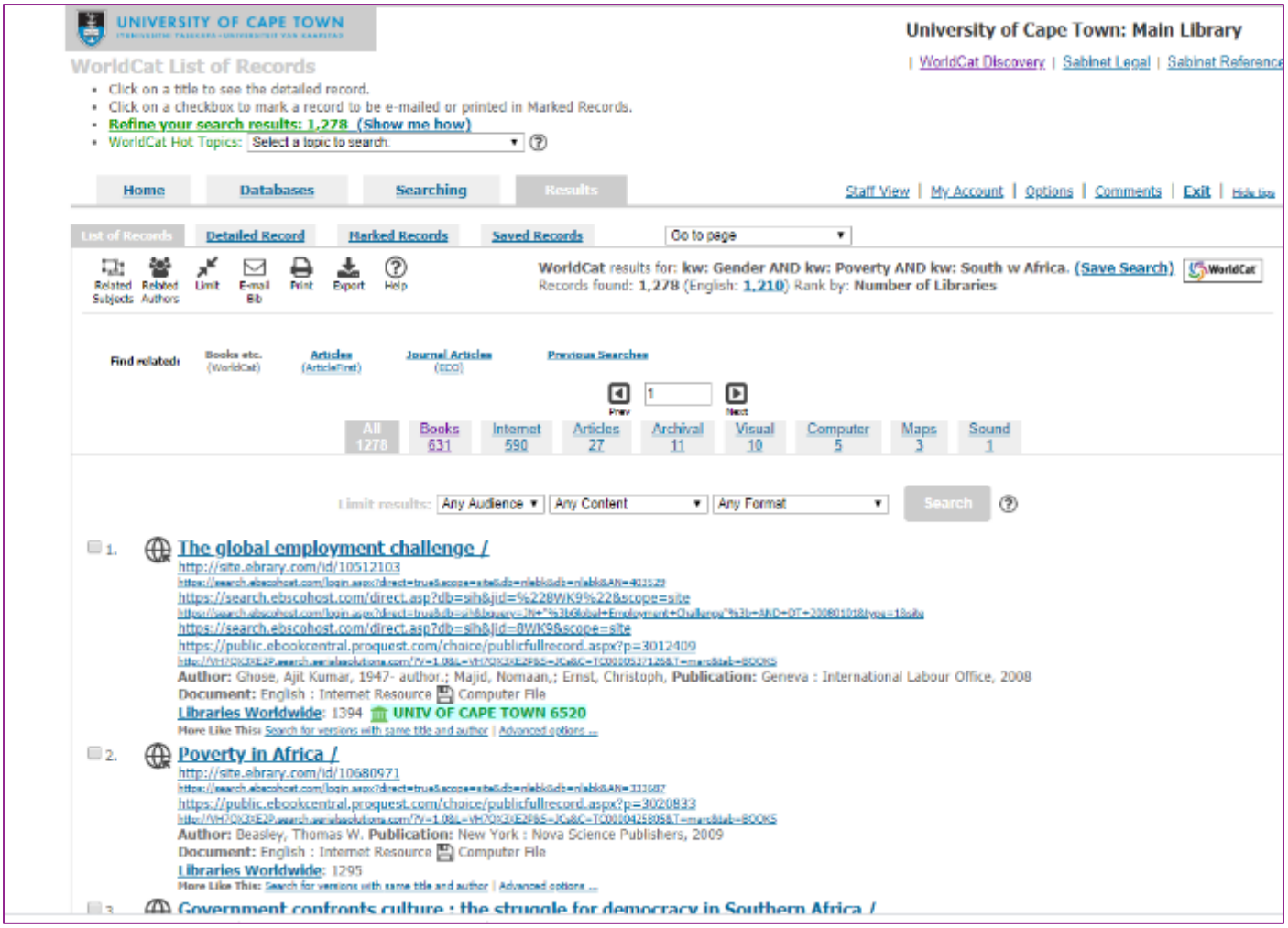
I find keyword searches are usually most effective – though because the national catalogue does not give as much detail for its book records, your keyword searches will be a bit less comprehensive than they would be on the UCT catalogue.

For this reason, although the National catalogue will show material that is in UCT library amongst its findings, it is best to search our own catalogue separately – the search on our interface can be simultaneously more comprehensive and more precise.

Also, our catalogue gives our specific shelf numbers.

And then, under Won the A-Z list, is WorldCat. Which does what it says on the can – *searches internationally across library* catalogues

WorldCat does what the SA Cat does for South Africa, only it is MUCH BIGGER since includes a lot of other countries (not all, but still very many.)



I am glad to see that the topmost (relevance ranked) one is held at UCT, btw. But if we don't have a book that your need, and it is not available in SA, then let me know and I would think about trying to buy it rather than doing an interlibrary loan from overseas.

With so many hits it might be an idea to try to use the limiting functions on this database:

Limiting to books published within a range of years (e.g. 2008-2018) is often helpful.

Searching for Theses

Having got a sense of what books have been published, or what is available in print in South Africa, it is now time to see if there is a gap in the research industry for your own interests, *and to see what is being written at the cutting edge of unpublished research*.

You can use a thesis's references and bibliography as a starting point and take the research further, or explore a different angle. *Often the thesis itself will constitute a body of material that is available nowhere else* – results from an individual's primary research in a local town or suburb, for example.

Most importantly, searching them allows you to check that your exact thesis has not been, or is not at this moment being, written at a university down the road.

Of course, there may often be some overlap of interests – plenty of people might be working in or close to your area, and the fact that others like you are writing on this is evidence that you are taking part in a hot debate or being part of the cutting edge on this topic – adding your own unique perspective and study and methodology.

So finding similar-ish work is not automatically a train smash.

But you do not want to discover, just before, or just after, handing in, that *exactly your own uniquely South African, cutting edge, thesis has been written a couple years earlier. This happens*, and it would be soul-destroying to find that you have spent a year or two repeating somebody else's work; even worse if it were to lead to suspicion of plagiarism.

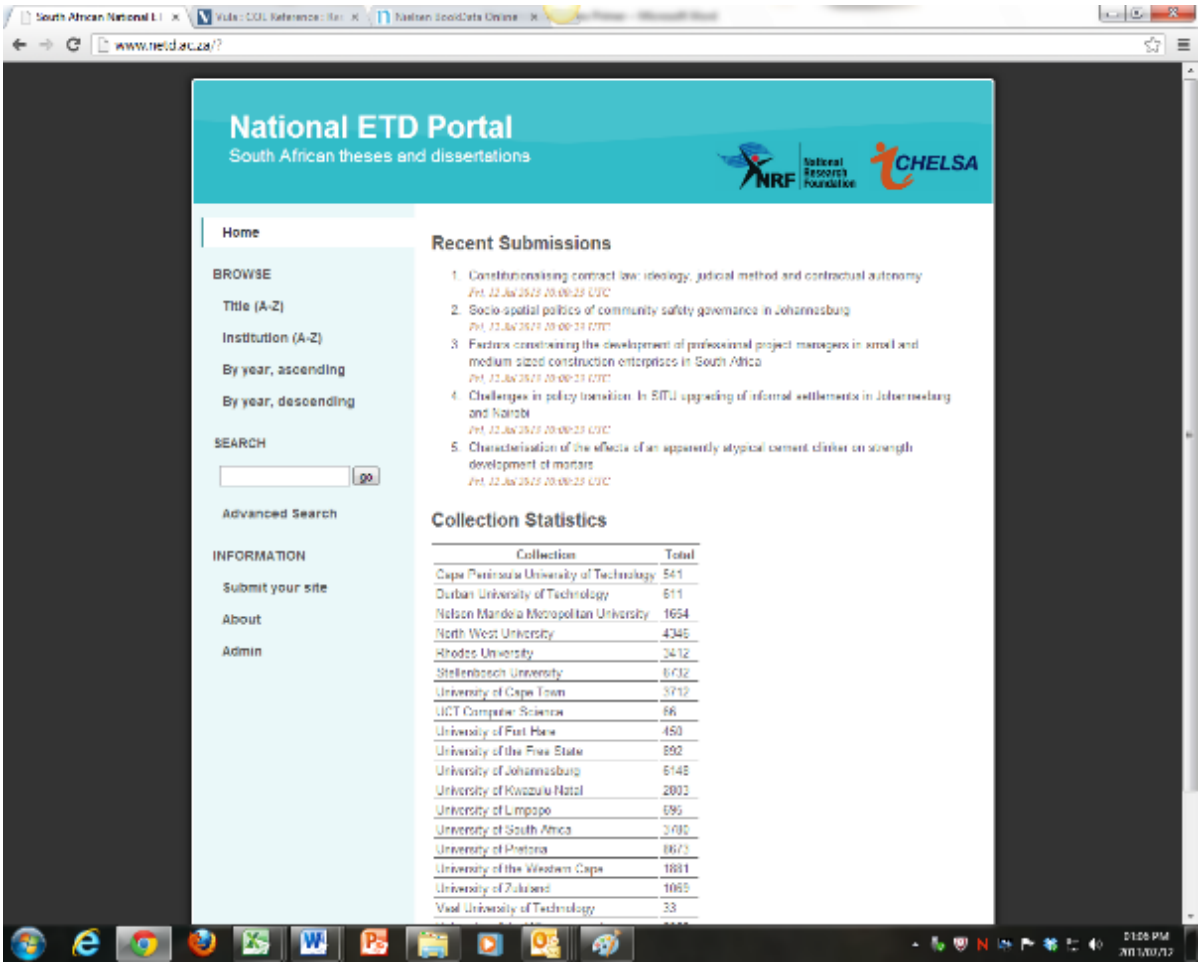
If a Masters or Doctoral thesis was done at UCT, you will find it on our open access database of UCT theses – available from a link on the library homepage.

Any South African thesis not at UCT or free online can be ordered by inter-library loan.

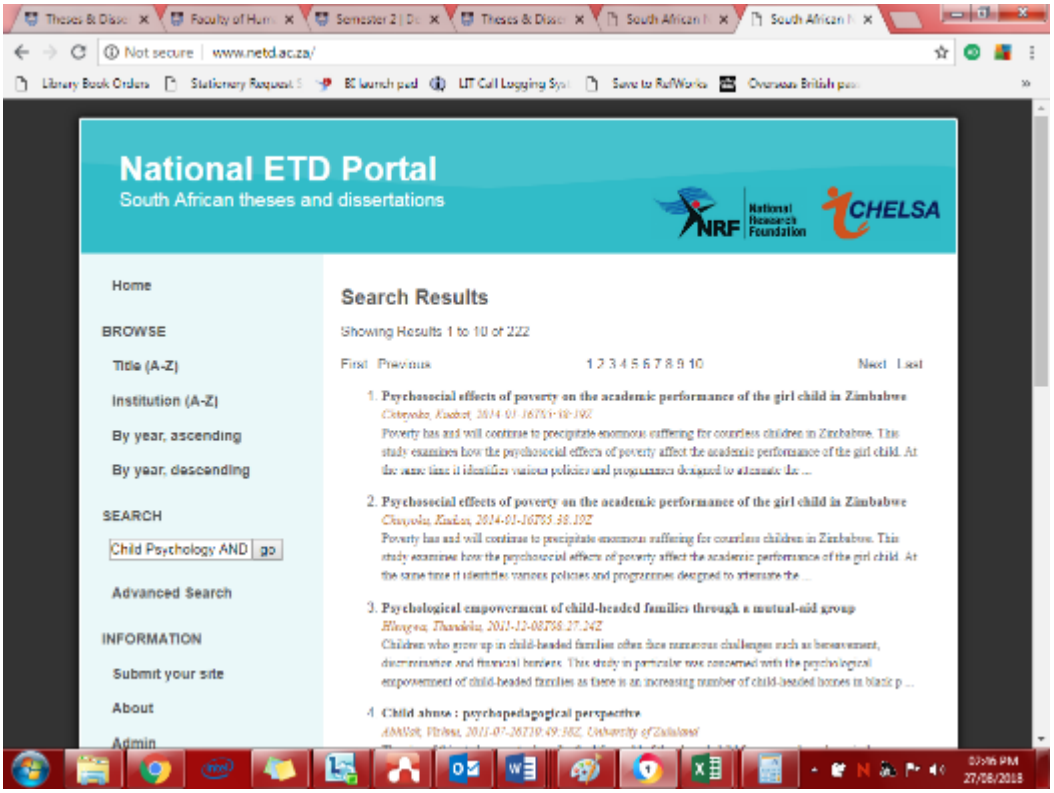
Quite a lot of the most recent ones are available on the web nowadays, though, so if you know the title of a South African thesis, simply putting the title into a Google search can often be rewarding.

The National ETD Portal South Africa: South African theses and Dissertations – under N on our A-Z Database list – is a formal database of full texts South African Theses from all the major institutions in South Africa.

It does not (yet) cover every thesis ever written in SA – the retrospective digitization is still ongoing – but it should have all of the recent ones, and does, in fact, go back quite far – to the 70s in some cases.



A Search for *Child Psychology AND Poverty* brought up 222 hits.



For *international* (Mainly USA) theses, a good tool is ProQuest Dissertations and Theses - A&I

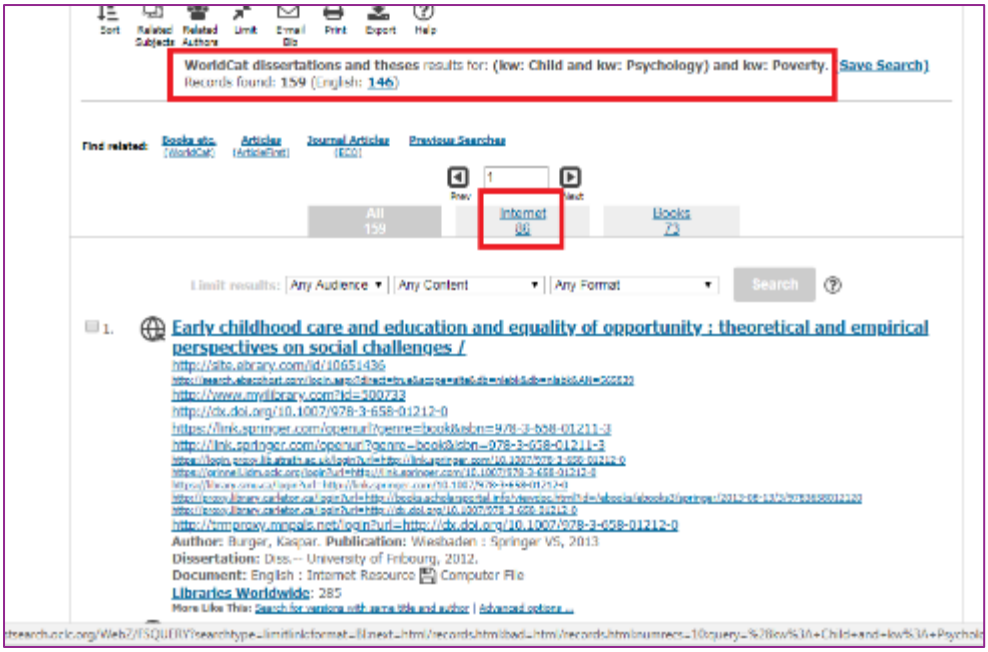
The blurb goes:

> *With more than 2 million entries, PQD&T is the single, central, authoritative resource for information about doctoral dissertations and master's theses. Dissertations published from 1980 forward include 350- word abstracts written by the author. Master's theses published from 1988 forward include 150-word abstracts. Titles available as native or image PDF formats include free twenty-four page previews. UMI offers over 1.8 million titles for purchase in microform, paper or electronic formats.*

The snag with ProQuest is that while it gives a 25 page free preview of the thesis, the theses cost money to download. Since the electronic version is a one-off purchase for person – it cannot be kept in the library – the library is not able to buy them, though we can buy a print version which we can keep.

Another source for international theses is WorldCat Dissertations and Theses

WorldCat Dissertations and Theses provides access to the dissertations and theses available in OCLC member libraries. With no, or few, abstracts, this database suffers the same problems as UCTD. *However, it does link to theses which are available free on the web* - often the only practical way to get hold of foreign theses without paying for them.



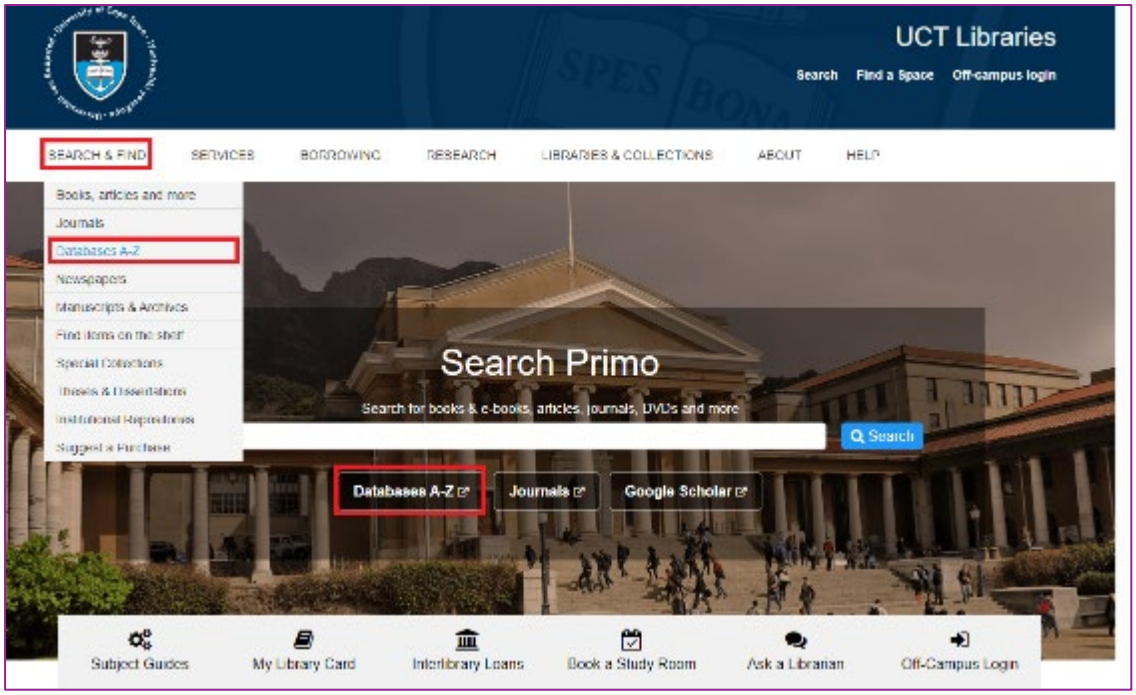
Some of our other databases, particularly *MLA* (for Literature), *Humanities International*, *SocIndex* (for Sociology and more general social sciences), *EconLit* (for economics), and *PsycInfo (*for psychology), provide abstracts of theses, along with abstracts of books and journal articles. You will often encounter a reference to a relevant thesis when searching for journal articles or book chapters on these databases.

Interestingly – people who have written a thesis, particularly a Doctorate, on a particular topic often go on to publish articles or book chapters on the same topic, *so if you find a good thesis, it might be worth searching the journal databases for the writer's name to see if they have continued to write on that theme*.

Selecting and searching specific Journal Databases

Our electronic databases index journal articles – the mainstay of academic publishing and debate. Many of them also index book chapters, conference papers, Government or institutional or NGO reports, and theses.

From the Library homepage, mouse over **Search & Find** and select **Databases A-Z**



You can use the databases to find journal articles and chapters in books by subject, authors or keywords. We have about 180 databases, some of general interest, others subject specific (and your librarians *are really good* at matching specific databases to particular questions.)

UCT subscribes a number of specific subject databases as well as some very good general databases which will help with most queries.

Many of our databases will hold material of interest to just about any subject.

For example:

ScienceDirect (Full Text) - often has very good articles in the ***SOCIAL SCIENCES*** as well as the physical sciences – I would definitely try it for Politics, Psychology, Sociology, Social Work, Socail Anthropology, Education, Gender Studies, Religious Studies … the social sciences in general. It has good holdings in language sciences (Linguistics) too. It is also often a unique source of full text from the Elsevier journals.

JSTOR – is an historic archive of major journals, across disciplines, usually from their first issue in a rolling file until five years ago (so IT IS NOT UP TO DATE.)

Project Muse Premium Collection - if you like JSTOR, you will love MUSE, a collection of high quality, peer reviewed, interdisciplinary journals from leading university presses, not-for-profit publishers and prestigious scholarly societies.

Sabinet African Journals (previously called **SA ePublications**): a small, full text database of largely South African journals – essential for local research.

Africa-Wide: NiPAD - via EBSCOhost - a much bigger combination of African interest databases (African Studies, South African Studies, and African Healthline). Important, but not always full text.

EconLit - via EBSCOhost would have material on poverty and work and economics – including their Humanities/Social Sciences aspects.

PsycARTICLES - via EBSCOhost - on any aspect of psychology, including the Political and Sociological.

SocINDEX with Full Text - via EBSCOhost - described as “the world's most comprehensive and highest quality sociology research database” in the database blurb.

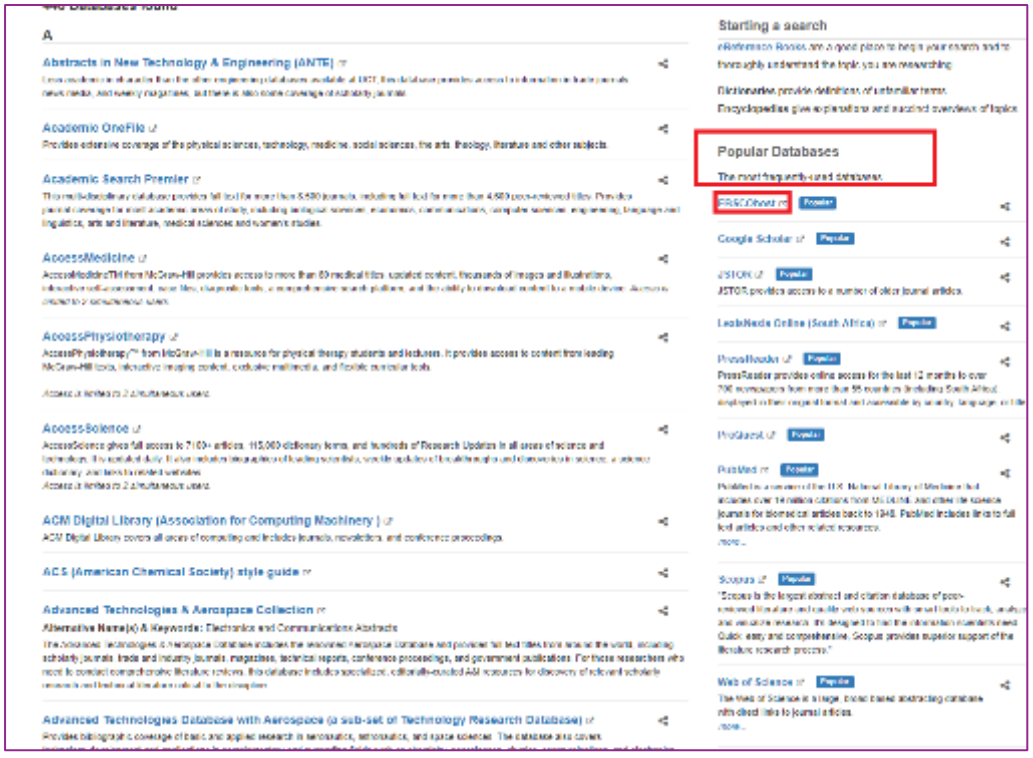
Sociological Abstracts - The database includes abstracts of journal articles selected from over 2500 journals, abstracts of conference papers presented at various sociological association meetings, relevant dissertation listings from Dissertations Abstracts International, enhanced bibliographic citations of book reviews, and abstracts of selected sociology books. Approximately 2500 journals in 30 different languages from about 55 countries are scanned for inclusion…."

International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS) - references to journal articles and to books, reviews and selected chapters dating back to 1951. It is unique in its broad coverage of international material and incorporates over 100 languages and countries. It provides cross-disciplinary coverage across the social sciences, focused on four primary subject areas: anthropology, economics, political science and sociology.

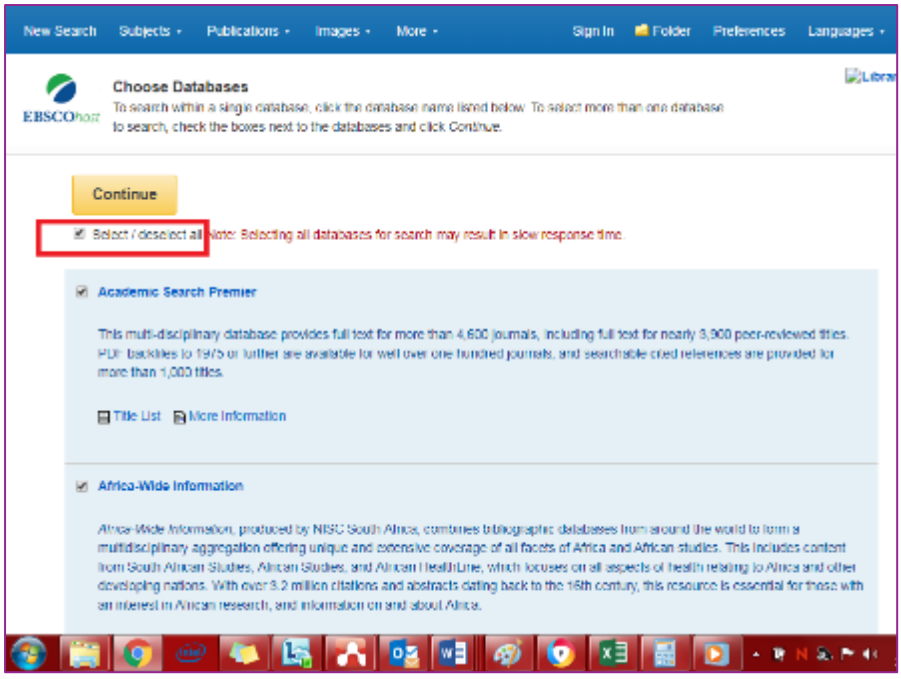
However - there is no magic bullet database and you might need to search others - especially if you are working across disciplines - Psychology, Medicine, Religion, or any other discipline that you may be exploring - as well as key African databases if you are working on African issues.

CROSS-SEARCHING THE EBSCO DATABASES

It is possible to cross-search a number of the Ebsco databases. Look to the left of the Database list and you will see EbscoHost listed – the parent database to Africa-Wide.



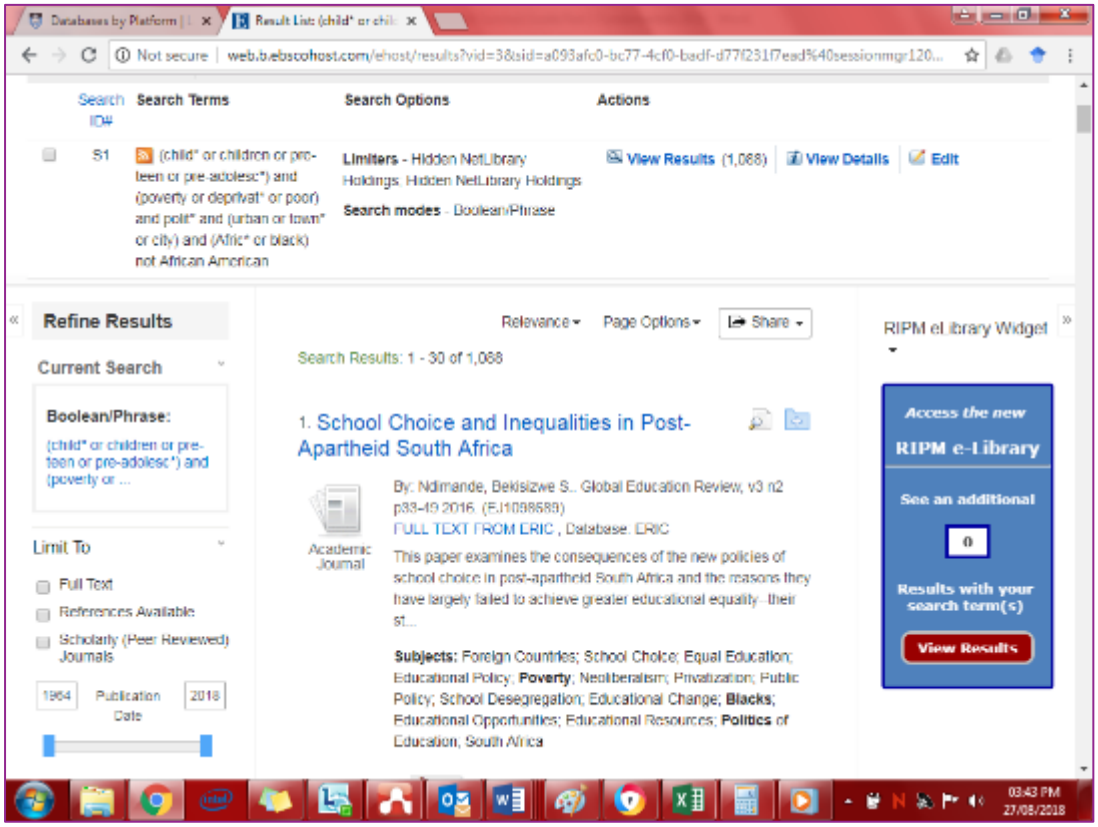
Most people simply select *all* the databases – the less relevant ones will filter themselves out since they might not have material on your topic. (Or, alternatively, you might be delightfully surprised *by what unsuspected material of Sociological interest comes up on a Music journals database*.)



The databases on Ebsco do not, alas, share the same *indexing* protocols, but, coming from the same platform, they do respond identically to nice, detailed, Boolean searching:

(child* or children or pre-teen or pre-adolesc*) and (poverty or deprivat* or poor) and polit* and (urban or town* or city) and (Afric* or black) not “African American”

This brought up 1088 results, ranked by relevance – with some nice stuff:



I can limit results by date (handy for weeding out the pre-1994 watershed for SA) and also restrict results to peer-reviewed journals.

I would not restrict it to full text only, though, because, it (a) leads me to miss important stuff and (b) it lies – remember, as above, that just because it is not full text on the Ebsco databases, doesn't mean that I can't find it full text on any other that we have, by using the Link to the Record through Primo option, at the foot of each record, if there is no full text on Ebsco.

More Boolean Searching, this time with Command Language

To recap:

(child* or wom?n or gender) and poverty and Africa* Not "African American"

The * is a wildcard – it calls up anything that follows the root "child" – so it will being up child and children or childhood……

The ? is a mid-word wildcard – calls up women and woman…

The OR expands you options – women or gender must come up in the results, it doesn't matter which….

The (brackets) keep the OR words together and relate them to the AND which follows – otherwise the search would call up anything to do with women, regardless of whether it had to do with poverty and Africa….

Any words linked with AND must be included in the search results - OR broadens a search, AND tightens it.

Not excludes a term. Be careful of this. First search without it, to get an idea of what you are missing.

While Booleans work across most databases, some databases, particularly the Ebsco set, also allow you to combine those Booleans with Command Language Searching, the most useful terms of which are: SU, AU, AB and TI

SU put before a word means that the word must be in the subject field.

AU put before a word means that the word (a name actually) must be in the author field – useful when searching for works by somebody often referred to in other papers.

AB put before a word means that the word must be in the abstract field.

TI simply means that the word must be in the title.

(SU child* or SU wom?n or SU gender) and AB poverty and AB Africa* Not "African American"

Sometimes you don't need to use Booleans much, apart from the odd AND, and sometimes the separate fields of a multi-field search screen (commonly found under the Advanced Search option on most databases) do the job of the brackets.

It is also wise not to be too specific – at least to start out with. You might find yourself searching only for what you already know, and miss out on new insights.

Also be very careful about using the not operator – you will literally not know what you are missing.

The other thing to watch out for is USA and British standard spelling. Words like colour/color or behaviour/behavior or Labour/Labor can radically effect your search results. Use wildcards * or ? for these.

Some other caveats about language searching international databases and catalogues:

Be especially careful about *differences in terminology between American and Standard British English*. Not just spelling – but actual terminology - American business databases tend to use "corn" where European ones, and South African ones, would use "maize", for example.

"Mielies", "Dagga" and "Tik" are words unique to South Africa, of course. They can be used when looking for only SA material, particularly popular material, but should be combined with the more generally used terms if you want a comprehensive search for SA material, overseas material, and SA material that uses overseas terminology.

There are *also social taboos which vary from country to country* - terms for race, poverty, or social class, in particular, can vary wildly, not only from database to database but also between journals of different national origins or different disciplines within a database.

There is also a major caveat about the advantages of using keyword searching over sticking to the subject headings - it must be said that those few databases which do not have good abstracts for their articles, including the library catalogue, which does not always have a table of contents for its books, respond a bit less helpfully to Boolean keyword searching than ones which are lavish with their abstracts.

In these cases, typically older databases which have migrated from an original printed index, it probably is wise to pay close attention to their formal subject terminology.

Newspapers, for the voice of the people

Newspapers provide a voice-of-the-people perspective, a "**primary-source**" account of events as they happened and a very up-to-date account of events too recent to have been widely covered in academic journals.

While many of our general databases index newspapers and popular magazines as well as academic journals, we do have some very good specific newspaper databases.

For the last 365 days of news, worldwide, and South African, there is a database called:

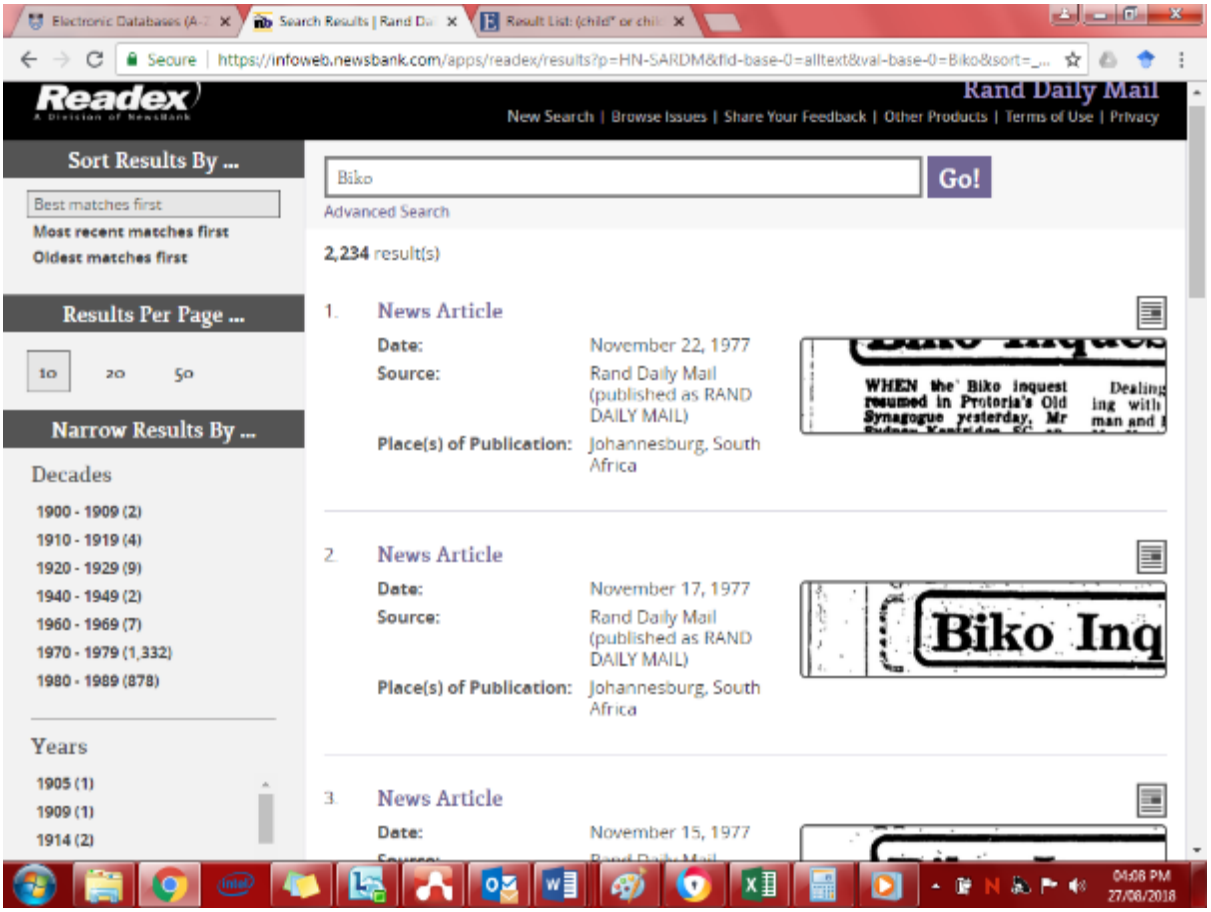
PressReader
PressReader (Library PressDisplay) is a database that provides access to over 3000 publications from more that 55 countries (including South Africa). Access covers the most recent 6 months and the content may be browsed by country, language, or title.

For older South African news there is:

SA Media - via Sabinet Reference
S.A. Media is one of the most comprehensive press cutting services offering you access to a database consisting of more than 3 million newspaper reports and periodical articles which have been indexed on computer since 1978.

And the

Rand Daily Mail Archive



In addition to the Rand Daily Mail archive, UCT Libraries has acquired three archive databases which form part of NewsBank's South African News Archive.

Access is available via the Databases list. They are:

Sowetan 1981-2008,

Sunday Times 1906-2006,

World Newspaper Archive: African Newspapers Series 2, 1835 -1925.

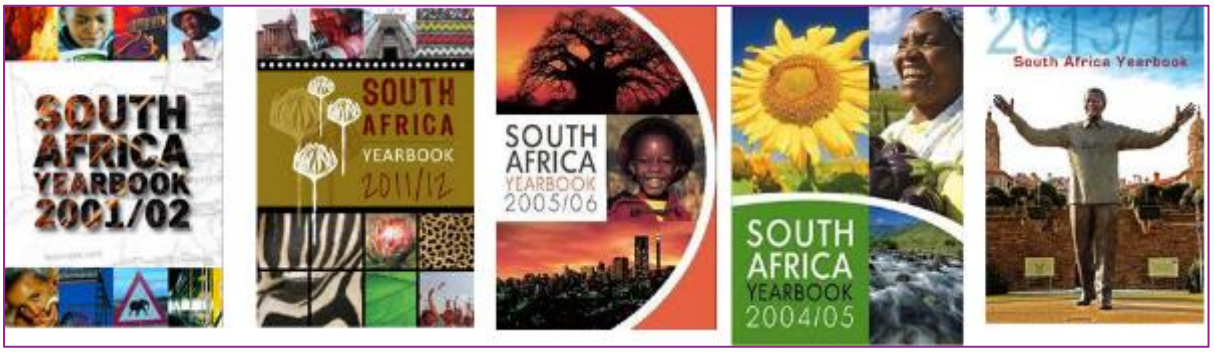
And on a broadly international note there is LexisNexis Academic , a huge database of international news, and newish magazines, going back for years. American students in particular tend to use it for nearly everything- and with good reason.

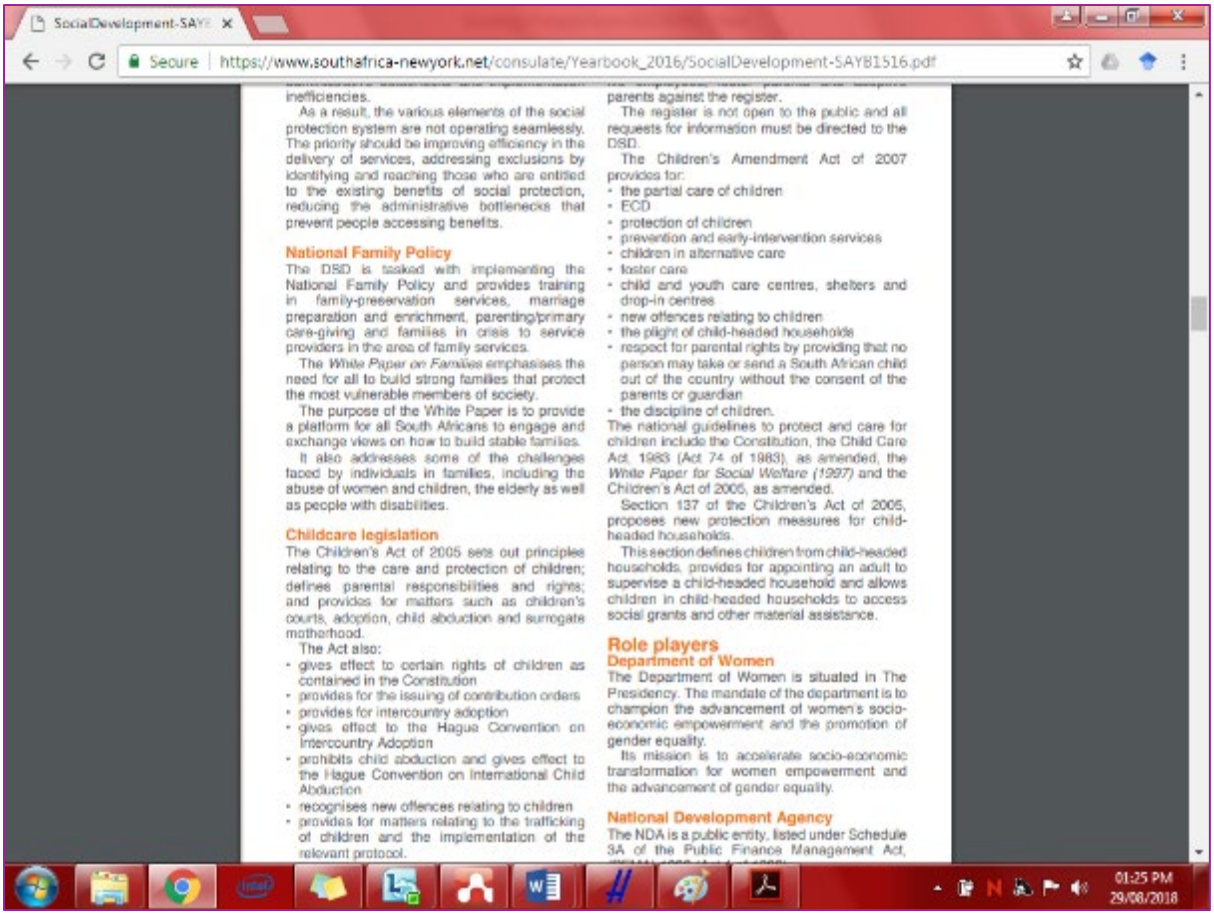
(Note : Lexis Nexis Academic *differs from LexisNexis Online (South Africa)*, which is a specialist legal tool. Don't use that one unless you are heavily into SA legislation.)

Official reports and facts and figures

Two major annual country reports are published in SA: the *South Africa Yearbook* and the *South Africa Survey*

The official Government publication, the *South Africa Yearbook* is available free online, with back files giving reports from previous years - to help in then/now comparisons:



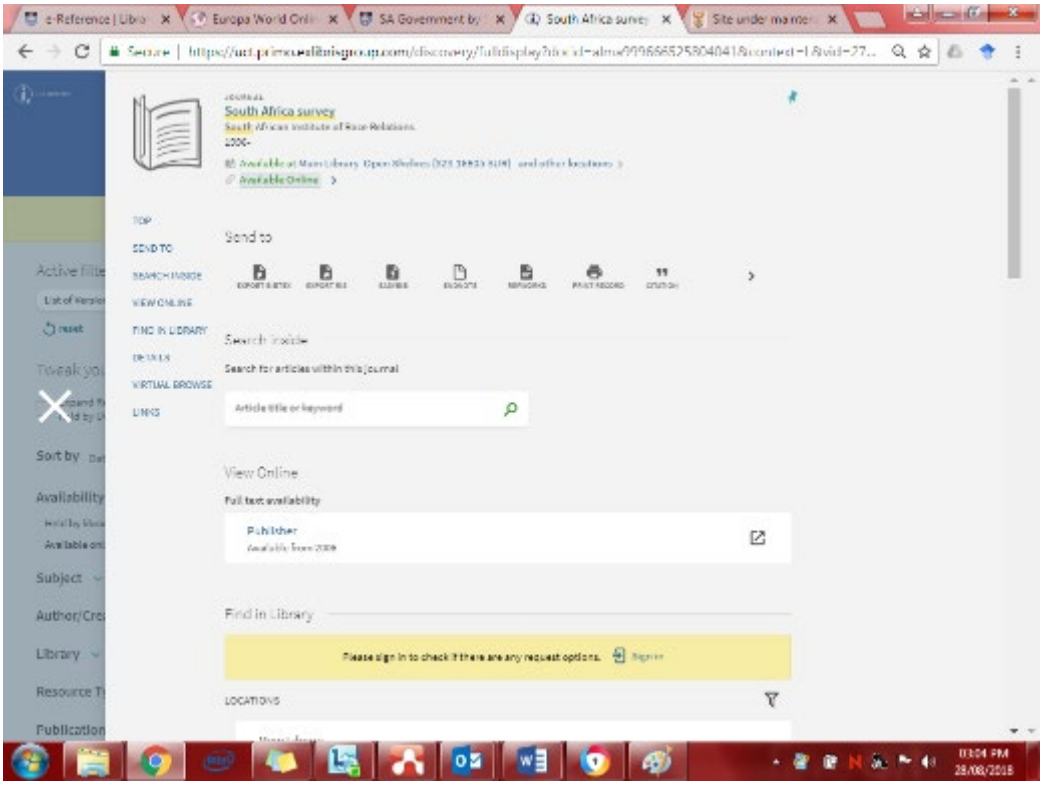


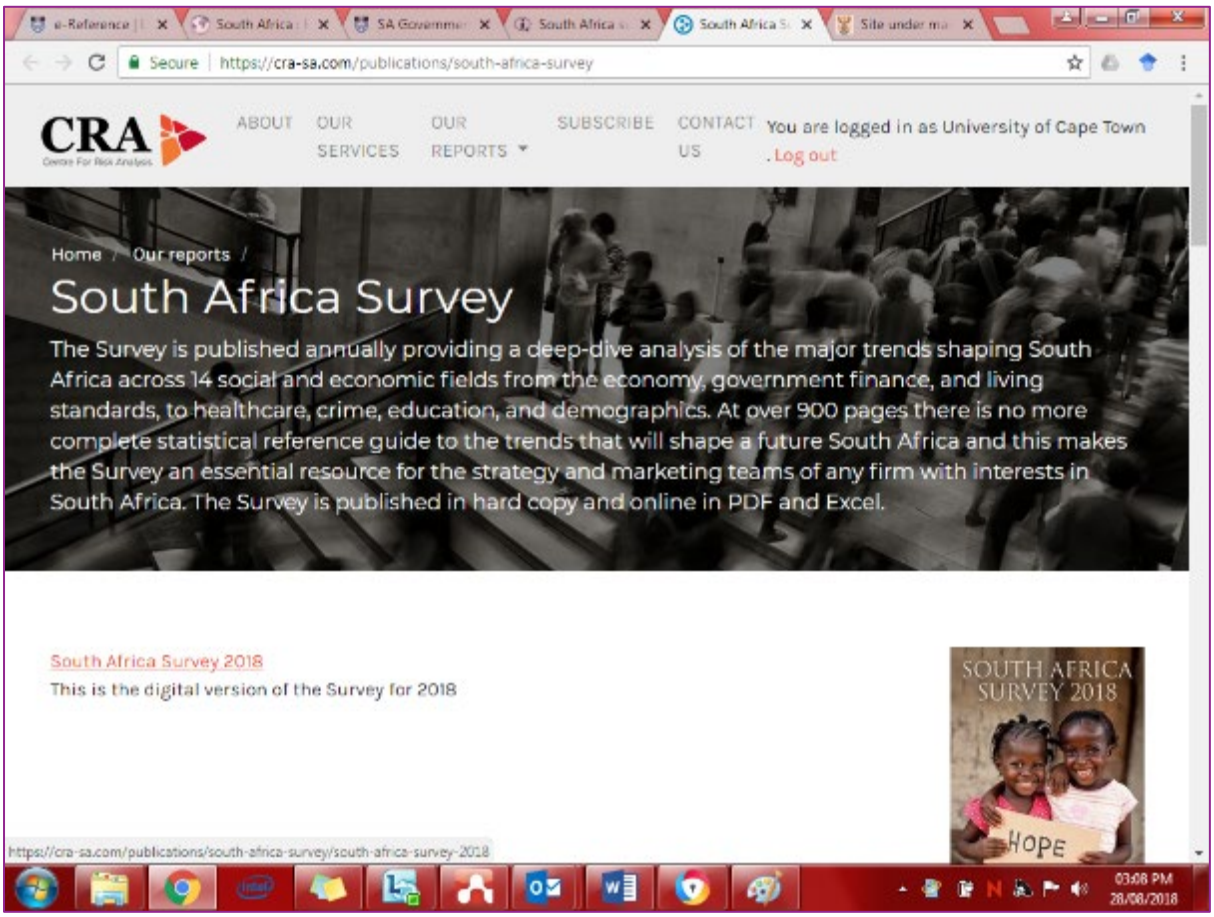
https://www.gcis.gov.za/content/resourcecentre/sa-info/yearbook

AND

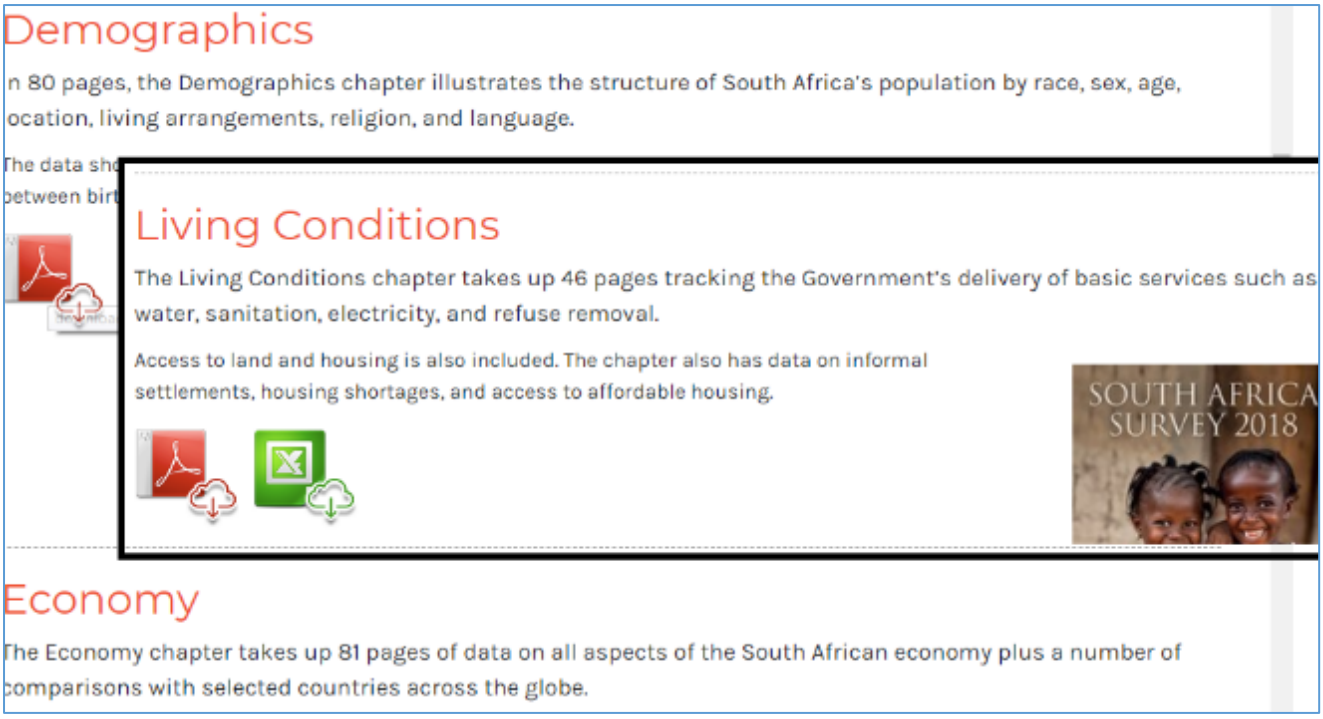
A subscription, with more stats and less narrative, the non-governmentally produced *South Africa Survey*, again with back files available from previous years.

Connect to this one through Primo:

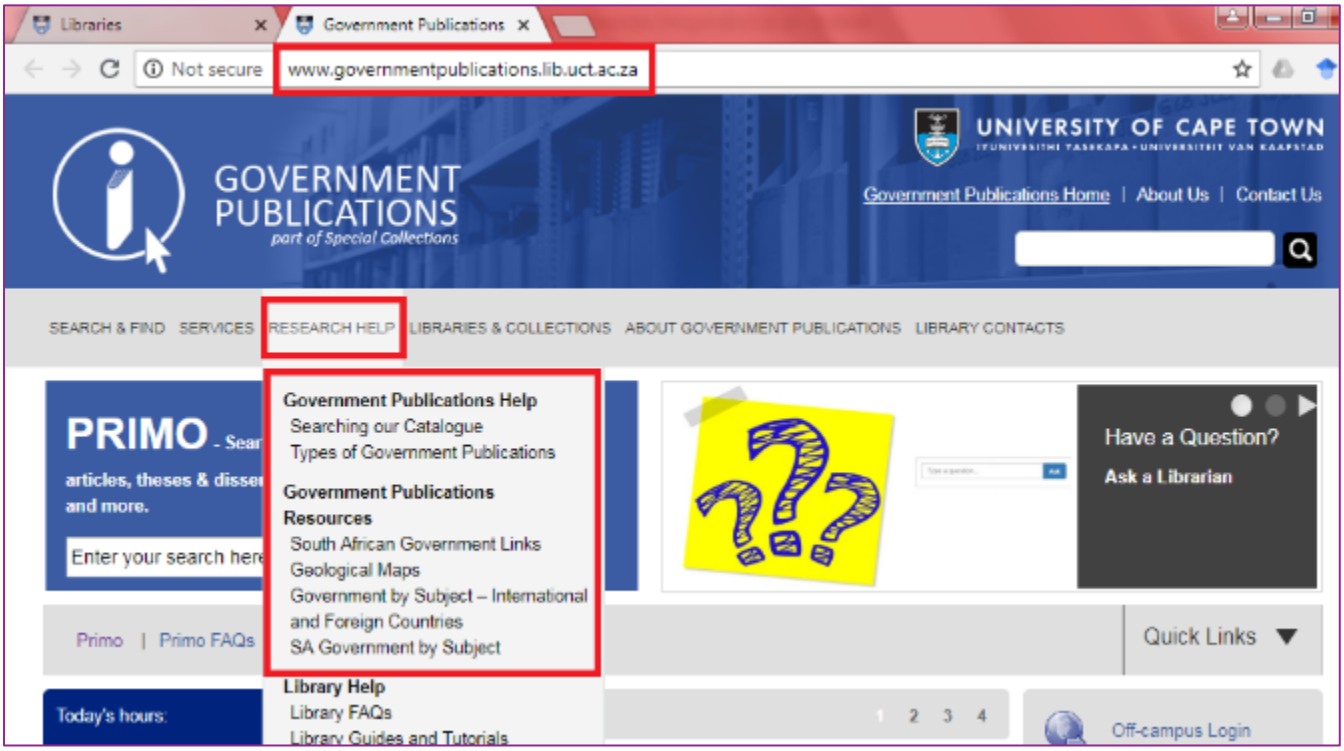




Pick a year and download your data as a PDF or an Excel file.



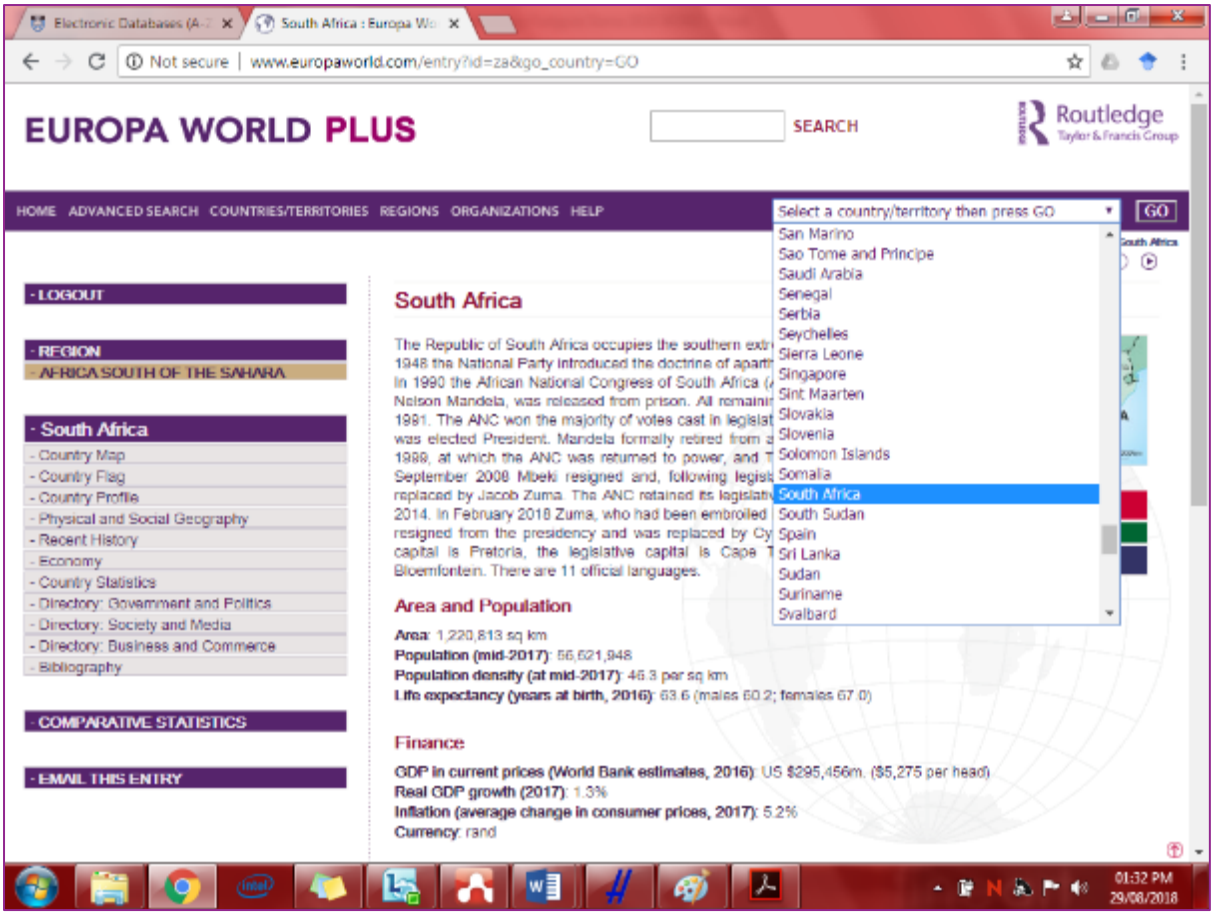
For South(ern) African and official material and stats, you might also want to have a look at our Government Publications library: http://www.governmentpublications.lib.uct.ac.za/



The librarians in Govt. Pubs. are experts in tracking down this information.

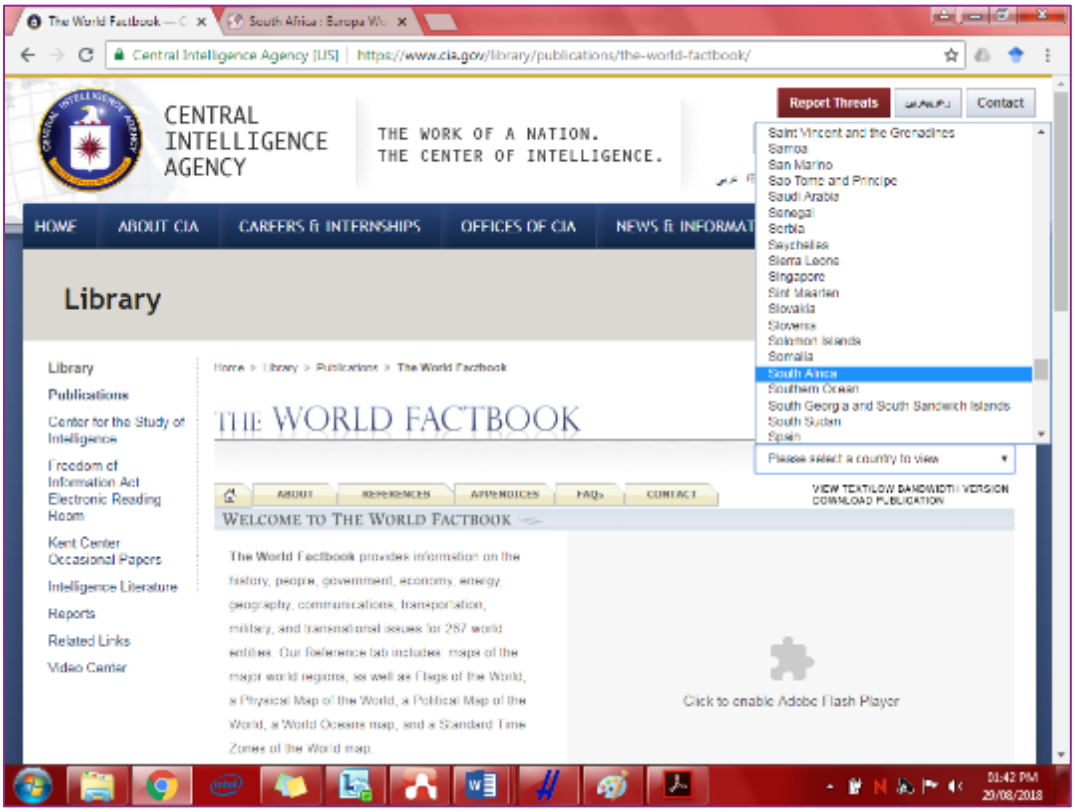
For International facts and figures and country reports go to our Databases A-Z and try:

Europa World Year Book - a detailed guide to every country in the world – with sections for each on their Political and Economic History, and a statistics section.



Or, more simply and free online (with excellent facts and figures and country-comparisons, but without the detailed political and economic history essays) the famous

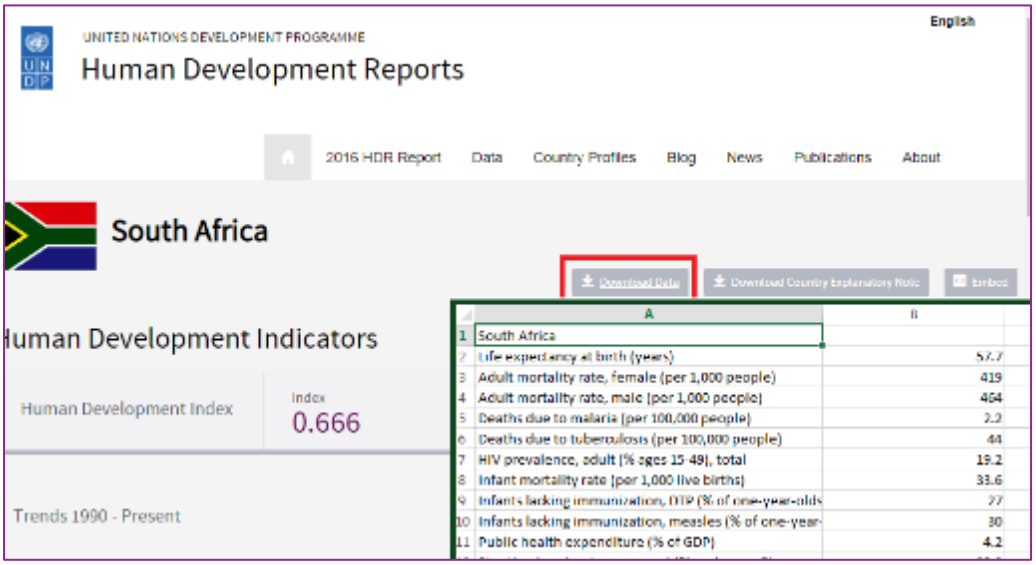
CIA WORLD FACTBOOK – which is indeed from the Company, in Langley, Virginia….



And, for specifically Social Data, again, free online, the United Nations Human Development Reports and Data

The (most recent, 2016) report itself can be downloaded at http://hdr.undp.org/en/2016-report

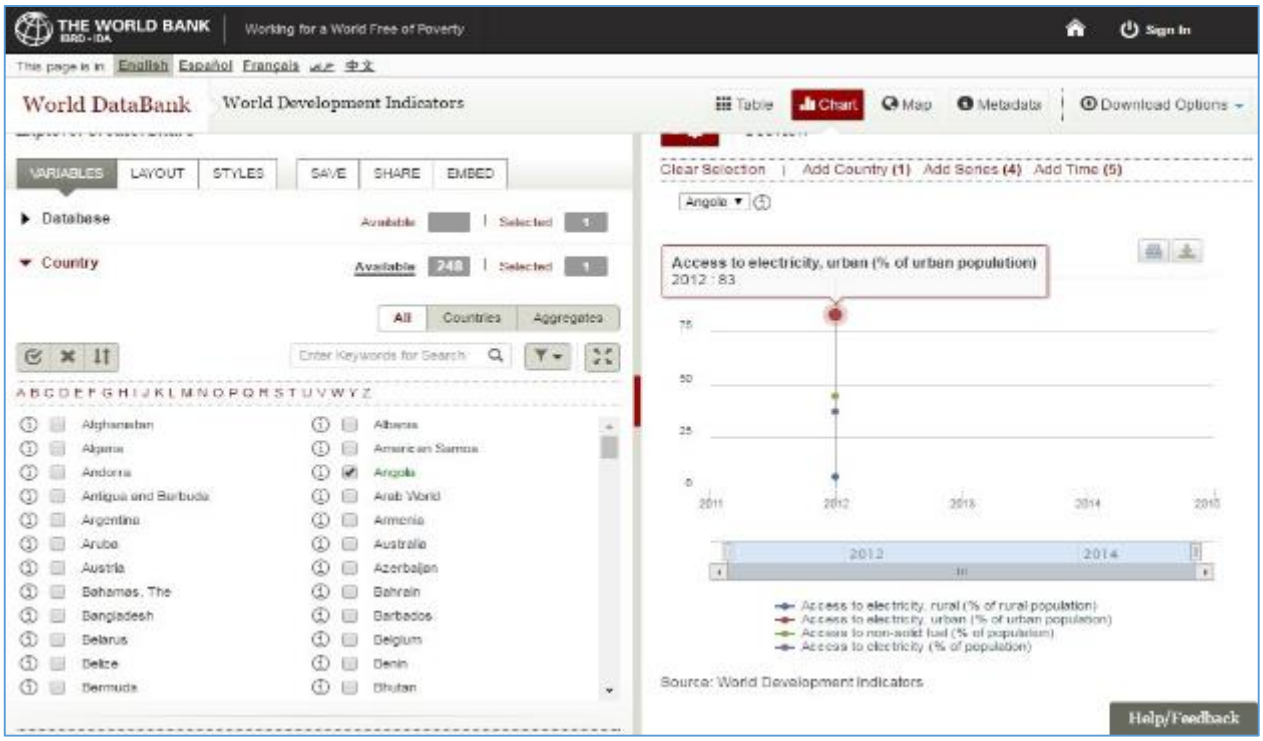
And the stats for particular countries at http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries



More complex is the

World DataBank , an analysis and visualisation tool that contains collections of time series data on a variety of topics. You can create your own queries; generate tables, charts, and maps; and easily save, embed, and share them. Complex to use, but a key resource for Social and Economic

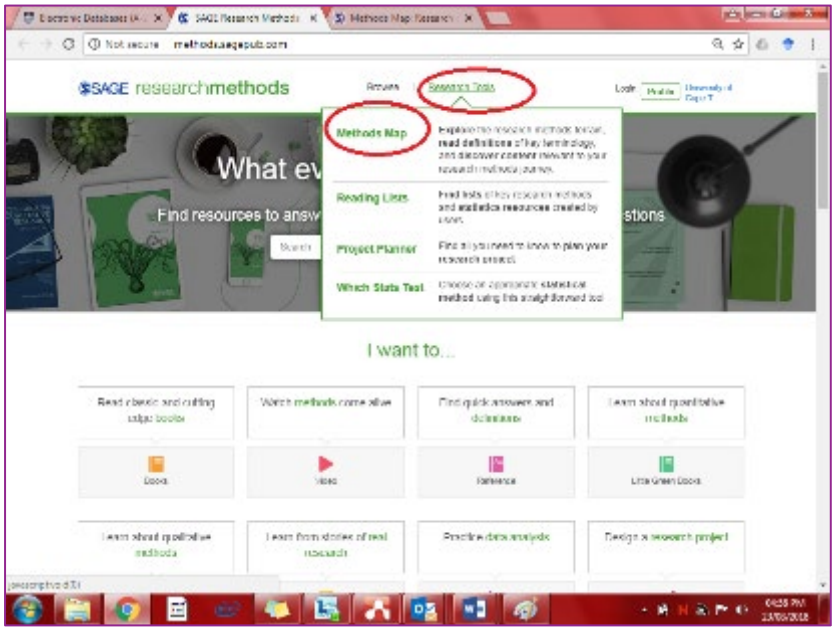
data and extremely handy for making one's own charts and graphs for including in Social Science essays.

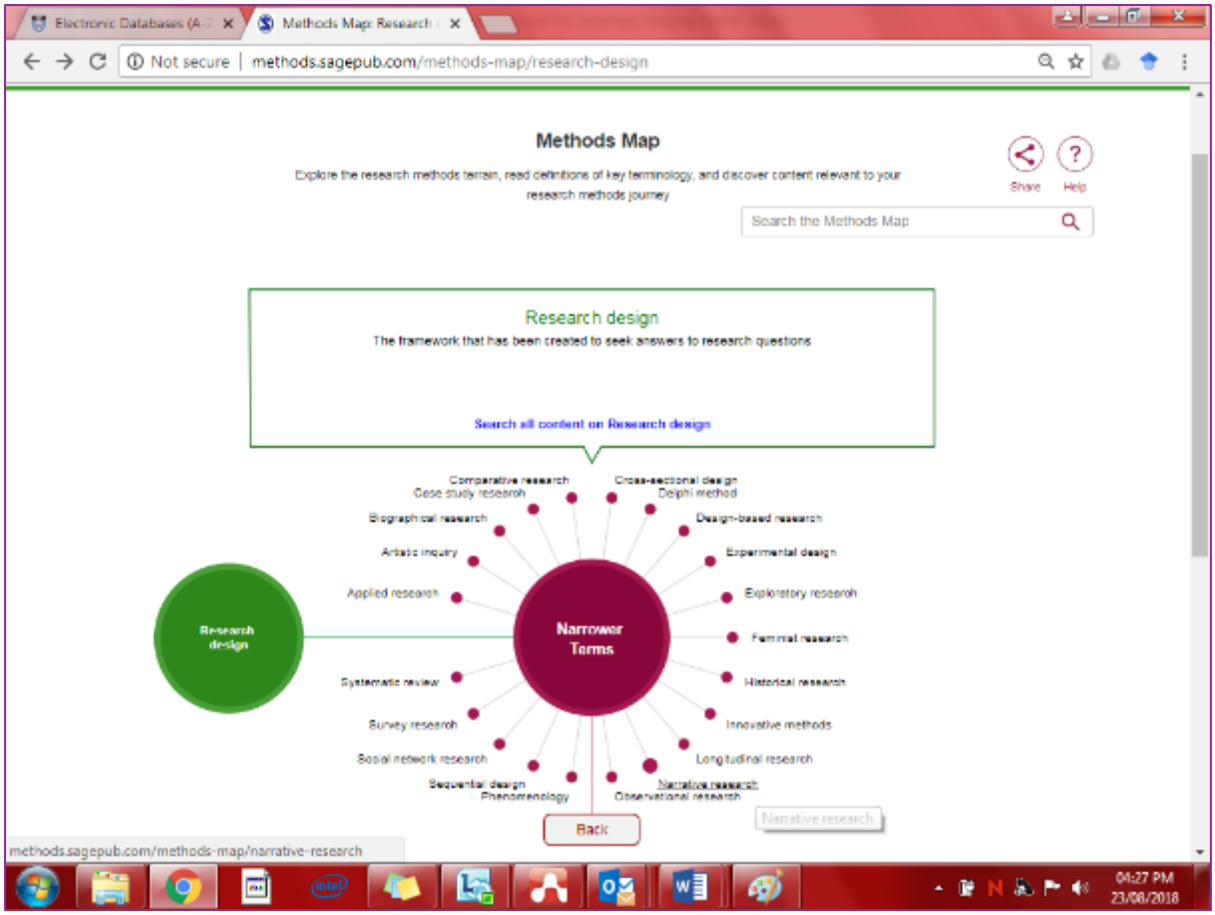


Finding research techniques and tools for your study

Sage Research Methods Online (SAGE Research Methods), a database we encountered when looking at Literature Reviews, does what it says on the can and is your major online source for choosing, and helping you explain why you have chosen, the *research techniques, theories and tools* that you will use in your study.

Either type in the research method or tool you are interested in directly into the search box, or, if you want to browse among related methods, use the Methods Map option to drill down through the various families of research methods.




Methods Map
Explore the research methods terrain, read definitions of key terminology, and discover content relevant to your research methods journey
Share
Help
Search the Methods Map
Research design
The framework that has been created to seek answers to research questions
Search all content on Research design
Research design
Narrower Terms
Comparative research
Case study research
Cross-sectional design
Delphi method
Biographical research
Design-based research
Artistic inquiry
Experimental design
Applied research
Exploratory research
Feminist research
Historical research
Systematic review
Survey research
Innovative methods
Social network research
Longitudinal research
Sequential design
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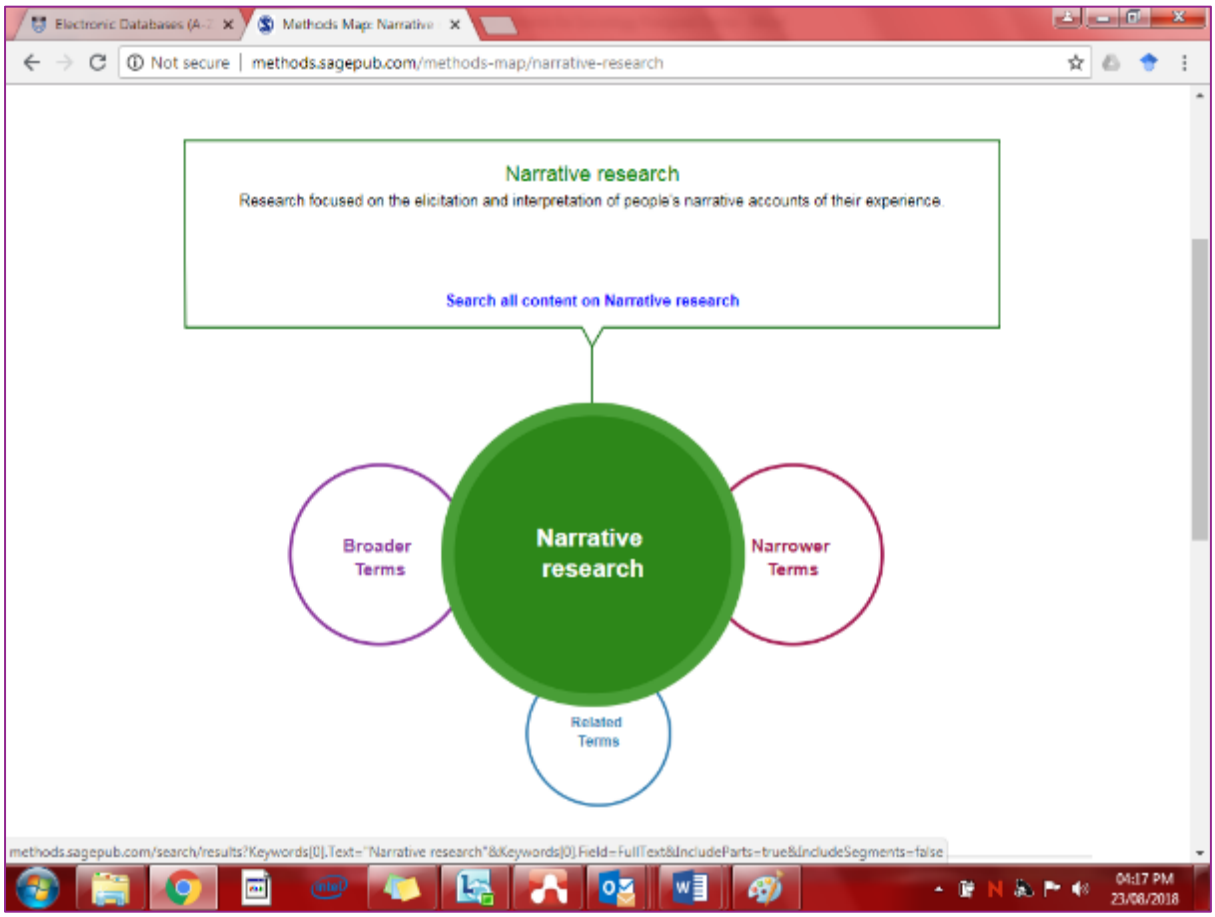
Not secure | methods.sagepub.com/methods-map/narrative-research
Narrative research
Research focused on the elicitation and interpretation of people's narrative accounts of their experience
Search all content on Narrative research
Broader Terms
Narrative research
Narrower Terms
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methods.sagepub.com/search/results?Keywords[0].Text="Narrative research"&Keywords[0].Field=FullText&IncludeParts=true&IncludeSegments=false
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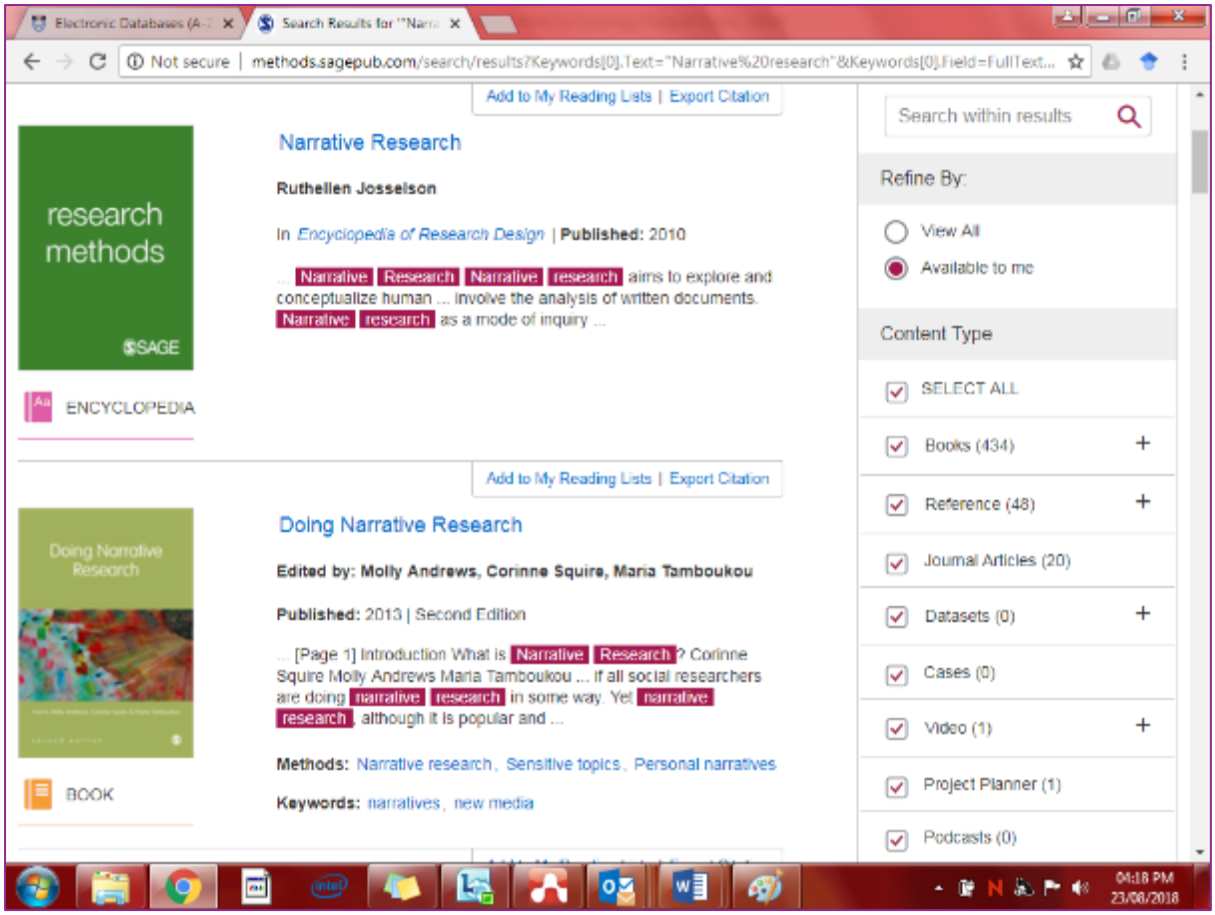


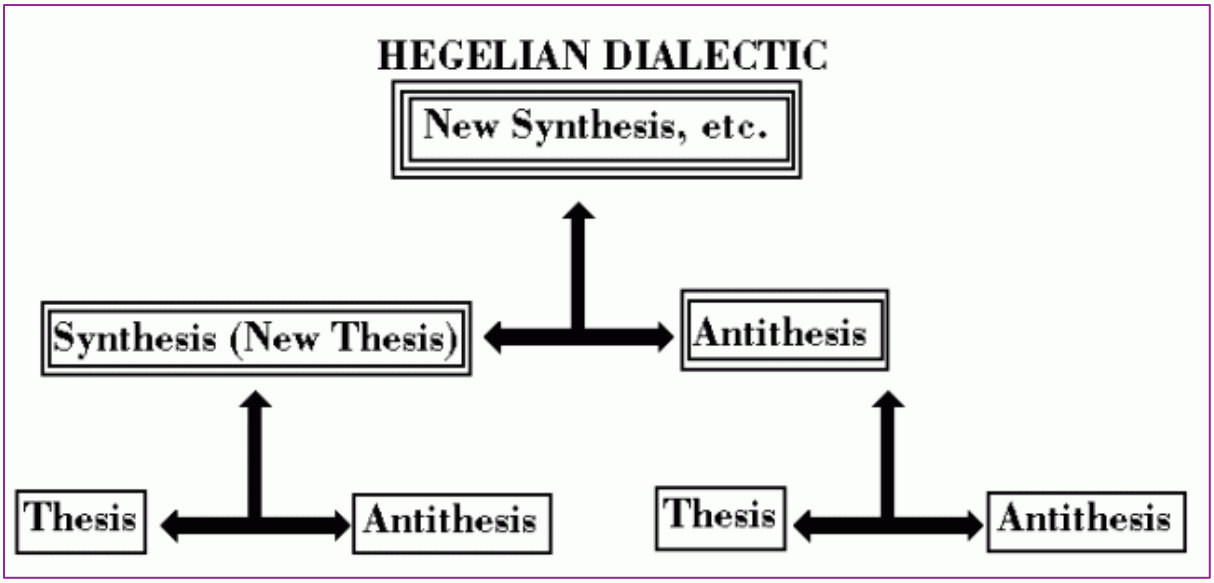
Literature reviews: writing with authority & sounding like you belong in the discipline:

As you write, and rewrite, your literature review, and shuffle paragraphs and sections around, your experience of the literature, and the confidence of your voice, will grow with your literature review. You will develop a more certain narrative and expert voice through the drafts, from what was originally an uncertain-sounding listing of research papers –

Your knowledge and overview of the literature will enable you to tell its story. A story often implies some chronology – it has a beginning, a middle, an end, and possibly an outline of future possibilities – and we are quick to buy into such a story, narrative animal that we are.

(An interdisciplinary literature review, btw, *is like two separate lit reviews* – and can well be an account of how you have gone about *weaving together two separate stories*. Your focus would/could be on similarities and differences in the stories and how they are told – what tools and techniques are used in each discipline, and where they overlap or vary.)

The Hegelian dialectic of progressions of academic argument, traced through the literature – thesis, antithesis, synthesis, new thesis…. etc. corresponds to the beginning, middle, end, future possibilities of narrative.



(https://brightshinyobjects.net/2012/09/30/dialectical-progress/)

Should one critically evaluate *each* piece? (*In the written review*, that is – obviously one does evaluate each piece mentally.)

It depends on the piece, but certainly *you would not need to evaluate them all to the same extent* in your written review – this not only wastes space but can cause one to drift away from the point – a Lit Review should make a POINT, not just bang on with a "he said, she said,"

Often a sort of "yes or no" question can serve to group writers who answer *yes or no or maybe* to the question into those three separate groups – and you may well find that the yes, no, maybe pattern of answers corresponds to time periods, (since academic research develops and has tides and seasons of opinion over time) or to the specific national or political or theoretical stances of groups of authors.

In your early drafts you might well spend too much space on articles that were not very important or just repeated what was being commonly written. This is because, at that time, you were not familiar enough with the literature to judge their relative importance or unimportance – only later would you spot that a lot of articles were all starting to sound like ones you had read earlier, adding nothing new, and could simply be grouped together as doing and saying and finding the same sort of thing.

I will cover searching databases for material shortly – but it is worth mentioning here that you can search specifically for literature reviews by simply putting words or phrases like "Literature review" or "review article" or "review paper" or "meta-analysis" into your database searches.

In part this lets you benefit from previous syntheses of the literature – so you are not reinventing the wheel, but it also lets you see how literature reviews are commonly approached or written in your discipline or on your topic.

Different disciplines have different approaches to reviews – some more "dispassionate" or "factual" or "formal" than others. But you will find that even in very "factual" reviews – the authors of the literature tend to have a stance, obvious or not.

This is not always evident in some subject areas, but it is likely that, while one might not start out with a stance, one tends to develop one in response to reading the literature and weighing it up. This is research as a genuine learning experience, and can even be expressed as such – the encounter with the literature can be described as a journey of understanding, with the realisations, insights and re-evaluations detailed in the account – moving progressively closer to the concluding and completed understanding.

Chronology makes a good narrative structure, but other ways to structure might be to criticise the methodologies or themes in the literature or group things together by their methods, assumptions, coverage…. *Who is writing what, how and when, and based on what, and for what purpose or for what audience*?

Another way of grouping is to start out with material and findings that are not controversial, and from these areas of agreement move into examining material that is more controversial, where there are debates, and arguments still current. In this cut and thrust of thesis and antithesis you would then pick a side or suggest a synthesis, based on the understanding you have acquired and demonstrated from the material analysed earlier.

YOUR BIG AIM IN A LITERTURE REVIEW, MOSTLY, IS TO FIND A GAP IN THE LITERATURE …. IT IS THIS GAP IN THE PREVIOUS RESEARCH THAT JUSTIFIES THE UNDERTAKING OF YOUR OWN RESEARCH.

Typical phrases in your lit review that signal this might be things like, "Much has been done in this area/ topic, *however*, no studies have examined ….." You might also identify a need for a reanalysis and reconceptualization of past views in the literature, applying a new theory or research technique.

After analysing the literature you will have identified, and should be able to describe your new contribution to the field; what you will add to the story of the literature, going forward.

Setting limits to the literature review is always tricky. Potentially it is never ending – there is always, one more piece you can include, or a new tangent or a new direction, that one paper leads on to another to suggest….

But there will come a time when the new pieces you discover will seem quite samey – they will be adding nothing new to what you already know. Remember too, that you can be ruthless in keeping a laser-eyed <u>focus</u> – you must pick information for inclusion based on whether it is relevant or irrelevant TO YOUR TOPIC.

It is also important to accept, and hang onto the fact, that WHEN YOUR REAL PURPOSE IN THE LIT REVIEW IS TO SAY THAT THERE IS A GAP TO BE FILLED OR A DEBATE TO BE LAUNCHED OR SUPPORTED OR COUNTERED, THEN ONCE YOU CAN DO THIS, YOU CAN STOP.

It is also wise to anticipate and cover yourself against questions about why you didn't do such and such, to include a section explaining what you did, and why and justifying your decision not to include materials – perhaps because they were outdated, peripheral, much the same as before, very derivative, or opened up unanswerable and or enormous or never ending questions which "….*could not be addressed within the scope of this study.*" (This is a very useful phrase, btw.)

Be very clear about your reasons for a decision to specifically examine some sources or use some finding aids in particular and specifically to exclude others – e.g. particular newspapers, perhaps because their readership was not in the social catchment area of your focus, for example.

And, of course, make a point of studying anything that your own supervisor may have written on the subject.

Apart from being a polite thing to do, you will also get an idea of their preferred writing style and methodological approaches, which will help you to more clearly understand and respond to the guidance and direction they give to your own study.

It is vital to be aware that your reader will have expectations of the literature review – anticipate and meet these expectations or explain and justify why you are not.

How far back should you go? Depends –but beware of just including recent material.

There are tides and seasons in the history of any literature, a subject might have been very hot some years ago, but not recently – if you are reviving it you might have to go back to when it was hot. A good subject encyclopaedia can often give a clear, and brief, articulation of the history of academic debate on a subject, listing the key works that shaped that history.

So, go back as far as you need to go to tell a good story about the development of the thought and literature on your topic. This often involves reference back to a point where the history still has some impact or influence on current directions and thought, even if only as a reaction against previous ideas.

There are different approaches not only to arranging the information, but to looking at it in the first place.

Maybe look at field of study from a particular disciplinary perspective, for example from standpoint of anthropology or psychology or sociology- we are in interdisciplinary age after all, or arrange the authors by their Yes, No or Maybe answers to the research question, or their political perspectives on the topic, or by country/culture of origin, or by methodology – quantitative, qualitative – or their theoretical basis, or their sample sizes or even sample location – for example studies that focus on urban versus rural dwellers, or rich versus poor, or, age groups, or educational level….

However you arrange it, you review is a demonstrating your perception of PATTERNS IN THE LITERATURE – for example, identifying the shaping views of different disciplines – which your arrangement demonstrates.

The purpose of a literature review for a university student is in part to demonstrate a satisfactorily clear grasp of the development and dynamics of the literature and of the field.

Try to identify the key journal or handful of key journals in a discipline, or with a history of focus on a particular topic – this is where the seminal articles and cutting edge arguments happen. It is often very helpful to mention and outline a clash of views conducted in the pages of a major journal, often as a ding-dong dispute, back-and-forth across several issues of a journal. Editorials in that journal will often contextualise the debate at various points in its development, and reflect on it at its end.

It is also important to look specifically for *seminal papers* (more on this below) and major authors who cite a key article because they or agree or disagree with it (more on citation searching below, too.)

Writing like you belong in the field involves use not only the technical vocabulary of the field (correctly) but also the verbs common to descriptions of literature in your fields – "suggests" "argues' "examines". You will pick this style up from your reading, partly by osmosis, but it helps to make a mental note of it consciously too.

Should you use evaluative language in your review, such as "novel" or "important" or "thorough? Some evaluative language can help you to put your stamp on the literature – by articulating what you really think, not just what you found.

Still – be aware, or wary, of terms which you might normally use yourself, *but never encounter in your reading* - maybe your field avoids terms like "demonstrates", "actually", "evidently", "probably", "undoubtedly" – therefore avoid these terms too.

Your phraseology and writing style can also be an important aide in grouping authors together in your description of their work, rather than listing them individually:

You don't have to keep saying that Smith argues and Jones argues, for example -You can say rather that:

"A number of UK writers have argued that XXXX (Refs to Smith 2009, Heston 2009, Wales 2008, Jones….) By contrast, a, predominantly American, approach has been to argue that XXXXX…. (Refs to Haines 2009 , Parsons 2010, Blake 2011….)

Another example might be not writing that "Jones investigated…." And "Smith investigated…" But instead saying that:

"In recent years there has been growing interest in …..(REFS to x, y, z ,w)"

OR

"Studies conducted from this perspective …..(REFS to x, y, z ,w)"

You will find also that as your expertise and understanding progresses, and as you sort articles more efficiently into this kind of phraseological structure, your long, cumbersome, intimidatingly crammed review becomes shorter and sweeter and perhaps even a genuine pleasure to read.

This increased readability, and more varied sentence structure, are the symptoms of a good story developing, as opposed to just a list of facts and papers.

Also, as your paper identifies and describes areas of uncertainty, areas that should be treated with caution, or are problematic, or still developing, so your ability to identify these areas makes it clear that you have now become an authority on the literature and topic.

Signs of this development can be seen in your language, which is – in later drafts of the review - becoming evaluative, and more certain, detectable through the use of phrases such as an innovative approach to the study…." or "the emerging trend", or, "narrowly focussed" or "polemical", or "There is a growing debate…" or "A small but widely distributed body of research has recently emerged in the United States…."

SOUND AS THOUGH YOU ARE IN CONTROL OF THE LITERATURE, NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.

Again – you will develop this language by learning from the patterns and habits of expression common in the literature and reviews of your discipline.

You will develop a preference for certain accepted patterns of expression and phrase and tone in your discipline – thus developing your own style, yes - – but it will still be an acceptable style within the conventions of your discipline.

And, it must be stressed, the single greatest guide to developing appropriate language is gained by paying attention to your supervisor's critique of the language and expressions you use – *these critiques are not just a matter of your supervisor's personal taste, but judgement gained from years of writing in that discipline*.

And, on a last note, SIGNPOST your work regularly – at the start and end of each section, telling your reader what you doing and what you are going to do next – for example, telling your reader that you will address this topic in the next section, or telling them that you are now going to focus on authors who agree or disagree with a particular policy or theory or political stance.

This signposting (sometimes described as "Metadiscourse") tells your reader how your argument is shaped by outlining what you are doing, and where you are going, so that the reader knows where they are in your argument and what to expect in each section.

Beyond the Literature Review?

Well, the style and organisational tips will still hold true for the rest of your research project too, and, in general – the rest of your research project will grow from a good literature review – and may well be shaped in response to the understandings you have gained from it. In fact this understanding derived from a literature review can raise questions or lead to insights that can be section headings or chapter headings in the rest of your work. A good literature review can form a skeleton that just needs to be fleshed out.

Also, by the time you have found your voice in the literature review, signposted it correctly, and developed your argument/narrative/structure, you will be equipped with three major things that underpin a good research paper:

- A 'golden thread', an overall line of argument or narrative running through the paper, giving it its continuous, progressive, structure as a story.
- 'Sign-posts : the titles, sub-titles and headings, as well as sentences in the text that tell your reader what you are doing and where you are going next.
- A voice of authority –derived from a solid knowledge *of the content, development, and writing style* of the existing literature that allows you to fit in to it as a fellow practitioner of the discipline.

You will have also gathered a good supply of ammunition in the course of your literature review – authors or arguments that you have discussed in a very condensed format in the literature review and which you can now resurrect and use in a much more in-depth examination where and when needed in the body of your essay.

And, of course, one last thing you will have learned from the literature review is how to synthesise the different voices and arguments; avoiding long quotations and breaking up quotations or arguments from the literature with your own discursive commentary and insights. In essence, you will have learned how to truly engage with the literature rather than just note it down and repeat it.

But don't just take my word for all this ☺

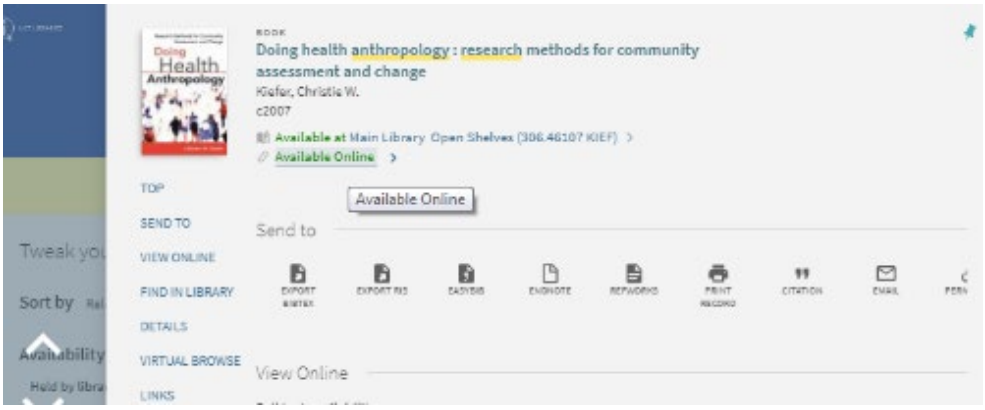
You might well also like to take a look at one of the many, often discipline-specific, academic writing guides in our collection. (Search Primo for headings like *Writing and Anthropology*)

<u>An example of a specific *subject* writing guide:</u>

Kiefer, C. (2007). *Doing health anthropology : research methods for community assessment and change* . New York: Springer.

Available on Open Shelves 306.46107 KIEF

Also available as an electronic version:



<u>Two examples of broader, Social Sciences, writing guides:</u>

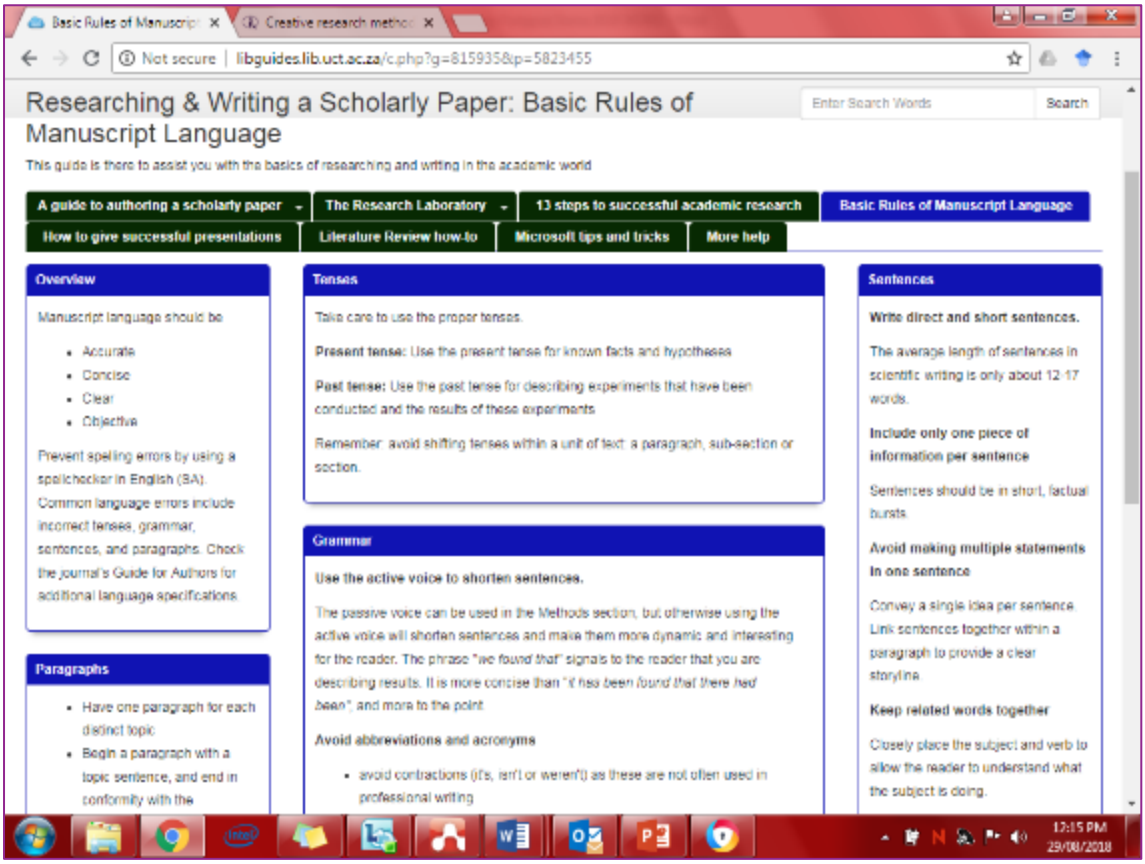
Redman, Peter. *Good Essay Writing : a Social Sciences Guide* . 3rd ed. Milton Keynes, UK: The Open University, 2006. Print. Reference Collection R 808.0663 REDM

Kara, Helen. *Creative Research Methods in the Social Sciences : a Practical Guide*. Bristol: Policy Press, 2015. Print. Open Shelves 300.721 KARA

And one ofour library guides for very condensed advice:

Researching & Writing a Scholarly Paper

http://libguides.lib.uct.ac.za/academicresearchandwriting



Evaluating stuff:

Librarians, in particular, are very keen on the basics of what we call “Information Literacy”, which largely involves spotting the sharks in the ocean of information that we encounter.

C.f.

Crap Detection, a 21st Century Literacy, September 16, 2010 — Bobbi Newman

“The CRAP test is a way to evaluate a source based on the following criteria: Currency, Reliability, Authority and Purpose/Point of View. Below are some questions to help you think about how to measure each of the criteria.

Currency

- *How recent is the information?*
- *How recently has the website been updated?*
- *Is it current enough for your topic?*

Reliability *-*

- *What kind of information is included in the resource?*

- *Is content of the resource primarily opinion? Is it balanced?*
- *Does the creator provide references or sources for data or quotations?*

Authority

- *Who is the creator or author?*
- *What are the credentials?*
- *Who is the published or sponsor?*
- *Are they reputable?*
- *What is the publisher's interest (if any) in this information?*
- *Are there advertisements on the website?*

Purpose/Point of View –

- *Is this fact or opinion?*
- *Is it biased?*
- *Is the creator/author trying to sell you something?"*

https://librariesandtransliteracy.wordpress.com/2010/09/16/crap-detection-a-21st-century-literacy/

It is important to realise just how much agenda-driven and unreliable information is now available, in comparison to an earlier tradition of formally published (and thus rather better- checked and more accountable) material:

In fact, unreliable information, and its societal impact, is worrying IFLA (the International Federation of Library Associations) more than I can say. "When Oxford Dictionaries announced *post-truth* was Word of the Year 2016, we as librarians realise action is needed to educate and advocate for critical thinking – a crucial skill when navigating the information society."

This poster is used internationally now by libraries.

https://www.ifla.org/publications/node/11174https://www.ifla.org/publications/node/11174

Notice, btw, that it also asks us to check our own biases –This also includes being aware of what views we are actively searching for, and what views and voices we are actively avoiding.

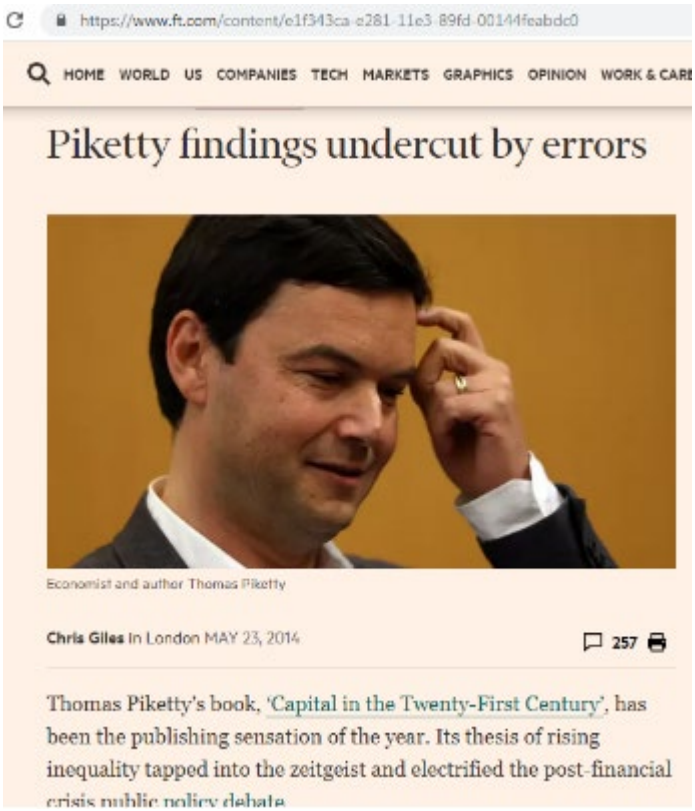
Always be wary of factual claims which seem extraordinary in your experience of the world or in the light of other information you have picked up. Or even simply too conveniently clear cut and monolithically solid in supporting a particular point … humans are complex creatures, and so, often, is the data which describes us.

Even honest people can misremember or misinterpret a source –or simply make an error in copying figures. Following back to the source usually reveals this and gives you a nice mark-gaining bit of scholarship to use in your research when you point out the error.

And then we have the role of strongly held convictions, ideological blind spots, and the murky complexity of the human mind….

Viz.

"Thomas Piketty's book, 'Capital in the Twenty-First Century', has been the publishing sensation of the year. Its thesis of rising inequality tapped into the zeitgeist and electrified the post-financial crisis public policy debate. But according to a Financial Times investigation, the rock-star French economist appears to have got his sums wrong."



https://www.ft.com/content/e1f343ca-e281-11e3-89fd-00144feabdc0

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Piketty findings undercut by errors

Economist and author Thomas Piketty

Chris Giles in London MAY 23, 2014 257

Thomas Piketty's book, 'Capital in the Twenty-First Century', has been the publishing sensation of the year. Its thesis of rising inequality tapped into the zeitgeist and electrified the post-financial crisis public policy debate

Some issues concern sourcing and definitional problems. Some numbers appear simply to be constructed out of thin air.

Continue reading ...

page tome, which has dominated best-seller lists in recent weeks, contain a series of errors that skew his findings. The FT found mistakes and unexplained entries in his spreadsheets, similar to those that last year undermined the work on public debt and growth of Carmen Reinhart and Kenneth Rogoff.

The central theme of Prof Piketty's work is that wealth inequalities are heading back up to levels last seen before the first world war. The investigation undercuts this claim, indicating there is little evidence in Prof Piketty's original sources to bear out the thesis that an increasing share of total wealth is held by the richest few.

Prof Piketty, 43, provides detailed sourcing for his estimates of wealth inequality in Europe and the US over the past 200 years. In his spreadsheets, however, there are transcription errors from the original sources and incorrect formulas. It also appears that some of the data are cherry-picked or constructed without an original source.

https://www.ft.com/content/e1f343ca-e281-11e3-89fd-00144feabdc0

And it also appears that intelligence is not a shield against errors – in fact it makes us better at committing them:

SUNDAY REVIEW The New York Times

Opinion

GRAY MATTER

Why Do People Fall for Fake News?

Are they blinded by their political passions? Or are they just intellectually lazy?

By Gordon Pennycook and David Rand

Dr. Pennycook and Dr. Rand are psychologists.

Jan. 19, 2019

The rationalization camp, which has gained considerable prominence in recent years, is built around a set of theories contending that when it comes to politically charged issues, people use their intellectual abilities to persuade themselves to believe what they want to be true rather than attempting to actually discover the truth. According to this view, political passions essentially make people unreasonable, even — indeed, especially — if they tend to be good at reasoning in other contexts. (Roughly: The smarter you are, the better you are at rationalizing.)

…. The implications here are profound: Reasoning can exacerbate the problem, not provide the solution, when it comes to partisan disputes over facts. Further evidence cited in support of this of argument comes from a 2010 study by the political scientists Brendan Nyhan and Jason Reifler, who found that appending corrections to misleading claims in news articles can sometimes backfire: Not only did corrections fail to reduce misperceptions, but they also sometimes increased them. It seemed as if

people who were ideologically inclined to believe a given falsehood worked so hard to come up with reasons that the correction was wrong that they came to believe the falsehood even more strongly.

In essence, we are talking about the human capacity for "Confirmation Bias" in all this:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confirmation_bias

So, it really does help to be aware of an author's POSITION – politically, ideologically, economically, historically, etc. CONSCIOUSLY OR NOT, even in respectable academic studies.

Awareness of a particular position, *or spotting one as you read*, helps you to prepare for a paper that is stacked with facts and figures which strongly support a particular position and an absence of any which might challenge it.

There are two dangers to watch out for in reports of facts and figures in particular: the deliberate suppression of a truth (by cherry picking facts or figures), which is just as dishonest as a deliberate fabrication.

However, it is essential to remember that we too, quite commonly, suppress and cherry pick our facts when we are emotionally involved in a matter or invested for whatever reason in maintaining a particular position.

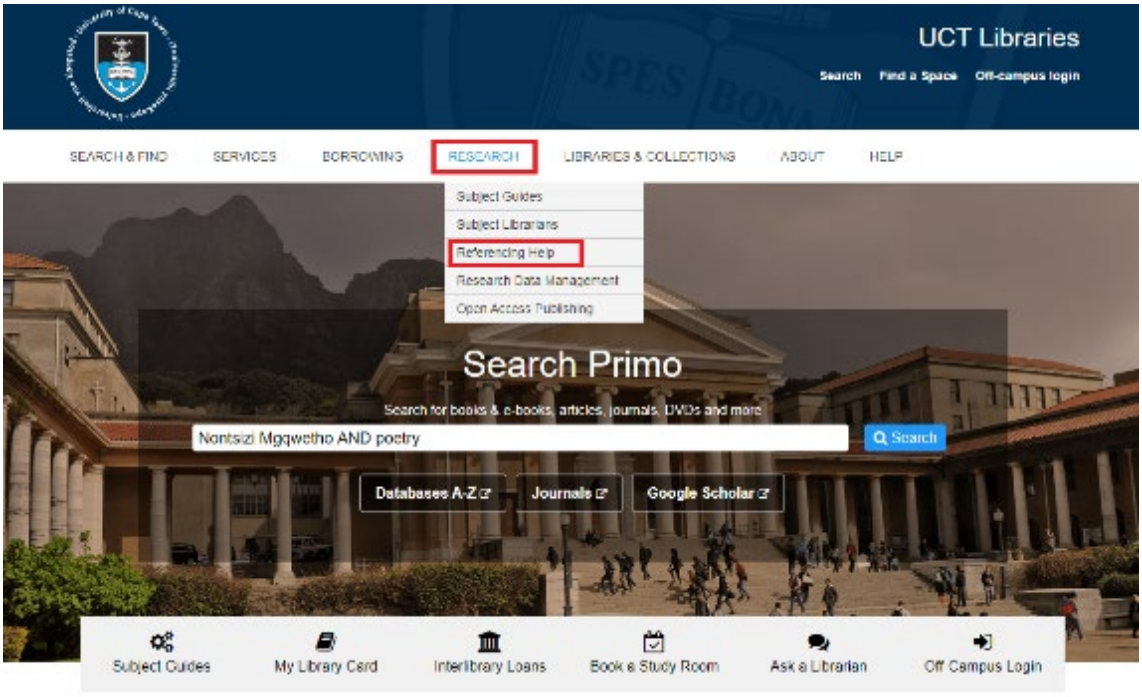
For this reason, it really does help to practice a little bit of mental judo when researching – remind yourself that you are not writing to prove that a thing is true or false, you are writing to determine whether a thing is true or false. Whichever you end up finding, therefore, you have not lost, because you are not wedded to a specific result, but to a process of scholarship.

This takes some pressure off you and relieves you of the temptation to pull a fast one to get you out of a tight spot.

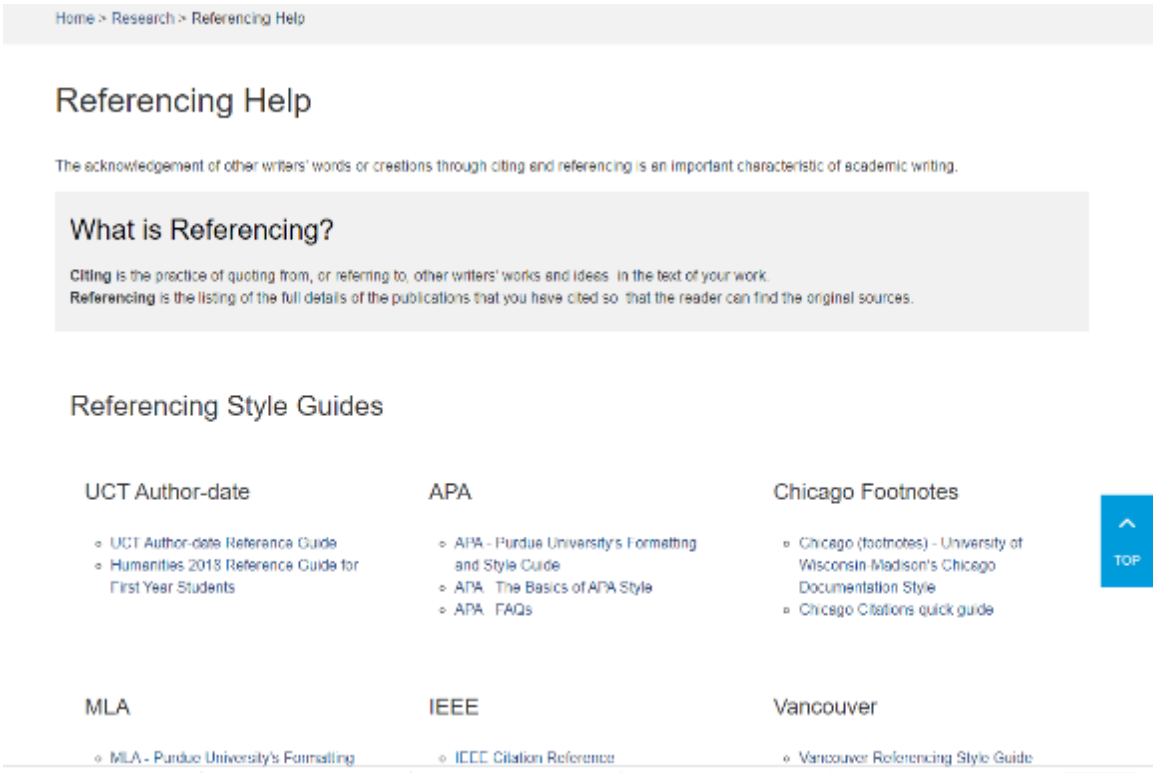
On a final, comforting, note; don't be too hard on yourself on those occasions when you just can't settle on a position - it is a poor mind which is never in conflict with itself.

Referencing it all:

From the Library homepage, mouse over the Research Help tab and select Referencing Help.

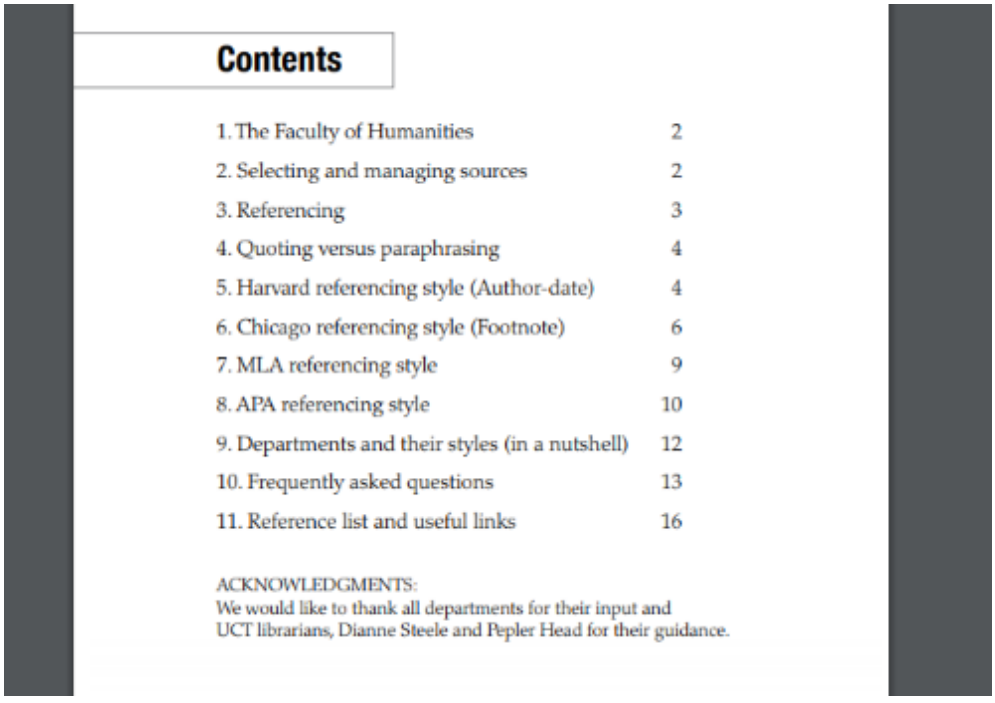


This has guides to most of the referencing styles you are likely to encounter at UCT:



THE UCT author date guide (previously called UCT Harvard) is the most popular among Humanities Faculty departments [UCT Author-date Reference Guide]

Aditi Hunma's Humanities Referencing guide covers all the Referencing styles used in the Faculty and, despite the use off "First Year" in its title, *is useful for all years of study*.

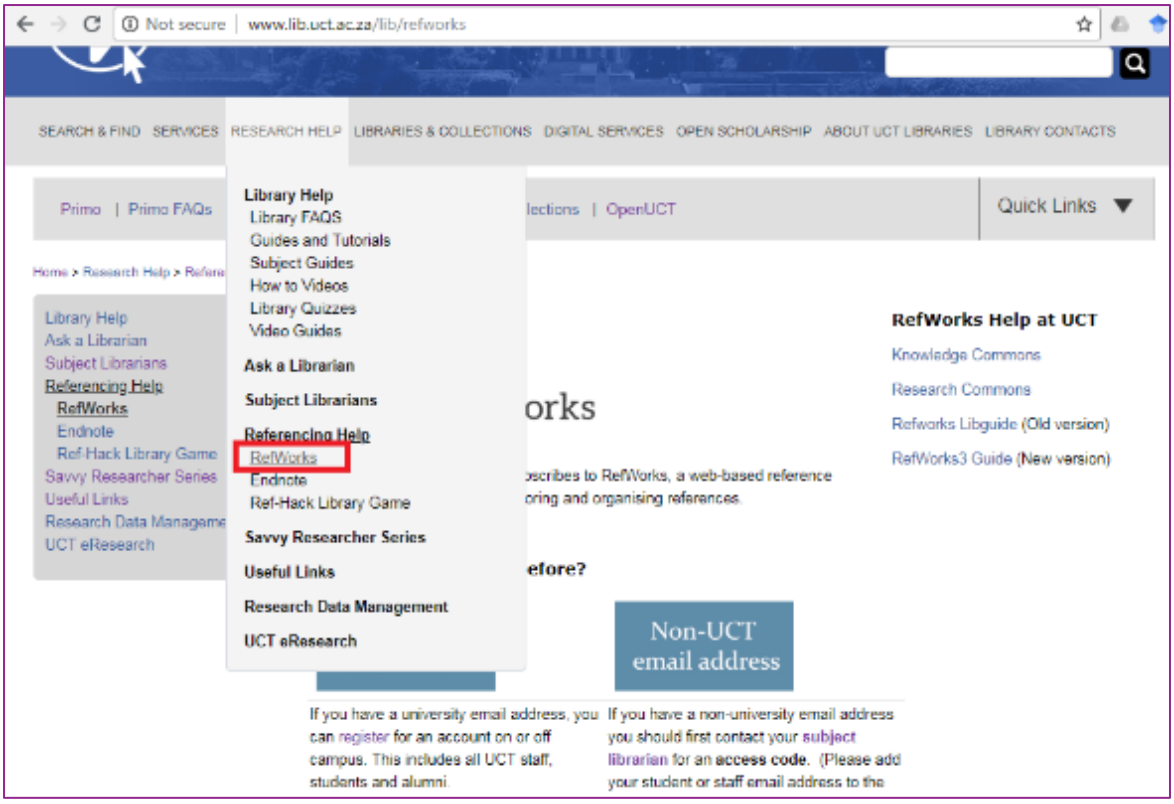


Contents

1. The Faculty of Humanities 2
2. Selecting and managing sources 2
3. Referencing 3
4. Quoting versus paraphrasing 4
5. Harvard referencing style (Author-date) 4
6. Chicago referencing style (Footnote) 6
7. MLA referencing style 9
8. APA referencing style 10
9. Departments and their styles (in a nutshell) 12
10. Frequently asked questions 13
11. Reference list and useful links 16

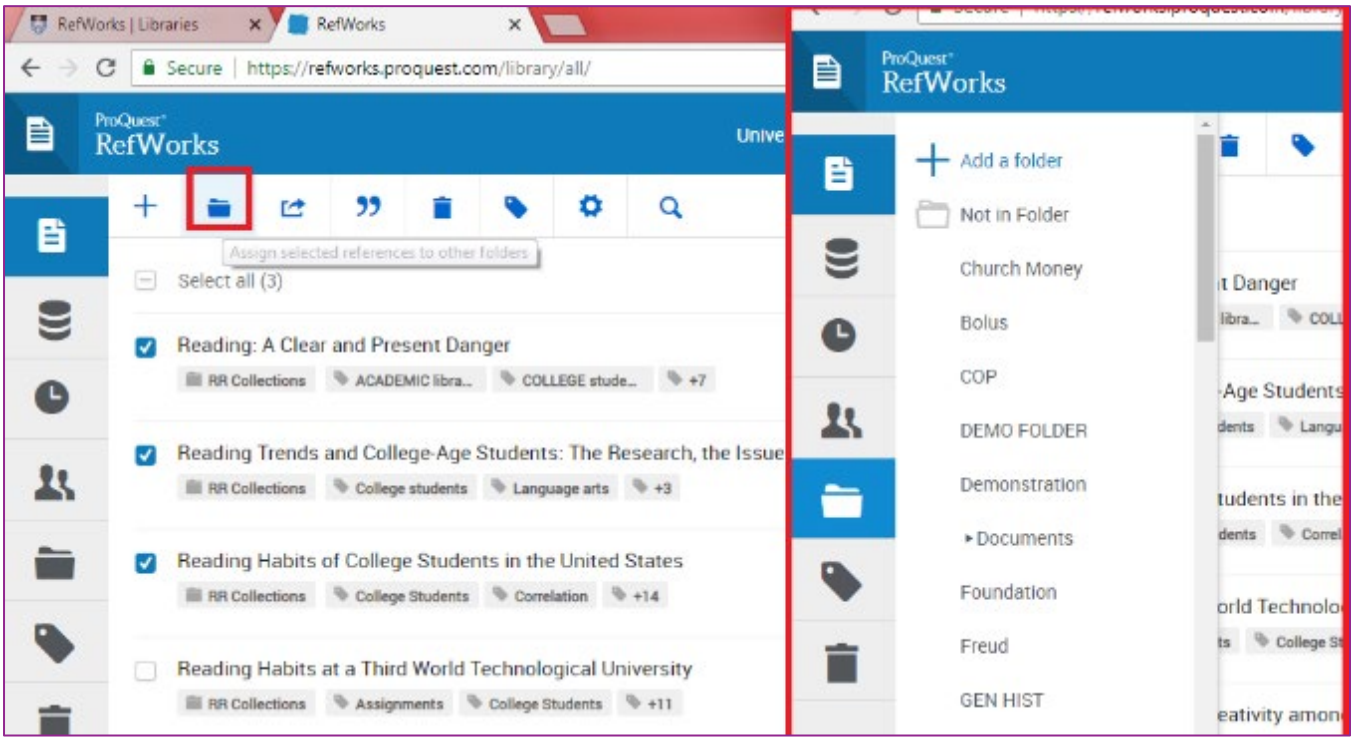
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:
We would like to thank all departments for their input and UCT librarians, Dianne Steele and Pepler Head for their guidance.

Or, you could instead click on the **Refworks** link and have all your referencing magically done for you….

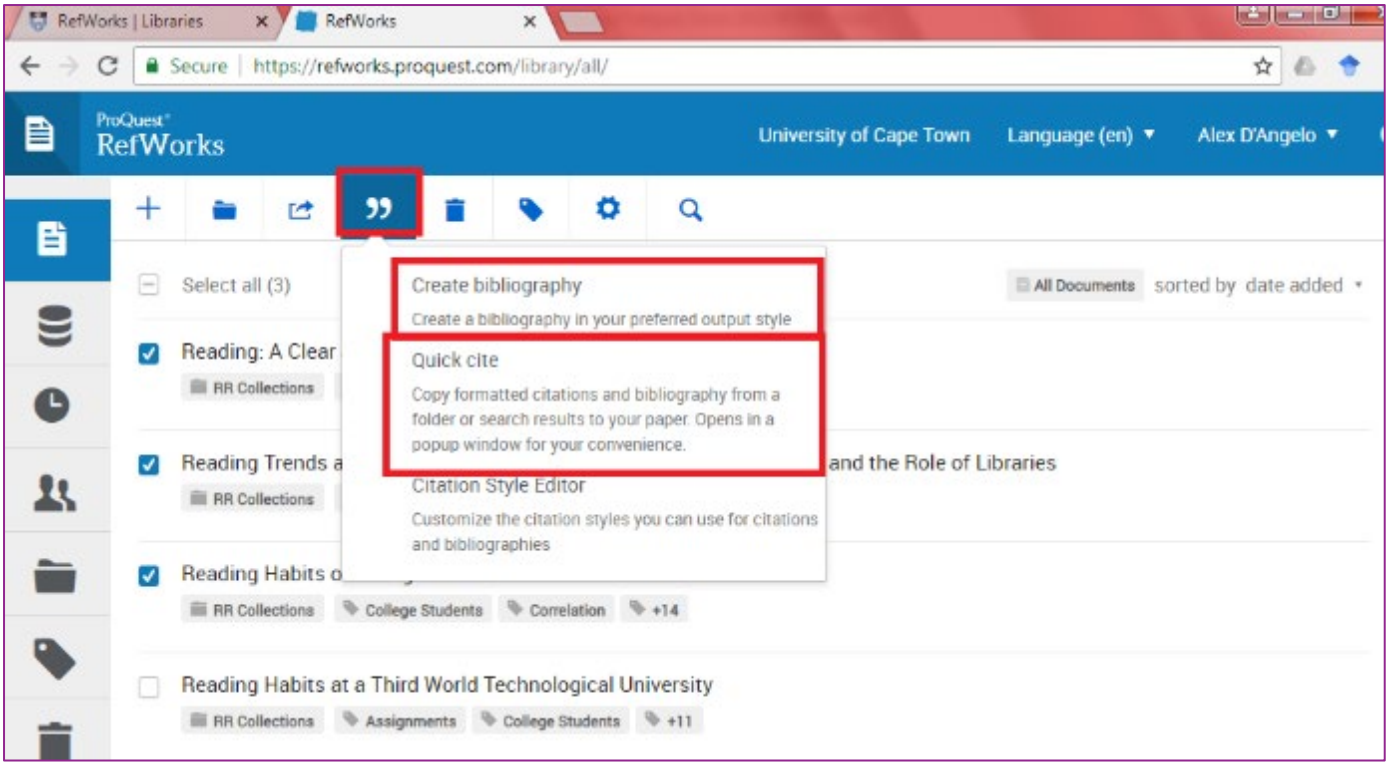


You sign on and set up an account on RefWorks, and thereafter you will be able to export references from our databases or Primo into your Refworks, which exists in cyberspace and can be accessed from anywhere by login.

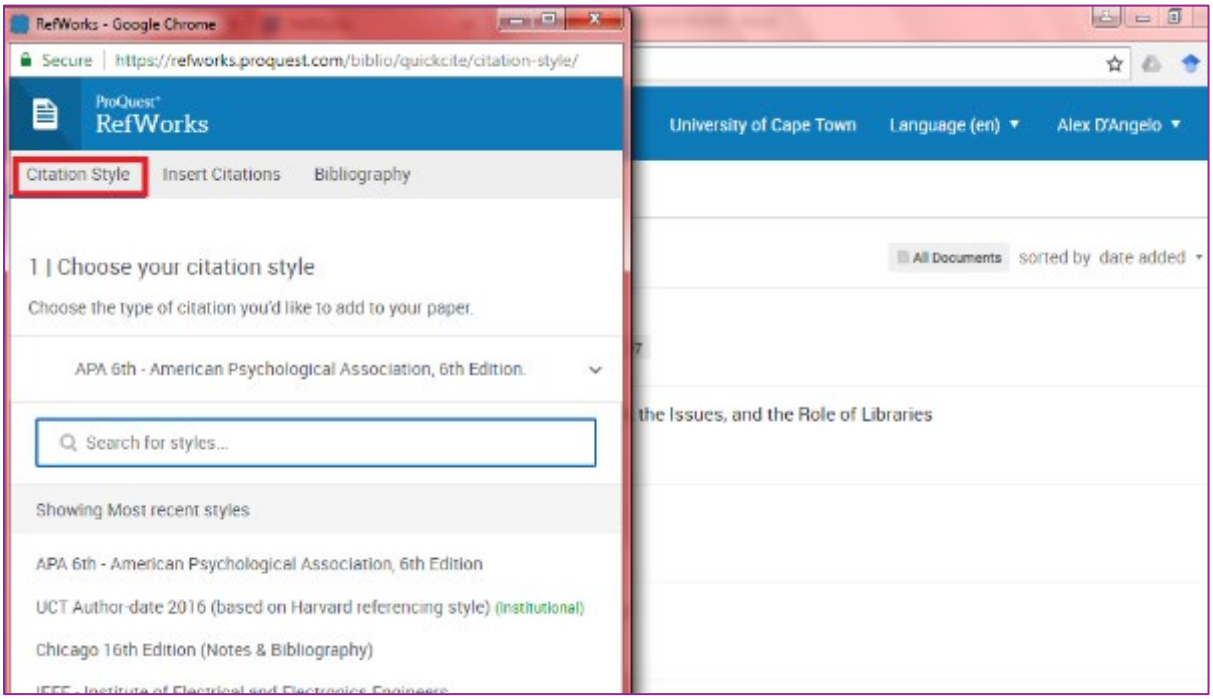
You can organise your references into folders,



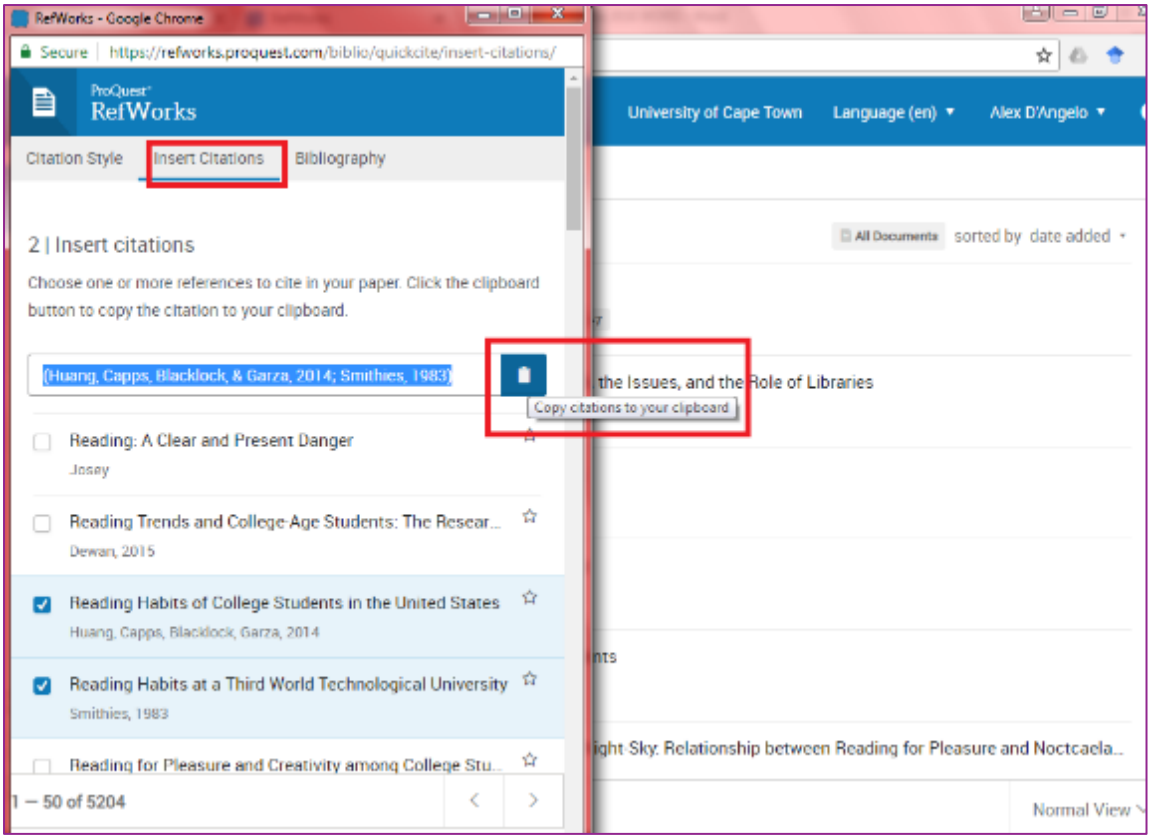
And you can either create bibliography, in any style you like from the folders, or you can generate in-text citations as you type, and then generate a bibliography for the ones you have used in your paper, through Quick Cite:



In Quick Cite, I first choose my citation style:



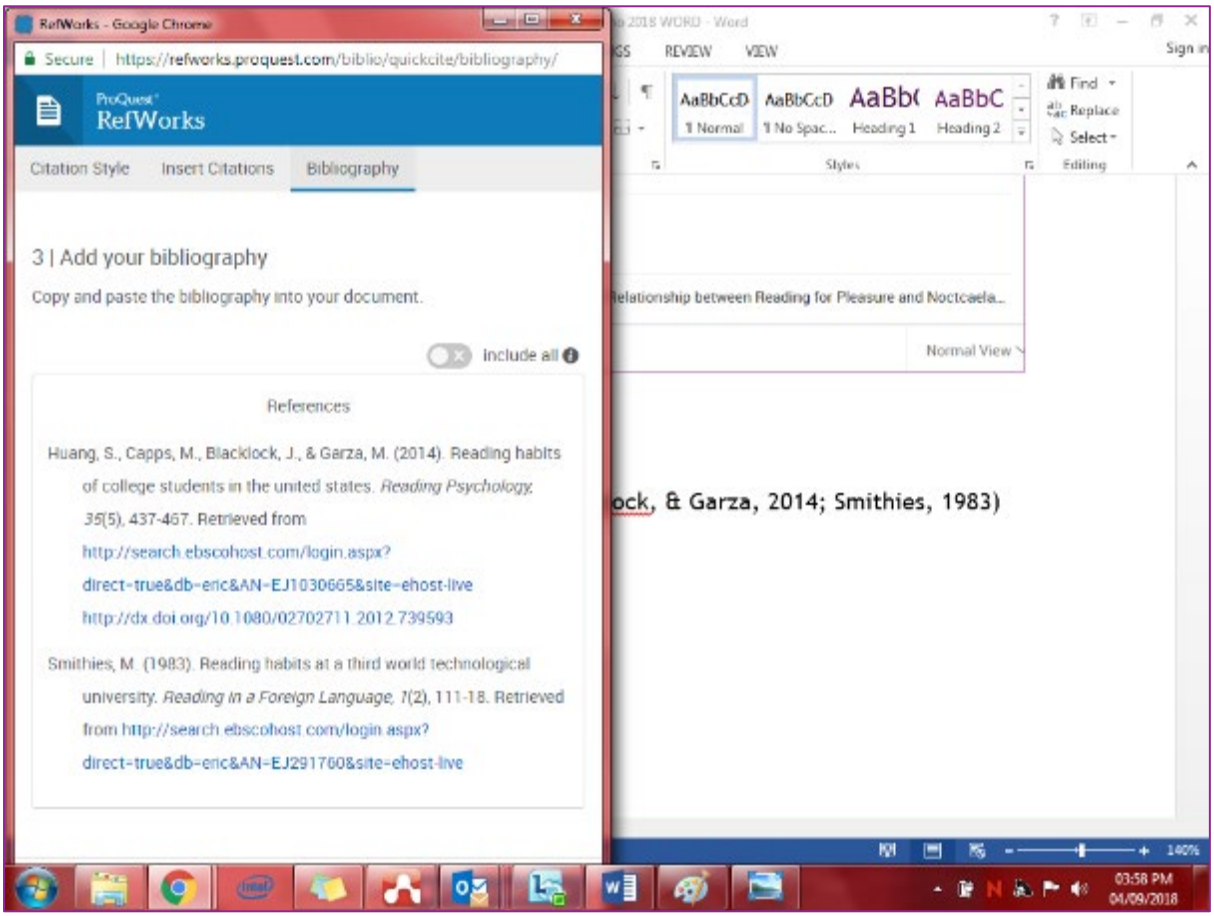
then select the in-text citations I want to use:



And paste them where I want them in my paper…

Blether, blether, blargle, blarg (Huang, Capps, Blacklock, & Garza, 2014; Smithies, 1983) blether blether blargle!

And then by selecting the Bibliography tag, the full references for anything I have selected are generated and I can cut and paste them into my bibliography:



Viz:

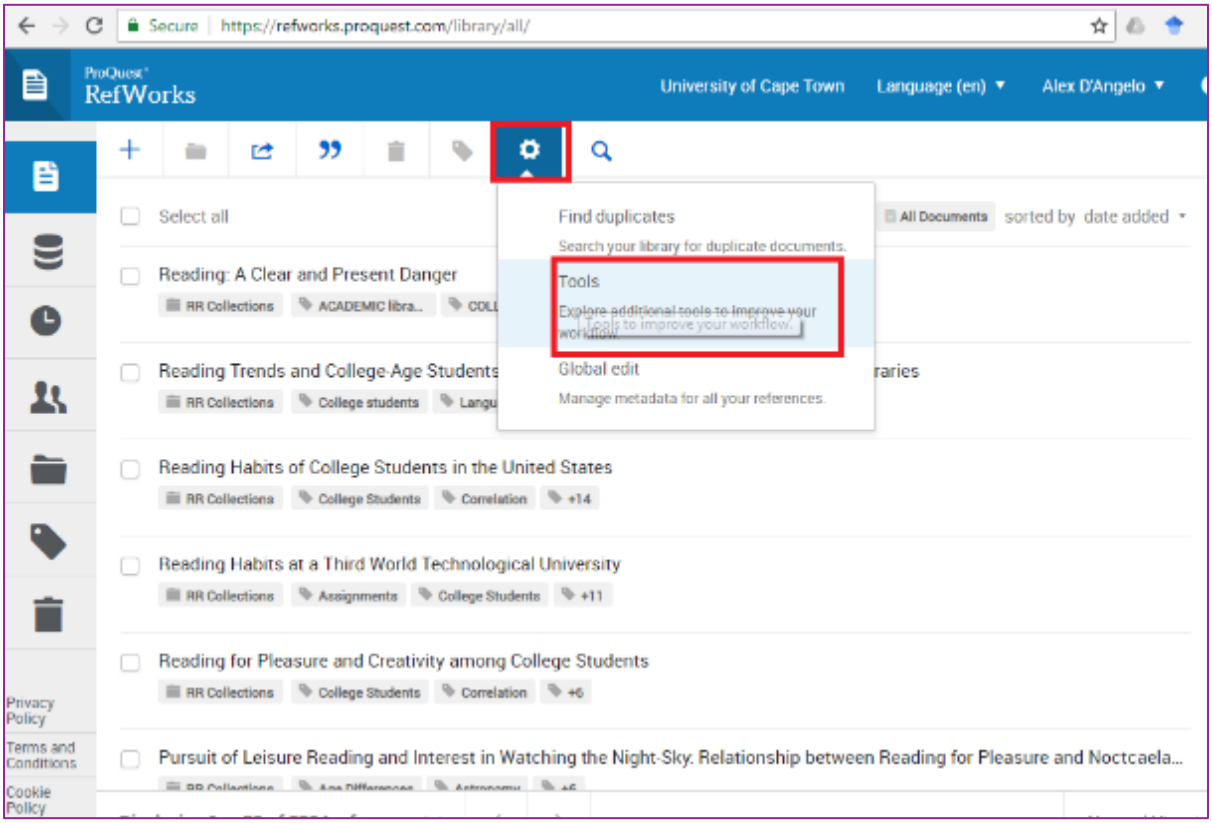
References

Huang, S., Capps, M., Blacklock, J., & Garza, M. (2014). Reading habits of college students in the united states. *Reading Psychology, 35*(5), 437-467. Retrieved from http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ1030665&site=ehost-livehttp://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02702711.2012.739593

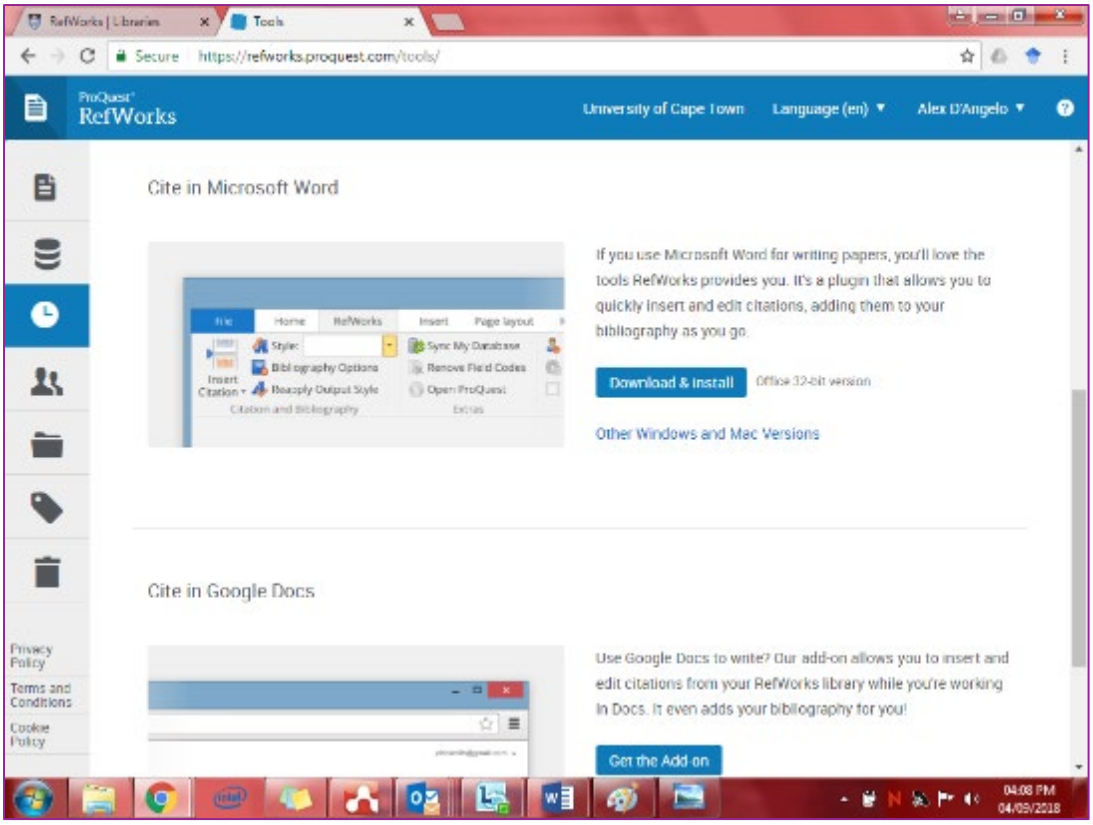
Smithies, M. (1983). Reading habits at a third world technological university. *Reading in a Foreign Language, 1*(2), 111-18. Retrieved from http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ291760&site=ehost-live

Simple as that.

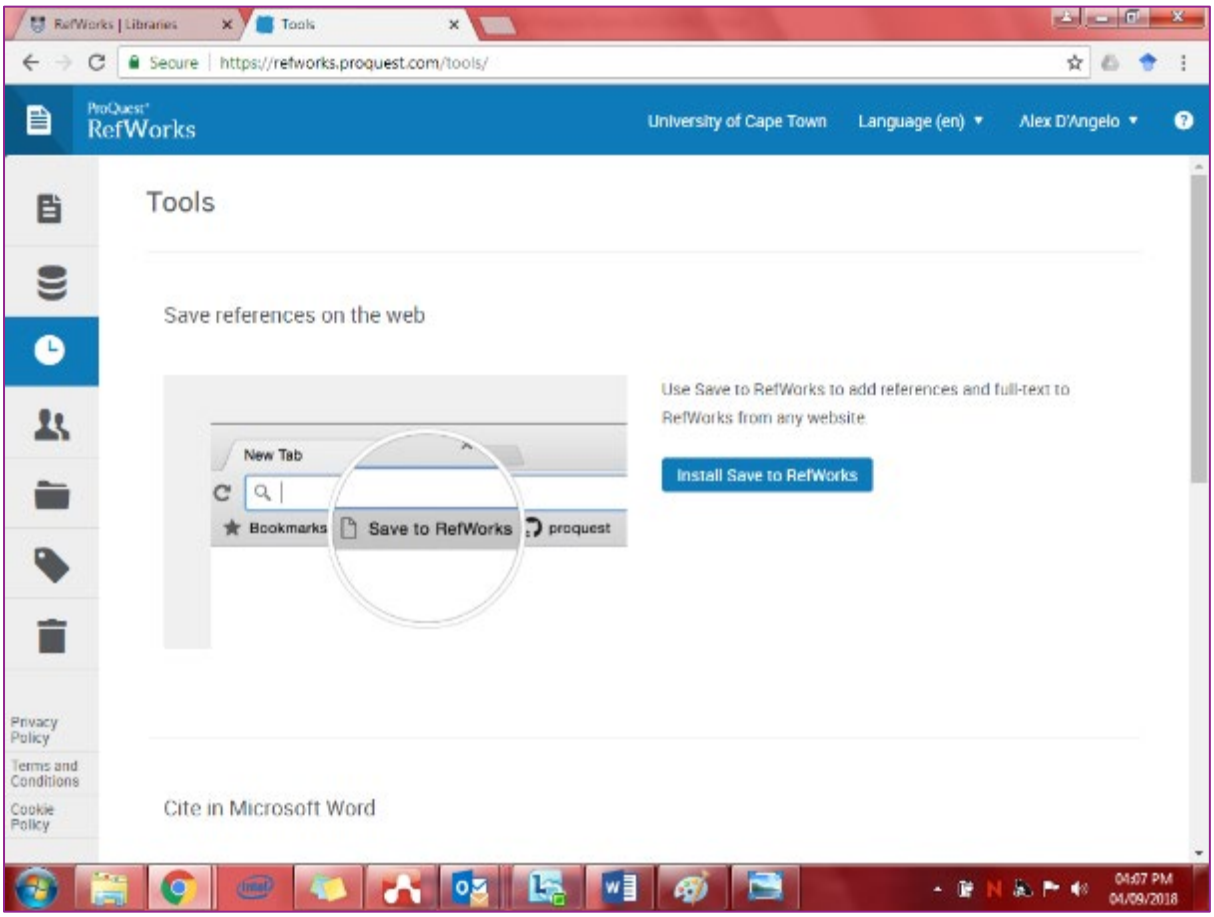
However, some very useful and rather more sophisticated tools can be found under by mousing over the gear symbol and selecting tools:



These include a far more sophisticated citation plugin to download, called Write-n-Cite, that lives on your microsoft word tool bar,



And an option for saving internet site data for later citation.



The Knowledge Commons is the best place to get started with RefWorks, since it has very experienced helpers on hand, but there are also many online help guides to RefWorks, one of the easiest being here: http://proquest.libguides.com/newrefworks

And so done 😊

Your librarians wish you the best of luck for your work this year