

LIS 663: Assignment 1


EBSCOhost, ProQuest, & Gale/Cengage Platforms

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About the Platforms

1. EBSCOhost

EBSCO Industries, Inc., is one of the largest privately held and family-owned companies in the United States. EBSCO Information Services, a division of EBSCO Industries, Inc., has been serving the information needs of the library services industry since 1944. From their humble beginnings as a small subscription agency, EBSCO's rise, as a leader in the information and library business is a testament to their excellence in service, technology, and confirms the dedication to the continued long-term growth of their products for their customers. EBSCO's core values include taking care of their customers' needs through constant product improvement of services and technologies; fostering a vision based on customer feedback; continuously searching out employees with the creativity and passion to implement new ideas; quality of services, resources, and technology; and staying ahead of technologies for libraries and end users to ensure the best administrator tools and resources. Partnering with libraries for over 70 years, EBSCO platforms continue to deliver quality content coupled with powerful technologies. Providing premium resources through databases, eBooks, journals, magazines, (as well as an adaptable discovery tool, which allows users to search across all resources in the library. EBSCO Industries, Inc., provides an extremely powerful platform from which users can access an impressive array of databases and support services.

2. [ProQuest](#)

ProQuest, headquartered in Ann Arbor, Michigan, with offices around the world, is a collection of companies that have merged to provide information for corporations, librarians, researchers, students and information seekers of all kinds. ProQuest is responsible for the production of the renowned reference standard *Books in Print*. ProQuest also provides ebrary, a source for thousands ProQuest's vast content is reported on their website to have reached 90,000 authoritative sources, with 6 billion digital pages and spanning six centuries. This content includes journal articles, dissertations and theses, newspapers and e-books. ProQuest's online platform is dedicated to developing precision searches and providing bibliographic support and document management.

ProQuest has an invaluable feature called MyResearch which enables a user to create a free account and archive searches and documents. We cannot overstate the usefulness of this feature as we conducted multiple trial and error searches. We were able to save our most effective searches across multiple databases and return to them easily without having to remember or recreate a particular query.

ProQuest search features are easy to use and the interface is visually pleasing. Basic search features includes default searching for every term that you type into the basic search box or exact phrase searching (use of ""). In a basic search, one can use numbers or letters and the search program will ignore punctuation and stop-words. Advanced searches can vary in complexity based on the search skills of the user. For example, one can search for terms within specific search fields, use Boolean and proximity operators (e.g. AND, OR, PRE, and NEAR), and/or

limit results to full text, peer reviewed, and/or scholarly journals. Users can use various forms of truncation as explained in the search tips section. One can select certain databases to search or search of all databases at once. After entering the search terms, a user can also limit results based on date of publication, source type, document type, and language (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Advanced search screen on ProQuest showing command box and limiting search options.

On the search results page, a user can choose to highlight search terms in the document on the results screen. ProQuest automatically sorts by relevance though they do not reveal the algorithm that they use to determine relevance. We question the accuracy of the algorithm, since in our final searches, articles with fewer highlighted terms appeared higher on the list than records with more. Records can be limited by certain facets by the menu on the left of the screen after the search has been run. It is at this point that one could select certain documents to save to their MyResearch account, if they have created one and signed in (see Figure 2).

Full text Peer reviewed ⓘ Modify search Tips Save search/alert ▼

Did you mean: (su(terrorism AND *international relations*) AND (*middle east* AND (*eastern europ** OR *western europ** OR europe)) AND (victim* OR hostage* OR casualty* OR bomb*) AND pd(>20131231)) AND fdb(1000008)

29 Results [Search within](#) Search name: ABI/INFORM Complete 2

[Cite](#) [Email](#) [Print](#) [More](#)

Relevance ▼ [Sort](#) Select 1-20 0 Selected items [Brief view](#) | [Detailed view](#)

Narrow results by

- Full text
- Peer reviewed
- Source type
- Publication date
- Publication title
- Document type
- Subject
- Classification
- Company/organization
- Location

1 **Fear of a new darkness; Anti-Semitism in Europe** [Preview](#)
 Anonymus. *The Economist* 414.8926 (Feb 21, 2015): 49-50.
 ...worries about Jew-hatred in **Europe** THE crowds
 ...Imagine* at memorial rallies for **victims** of the weekend shootings in
 ...that Jews do not belong in **Europe**. The French prime minister
[Abstract/Details](#) [Full text](#)


2 **Europe's Syria-Trained Jihadist** [Preview](#)
 Anonymus. *Wall Street Journal, Eastern edition* [New York, N.Y] 02 June 2014: A.14.
 ...Florida conducted a suicide truck **bomb** attack in Syria while fighting for the
[Abstract/Details](#) [Full text](#)

3 **BOSNIA: Action against jihadists may be ineffective** [Preview](#)
 Oxford Analytica Daily Brief Service. (Nov 28, 2014).
 ...fighters to the **Middle East**.
 ...in Western **Europe** represent a
 ...fighters from the **Middle East**. These same
[Abstract/Details](#) [Full text](#)

Figure 2: ProQuest search results page, showing highlighted search terms, limiters menu, and sharing and formatting options.

3. [Gale/Cengage](#)

Since the middle of the twentieth century the name Gale has been one that is synonymous with research. Founded in 1954 by Frederick G. Ruffner, Jr, Gale has always marketed themselves as an educational resource and aligned themselves with public education. In 2007 they merged with Cengage Learning and became known as Gale Cengage Learning. They provide resources to nearly every public library in the nation (“Cengage Learning,” n.d.), and offer information from a vast network of sources. To strengthen their name in educational resources they also provide content to many larger Discovery Sources, such as Ex Libris’ Primo, and OCLC’s WorldCat Discovery (“Gale Discovery Resources - Technical Documents - support.gale.com - Gale,” n.d.), and in June of 2015 they became a full-fledged Google for



Education Partner (Breeding, 2015). This affords them the opportunity to integrate with Google Scholar and to offer services within their databases that allow for easy transfer of information into Google Drive. It is safe to assume that since the restructuring of their finances in 2014 Cengage Learning is stronger than ever.

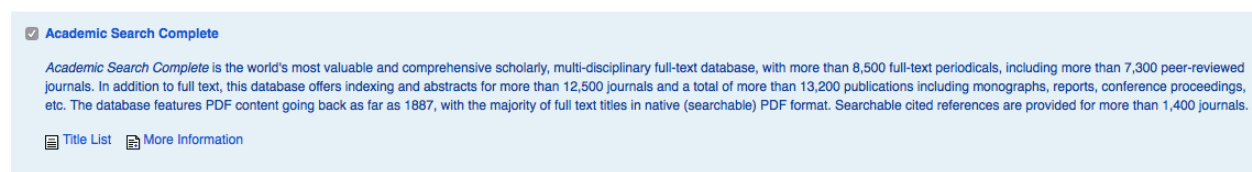
Selecting a database within the platform

1. EBSCOhost

The University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa (UHM) subscribes to EBSCO*host*, and EBSCO*host* Mobile. We choose to use EBSCO*host* Platform; with sixty-one databases it offers an impressive selection to choose and search from. UH student and faculty users need only sign in with a UH username and password through their MyUH homepage to gain access to the University’s Online Databases/Indexes resources. The databases that EBSCO*host* provides access to are: Academic Search Complete, Agricola, AHFS Consumer Medication Information, Alt HealthWatch, America: History & Life, American Bibliography of Slavic and East European Studies, American Doctoral Dissertations, 1933-1955, Art Architecture Complete, ATLA Religion Database, Biography Reference Bank (H.W. Wilson), Book Collection Nonfiction: Elementary School Edition, Book Collection Nonfiction: High School Edition, Book Collection Nonfiction: Middle School Edition, Book Collection Nonfiction, Business Source Complete, CINAHL with Full Text, Communication Source, Computer Source, eBook Collection (EBSCO*host*), eBook Public Library Collection (EBSCO*host*), ERIC, European Views of the Americas: 1493 to 1750, Fiction Core Collection (H.W. Wilson), Film & Television Literature Index, Fuente Academia, Funk & Wagnalis New World Encyclopedia, GreenFILE, Health Source – Consumer Edition, Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition, Historical Abstracts, History Reference Center, Hobbies & Crafts Reference Center, Home Improvement Reference Center, Hospitality & Tourism Index, International Bibliography of Theatre & Dance with Full Text, Legal Collection,

Legal Information Reference Center, Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts, MAS Complete, MasterFILE Complete, MedicLatina, MEDLINE, Middle Search Plus, Military & Government Collection, Music Index, Newspaper Source Plus, Newswires, Peace Research Abstracts, Primary Search, Professional Development Collection, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, Public Administration Abstracts, Regional Business News, Religion and Philosophy Collection, Science Reference Center, Small Business Reference Center, Small Engine Repair Reference Center, Teacher Reference Center, TOPICsearch, Vocational and Career Collection, and Web News.

Each database appears identical when searching, although each database has different search options, which makes it user friendly, and less confusing, even to the first time user. Switching searches between any of the databases within the platform can be done pretty much effortlessly. To select one database out of the sixty-one that EBSCOhost offers we decided to go through each, and by process of elimination based on the requirements of our subject search we would narrow it down to a workable list. Having to go through each of the sixty-one databases was made considerably easier by a quick description of what type of resources that database offers, which you can view in the “Detailed View” (see Figure 3).




Academic Search Complete

Academic Search Complete is the world's most valuable and comprehensive scholarly, multi-disciplinary full-text database, with more than 8,500 full-text periodicals, including more than 7,300 peer-reviewed journals. In addition to full text, this database offers indexing and abstracts for more than 12,500 journals and a total of more than 13,200 publications including monographs, reports, conference proceedings, etc. The database features PDF content going back as far as 1887, with the majority of full text titles in native (searchable) PDF format. Searchable cited references are provided for more than 1,400 journals.

[Title List](#) [More Information](#)

Figure 3 : Sample Detailed View of Academic Search Complete Database.




This feature cut our time down greatly, and helped us weed out fifty-three of the sixty-one databases, ultimately leaving us with the eight best options: Academic Search Complete, MasterFILE Complete, Military Government Collection, Newspaper Source Plus, Newswires, Peace Research Abstracts, TOPICsearch, and Webnews. Our search requirements restricted us to using only the databases, which had either a thesaurus or controlled vocabulary. Going back through each of the remaining eight databases, we were now able to whittle the number of acceptable databases down to three: Academic Search Complete, MasterFILE Complete, and Military Government Collection.

Academic Search Complete would be our chosen database in the EBSCO*host* platform, as such we will take a closer look at it in detail in a later section of this paper. One useful tool we did find in this platform is the ability to search all, or as many databases as the user chooses, at one time. Running searches through the final three databases at once would yield different results, due mainly to the fact the search options for each of the remaining databases have different limiters.

2. [ProQuest](#)

In first deciding which database to use, we visually scanned the list of ProQuest databases available through University of Hawai‘i. Though the home screen indicated that there were only 29 databases, we realized that that number was deceptive. Some smaller collections are “nested” within larger databases. If one looks under Search Tips/Database/Specific Field Codes, there are 44 databases listed. Knowing that a database might be a collection of smaller databases is an



important detail if one wants to exclude certain databases within a larger set that might not produce relevant returns. This happened when our group initially searched ProQuest Business Collection and didn't realize that ABI/INFORM Complete was a subset of that database. Towards the beginning of our process, we performed initial queries on each database separately. This was extremely time consuming but it did give an accurate estimation of which databases were "good" for this topic, and which were not. Also, in the assignment guidelines, we were constricted to databases that had controlled vocabulary, which all of our initial choices did. Also, because our information request contained geographical information (e.g. Middle East and Europe), we felt that having the ability to limit searches by a location (LOC) field code might be helpful, so we also looked for databases that allowed that option. On the advice of a classmate, we learned that with ProQuest, we could also perform a preliminary search on ALL of the databases at the same time and use the database limiters on the left side of the screen to determine which databases produced the most returns (see Figure 4). The combination of these two methods helped familiarize our group with the databases that ProQuest offers, and helped us refine our search string. Ultimately, we decided to use ABI/INFORM Complete since it returned the highest number of hits (968) from our preliminary search. Table 1, shown below, summarizes the descriptors of the possible databases that our group considered from the ProQuest platform.

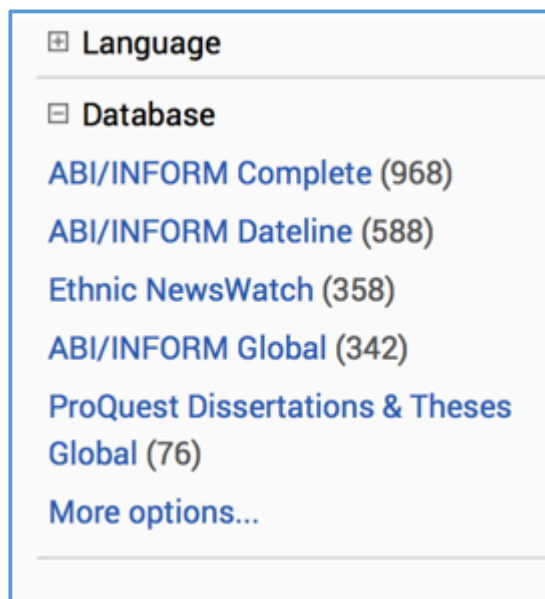



Figure 4: Results from preliminary search of all databases showing the most promising databases.

Table 1: Summary of ProQuest database features that might be appropriate for our topic.

Database	Thesaurus or CV	Dictionary	Search by Location Field Code	Number of Returns in Preliminary Search	Notes
Alt-Press Watch	Y	N	Y	See notes	Initially, we predicted that this would be the most promising database. This was the first database tried, before we realized that we could search all databases to find the most relevant ones. Here, we worked on refining search terms. 1st search = 23 results

					but not all relevant, 2nd search = 4 results, too few. 3rd search = 78 results was a little too many. 4th search = 31 results using some controlled vocabulary + natural language which was manageable.
Ethnic News Watch	Y	N	Y	358	pretty good source but not the best
PAIS international	Y	N	N	0	This was surprising as we expected it to have something related to terrorism based on the written description of the database. When we searched it separately, we found mostly abstracts and very limited full text
ProQuest Business Collection	Y	N	Y	1046	some unique hits plus a most promising one, more full text, seems like a larger database based on number of returns from a similar search
Worldwide Political Science Abstracts	Y	N	N	2	returning duplicate documents as other databases



ABI/INFORM Complete	Y	N	Y	968	one of the databases within ProQuest Business Collection
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3. [Gale/Cengage](#)

The Hawai'i State Public Library System (HSPLS) is one of many that subscribe to Gale Cengage Learning and thirteen of its different databases. Users simply need to have an HSPLS library card and internet connection to access these resources. The databases that HSPLS provides free access to are: Archives Unbound, Biography in Context, Business Insights: Essential, Gale Artemis Literary Sources, Gale Virtual Reference Library, Health & Wellness Resource Center, InfoTrac Custom Journals, Literature Resource Center, National Geographic Virtual Library, Science in Context, Testing & Education Reference Center, U.S. History in Context, and World History in Context.

Each of the thirteen databases are set up fairly similarly (see Figure 5), seven (Biography in Context, Gale Virtual Reference Library, InfoTrac Custom Journals, National Geographic Virtual Library, Science in Context, U.S. History in Context, and World History in Context) are essentially identical in layout. This level of continuity allows the user to traverse databases fairly seamlessly, and even allows for integration of their sessions with Google Drive. This feature is especially helpful as it affords the user a safe, secure, and accessible way to collect their research.

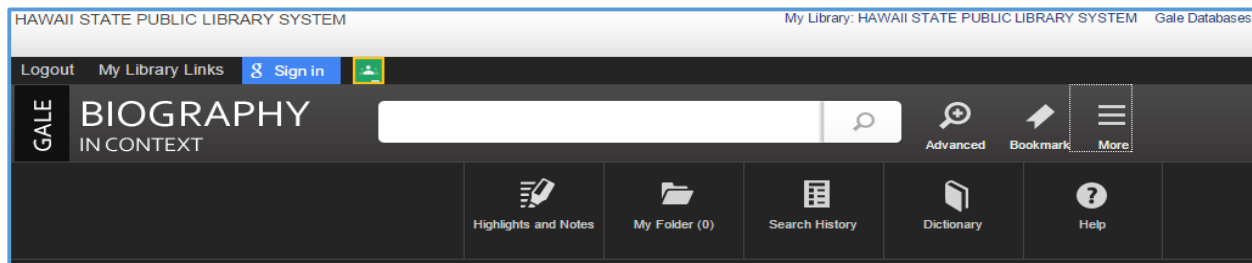


Figure 5 : Sample of Gale database setup.

In order to select the one specific database out of these thirteen options we agreed to look into each database individually, and assess their value for the purposes of the requested subject matter. We were able to narrow down the list in a fairly expedient manner. Archives Unbound only contains information up to the 1960s, which is far outside the scope of the information that we were seeking. Gale Artemis Literary Sources (which now houses the Literature Resources Center database) is an excellent location to find literary criticism, and other specialized literary reference resources. We determined that this was not a reliable database to search for this topic, as most hits returned were book reviews. That being said, it did have one feature that we found to be fairly unique and interesting, the “Term Frequency” tool. This tool allows the user to input whatever term they choose and discover the frequency with which it was used in publications over a pre-selected period of time. The term “terrorism” appears to have peaked in the year 2002 with 2,731 documents produced (see Figure 6). The user should not assume that this is all-inclusive, and should understand that it is limited to items that are available through a cross-section of Gale Databases.

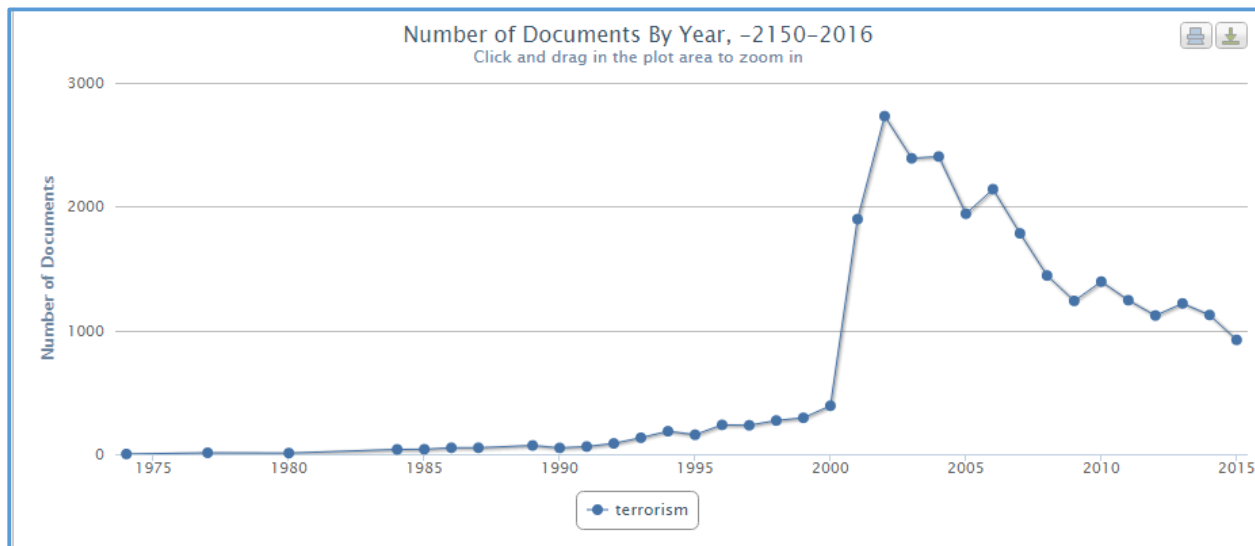



Figure 6 : Term Frequency graph from Gale Artemis Literary Sources database.

The Health and Wellness Resource Center provides an insurmountable sum of information related to many different diseases, conditions, and other wellness issues. However, it does not appear to provide much in the way of articles on terrorism in the Middle East. National Geographic is a company that is known worldwide for their expertise in the fields of journalism and photojournalism. We were sad to see that this database did not yield much in the way of relevant hits. There were some compelling photographs related to the topic at hand, as well as a link to some print books related to terroristic actions, however this was all. The database only provides complete archives of the magazine through the mid-1990s, which was decades out of our target time period. It is worth noting that this database has a very kid-friendly side that is obviously geared towards the younger user. Being that this is one of the databases with a similar overall setup, it would be easy for a user to learn on here at a younger age, and then gradually increase their database usage/knowledge through similarly setup databases. We feel that this would theoretically lead to better database interactions for younger users all around.

The Testing & Education Reference Center provides ample resources for users who are seeking information related to test preparation throughout the educational realm. Unfortunately it provides little more than that, so we were able to easily rule out this database. Business Insights: Essentials seemed promising, as it could possibly relate to industry in the Middle East and Europe. After our preliminary searches primarily returned small-scale stories (see Figure 7), we moved on. Science in Context was the next database that we perused. Again the matching search functionality made its use easy, however our searches left much to be desired. Our preliminary searches yielded few results, often less than ten, so we moved on quite rapidly.

- ★
Worried mother told police about son's Jihad plans
Article *The Times (London, England), December 6 2014*
 Byline: Sean O'Neill Crime and Security Editor Two childhood friends who went to Syria to join a group linked to al-Qaeda were jailed yesterday for more than 12 years after a judge described them as dangerous extremists.
- ★
Lights out at 10pm sharp... a snapshot of life in a terror training camp; Extremists' timetable made public after British brothers become first to be jailed for jihad
Article *Daily Telegraph (London, England), November 27 2014*
 Byline: Tom Whitehead, Security Editor A RARE insight into life in a terrorist training camp – including a strict edict to be in bed with lights out by 10pm – has been made public after two brothers became ...
- ★
Homeward bound? Don't hype the threat of returning jihadists
Essay *Foreign Affairs, 2014 November-December*
 On May 24, 2014, a man opened fire inside the Jewish Museum in Brussels, quickly killing three people and fatally wounding a fourth before disappearing into the city's streets. The alleged perpetrator, a French citizen ...
- ★
Family pulls up stakes to join jihad
Brief article *New York Post (New York, NY), October 9 2014*
 WASHINGTON - The family that "preys" together stays together. An entire French family of 11 - including Grandma - packed up and headed for Syria to join jihadist fanatics there, French government officials said


Figure 7 : Sample of Results from Business Insights: Essentials using the search query "Middle East* AND Terror* AND Conflict".



We felt sure that we would dig up promising articles when we entered U.S. History in Context, and even more so when we discovered that the user can “[c]ross-search U.S. History in Context with World History in Context to provide a one-stop source for all history research needs”(“U.S. History - Gale In Context - Cengage Learning,” n.d.). After inputting a variety of search strings we determined that World History in Context had more relevant articles than U.S. History in Context, but that neither had quite what we were looking for.

This left us with three remaining databases to investigate, Gale Virtual Reference Library, Infotrac Custom Journals, and Biography in Context. As Infotrac Custom Journals provides access to over 952 publications we travelled there next. We found more of the same. Some valid information, but many duplicates, and nothing was quite what we were looking for. The Gale Virtual Reference Library initially appeared to be one of our main contenders. After trying many different versions of our search string we were unable to locate anything of relevance. The majority of the hits we came up with were confusing, at best. After discussing why we thought a guide to Colleges would be returned as relevant to our topic, we placed the Gale Virtual Reference Library aside and moved on to the last remaining database, Biography in Context.

Biography in Context was our chosen database within this platform, and as such it will be discussed more fully in the upcoming sections. We do feel that it is important to discuss another valuable tool, one that also led us to the conclusion that Biography in Context was the appropriate database for us to use. Gale Cengage Learning has a Power Search feature that acts as a discovery tool for all of its databases. This tool allows the user to search multiple databases



at a single time. We opted to try this feature after searching, unsuccessfully, through more than eight of the thirteen databases. The Power Search page has links to a Topic Finder feature that offers users many different options for topic searching. Like the majority of the rest of the databases, the search features were the same, but with a wider scope. We tried our preliminary searches through here and found that the majority of the hits that were being returned were coming from the Biography in Context database. We felt that this assured us that we were on the correct path.

Throughout the entire searching process we encountered a major flaw with the Gale/Cengage databases, severe connectivity issues. We attempted our searches using four different computers, three different internet browsers, and multiple Wi-Fi enabled areas. It did not seem to matter which computer, browser, or waif network we used, we were constantly receiving timeout errors, and failed links. This led to a significant amount of wasted time, and drastically increased our frustration levels with this platform.



Overview of chosen databases

1. EBSCOhost

After weeding out the databases on the EBSCOhost platform we knew to be useless in our targeted search, we were left with Academic Search Complete, MasterFILE Complete, and Military & Government Collection. At first glance, we thought our best choice from the three databases would have come from the Military & Government Collection however, after running a few searches with the three together we found that the best and most search results came from Academic Search Complete.

The best feature about the EBSCOhost platform is no matter what database you choose to search through, each search interface is exactly alike, the only features that differ are within the search options. When doing an Advanced Search, the Search Modes and Expanders, and the Limiters/Special Limiters (Figure 8) can vary, though not confusing to the user in any way and can be very helpful when doing a group database search. We felt this is an excellent feature for both amateur and novice researcher/user, however, the cons with this would be that the search is so focused and exact that often times it can/could return unsuccessful search results.

Special limiters for Academic Search Complete

Publication Type	Document Type
All	All
Periodical	Abstract
Newspaper	Article
Book	Bibliography
Language	
Dutch/Flemish	
English	
French	
German	
Greek	

Special limiters for MasterFILE Complete

Publication Type	Document Type
All	All
Primary Source Document	Abstract
Almanac	Article
Biography	Bibliography

Special limiters for Military & Government Collection

Publication Type
All
Primary Source Document
Periodical
Book

Figure 8 : Sample Special Limiters in Search Options.

Academic Search Complete would in the end become the database we would choose to use to find our article and abstract from, as it returned the best search results between the three databases. Created especially for academic institutions Academic Search Complete is a scholarly, multidisciplinary full- text database, offering periodicals and peer-reviewed journals, and it includes indexing and abstracts for an impressive amount of peer-reviewed journals and publications. The database shares with the user full text resources from areas of academia including anthropology, ethnic & multicultural studies, general science, law, materials science, music, religion & theology study, among many other areas of study. Offering a broad variation of scholarly and peer-reviewed resources, this database has a little bit of everything for the everyday student or serious researcher.

We agreed that the database was fairly easy to navigate and understand, and from our search results page we noticed we were able to refine our searches with one or two clicks to the left, in a “pop out” (Figure 9) screen. At first use it seemed somewhat confusing and we often would collapse the “pop out”, though as the searches got longer, we found it to be more and more useful to make the searching faster.

The screenshot displays a search interface with a sidebar on the left and search results on the right. The sidebar is titled "Refine Results" and contains several sections:

- Current Search:** Shows the search query: "SU (terror* OR violen*) AND SU (("Middle East*" OR ...".
- Expanders:** Includes "Apply related words" (checked).
- Limiters:** Includes "Full Text" (checked), "Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals" (checked), "Published Date: 20140101-20151231" (checked), "Publication Type: Periodical" (checked), "Document Type: Article" (checked), and "Language: English" (checked). There is a "Clear All" link at the bottom.
- Limit To:** Includes "Full Text" (checked), "References Available" (unchecked), and "Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals" (checked).

The main search results area shows "Search Results: 1 - 20 of 20" and lists four results:

- 1. The Tale of the Middle East's Children.** By: Bahjat, Safaa. Middle East Journal of Family Medicine. Sep2014, Vol. 12 Issue 7, p22-25. 4p. Subjects: CHILDREN & war; VIOLENCE; CHILDREN; WAR -- Psychological aspects; SUICIDE bombings; MIDDLE East. PDF Full Text (601KB).
- 2. IS IT GOOD FOR THE JEWS?** By: Rich, Dave. World Affairs. Summer2015, Vol. 178 Issue 2, p13-22. 10p. Subjects: ANTISEMITISM; JEWS; MUJAHIDEEN; MUSLIMS; VIOLENCE; COMMUNITIES -- Social aspects; ISRAEL; EUROPE; SOCIAL conditions; ATTITUDES; CRIMES against; EUROPE -- Politics & government -- 21st century. HTML Full Text, PDF Full Text (404KB).
- 3. Nuclear Non-Proliferation, Rogue Actors and the Middle East.** By: Seitelbach, Emmanuel. Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics & Culture. 2014, Vol. 19 Issue 1/2, p101-108. 8p. Subjects: NUCLEAR weapons; TREATIES; NUCLEAR terrorism -- Prevention; NUCLEAR crisis control; MIDDLE East; TREATY on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (1968). PDF Full Text (3.4MB).
- 4. Designing Supervision under the Preventive Anti-Money Laundering Policy in the European Union.** By: van den Broek, Melissa. Utrecht Law Review. Dec2014, Vol. 10 Issue 5, p151-167. 17p. Subjects: SUPERVISION; MONEY laundering -- Law & legislation; EUROPEAN Union law; TERRORISTS; LAW enforcement; EUROPE; EUROPEAN Union. PDF Full Text (2MB).

Figure 9 : Sample refined results for search.

The interface itself is nice and simple to understand, all pertinent information is shown on the screen and it is just as simple to start another search if needed without any effort on the part of the user. Within the search results the user is also afforded the option to take a look at the abstract with more information (Figure 10). Another feature we found useful to the researcher was the ability to save all searches made into a folder which you could access by creating an

account in the platform. This would save every single search one made, no matter the databases chosen.

The screenshot displays a search results page with a list of academic journals. The entry for "11. Jihad in the Balkans" is highlighted with a red circle. The detailed view for this article is expanded, showing the following information:

- Title:** Jihad in the Balkans.
- Authors:** Bardos, Gordon N.
- Source:** World Affairs
- Date:** 2014
- Publication Type:** Academic Journal
- Subjects:** MUSLIMS; ISLAMISTS; MUJAHIDEEN; RELIGION; TERRORISM; WAHHABIYAH; MOSQUE officers; PROPAGANDA; YUGOSLAV War, 1991-1995; BALKAN Peninsula; BOSNIA & Herzegovina; EUROPE; RELIGIOUS aspects
- Abstract:** The article discusses the militant Islamist movement in Southeastern Europe, noting the possible future impact of jihadi fighters who are engaged in the Syrian civil war on the Balkan Peninsula. Topics include the involvement of Islamist fighters in the Bosnian War, the propagation of Wahhabi Islam
- PDF Full Text:** (545KB)
- Buttons:** Add to folder, Detailed Record

A red arrow points to the "YUGOSLAV" subject tag in the subject list.

Figure 10 : Sample detailed view for possible final article.

2. ProQuest


ABI/INFORM Complete is a comprehensive business database that began in the 1970s and is a subset of the ProQuest Business Collection. ABI/INFORM Complete itself is composed of ABI/INFORM Global, ABI/INFORM Trade and Industry, and ABI/INFORM Dateline. Featured full text journals in ABI/INFORM Complete include: *Journal of Business Ethics*, *Journal of Economic Literature*, and *Journal of International Business Studies*. Full text periodicals include

Wall Street Journal, *The Economist*, and *Christian Science Monitor*. Topics covered include Business, Economic conditions, Business trends, Accounting, Finance, etc. From what I could tell, ABI/INFORM Complete uses the ProQuest thesaurus as its controlled vocabulary. A user of ABI/INFORM Complete can use any of the ProQuest platform search tools described above.

3. [Gale/Cengage](#)

Biography in Context is laid out the same as the other “in Context” databases that are offered by Gale. It is very crisp, clean, and easy on the eyes. The search bar is easily locatable at the top of the screen, and the user can access the basic and advanced search features with the click of a button. They also have the opportunity to save articles, highlight and take notes on the pages themselves, access and revise their search history, access a dictionary, and click into a fairly extensive help file. One of the relatively new features of this database is the ability to integrate it with a personal Google Drive. This feature allows users to save citations in their preferred format (APA or MLA only), download citations and articles directly into their Drive, it will even download the user’s notes and highlights with the articles themselves. This is an extraordinary addition to the database as, even though the user can sign in and save items, they do not get saved for future use. Once the session is complete then the saved items and search history reset, which is highly frustrating.

Even though the help file is the same throughout all of the HSPLS accessible Gale databases it does link to each individual product’s website. The file/page provides useful tips on how to search within the databases, provides sample searches, explains Lexile levels, and even has




separate areas for librarians, teachers, and secondary school researchers. The teacher portion provides access to lesson plans, scavenger hunts, Common Core curricula, and gives suggestions on how to integrate Gale's services into their classroom. For the librarian, the help sheet offers links to publication lists, free promotional materials, MARC records, database direct URLs, an administrative portal, and valuable usage statistical tools.

The Research Toolkit boasts a wide variety of aides for the high-school researcher. The top item, perhaps one of the most valuable, is the tip sheet, and coordinating quiz, on how to judge sources. This is important as high-school students are not typically seasoned searchers, and have no idea how to evaluate the quality of the information they retrieve. The help sheet also offers assistance on how to create outlines, formulate topic sentences, prepare arguments, organize reports, use footnotes, citations, and comprehend graphs. Each of these subtopics has a comprehensive tip sheet and related quiz. This vastly increases the value of this database to the demographic that it is aimed at.

Once the user has selected an article there are many exciting features in the full records themselves. As we previously mentioned users can choose a citation style, then they can both copy and paste their citation(s) elsewhere, or they can use the integrated feature to export them into a selection of citation products, such as EasyBib, EndNote, and RefWorks. They can choose to email the article to anyone they like, they can even use the "share" feature to share the article through over 200 different online sites.

Another feature that Gale provides users with is a translation button. This allows the user to translate the text into over 10 different languages. This goes hand in hand with the "Listen"




button. Once pressed, the user will hear the text of their document, and can follow along with the visual highlighting, in whatever language they choose to translate it to.

Although Biography in Context has many exciting and useful features we discovered many of the flaws that it contains. As we previously mentioned the save feature does not save items or search history for future usage. Once the session has been completed the folders get emptied. We found this to be extremely unfortunate as we conducted many of our searches over multiple days, and often had to recreate our searches from scratch. This is a major drawback and a deal-breaker for many solid researchers. Proper searching takes a significant amount of time and effort in and of itself, when the user is forced to waste time recreating previous hit lists they are more likely to discard the database.

We utilized the cross-database searching capabilities of the Power Search function to further our campaign. When we found an article we liked using Power Search we went to locate it using the specific database, in this case Biography in Context. We found that the search string we used in Power Search did not return the same database hits in Biography in Context. This was to be expected as Power Search searches all the Gale databases, however we did not find articles that were specifically labeled as “from Biography in Context” until we amended our search string. We found this to be confusing, and a waste of even more time.

Once we located our featured articles, we then copied down the citations. While Biography in Context we noted that there was no option for a short URL. This meant that the formal citation included a long, messy URL that was filled with our search information. We then located the same article through the Power Search and noticed even more discrepancies. The record for the



same exact articles through Power Search not only had short URLs, but they also contained links to a DOI when available. The presentation of the publication information was even different. Power Search has the publication information at the top of the screen in a collapsible field, and Biography in Context places it at the end of the article's text. This would not be so disconcerting if it were just different in one database, but we noticed it across all of the "in Context" databases. We are unsure as to why the platform developers felt the need to alter something that appears to have been uniform across the board. Changes such as those we have outlined above are some of the many reasons why we do not recommend these databases for serious researchers.

Searching the databases

1. EBSCOhost

i. Forming a search

After agreeing to use the same terminology for all three databases we found that EBSCOhost and ProQuest would be a little more challenging to search through, than Gale/Cengage. Starting with a broader search, we then moved to narrowing it down, while attempting to get the best and most relevant search results. Setting our limiters, we focused on material published after January 2014 and used terms we thought best to find our required subjects “terrorist actions”, “Middle East/Western Europe”, and “types of the targets of the terrorist actions.”

We started by using the term “terrorist”, which yielded too many results for us (2,749) (see Table 2). We then decided to truncate “terrorist”, which only made things more difficult as it returned three times more results (7,119) than terrorist did; we knew that we need to try another approach. We decided then that we would use the thesaurus to find the best and most relevant search term for “terrorist”, we found that the “Terrorism” was the term to use. Next we did a subject search for “Terrorism” and came back with (3,095), still far too much for any researcher to sift through, so we added (“Middle East” AND “Europe”), keeping the same limiters. Our search results dropped drastically, down to 10. We choose a few select articles from this results list as possible finalists, however we felt that we could still do better. We amended the final search string making it “SU terrorism” AND (“Middle East” AND “Europe”) AND (hostage*

OR victim* OR “target*”), the search returned 1 result which was more historical than current, and therefore not useful. We tried another search, SU (terror* OR violen*) AND SU (“Middle East*” OR Europe*), adding the limiters of date (January 2014 – September 2015), full text journal article, and written in English. This search resulted in 20 hits, many of the articles we found on this results list were articles we had seen before, with a few that were new to us. In this search we encountered an article that we all agreed was a solid hit.

Table 2 : Selected searches done through Academic Search Complete.


Term	Limiters	Hits	Relevant	Notes
Terrorist	1/14-9/15 Article; English	2,749	No	Too many results, not focused on Middle East activity
Terrorist*	1/14-9/15; Article; English	7,119	No	Too many results to go through
SU terrorism	1/14-9/15; Article; English	3,095	No	Too many results to go through
SU terrorism + “Middle East” AND “Europe”	1/14-9/15; Article; English	10	Yes	Not bad, choose a few articles from this search results

SU terrorism + "Middle East" AND Europe + Conflict*	1/14-9/15; Article; English	1	No	Not relevant
SU (terror*) AND "Middle East" AND Europe +	1/14-9/15; Article; English	145	Not bad	Maybe
SU (terror* OR violen*) AND SU (("Middle East*" OR Europe*))	1/14 - 9/15; Article; English Full text	73	Possibly	Contained a few relevant articles, saved for later. Ultimately found the article we would use: The European Front.

As we were unable to find an appropriate abstract during our previous searches, we did a few more searches using the query SU Terror* AND SU "Middle East*", this lead to 65 results. This seemed like it could still be too many for a casual searcher to page through, however with just a quick check of the first ten items we found an abstract that we all agreed upon.

ii. Analyzing the results

For the full text article, we used the search terms SU (terror* OR violen*) AND SU (("Middle East*" OR Europe*)), which resulted in somewhat a high number of search results. After running so many searches and coming up with either too many or not enough search results, we decided this was a pretty good search string and we agreed we would look through this results list just in case there was an article of substance we could use. The article had to



meet the requirements that had been laid out in our assignment. It had to discuss terrorist actions in the Middle East and Western Europe and talk about who or what the typical target types were.




iii. Choosing an article

After taking a really good look through the results, we all agreed that the best article which fit the requirements of “terrorist actions” in the “Middle East/Western Europe” and included “types of the targets of terrorist actions”, was *The European Front*, by Von Drehle. We each felt it was strong article which talked about the terrorist attacks in Paris, Islamic terrorism in Europe including the political parties, and the degrees of Muslim integration in Europe. In the end this turned out to be the best article in Academic Search Complete.

2. ProQuest

i. Forming a search

First, our group brainstormed terms that related to each of the components of our search. We produced these terms based on word associations, synonyms, antonyms, related terms and also based on world events news accounts of which the group was aware within the last year and a half. We also created truncated versions of terms to combine multiple relevant terms into one search. Initially, we entered certain terms into all three platforms (ProQuest, EBSCOhost, and Gale) to familiarize ourselves with some of the differences between platforms. Our collections of terms listed below contain natural language terms written in lowercase and terms found in at least one of the platforms’ controlled vocabulary indexes written in ALL CAPS:




1) Terrorist actions: car bomb, bomb*, shooting, shoot*, ied, improvised explosive device, threat, suicide, Hamas, al Qaida, isis, plane, boat, air strike*, jihad*, palmyra, temple of bel, French terror train, Spencer Stone, Al Quaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, AQAP, Al Qua?da, TERRORISM, SUICIDE BOMBINGS, JIHAD, MASSACRES, TRUCES & CEASE FIRES, CIVIL WAR, CHARLIE HEBDO-FRANCE, ISLAMIC STATE OF IRAQ & THE LEVANT—ISIS, ISLAMIC STATE, CONFLICT

2) Middle East/Western Europe: Syria, Israel, Middle East*, Yemen, Hungary, PARIS FRANCE, Saudi Arabia, Iran, europ*, West* Europ*, East* Europ*, every other country in those regions.

3) Types of the targets of the terrorist actions: target, target*, victim, victim*, bank*, mosque, subway, Charlie Hebdo, train, Shiite, SHIITES (ebsco), Sunni, SUNNITES (ebsco), Wahhabism, freedom of speech, MUSLIMS, JIHAD, christians, jew*, ISLAMIC STATE, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Next, we explored the ProQuest thesauri to find controlled vocabulary specific to the platform (see Figure 11).



Thesaurus List

The following thesauri are available for your currently selected database(s). Note that many thesauri are database-specific, and may limit your search results to documents from those databases.

- Aquatic Sciences & Fisheries Abstracts (ASFA) thesaurus (subjects)
- ARTbibliographies Modern thesaurus (subjects)
- DAAI:Design and Applied Arts Index Subject/Artist (subjects)
- EconLit thesaurus (subjects)
- ERIC thesaurus (subjects)
- IBSS terms and places (subjects)
- Life Sciences thesaurus (subjects)
- Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts thesaurus (subjects)
- Meteorological and Geostrophysical Terms
- MLA Personal Names
- MLA thesaurus (subjects)
- PAIS International Subject terms (subjects)
- Physical Education thesaurus (subjects)
- PILOTS thesaurus (subjects)
- ProQuest thesaurus (subjects)
- Sociological thesaurus (subjects)
- Taxonomic Terms (Latin Names of Organisms Vocabulary)
- Worldwide Political Science Abstracts thesaurus (subjects)

Figure 11: List of thesauri found in the ProQuest platform.

The thesauri that we found most helpful were the IBSS terms and places (subjects), the ProQuest thesaurus (subjects), the Sociological thesaurus (subjects), and the Worldwide Political Science Abstracts thesaurus (subjects). One can browse each thesauri or type in specific words to find a match within that thesaurus (see Figure 12).

ProQuest thesaurus (subjects)

Search terms: Terrorism

Contains word(s) Begins with

Browse terms: All 0-9 A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

« Back to results

Terrorism

BROADER TERMS:

- Crime
- Violent crime

NARROWER TERMS:

- Biological & chemical terrorism

Figure 12: Broader and narrower terms associated with the search term “terrorism” in the ProQuest thesaurus.

Using controlled vocabularies has its benefits and its disadvantages. Some of the positive aspects of using controlled vocabulary include the ability to conduct more precise search and receive more relevant returns. One can also limit searches to indexed fields for more precise recall. However, an untrained user usually can neither locate nor optimally use controlled vocabulary, and would be more likely to use natural language searching. Further, many have claimed that controlled vocabularies can be biased and/or misleading, especially when the user is of a different culture than the creators of the controlled vocabulary concepts.

It is important to note that entering the same term into different thesauri will yield different results (see Table 3). This is one of the drawbacks of using controlled vocabulary in general and ProQuest thesauri specifically. Since there are multiple controlled vocabulary choices and not all thesauri are usable in every database, one would think that ProQuest would

inform the user about which database can be searched by which thesaurus/thesauri. This is not the case. This is one feature in which ProQuest is lacking and one that might really help a user construct a precise search string. When you look at Table 3, one can see how varied the results are when searching for the same term across different thesauri.

Table 3 : Results of terms associated with the search term “terrorism” entered into 4 different ProQuest thesauri.

Thesaurus Searched	Term	Use For Term	Broader Terms	Narrower Terms	Related Terms
Sociological thesaurus	Terrorism	-	-	-	Assassination, Bombs, Guerrillas, Hostages, Kidnapping, Mau Mau Rebellion, Nihilism, Torture, World Problems
ProQuest thesaurus	Terrorism	-	Crime, Violent Crime	Biological and Chemical Terrorism	Aircraft hijacking, Anti-terrorism Act-Canada, Bomb scares, Bombings, Casualties, Counterterrorism, Guerrilla forces, Homeland Security Act 2002-US, Hostage negotiations, Hostages, Kidnapping, Political dissent, Secret police, Suicide bombings, Terrorism Risk Insurance Act 2002-US, USA PATRIOT Act 2001-US, Violence, Weapons of mass destruction

IBSS terms and places	Terrorism	-	Violence	Paramilitary organizations, Terrorists, Transnational terrorism, War on terror	-
Worldwide Political Science abstract	Terrorism	-	Political Violence	-	Assassination, bombs, counterterrorism, covert operations, guerillas, Hostages, Insurgency, International Conflict, Kidnapping, Nihilism, Security Policy, September 11th 2001, Terrorist Organizations, Torture, Weapons of Mass Destruction, World Problems

As mentioned above, when discussing choosing our databases, initial searches involved searching each database separately and varying the terms used and fields searches (see Figure 13 and Figure 14).

1 **Name:** LIS663Altpresswatch1 [Edit name](#)

Searched for: (ab(bomb* OR died OR threat OR suicide) AND ab((middle east* OR europe*)) AND (bank* OR mosque OR train OR subway OR "charlie hebdo")) AND yr(2014-2015)

Databases: Alt-PressWatch

Notes: the bank* term produced a lot of results that w...

Saved: September 04 2015

[Modify Search](#)
[Delete](#)
[Create alert](#)
[Create RSS feed](#)
[Get link](#)

Figure 13 : An example of an initial search in ProQuest Alt-PressWatch database.

4 **Name:** LIS663Altpresswatch4 [Edit name](#)
Searched for: ab("suicide bomb*" OR terror* OR threat* OR violen* OR jihad) AND ab((middle east* OR yemen OR syria OR iraq OR europe* OR france OR hungary)) AND ab((victim* OR target* OR "charlie hebdo")) AND pd(>20140131)
Limited by: Date: After January 2014
Databases: Alt-PressWatch
Notes: [Add notes](#)
Saved: September 04 2015
[Modify Search](#) [Delete](#) [Create alert](#) [Create RSS feed](#) [Get link](#)

Figure 14 : A variation of a search in the AltPress Watch database.

The group found that using specific terrorist actions or targets as search terms (e.g. boat, school, bank, subway, and train) did not yield many relevant results. After multiple trials, we decided to use more general terms like victim* or target* (see Figure 15).

8 **Name:** LIS663Worldwidepoliticalscienceabstracts1 [Edit name](#)
Searched for: ab(suicide bomb* OR terror* OR violen*) AND ab("al qua?da" OR "middle east*" OR europ*) AND ab(victim* OR target*) AND pd(>20140131)
Databases: Worldwide Political Science Abstracts
Notes: [decent source for abstract records](#)
Saved: September 04 2015
[Modify Search](#) [Delete](#) [Create alert](#) [Create RSS feed](#) [Get link](#)

Figure 15: A ProQuest search using more general terrorist target terms.

The group also avoided using specific country names after being warned in class about the perils of anticipating multiple spellings and misspelling of geographic place names. Instead, we used truncated, regional terms like Middle East* or Europ*. We decided that if we could get relevant returns using broader, more general terms, then we could always limit our searches or use more specific terms later. A typical search tended to look something like this:

terror* OR "suicide bomb*" in the subject index
 "middle east*" OR "europ*" in the abstract or full text
 "victim*" OR "target*" in the abstract or full text

During some of our scanning of possible articles the group observed that many articles that contained TERRORISM in the subject field also included the subject term INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS but not suicide bomb* so we replaced suicide bomb* with INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS in the query. We also experimented with using terms of known terrorist groups like Al Quaida, Islamic State, or Hezbollah (see Figure 16).

The screenshot shows a ProQuest search result for a saved search named "LIS663EthnicnewsWatch2". The search query is: `su(international relation* OR terror* OR conflict) AND loc(middle east OR europe) AND ab(victim* OR target* OR "islamic state" OR hezbollah) AND pd(>20140131)`. The search is limited by date to "After January 2014" and is performed in the "Ethnic NewsWatch" database. The interface includes options to modify the search, delete it, create an alert, create an RSS feed, and get a link.

Figure 16: An example of a ProQuest search using names of known terrorist groups.

As we noticed certain broader, narrower, or related terms again and again in the various thesauri, we replaced the term europ* to “eastern europe” or “western europe” and added the terms hostag* and casualt* to the search string.

Finally, based on class lecture, reevaluated our use of search fields in our search strategy. By limiting the search the abstract field, we would miss those articles that did not contain abstracts. If we limited our search terms to full text, we would miss the Indexing/Abstracting-only records that did not contain full text. So, in our final searches, we opted to use controlled vocabulary in the subject field but then searched for the remaining terms anywhere in the record. It was by this method that the group was able to find some relevant returns.

Our final search is shown below; it gave us a return of 29 results, 13 of which ended up being relevant (see Figure 17 and Figure 18). Another comment about how ProQuest saves searches: we found saving the searches through MyResearch an invaluable time saver but wished that Proquest would show the number of records that each search returned at the time it was run. We realize that the numbers of returned records will vary slightly when performing the search on different days, but it would still be helpful to have a ballpark figure to refer to.

15 Name:
ABI/INFORM Complete 2 [Edit name](#)

Searched for: (su(terrorism AND "international relations") AND ("middle east*" AND ("eastern europ*" OR "western europ*" OR europe)) AND (victim* OR hostage* OR casual* OR bomb*) AND pd(>20131231)) AND fdb(10000008)

Databases: 29 databases searched [View list](#) ▼

Notes: [Cancel](#) [Save](#)

Saved: September 12 2015

[Modify Search](#) [Delete](#) [Create alert](#) [Create RSS feed](#) [Get link](#)

Figure 17: Our final search in ABI/INFORM Complete as it appears in our saved search history in MyResearch.

(su(terrorism AND "international relations") AND ("middle east*" AND ("eastern europ*" OR "western europ*" OR europe)) AND (victim* OR hostage* OR casualty* OR bomb*) AND pd(>20131231)) AND fdb(10000008)

Did you mean: (su(terrorism AND "international relations") AND ("middle east*" AND ("eastern europ*" OR "western europ*" OR europe)) AND (victim* OR hostage* OR casualty* OR bomb*) AND pd(>20131231)) AND fdb(10000008)

29 Results Search within Search name: ABI/INFORM Complete 2

Relevance Sort Select 1-20 0 Selected items Brief view Detailed view

Narrow results by

- Full text
- Peer reviewed
- Source type

1 **Fear of a new darkness; Anti-Semitism in Europe**
Anonymous. *The Economist* 414.8926 (Feb 21, 2015): 49-50.
...worries about Jew-hatred in Europe THE crowds
...Imagine" at memorial rallies for victims of the weekend shootings in
...that Jews do not belong in Europe. The French prime minister
Abstract/Details Full text

2 **Europe's Syria-Trained Jihadist**
Anonymous. *Wall Street Journal, Eastern edition* [New York, N.Y.]02 June 2014: A.14.

Figure 18 : Our final search query in ABI/INFORM Complete as it appears on the search results page with hit count.

ii. Analyzing the results

From our multiple searches, we selected 13 records (8 full text and 5 Indexing/Abstracting-only records) to look at more closely (see Figure 19). We determined that a record merited consideration if it contained the subject terms TERRORISM and INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS; if it referred to at least one geographical term Middle East, Europe, Eastern Europe, or Western Europe; and if it discussed targets of terrorist attacks. The record also had to have been written or published after December 31, 2013. Before saving an article, we skimmed the abstract (if included) and the article to determine if it contained all the criteria mentioned above. If so, we saved the record to MyResearch file. As we added articles to MyResearch, we also had the options of appending the record with personal notes. If we suspected that a particular article was very relevant, we could note that opinion in the My

Research notes (see Figure 20). Whether or not an article ended up being a good fit for the information request was determined after our final analysis.

Folder: All documents (13)

All Documents

✓ Select items 1-13
📁 Add to folder
✕ Delete
🔗 Cite
✉ Email
🖨 Print
⋮ More

✓ 1

📖

The next war against global jihadism; Confronting Islamic State 🔍 Preview

The Economist 412.8904 (Sep 13, 2014): 53-55.

Abstract/Details 📄 Full text

Notes: 📄 Add notes

Saved: September 13 2015

✕ Delete 📁 Add to folder

✓ 2

📄

Why We're Losing to Radical Islam 🔍 Preview

Gingrich, Newt. **Wall Street Journal, Eastern edition** [New York, N.Y] 15 Jan 2015: A.13.

References (31)

Abstract/Details 📄 Full text

Notes: 📄 Add notes

Saved: September 13 2015

✕ Delete 📁 Add to folder

Figure 19 : Examples of saved records in MyResearch file. Each record shows the date the article was saved, the title of the article, the journal in which it was written, and whether or not it contains full text or if it is an Indexing/Abstracting-only record.

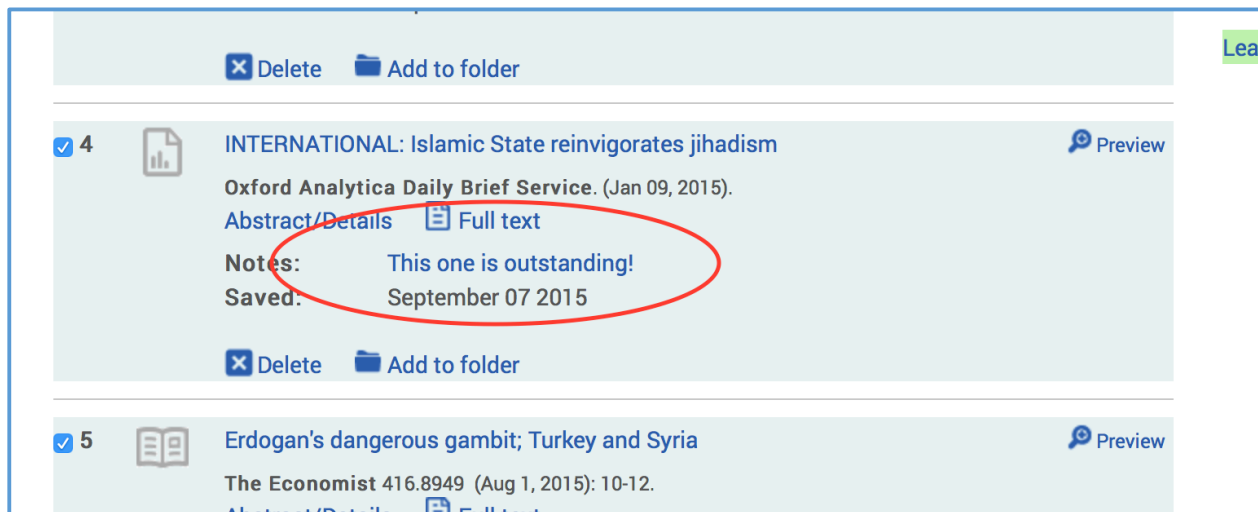



Figure 20 : Example of notes made in a saved document in ProQuest's MyResearch.

iii. Choosing an article

From our 13 saved articles, choosing one full text and one Indexing/Abstracting-only record required closer attention to the information in the article. If no full text was available, we could only read the abstract to try to determine if the article was a relevant match to the query. If the article was available in full text, we scanned each article for salient information. Once again, the note feature of MyResearch helped in making our final decisions. As we read each record, we were able to add notes and systematically narrow down our choices. Some articles discussed the Middle East in depth but made no mention of Europe. Others seemed to cover both areas but failed to mention specific targets. Still others, recommended changes in U.S. or foreign policy as a result of terrorist action. When we finished skimming all of the records, it was relatively easy to pick the most relevant articles. Thankfully, going back over the articles revealed that a few



that the group initially considered relevant turned out to be poor candidates upon closer examination.

For the Indexing/Abstracting-only record, the group chose “The islamic state: From al-quaeda affiliate to caliphate” (see Figure 21). Based on the information request, it matched nearly every criteria and seemed like a very relevant source. Unlike many of the other articles, this one appears to discuss terrorist activities in both the Middle East and Europe, and claims to "provide a concise overview of the origins, ideology, goals and military operations of ISIS in Iraq and Syria from 2003 to the present." Its drawbacks include a relatively short and vague abstract which leaves some question about the ultimate usefulness of the article to the user.

Back to My Research < 2 of 13 >

The Islamic State: From al-Qaeda Affiliate to Caliphate

Hashim, Ahmed S. *Middle East Policy* 21.4 (Winter 2014): 69-83.

Abstract/Details

Show duplicate items from other databases

Full text availability: [find it](#)

Abstract [Translate](#)

The dramatic victories in summer 2014 of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) over rival groups fighting the regime of Bashar al-Assad – and over the government of Iraq and Kurdish forces – culminated in the declaration of a caliphate, or the Islamic State. The international community became alarmed, and the lightning ISIS advance in Iraq was blunted in mid-August by U.S. air power. Air strikes were ramped up in September and October in both Iraq and Syria by the United States and an ad hoc coalition of Middle Eastern and European states. There has been a scramble by policy makers, militaries, intelligence officials and journalists from around the globe to understand the ISIS phenomenon, resulting in a profusion of unverified and contradictory information. This study, drawing from a multitude of open sources, seeks to provide a concise overview of the origins, ideology, goals and military operations of ISIS in Iraq and Syria from 2003 to the present in order to help governments understand and deal with this phenomenon.

Details

Subject [International relations-US;](#)

Figure 21 : The final Indexing/Abstracting-only records chosen from ProQuest.

The full text document that we chose was “In the crosshairs; the war against islamic state.” Again, this was an appropriate choice because it contained all of the information components requested, including a discussion of European, American, and Muslim targets. Drawbacks include an unidentified author, which might make one question the veracity of the information in the article. However, the fact that it was published in *The Economist* lends weight to its reliability, since that journal is a well-respected one with an impeccable reputation. To view the first page of this full text article, see Appendix 4.

3. Gale/Cengage

i. Forming a search

After our initial discussions and preliminary searches using similar language across all three platforms it became apparent that the terminology used to search Biography in Context was going to be far less technical than that which we used to search EBSCO*host*, and ProQuest. As such we were forced to start our searches extremely broad and then only narrow them minimally. We set our initial limitations to only articles published after January 1, 2014, and then started inputting terms that would best represent the selected topics of “terrorist actions”, “Middle East/Western Europe”, and the “types of targets of the terrorist actions”.

We found that using the truncated version of the word “TERRORISM” was preferred for “terrorist actions”, and that it would give us too many hits (see Table 4) on its own. We then added in “Middle East* AND Europe*” and the results dropped to 140. We decided that this was still too many for the researcher to sift through, so we opted to add types of targets. The addition of the “hostage* OR victim*” chiseled the results list down to 14. Of these 14 we selected a few for possible later use, but decided that they were not quite what we desired. We then amended the search string to read “Terror* AND (Middle East* AND Europe) AND (hostage* OR victim OR target*)”. This raised the hits to 19, and we had another few articles for consideration. Based upon the types of articles we were coming across we opted to add “AND train*” to the search string, as this appeared to be a lucrative addition to the query. Unfortunately this brought back no results. We discussed the search string again (“Terror* AND (Middle East* AND Europe) AND

(hostage* OR victim OR target*) AND train*”), and agreed to alter it to read “Terror* AND (Middle East* OR Europe) AND (hostage* OR victim OR target*) AND train*”. We felt that the adjustment to the Boolean term between Middle East* and Europe* would widen our results and allow more relevant information to eke through. “Terror* AND (Middle East* OR Europe) AND (hostage* OR victim OR target*) AND train*” turned out to be the key. This query retrieved 20 results, some that we had previously encountered, and the article that we chose from this platform.

Table 4 : Selected searches from Biography in Context.

Term	Limiters	Hits	Relevant	Notes
Terror*	After 1/1/14,Full text	29,399	Too many results.	Breaks the results down by type, this is both a blessing and a curse.
Terror* AND Middle East*	After 1/1/14,Full text	1,474	Too many results.	
Terror* AND Middle East* AND Conflict	After 1/1/14,Full text	55	Possibly.	Still a lot for the casual user to browse through.
Terror* AND Middle East* AND Conflict AND Target*	After 1/1/14,Full text	2	Not enough results.	
Terror* AND Middle East* AND Target*	After 1/1/14,Full text	15	No.	Most are Brief articles, and the rest are too broad

Terror* AND Middle East* AND victim	After 1/1/14, Full text	52	Possibly.	Still a lot for the casual user to browse through.
Terror* +Middle East* + Jihad	After 1/1/14, Full text	67	Possibly.	Still a lot for the casual user to browse through.
Terror* AND Middle East* AND Europe*	After 1/1/14	140	Too many.	Some really good puny newswire stories.
Terror* AND (Middle East* AND Europe*) AND (hostage* OR victim*	After 1/1/14	14	Yes.	Some relevant articles, saved for later.
Terror* AND (Middle East* AND Europe) AND (hostage* OR victim OR target*)	After 1/1/14	19	Yes.	Some relevant articles, saved for later.
Terror* AND (Middle East* AND Europe) AND (hostage* OR victim OR target*) AND train*	After 1/1/14	0	N/A	Reform the Booleans.
Terror* AND (Middle East* OR Europe) AND (hostage* OR victim OR target*) AND train*	After 1/1/14	20	Yes.	More relevant hits. This is the search where we found our selected article.

While performing the searches for our full text article we also perused for an appropriate abstract/indexing record. We were unsuccessful at locating one at the same time as there appeared to be very few abstract/indexing records in the “in Context” databases in general. We began by breaking down our search string and trying small portions of it while maintaining the same date restrictions as before. “Terror* AND (Middle East* OR Europe)” after January 1,

2014 with a publication type of abstract yielded zero results. “Terror* AND (Middle East*)” after January 1, 2014 with a publication type of abstract yielded zero results. “Terror* after January 1, 2014 with a publication type of abstract yielded three results (see figure 22), none of which appeared to be relevant. We brainstormed a bit more, and agreed that it often takes time for items to be published. This led to us expanding the date range to December 2013 in hopes of allowing more publications from the month of January 2014. This proved fruitful as the query: terror* and limiters for date (12/1/2013) and document type (abstract) yielded five results. Deterrence, preemption, and panic: A common-enemy problem of terrorism (Figure 23) was dated January 2014, and was selected as our final abstract/indexing record from the Gale/Cengage platform.

Search results: Entire Document= Terror* x LIMITER: Publication Date > Jan 1, 2014 x AND Document Type= "Abstract" x

Academic Journals 3

Save **International Philosophical Quarterly: Vol. 54, No. 4, December 2014**
 The Review of Metaphysics, March 2015
 Aristotle's Voluntary/Deliberate Distinction, Double-Effect Reasoning, and Ethical Relevance, T. A. CAVANAUGH This essay articulates Aristotle's account of the voluntary with a view to weighing in on a contemporary...


Save **Wave riding or owning the issue: how do candidates determine campaign agendas?**
 American Economist, Fall 2014
 This paper addresses the question of how the agendas for political campaigns are determined and whether or not candidates discuss similar issues. Two candidates compete by choosing how to allocate their time across two...

Save **Benefits from collecting checks electronically**
 American Economist, Fall 2014
 The Uniform Commercial Code has long required the physical check to be presented to banks for payment. This was before electronic methods were invented. This process was disrupted during September 11, 2001 and...

Figure 22 : Results for abstract search in Biography in Context using: Terror* and limiters for date (1/1/2014) and document type (abstract).

Deterrence, preemption, and panic: a common-enemy problem of terrorism

Abstract

 *Economic Inquiry*, January 2014

A game-theoretic analysis of terrorism examines interactions between a terrorist organization and multiple target countries. It considers both preemption and deterrence as counter-terrorist policies. Damage from terror...


Figure 23 : Final selected abstract/indexing record from Biography in Context using: *Terror** and limiters for date (12/1/2013) and document type (abstract).

ii. Analyzing the results

As this database was not heavily stocked with articles relating to terrorist actions in the Middle East and Western Europe and who/what their targets were between 2014 and the present we did not have a difficult time selecting articles to choose from once we had our search query correct. We scanned any article that sounded relevant based upon the title and blurb provided within the database. Once we felt they sounded relevant we looked them over for specific key terms, Middle East, Europe, terrorism, and targets. If we saw these phrases then we read a small portion of the article. We then determined if the information was relevant enough, and if it was we saved the articles for review at a later point in time.

iii. Choosing an article

After a seemingly exhaustive amount of searching we had come up with five relevant full text articles, and one relevant abstract/indexing record from Biography in Context. Choosing the abstract was not difficult, as there was only one result. We read through our five articles and



decided if they were appropriate for our topic if they discussed terrorist actions in both the Middle East and Europe, in any capacity, and who/what the targets were. We ruled out three of the five immediately. Although they discussed all of our targets they were either too broad, or not cohesive enough. We made our selection between the final two based upon the quality of the information contained within. We felt that *Europe is Facing New Uncertainty in Terror Threat* was the stronger article. It discussed multiple attacks on commuter trains across Europe, and how these targets were being chosen based upon their low levels of security, making them prime targets for “determined jihadists” such as Ayoub El Khazzani from Syria (Nossiter, 2015).



Conclusion

Overall, the group recognized that each platform has helpful features and search functions. Furthermore, full access to all of the features is greatly enhanced by creating an account with each platform and signing in to that account before beginning the search process. ProQuest seemed to be the easiest to use, with a pleasing layout and fairly intuitive features. EBSCOhost provided powerful searches and functions as well, but was a little problematic for us since it kept logging out while we were trying to search. We all agreed that Gale/Cengage platform was by far the most frustrating platform to interact with. It appears to be configured for a casual searcher who hopes to find what they need in one session as compared to a trained researcher, who would benefit from being able to save searches and documents between sessions.

Creating the query was a dynamic process beginning with forming a word bank for our concepts through brainstorming and browsing; creating a search string with trial and error; and continuing with constant tweaking followed by evaluation and re-tweaking. However, once we found a query that produced relevant returns in one database, the same query seemed to work well in all databases, with only minor modifications.

Though this initial project was time consuming, it provided valuable experience with three of the largest database platforms in the information industry. Future searches will undoubtedly be more efficient and streamlined thanks to this first effort.

Appendices

1. Detailed records of selected articles

- Das, S. P., & Chowdhury, P. R. (2014). Deterrence, preemption, and panic: a common-enemy problem of terrorism. *Economic Inquiry*.
http://ic.galegroup.com/ic/bic1/AcademicJournalsDetailsPage/AcademicJournalsDetailsWindow?failOverType=&query=&prodId=BIC1&windowstate=normal&contentModule=s&display-query=&mode=view&displayGroupName=Journals&limiter=&currPage=&disableHighlighting=false&displayGroups=&sortBy=&search_within_results=&p=BIC1&action=e&catId=&activityType=&scanId=&documentId=GALE%7CA355052893&source=Bookmark&u=hawaii.statepub&jsid=54407d187e6ef17afdeb1875214a47f7
- Hashim, A. S. (2014), The Islamic State: From al-Qaeda Affiliate to Caliphate. *Middle East Policy*, 21: 69–83. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/mepo.12096>
- In the crosshairs; the war against islamic state. (2014, Dec 13). *The Economist*, 413, 51
<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/docview/1636202928?accountid=27140>
- Nossiter, A. (2015, August 24). Europe Is Facing New Uncertainty in Terror Threat. *New York Times*.
<http://ic.galegroup.com/ic/bic1/NewsDetailsPage/NewsDetailsWindow?failOverType=&query=&prodId=BIC1&windowstate=normal&contentModules=&display->

[query=&mode=view&displayGroupName=News&limiter=&currPage=&disableHighlighting=false&displayGroups=&sortBy=&search_within_results=&p=BIC1&action=e&catId=&activityType=&scanId=&documentId=GALE%7CA426427313&source=Bookmark&u=hawaiiistatepub&jsid=1d16e96fd75f01d78d91225cd36e7f78](http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=103526186&site=ehost-live)

- Troianovski, A., & Nissenbaum, D. (2015, June 27). Terrorists Kill Dozens on 3 Continents. (Cover story). *Wall Street Journal* - Eastern Edition. pp. A1-A11.
<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=103526186&site=ehost-live>
- Von Drehle, D., Bajekal, N., Newton-Small, J., Walt, V., Shuster, S., Abend, L., & ... Miller, Z. J. (2015). The European Front. (Cover story). *Time*, 185(2), 30-37. Retrieved from,
<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=100425700&site=ehost-live>

2. Compact records of selected articles

- Deterrence, preemption, and panic: a common-enemy problem of terrorism. *Economic Inquiry*. (2014)
http://ic.galegroup.com/ic/bic1/AcademicJournalsDetailsPage/AcademicJournalsDetailsWindow?failOverType=&query=&prodId=BIC1&windowstate=normal&contentModules=&display-query=&mode=view&displayGroupName=Journals&limiter=&currPage=&disableHighlighting=false&displayGroups=&sortBy=&search_within_results=&p=BIC1&action=e&catId=&activityType=&scanId=&documentId=GALE%7CA355052893&source=Bookmark&u=hawaii.statepub&jsid=54407d187e6ef17afdeb1875214a47f7
- The European Front. *Time* (2015)
<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=100425700&site=ehost-live>
- Europe Is Facing New Uncertainty in Terror Threat. *New York Times*. (2015)
http://ic.galegroup.com/ic/bic1/NewsDetailsPage/NewsDetailsWindow?failOverType=&query=&prodId=BIC1&windowstate=normal&contentModules=&display-query=&mode=view&displayGroupName=News&limiter=&currPage=&disableHighlighting=false&displayGroups=&sortBy=&search_within_results=&p=BIC1&action=e&catId=&activityType=&scanId=&documentId=GALE%7CA426427313&source=Bookmark&u=hawaii.statepub&jsid=1d16e96fd75f01d78d91225cd36e7f78
- In the crosshairs; the war against islamic state. *The Economist* (2014)

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/docview/1636202928?accountid=27140>

- The islamic state: From al-qaeda affiliate to caliphate. *Middle East Policy* (2014)

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/mepo.12096>

- Terrorists Kill Dozens on 3 Continents. *Wall Street Journal* (2015)

<http://eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=103526186&site=ehost-live>

3. List of other selected references

- Breeding, M. (2015). Gale collaborates with Google to channel content and technology directly into student workflow and classroom learning. Retrieved from <http://librarytechnology.org/news/pr.pl?id=20793>
- Cengage Learning. (n.d.). Retrieved September 20, 2015, from <http://solutions.cengage.com/gale/about/>
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- Nossiter, A. (2015, August 24). Europe Is Facing New Uncertainty in Terror Threat. The New York Times.
- U.S. History - Gale in Context - Cengage Learning. (n.d.). Retrieved September 21, 2015, from <http://solutions.cengage.com/InContext/US-History/>



4. First pages of full text articles (submitted separately from this document)