



New York Review of Books /Online Book Review Sources

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This class will explore the use of electronic databases the library currently subscribes to as sources of book reviews. The class will focus on the New York Review of Books, Books in Print, and the TLS Centenary Archive.

This document contains brief profiles of these three databases, as well as JSTOR, Wilson Web, and Proquest-NY Times with regards to book reviews. I hope you will find them helpful, but the only way to learn these databases is to use them. Log on at a terminal in the library, or from home, and give them a try. Aside from a few eccentricities, all are fairly intuitive, and all are rich in content as well as fun to use.

A short list of free web sites that may be useful when searching for reviews is also attached.

All databases are available through the library's home page. Remote access is available with valid barcode number (except *Proquest-NY Times*). If you do not know your barcode, ask at the circulation desk.

If you have any questions, my e-mail is smcguirl@nysoclib.org

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New York Review of Books

Overview:

- First issue (1963) through contents of current issue.
- Full-text: features, reviews, letters (including 'exchanges'), poems.

Searching:

- *Browse* (by date or author first name)
- Basic *Keyword* search
- *Specific fields* (author of article, reviewed author, reviewed work, etc.)

Results:

- Articles can be printed (using Print button on browser) or e-mailed, using "e-mail to a friend" link at top of article.

Pointers:

- **Important:** When searching authors using the "specific fields" feature, enter first name first, then last name.
- Often, an author search must be very exact. For example:
"William Gass" = 0 results; "William H. Gass" = 30 results.

TLS Centenary Archive

Overview:

- Archive comprehensively covers the period 1902-1990 – articles, reviews, letters, etc. Some limited current content is available on the TLS web site: www.the-tls.co.uk
- Up until 1974, reviews in the TLS were not signed. After years of research in the TLS archives, all contributors were identified and can now be searched in this database. All articles and reviews are now attributed to a writer.
- Includes brief “Contributor Biographies”
- Actual page images

Searching:

- *Article Search*
- *Contributor Search*
- Using the “all fields” search from either of these screens is equal to a general keyword search.
- Boolean searching via checking ‘or’ /‘and’ circles at search screen.

Results:

- **Important:** Use “Zoom in” and “Zoom out” on top of page to increase or reduce magnification of page image.
- **Important:** Click “Page Print” on top of article image. You will automatically be sent to: Printing Options. Use “Full Size Adobe Acrobat” on pull down menu for best printing.

Pointers:

- When searching initial names, remember to put a space between the period and letter; e.g. Eliot, T. S. Without the space you will get zero results.
- Proceeding from search to results to an actual article can be less than intuitive and more than a bit tedious. Sample pages are attached. After searching the database:
 1. From “**Search Results**” page, click on the hyperlink to the name. You will be sent straight to the “**Contributor Biography**” page.
 2. You then click “**other reviews by this contributor**” on top of the page. You will be sent to the “**Search results**” page, where a list of articles appears...
 3. Click on “**Detail**” and you will see the “**Article Detail**” page.
 4. Click on “**View Facsimile**” and, finally, the page image appears.

(Patron) Books in Print

Overview:

- “The industry’s largest web-based bibliographic resource.”
- Many titles include full-text reviews from *Choice*, *Booklist*, *Publisher’s Weekly*, *Library Journal*, *Kirkus*, *School Library Journal*, *Reference and Research Book News*, and more. Citations – but not text – for other important review sources included.
- Table of Contents, jacket copy, author biographies, publisher information are sometimes included.
- Readers’ Advisory features.
- Awards and media mention information available.

Searching:

- *Quick Search* (this option appears somewhere on every screen)
- *Advanced Search*: pull-down menus and limiters
- *Browse*: by subject, author, or award
- Searches may be saved for future use.

Results:

- May be sorted by release date (old to new & new to old); alphabetically by title and by author; and by price.
- Search results is just a preview. You must click on “View all titles” to see full results.
- Results may be printed or e-mailed.
- Users may save results for bibliographies; this requires an e-mail address and password registration. Saved lists may be e-mailed or printed.
- Using Books In Print, library members may request that the library purchase the book. All options are on top of book entry.

Pointers:

- A large yellow star next to the title entry *should* mean reviews are included. If you don’t see a yellow star, check anyway.
- **Important:** Click “Read More” link at bottom of entry to see more reviews.
- Quick Search is often adequate if you know author and title information. Advanced Search can be useful for focusing search; there are many search limiters available.
- Given the vast size of the database, the browsing feature is generally not as useful.
- Hyperlinks for authors and subjects are included in each title entry for browsing subject areas and authors.
- Be patient: Pages can be very slow to load.

JSTOR

Overview:

- Library package includes over 600 *scholarly* journals, all full-text articles. Number of back issues included varies widely by title. To see what is included in NYSL package, click: 1. "About JSTOR" 2. "Resources for Librarians" (top of page) 3. "JSTOR Collections at your Institution."
- For most journals included in JSTOR, there is a 0 - 5 year gap between the last issue available and the most recently published issue; for some the gap is as many as 10 years.
- Emphasis is on scholarly, academic material.
- Results are high-resolution, scanned images of journal pages.

Searching:

- *Basic Search* (simple one-line keyword search).
- *Advanced Search*: Four fields with pull-down menus; search limiters include article type, date range, and discipline.
- *Browse* feature browses journals and issues; generally not effective for book reviews.
- *Article Locator*. Use only if you know *exactly* what article or review you are looking for.

Results:

- Save citations, e-mail, download, or print results.

Pointers:

- Use "help" buttons at each search. They are clear, concise, practical—very helpful.
- Use quotation marks to search phrases and names (e.g. "William Faulkner").
- **To find book reviews**: Use Advanced Search and select "Review" (next to "Type," under "Limit By").
- Usually it is best to uncheck box next to "Search for links to articles outside of JSTOR" to keep results focused.

Wilson Web

Overview:

- Covers 422 periodicals
- Indexing, 1983-2007; abstracting, 1984-2007; limited full-text, 1994-2007

Searching:

- *Basic*
- *Advanced* (best for finding book reviews)
- *Browsing*

Pointers:

- To keep results focused on reviews, use Advanced Search, and choose "Book Review" from "Document Type" pull-down menu (see attached example).
- Advanced Search can be used to limit results to full-text, by checking "Full-Text" box.

Results:

- Print or e-mail.
- **Important:** Book titles are hyperlinked to find more reviews of same title, which is very useful.
- Full text HTML or full-text PDF's are available.

Proquest – New York *Times*

Overview:

- Available only inside the library; no remote access.
- 1851 – current
- Actual page images for historical content.
- Recently, much of this material was made available on NY *Times* web site for free, with the exception of the years 1923-1986.

Searching:

- Historical databases can not be searched in combination with other databases. Select either New York *Times* (for 1980-) or Historical Databases, which covers the *Times* from 1851-2004.
- From both *Basic* and *Advanced* search screens, click on “More Search Options” to reveal “Document Type” pull-down menu. Choose “Review” from this menu to limit search. (See attached example.)

Results:

- Actual page images (pdf), including photos and graphics, for historical content; text-only for recent content.
- May be printed or e-mailed.

Web sites

Most of the well-known review periodicals offer only very limited access to full-text via their web site without a subscription, and are thus not included here. The following web sites offer free full-text content, although there are occasional restrictions. Some sites, particularly newspapers, require filling out a brief registration form. There are also hundreds of independent on-line forums of varying quality to which anyone (that is the key word here) can contribute reviews. They should be used carefully, and only if information on contributors is included. When using the internet, one must *always assess sources critically*.

Arts & Letters Daily www.aldaily.com

Offers links to a new review every day from a wide range of sources. It makes an excellent home page for your browser. Also features articles and editorials.

The NY Sun www.nysun.com

Updated once or twice a week, featuring thoughtful, well-chosen reviews from the print edition.

Los Angeles Times www.latimes.com/features/books

Includes the contents of the entire Sunday Book Review.

New York Times www.nytimes.com/books/

Reviews and articles are now free from 1851 to 1922 and from 1987 to the present. Access to content from 1923 to 1986 may involve a small charge; or use library access to the Proquest-NY *Times* database for a better search engine and for complete content.

The Spectator <http://www.spectator.co.uk/>

Click on "books" for many full-text reviews. Archive link on web site allows one to read back issues.

Independent Online Edition <http://arts.independent.co.uk/>

The Guardian Review <http://books.guardian.co.uk/review/>

Complete Review <http://www.complete-review.com/>

A portal mixing opinionated book reviews written by site staff and links to outside sources, including periodicals.

New York Public Library www.nypl.org

With a public library card, one can access the Gale **Literature Resource Center**, a database built upon the following reference sets: *Contemporary Authors*, *Contemporary Literary Criticism Select*, and *Dictionary of Literary Biography*. The *Literature Resource Center* also includes selected full-text from other well-known sources, and links to more than 260 prominent literary journals.