



Database Guide: Black Studies Center

Search Tips

To receive more precise results when searching the **Black Studies Center™**, use the Refine Search link or main Search link and try one or more of the following:

- * Be more specific with your keywords.
- * Try searching within a date range.
- * Where possible, try limiting your search to selected content types.
- * Use Boolean operators.

Tip 1: using ~ (tilde) to search for alternative spellings

Prefix words with a ~tilde if you are unsure of the spelling.

Example: If you are unsure of the correct spelling of Phillis Wheatley, you can search on the term ~Phillis or ~Phyllis and the search will still return results for the correct spelling.

Tip 2: using " " (double quotes) to search for an exact word or phrase

Search for an exact word or phrase by using double quotation marks. This stops the search engine from using the thesaurus.

Example: A search on "Martin Luther King" will return all records containing the terms as a phrase.

Tip 3: using () (parenthesis) to search for grouped statements

Use parenthesis to group statements.

Example: A search on (JFK Kennedy) election will return all records mentioning JFK or Kennedy and the word election.

Tip 4: using : (colon) to weight search terms

Use a colon to weight terms. Weights range from 1-10.

Example: A search on egypt suez:10 canal will return records with hits on suez (and its expansions) being ranked 10 times higher than hits on egypt or canal (and their expansions).

Tip 5: case sensitivity

All searches are case-insensitive, so you do not have to know when a word should be capitalized or not.

Example: There is no difference between Alabama, alabama or aLabama.

Truncation and Wildcard Characters

The **Black Studies Center™** allows you to list records containing variations on a word or number by using the * character, referred to as "truncation," when searching Journals and Newspapers. The * character represents one or more characters at the end of a word or number.

Example: **poli*** will find policies, policing, policy, policyholders

The **Black Studies Center™** also allows you to list records containing variations on a word or number by using the following characters, referred to as "wildcard characters," when searching the Schomburg



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Studies on the Black Experience, The HistoryMakers® and Black Literature Index. The wildcard characters represent one or more characters in a word or number: To search using a wildcard, type the stem of the word with one of the wildcard operators in the search box. You can position wildcard operators at the beginning, middle, or end of a search term/word. Any records that contain variations on the word you typed will appear on the List of Results page.

Wildcard	Description	Example
@	Matches one alphabetical character exactly	l@st will find last, lest, list, lost
#	Matches one numeric character exactly	#600 will find 1600, 2600, etc.
*	Matches any character(s)	polic* will find policies, policing, policy, policyholders
?	Matches one character exactly	la?er will find later, laser, la3er, etc.
[]	Matches only one character specified within the brackets; a hyphen can be used to indicate a range of numbers or letters	199[1-6] will find 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996
[^]	Matches any character except the next character	199[^1-3] will <i>not</i> find 1991, 1992 or 1993, but will find 1994 etc.
_	The underscore matches zero/one character(s)	colo_r will find color, colour
\	Treats the next character literally, not as an operator	somebody&#92;@somewhere.com

NOTE: If you use a wildcard in one of your search terms, The **Black Studies Center™** does not expand the search word to include related meanings or variant spellings; it only implements the wildcard operator.

NOTE: Only the * wildcard will work when searching Newspapers and Journals. Wildcards will not work in the Black Literature Index Microfiche field.

Operators

Boolean searching allows you to combine search terms using the three Boolean operators AND, OR and NOT. To execute a Boolean search, enter the required terms separated by the Boolean operators you wish to use.

NOTE: When you transfer more than one search term from a "Select from a list" to a search box, the terms are automatically combined using the Boolean operator OR.

AND The **AND** operator retrieves all entries that contain all of the terms entered. This normally retrieves fewer entries than searching one of the terms on its own.



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Example: education **AND** segregation

If you wish to search for the word 'and' in a phrase (and therefore do not want it to be a Boolean operator) you should type the phrase into the search box and enclose it in double quotes.

Example: "Brooklyn **AND** New York" will find the whole phrase 'Brooklyn and New York'.

OR

The **OR** operator retrieves all entries which contain one or more of the terms entered. This retrieves more entries than searching one of the terms on its own.

Example: bi-racial **OR** mixed-race

If you wish to search for the word 'or' in a phrase (and therefore do not want it to be a Boolean operator) you should type the phrase into the search box and enclose it in double quotes.

Example: "Brooklyn **OR** New York" will find the whole phrase 'Brooklyn or New York'.

NOT

The **NOT** operator retrieves all entries that contain the first term entered but not the second.

Example: race **NOT** riot

If you wish to search for the word 'not' in a phrase (and therefore do not want it to be a Boolean operator) you should type the phrase into the search box and enclose it in double quotes.

Example: "Brooklyn **NOT** New York" will find the whole phrase 'Brooklyn not New York'.

Stop Words

The following common words and symbols are excluded from searches in the **Black Studies Center™**. To use these words as part of a search phrase, enclose them with quotation marks ("").

Example: "how to build black pride"

NOTE: Boolean operators are treated as stop words in searches for the **Schomburg Studies on the Black Experience™** resources and will therefore be ignored.

A	ALSO	AN	AND	ARE
AREN'T	AS	AT	BE	BECAUSE
BEEN	BUT	BY	CAN	CAN'T
COULD	COULDN'T	DID	DIDN'T	DO
DON'T	DOES	DOESN'T	FOR	FROM
HAD	HADN'T	HAS	HASN'T	HAVE
HAVEN'T	HE	HE'S	HE'LL	HER
HIM	HIS	HOW	I	I'VE
I'LL	I'M	IF	IN	IS
ISN'T	IT	IT'S	ITS	ME
MY	NO	NOT	OF	ON
ONLY	OR	OUR	SHE	SHE'LL
SHE'S	SHOULD	SHOULDN'T	SO	THAN



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THAT	THE	THEIR	THEM	THEN
THERE	THESE	THEY	THEY'RE	THEY'VE
THIS	THOSE	TO	WAS	WASN'T
WE	WE'VE	WE'RE	WERE	WHAT
WHEN	WHERE	WHICH	WHO	WON'T
WITH	WOULD	WOULDN'T	YOU	YOU'VE
YOU'RE	YOUR			

Where to find help

Search our Support Center:

<http://www.proquest.com/support>

To access product help and training documentation:

<http://www.proquest.com/go/training>

<http://www.proquest.co.uk/go/training>

By phone

In North America: 800-889-3358

Outside North America: 0880 220 710 (UK only)
+44 1223 271 496 (Outside of UK)