

Using the ProQuest Database to Find Literary Criticism Articles

Doing a research paper? Don't panic; article databases can help!

When you are working on your research papers for this class, you will be required to use literary criticism articles from academic journals. You can find these in several of our databases, but this tip sheet will cover searching in **ProQuest**, a general database that covers a wide variety of subjects.

There are a couple of different ways to access **ProQuest**:

From the library homepage (www.pulaskitech.edu/library), click on **Databases A-Z** under the **Articles & More** heading. Click on the letter "**P**" and choose **ProQuest**.

or

In Blackboard, go to the **PTC Libraries** link in your class list. Click on **Find Articles**, then **Databases A-Z**. Click on "**P**" and choose **ProQuest**.

You will automatically be taken to the **Basic Search** option when you open **ProQuest**. However, this is not the best choice when you are searching for a particular title and author.

A better choice is the **Advanced Search**, which allows you to type the title and author in separate search boxes. This makes searching more efficient by telling the database that you want to find both of these terms within the same article.

To give you an example of how to search **ProQuest** for literary criticism articles, let's do a search for articles on the short story **The Things They Carried** by **Tim O'Brien**.

To do a search, follow these steps:

- Type the title, **The Things They Carried**, in the first search box. You can leave the drop boxes beside the search terms as "**Citation and document text.**"
- The AND in the box to the left of the second search term tells **ProQuest** that you want to search only for articles that contain both of these terms, so you can leave it alone.
- Type the author's name in the second box. You can either type in just his last name, or his whole name.
- Below the search boxes there are two options labeled **Full text documents only** and **Scholarly journals, including peer review**. Click on both of these boxes to select them.
- Now you should be ready to do your search, so click on the orange **Search** button.
- You should now see a results screen that tells you **ProQuest** found 99 citations (this number changes regularly as new articles are added to the database) that discuss both **The Things They Carried** and **O'Brien**.

***ProQuest** automatically sorts results putting the most recent publishing date first. To find the most appropriate articles for your needs (in this case literary criticism), select **most relevant first** in the **Sort results by** area on the right side of the results screen.*

Since you requested that all of your results be full text, all of them will have at least one of the following two viewing options:

1. **Full Text** -- this option allows you to view the article as a website without any of the original formatting. You can print or email a copy of these articles by clicking on those links on the left side of the page under **Document View**, and citation information can be found below these links.
2. **Full Text-PDF** – this option gives you a scanned image of how the article looked when it was originally published. This format can be helpful when doing MLA in-text citations because it shows you individual page numbers for the articles. Citation information for PDF articles in ProQuest can usually be found at the top of the first page of the article. You can also click on the **Abstract** link in the right hand corner of the PDF to access the citation information. As with the e-books we discussed earlier, you can click on the **Print** and **Save** icons in the gray PDF toolbar if you would like a copy. You can also email the article to yourself by clicking on the **Email** link above the toolbar.

To return to your original list of search results, click on the **Back to Results** link at the top of the page.

As always, if you have any questions, please contact me through Blackboard or at the contact information listed below.

Thanks,
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