

FINDING PRIMARY SOURCES IN THE LIBRARY

What are Primary Sources? For historians, primary sources are “first hand” accounts, which are generally written at the time, or shortly thereafter, of an historic event. These sources include letters, diaries, newspaper articles as well as records of governmental agencies and other organizations. They may be published or unpublished. Speeches and oral histories may be printed transcripts or audio recordings. Maps, photographs and advertisements can also be primary sources as can statistical data, video materials and artifacts.

CFCC Library Online Catalog

Go to <http://cfcc.edu/lrc/>

Using the General Keyword search box is recommended.

Use keywords for your topic plus one of the following words or phrases:

- History Source*
- History Document*
- Personal Narrative*
- Diar* (this retrieves Diary and Diaries)
- History Archive*
- Correspondence
- Letter*
- Speech*
- Primary source*

Note: Use of the * at the end of a word will search for singular and plural forms.

If your search gets zero hits, try a broader term. For example, if there are no books with GETTYSBURG, try searching for CIVIL WAR.

The screenshot shows the 'Advanced Search' interface of the Cape Fear Community College Library. At the top, it says 'You're searching: Cape Fear Community College Library'. Below that is the 'Advanced Search' header. A search instruction reads: 'Search the library catalog. Fill in at least one field. The more words you search for, the smaller the results.' There are five search fields: 'General Keyword', 'Title Keyword', 'Author Keyword', 'Subject Keyword', and 'Series Keyword'. The 'General Keyword' field contains the text 'civil rights history source*' and has a red search button to its right. A callout bubble points to this button with the text 'Click here to search'. Below the search fields is a 'Library of Congress Call Number' field. A second callout bubble points to the 'General Keyword' field with the text 'Type in keywords relevant to your topic. Using the General Keyword search box is recommended'. Below the search fields is a 'Refine your search (optional)' section. It says 'You can refine your search by'. There are two dropdown menus: 'Limits' and 'Select Campus'. The 'Limits' dropdown is open, showing options: 'Cape Fear All', 'Cape Fear Books - Print', 'Cape Fear Books - Electronic', 'Cape Fear Audio', and 'Cape Fear Periodicals'. A callout bubble points to the 'Cape Fear Books - Print' and 'Cape Fear Books - Electronic' options with the text 'Limit to Books -Print and/or Books - Electronic, if desired'. The 'Select Campus' dropdown shows options: 'CFCC Downtown', 'CFCC North', and 'CFCC Downtown & North'.

Selected Books

American Decades Primary Sources. (10 vols.) Downtown Ref E 169.1 .A471977 2004
Includes primary sources and secondary articles about Twentieth-Century America.

Ancient Near East: Historical Sources in Translation. Downtown Circulating DS 62.2 .A63 2006

Annals of America. (24 vols.) Downtown Ref E 173 .A793
Primary sources of American history from the Age of Exploration to 1973.

Daily Life Through World history in Primary Documents. (3 vols.) Downtown Ref CB 69 .D35 2009

Milestone Documents in American History: Exploring the Primary Sources that Shaped America. (4 vols.) Downtown Ref E 173 .M62 2008 Includes an analysis of each primary source.