

SOME SOURCES OF IDEAS, PREVIOUS STUDIES, AND STATISTICAL DATA FOR YOUR LAB RESEARCH PROJECTS

Econlit: A database you can search for books, articles and other documents. Not primarily intended as a source of full-text electronic articles or publications.

The most important database of research in economics and related fields is Econlit. You can find it by doing a keyword search on Tripod. (You must be logged onto the HC or BMC network to access Econlit.)

Econlit is the tool to use when you want to do a broad search by topic, author, subject, keyword, etc.

Econlit is not an archive of journals or other publications. That is, you can use Econlit to find references to articles, books and other sources, but Econlit does not store the full text of any documents.

However, the “findit” link that appears when you find a reference on Econlit will let you know whether the item is available in the tri-co library system, or will help you get started finding a copy elsewhere.

JSTOR: An archive of some journals; a place you can go to get the full text of a journal article you are looking for. Not primarily intended as a database to use when doing a broad search by topic, author or other criteria.

JSTOR is an electronic archive academic journals from all disciplines. For most journals, issues that are less than three or four years old are not stored on JSTOR, but other than that JSTOR contains the full text of all articles in the journals it covers, for most or all previous years.

You can search JSTOR by all the usual criteria (author, subject, date, name of journal, etc.), but it is not a good source to use for broad searches intended to identify a wide range of sources. The reason is that, although the contents of a very large number of journals are archived on JSTOR, there are still many other journals that are not archived on JSTOR. Moreover, books, working papers and other kinds of publications besides journal articles cannot be found on JSTOR. (For broad searches covering much more material than JSTOR, use Econlit.)

JSTOR is often a good place to find the full text of a journal article after you have already found a reference to it (e.g., in the reference list of a paper or book you have read, or in the results of an Econlit search).

JSTOR can also be used to browse the contents of a particular journal you are interested in (such as the *Journal of Economic Perspectives* or the *Journal of Economic Literature*, which are discussed below).

The Journal of Economic Perspectives and the Journal of Economic Literature

These two journals can serve as good starting points as you choose a topic and begin finding literature on your topic. Both of them are archived on JSTOR and indexed on Econlit. You can use these journals in two ways:

--Using JSTOR (or by going into the stacks in the library where the paper copies of these journals are shelved), browse through some issues of these journals from any time in the last ten to fifteen years or so. If the titles of any articles catch your interest, take a look at the article to learn more and see if it might make a good topic for your project. If an article does catch your interest, the reference list will have citations to many other sources on the topic.

--If you have chosen a topic, do a search for articles exclusively in one or both of these journals. You will find less than if you search for the topic on Econlit without limiting the search to specific journals, but this can be a good way to start because you won't get an overwhelming number of hits, and articles in these two journals tend to be relatively accessible and/or to give a good overview of a field. If you limit a search just to these journals it doesn't matter whether you use Econlit or JSTOR, because JSTOR includes both of them. As noted above, if you find an article related to your topic in one of these journals, you can use the reference list of the article to find more sources on the topic.

Note: If you do a search for articles in the *Journal of Economic Literature*, begin by limiting the search to "journal articles only." Otherwise you are likely to get citations for a huge number of book reviews.

Some on-line sources of statistical data

Four sources to which HC and BMC have subscriptions:

ICPSR: www.icpsr.umich.edu

World Bank WDI: On Tripod, do a keyword search on "WDI online"

IMF International Financial Statistics: On Tripod, do a keyword search on "IMF International Financial Statistics"

UN Common Database: On Tripod, do a keyword search on "UN Common Database"

Socioeconomic surveys of the US and other countries (publicly available)

General Social Survey (just US data): www.norc.org/GSS+Website/

International Social Survey Program: www.esis.org/en/services/data/survey-data/issp/

Pew Global Attitudes Project: pewglobal.org/ (click on "Data Sets" on the menu on the banner at the top of the page)

Catalogs, guides and directories with links to lots of different sources of data

The tri-co economics subject portal: <http://triportal.brynmawr.edu/guides/Economics/>

Resources for Economists on the Internet: www.rfe.org

If you click on "Data," you can navigate your way to links to many, many great data sources. Here I will mention just a few that are commonly used or especially valuable.

After clicking on "Data," click on "U.S. Macro and Regional Data" to get to

The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA): <http://www.bea.gov/>

The Federal Reserve ([rfe.org](http://www.fedreserve.org) gives URLs for the Board of Governors of the Federal reserve and for each of the regional Feds)

After clicking on "Data," click on "Other U.S. Data" to get to three more on-line catalogs or indexes that have links to many other on-line data sources:

Data on the Net: 3stages.org/idata/

FedStats: www.fedstats.gov/

Statistical Research on the Web (University of Michigan): www.lib.umich.edu/government-documents-center/explore/browse/statistics/260/search/

A real human being

Norm Medeiros, the Associate Librarian in Magill, is available to help you find resources for this project. For many years he has been providing very effective assistance to economics students looking for books, articles and other published information about whatever topics they have been working on, as well as finding statistical data on just about every imaginable area. If you would like to consult with him, you may e-mail him at nmedeiro@haverford.edu to set up an appointment.