

Information Skills: the basics

Reading the reading list

Before you start searching for books and journals in the library, you need to be able to distinguish book and journal references on a reading list. Reading lists are compiled by tutors, and the style of referencing may vary, but broadly speaking you should be able to distinguish three different types of reference:

1. a book
2. a chapter or article in a book
3. an article in a journal

Here are three examples:

1. Alan Mann. *Atonement for a sinless society*. Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2005.
2. Kosuke Koyama. 'The crucified Christ challenges human power' in *Asian faces of Jesus* ed. R. S. Sugirtharajah (London: SCM Press, 1993) pp.149-62.
3. E.T. Charry. 'While visions of salvation dance in our heads' in *Theology Today* 61:3 (2004) 291-6.

The first example is a book. The title of the book is in italics.

The second example is a chapter in a book. The author (Koyama) is the author of the chapter. The title of the chapter is in inverted commas. The title of the book is in italics, and the editor of the book (Sugirtharajah) is given, along with a page reference.

The third example is an article in a journal. The author (Charry) is the author of the article. The title of the article is in inverted commas. The title of the journal is in italics, and the volume number (61:3) is given, along with a page reference.

So how do you go about finding these references in the library? All library catalogues list books, and some library catalogues list journal titles, but very few library catalogues index articles or chapters¹. So to find Koyama's chapter (example 2), you would need to search the catalogue for the book, *Asian faces of Jesus*, edited by R. S. Sugirtharajah. The Queen's library catalogue does not list journal titles, so to find Charry's article (example 3), you would need to check the list of Current Journals on the library website, and then find the relevant issue on the shelf (see Finding journals in the library below).

Using the library catalogue to find books

You will find a link to the library catalogue on the library website. Click on the link to open the library catalogue, and click on the Enter library button. You will be presented with a single search box – this is the Simple Search. The library catalogue is publicly available, so there is no need to log in. You will only need to log in if you want to renew books or reserve books, or check your borrower record.

¹ The Queen's library catalogue does sometimes include chapter headings as part of the catalogue record, but this is the exception, not the rule.

The Simple Search is usually sufficient for locating a particular book. There are many ways to search for a book, but my advice is to keep your search as simple as possible. When you enter a search term, the computer will search for all the occurrences of that search term on the database, regardless of whether it occurs in a title, an author name, or anywhere else. So choose the most distinctive search term from the information that you have. In the examples above, the following search terms are all likely to be relatively distinctive: Mann, sinless, faces. The following terms – in the context of a theological library catalogue – are unlikely to be distinctive: society, atonement, Jesus. Try them, and see how many results you get.

In practice, it usually makes sense to enter two search terms rather than one. Two search terms in combination will often produce an exact match. If you choose to combine an author name with a word from the title, you will need to include the link word “and”. Try the following:

atonement sinless
 Mann and atonement
 Asian faces

Of course you are welcome to type in the whole title, but the point is that you don’t need to. The more you type, the more likely you are to make a mistake. Here are some examples of common mistakes:

1. atonementfor a sinless
2. mann atonement
3. sugitharajah

In the first example, there is a simple typographical error. In the second example, the link word “and” needs to be added. In the third example, there is an easy-to-make spelling mistake (be alert to the possibility of spelling mistakes with unusual words or names).

Note that in the first example, you are offered the opportunity to perform what is called a “loose” search, which eventually finds the book you are looking for. In the second example, you are given the option of searching for each search term individually. But in the third example, you simply draw a blank.

The brief catalogue record

When you perform a search, the results are presented in the form of one or more brief ‘summary’ records. Usually the brief summary record is sufficient to find the book in the library, but occasionally you will need to view the detailed catalogue record, which contains more information. To view the detailed catalogue record, click on the title.

The screenshot shows a library search interface. At the top, there are three tabs: 'Summary' (selected), 'Detailed', and 'See Also'. Below the tabs is a search bar containing the text 'atonement for a sinless' and a magnifying glass icon. Below the search bar is a link for 'Advanced'. Below that, it says 'Search for atonement for a sinless' and 'Result 1 of 1'. A table with one row of results is displayed. The table has columns for 'No', 'Authors', 'Title', 'Date', 'Location, Loan type - Status', and 'Class'. The row contains the following information: '1', 'Mann, Alan', 'Atonement for a 'sinless' society: engaging with an emerging culture.', '2005', 'Main Shelves, Week loan, Available (3)', and '232.8 MAN'.

No	Authors	Title	Date	Location, Loan type - Status	Class
1	Mann, Alan	Atonement for a 'sinless' society: engaging with an emerging culture.	2005	Main Shelves, Week loan, Available (3)	232.8 MAN

To find the book in the library, you need to note the Location and the Class or shelf mark. Most of the stock in the library is located on the Main Shelves, but there are several other locations which you need to be aware of:

- Pamphlets
- Quartos (for oversize publications)
- Reference
- Reserve Shelf
- Stack (the closed access area in the Stack Room)
- Videos / DVDs

The classmark comprises a number followed by three letters (usually derived from the first three letters of the author's surname). The number represents a subject, so by arranging the books in the library by number, we are effectively arranging them by subject, as well as providing the key to locating them. Books on the same subject, and hence with the same number, are arranged alphabetically by author (hence the three letters are sometimes referred to as a "filing suffix").

Once you have noted the Location and the classmark, you should consult the maps in the library. There are a map and guide in the foyer area which show where the various sequences are located, and each room has a more detailed map showing the precise arrangement.

The two most common mistakes which people make when they can't find a book are a) to assume that the book is on the Main Shelves, when it is in fact located elsewhere, and b) to fail to spot that it is on loan.

Finding journals in the library

We now return to the third of our three examples. To find the article by Charry, we need to find the journal *Theology Today*. You will find a link to an alphabetical list of Print Journals on the library website. Click on the link to view the list, and browse down to *Theology Today*.

Theology	1924 -	1999 -	Sage	Print holdings: 1970 to present
Theology Today	1970 -	1999 -	Sage	
Transformation	2002 -	1999 -	Sage	Available online: 1999 to present

Column 2 indicates that the library holds a full print run from 1970 to the present. Column 3 indicates that content is also available online for the period from 1999.

The library's journal collection is located in the Kingsmead Room, and the journals are arranged in alphabetical order. The Charry article is in Vol.61 No.3, 2004.