ACTIVITY: PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS

Primary Source Analysis

In order to dig in and examine some of the specific materials from the times and places, you will choose one primary source document related to your chosen keyword to analyze. This can be anything from a government document to the testimony of someone who is currently or formerly incarcerated. You can use online databases and print collections to find your source, such as HathiTrust or Proquest Congressional for government documents or the America in the World and/or Let Freedom Ring edited volumes listed below, among others.

Online Resources for Primary Sources

You will want to research your chosen keyword in a number of online databases. You will want to search the term along with related terms -- like foreign policy, criminology, police, prison, etc., -- to get a range of material from both government documents, newspapers, organization materials, memoirs, and so forth. Some of the databases you will find most useful, depending on the approach you take to your keyword include:

Databases: America’s Historical Newspapers; American Indian Newspapers; Asian American Drama; Archives of Human Sexuality, Identity, LGBTQ History; HeinOnline; HathiTrust; Hispanic American Newspapers; Internet Archive; Latin American Newspapers; LGBT Life; Middle-East Online; Military and Government Collection; NAACP Papers; Nixon Years; ProQuest Congressional; ProQuest Historical Newspapers; Slavery, Abolition, Social Justice; Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy; US Intelligence on the Middle East; United Nations Digital Library; US Newsstream; Women and Social Movements in the US; Women Writers Online; Women, War and Society; World Newspaper Archive.

Primary Source Collections

- Jeffrey Engel, et. al. eds., America in the World: A History in Documents from the War with Spain to the War on Terror (Princeton, 2014)
- Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall, eds., The COINTELPRO Papers: Documents from the FBI’s Secret Wars Against Dissent in the United States (South End Press, 1990; 2002)