



# Wichita State University Libraries

## MLA International Bibliography

### What it is.

The MLA International Bibliography, produced by the Modern Language Association, is a database indexing articles, books, book chapters, dissertations and more on the subjects of literature, language, linguistics, and folklore. It includes coverage from 1925 to the present. This is arguably the single most important resource in the areas of literature and language. The interface has many features and might seem a little daunting, but it is well-worth getting to know.

### How to use it.

Access the MLA Bibliography from the Wichita State University Libraries homepage (<http://library.wichita.edu> ). Click the link to **Electronic Databases**. On the next screen, under the Databases heading, select **By Title**. Then find and click on **MLA International Bibliography**. You will be routed to CSA Illumina, with the MLA International Bibliography as the selected database. By default you will be in Quick Search mode. For more options, click on the **Advanced Search** tab. See Screens 1 and 2, below.

Advanced Search Form - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www-md3.csa.com/ids70/advanced\_search.php?SID=1d20a729955c5ab43f709a030572f7f3&tab\_collk

CSA ILLUMINA Provided by Wichita State University Libraries

[Logout](#) **Quick Search** **Advanced Search** [Search Tools](#) [Browse](#) 0 Marked Records | [Search History](#) | [Alerts](#) [Help & Support](#)

[Add Row](#) | [Remove Row](#)

|     |                      |    |                      |    |                      |   |          |                      |
|-----|----------------------|----|----------------------|----|----------------------|---|----------|----------------------|
| (   | <input type="text"/> | or | <input type="text"/> | or | <input type="text"/> | ) | Anywhere | <input type="text"/> |
| and | <input type="text"/> | or | <input type="text"/> | or | <input type="text"/> | ) | Anywhere | <input type="text"/> |
| and | <input type="text"/> | or | <input type="text"/> | or | <input type="text"/> | ) | Anywhere | <input type="text"/> |

[Search Tips](#): e.g., wildcard\*, exact phrase; use Keywords for a single search of Title, Abstract, Descriptors

**Now Selected:**  MLA International Bibliography

**Change:**  or [Specific Databases](#)

**Date Range:**  to

**Limited to:**  Latest Update  Journal Articles Only  English Only

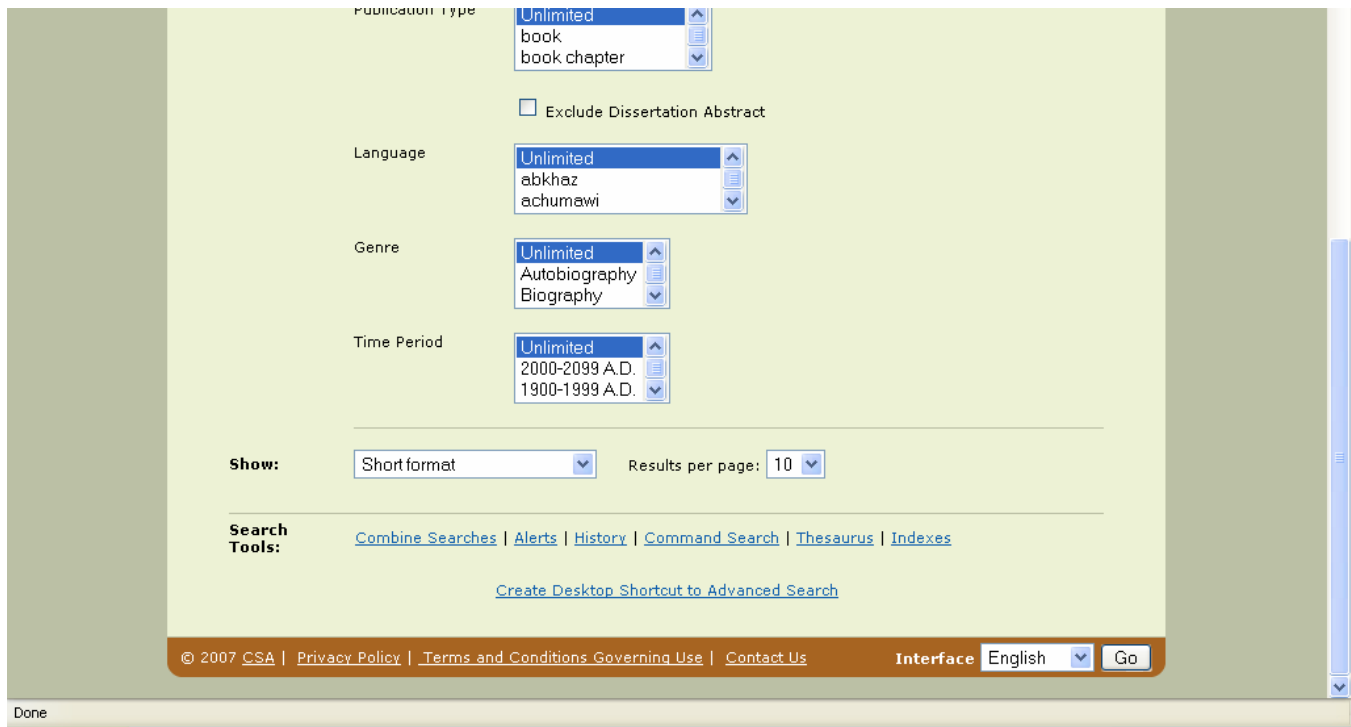
These limits apply only to the MLA International Bibliography database

Peer Reviewed

Full-Text on JSTOR

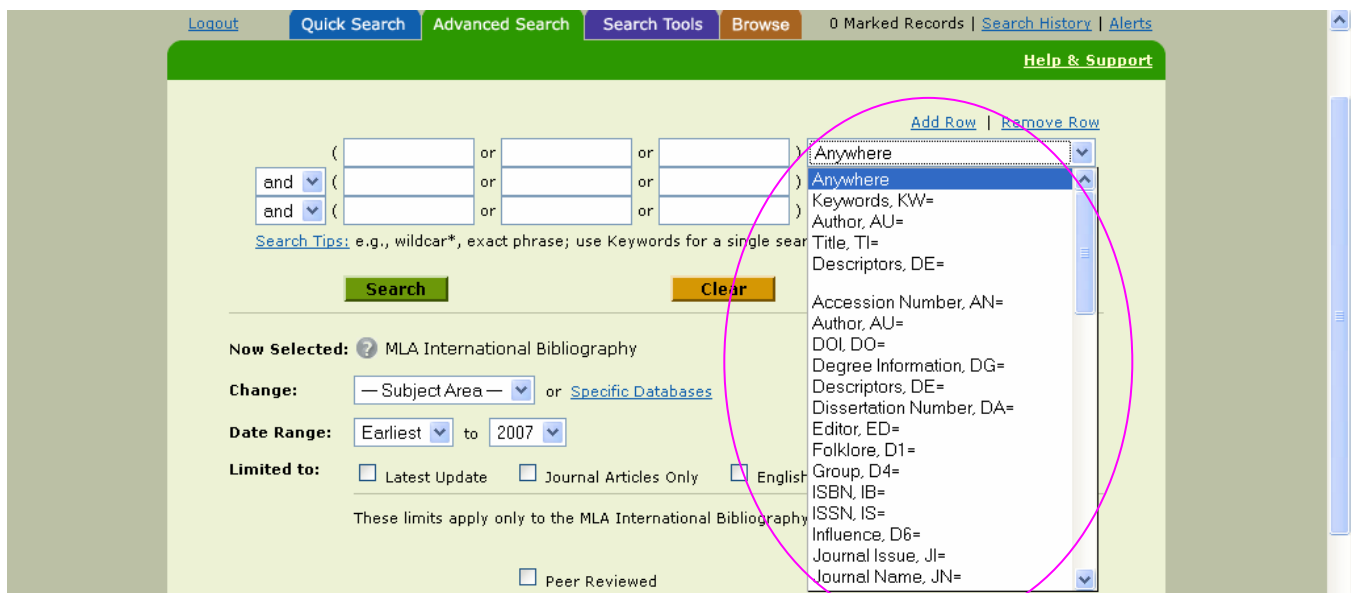
Publication Type:   
book  
book chapter

Screen 1



Screen 2

There are so many options that it takes two screenshots to show even the drop-down windows, much less their contents! We'll go over the main sections of the page, from the top down.

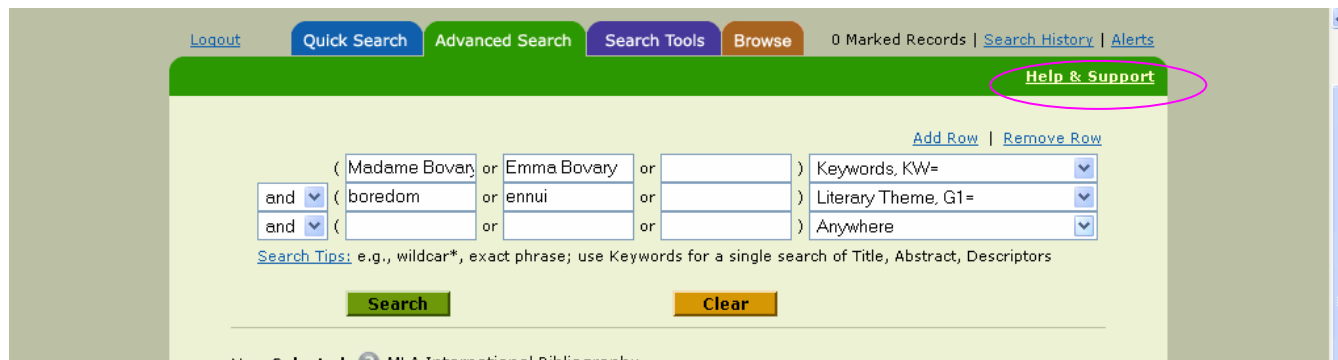


Screen 3

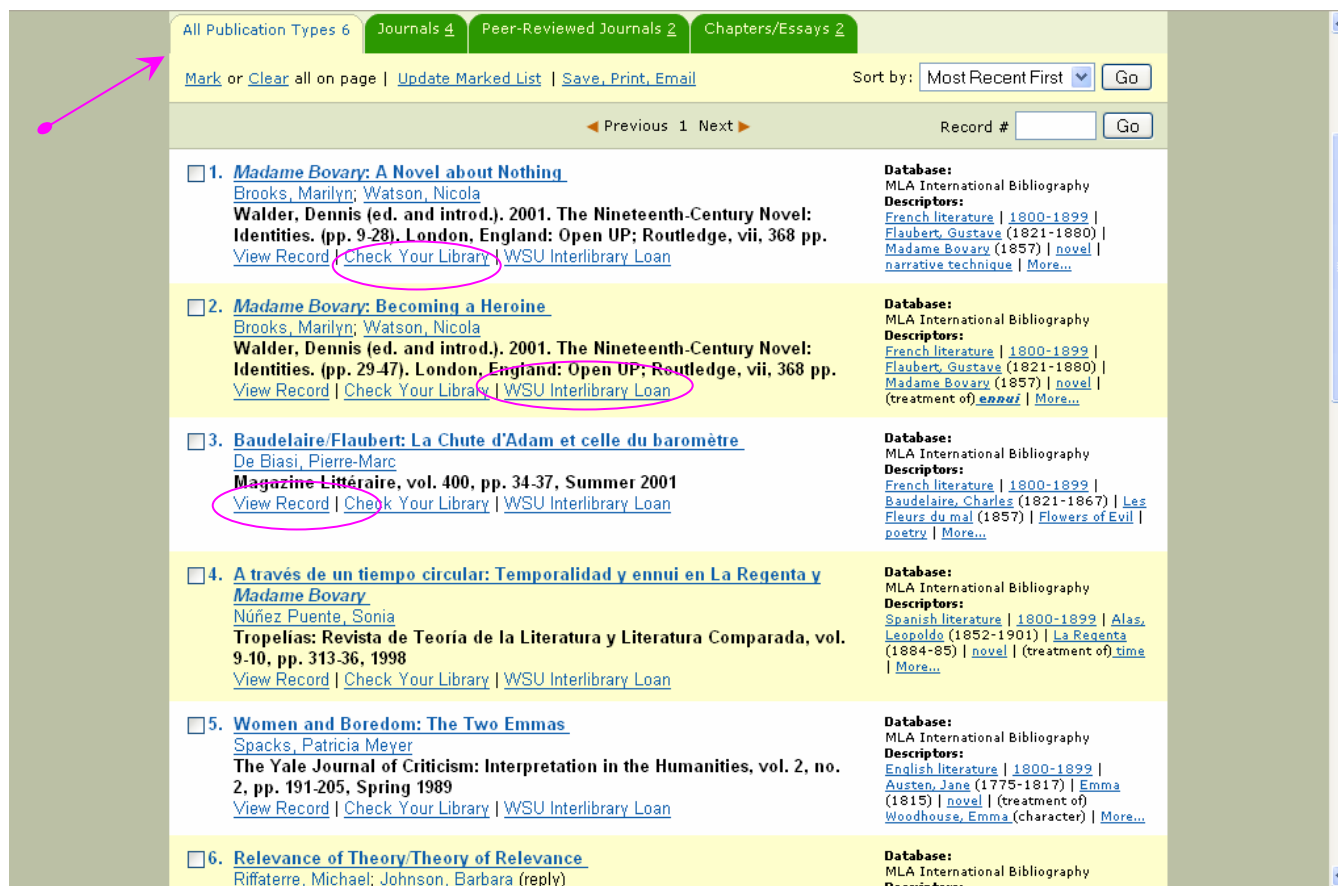
**The search fields.** As you can see from Screen 3, the Boolean operators in CSA Illumina work both vertically and horizontally. Use the ORs in the rows to search related terms. Use the ANDs in the first column to include terms in your search, or switch them to NOT to exclude terms. You can also change the operator to OR to broaden your search. The pull-down menu at the end of each row can be used to limit the search to a particular type.

There are a whopping 53 ways to search each row, plus you have the option of adding rows. Remember, though, that sometimes using too many search terms will produce overly narrow results. The four most common searches, by **Keyword**, **Author**, **Title**, and **Descriptors** (subjects) are listed first. It is well worth scrolling down and reviewing all of the various options. Among the more unusual ways to search are by **Scholarly Approach**, **Influence**, and **Literary Theme**.

Searching is not case sensitive. If you enter multiple words into one search box (e.g., *Madame Bovary*) they will be searched for as a phrase. Use the asterisk (\*) for truncation, that is, to search various forms of a word: *theat\** will find *theater(s)*, *theatre(s)*, *theatrical*, etc. The asterisk is also used within words to find variant spellings or irregular word forms: *behavi\*r*, *wom\*n*. For more searching tips, click the **Help & Support** link.



At the time of this writing, the search above yielded 6 results, or **records**, including one article in Spanish and one in French.



#### Screen 4

Note the tabs across the top. Here they indicate that there are 6 records total, 4 in journals, of which 2 are peer-reviewed, and 2 are essays or chapters. Selecting any of those tabs will show only results of that type.

**The limiters.** Below the search boxes are four terms or phrases (Screen 3): **Now Selected** just lets you know that you are in the MLA International Bibliography database, because the vendor, CSA, also publishes in other subjects. Clicking on the question mark (?) will bring up a window giving details about the database including the scope of its contents.

The next item is **Change**. Leave this as it is. Changing will take you away from the MLA International Bibliography.

Below that is **Date Range**, with 2 pulldown menus beside it. If you want to limit your results to a certain range of years, change either the beginning, the end, or both years.

**Limited to** is pretty self-explanatory. Check as many boxes as apply. The Bibliography is updated 9 times per year, so if you have searched a subject in the recent past and only want to retrieve new records, check Latest Update.

The screenshot shows a search interface for the MLA International Bibliography database. At the top, it says "Now Selected: ? MLA International Bibliography". Below this, there are several filter sections:

- Change:** A dropdown menu set to "-- Subject Area --" with a link for "Specific Databases".
- Date Range:** Two dropdown menus set to "Earliest" and "2007".
- Limited to:** Three checkboxes: "Latest Update", "Journal Articles Only", and "English Only".

Below these, a note states: "These limits apply only to the MLA International Bibliography database".

Further down, there are more filter options:

- Peer Reviewed
- Full-Text on JSTOR
- Publication Type:** A dropdown menu set to "Unlimited", with options "book" and "book chapter" visible.
- Exclude Dissertation Abstract
- Language:** A dropdown menu set to "Unlimited", with options "abkhaz" and "achumawi" visible.
- Genre:** A dropdown menu set to "Unlimited", with options "Autobiography" and "Biography" visible.
- Time Period:** A dropdown menu set to "Unlimited", with options "2000-2099 A.D." and "1900-1999 A.D." visible.

At the bottom, there is a "Show:" section with a dropdown menu set to "Short format" and a "Results per page:" dropdown menu set to "10".

## Screen 5

The next set of limiters lets you limit your search to **Peer Reviewed** or to **Full-Text on JSTOR**. If the WSU Libraries has an electronic version of a journal and it is available through the JSTOR database, you will be able to download the article in full text. If you leave this option unchecked, you may still be able to get full text. When you get your results, click on **Check Your Library** (see Screen 4). If the library does not have what you need, you can request an interlibrary loan by clicking on **WSU Interlibrary Loan**. If you click on **View Record**, a list of **Descriptors** will appear and you can select terms that you want to either add to your search, or eliminate from it. See Screens 6 and 7.

**Title** Women and Boredom: The Two Emmas

**Author** [Spacks, Patricia Meyer](#)

**Source** The Yale Journal of Criticism: Interpretation in the Humanities, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 191-205, Spring 1989  
[Journal Information](#)

**ISSN** 0893-5378

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**Descriptors**

**Specific Literature:**  English literature

**Time Period:**  1800-1899

**Subject Author:**  Austen, Jane (1775-1817)

**Subject Work:**  *Emma* (1815)

**Literary Genre:**  novel

**Literary Theme:**  (treatment of) Woodhouse, *Emma* (character)  (relationship to) *boredom*  (compared to) *Bovary, Emma* (character)

**Subject Author:**  (in) Flaubert, Gustave (1821-1880)

**Subject Work:**  *Madame Bovary* (1857)

**Specific Literature:**  French literature

**Time Period:**  1800-1899

**Subject Author:**  Flaubert, Gustave (1821-1880)

**Subject Work:**  *Madame Bovary* (1857)

Done

Screen 6

**Subject Author:**  Flaubert, Gustave (1821-1880)

**Subject Work:**  *Madame Bovary* (1857)

**Literary Genre:**  novel

**Literary Theme:**  (treatment of) *Bovary, Emma* (character)  (relationship to) *boredom*  (compared to) Woodhouse, *Emma* (character)

**Subject Author:**  (in) Austen, Jane (1775-1817)

**Subject Work:**  *Emma* (1815)

**New Search Using Marked Terms:**  Use **AND** to narrow  Use **OR** to broaden

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**Notes** New Edition

**Language** English

**Publication Year** 1989

**Publication Type** Journal Article

**Sequence Number** 1989-1-2810; 1989-2-2122

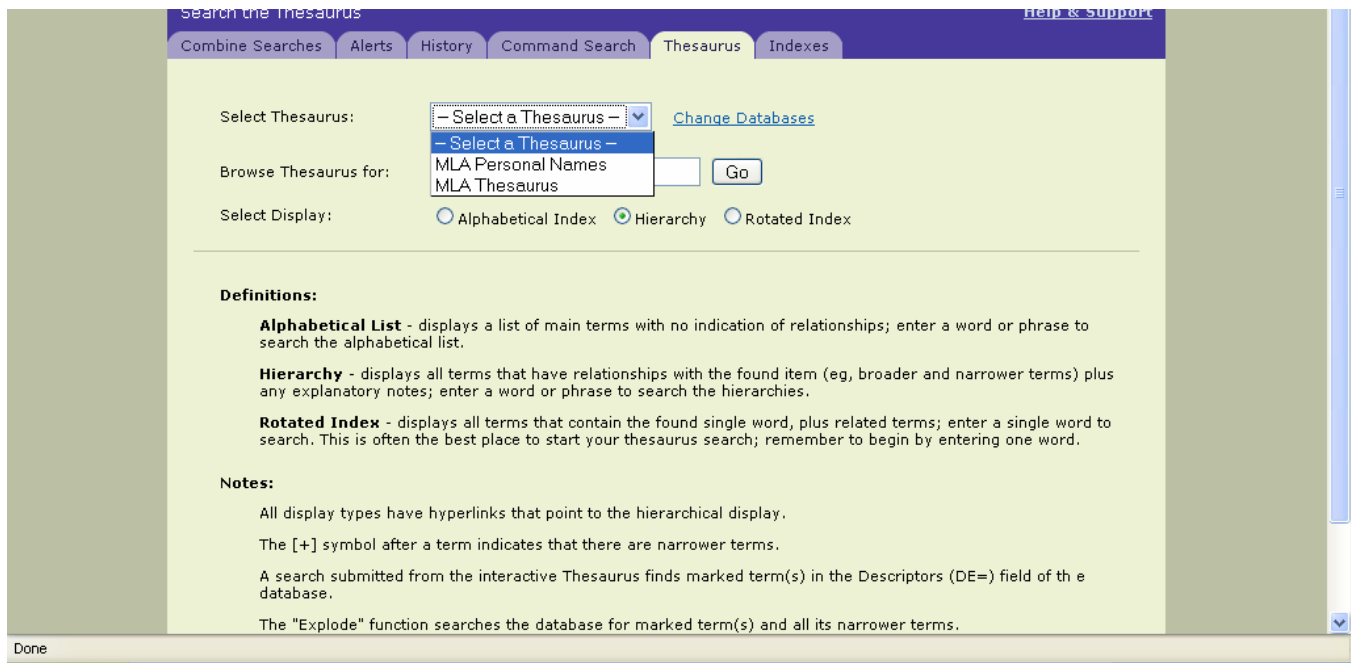
**Peer Reviewed** Yes

**Accession Number** 1989070551

Screen 7

## What if I can't think of search terms?

The MLA International Biography database has a handy feature under the **Search Tools** tab. Once in that view, select the **Thesaurus** tab.



### Screen 8

Most of the time you will want to select MLA Thesaurus. The **Definitions** and **Notes** explain the various display options. The **Hierarchy** display is the one most like a print thesaurus, offering broader, narrower, and parallel terms. For example, if you browsed for the term *boredom*, the thesaurus finds *emotions* as a broader term and *ennui* as a related term.



Clicking on a term with a plus sign (+) will produce a list of narrower terms, in this case, various emotions. CSA calls this the **Explode** function.

The MLA International Bibliography through CSA is a sophisticated database, and there are other features, such as **Search History**, that are not discussed in this handout. If you would like to know more about them, read the **Help & Support** documentation or ask a Reference Librarian. We are always happy to help!

Revised 1/29/07 by [Liorah Golomb](#), Humanities Librarian  
Wichita State University