Although this is just the second time I have compiled a research paper in college, I have learned a tremendous amount about the vast availability of library and online resources in completing my project. The idea for my topic originated from one of the course readings for the Honors seminar GVPT409H: International Security. One of the articles, "The correlates of nuclear proliferation: A quantitative test" by Sonali Singh and Christopher Way, piqued my interest. After reading the selection online through the library database, I was curious to read about other scholars' opinions. Using Research Port, I chose the database "Politics and Public Policy: International Relations," and selected Academic Search Premier because of its comprehensive collection in order. Search results for "nuclear proliferation" and the authors' names provided me with a variety of articles from academic journals.

After skimming some of the articles, I chose nuclear proliferation as my research topic. I asked Professor Croco how to find additional relevant journal articles. As Singh and Way's article was published in the Journal of Conflict Resolution, she showed me the "References" function on the journal's website as well as the "cited by" link in Google Scholar, both of which would allow me to find other works that referenced Singh and Way's article. Dr. Croco was instrumental in helping me jumpstart literature review of my research topic and gave me invaluable guidance on how to find scholarly information using library resources.

In order to ensure that my sources were scholarly, I used Academic Search Premier and Social Sciences Full Text and limited my search to peer-reviewed scholarly articles published within the last twenty years in order to understand how research on nuclear proliferation has progressed. Because we had been learning of the role of international organizations in maintaining international security, yet none of the articles mentioned whether membership in the United Nations Security Council affects a country's stance on nuclear proliferation, I decided to pose this as my research question. Following Dr. Croco's suggestion, I gained access to the Journal of Conflict Resolution through EBSCOhost, and found articles that built upon Singh and Way's research through Google Scholar and Web of Science. Dr. Croco also helped me locate Singh and Way's dataset from the Journal of Conflict Resolution webpage, which I merged with that of another source into a master dataset in Stata. I then created my new variable by visiting the United Nations website and sorting the information by country and year. The "Cite" feature on EBSCOhost and the APA Style Guide on the UMD Libraries webpage were very useful as I compiled my reference list.

Without the database subscriptions provided by the University of Maryland libraries, I would not have been able to effectively execute my research project. I was able to obtain the datasets that created the backbone of my research paper through the Journal of Conflict Resolution library subscription. I learned to narrow my search queries with quotes, title and author, and find relevant sources through cross-references. As a result of my performance in her class, Dr. Croco recruited me as a research assistant and has expressed that she is willing to potentially list me as a co-author in a future publication. The knowledge I have gained, such as the ability to select appropriate online databases and find relevant sources through the UMD catalog, will help me conduct research throughout college and my career. As a member of the Government & Politics Honors Program, I am required to write and defend a thesis. My research assistantship has familiarized me with the invaluable expertise of librarians, including Ms. Markowitz, Dr. Mattlage, and Mr. Lindquist, as well as many online and offline resources, which

will help me strengthen my thesis. In addition, because I hope to attend graduate school and pursue a career in international relations, strong research skills are essential to my success.

In the future, I will take even greater advantage of library resources. If I were to redo this project, I would ask librarians for their expertise to enhance my research. Not only would I ask about recommended political science research tools while choosing a research topic, but I would also ask them which databases and search queries they suggest to help me answer my research question. The subject guides and links I have learned about during my research assistantship have been extremely useful, and I only wish I had used them for my original project. Rather than focusing on online sources, I would also study books in the UMD libraries to learn more about the history of nuclear proliferation.

I hope library resources may be expanded in addition to the vast wealth of information they currently hold to aid research. I appreciated the ease with which I was able to access journal articles online. However, not all journals have the full text available online. I hope collections may be digitized or scanned so that students access them and effectively conduct research off-campus. Ideally, I hope students will be able to search within the full text of all articles, rather than just the keywords of some. When searching for items in the University of Maryland catalog, a visual representation of an item's location, such as a dot on a floor plan, in the corresponding library would decrease the amount of time students spend searching among call numbers. Alternatively, an interactive map in which users can search for an item's location would be beneficial. I also hope that the library computers may eventually acquire Stata. Last semester, I constantly stayed in the computer lab at LeFrak Hall, the only computer lab with Stata and relatively far from the center of campus, in the evenings. Nonetheless, learning about the library resources at the University of Maryland has been a tremendously beneficial experience. I am excited to continue using these services as a college student, and I hope that as more students learn about them, their educational experiences will be likewise expanded and made much more rewarding, as mine has.