

As an undergraduate student in the history department, I rely heavily on the resources available through the University of Maryland (UMD) Libraries. Commencing research for my senior honors thesis immediately overwhelmed me. How was I to discover all the possible resources that could aid with my research? Yet, I slowly began to uncover a treasure trove that existed right at my disposal. The UMD Libraries have been crucial in my research process for my thesis. My research paper, however, is not my thesis. It is, rather, a sample of what will expand into my thesis, which is to be completed in May 2017. How I chose my thesis topic actually starts with the UMD Libraries.

For the Spring 2016 semester, I accepted an internship with the Gordon W. Prange Collection. At the internship, I was tasked with writing interviewee biographies for oral histories from Americans in Occupied Japan for those with the last names J through Z. When I got to W, one person in particular stood out. Carrington Williams was a defense lawyer during the International Military Tribunal for the Far East (IMTFE). As I listened to him talk about his experience, I realized that he, an American, was discussing defending Japanese war criminals. I was fascinated.

As a part of my internship, I needed to write a research paper about the Occupation with guidance from Dr. Marlene Mayo. I told her about my interest on the American defense lawyers. Through a search using the WorldCat UMD system we discovered a memoir by Elaine Fischel, the defense secretary for William Logan and John Brannon, two of the American lawyers. Her memoir led me to discover Brannon's personal letters online through Georgetown Law along with an online collection dedicated to the IMTFE through University of Virginia (UVA) Law. Furthermore, I used Aeon to request to view the Owen Cunningham Papers at the Prange Collection. Utilizing the memoir, Brannon's letters, UVA's collection, and the papers and oral histories available at the Prange Collection, I endeavored to try and understand the American defense team. My next stop was the WorldCat system to learn more.

I scoured for anything related to the Occupation, the Tribunal, and international law. I currently have twelve books being used for my research checked out, with some coming from other libraries through the USMAI Library Consortium and Interlibrary Loan Services. The amount of sources available to students through these mediums, as well as UBBorrow, is immensely beneficial to undergraduates. Dr. Mayo's expertise in modern Japanese history helped me narrow which books were best to approach first.

Expanding from books, articles became vital as well. My research began for my internship but continued for my honors thesis classes, HIST398 and HIST399. I completed this research paper during HIST398 to have a sample for my thesis. With my HIST398 class, I met with UMD librarian Eric Lindquist to discuss research strategies using the UMD Libraries' resources. He shared various tips on how to discover scholarly articles, highlighting the many journals that we can access using our UMD account. After that meeting, I searched in Database Finder. Using that tool, I found HeinOnline, a repository of legal materials and scholarly articles on international law. Furthermore, I used the "advanced search" engine in WorldCat, clicking the "only return peer-reviewed articles" option. I read several works through databases like Jstor and HeinOnline. Although most of these articles were used to expand my background knowledge,

and not so much as sources cited in my paper, having them greatly supplemented my research experience.

My journey did not stop there. Per the advice of Dr. Mayo, I requested a 1983 documentary film on the Trials held in the Library Media Services at Hornbake in VHS. I do not own a VHS player; therefore, I used the VHS players in the library. I also wanted to gain more understanding of the legal side of the American defense team experience to compare their defense arguments with their personal thoughts. WorldCat steered me toward the proceedings transcript organized into 22 volumes based in McKeldin Library. I decided to go to the Library to read them and plan to use the information gathered for my thesis. While in the library, I surveyed for other helpful materials. I unearthed a book on the IMTFE published by The Oriental Economist hidden in protective covering due to its fragile state. The book offered information on the defense team, which is often overlooked in scholarship. I eventually discovered a 1998 dissertation by Galen Johnson, which focuses on the American defense lawyers, especially Brannon. Using Interlibrary Loan, I requested the dissertation, which I also aim to explore further in my thesis.

Throughout the research process, I have acquired invaluable skills in how to best utilize my time and the resources available to me as an undergraduate UMD student. Knowing how to effectively use library tools is crucial for success in my intended career path in academia. Libraries and archives are often overwhelming but contain hidden treasures, such as the Brannon letters or the Mayo oral histories. Uncovering these materials was an arduous task. Thankfully, I had a mentor who was well versed on my general topic, helping me refine my searches and advising me on which sources I should first focus. Not every student has that. The library could provide an online chat for students to directly and immediately talk to a librarian in order to receive suggestions for starting sources. Another way to do this is to connect students with professors who are experts in the topic, as professors are another often-untapped resource. The library could also feature an item or collection each week on their website to showcase hidden gems of which students are likely unaware. Overall, my experience researching for my thesis has been daunting yet rewarding. The UMD Libraries not only inspired my research topic but also allowed me to thoroughly mine existing sources, deepen my knowledge, and contribute to historical discourse.