

Last semester my Academic Writing instructor, Ms. Shanna Charles, informed the class that we would be writing a paper series on a topic of our choice. I knew at that moment that I would discuss the Holocaust and the emergent issues of historical revisionism and denial. This topic touches me personally, both because I had family who suffered in the Holocaust and I visited the various concentration camps in Poland on my high school's senior trip, called the March of the Living. My hope was to effectively inform the audience of the dangers of denial while simultaneously advocating the unconditional right of free expression for the sake of education.

Within the first few weeks of the Fall 2010 semester, my English 101 class spent one class period meeting with a librarian in McKeldin Library. Essentially, she taught us how to investigate a specific topic within the online library, as well as the art of broadening or specifying key words in order to control the breadth of search results. This class period was the starting point of my long road of research experience.

In order to gather the appropriate sources for the paper series, I used the University of Maryland's online Research Port, which proved very useful and efficient. I entered the key words of my topic into the quick search box and a plethora of sources surfaced. The sources consisted of chapters from books and articles from journals and newspapers. Most of the information that I obtained online came from the Academic Search Premier and JSTOR databases. Additionally, this search led me to pursue various hard copies of books from McKeldin Library.

One main strategy that I employed involved researching the opinions of the opposing argument in order to determine which questions I was required to answer. This allowed me to create a unified, meaningful piece. Moreover, the sole criterion for the research which I

incorporated into my essays was to include peer-reviewed, scholarly sources. I did not, however, disregard all other sources for lack of peer review. Additionally, in order to integrate citations, I simply perused each source and found quotations that I determined effective in supporting my thesis. I carefully chose which ones were the most powerful and concise.

Performing the research for the paper series in English 101 has opened a large window of opportunity. As a Psychology major, I plan to immerse myself in research at many points over the course of my academic career. Furthermore, I plan to use the plentiful resources that Research Port offers throughout my undergraduate experience. For instance, I am currently working on a group project discussing the effects of drug abuse on various interpersonal relationships. In order to obtain the appropriate, peer-reviewed articles, I have made use of the PsycINFO database within the university's online library.

Overall, my experience in performing research for English 101 writing assignments has been incredibly beneficial. Since the University of Maryland is such a prominent research institution, the librarian who spoke to my class passed on the essential tools for academic achievement. I am now confident that I will successfully find a broad spectrum of information on any given topic; I can now fully appreciate the wealth of information at my fingertips.