We regularly try out and purchase new materials to support faculty and student research. This semester we have several new databases in our collection, including:

- **NewspaperDirect Library PressDisplay**: Current editions (with 60 day backfile) of world-wide newspapers in full color, full page format.
- **Sage Stats**: Over 3,000 current and historical data series featuring U.S. state and local geographies, with interactive maps and charts.
- **Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson Online**

To learn about other databases we have recently purchased or are currently trialing, visit our [database trial page](#). If you’d like for us to consider a new database, contact your subject librarian. For books, films, or other materials that the library does not already own or license, please submit a purchase request (or ask us—we’d love to hear from you).

### amherst explorations

Planning for the 4th annual Amherst Explorations is underway! Encourage your students to showcase their research projects or creative work with a campus-wide audience. This year’s Explorations is set for Friday, April 1st -- check the [Amherst Explorations website](#) for updates.

### the octagon

Research shows that open access articles are cited and viewed more frequently than subscription articles. The faculty's [Open Access Resolution](#), passed in 2013, reflects the faculty’s commitment to disseminating the results of its scholarship and research to a worldwide public audience. The Octagon represents that commitment by allowing faculty to submit their articles to an open access collection. Submit your work today!

### course reserves

The library’s [reserve service](#) makes course materials readily available to students, either physically in the library or electronically from your course Moodle page. You can contact the library (reserves@amherst.edu) or your ADC to make sure materials are available for your course.

### research attentive courses

Teaching a research-focused course next semester? Be sure to add the “research attentive” keyword for the course scheduler when you submit the description.

---

**Research Instruction Spotlight:**

**Visual Literacy**

Throughout the year, Arts & Humanities Librarian [Sara Smith](#) teaches classes on accessing and using images in research for a variety of subjects, including Art History, Theater/Performance Studies, and other courses with projects that involve object-centered or archival research. These workshops often cover topics like visual analysis, copyright, and the relationship between text and image.

Sometimes, this happens over the course of a semester, as in Professor Nicola Courtright’s Mellon Seminar, “Art, Things, Spaces, and Places from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment”. There, Sara guided students in class, team meetings, and individual research appointments as they worked to select a museum object and research how it was made and used, and its historical and cultural context.

Often, Sara works with a faculty member to address a specific goal they have for students’ use of images in research. In her seminar on the [Victorian Underworld](#), Professor Ellen Boucher wanted students to better incorporate images and visual analysis into their history papers. To this end, she and Sara developed an assignment in which students scrutinized how an author incorporated an image into her article, paying particular attention to how the image was used to support her argument, how the caption functioned, and whether it was an essential part of her research. This helped to set up the library research session, where students learned how to find and properly cite images.

“Students often fear working with images in research, and don’t realize how much visual analysis actually has in common with the critical skills they have been developing in their academic research. I work to show them how to use the knowledge they have to get the best possible images for their purpose.”

— Sara Smith