

Challenges of Meeting User Needs

The Special Collections and Archivist Task Force is appreciative of being asked by the UC OCLC Implementation Team to assess the unique needs of special collections material in discipline-specific searches.

We have prepared the following use cases which are representative of the task force members' collections, and which we believe represent a good sample of standard use requests. We have included case study examples of: specific format searching (photography); specific archive searching (faculty papers, records of motion picture studios, records of record companies); and specific subject searching which also addresses rare book searching (book arts, history of homeopathy.)

While the Task Force members have prepared these samples, we do want to inform the UC-OCLC Implementation Team that in general special collections librarians and archivists do not rely on Melvyl as a primary source to provide service to their users. Each UC special collections department has its own specific collection development focus and the Online Archive of California and World Cat are the union catalogs of choice.

Additionally, use of special collections archival materials and their finding aids will always require librarian assistance to interpret records and to locate and page physical items. Use, provenance, and rights information are usually addressed more fully in finding aids and in local catalogs, and are more frequently required to be defined by the librarian. The relationship between the user and the librarian in archival research is often iterative, as information found in archival collections often results in new questions by the user and potential new directions and resources suggested by the librarian. A collaborative relationship in this type of research occurs often.

Many of our materials are not accessible via catalog records or online finding aids due to collection processing/cataloging backlogs. All special collection departments have many more hard copy-only finding aids than those encoded in EAD and posted to the OAC. These materials are often only searchable through local and not universal catalogs.

When users do search Melvyl for special collections often the results are inconclusive or misleading as many users are unaware of the existence of archival collections and in turn may not know to refine their search with format “archives.” In general, subject headings are not specific to specialized materials, and genre and index terms (from various thesauri) applied to collection level catalog records are not applied universally. The usefulness of a dedicated genre index in Melvyl is also apparent. And further, many Melvyl collection level records for special collections/archives do not have URL links to their online finding aids.

Case Studies

Use Case no. 1: Archives and Special Collections – Subject search

Users: Faculty, graduate students, undergraduate students, historians, practitioners, general public. The user group has varying degrees of knowledge and searching expertise.

Assumptions: None

Description of use: The user is trying to find primary source material, both unpublished archival materials and early published works, related to a specific subject area.

For this example, the user is interested in the history of the practice of homeopathy. The user may be a historian (faculty, student) researching the development of homeopathy or early controversies in homeopathic practice; or a practicing homeopath interested in the history of his or her profession. (Practitioner/historians are very common in the health sciences.)

Current method of support:

User goes to **Melvyl** and

1. does a subject search: “Homeopathy history”. This results in **67** hits, mostly secondary sources. The few primary sources are items such as a published diary, and publications by homeopathic societies from the late-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
2. does a keyword search: “Homeopathy history”, resulting in **101** hits, again mostly secondary sources, though some more primary sources were revealed:

- A series of manuscripts on microform (in French) at UCLA (caught because the word “History” is in the series name)
- Fabiola Hospital Association records, 1884-1952 – at UCB (caught because of the note: Included in: **History** of Science and Technology Collection)

At this point, a user may seek mediation by a Librarian who would do an advanced search. More sophisticated users would do the advance search themselves.

Search for archival materials

Advanced search: subject = homeopathy, and format = Archive/Manuscript.

This results in the following **5** hits:

Trade catalogs of home remedies and quack cures, 1866-1977.
Source: Romaine trade catalog collection
UCSB

Guttentag, Otto Ernst, Papers, 1930?-1990?
UCSF

California Homeopathic Institutions Records, 1884-1984
UCSF

Fabiola Hospital Association records, 1884-1952.
UCB (*note: this came up in the previous keyword search)

Kirschmann, Anne Taylor, 1944-
A vital force : women physicians and patients in American homeopathy, 1850-1930 / by Anne Taylor Kirschmann. c1999.
Format Dissertation
SRLF

An advanced search with “homeopathy” as a keyword (rather than subject), and **Archive/Manuscript as format**, yields 1 additional hit:

Blaisdell Civil War Medicine Collection : binders with multiple articles. [2005?]
UCD

A Special Collections librarian or archivist (or a savvy user) would also search the OAC (the librarian/archivist would know that there are many collections represented in the OAC that do not have a record in Melvyl).

A search on the OAC for “homeopathy” in “entire finding aid” results in **10** hits. Of these, only 2 (the Guttentag papers and the California Homeopathic Institutions Records, both at UCSF) are duplicated in the Melvyl search above. (Those 2 collections also appear in the first page of hits in a Google search “homeopathy history California”.)

***Note:** a user would need to search **both OAC and Melvyl** in order to get a complete listing of archival materials available on this topic at UC campuses. (In the OAC results, only 1 item was at a non-UC repository.)

Search for published materials

Up to this point, this case study has focused on archival materials, but users would also be interested in rare books, specifically early works by homeopaths such as Samuel Hahnemann.

In Melvyl, an author search on “Hahnemann, Samuel” results in **67** hits. A user interested in early works (rather than later reprintings) could sort the results by year.

Problem in Melvyl

Hahnemann’s most important work was his *Organon der Heilkunst* – his basic text on homeopathy. Hahnemann revised the work several times in his lifetime. The 6th edition (his final revision) was published after his death, based on his notes, and there is some controversy as to the accuracy of this edition. UCSF Library holds Hahnemann’s own copy of the 5th edition, which contains all of his notes for the 6th edition; this volume is often consulted by homeopaths and historians.

In **Melvyl**, the unique nature of this volume is not apparent. It appears simply as the 1833 5th edition, sharing a Melvyl record with UCLA and the Center for Research Libraries. This would lead a user to believe that the edition at UCLA is identical to the edition at UCSF, which is not the case.

This problem is not the result of faulty cataloging on the part of UCSF, as the record in the UCSF catalog displays the note: **Bound with interleaved blank pages; these pages and additional pieces contain ms. additions**

and corrections in Hahnemann's own hand. This note also appears in the **WorldCat** record for UCSF's copy (and only UCSF's copy), so presumably this problem would be alleviated by a catalog based on WorldCat.

Conclusions

Currently, users looking for all relevant special collections materials on a given subject must search at least 3 different sources: Melvyl, OAC, and WorldCat. A user would likely have to do some advanced searches, which might require help from a librarian/archivist.

This situation could be alleviated somewhat, if OAC records were included in UC's WorldCat local.

Some of the metadata in Melvyl is inaccurate and misleading, with the result that the user may not get the most relevant items. WorldCat records contain more accurate and thorough metadata.

Use Case no. 2: Record Company Records

Users: faculty members, undergraduate students, graduate students, recorded sound industry professionals

Assumptions: None

Description of Use: The user is trying to find information on record companies

Current method of support:

The user goes to Melvyl and

1. tries using the keyword "record companies" at all libraries, all formats. The search results in 57 hits consisting of predominantly search results which include the words, "record" and "companies" somewhere in the entry.

Six of the fifty seven hits pertain to sound recording companies. None of the hits represent archival collections.

2. User consults a librarian who suggests using the correct subject heading, “sound recording industry.” The search results in 511 hits. This search result is overwhelming, and too cumbersome for a user to sort through.
 3. User again consults a librarian who suggests limiting the search by format to “archives/manuscript” which limits the results to 12 hits, none of which represent an archival collection, such as the A&M Records Collection.
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Use Case no. 3: Archives and Special Collections – Subject search – Artist Books

Users: Faculty, graduate students, undergraduate students, artists, art historians, collectors, general public. The user group has varying degrees of knowledge and searching expertise.

Assumptions: None

Description of use: The user is trying to find books produced by artists.

- The user is also interested in locating books by Mexican book artists.
- The user is most interested in books by the Mexican book artist Yani Pecanins.
- Of particular interest are books by Pecanins that incorporate the use of mimeograph technique.

Current method of support:

The user goes to Melvyl and

1. The user tries using the keyword “books by artists” searching all libraries. The search result is 406 items. Reviewing the first several items in the search result the user is confused as to why some of the items are included in the search results, but other items are on target.
2. The user reviews the first few titles that appear on target, by clicking on “Details/Locations” for those titles. Some of the more useful items have a subject of “Artists’ books.”
3. The user does a new search of Melvyl by subject “Artists’ books.” The search result is 6337 items.

4. The user reviews the first few titles that look relevant, by clicking on “Details/Locations” and discovers that there is a subject “Artists’ books – Mexico”
5. The user clicks on the subject “Artists’ books – Mexico” from one of the relevant records and discovers that there are 105 items for the subject “Artists’ books –Mexico.” However, looking at the first few titles the user doesn’t find any items by the artist Yani Pecanins. The user also notices that the search result includes both books by Mexican book artists and books about Mexican book artists.
6. The user seeks help at the Special Collections reference desk because most of the relevant titles appear to be located in Special Collections.
7. The Special Collections reference librarian assists the user by explaining that “artists’ books” is a genre heading that can be used in searching Melvyl for books produced by artists. Melvyl is not currently searchable by a dedicated genre heading index, but the “subject” index will search the genre headings.
8. The librarian also explains that although the subject heading “Artists’ books” will retrieve most of the artists’ books, there are some other subject headings that will also retrieve these types of books. Those other subject headings examples are:

Altered Books	Narrative Art
Art Political Aspects	Novelty Works
Conceptual Art	Paper Sculpture
Copy Art	Pop-up Books
Flip Books	Toy and Moveable Books
Mimeographed copies	
9. The librarian confirms that searching by subject “Artists’ books – Mexico” will retrieve books by Mexican book artists and books about Mexican book artists.
10. Furthermore, the librarian explains that book artists are often listed in the Melvyl records as an “added entry” and therefore one can search for books produced by Yani Pecanins by searching “author” Yani Pecanins.

11. The librarian also explains that books by Yani Pecanins that incorporate the use of mimeograph can be found by doing an advanced search by author Yani Pecanins and subject “mimeograph copies” in Melvyl. The librarian explains that “mimeograph copies” is also a genre heading but it is searched in Mevyl as a subject.

12. The user is able to successfully complete a subject search of “Artists’ books – Mexico” resulting in 105 items. The user completes a search by author “Yani Pecanins” which results in 9 items. Lastly, the user completes an advanced search by searching author Yani Pecanins and subject mimeographed copies which results in 1 item.

Comments:

Most problems associated with searching Melvyl for artists’ books have to do with genre headings. While “artists’ books” is both a LCSH heading and a genre heading, in this use case the ability to search only genre headings would improve the search results. The user is looking for artists’ books, not necessarily books about artists’ books.

Use Case no. 4: Regional History: Photograph Use

Users: Non-affiliated researchers, Faculty, Graduate students, undergraduates

Assumptions: [None yet]

Description of Use: Researcher is trying to find images and image collections documenting the development of a particular region of California.

Current method of support: In this sample the researcher is looking for photographs of the City of Davis.

Researcher begins his search in MELVYL and

1. Tries using subject keywords (Davis California Photographs) at all libraries, with limits on formats. The search results in 24 hits. Of this set, thirteen records describe some sort of photographic image of the City of

Davis or the University of California, Davis. The rest are records that have Davis as part of name used as a subject.

2. While looking through the set of records the researcher notices the subject headings “Davis (Calif.)—Pictorial works” and “University of California, Davis—Pictorial Works” and does a subject search using both terms.

The results for Davis (Calif.)—Pictorial Works: 19 items.

Some of results (both good and bad) are the same from the previous search, some books containing historical photos of Davis California pop up, and a handful of digital scans taken from the “Historical atlas map and history of Yolo County, Cal.”

The results for University of California, Davis—Pictorial Works: 9 items.

Again we get a few repeats from the previous two searches, but we also get a variety of campus publications (Undergraduate Admissions), a book documenting the changes in garden outside the Memorial Union Art Gallery, and again some records where Davis is simply a part of personal or corporate name used as a subject.

3. Not completely satisfied with material that has been discovered, the researcher consults with a reference librarian who refers them to UC Davis Special Collections. The librarian/archivist explains that much of their photographic material is contained within mixed material, archival and personal papers collections. The librarian/archivist also directs them to the Eastman’s Originals Collection which contains a large number of images of Davis. It is explained to them that they would not have found this collection using the researcher’s previous Melvyl searches because the collection contains images from all over Northern California and has been given broader subject headings to reflect this. The archivist/librarian is also able to direct the researcher to collections that have not yet cataloged including the University Archives Photo Collection.

4. Finally the librarian/archivist directs the researcher to the Online Archive of California website. The librarian/archivist explains that OAC allows researchers to view and--to a limited extent--search through more detailed descriptions of UC collections called finding aids. The librarian/archivist is careful to note that the detail and structure of the finding aids can be quite varied and that this can present some challenges to systematic searching. It

is suggested to the researcher that may want to look tried to focus on collections that have Davis (Calif.), California—Davis, or University of California, Davis as subject headings and also contain Photographic series or subseries.

The librarian/archivist explains the researcher can also search a portion of the University of California's (as well as other participating California heritage institutions) image holdings using its image search which is available from the OAC and Calisphere websites. Again, the librarian/archivist warns the researcher that the images available through these sites only represent a fraction of the University of California's total image holdings.

Using words and phrases from is original Mevyl searches in the OAC image search; the user is able to browse through 68 images, most of which have come out of the UC Davis' Eastman's Originals Collection.

Use Case no. 5: Motion Picture Studios Collections

Users: faculty members, undergraduate students, graduate students, film industry professionals

Assumptions: None

Description of Use: The user is trying to find all archival collections pertaining to the records of motion picture studios.

Current method of support: The user goes to Melvyl and

4. tries using the keyword "motion picture studios" at all libraries, all formats. The search results in 669 hits consisting of mostly sound recordings, video recordings, as well as some books. This search result is overwhelming, and too cumbersome for a user to sort through.

Most importantly, the user does not find the RKO Studio Collection, which is a rare example of a complete motion picture studio's records.

5. User tries using the keyword "motion picture studios" at all libraries, archival/manuscript as format. The results consist of thirteen hits, all of which pertain to items whose formats are listed as

“Archival/Manuscript.” However, the results also predominantly consist of oral history transcripts, as well as trade catalogs, and a collection of MGM set designs.

Again, the user does not find the RKO Studio Collection, which is a rare example of a complete motion picture studio’s records.

6. user seeks help at Performing Arts Special Collections:
The librarian searches under the subject heading, “Motion Picture Industry – United States” and quickly finds the record pertaining to the RKO Studio Collection.

This collection cannot be found in the OAC because:

- 1) it has not been processed, and only a collection inventory exists
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Use Case no. 6: Faculty Papers

Users: Faculty members, undergraduate students, graduate students

Assumptions: None

Description of Use: The user is trying to find UC faculty papers. Before contributing her papers a faculty member tries to find all UC faculty papers deposited in UC special collections in order to ascertain where other UC colleagues have their papers and how they are described.

Current method of support:

User goes to Melvyl and

1. tries using key word “faculty papers” at all libraries. The results are erroneous as user gets records for books about faculty papers mixed with some faculty papers;

tries again using key word “faculty papers” as phrase search at all libraries. The results are better as all records are for faculty papers, but user notices the faculty papers are only at UCB or UCSC or NRLF (UCB, UCSC)

2. user seeks help at Special Collections.

- a.) Librarian knows that terminology for cataloging faculty papers is not done uniformly so conducts two searches in Melvyl at all libraries:

su: University of California

kw phrase: faculty papers

Search results: 190

realizes results are limited because only UCB and UCSC catalogers are using “faculty papers” as term in MARC 655 genre/index field. (This genre term from AAT)

and

su: University of California

kw phrase: faculty archives

Search results: 86

results indicate that UCD, UCSD, UCI, UCLA(SRLF), UCSC use campus name as subject heading, with the sub heading “faculty” and form sub heading “Archives”

a phrase kw search will pick up these records.

Alternate Search Option:

Individual Melvyl subject search by campus name and faculty archives for all 10 campuses may reveal items but this is very inefficient search.

But, the Librarian also knows that:

some UC faculty papers have local or OAC finding aids but no collection level record in Melvyl, so the librarian goes on:

The Librarian may go to OAC for more definitive searching.

(In OAC however, there are also some stumbling blocks to efficient searching of UC faculty papers as held by UC.)

A keyword exact phrase search of findings aids for “faculty papers” or “faculty archives” displays many items but UC holdings are mixed with other OAC contributors.

In OAC advanced keyword phrase search in finding aids for “university of california” “faculty archives” displays 42 items; “university of california” ”faculty papers” displays 13 items.

Alternate Search Option:

Another option in OAC is to browse the list of institutional contributors (i.e. each UC special collections) and then browse through holdings to find

faculty papers. Much more information is found here about individual faculty papers than is found in Melvyl or in local opacs.

Simple CASE STUDY: FACULTY PAPERS

User: outside researcher, but potential for faculty members, graduate students, undergrad students

Assumptions: None

Description of use: User is interested in published and unpublished writings by faculty member who worked/taught at particular campus. The user wants to read unpublished material and possibly use excerpts in own forthcoming publication.

Current method of support:

User goes to Melvyl and/or local catalog and searches for published works by author's name.

Unpublished works are not found in the catalog.

The user may note in the search results a record for the papers of that particular professor/author. This record may or may not refer to unpublished works as being part of the "faculty papers" If an OAC finding aid is available it would be linked from this record.

The user may click to the finding aid, or they may go to Special Collections for further information.

In any case should the faculty papers contain unpublished material and the user requests a copy, excerpt for publication, etc. the rights information may be noted in the finding aid and most likely need further intervention/determination by Special Collections staff as to possibility of further reproduction.

(Rights info not in Melvyl or the local catalog.)