

Stanford Newspaper Visualization

By Lisa Louise Cooke

Data Visualization is a growing trend online and *Stanford University's Rural West Initiative* at the Bill Lane Center for the American West uses this technology in a stunning way.

The *Data Visualization: Journalism's Voyage West* website presents a visualization that plots over 140,000 newspapers published over three centuries in the United States. The data comes from the Library of Congress' "Chronicling America" project, which maintains a regularly updated directory of newspapers.

Before we take a look at the Visualization, the creators remind us that there are some important things to keep in mind as we do:

"It would be fairer to call this a "database" visualization than an omniscient creator's-eye view of the growth of American newspapers. There are known (and surely unknown) omissions from this list, as well as duplicate entries, and entries that are similar and can appear duplicative.

Process: The data originates from many state-level libraries and scholarly institutions that are actively collecting, scanning and cataloguing American newspapers. These records are sent to the Library of Congress for aggregations in the newspaper directory. In many cases, publication start and end dates are uncertain. Where possible, we have calculated minimum run dates of publications, based on dates within which copies have been catalogued."

As I said, *Newspapers are an Exciting and Exasperating Record Group!*

Ok, we're ready! Go to www.stanford.edu/group/ruralwest/cgi-bin/drupal/visualizations/us_newspapers

When you arrive at the website you will find the map set to 1690, and no newspapers visible. As you move the time slider (at the top of the screen) to the right and come forward in years, newspapers begin to appear on the map represented by dots. The larger the dot, the more newspapers concentrated in that area.

When dots begin to appear in the area of interest on the map, click the zoom tool found in the upper right corner of the screen. Click and drag the screen to reorient to the correct area. Continue zooming in until you are close enough that you can distinguish

between the dots. Hover your mouse over a dot and the newspapers in existence in that area in the time selected will appear in the lower left corner of the screen.

Each newspaper listed in the Details box is hyperlinked to the Library of Congress Chronicling America catalogue entry. Click on the “Libraries That Have It” link at the top of the listing and you will discover where you can view the paper.

By selecting a particular year on the timeline, you get an amazing sense of how vast the potential records are. The visualization also provides a very effective way to determine potential papers to investigate that you might otherwise have missed. Once you’ve made note of the newspapers associated with the dot on the town you are interested in, click on and explore surrounding dots. The news knows no boundaries, and it’s very possible that the news you seek was reported in a neighboring area.

NewspaperMap.com

By Lisa Louise Cooke

Newspaper Map.com has an interactive map which allows you to search over 10,000 newspapers from all over the world and see where they are located. Best of all you can browse, and read them all online. Simply search by specific location, zoom in on the specific areas of interest and click on the icon for the available newspapers.

In the top search box, you can search for a specific newspaper title, or just below it you can type in the location name. Type in "California, United States" and click Search and the map zooms in on California and an array of mostly yellow dots or icons appear. In the bottom right corner is the color code guide for the icons. Yellow is for newspapers in English, but you'll find that there are several different languages supported.

If your interest is in the Sacramento area newspapers click the zoom plus sign in the upper right corner to zoom in closer and click on each dot in that area. A dialogue box appears typically containing an image of the newspaper, a hyperlink to it, and additional pertinent information such as the city and state, and the language. You will also see options for translating the paper into other languages. (This is a BIG help when looking at newspapers in Germany and you speak only English!) If you want to read the paper in its native language, just click the thumbnail image of the paper. And again, because these are modern day papers most likely you'll be taken to that newspaper's website and you'll be reading the paper on their site. This is a neat way to get familiar with an area in your country or around the world as it is today.

Newspaper Map doesn't stop there! The website boasts many historical newspapers. To access them head over to the search box and click the Historical button. When you do that the map changes: the current newspaper icons disappear and what is left are icons plotting historical newspapers available online for that area. This data is, again, primarily tying back to the Library of Congress Chronicling America catalogue. Some tie to a card catalogue listing for the newspaper, and some link directly to the free digitized pages!

What if I want to find newspapers near Gladbeck Germany where my ancestors on my mom's side once lived? As I start to type Gladbeck in the search box the site prompts me for Germany as it is looking for locations that match as I type.

Once the map zooms in to Gladbeck, Germany, the town is pretty much dead center. That's good because unfortunately the site doesn't put a place mark on the town you

requested. That would be a nice feature to see in the future, because certainly we'll be searching some areas we're not that familiar with.

I find a newspaper in the nearby town of Essen, and when I click on the icon I get that dialogue box again where I can then click on English so that when I'm taken to the website for that paper it will be already translated into English for me.

When I click the Historical button unfortunately I don't see any historic papers plotted. In that case you have to zoom out to see where the closest place mark is, and in this case that looks like Luxemburg.

When you want to start a new search, and get back to a clean slate, just click on the words Newspaper Map in the box in the upper left corner of the screen.

New newspaper content is being added every day online and it's a challenge for the folks at Newspaper Map to add them all. But you can help! If you know of an online newspaper you can add it to the map. Just head back up to the box in the upper left corner and click the Add/Correct button. Fill in the field and click Submit. If we all chip in, NewspaperMap just might be able to become a 'one stop shopping place' for finding online newspapers.

World Cat

By Lisa Louise Cooke

There are two challenges that come to mind when I think about trying to locate newspapers. One is finding out what newspapers are available. The other is figuring out how to get your hands on those newspapers. Either way our starting place is the same: WorldCat.

WorldCat is the world's largest network of library content and services, and WorldCat libraries are dedicated to providing access to their resources on the Web. The website allows you to search the collections of libraries in your community as well as thousands of other libraries around the world. It's tough to find a broader reach anywhere. A simple search of their participating institutions delivered over 78,000 in the U.S. alone, including public, corporate and academic libraries! And thanks to the efforts of librarians and other information professionals, WorldCat is growing larger every day.

You can search for traditional library items such as books, music CDs and videos, as well as many new kinds of digital content, such as downloadable audio books, article citations with links to their full text; documents and photos of local or historic significance; and digital versions of rare items that aren't available to the public. Most importantly, if there is a paper copy or roll of microfilm of the newspaper you desire in a public library, WorldCat can find it!

However, WorldCat also harnesses the power of social networking which means you can benefit from other users' findings. The Lists tool facilitates the sharing. Lists can play an important role in your personal research organization as well facilitating the sharing of ideas and resources.

To take full advantage of WorldCat, you will need to sign up for a free account. Your account will allow you to:

- Create a profile
- Organized your library research by building and maintaining public and private lists of newspapers, books, videos and other items owned by libraries
- Search for lists
- Network with other users regarding their lists
- Add your rating and review of items

How to Register for a Free Account

1. Click the Create an Account Now Link
2. Enter a User Name
3. Enter a password
4. Retype the password
5. Enter your email address
6. Read the terms and conditions
7. Click the "I certify I am at least 13 years of age"
8. Click the I AGREE button
9. You'll be taken to a webpage acknowledging your account and directing you to various activities such as creating a public profile and creating public and private lists
10. You'll also get a welcome email at the email address you registered

Before you begin your search, set up a list for newspapers.

How to Set Up a List in WorldCat

1. From the Menu bar in the upper right corner go to MY LISTS
2. Select CREATE NEW LIST
3. Type in your list title
4. Click the CREATE NEW LIST button
5. This will take you to the page for that list where you can start searching for items
6. Type in some key words in the SEARCH FOR ITEMS TO ADD field
7. Click the SEARCH button
8. Click the boxes for each item that you want to add to your list
9. Go to the top of the list and select the list you want to add the items to from the drop down menu in the SAVE LIST box and click the SAVE button

The WorldCat Search

There are two ways to focus in on the right newspapers for your research. One way is to do a keyword search which is pretty straight forward. Start by searching the name of the town, the state and the word newspaper and you will be well on your way. You can also search the exact title of the publication.

The beauty of the search results is that you will not only learn which libraries carry the item, but also have them organized by their proximity to you!

Saved Searches

If you've read my book *The Genealogist's Google Toolbox*, then you know that sometimes it takes a few tries to create a finely tuned search query that gets good results. But of course a search is only good for that moment in time. A new newspaper could be added to a collection tomorrow. Save these queries that you've worked so hard on and will likely want to run again in the future with the Saved Search tool.

How to Create a Saved Search

1. On the search results page click the SAVE SEARCH button in the upper right corner of the page and a dialogue box will appear.
2. Enter a name for your search. Example: US Spanish Language Newspapers – Mexico
3. Enter a description – this would be a great place to record what your search goal is.
4. Set your Saved Search to public or private
5. Click the SAVE SEARCH button
6. You can access and manage your saved searches from your WorldCat profile page.

TIP: WorldCat Help for searches – Your best bet for getting great results quickly is to use the Advanced Search. However, the Search Help section provides the scoop on Boolean Operators and Wildcards if you feel like trying your hand at customizing your search.

Tags

Traditionally organizational systems, whether physical or digital, have relied on folders. But with the power of online databases, they are falling by the wayside in favor of Tags. The reason is simple: Tags don't limit you to sorting by one topic. Each digital item can be tagged with one or many subject tags that describe it. For example the El Moro de paz newspaper at Louisiana State University could be tagged as follows:

- Spanish Language
- Newspaper
- Louisiana
- Garcia Surname

These tags represent the various subjects I may want to retrieve and review in the future. While this item may be included in a more global "Newspaper Research List" (see the next section), I may want to later retrieve all items I've looked at that pertain to Garcia surname research. Those items might include newspapers, books and videos found through World Cat. Even if I have tagged 1,000 items to date, one click of the

“Garcia Surname” tag on my Profile page would instantly give me every item with that tag. Invest in tagging – it will pay off down the road!

How to Tag an Item

1. Make sure you are signed in to your World Cat account
2. Run a search
3. Click on an item in the results list
4. Click ADD TAGS (just above the title of the item)
5. In the pop up box, enter tag names separated by commas, and or select a tag you have already created (remember, you can tag an item many times if you wish)
6. Click SAVE TAGS
7. If desired, EDIT TAGS from your profile page.

Lists

We rarely have time to look in depth at all the results we get when searching. The beauty of WorldCat’s lists is that you can run a search, add the items of interest to your list, and then review them at your convenience.

If other people have read the book or viewed the microfilm they may have added “notes” that you can review to help you even further decide if this is the right item for your purpose. Once you’ve viewed the item, you can go back to your list and add notes for your own purposes as well as to help others determine what the item contains.

The List feature also goes a long way to keeping you organized and assisting you in your research. Think of it – you may never make the mistake of requesting a book or checking one out that it turns out you’ve already worked with! And you’ll have notes in one place to remind you what it contained, page numbers and etc. so you can go back to it and find what interested you. There’s always a chance that someone out there has already created a Newspapers list on your topic. Wouldn’t it be great to see what they included and found helpful? Let’s give it a try. Let’s say you would like to see if there is a list for Spanish Newspapers.

How to Find Another User’s List

1. At the menu click on the SEARCH drop down menu
2. Select SEARCH FOR LISTS
3. From the Search results you can click on the list itself, or the user who created it.

Not only did three lists come up, but they each have a different focus. Two are general though not identical, and one is Spanish language newspapers in Louisiana.

I searched on the word genealogy and found nearly 450 lists. Immediately one caught my eye; “Randolph County, Indiana, Genealogy”. That is right up my alley because I have a lot of ancestors from there. So I just clicked on that list and found several books listed that would be very helpful to my research.

What Else Can You Do With A List?

- Save selected items from the list to one of your lists
- Save the entire list as your new list
- Add the entire list to one of your existing lists
- Watch the list for update (WorldCat will notify you if the list creator adds additional items)

The tell-tale sign of a good genealogist is research where sources are cited. WorldCat makes source citation a snap with the Citations tool.

How to Use the Citations Tool

1. Sign into your account
2. Run a search
3. Move desired items to a WorldCat List
4. Use the Citations View to see your list
5. Select the desired citation style
6. Select the order
7. Export the citations list or click the Cite this Item link from the detailed record, and cut and paste the style into your document.

RSS Feed

You can even subscribe to the list through an RSS feed. This means you can track the list in an RSS reader, and you’ll get updates whenever that user adds an item to the list.