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Old Habits Are Hard to Break: Lessons Learned from a Qualitative Research Study

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Oregon State University

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Oregon State University

Hannah Gascho Rempel
Oregon State University

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Old Habits Are Hard to Break:
Lessons Learned from a
Qualitative Research Study

Stefanie Buck
Anne-Marie Deitering
Hannah Gascho Rempel
Online NW 2012



BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

What do our users expect when they use library databases or the library webpage to search for sources?

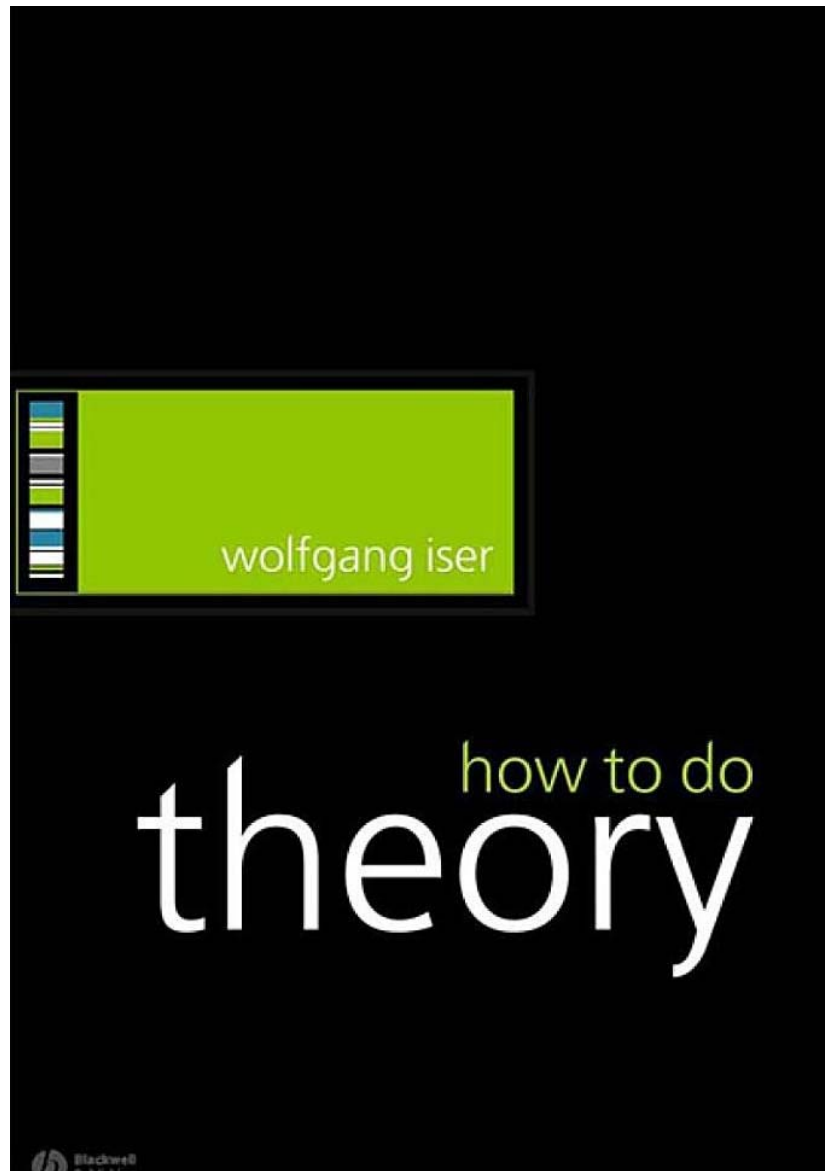
When given a research assignment, what do our users typically do? What's their process?

When pushed to use new source types or new research tools, how do our users adjust?

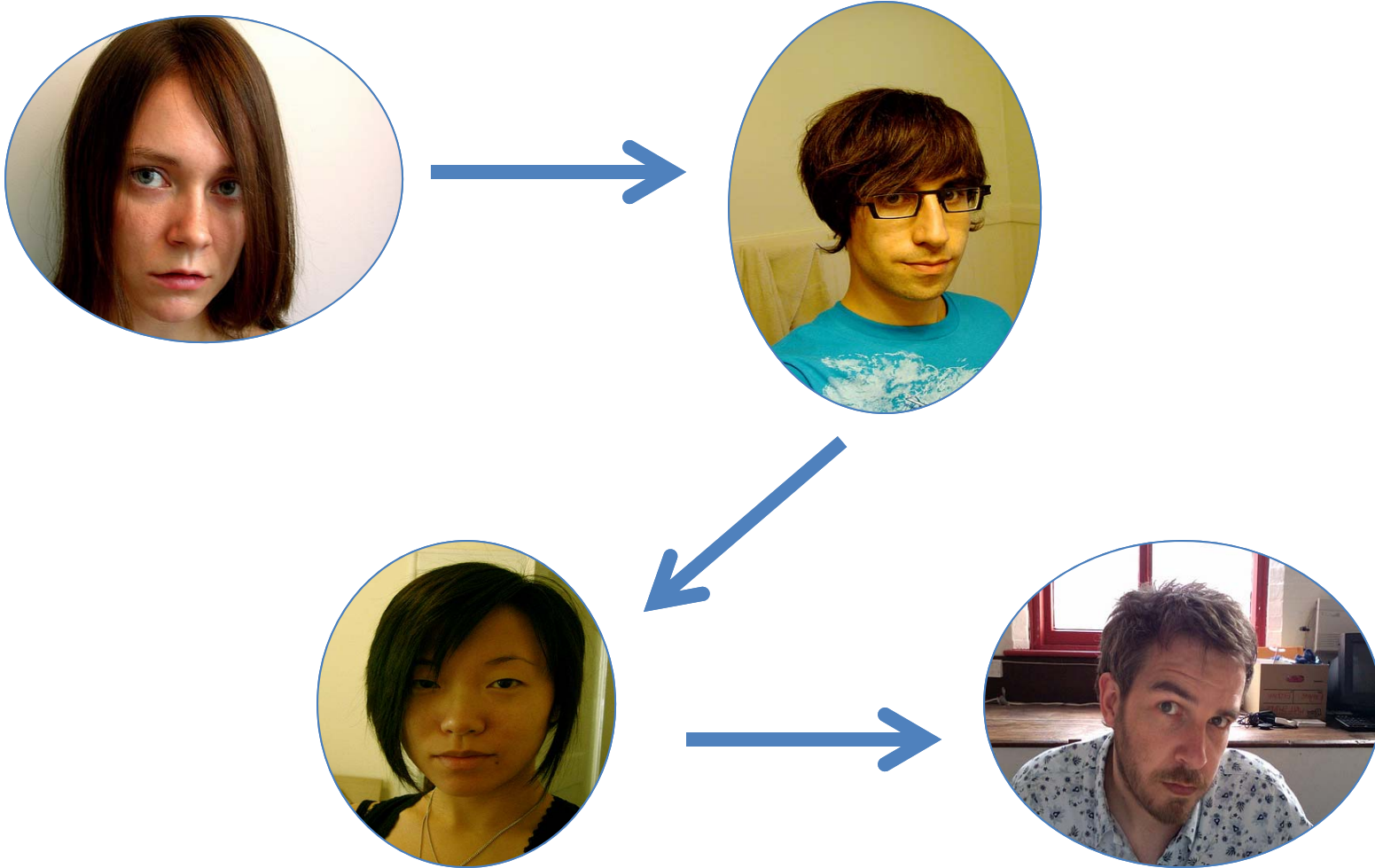
$$n = 20$$

A high-angle, wide shot of a large, diverse crowd of people gathered on a paved surface. The individuals are of various ages, ethnicities, and are dressed in casual attire. Many are looking towards the camera, while others are engaged in conversations or looking away. The crowd is densely packed, filling the entire frame.

STATISTICAL



ANALYTIC



TRANSFERABILITY



THICK DESCRIPTION

STUDY METHODS

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Task

You are an OSU student, enrolled in COMM 111. You have two weeks to prepare a speech that meets the following requirements:

1. You must use evidence from outside sources in your speech.
2. You should use sources that an academic audience would find convincing and authoritative.
3. You must use at least 3 different sources.

You may choose one of these 5 topics:

- Tsunami early warning
- Medical school admissions
- Solar development
- Traffic congestion
- Urban woodlands

Search Boxes 1

Web of Science

WEB OF KNOWLEDGESM

Search Web of ScienceSM

Copyright 2010 [Thomson Reuters](#)

Multidisciplinary database with information from thousands of scholarly journals.

1Search



Search the library's collections. Find books, articles and more. Also consult subject specific databases and web resources for more targeted searching.

<[Learn More](#)>

Google Scholar

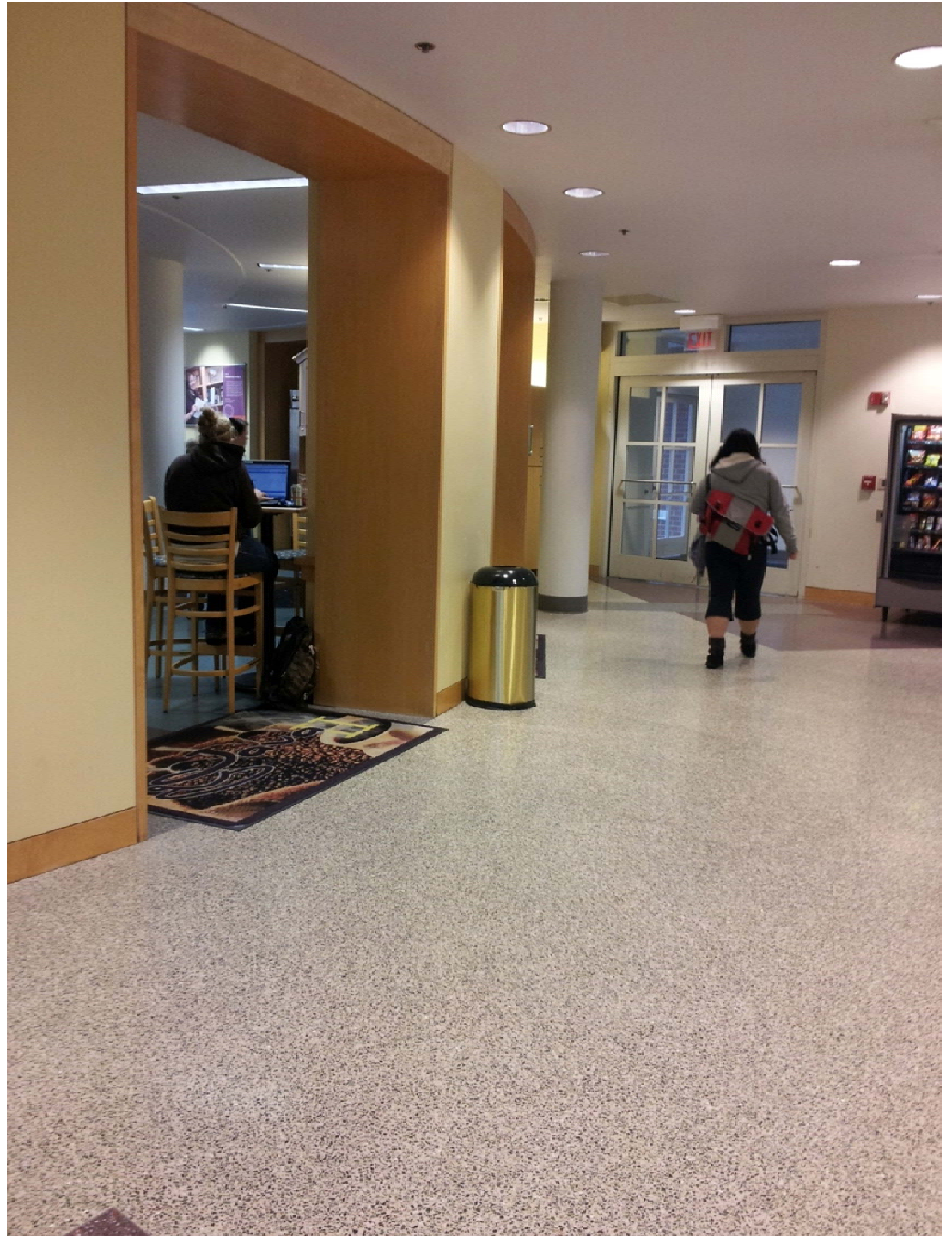
The Google Scholar logo, with 'Google' in its multi-colored font and 'Scholar' in green below it, followed by 'BETA' in small letters.

A simple way to broadly search for scholarly literature.



**DON'T
FISH HERE**

OR HERE

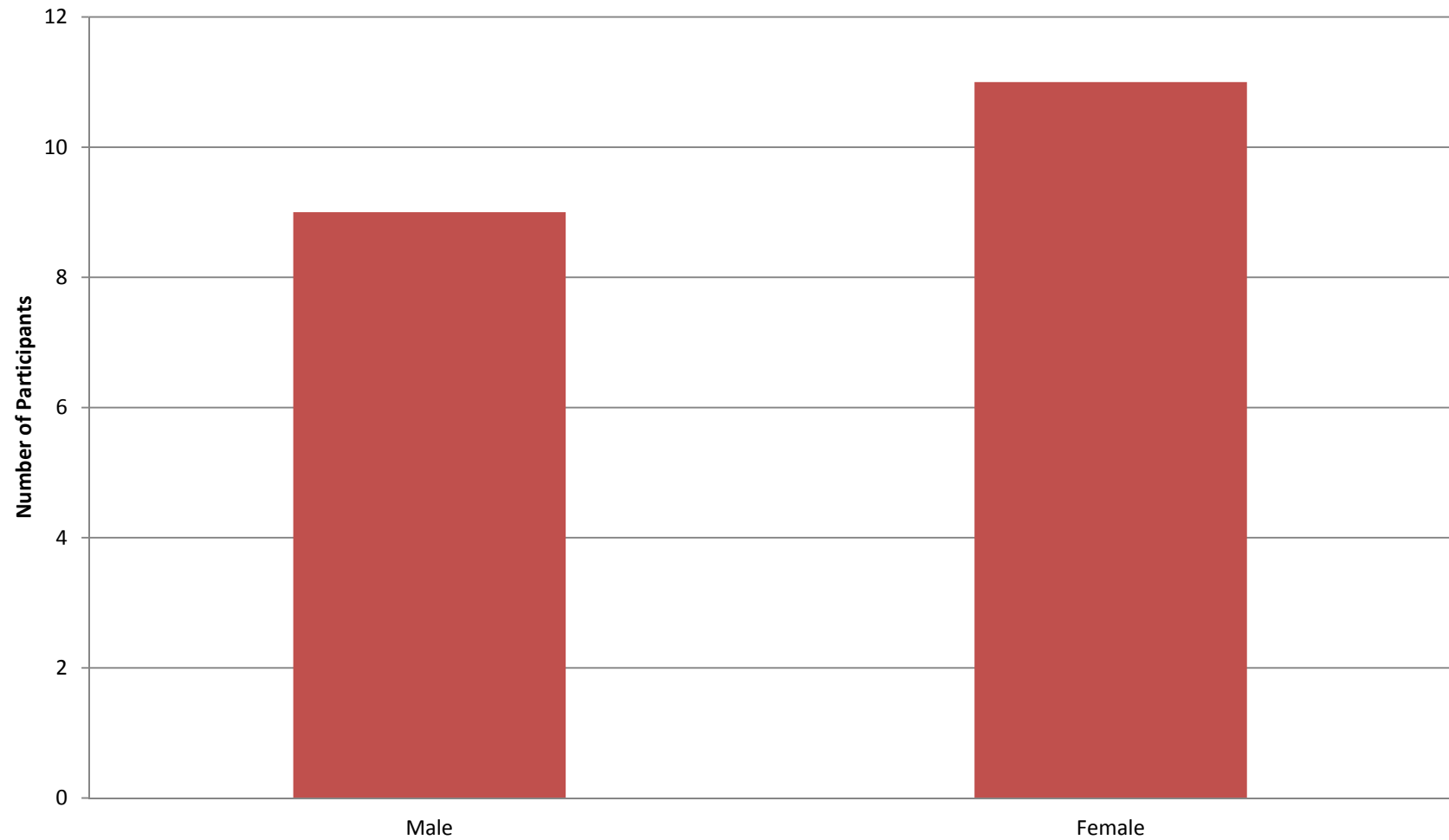




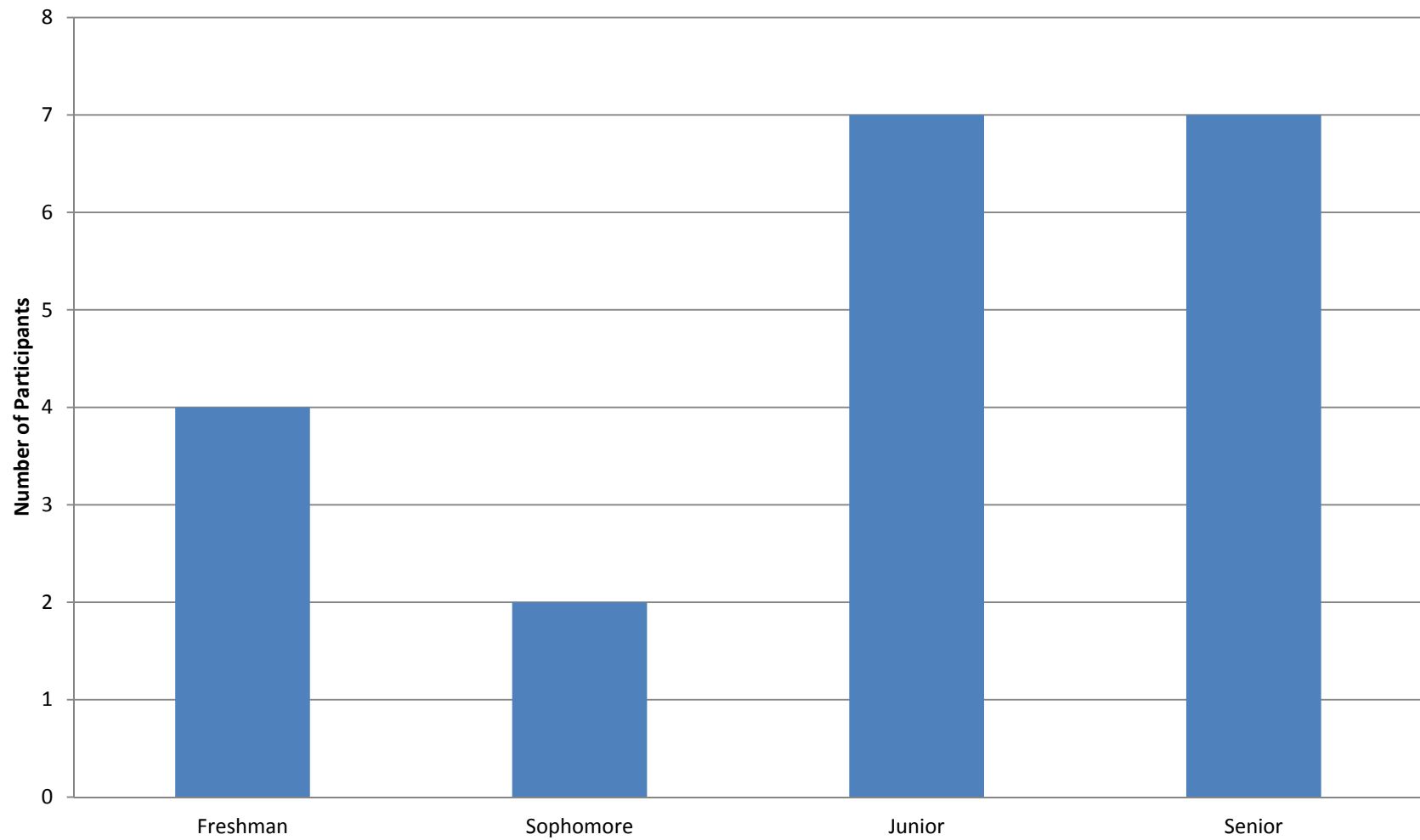
**Fish
HERE**



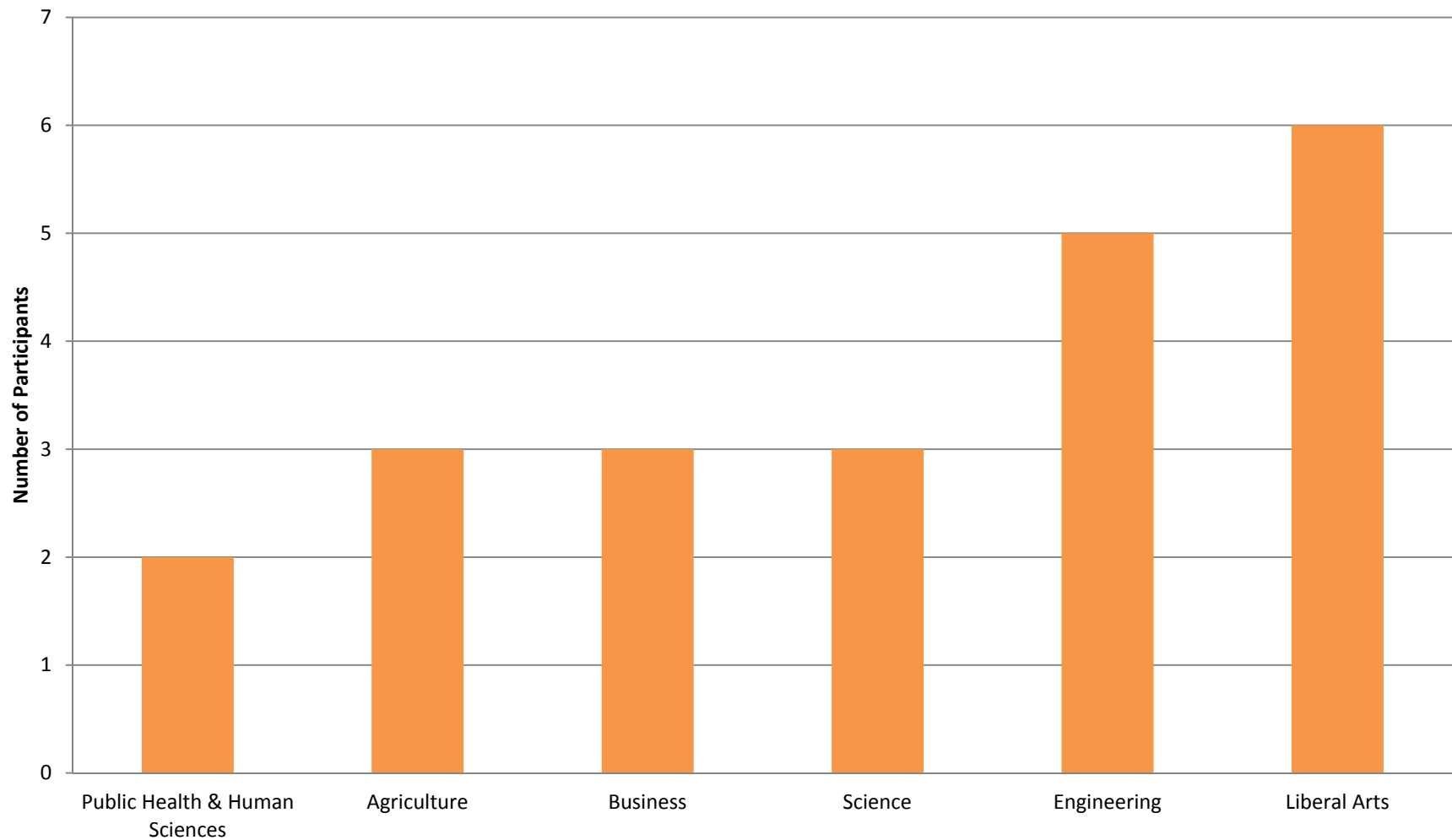
20 Undergrads: Gender



Academic Standing



College Affiliation*



*Some participants belonged to more than one college.

Subject 13

Valley Library Lobby

(male)

Coffee shop study person 3 – used search page 1

9/26/11

Valley Library lobby

(transcriber – Hannah)

(male)

-chose topic urban woodlands

Well, look here I'm already at **web of knowledge** (first on the list) – I'll type in *urban woodlands*, and will search (really slow internet connection)

-skim and look at the titles of all the articles, this has a lot of big words, about erectophyza microrhiza [gives the name of the fungi]

The 3rd one looks decent – I'm looking for a plain article – no scientific names, something simple, I'm just looking for some... I'll open the result in a new tab and keep going down the search page.

This looks interesting, [reads title] "a landscape analysis from the changing ... or rome 1954"

I'll just open one more that looks interesting to me.

[reads title] "Green structures in Portugal."

I'd just open 2-3 results at time, in a real search, because I don't want too many tabs open at a time, or I'll forget why I had them open. I'll get 3 and maybe none of them work, then I'll change my terms, or before I'd do that I'd go to another database..

FishingProjectRound3.nvp - NVivo

File Home Create External Data Analyze Explore Layout View

Sources

Look for: Search In Internals Find Now Clear Advanced Find

Internals

Name	Nodes	References	Created On	Created By
Subject 19_Oct26	25	63	12/27/2011 4:58 PM	HGR
Subject1_sept26	27	51	11/15/2011 3:19 PM	HGR
Subject10_Sept28	30	64	12/6/2011 9:53 AM	HGR
Subject11_Sept29	23	53	12/27/2011 4:58 PM	HGR
Subject12_Sept29	37	83	12/27/2011 4:58 PM	HGR
Subject13_Sept29	30	74	11/15/2011 10:09 AM	HGR
Subject14_Oct.4	23	59	12/27/2011 4:58 PM	HGR
Subject15_Oct.4	21	47	12/27/2011 4:58 PM	HGR
Subject16_Oct.4	22	58	12/27/2011 4:58 PM	HGR

Look for: Search In Nodes Find Now Clear Advanced Find

Nodes

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By
Assignment Criteria	13	27	12/14/2011 2:31 PM	HGR
Genre	10	19	12/14/2011 2:33 PM	HGR
Rhetorical Base	4	6	12/14/2011 2:34 PM	HGR
Scholarly	2	2	12/14/2011 2:33 PM	HGR
Memorable quotes	9	12	12/7/2011 9:50 AM	HGR
Prior Experience	20	149	12/14/2011 2:45 PM	HGR
Assignment navigation	8	15	12/15/2011 11:34 AM	HGR
Developing topic	12	16	12/15/2011 11:40 AM	HGR
Discovery	0	0	12/27/2011 5:34 PM	HGR
First steps	2	2	12/15/2011 11:57 AM	HGR
Process	16	33	12/15/2011 11:35 AM	HGR
Search strategies - newish	6	6	12/27/2011 5:36 PM	HGR
Sources	1	1	12/15/2011 11:33 AM	HGR
Staying organized	18	31	12/27/2011 5:37 PM	HGR
Subject area - new	3	4	12/29/2011 11:14 AM	HGR
Tools	18	41	12/15/2011 11:32 AM	HGR
Process	18	61	12/15/2011 11:37 AM	HGR
Developing outline	9	13	12/15/2011 11:40 AM	HGR
Organization	7	10	12/15/2011 11:41 AM	HGR
Search Strategies	11	15	12/15/2011 11:42 AM	HGR
Topic Development	12	23	12/27/2011 5:38 PM	HGR
Search Tool Selection	14	28	12/14/2011 1:58 PM	HGR
Access to the tool	0	0	12/27/2011 5:15 PM	HGR
Assignment Requirements	7	11	12/14/2011 2:03 PM	HGR
Convenience	3	4	12/27/2011 5:14 PM	HGR
Descriptions	8	13	12/15/2011 12:27 PM	HGR

Oregon State **OSU** Libraries

Search

☐ Keep search refinements ☒ New

Search Results: Your search for **stuff** returned **3,138,297** results

Refine your search

- ☐ Items with full text online
- ☐ Limit to articles from peer-reviewed publications
- ☐ Exclude Newspaper Articles
- ☐ Items in the library catalog
- ☒ Add results beyond your library's collection

Content Type

- ☒ Any
- ☐ Newspaper Article (2,363,523)
- ☐ Journal Article (378,506)
- ☐ Book / eBook (335,648)

Stuff

by Miller, Daniel
2010, ISBN 07456
Material culture S
Book: AVAILAB

STUFF

Kirkus Reviews, IS
... has his **stuff**, h
picture books
Journal Article: f

Google
scholar

Search

[Advanced Scholar Search](#)
[Scholar Preferences](#)

☒ Articles (☒ include patents) ☐ Legal opinions and journals

Stand on the shoulders of giants

WEB OF KNOWLEDGESM | DISCOVERY STARTS HERE

[Go to mobile site](#)

All Databases | **Select a Database** | **Web of Science** | **Additional Resources**

[Search](#) | [Author Finder](#) | [Cited Reference Search](#) | [Advanced Search](#) | [Search History](#)

Web of ScienceSM

Search

Example: oil spill* mediterranean

**WHAT
DATABASES
DID THEY
USE?**

Search Boxes 1

Web of Science

WEB OF KNOWLEDGESM

Search Web of ScienceSM

Copyright 2010 [Thomson Reuters](#)

Multidisciplinary database with information from thousands of scholarly journals.

1Search



Search the library's collections. Find books, articles and more. Also consult subject specific databases and web resources for more targeted searching.

<[Learn More](#)>

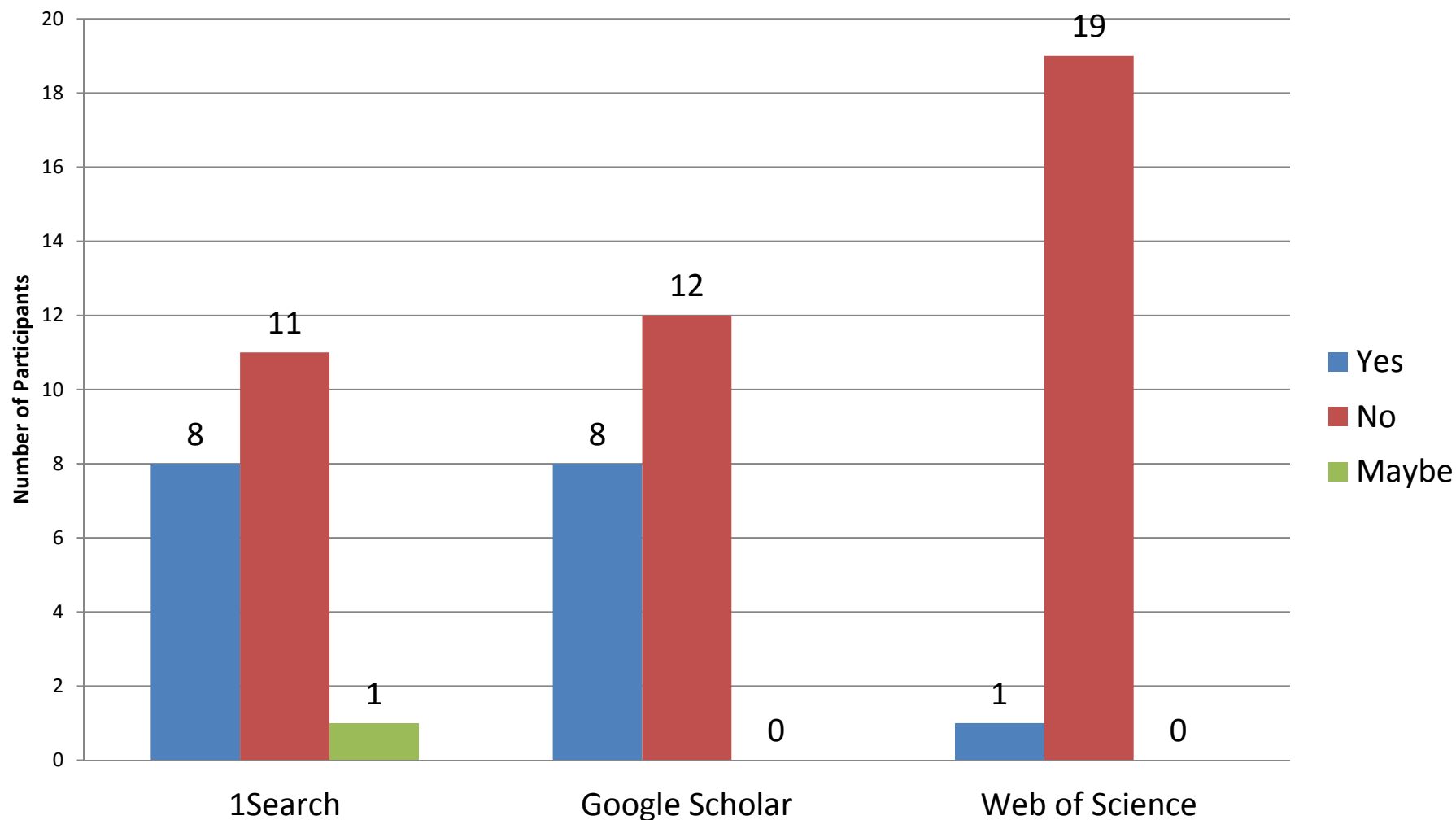
Google Scholar

The Google Scholar logo, with 'Google' in its multi-colored font and 'Scholar' in green below it, followed by 'BETA' in small letters.

A simple way to broadly search for scholarly literature.

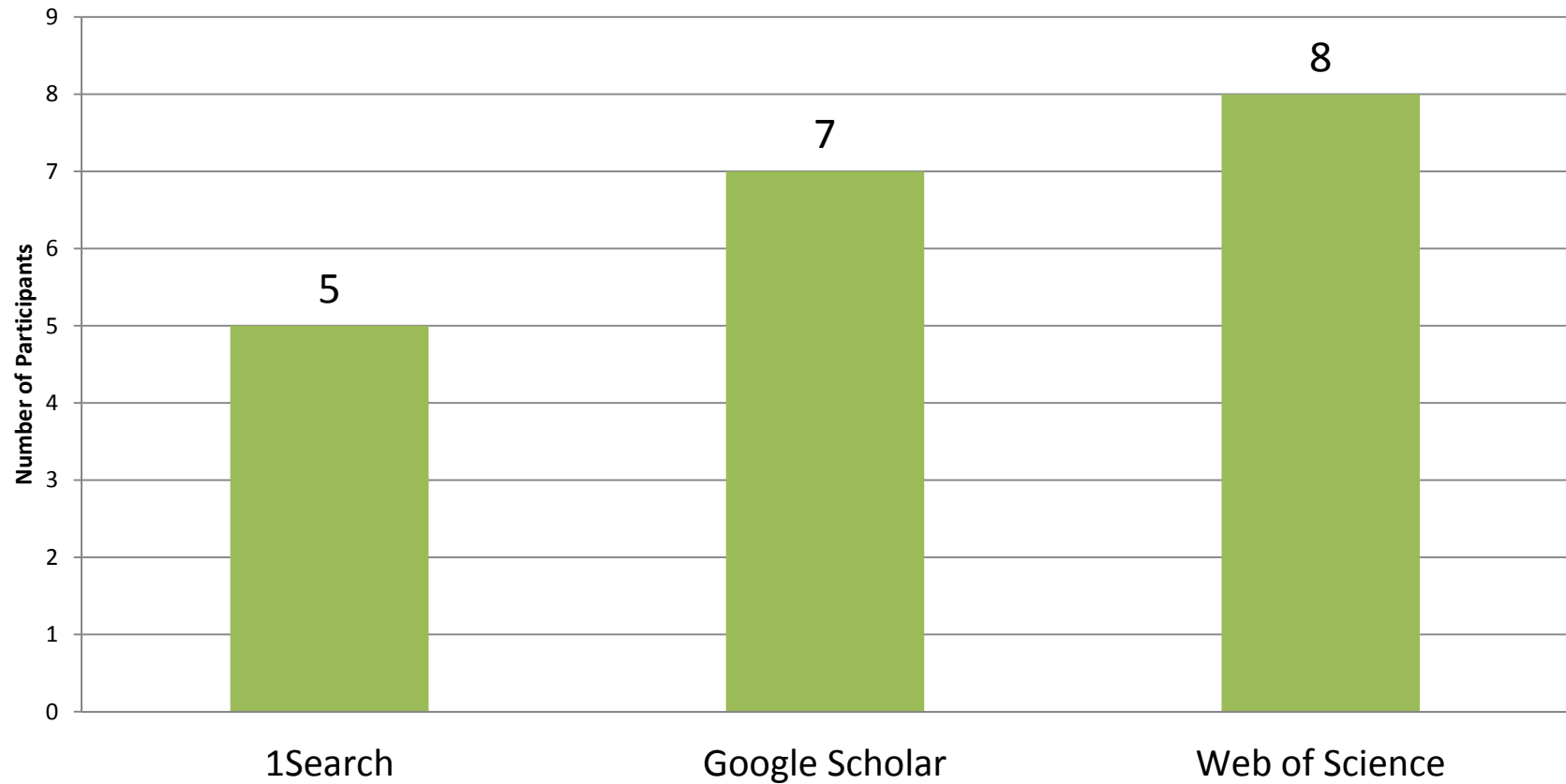
What Did We Learn About Database Selection?

Previously Used Database?



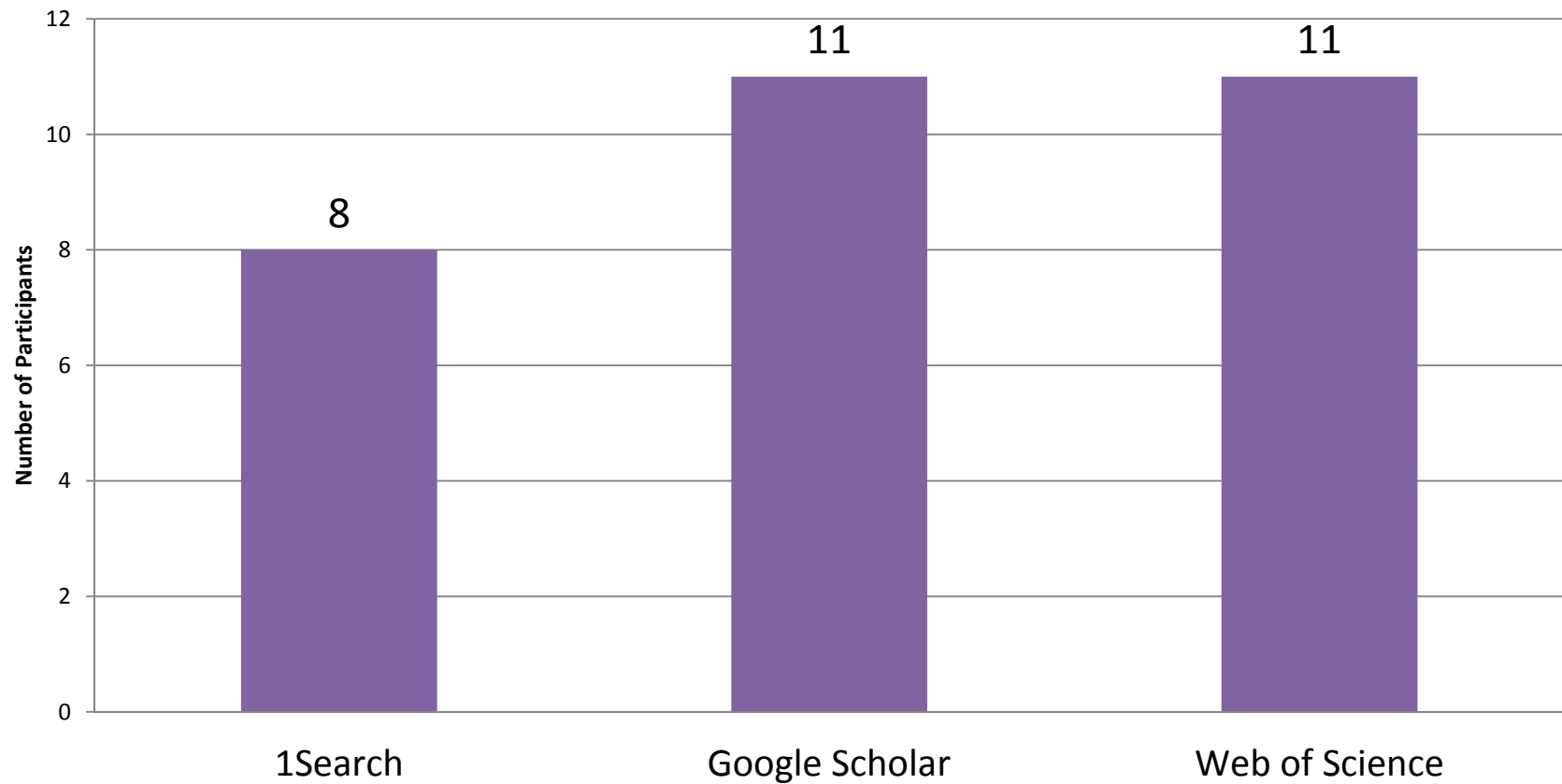
What Did We Learn About Database Selection?

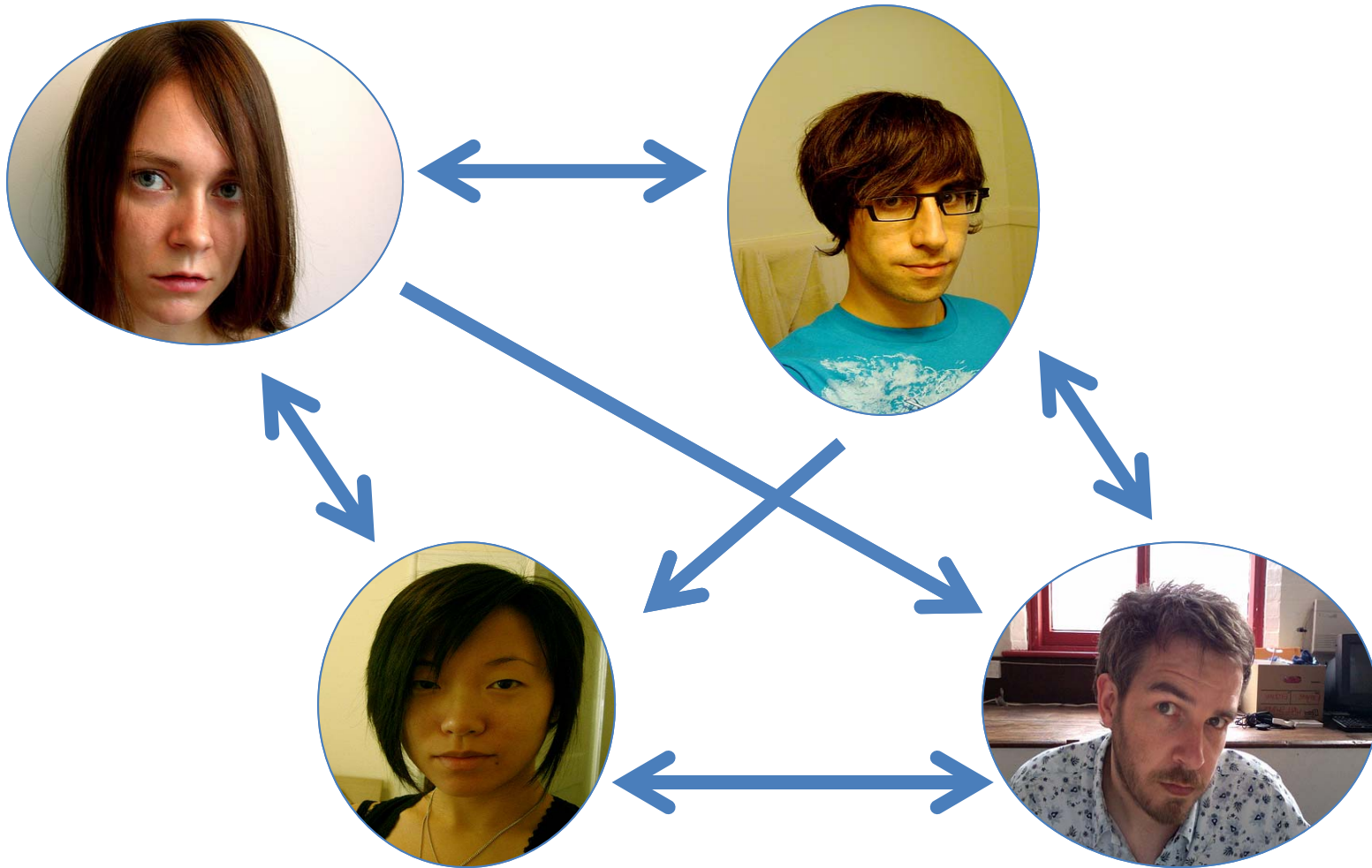
What Was the First Database They Selected?



What Did We Learn About Database Selection?

How Often Were Each of the Databases Used?





ANALYSIS USING PERSONAS

Novice



- Anthony
- Freshman
- Engineering major
- Google Scholar
- Doesn't know what peer review is
- Wants credible sources, but nothing too scientific

Seeks the Familiar



- Megan
- Junior
- Sociology major
- 1Search
- Chooses known databases (from H.S. or college classes) finding peer reviewed articles
- Moderately important to find scholarly articles, but other access issues are more important

Orients First

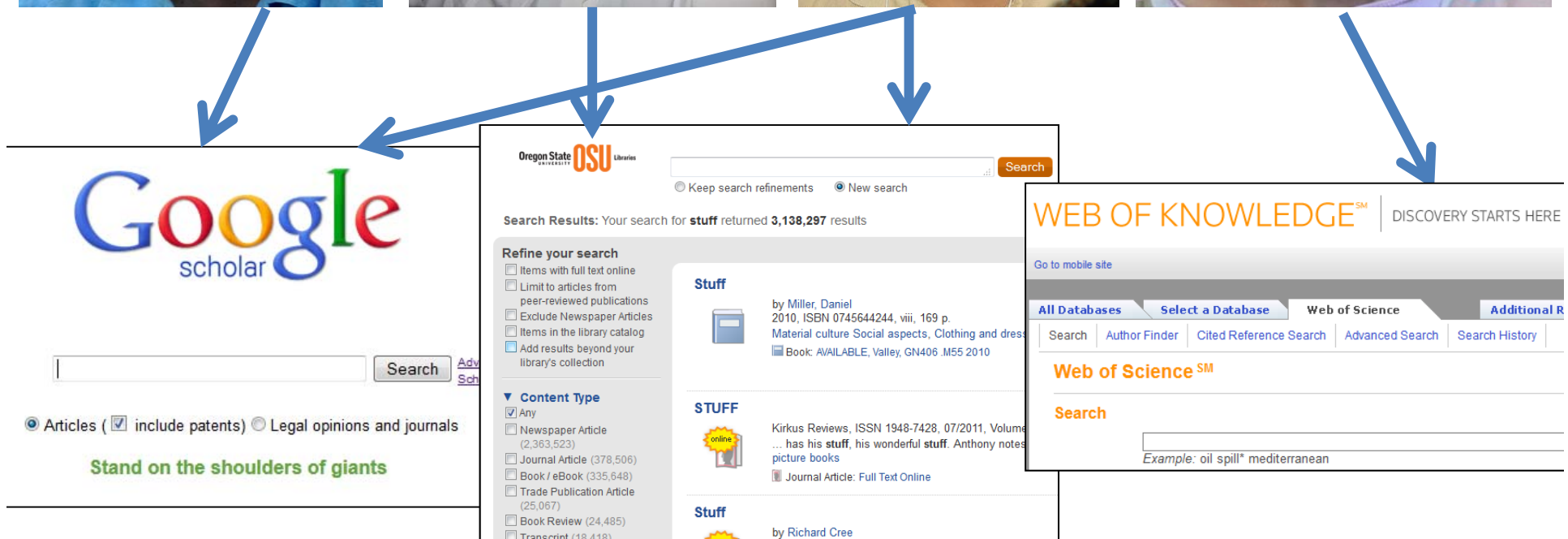


- Ryan
- Senior
- Economics major
- Google Scholar
- Relies on the database to return scholarly articles
- Tries to be conscientious about selecting scholarly items from the outset

Experimenter



- Sophie
- Junior
- Biology major
- Web of Science
- Wants a database with only peer-reviewed options
- Will evaluate the articles she finds to see if they are scholarly



USING PERSONAS TO THINK ABOUT DATABASE SELECTION



Google Scholar



Search

A simple way to broadly search for scholarly literature.

Web of Science

WEB OF KNOWLEDGESM

Search Web of ScienceSM

Enter a topic to search

Search

Reset

Copyright 2010 [Thomson Reuters](#)

Multidisciplinary database with information from thousands of scholarly journals.

1Search



Search the library's collections. Find books, articles and more. Also consult subject specific databases and web resources for more targeted searching.

Search for books, articles, and m

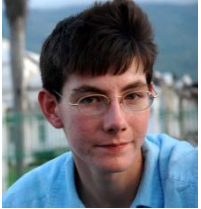
Go

el comfortable using

pretty useful."
description."

Because of the web
the description"

Criteria for Database Selection Based on Content



Prefers a broad overview or background experience. "I prefer Wikipedia

You may choose one of these 5 topics:

- Tsunami early warning
- Medical school admissions
- Solar development
- Traffic congestion
- Urban woodlands



ke



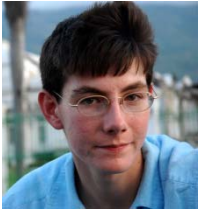
hers



so I'd

use web of science first.

Database Content -Satisfaction



Access (Snippets, an abstract and full-text).

“I’d take snippets, and put those snippets together and make a speech out of that.”



Guidance. “Now I’m looking at these tags at the end and seeing what’s interesting in those to me. So like this one I really like because it has a lot of tags that are broad enough, so I think I can assume that the author is talking about things that are interesting or relevant to me.” “The highlighting helps me out a lot.”

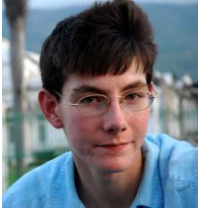


Content. “This one [this database and the results it returned] has a lot more, this has solar development and then the green stuff and using solar and wind power, yeah I would definitely use this [the database]”



Credibility. “Something else is looking if it’s been cited before, that means that it probably has good information, that’s something I usually look at.”

Database Dissatisfaction – Content, Lack of Generality



But I am not getting the stuff. I know what I am looking for, but not finding it [1search].



“Well, since I saw so many newspapers, I want to exclude stuff like that - newspaper articles, patents, videos (I don’t want to watch those), I don’t want to read government documents either.”



“It’s hard to get general information (from the databases when you’re required to look for scholarly sources). It’s kind of intimidating. I’m kind of put off.”



“That’s a bit daunting sounding, I’d maybe come back to that later .”

Database Switching



No switch or only 1 switch.



**Works with current tool before switching:
“I tend to exhaust one avenue before I go onto another one”**



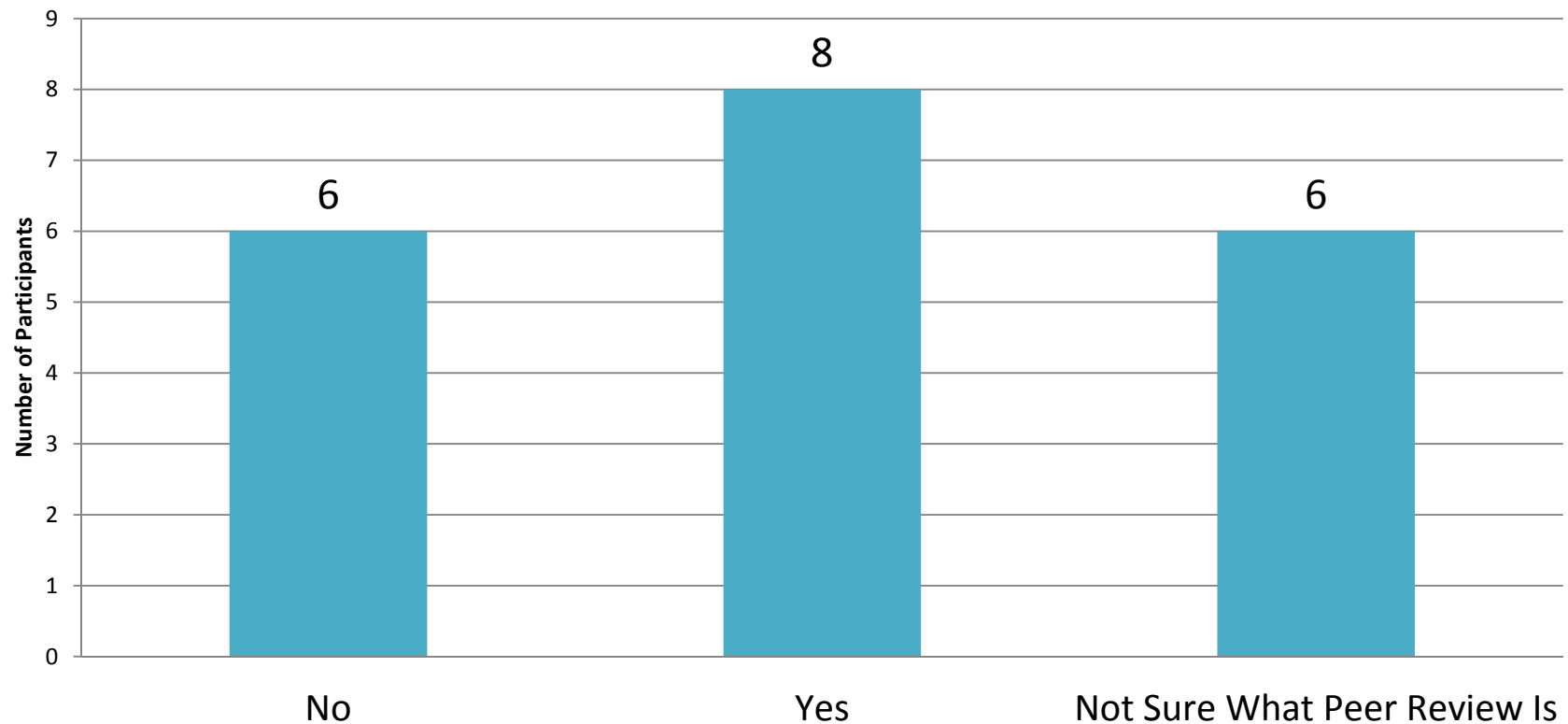
“I’ve done the 1Search one before, so I’ll start there, and I’ll see what the others have to offer if I can’t find anything there.”



“Before I’d do that [change keywords] I’d go to another database. [Web of Science].”

Database Selection & Authority

Would They Change Their Process If Assignment Asked for Peer Reviewed Articles?



Peer-Review



Only a vague understanding of peer-review: “I would first research what peer-reviewed journals are, I have an idea but, and then I would do it depending on how the different web sites tell me to do it.”



Would have used a different tool: “EBSCO; I would expect peer-reviewed stuff there. I feel like EBSCO has more of a guarantee that there will be PR journals.”



Selection process would be more rigorous: “I think it would have been more intense, I would take more time if it was the peer-reviewed requirement” or “I’d find search terms that have more specific information, sources that have that.”



Already thinking peer-reviewed in their search or relies on database: “Most likely not [wouldn’t have changed her search tactics], because I try and find peer reviewed journals, because at this stage I think that’s what’s required of me.”



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IMPACT OF PRIOR HISTORY & EXPERIENCE

Experiences Create Context for Research

- Impact on databases selected
- Source of academic authority
- Sense of flexibility
- Tools in their toolbox

Approach to Database Selection



Lacks a starting point: “I’m not familiar with Google Scholar or any of these search tools. I’m not used to finding individual articles and how to cite them.”



Uses Tried & True Tools: “I usually go with Google Scholar because that is what I am used to.”



Orients First: “So I’m not familiar with Google Scholar, but I’ve done the 1Search one, so I’ll start there and I’ll see what the others have to offer if I can’t find anything there.”
Searching is Random: “I’ve seen OSU has this 1Search screen so I’ll give it a shot – sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn’t.”



Tries new things (if on topic and authoritative): “I’d most likely choose Web of Science, because it’s scientific in nature, so I’d use Web of Science first.”

Source of Authority



Books: “I would go to Google or use a book from the library.”
“I’m guessing that most of the books in the library are academically written.”
Reference Sources: “my old high school had a page of reference sites that were really good – Annals of American history, Britannica”



Databases provide authority: “I usually use EbscoHost, I’ve used that quite a bit, that’s usually where I start if it needs to be accredited or something like that.”



Sense of Flexibility



Not Flexible: “and since speech writing is a five paragraph thing...”



Comfortable with a known process: “Generally with a speech you have a similar structure to a simple high school paper, 3 points, 3 sources makes sense.”



Highly Flexible: “A lot of times, I’ll start with an idea, and when I start doing the research it turns into something totally different.”



Role of Information



Utilitarian: “Generally I skim the abstract, or use the control search to search within the paper to search for the highlighted words for my topic...Then I’d read the paragraph to see if it’s something I can use.”



Willing to Explore: “I could read the articles that I’ve opened more thoroughly, take notes about what I could expand on, maybe filter through different types of content to find more things in that way.”



Utilitarian: “I look for useful information, and finds some information that would work.”

“I scan over the article and later when the deadline approaches is when I actually read them.”



Willing to explore: “I type in the topic and see where it will take me, and usually go through all of them and see which ones I like.”

Even if it’s scary: “That’s a bit daunting sounding, I’d maybe come back to that later...Like I said, it’s a bit daunting all of this.”

Tools In Their Toolbox – Familiarity with the OSU Libraries



Unfamiliar: “So to be quite honest, when I do research to begin with, I’m not very familiar with the library website because I haven’t had any classes where the library has come to talk to us about using the library.”



Use the space, but refer back to H.S. access: “I still have access to EBSCO from my high school. I don’t know how to get to it here.”



Some (but not great) experience: “I quickly remove myself from the library page, because it’s not easy to use and not everything is readily available. So I’ll start there, but move out quickly.”



Familiar with library resources and how to use them: “the paper was from 1968, I did that I read all their articles, I had to go downstairs to all the old ones.”

Tools In Their Toolbox – Advanced Database Features



Unaware of advanced features



Recognizes some advanced features: “Now I’m looking at these tags at the end and seeing what’s interesting in those to me. So like this one I really like because it has a lot of tags that are broad enough .”



Knows how to use them: “I use the OSU tools a lot, and they usually say that it’s cited, or those [cited papers] are linked higher up.”



Tools In Their Toolbox – Ability to Adapt Tools to Varying Tasks



Not able to adapt



Adapts tools based on task: “It depends on what the requirements are, for academic sources, I’d use the library page, but if it was a broader topic, I’d use a Google search or read a Wikipedia article to get more specific terms related to the topic in mind and then go to more narrow resources like journals.”

**WHAT CAN
WE DO?**



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General Databases – Known Starting Points

1

[Google scholar - \(more info\)](#)



Google scholar

"Google Scholar enables you to search specifically for scholarly literature, including peer-reviewed papers, theses, books, preprints, abstracts and technical reports from all broad areas of research. Use Google Scholar to find articles from a wide variety of academic publishers, professional societies, preprint repositories and universities, as well as scholarly articles available across the web"--About Google scholar.

2

Google Scholar - Contains Full Text

Google Scholar enables you to search specifically for **scholarly literature**, including **peer-reviewed papers**, theses, books, preprints, abstracts and technical reports from all broad areas of research. [\[info\]](#)

3



Google Scholar

Google's search engine for scholarly research: the ease of Google searching combined with the quality resources you find in library databases. It indexes citations, abstracts, and full-text articles, books, conference proceedings, theses, online repositories, patents, legal cases, and more.

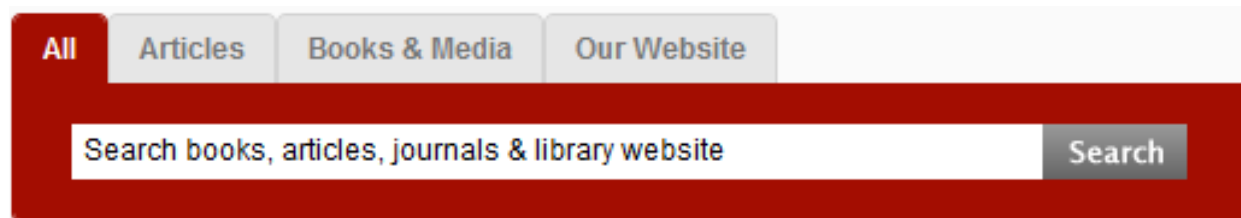
Google Scholar is particularly good when starting research and canvassing the literature or as a final

search on a topic. From off-campus, click "Scholar Preferences" to set library links, which will ensure linking to full-text sources works properly.

Full record

General Databases – Discovery tools

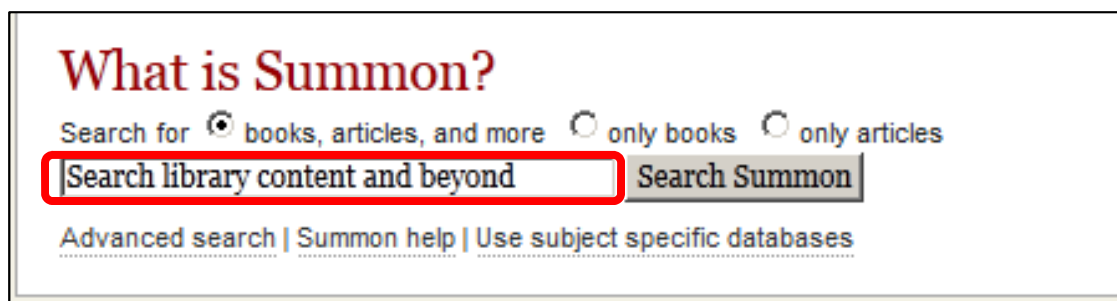
1



All Articles Books & Media Our Website

Search books, articles, journals & library website Search

2



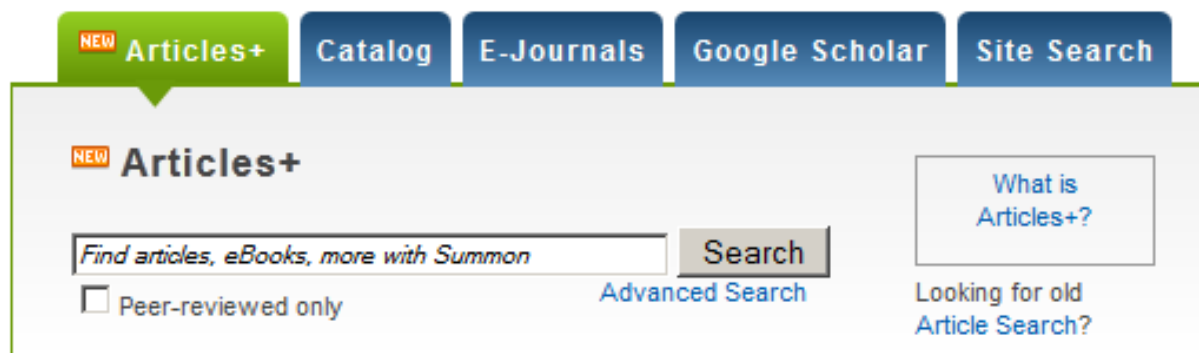
What is Summon?

Search for ☒ books, articles, and more ☐ only books ☐ only articles

Search Summon

[Advanced search](#) | [Summon help](#) | [Use subject specific databases](#)

3



NEW Articles+ Catalog E-Journals Google Scholar Site Search

NEW Articles+

Search

☐ Peer-reviewed only [Advanced Search](#)

What is Articles+?

[Looking for old Article Search?](#)

Database Description

Subject databases

1

[Web of Science - \(more info\)](#)



Web of Science

Part of the ISI Web of Knowledge, Web of Science is a leading citation database with multidisciplinary coverage of over 10,000 high-impact journals in the sciences, social sciences, and arts and humanities, as well as international proceedings coverage for over 120,000 conferences. See [tips for using Web of Science](#).

2

Web of Science (ISI)

The Web of Science provides Web access to the Science Citation Index Expanded(TM), Social Sciences Citation Index(R), and Arts & Humanities Citation Index(R). [\[info\]](#)

Coverage: 1955 -

3



Full record

Science Citation Index from ISI Web of Knowledge


Science Citation Index, a subset of *Web of Science*, indexes citations, abstracts, and some full text from journal articles and conference proceedings in all science disciplines. You can search cited references. 1975-present (older data available in print).



CAPITALIZE ON THE FAMILIAR

Like This Database – Might We Suggest...?

More like Red Cliff: Theatrical Version




Red Cliff: Theatrical Version

has been added to your Instant Queue

↑ Move to position #1

Three Kingdoms




Play

★★★★☆

Not Interested

The Warlords




Play

★★★★☆

Not Interested

The Warring States




Play

★★★★☆

Not Interested

Iphigenia




Play

★★★★☆

Not Interested

Little Big Soldier




Play

★★★★☆

Not Interested

The Revolt of the Slaves




Play

★★★★☆

Not Interested

9th Company

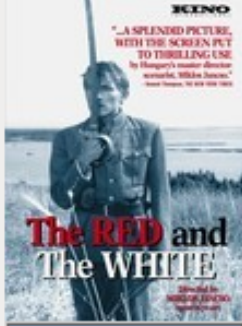


Play

★★★★☆

Not Interested

The Red and the White



Play

★★★★☆

Not Interested



BEYOND WHAT THEY KNOW



BARRIERS



**NEXT
STEPS**

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QUESTIONS?