Courtney Woodberry

Dr. Koster

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Short Take 1

To begin researching Blake's "Garden of Love," I would start by looking in any textbooks I had for the class in question which might have information on the author or work. I almost always use the textbook as a source, so at this point I can go ahead and start a word file where I list possibly useful sources and add the textbook to it. When the word document is in place, I head straight to Google to find out some basic information such as the date of publication and what collection it was originally published in. As far as search terms I would use "garden of love", and if that failed to produce specific enough results, I would try "blake garden of love" (and I would not capitalize). Since the poem just so happens to be from a book I own I would probably spend about ten minutes looking for my copy, but would be unlikely to actually find it. Either way I would still end up searching for a digital copy of the text for easier copy and pasting. If the earlier search terms did not immediately produce a full copy of the text I would modify them to "garden of love text".

After making my first impressions of the work, I would begin the real research of the topic. I would start with the context. The first step for this is to search for high quality websites that contain biographical information on the author and then branch out to the artistic movement he was associated with as well as the influence he and his work may have had on culture. I'll go ahead and admit my dirty research secret. I use Wikipedia. I

find it valuable for three reasons. First, I know the information is continuously reviewed, where most websites have no such guarantee. Second, I can immediately check individual sources and can often use a source or two for my own purposes. Third, I love Wikipedia. It is almost without exception clearly organized and outlined, visually clean and uniform and written in simple but precise English. It is also set up with hyperlinks throughout the article and at the end which make it very easy to follow ideas to other subjects and articles.

Once I knew more or less what I was dealing with, I would move on to the Winthop library home page and search the databases for information I could use to discuss the poem further. Databases I would search immediately would include academic search premier and JSTOR followed by (only if these were unsuccessful) some of the more specific databases conveniently categorized for me on the database page (thanks Dacus). As I find useful articles, I would copy and paste their information and URLs into my growing Word document of sources. Search terms at this stage would include title and author but also the terms I would be learning along the way, most likely whatever the work is considered significant for or concepts it is associated with.

Hopefully the journal articles would be useful enough to begin writing at this point. In the event that they are not, I would move on to search Dacus's catalogue for more general material on the subject. Lucky finds here are books. I do not say this lightly. I hate dealing with microfiche. If the search produces anything promising, I would move my operations base to the library for further investigation. I would search in this order (journal articles first, and then books) because journal articles tend to have the most current information.

I suppose I do research the way Carr describes to an extent. I browse through several pages pretty quickly to find one I feel will be useful and reliable. The difference between what Carr describes and the way I go about things is that once I establish my library of sources I plan to use I do read them through (or at least read the chapters or sections which are obviously relevant in the case of something like a textbook). I have never had to do research without the aid of a computer, but I do not feel that that my level of comprehension is less than if I had found my data with a card catalogue.

Since I plan to make a career of research I suppose this should be an important idea to think through. I think that, given the ever-increasing wealth of information accessible through the internet, it is becoming more important as a researcher to be able to quickly filter through and decide what is useful, what is irrelevant and what is bullshit. I don't know how other fields are evolving but psychology is a very young and quickly changing science. Generally, information more than five years old is considered out of date. This means that most research that has made it into a book is close to or already getting old. Not that it is wrong, but there is almost certainly more to know about it that is already published in a journal accessible online.

In conclusion, I feel that as the nature of information is changing, we are adapting to be able to comprehend and absorb a broader presentation of data. Carr makes some very valid points about where technology may lead us, but I tend to disagree with his general sense of pessimism. I personally don't feel as though I am losing my capacity for "deep reading", but the easy access of very specific information does make it less of a valuable skill than it has been in the past. Carr's article is certainly intriguing, but- scientist that I am- I want proof. I would be interested to know what studies have been

done investigating how technology is changing our intellect. As I read Carr's article I found myself less dismayed than fascinated. I can remember there being no internet and know that when I tell the next generation about it they will be as boggled as I was when my mother told me about having no television. At this point I thought I was going to make an argument about rapidly developing technology being a change for the better that would propel human achievement to great heights. I don't have any more evidence for that than Carr has for his worries that it will take away part of who we are.