My first choice for the project was the library research, but for some reason I found it difficult to find a good document on the library website. Instead, I looked at some for my second choice, the international student topic. I am using a document titled "Good Reasons to Study at Illinois State." I found many good examples of assumption sentences in that document.

http://www.internationalstudies.ilstu.edu/students/prospective/

Example 1: Illinois State University is pleased to have its own International House. I-House makes it possible for international students and Americans to live together in a residence hall and participate in many fun, educational and cultural events. Take a virtual tour of I-House!

In this section it can be assumed that Illinois State University places a lot of value on the international house, by the use of the word "pleased." It is also assumed that there are international as well as American students that occupy the international house, and that that is ideal for both of them. It is also assumed that it is ideal for the international students and American students to partake in the activities at ISU.

Example 2: Many Ways to Get Involved: There are well over 300 Registered Student Organizations at Illinois State. These clubs and organizations allow you to explore interests outside (and sometimes inside) your studies. We encourage you to get involved, have fun, meet new people, and develop your leadership skills!

In this section there is an existential assumption made about the clubs and organizations. These clubs and organizations exist, and they exist to allow the students to explore interests, whether they are directly relevant to your area of study, or not. The university believes it is wise for the international student to be active on campus to better themselves.
especially when it comes to research. Having not had a chance to discuss with my group yet, this is solely my interpretation of what we might be doing.

I believe that this is a very important research topic for many reasons. Firstly, I believe that if the library’s technology is catered to the specific needs of students at Illinois State University, the students will be in a better position to do well in school. It would also encourage more use of the library, and create a more academic environment on campus. As said in class, the library is really what sets “the university” apart from society. Access to millions of resources from one location allows education to flourish and students minds to expand. The generation of students in college from now one is one that was raised with computers, and has grown with technology. As technology improves so must the resources at the university to keep up with the ever expanding possibilities technology provides.

Having spent uncountable hours in the library researching for anthropology research papers, I feel very familiar with the library system and I think I know some of its strengths and some of its weaknesses. Some things I think I might find are students who don’t use the library to its full potential. One of the reasons I think this happens is because they have not spent enough time figuring out all that the library has to offer. I have many friends who are art students, and some business student friends who very rarely, and sometimes never, go to the library. I think that no matter what discipline you are in, the library can be beneficial to the student. I think that I might find different needs from students in different majors, which should be taken heavily into account to enable the whole student body to utilize the resources here on campus.

In order to go about researching this, I predict that we will spend lots of time watching students research, asking what people like and dislike about the library system (catalog, website, searches, etc.), and asking what and ideal library environment is in their head. In all those hours I spent writing, reading, and searching in the library, there were times when “I wish the library had...” or “I don’t understand why this is so hard...” thoughts popped into my head. I think it would be interesting to see what other students thoughts are about Milner. I also think that it would be beneficial to visit or read about other libraries and how technology works there, to see where Milner stands in the spectrum of technology on campus.

This research project is on how history students at UIUC utilize the library and how they research. Reading this showed me that the background that the student has with research (high school, etc.) has a major influence on how they research at the university. Some students prefer physically getting books from the stacks and researching that way. Others rely completely on online resources. It also raised the question of if a student does not use the university library to obtain information and research, then what source do they go to? Some of my friends just use the internet, but do others prefer going to a public library? I also wonder if students feel abandoned by their professors when it comes to information and research gathering. In anthropology, I feel like the professors are very encouraging and helpful with students research, but I wonder if that is common in other majors here at ISU. For me, I was fortunate to come from a high school that forced me to go to library research tutorials during English class every single year. This continued in college from Com 101 and English 101. We also did one of these library research tutorials in some anthropology courses. How to search for research topics, articles, books, and general information has been drilled into my head.
I have been searching and searching and can't seem to find other research about my topic. I am sure something is there, but I don't know where! I have searched by title, and subject, and done keyword searches for "library" "research" "library research" "Milner" "library ethnography" and multiple others and only gotten results that aren't relevant. What I really want to read is what Jim and Brian did on the library last semester, because I think that would be most relevant to my topic, but I don't know where to find that, or if it is available.

Subject: Not An Assignment: possibly useful websites about libraries

Topic: My Research Project

Author: Victoria More
Date: September 13, 2009 3:25 AM


Why do some of us prefer coffee shops to libraries?


Tons of blogs all pertaining to the library, some specifically pertaining to the academic library.

Subject: Discussion #5 An Observation

Topic: My Research Project

Author: Victoria More
Date: September 14, 2009 3:10 PM

I am doing my observation in Ames Library, at Illinois Wesleyan University. I chose this location for a few reasons. Firstly, I thought that it might be beneficial to my research project to observe a library different from the one we would be studying, and I figured some of my group mates would already be observing Milner. Ames is also an academic library, not too far from Illinois State’s campus. I am interested in whether or not there is anything different happening in this library from ours. I do not expect for anything to be different, but I would never know unless I came here and observed.

It is Sunday night, 8:30 pm. The library is open until 1:30 am, so I came at a time that I would expect a decent number of students. There are students in all parts of the library, but definitely not occupying every table. Most students are one to a table (a table with 4 chairs), but there are also students in the individual cubbies, and some 2 or 3 to a table. Students talk on their cell phones in the stairwell. Most students have large re-useable water bottles with them, or coffee thermoses. There are also some bags of chips that have been eaten. Many of the students have computers open in front of them, but others only have books and notebooks. Unfortunately it is not very easy to be covert to observe what I wanted to observe—students on library computers. The computers are located in a place where there are no other tables or chairs around, and I do not have a log-in to be able to pretend to use a computer. I am currently on the 3rd Floor, but might move floors to see what is going on there. The 4th (top) floor was very quiet, not many people, but I did see one student making use of the service room, where there are two copiers, staplers, hole punches, etc. From what I could tell, (by sneakily walking behind book shelves and peeking through the cracks) students were using the computers for word, watching a movie (perhaps for a foreign language class), or on facebook. Now I am at the 1st floor, and I found a good spot to see computers from. Two students are on facebook, one is checking the football game score, and a few people are legitimately doing homework, and flipping back and forth to facebook. One girl printed out a paper, and it seems like they do not have to pay for their print-outs like we
I did not find anything too out of the ordinary while I was here, everything was very normal and rather uninteresting. Everyone was very quiet, and even when I tried to overhear a conversation, all I could make out of it was the word “ridiculous” undoubtedly in referral to the homework she and her friends were trying to get done.

Luckily, taking field notes in the library was very easy. It was simple for me to blend in with everyone else, open my computer, and write about what was going on around me, and still seem (to them) that I am just doing the same types of things that they are. I chose to be covert about my field work because I thought there was no reason to be overt. There is no risk involved for those being observed, so I thought it was best because of the amount of time I had to be covert.

I observed 5 minutes in the computer lab of Schroeder. It was 1:50 pm, and people were constantly going in and out. 3 people came in just to check something and go. Two came in to print something out and go to class (I assume). Most of the people who were sitting at computers when I first arrived were getting up to leave and go to class. As they left some were replaced by students coming into the lab. It was a busy time in Schroeder, with many classes ending at 1:50, and many classes beginning at 2.

Some of the sites on my map I named similarly to the apache, describing it with many words, and expressing my experience with that location. In other places, such as “home” or “school” the words are short but they hold a lot of meaning to me, so a long title is unnecessary. Since I lived on the opposite side of campus last year, I don’t have much history with the route I now walk. If I had been travelling this route longer, I’m sure I would have many other points along the way where something has taken place that I could also name as a landmark. I suppose the way I feel about the university changed a bit, because it makes it feel like the campus is my own. I have memories and histories in these places that are similar to other peoples, yet uniquely mine.

My group is going to study the library in order to see how it can function better for the students at Illinois State University. I think we will most successfully achieve this first by finding out what students need from the library, and what they feel the library’s strengths and weaknesses are. I was thinking we could take a look at people in a variety of majors to see if the library can improve in any specific ways to help those majors. It would also be beneficial to get the librarian’s perspective on it’s help with students research. If there are any differences between what the librarians are trying to do and what the students get out of it, maybe we can help close that gap and make the library overall function more efficiently and help the greatest amount of students from the most majors possible. I think we should also spend some time researching what other university libraries do (technologically speaking) that is different from our library to make resources available to students in this digital age. I’m sure there are a lot of great academic libraries out there that Milner can model itself on.
Interviewed person: “M” Female, senior, painting major, transferred at the beginning of last year.

* * * * * * *

When do you use the library?
When I need books

During the week?
Quick internet access, printing, that’s pretty much it but I don’t go to it much

Why?
I dunno. I just don’t think that I really need anything there.

What kind of research, if any, does the art department ask of you? Does the library help with those assignments?
We have to research artists, like new artists, and they cant help you. You have go on the internet for everything which is a bitch because sometimes they won’t let you have internet sources, so you have to use a book, and Milner’s books aren’t recent enough

Have you ever gone to Milner to use the spaces, tables, etc?
No… for group work yes, maybe twice a year.

What do you think of the library’s lay out?
Crowded, not enough windows, it just feels old. I don’t really like the feeling. It needs more plants.
I always sit by the plant on the 5th floor.

As a transfer student did you get a tutorial on how to use the library?
No, but I have had so many of those, I know how to use a library.

What do you think the libraries strengths are?
Lots of computers. It’s pretty big, there is a lot of room, but at finals time its too small and I don’t go because I know there are going to be a bajillion people there

What are it’s weaknesses?
Computers are slow, always crowded at finals, I feel like the staff isn’t available, we shouldn’t have to go down to the second floor to ask a librarian a question.

* * * * * * *

This interview was important because it showed the opinion of a person who doesn't find much use in the library. She doesn't think the library has a lot to offer her because the material that she needs most is very recent material. She said very confidently that she knows how to use a library because she has been to so many library tutorials, but it is made obvious at the end that she doesn’t know specific things about our library that might make her life easier. I hypothesize that people are very turned off by the library tutorials that everyone is forced to go to. The ones I have been to are redundant and uninteresting and do not address small things that students can use to make their lives easier (for example, the instant messaging librarians, or texting call numbers to your phone). I enjoyed hearing her strengths and weaknesses also, because she mentioned a lot of things that I never thought about. For example, she mentioned that the computers are slow, which is not something that comes to mind when I think about our computers. I also liked her plant suggestion and her comment on the windows because it just shows how important environment
can be in the library. She also brought up the issue of new books, which is a problem I have encountered as well.

Subject: Discussion #8 Data  
Topic: My Research Project  
Author: Victoria More  
Date: September 27, 2009 7:05 PM

This week my group created two surveys, one about technology and one about study habits/library space. Rachel and I are in charge of the latter, and below is the survey (as of tonight... it might change).

Study Space Survey: Ethnography: September 2009  
Major: ____________________________  
Minor: ____________________________  
Year in School: __________  
Years at ISU: __________

In general, where do you do most of your studying?

How often do you come to the library?

What floor do you usually go to?

Where do you like to sit when you come to the library? (Table? Partitioned desks? Window view? Study rooms? Comfy chair?)

Do you prefer enclosed study areas or open spaces?

Does Milner provide you with everything you need to get studying done?

Is there anything Milner is missing that could make your study time more efficient or convenient?

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We will be handing this out and compiling the data in the week to come.

I also did an observation of the 4th floor of the library tonight (Sunday, September 27th). I surveyed the floor three times, once an hour. The first walk around (4:30 pm) I counted 48 people. The second (5:30) I counted 38, and the third I counted 49. The library seems to be a popular place on Sunday evenings. There were relatively few people using the public computers, but most people had laptops. I noticed that most of the laptops had Facebook open. There were many people utilizing the partitioned desks, and the large tables were populated as well.

Subject: Discussion # 10: Interview  
Topic: My Research Project  
Author: Victoria More  
Date: October 2, 2009 4:15 PM
[quick] Interview with Dale* (Geology/geography, graduated in May 2009, spent 4 years at ISU)
Coffee Hound
October 2, 2009

Where did you spend most of your time studying while at ISU?
I'd say it was 50/50. I would go to Milner when I really have to get something done. The other 50 was at home in my apartment or at the coffee hound.

Did you use the library a lot as an underclassman?
I used it more as an upperclassman for sure. I used the interlibrary loan a lot to get journals sent to me. I also used the maps a lot that are in the library. When I was an underclassman I didn't really need the library.

Do you think Milner is a good library?
Yes I liked it a lot

Did you ever use the librarians for help? Did you know the Geology librarian?
No, not really. I would say as a geology major I was able to find all the resources I needed from the library. I always had to find peer reviewed journals.

(I hope to continue my interview with Dale tonight or tomorrow, depending when he is back in town.)

I conducted this interview with a recent graduate of Illinois State University. I thought Dale would be a good person to interview because he has completed his senior year, which many times is the busiest year of one's college career. Previously I interviewed an Art major, so this time I wanted to get another major involved.

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This week I also did an observation of an Art major named Madison*. She had to do some research for a paper in her Art History class. I observed her Wednesday afternoon at 4:15pm. She came into the library and sat down at the first computer she saw, which happened to be right near the doors. She immediately went to Milner's website and did a book search. The first comment she made was that she wished Milner's book search bar had spell check, like google when you type in a word and a bunch of options appear below the search bar. She soon got frustrated and started having to google her search terms before she typed them in Milner's search. Madison came to the library with her search terms written down in notebook, because she says she has trouble coming up with search terms on the spot. As she found relevant books online she wrote down the call numbers in her notebook. She said sometimes she has trouble finding books even when she has the call number. We went upstairs and she successfully collected her books from the stacks.

One problem that arose during this observation was that I was not sure how much to interact with her. She mentioned that she "feels like a little mouse test subject." She was also curious what I was writing down in my notebook. At one point in her search, the book she wanted was checked out from Milner. I informed her that it is easy to get a book sent here from another school. I showed her how to request a book. Was I not supposed to do that? I don't know!

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Today Rachel and I passed out a survey on the 3rd and 4th floors of Milner. The survey questions
are in entry #8. Between the two of us, we handed out 35 surveys total. We will be figuring out how to compile the data and interpret it in the week to come.

**Subject:** #9: revised research plan/question  
**Topic:** My Research Project  
**Author:** Victoria More  
**Date:** October 2, 2009 4:24 PM

so far my research has been trying to get a feel for what students think about Milner. I have done this by conducting two interviews, one survey, and a couple observations. I think our research question is still “How does the digital age impact how the library is used?” Since most of the students here have grown up with the internet and using a computer, I expect that just by asking the students their opinions on the library will reflect their background with technology. We have two different surveys, one specifically regarding digital and technology aspects of the library, and another regarding the spaces and uses of the library. Together we should be able to come up with a well-rounded critique of the library in this digital age.

**Subject:** #9.5: re-revised Research Plan  
**Topic:** My Research Project  
**Author:** Victoria More  
**Date:** October 12, 2009 3:05 PM

our revised research plan is as follows:

What is the academic library today?

In the past, the library was THE place, the only place, to go to study at the university. Now that the digital age is upon us, what role does Milner library play at Illinois State University? what do students use it for? what improvements can be made to enhance it’s role in the students lives?

We seek the answers to these questions not only by observing life within the walls of Milner, but also investigating the way studying has moved outside the library and into the local coffee shops and restaurants.

**Subject:** #12: Dipping into Archives  
**Topic:** My Research Project  
**Author:** Victoria More  
**Date:** October 15, 2009 4:45 PM


In this paper, Mark Wyman sums up the computer history Illinois State University in his chapter titled “A Technological Revolution.” Milner had the enormous task of keeping up with the information explosion that came along with the popularization of computers. By the mid 1980’s, Milner’s second floor was a large computer work area, “used almost exclusively by students.” This is important and relevant to our research because this is the time in history where our shift in learning began. From that time forward, students in universities all over the world were able to attain more information at a quicker speed and from more places.

I searched and searched trying to find some sort of primary account of what student’s research habits were like (where they studied, etc.) but I couldn’t find anything like that in any of the “general history” book series online.
Studying Students: Undergraduate research at the University of Rochester

Ch. 9 Then and Now: How Today’s Students Differ

In this chapter, Nancy Fried Foster discusses the previous generations and the current generation of library users. The times in which we (as a generation) grow up have an immense impact on the way we live and research. This is especially true for today’s generation, “the Millennials,” who have grown up as technology has grown. This has impacted us in a number of ways. It changes the way we communicate, has made us more able to multitask than previous generations, and changed the way we see and use physical spaces.

This chapter of the Rochester study I found especially interesting because it shows just how different generations are from one another. More specifically, it provides reasons for why our generation studies the way we do. For example, Foster points out that the Millennials prefer to learn “anywhere they may be, in social settings as well as academic, using digital technology in ways that suit them individually. This means that learning does not take place only or even primarily in classrooms or study spaces; anywhere students congregate is a venue for academic work, a coffee shop is just as likely as a dorm room or lounge (Lomas and Oblinger 2006).” She goes on to explain that the Millennials want a great deal available to them because they are trying to get a great deal done, all the time. Further, she states that “this may be the first generation that comes to the library to escape from communication.” Communication has become too prominent in our lives that it can be a distraction.

All of this is extremely important to our research because it supports what we have found so far. The use of spaces has changed in academia today, including the library. It puts into perspective reasons behind the study habits of my peers.

Academic Libraries and Social and Learning Space: a case study of Loughborough University Library, UK.

In this article, Joanna Bryant evaluates the use of space in the university's library. She does so by using ethnographic methods to see how the spaces are used. She makes many excellent points about modern academic libraries that I hadn't thought of. "Many predicted the decline of the academic library, as digital communication methods allowed access to information via the Internet... Instead, there is actually higher demand for library buildings, as places where members of the academic community can access information in a variety of formats, and make use of a range of learning environments." The modern day library is most beneficial to students when it is a flexible learning space.

The library space at Longborough Uni is an open one, where students are left to govern the space themselves, for group or individual activity. Their library is far smaller than ours, with 400,000 books, 4000 printed journals, and 6000 online journals. They have 120 PCs, and wi-fi. It was developed to provide a venue for group learning, which might be more desired by students than a cafe because it is less linked with leisure activities, and more conducive to learning. Thinking of a stereotypical academic library, one may think of strict rules to moderate behavior. With the ability to 'self govern' frees students to decide what type of study space they need.

Thinking about this, it seems like Milner currently might be torn between a social learning space and an independent quiet study space. People in our surveys complained that it was too loud, and others were happy with the level of noise. Maybe what Milner needs is one level of the library that...
is open and self-governed for people who are doing group work or enjoy the freedom to eat or make noise, and other levels for quiet, more traditionally independent study.

I am glad I finally received this! I will definitely be using it as a source for the final paper, because Joanna's study is so relevant and similar to ours.

Subject: #10: Verbal Snapshot
Topic: My Research Project
Author: Victoria More
Date: October 26, 2009 7:18 PM

I walk into the Library; it’s a rainy Sunday evening in autumn. There is a special buzz in the library, a feeling that is different from week nights. It is the eve of another week, and Milner is packed, as I have noticed on many Sunday nights. I walk in the doors on the second floor and I hear many noises. My ears pick up on the rumble of many conversations taking place at once, people walking in and out of the stair well, people typing away on the library computers, pages notebook paper being turned, and a voice on the other end of a cell phone. Going back in time I reflect on an observation, on a Sunday, few weeks ago. I am on floor 4, seated at a 4 person table, alone. There is one table of girls chatting about the gossip of the weekend, and girls keep coming up to them and saying hello. I periodically get up and make my rounds to observe and map the space. Each corner and edge of floor 4 has a distinctly different feel. The corners with couches are occupied by pensive students with lap tops, surrounded by very large corner windows overlooking four distinctly different views. The long line of partitioned desks near the GN stacks occupy 4 or 5 students, who always look up one by one as I pass by. The computer users are partially productive but mostly facebooking. Looking around, the colors of Milner are quite bland. Grey concrete, off-white textured walls, faded blue and orange/brown carpet, beige shelves, brown worn in chairs, medium-toned tables and desks. The most colorful things around are the books, coverless, which come in many shades of red, orange, green, blue, and black. Looking up isn't a pretty site. Dark brown square hollows line the ceiling, with pipes going every which way.

Subject: more data: #15
Topic: My Research Project
Author: Victoria More
Date: November 8, 2009 8:35 PM

For my final data collection I did an observation of the fourth floor. I did this because in order to wrap up the final pieces of this research, I thought it would be good to just immerse myself in the location one final time. With multiple observations, surveys, and interviews under my belt, I felt I was able to make better and more useful observations of the environment around me.

Final Observation:
Tuesday, November 3. Floor 4 Milner Library. 2pm

This time I spent more time by the computers than the tables, because previously I had spent more time at tables. I noticed that there were two different pairs of people working on partner projects at the floor 4 computers. This is not the first time I have seen this, either. Many times the computer areas are more talkative than just tables because of the group and partner work. The additional people in the group are forced to search for a seat to pull up so they can contribute to the project.
About 20 minutes after I arrived two men came to the computer area and there were only two separate computers open. One student notices they need a place to sit and offers to move because she is only on the computer to pass time on Facebook.

Meanwhile, a library employee comes by with a cart of books and clicks her little counter for each person who is sitting in the area. I didn’t realize they counted the students on the floors.

2:30: A girl answers her phone a little too loudly, and in response the people sitting across from me make fun of how loudly she was speaking because to them it was a bit inappropriate.

2:44: I overhear a girl talking about how she doesn’t like coming to the library because she feels restricted. She likes to study at home because there she is free to get up and go to the fridge and have a cigarette and go to the bathroom whenever she wants, and she doesn’t even have to get dressed.

I think I got two very useful pieces of information from this observation: partners and computers, and a reason a student doesn’t like to go to the library.

attached is my contribution to our rough draft!

Subject: #16 Rough Draft
Author: Victoria More
Date: November 13, 2009 8:49 PM

Subject: Final Product
Author: Victoria More
Date: December 4, 2009 3:55 PM