

Urban Legends

Databases: Books

If you want to find books about urban legends, or folklore, the best place to find out what our library owns is the library's [OPAC](#) (Online Public Access Catalog), which can be search from the library main page. The best strategy is to use the **Power Search** option. Once you get to the power search page, you might try a *word or phrase* search for **urban legends**, or a *subject* search for **folklore**. The best database in which to find out what books exist on the subject is [WorldCat](#), which searches for books and materials in libraries worldwide. Remember that the advantage of WorldCat over Books in Print, which can be accessed through the website of [The State Library of Louisiana](#), is that WorldCat finds only books that are already published and housed in libraries. The WorldCat *Advanced Search* screen will allow you to limit your search by language, number of libraries, audience (Adult vs. Juvenile), content (Fiction vs. Non-Fiction), and year of publication. Limiting your results to those books held in 500 or more libraries will guarantee that you are pulling popular titles, which will be sorted according to their popularity.

You might want to try as one of your search terms the keyword terms **urban folklore**. You can also add a second keyword, **United States** if you wish. As of April 2, 2008, that search finds 124 books. Any of these books that the library does not own can be accessed through Interlibrary Loan, providing you have set up your account. The process of getting a book this way is almost always free, and takes only one to two weeks.

Databases: Articles

To look for articles about **Urban Legends** or **Urban Folklore**, the best databases are the following:

[Academic Search Complete](#), a large multi-disciplinary academic database that contains over 4,000 full-text titles. Over 3,100 of these titles are peer-reviewed.

[JSTOR's Arts and Sciences Collection](#), which offers full-text access to hundred of titles in many disciplines of the arts, humanities, sciences, social sciences, business and education.

[MAS Ultra](#), designed for use by high school students, with access to 253 full text reference books, nearly 100,000 biographies, 76,000 primary source documents, and an image collection of 116,000 photos, maps and flags.

[Newspaper Source](#), which provides selected full text for nearly 30 national (U.S.) and international newspapers. The database also contains full text television & radio news transcripts, and selected full text for more than 200 regional (U.S.) newspapers. This database is updated daily via EBSCOhost.

[Project Muse](#), which is a unique collaboration between libraries and publishers providing 100% full-text, affordable and user-friendly online access to over 300 high quality humanities, arts, and social sciences journals from scholarly publishers.

[PsycInfo](#) contains more than 1.8 million citations and summaries of journal articles, book chapters, books, dissertations and technical reports, all in the field of psychology.

[Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection](#) provides nearly 575 full text publications, including nearly 550 peer-reviewed titles. Psychology & Behavioral Sciences Collection covers topics such as emotional and behavioral characteristics, psychiatry & psychology, mental processes, anthropology, and observational and experimental methods. Nearly every full text title included in this database is indexed in PsycINFO.

[SocINDEX with Full Text](#) is the world's most comprehensive and highest quality sociology research database. The database features more than 1,600,000 records with subject headings from a 15,600 term sociological thesaurus designed by subject experts and expert lexicographers.

The Web

You can also find useful information about **Urban Legends** in general, and on specific aspects and/or authors, by searching the internet. By far, the best search engine on the World Wide Web is [Google](#), which is located and maintained at Stanford University. Google allows for phrase searches, for combination (boolean) searches, and for domain limitations. For example, you could type in either of the following (including spaces and punctuation):

"urban legends" site:.edu

"urban folklore" site:.org

The Google command for domain limitation is **site:** followed by the domain you wish to limit results to, such as government agencies (**.gov**), universities (**.edu**), not-for-profit organizations (**.org**), and military sites (**.mil**). By typing **site:.edu** or **site:.org** in the above search, you are telling the search engine to return only those sites that come from universities and educational institutions or organizations. The Google command for a phrase search is enclosing the phrase within quotes. So when you typed "**urban legends**" (in quotes), you tell the search engine not to return sites with the word **urban** in them, unless that word is immediately followed by the word **legends**. The space between the commands takes the place of the boolean operator **AND**, thus allowing you to combine terms.

Of course, you can also click on Google's Advanced Search options, which would allow you to more graphically envision your search strategy. And as always with the web, keep in mind that site evaluation is important, as [this web tutorial](#) instructs.

Now try typing the following into Google:

"urban legends" site:.edu "research guide"

As of April 2, 2008, this search will return 266 hits, including The University of Wisconsin at Madison Libraries Undergraduate Research Guide on Urban Legends, which will give alternative methods of searching for information (although we cannot reproduce their search results if we do not own the same databases and books, we can use their search terms).

The other excellent search engine on the web is called [All The Web](#). However, it is not as intuitive as Google. You have to click on **Advanced Search** in order to get it to handle phrases correctly, or in order to limit your results by domain extension. Still, alltheweb.com allows some commands that Google does not, so if you need to do an expert search, give it a try. Where both Google and All The Web allow you to search for images, only All the Web will allow you to find video and audio files.

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