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### Research Process

The prospect of starting researching my first college paper was a daunting one, but fortunately I had the help of the Marquette library system to assist every step of the way. Determined to make use of the resources available to me, I went through a process of research, narrowing down selections, and overcoming a learning curve.

Locating sources was obviously the first step, and one that proved to be a challenge. My research subject was a relatively unknown Korean poetess and entertainer from the Joseon Dynasty, so finding accurate and reliable sources required use of various databases. My first source was my class textbook, which I used to select a research topic, and then at my professor's recommendation I began with JSTOR, a comprehensive online database of periodicals, books, and various other media types. At this point in my research, I was relatively unclear about what to search for, other than a few key terms, so I turned to Google to gain a better overview of my subject. Once familiar with the context of my subject, I returned to JSTOR to research, but also used the Marquette library system through MarqCat and Encore, which later led me to WorldCat for inter-library searches.

Armed with appropriate search terms, these resources turned up a variety of sources related to my subject, however not every source was equally valuable to me. Before narrowing down my selections, I compiled all of my prospective sources (which, at this point, were mainly print) and began to comb through indexes to find the relevant information. I had ended up with multiple generic history books, each with a little bit of information on a lot of subjects, so I

decided against using most of them in my paper. The information provided in these books was repetitive and could be sourced from more specific sources. My main criteria in selecting sources included relevance to subject, credibility of author or organization, and ease of information access. Some books appeared promising, but the information was buried within the text, making it relatively inaccessible to me.

The main type of source I used was print books that I got from the Marquette libraries because they fit my criteria and were easy to access. These included Korean history books (both specialized and general), books of poetry, and a travel memoir. I used a few web sources in the form of online journal publications, but ended up not using any sources from the JSTOR database due to the availability of information at the Marquette libraries.

What proved most useful to me, however, was the use of the inter-library loan system. This allowed me to access books specializing in my topic from libraries all over the United States and even just within Wisconsin. The system, on a whole, was efficient and timely; however, the most promising source I requested was a dissertation specifically on my subject that didn't arrive in time to aid in research.

The difficulties I experienced in researching were across the board, though mainly located in the beginning stages. I started researching without a clear idea of the information I was looking for, and this provided me with too many irrelevant sources. However, after narrowing my search criteria, I was able to access information useful to my research subject. Another difficulty I experienced was in citing. I used MLA format for my bibliography, though the paper was a Chicago Style paper. Because I was unfamiliar with Chicago Style citation, I decided to use what I was familiar with.

What researching this project taught me is that Google, while a useful tool, is not the best or most comprehensive research method. While it sufficed for high school papers, the sources needed for a college level research paper needed to be grounded with more credibility.

University libraries, like those at Marquette, provide students with an incredible array of research tools and materials. The Marquette online library catalog was instrumental in my accumulation of sources, as well as physically searching through the stacks for relevant books. Without the resources provided to me by Marquette, both with a physical library as well as access to various other databases through my Marquette account, I would not have been able to research as efficiently or effectively.