Finding Books

**Getting Started:** 1. To access the St. John’s University libraries catalog, start by going to libraries.stjohns.edu. 2. Click on Library Catalogs. 3. Choose either Basic or Advanced Search. (Basic Search is adequate for most searches.)

**Searching by Subject:** To search by subject, it is usually best to begin your search with keyword. Simply enter terms that describe your topic. For example,

ethics capital punishment

**Caution:** Avoid searching by subject heading unless you are familiar with the headings used for the subject you are looking for.

**Searching by Author:** When searching by author, exact place last name first. For example,

lethem, jonathan

**Searching by Title:** When searching by title, omit the initial article. For example, if you were looking for *The Bluest Eye*, you would enter

bluest eye

**Locating a book on the Shelf:** To find an item on the shelf, check a) Status: to see if a book is available, checked out, or missing, b) Location: e.g. 3rd North, and c) Call Number: for the exact shelf location of the book.

**How to read Call Numbers:** LC classification arranges books 1) alphabetically by the first line of the call number, 2) numerically by the second line, and 3) by the third and subsequent lines, which consist of letters and decimal numbers. For example:

PA 354 .A8
PA 354 .A83
PA 354 .A9

**Refining your Search:** Use Quick Limits to limit your search by any of the following criteria:

- Library Location (Queens or Staten Island)
- Format (books, videos, CDs…)
- Language
- Publication Date

**Reserve Materials:** To find items on reserve, click on the Course Reserves tab on either the Basic search page or Advanced search page, then provide your Instructor’s name and/or course number.