Practical Guide to Using eHRAF

If you are new to the eHRAF World Cultures & Archaeology databases, the following practical guide will help you get started. The guide focuses on *Advanced Search* and *Browse Cultures*. For Browse Subjects, Browse Documents (by author), and Basic Search please visit the "Help File" in the upper right-hand corner of the eHRAF databases.

eHRAF at a Glance

•Collection of documents (e.g. books, journal articles, monographs)
•Organized into cultures or archaeological traditions
•Detailed subject-indexing covering all aspects of social and cultural life.
•Powerful searching by cultures, subjects, and keywords
•Cultures organized by regions, subregions and subsistence types

One of eHRAF's most powerful aspects is Advanced Search, where you can build a search using cultures, subjects and keywords. In order to appreciate this fully, it is important to know how eHRAF is organized. This guide will point you to some essential features.

Browse Cultures

This is a great place to begin learning about the cultures in eHRAF. In the *A-Z index,* for example, you may find that the Selk'nam, a small indigenous group in South America, have quite a few similar-sounding names. In *By Country, for example,* you can explore the various ethnic groups in Afghanistan, including the Hazara and the Pashtun (see Fig 1). In *By Region* you'll find cultures for eight major regions (e.g. North America) and subregions (e.g. Northwest Coast and California). The cultures included in eHRAF are a sample of all the world's cultures. eHRAF World Cultures currently contains 280, eHRAF Archaeology contains 88 and new cultures are added regularly.

Figure 1. Information is organized by cultures, including Western and non-Western cultures.

In *Culture Summary* (Fig 1) you'll find some basic information about a culture, such as its economy, history, environment and sociopolitical organization. For archaeological traditions, you'll find other important information, such as absolute and relative time periods, diagnostic material attributes and key. If you are teaching undergraduate classes, these may make useful student assignments.

Next is *Collection Description,* where the word "collection" refers to all the ethnographic and archaeological works collected for a particular culture/tradition (Fig.2). Previously they were called "files," which is still reflected in the name of the organization – Human Relations Area *Files. Collection Description* briefly describes the culture, while *Collection Information* shows the total number of documents in the eHRAF database for that culture. Knowing where to find *Collection Information* may come in handy for hypothesis testing or when evaluating search results weighed against all documents for a particular culture. In *Collection Indexing Notes,* you'll find a glossary of terms used in the next section, the *Collection Documents.*

Figure 2. Titles of ethnographic works on the Aleut in *Collection Documents* in the *Browse Cultures* section of eHRAF

Collection Documents is where you'll find culture-specific texts, including books, dissertations, monographs or journal articles. You may even come across some "classic" ethnographies describing all aspects of cultural and social life. Many cultures included in eHRAF are preindustrial societies that, to this day, practice very traditional lifeways, such as hunter-gathering or pastoralism, without modern amenities, such as running water, refrigeration, electricity or the internet.

Information such as field and date coverage assigns the indexed page a temporal and spatial value

The subjects "summarize" the content of a paragraph. They can be used in Advanced Search to find texts that are difficult to search with keywords.

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Paragraph	Subjects (OCM)
In the last part of November and beginning of December the peppernuts, be·hé were ready to be collected. The outer, fleshy, avocado-like covering, há·li was eaten and the nuts were stored in the house during the winter. The following spring they were ground, heated until sticky, and shaped into biscuit-like cakes, called be·hé-sò·y. These were wrapped and stored in a cool place to be eaten with the spring clovers.	Annual cycle (221) Collecting (222) Preservation and storage of food (251) Food preparation (252) Diet (262)
During the fall the leaves of Indian tobacco, sa·xá· were gathered and dried for smoking during the rest of the year, and string, ɔtásu·lim, was manufactured from the dried stems of the milkweed plant, ma·šá, for use throughout the rest of the year.	Annual cycle (221) Recreational and non-therapeutic drugs (276)
During the winter the Eastern Pomo lived on food stored earlier plus snared or trapped birds, rabbits, deer and waterfowl. The ducks, coots and other waterfowls were hunted with nets at night. During the day slingshots employing small baked clay pellets were used, as well as traps. Gophers were shot with bows and arrows when winter rains flooded them out of their burrows.	Annual cycle (221) Diet (262) Fowling (223) Hunting and trapping (224) Weapons (411)
The two important Eastern Pomo ceremonials, the kúksu and the qa·lúy-kà· wk ʰ took place in the spring. Both involved feeding large numbers of people, on acorn mush and pinole primarily, and pinole balls and grain were thrown during one point in the kúksu ceremonial. Since both the grains for pinole and acorns were collected much later in the season, a sufficient supply must have been saved from the preceding year's collection.	Annual cycle (221) Organized ceremonial (796) Diet (262)
The midwinter months were, as Kniffen (1939: 366) points out, ones of little activity. Generally there seems to have been a sufficient supply of stored food to go with whatever fresh game could be acquired. The winter time was the appropriate time for telling myths, and for the men to spend a great deal of their time in the sweat house, talking, visiting, sweating, and gambling. Every man belonged by birth (?, the details of inheritance are not clear) to one of the two opposing sides in the sweat house (North versus South for the Southeastern Pomo; East versus West for the Eastern Pomo). During the winter men sweated daily, apparently either in the morning or the evening. The opposing sides competed with each other to fan heat back and forth to see which side would be forced to exit first (Loeb 1926: 222–223). (A similar sweating competition seems an important part of the ga·lúy-kà·wk ʰ ceremonial.)	Annual cycle (221) Leisure time activities (517) Personal hygiene (515) Labor and leisure (461) Moieties (616)
Diet	
The diet of the Eastern Pomo and the Southeastern Pomo depended in part on the time of the year. Fish, acorns for bread and mush, grains for pinole, and pepperwood nuts and buckeyes were stored, and eaten year round. The most common daily meal through the year consisted of dried fish and acorn mush (illustrated in figure 10). [Page 15] This was supplemented with fresh meat or waterfowl when available, and during the spring and summer fresh greens and roots and bulbs, berries and fruits in season.	Diet (262)

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Region: North America
Culture: Pomo
Field Date: 1959-1976
Date Coverage: mid nineteenth century - 1970s
Place Coverage: Eastern and Southeastern Pomo, lake region, California, United States

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Figure 3. A typical page in an eHRAF document

Click around a document (Fig. 3) to get a feel for the navigation and unique page layout, including reference made to date and place. On the right-hand side of the page, you'll notice subjects. These are taken from the *Outline of Cultural Materials (OCM)*, a vast thesaurus of indexing terms that covers all aspects of cultural and social life. HRAF trained analysts and anthropologists painstakingly index each and every paragraph in the eHRAF databases. As a paragraph's content changes, so will the OCM subjects appearing on the right-hand side. In *Advanced Search*, these subjects can be used to find concepts (e.g. cooking practices) expressed with many different words (boil, broil, roast, etc.), even in foreign language texts. You can become more familiar with them in *Browse Subjects* before you use them in *Advanced Search*.

Advanced Search in eHRAF
eHRAF works very differently from any kind of search platform that you may be used to. Three steps help refine your search:

1) Building an Advanced Search using subjects, cultures, or keywords
2) Refining the search by geographic regions, subsistence and sample types
3) Using "snippets" of texts for easy viewing and to toggle between paragraph and page view

Building an Advanced Search
An eHRAF *Advanced Search* is best described with a search example. Suppose you want to find ethnographies in eHRAF with information on indigenous cooking practices. A *Basic Search* with a word or phrase might be a good start. Because eHRAF uses "free text" word searching, only the exact terms, erroneous spelling and all, are retrieved. eHRAF also does not retrieve related words. In the example "cooking practices," texts containing related terms (e.g. roasting, boiling, grilling) are not retrieved.

This is where the "Add Subject" function in *Advanced Search* (see Fig. 4) comes in handy, because if you can find an OCM subject that matches your keyword or phrase you'll be able to find relevant text without being bound to any specific words (Fig. 5). Using OCM subjects is especially useful for hypothesis testing and cross-cultural comparisons.

Figure 4. Advanced Search using "Add Subject" to match one's search terms. For example, use OCM subject "food preparation" if you are searching for "cooking practices." This produces a more complete set of results.

Figure 5. OCM subjects will find concepts that keywords will not.

Depending on your purpose and the meaning of the word, a keyword search might be sufficient. For example, "enchilada" (a dish made with corn tortillas) may or may not be too narrow, while "corn" might yield far too many results. A word-subject search (see Fig.6) comes in handy, because you can "pair" your word (e.g. "corn") with OCM subjects (e.g. food preparation, diet, vegetable crops, etc.) to find relevant texts. This Advanced Search example also uses the Boolean operators "AND and OR." You can find more on the importance of Boolean operators in the "Search Tips" section.

Figure 6. *Advanced Search* with a subject and keywords

A powerful aspect of the *Advanced Search* is the ability to add a second layer, or clause using the "+" function. Using a second clause with Boolean AND function lets you build quite a sophisticated search using subjects, keywords, and cultures (Fig. 7). But, before you do, first read the *Advanced Search Tips* and *eHRAF Search Example & Methods* section to better understand how it works.

Figure 7. Building a powerful *Advanced Search* with truncated words, subjects, cultures, clauses (+), and Boolean operators AND and OR

Refine a Search by Regions, Subsistence & Sample Types

A unique and powerful feature of eHRAF is that it categorizes your search results by region and allows you to sort your results by culture, subsistence, sample type and so-on (see Fig. 8).

This enables you to jump from culture to culture within a region (e.g. Amazon) or between major regions (e.g. Africa or Asia) in seconds. It allows you to group all your results by type of subsistence (e.g. hunter-gatherers), sample type (e.g. PSF) or culture. Now you don't have to figure out which cultures in eHRAF are egalitarian societies because we have done it for you.

This ability makes eHRAF ideal for cross-culture, regional or area studies, or for comparative archaeology.

| BASIC Search | ADVANCED Search | Browse CULTURES | Browse SUBJECTS | Browse DOCUMENTS | |

Advanced Search > Culture Results

Region and Culture Results

Finished. Found 5369 paragraphs in 5369 documents in 280 cultures

Search Query:
Show / Hide

✿ Narrow Results by Subsistence Type and Sample

By Subsistence Type
- ☑ Hunter-gatherers
- ☑ Primarily Hunter-gatherers
- ☐ Pastoralists
- ☐ Horticulturalists
- ☐ Intensive Agriculturalists
- ☐ Agro-pastoralists
- ☐ Other Subsistence Combinations
- ☐ Commercial Economy

By Sample
- ☐ Probability Sample Files (PSF)
- ☐ Simple Random Sample (SRS)

⦿ Africa (88 paragraphs in 88 documents in 2 cultures)

Subregion ▲	Culture Name ▲	OWC ⇕	Subsistence Type ⇕	Samples ⇕	No. Documents ⇕	No. Paragraphs ⇕
Central Africa	Mbuti ▸	FO04	Hunter-gatherers	PSF	7	7
Southern Africa	San ▸	FX10	Hunter-gatherers		81	81
⊗ Close Box				*TIP -- Hold Shift to Sort Accross Multiple Columns*		

⦿ Asia (47 paragraphs in 47 documents in 6 cultures)

⦿ Middle America and the Caribbean (10 paragraphs in 10 documents in 1 cultures)

⦿ North America (719 paragraphs in 719 documents in 35 cultures)

⦿ Oceania (85 paragraphs in 85 documents in 4 cultures)

⦿ South America (176 paragraphs in 176 documents in 17 cultures)

Human Relations Area Files 🌐 Cultural Information For Education and Research

Figure 8. Unique in eHRAF! Once a search is performed select cultures by regions, subregions, and sort by subsistence or sample types

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