

Astronomy I Essay 2011

Carl Sagan was both a popularizer of science and serious astrophysicist who died in 1996. His work included solar system research and the investigation of the possibilities of extraterrestrial life. Describe his life and his scientific contributions, as well as his work in communicating science and in politics. Can you think of a modern day scientist with a similarly broad range of activities? Do we need people like Carl Sagan today?

You may want to check the Library's [Catalogue](#) to see if there are relevant books.

Check the Encyclopaedias as they generally give a history to a topic.

You may also want to search the electronic databases for more materials.

Search Logic for electronic databases

Before you begin a database search you may like to make a table to ensure that your search logic is appropriate.

Write down the main concepts and then list below them all the synonyms and alternative terms.

<i>Carl Sagan</i>	<i>Popularizer(s) of science</i>
	<i>Populariser(s) of science</i>

Are there other terms that you can think of that are not included in the table?

Search techniques vary in different databases but they use the same search principles. Check the database's help screens to find out about techniques such as truncation etc.

Think of terms to cover each concept in your topic.

Gather useful terms from the first articles you retrieve. Use a thesaurus if the database has one.

Combine terms with **Boolean operators** unless the database has natural language searching.

Truncate terms (check the database's truncation symbol- * or ?) and check how to search phrases (e.g. with or without quotes - "*popularizer of science*")

Consider **limiting** searches to English language, review articles etc

Check how to **display references** or mark them for **saving, printing or emailing**.

Once your database search has given references to articles, look for the full text of the journal article.

Sometimes you can link directly through an html or pdf link within the database to the **electronic full text** of articles.

If not, always **search the journal title (NOT the article title)** in the [Library catalogue](#).

The catalogue lists the call numbers and holdings of print journals and also lists electronic journals with links to the electronic full text of articles.

The Barr Smith Library does not hold all journals indexed in databases. You can also try:

[Other libraries' catalogues](#)

[Libraries Australia](#), a database of journals & books held by libraries in Australia.

Report writing

If you need help writing an essay or report, try some of the [essay and thesis style guides](#).

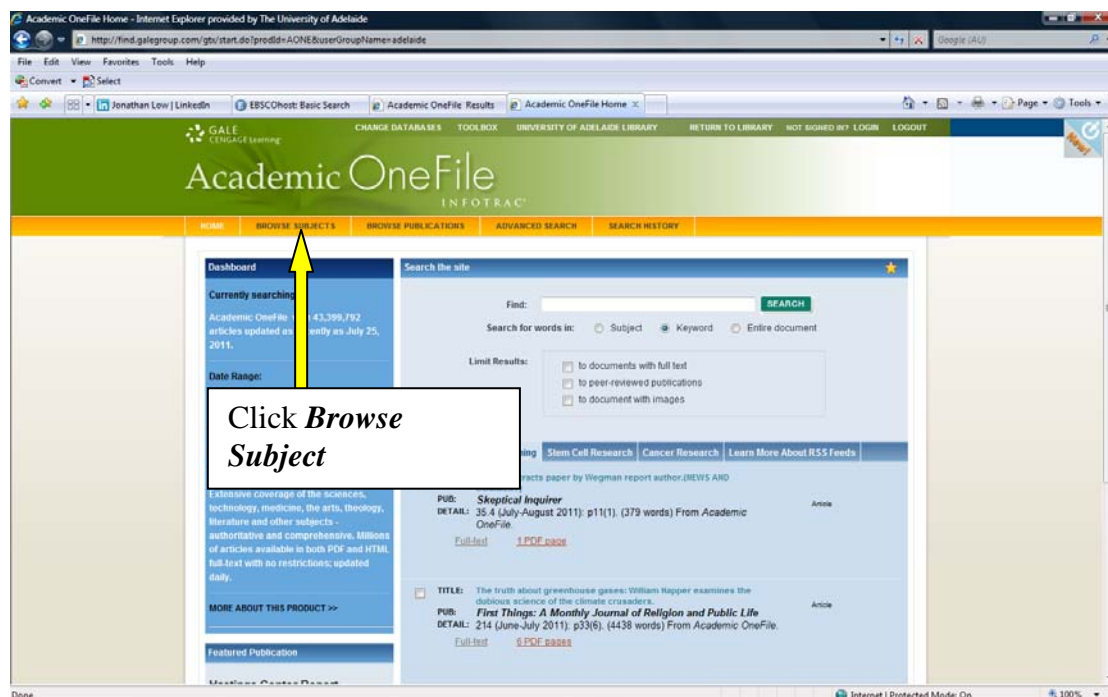
Suggested Databases

1. Academic OneFile

Full text articles are available in this database. This means you do not need to look for the article on the shelves in the Library.

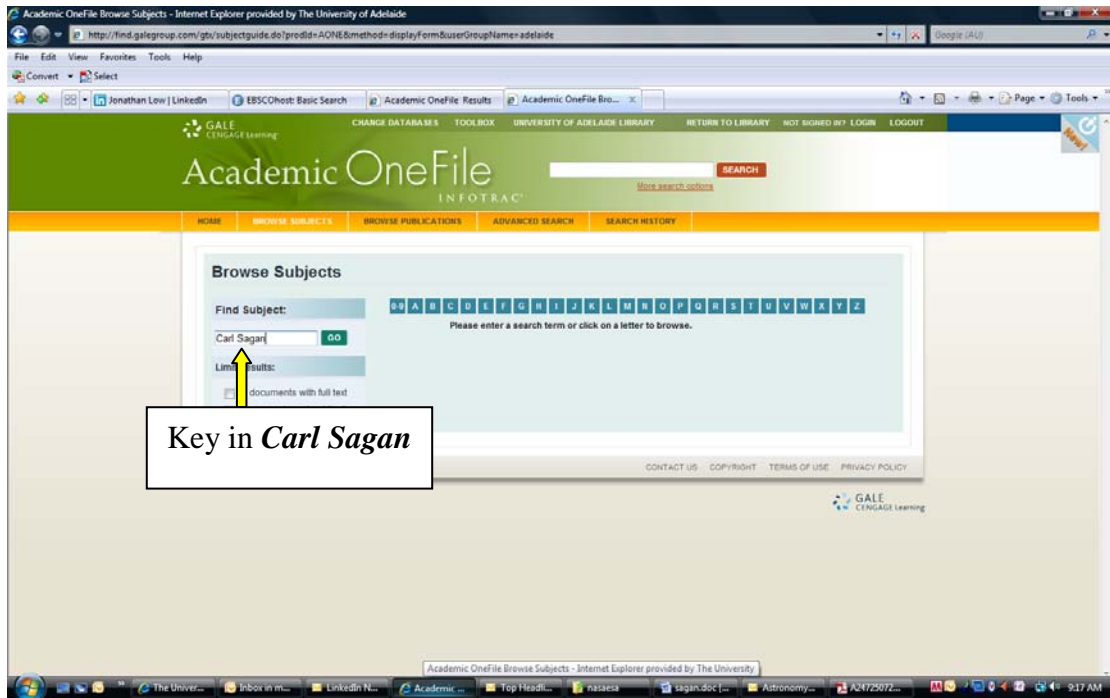
I have given you some examples of how to search below. Use your imagination and try other ways of doing the search. The more you practice the better you get with your strategy.

Using *Carl Sagan* in a keyword search will retrieve many irrelevant items. You may want to try *Browse Subjects* for this topic.

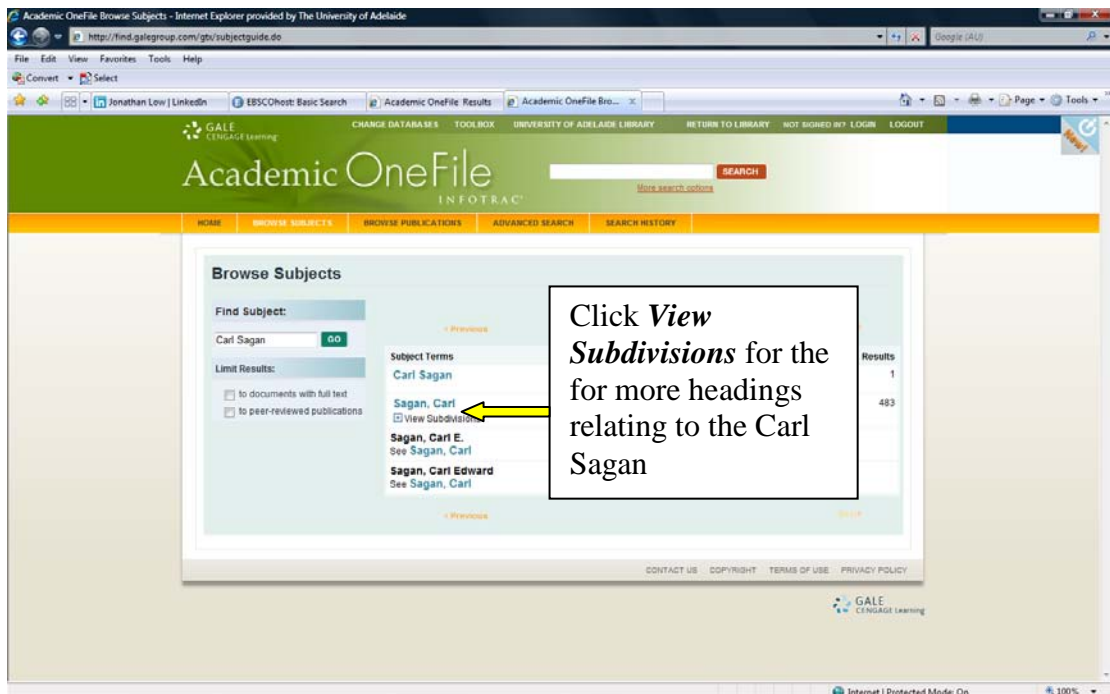


The screenshot displays the Academic OneFile website interface. The top navigation bar includes links for HOME, BROWSE SUBJECTS, BROWSE PUBLICATIONS, ADVANCED SEARCH, and SEARCH HISTORY. A yellow arrow points to the BROWSE SUBJECTS tab, with a text box overlaid on it that reads "Click *Browse Subject*". The main content area shows a search bar with the text "Find:" and a "SEARCH" button. Below the search bar are options for "Search for words in:" (Subject, Keyword, Entire document) and "Limit Results:" (to documents with full text, to peer-reviewed publications, to document with images). The search results section displays two entries:

- PUB:** *Skeptical Inquirer*
DETAIL: 35.4 (July-August 2011): p11(1). (379 words) From Academic OneFile
[Full-text](#) [1 PDF page](#)
- TITLE:** The truth about greenhouse gases: William Happer examines the dubious science of the climate crusaders.
PUB: *First Things: A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life*
DETAIL: 214 (June-July 2011): p33(6). (4438 words) From Academic OneFile.
[Full-text](#) [6 PDF pages](#)



Doing it this way will give you articles more specific to Carl Sagan. There should not be any irrelevant items.



Click here to get the 22 articles on his biography

Or here for 7 criticism & interpretation

Subdivisions	Results
Accidents	1
Achievements and Awards	7
Appreciation	12
Authorship	8
Behavior	5
Beliefs, Opinions and Attitudes	20
Bibliography	1
Biography	22
Cases	6
Contracts	1
Criticism and Interpretation	7
Death of	2
Discovery and Exploration	1
Employment	1
Environmental Policy	1
Evaluation	5
Family	2
Forecasts and Trends	1
Health Aspects	2
Homes and Haunts	1
Humor and Anecdotes	1
Influence	2
Interviews	3
Management	1
Observations	1
Personal Narratives	1
Planning	1
Political Activity	6
Potrayals	1
Public Opinion	5
Public Relations	1
Quotations	3
Research	24
Rites, Ceremonies and Celebrations	2
Science and Technology Policy	5

You may want to just look through the subdivisions. Scroll down for the rest of the subdivisions.

Click here to get the 11 items from Magazines

It is displaying the 10 items from Academic Journals

Search Results
Results for [Browse Subjects](#) (SD ("Sagan, Carl, Biography"))

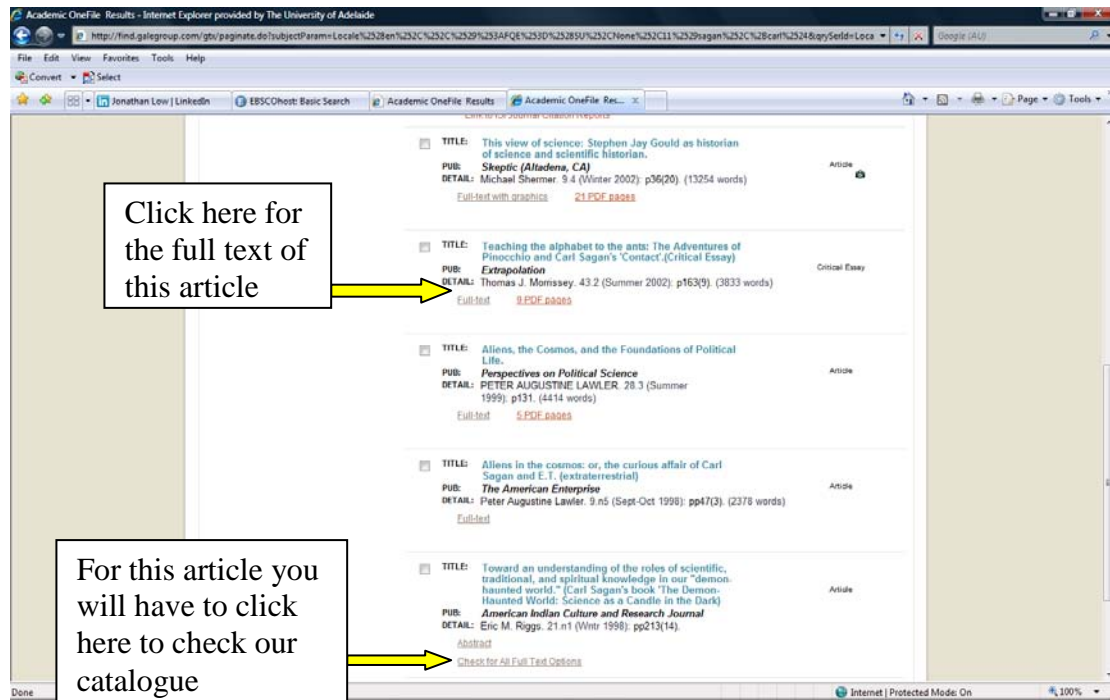
Academic Journals (10) Magazines (11) Books (9) Ebooks (9) Multimedia (1)

Showing 1 - 10 of 10 results

TITLE: Man for the Cosmos: Carl Sagan's life and legacy as scientist, teacher, and skeptic: in this new remembrance of Carl Sagan, who died ten years ago, a noted planetary scientist and colleague (and former student of Sagan) recalls Sagan's immense contributions to planetary research, the public understanding of science, and the skeptical movement.(Biography)

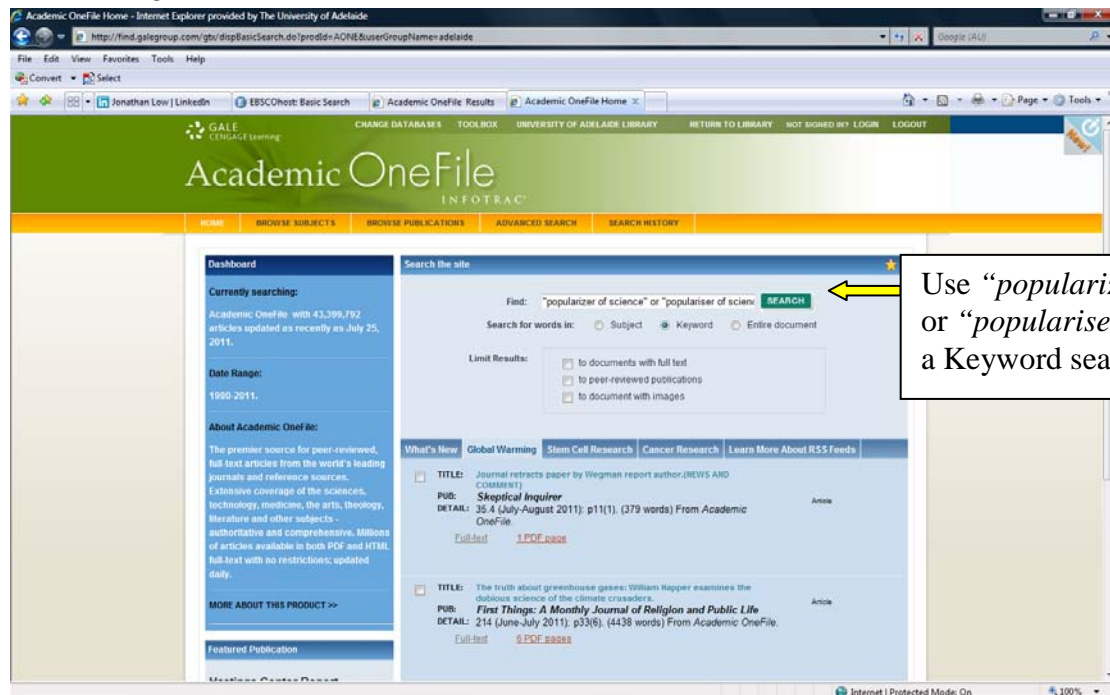
PUB: *Skeptical Inquirer*
DETAIL: David Monson 31.1 (Jan-Feb 2007): p29(B) (6380 words)
[Full-text with graphics](#) [PDF pages](#)

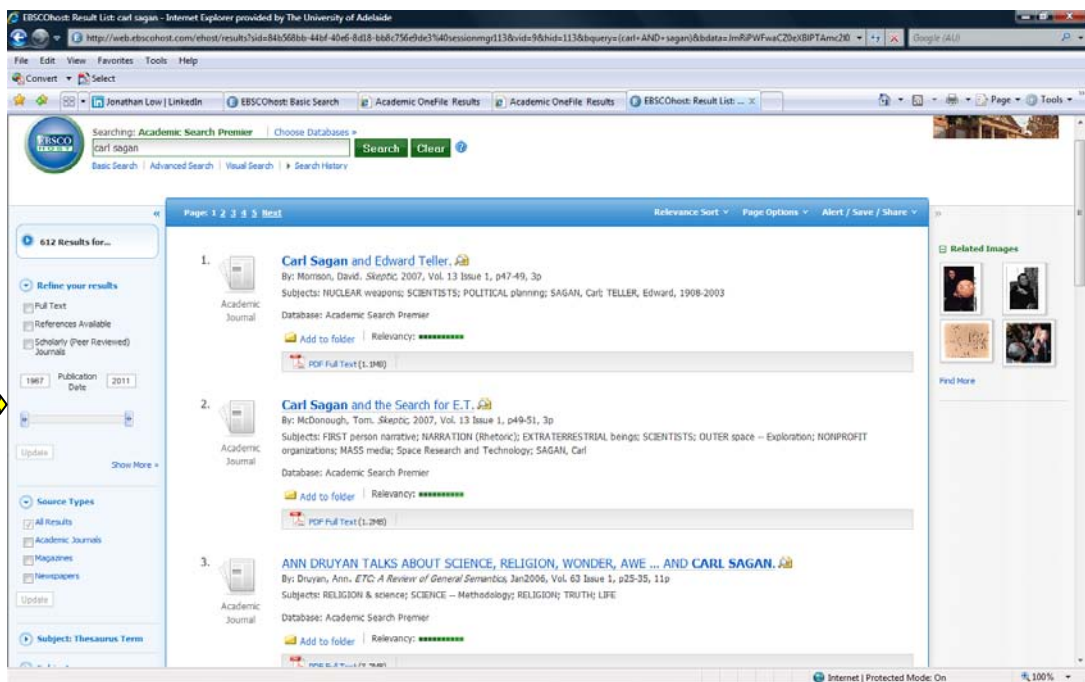
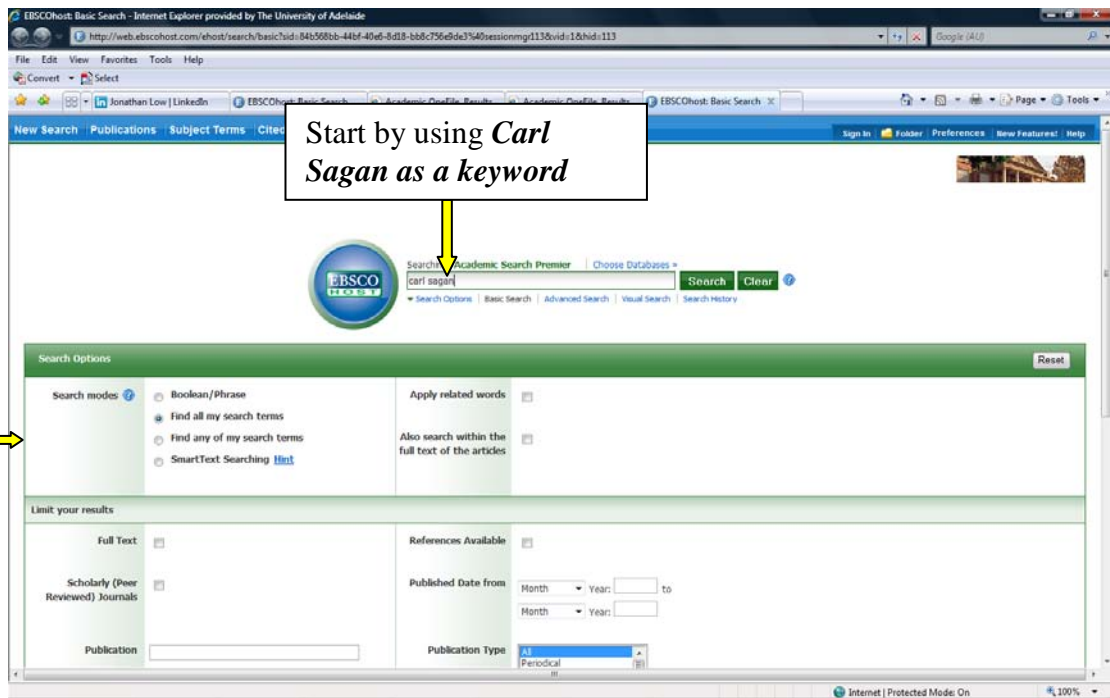
TITLE: The Sagan file.(Tributes to Carl Sagan)(Biography)



Subject Guides Search will retrieve articles that are generally more specific to that subject area than keyword search.

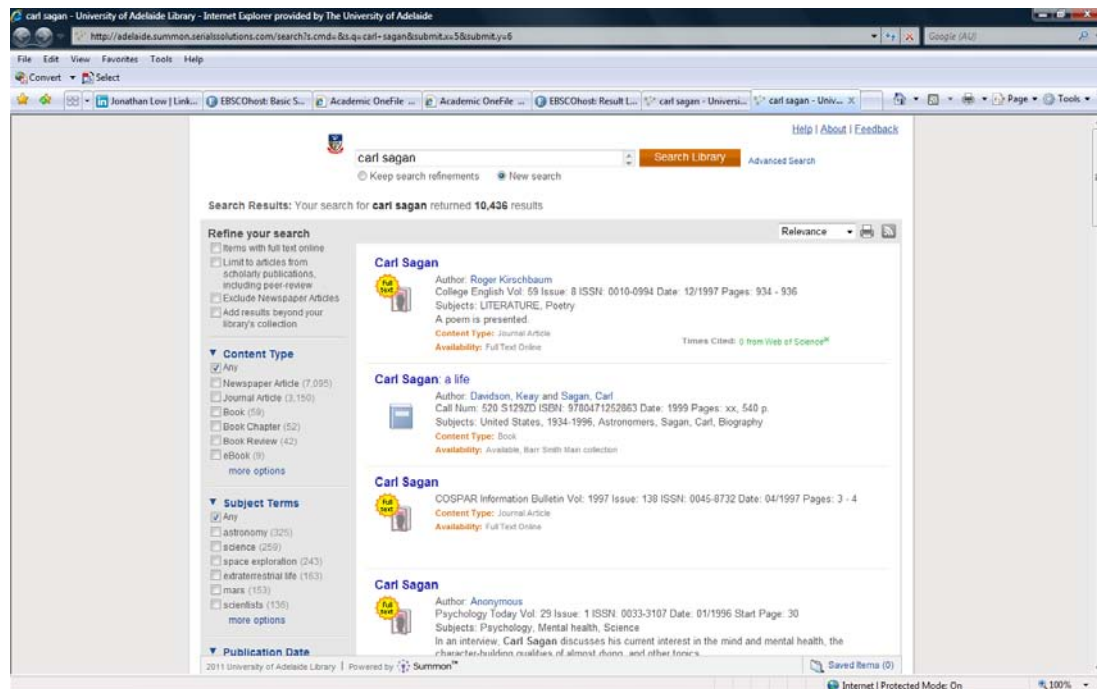
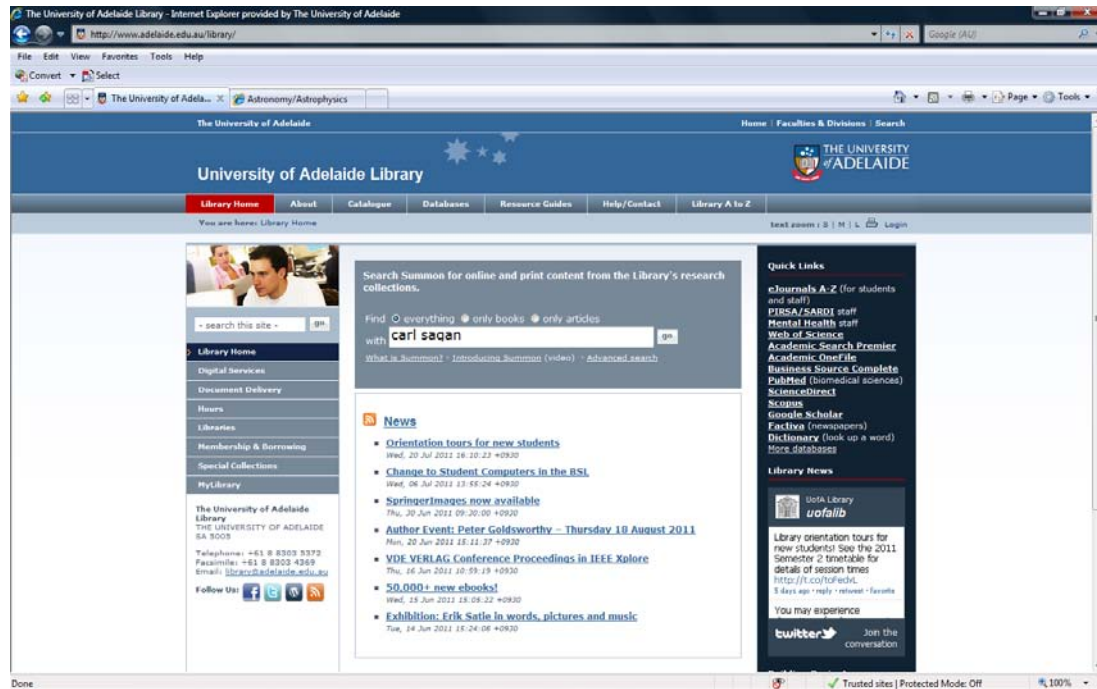
You may now want to see who are the modern day scientists with a similarly broad range of activities.





If you still want more items, you can try Summon, the Library's own search tool. This is a bit like google that searches the Library's Collection. It will include all the electronic books, the printed books and all the journals articles indexed that we hold.

3. Summon



As you can see, you have retrieved 10,436 items. You will now have to decide how to narrow the search using the refine tools at the left hand side.