Overview

1. Scholarly journals
2. Why we cite
3. Choosing a topic (you will need to refine or revise!)
4. Searching (and refining your search)

Scholarly journals

This assignment requires you use:

- Scholarly research journal articles
  - Watch: Peer Review in 3 minutes (North Carolina State University Libraries)
- Note: do not use:
  - Article reviews, editorials (opinion pieces that may be in peer-reviewed research journals)
  - Non-scholarly sources.

Citations in ASA Style

Sociologists, including soc students like you, follow the American Sociological Association Style Guide. Scholars follow these to:

- Show their own place in the sociological conversation
- Acknowledge sources of ideas

The databases will format ASA references for you, but you must refer to an ASA guide and fix errors.

Choosing your topic & developing a search statement

Choose a topic that is interesting to you. Get ideas from your experiences, the textbook, or lectures.

Write a search statement about something that you could research.

If you’re not certain yet, you can make this fairly general, but you will need to refine the topic once you find some articles.

1. Come up with a search statement or question. You can refine it later if it’s too general.
   Example: How does income influence the childrearing experiences of Canadian families?
   [Note that this statement is a bit too general, but I can get more specific as I get ideas from search results]

Your search statement: ________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
2. Identify concepts from your search statement
   *Example: income; family; children; Canada*

   **Concepts from your statement:**

   ______________________________________________________

3. List related words and synonyms for each concept from your search statement
   *Example:
   Income or wealth or poverty
   Family or parent* or child* or mother or father or caregiver
   Canada*

   **Related words & synonyms for words from your statement:**

   ______________________________________________________
   ______________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

**Searching library research databases for sociology**

VCC Libraries subscribe to many research databases, peer-reviewed journal article databases, such as *Canadian Journal of Sociology* and *Canadian Review of Sociology*.

From the library homepage – library.vcc.ca – select **Articles & Resources by Subject → Sociology → Go**
These are the research databases:

Sociology database; Canadian business & current affairs database; Academic search complete

Sociology database is most relevant so let’s start with that:
4. Enter your search concepts.
   - Put words with similar meanings together in one search box with **or**
   - Put each concept in a different **search box**
   - Use **Add a row** to add more search boxes, to enter additional concepts
   - Select **Peer reviewed**
   - Click **Search**

5. Look at your results, then **Modify search** to make the list shorter or longer.

6. For example, I can **Add a row**, then search only in journals with **socio** in the **Publication title**

7. Explore other database features, like **Publication date; Document type; Language**, etc. (along left)
8. When you find something that looks relevant, click cited by, to find related articles:

9. Click an article title for more information

10. Email the article to yourself. Copying & pasting the URL will not work.
    - Click Cite and copy the citation. Remember to check it against a guide!
    - Look under Related items to find similar articles

11. Explore other research databases, like Academic Search Complete

12. Use the Request this item through interlibrary loan link if there is not a full text article.