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: The Information Life Cycle (UNLV Libraries, Vimeo)

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.
- No ASA option from the database? Copy the Chicago-formatted reference, and edit as needed, based on the ASA guide handout.

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 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: What are the effects of female athletes’ depictions in the media?
   [Maybe this is too specific, but I can adjust and refine once I see what’s available]

Your search statement: _______________________________________________________________
2. Identify concepts from your search statement
   Example: athletes, depictions, women
   
   Concepts from your statement: ____________________________
   
   ______________________________________________________

3. List related words and synonyms for each concept from your search statement
   Example:
   Athlet* or sport*
   Wom?n OR female
   Depict* OR portray*

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

Searching library research databases for sociology

VCC Libraries subscribe to many research databases, which include peer-reviewed journals 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.

Scroll down for Statistics Canada
Sociology database is most relevant so let's start with that:
Note: Advanced Search is easier for multiple concepts. Click Advanced Search if you don’t see a white screen with three boxes:

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
   • Use * for different word endings: athlet* = athlete, athletics, athletes
   • Use ? for possible mid-word letter substitutions: wom?n = woman OR women
   • Select Peer reviewed
   • Click Search
   • Notice that I do not use any phrases, because authors will all phrase concepts differently.
     • Fixed phrases are ok, eg: “social media”
     • If you are too specific you probably won’t get much: eg: “depictions of women”

5. Look at your results, then Modify search to change it:
6. For example, I can search for my terms only in the article title and abstract (more relevant):

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. Example, these 71 articles all have this article in their references list:

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. Click **Find it at VCC**
   - It might be in another VCC article database
   - If it doesn’t link to the full article, use **Request this item through interlibrary loan**