SOCI 315:
RESEARCH METHODS
Fall 2009

Where to Get Help

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Where to Get Help

- Crumb library reference desk
- Crumb library home page – "Ask-a-librarian"
  - Meebo Chat
  - In person/phone/e-mail
  - Library consultations
  - Ask-Us 27x7

How to Get Information

- Use a database to find relevant periodical literature
  - Sociological Abstracts – citations and abstracts only, but links through ArticleLinker if full-text is available elsewhere.
- Library collection – search "BearCat"

Sociological Abstracts–

- Indexes and abstracts over 1,500 serials publications.
- Also has abstracts of books, book chapters, dissertations, and conference papers.
- Citations and abstracts only – NOT A FULL TEXT DATABASE!
- 1963 - current

Important to Know…

- You can connect to any library database remotely but you must use your campus computer account and password
- We have access to the full text journals through other databases
- "ArticleLinker" connects citation databases to full-text databases
- ILLIAD, our ILL service, will help you obtain any useful material you identify which we do not own or have electronic access to

TIPS & TRICKS FOR SOCIOLOGICAL ABSTRACTS

The Whole Point

You want to get GOOD, RELEVANT articles.

- What is GOOD?
- What is RELEVANT?

How do you do this?

- Find and USE good VOCABULARY

CONTROLLED VOCABULARY
THE THESAURUS OF SOCIOLOGICAL INDEXING TERMS (DESCRIPTORS)

- Controlled vocabulary is a standardized list of terms used to organize information.
- Terms are often defined by a scope note and include relationships to broader (BT), related (RT) and narrower terms (NT)
- Synonyms are linked to the preferred term – e.g. "teen/teenager" use "adolescents"
- Access thesaurus through the "Search Tools" tab in Sociological Abstracts

USE LIMITERS TO CONTROL RESULTS

- YEAR – Sociological Abstracts begins in 1963 so for latest research use a range such as 1999-2009
- LANGUAGE – set to English if appropriate
- PUBLICATION TYPE – by default searches the entire database
  - Check box for "Journal Articles Only"

Too many?

- Add more unique descriptors, connecting them with "and"
- Go back to the thesaurus to identify more specific terms (NT)
- Use more specific limiters

Too few?

- Reduce the number of search terms
- Go back to the thesaurus and find terms to broaden your search (BT) or add more synonyms (RT) nested with the Boolean operator "or" example: (sex role attitudes or sex roles)

Not quite what you want?

- Check out the note defining for your search terms – compatible with your meaning?
- Use keywords to search abstracts – can you find at least one good article? Then use the descriptors from that article to search