

Researching Sociology SCLG 1001

Identifying key terms and concepts

- Identify the key topics which relate to your research area
- Create a list of related terms or synonyms. This may be useful when searching a database or the Library Catalogue for information.

For example;

Locate information on **sociological perspectives of space in cities and urban areas.**

Concept 1	Concept 2	Concept 3
cities	space	Sociological perspectives
Synonyms or related terms	Synonyms or related terms	Synonyms or related terms
Urbanization (note spelling variations)	Public space	Feminist theory (or Fordism, globalism etc..)
Suburban life	Space and time	Sociological theories (or specific theorist Marx, Ritzer, Durkheim etc...)

Identify key terms and concepts for your research topic.

Concept 1	Concept 2	Concept 3
Synonyms or related terms	Synonyms or related terms	Synonyms or related terms

Dictionaries and Encyclopedias

Specialised dictionaries and encyclopedias may help define or provide an overview of subject or assist in finding related search terms.

➡ *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences* editors-in-Chief Neil J. Smelser, Paul B. Baltes. Amsterdam ; New York : Elsevier, 2001

Available online

Fisher Reference 300.3 18

This Encyclopedia is an excellent source for locating information that provides a broad overview on a sociological theory, concept or theorist.

The online version is available via the Library catalogue. This version allows you to:

- Keyword search
- Browse by broad subject classification
- Use a subject index to locate a specific topic and related fields
- Articles usually include lists of references
- Some references may link to articles available in full text

For example search for the Sociology of Work in the **Subject Index** of the Encyclopedia. The Index suggests you use the heading **Work, sociology of** click on this heading to locate the article by F C Gamst the article provides overview of this area. It also includes a list of references and cross-references to additional subject headings including

Alienation, Sociology of
Capitalism: Global
Community Sociology
Industrial Sociology

Labor Movements and Gender
Labor, Division of
Organizations, Sociology of
Strikes: Sociological Aspects

Other Dictionaries and Encyclopedias can be located by searching the Library catalogue under the Subject Heading

[Sociology -- Dictionaries.](#)

[Sociology -- Encyclopedias.](#)

[Social sciences -- Encyclopedias.](#)

A dictionary of sociology edited by Gordon Marshall. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. 2nd ed Fisher Reference 301.03 11 A

Gamble, Sarah, *The Routledge critical dictionary of feminism and postfeminism*. New York . Routledge, 2000, c1999. Fisher Research 305.4203 1

Finding books in the online catalogue

Use the **keyword** and the **subject** options on the Library catalogue

<http://opac.library.usyd.edu.au/> to locate material relevant to your essay topic. If you are unsure of the correct subject heading try a keyword search, look at the full record for an item that looks relevant to your essay topic, subject headings will be included in the record, click on appropriate subject headings to locate additional items.

Example

[Phillips, E. Barbara.](#)

City lights : urban-suburban life in the global society

New York : Oxford University Press, 1996..

➡ **Includes the following subject headings**

[Sociology, Urban.](#)

[City and town life.](#)

The subject headings **Sociology, Urban** or **City and town life** may retrieve additional references on this topic. In the catalogue the authors name also appears as a hyperlink. Click on this link to find other items by this author. The author may have written other books relating to your research topic.

Finding Journal Articles

As part of the research process you may be required to locate journal articles. Articles will be included in lists of references for an essay or tutorial or you will be asked to find additional journal references for an essay topic or specific subject area.

Where the full citation for an article is known for eg,

Benschop, Yvonne; Halsema, Lilian; Schreurs, Petra (2001) 'The Division of Labour and Inequalities between the Sexes: An Ideological Dilemma' *Gender, Work & Organization* 8(1) Jan, 1-18

Sassen, Saskia, (2000) 'Spatialities and Temporalities of the Global: Elements for a Theorization' *Public Culture* 12(1): 215-232

check the Library catalogue for holdings. In the above examples you would select the **Journal** search option on the catalogue menu and enter the **name of the journal** *Gender, Work & Organization*. In this example the links are to a journal that is only held in electronic form. Click on the link be careful to note any holding information, sometimes the issues you require may not be held in the Library. In the second example the Library holds both the print and electronic editions of *Public Culture*. Once again note the holdings only 5:2(1993)-11(1999) are held in print later issues are available electronically.

Where only a topic or research area is known you will need to consult an index to journal articles. Most indexes to journal articles in the Library are available in electronic form. They are referred to as **Electronic databases**.

Using Electronic Databases...

- index and in many cases abstract (summarise) the content of journals within specific or broad subject areas. Some databases also reference theses, book reviews, conference proceedings & collections of essays.
- In some cases provide the full text for an article
- May link to the library catalogue to providing details of holdings in University of Sydney Libraries
- allow researchers to identify and locate key journals in their subject areas.
- are compiled by commercial or professional organisations and index world, regional or national literature on a particular subject. References retrieved when searching a bibliographic database are **not necessarily held in the Library**.

Access

Electronic databases can be accessed from the Library and from Home. All information relating to databases and remote access is available from the Library **Databases and Electronic Resources Web page** <http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/databases/> Click on **off-campus access** details on how to access Library resources from home.

Finding databases for a specific subject area

To find out which databases are available for Sociology consult the Library Guide to Sociology Resources. <http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/subjects/sociology/> or the University of Sydney Library listing of databases by subject <http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/databases/dsubject.html>

Databases for Sociological Research

Database Name	Locate articles on...	Full text	Links to catalogue holdings
Sociological abstracts	Key sociological theories and concepts eg. Urbanization, sociology of work, Marxian sociology	Some	Yes
Family	Australian Sociology eg urban sociology, Australian theorists (Dempsey), sociology of Australian cities	None	Yes
Expanded Academic Index	Range of subjects covered by key sociological journals, most areas of social contemporary social theory eg urban sociology, Mcdonaldization, globalization, community	Some	Yes
APAIS	Australian Sociology or by Australian sociologists (no abstracts) much broader than Family requires a more focused search to retrieve relevant information	None	Yes
APAIS –full text	As above includes full text for a limited number of Australian sociological journals. eg Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology, Australian Feminist Studies	Some	Yes
Social Science Plus	most key sociological concepts	Some	Yes

Database Searching

Information provided by a database

When you search an electronic database under a given topic, you retrieve citations (or references) for many articles.

A typical citation will usually look like this (this example is from Sociological abstracts):

Kraack, Anna & Kelway, Jane (2002) 'Place, Time and Stigmatised Youthful Identities: Bad Boys in Paradise'
[Abstract of Journal Article] *Journal of Rural Studies* 2002 18(2), 145-155

[Abstract](#) ■ [Complete Reference](#) ■ [Library Catalogue Holdings](#)

In many cases an abstract or summary of an article will be included

Abstract

This paper focuses on rural young people in time & space, examining the implications of changes in their location for their youthful identities & reputations - particularly those of young males. It explores how, in a fishing, logging, & reluctant tourist town on the coast of New South Wales, Australia, such young people form & perform their identities & gain their status through a "geometry of multiple differences." This geometry includes collisions & collusions between history & the present, nature & culture, & between generations. The paper begins with a consideration of how boys in particular use public space as a theatre for certain of their masculine performances. It also shows how such performances contribute to their "bad" reputations among other members of the community. The paper then contextualizes this discussion by explaining how globalizing circumstances such as rural restructuring, the movement away from traditional industries, & the consequent reshaping of the local world of work contribute to contemporary constructions of rural youth in this town. Indeed it shows how in uncertain times & places "badness" is a construct steeped in changes in place. More generally, the paper implicitly critiques the notion of the rural idyll & offers instead a cultural analysis of dynamic intersecting localities & identities in changing times under the concept "geometries of multiple differences." 47 References. Adapted from the source document

Subject Headings

[*Rural Youth](#)

[*Masculinity](#)

[*Globalization](#)

[*Space and Time](#)

[*Public Space](#)

[*Australia](#)

[*Reputation](#)

[*Performance](#)

[Rurality](#)

[Stigma](#)


Click on hyperlinked
subject headings to
search for articles on
this subject

Databases allow you to:

- Search by subject headings
- Combine Search terms
- Limit by language, date etc...
- Truncate a search term

Subject Searching

Sociological abstracts click on **Map term to subject headings**. Click on appropriate subject headings to find related or narrower terms

Family and **APAIS** click on the Index of terms  on the right hand toolbar of the database or view the complete record for a specific item. This will display the Subject

Descriptors. In **Expanded Academic Index** click on **Advanced Search** on the initial Search Page. Choose subject search from the Drop down menus.

Combining Search terms (Boolean Searching)

Also known as Boolean searching, allows the use of **and**, **or** **not** to combine different search terms

and retrieves articles which contain all search terms, e.g. **space and cities**

or retrieves either or all of the search terms and is a useful way of retrieving synonyms or related terms, e.g. **globalization or regionalism**

not excludes articles or documents which contain a specified term, e.g. **Mcdonaldization not Restaurants**

Truncation & Wildcards

Allows searches, which locate both the singular and plural forms of a word, words that begin with the same root word and words that can be spelled in different ways. A symbol is used to

Database	Symbol used for truncation or wildcard	Examples
Sociological abstracts	\$ any number of characters # one character within or at the end of a term ? spelling variants	Urban\$ urbanised, urbanization etc wom#n for women or woman lab?r labor or labour
FAMILY or APAIS	* any number of characters	Global*for globalised, globalization
Expanded Academic Index	* any number of characters ? one character, ! one or no characters, singular or plural and spelling variants	Feminis* for feminist or feminism Women? For womens or women
Social Science Plus	* any number of characters	As for Family and APAIS

JSTOR Ejournal Collection

The Library subscribes to collections of electronic journal articles. In most the full text of articles is available within the database. **JSTOR** is a useful collection for locating articles in Sociology. This collection includes *American Journal of Sociology* 1895-2000 , *American Sociological Review* 1936-1997, *Annual Review of Sociology* 1975-1997, *Contemporary Sociology* 1972-1997, *Sociometry* 1937-1977. If you are looking for recent material, a broader range of journals or sociological articles relating to Australia it is advisable to use electronic databases such as **Family**, **APAIS** or **Sociological Abstracts**. **JSTOR** is available via the Library **Databases and Electronic resources Page** <http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/databases/> Click on **J** in the alphabetical sequence of databases or go to **Ejournal Collections**.

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