PILOTS (Published International Literature on Traumatic Stress)

With nearly 40,000 records dating back to 1871, the database, produced by the National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in White River Junction, Vermont, is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The database contains citations to all literature on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and mental health issues associated with traumatic events.

Searching

There are a number of ways to search the databases. The initial screen is the Quick Search screen.

You can type in the words you are looking to search in the text box. Note the search will run over all fields, so you may get more returned articles than you are interested in. You can use Boolean operators, wildcards and exact phrase searching in the Quick Search. (These will be discussed more fully later in the document.)

Since there are numerous databases provided by CSA, you need to make sure you are searching the correct database, which you can check by looking at the database named after “Now Selected.” If you are not in the correct database (or wish to switch your search to a different database), you can choose a subject area from the drop down menu or click on the link “Specific Databases.”

You can also limit your date range by using the drop down menu provided. The date parameters are set, though, in the drop down.

Search Rules

When searching the keyword (KW) field, the database automatically searches the abstract, descriptor and title fields.
Phrase searching is useful when searching for an exact phrase. If you are looking for articles about mental illness, you do not need to enclose them in quotation marks. CSA databases interpret words next to each other as a phrase. Wild cards can also be used in phrase searching.

Wildcards (* ?) can be used in fields that allow words and phrases, and there are two different wildcards that can be used independently or together. Wildcards cannot be used at the beginning of a word (*ology) or in a publication year search (200*). Three letter must appear before the wildcard for it to work.

- The asterisk (*) represents any number of characters including no characters at all.
  ex. `environment*` matches:
  - environment
  - environments
  - environmental

- The question mark (?) represents any single character. You can repeat the question mark for the number of letter you are unsure of.
  ex. `wom?n` matches:
  - woman
  - women

Take care when using wildcards as you may not want to use one with all searches. For instance, when looking for singular and plural forms of a word, you might receive fewer results by searching for the terms instead of adding a wildcard.

Boolean operators can also be used. The operators available are:

- **AND**: all terms in the search appear in the results
- **OR**: at least one term in the search appears in the results
- **NOT**: excludes terms from the search
- **()**: groups words and phrases to show a relationship and the order in which you would like the search to be performed
- **within n**: searches for terms within a certain number of words of the other term (ex. `drug` within 3 `addiction` will find the words “drug” and “addiction” within 3 words of each other)
- **near n**: searches for term preceding other term by a certain number of words; the result will be the same as using within
- **before**: finds words in relative order (ex. `drug` before `addiction` will find all instances where `drug` appears before `addiction`); adjacency is not implied, merely that the word appear in the order detailed
- **after**: finds words in relative order; functions like before

If parentheses are not used, the terms will be processed in order of precedence:

1. **NEAR**
2. **NOT**
3. **AND**
4. **OR**

Field searching is available in the Advanced Search as well as the Command Search. Some fields are not available in all databases, but common searchable fields are:

- **AB**: abstract
- AU: author
- CA: corporate author
- CF: conference
- DE: descriptor
- ID: identifiers
- KW: keywords
- TI: title

To use field searching type the code followed by the equal sign and then the word(s) you are searching. There should be no spaces between the code and the equal sign (eg. ti=sleep deprivation)

**Advanced Search**

If you want to combine search terms and aren’t comfortable creating your own string, you can use the advanced tab.

Most of the search rules discussed earlier apply to the Advanced Search, so you can use wildcards, phrases and field searching. However, only AND, OR and NOT are available in the drop down menus for Boolean searching.

**Search Tools**

The third tab available in the top menu allows you a variety of additional search options including command searching and a thesaurus.
Command Searching allows you to enter a search string using all of the Boolean operators available to you, as well as command search in fields. If you cannot remember the field codes, there is a drop down box from which you can choose the code and populate the search.

A thesaurus is also available from the Search Tools tab. A thesaurus is a controlled vocabulary created by the database provider to add continuity to searching. If you find that your search is not giving you any results (or as many as you think you should have) verify with the thesaurus that you are using the correct term(s).

If you are unsure as to what type of display you want to use, definitions are provided below the search interface. The three types of displays are:
- **Alphabetical List**: an alphabetical list of terms with no indication of relationships
- **Hierarchy**: all terms associated with the searched words and the relationships with the found item (e.g. broader and narrower terms) plus any explanatory notes
- **Rotated Index**: all terms that contain the found single word, plus related term; if you are unfamiliar with the thesaurus, you may want to start here; will only search a single term

The result of your search will be a list of terms for you to choose from to continue your search. For instance, in an alphabetical search for “war” indicates you would use the term if you were searching for information on battle, conflict or military conflict. Broader and narrower terms are also listed.

You can see that terms that are further subdivided have a plus sign (+) next to them, allowing you to expand to find the term that best suits your search. You can then either click on the link to search that term or write it down to add to your search string.

You can build a search using the thesaurus by adding to terms to the marked list (mark the record, then click the link “Add to Marked Terms”). Once you have added all the terms needed, click on the “AND” or “OR” search radio button on the left side of the screen. If this is not exactly the search you want to run, click search, and then from the results page, you can change the search by clicking on the “Command Search” tab.

**Results**

Once you’ve entered your search using whatever technique you are most comfortable with, you will be taken to a results page.
As you can see there is a lot of information provided on the results page. You can limit your search by publication type by clicking on one of the tabs at the top of the page.

You can also choose to mark records that might be of particular interest to you, so you can use them later in your research. For instance, you could mark a number of records, click on the “Update Marked List” link, and then click on the “Save, Print, Email” link.
The window will allow you to email, print or save your marked list or all of the results. You can export your results to EndNote using the Save function. If you are unsure of which records you marked, you can click the link at the top of the page labeled “# Marked Records” to confirm you have the correct records marked.

If you don’t want to mark your records, but merely want to see if the library has the article listed, click on the “Find It” link, found in each of the citations. There may also be a link for “Full-text linking” taking you to another database that has the article.

If the library does not have a subscription to the journal you need, you can request the article through interlibrary loan (ILL) from the “Find It” page.

A number of fields will be populated for you, but you will need to fill in your name, contact information and date by which you need the article as well as the copyright notice box. Click “Submit your request” at the bottom of the page. The default delivery for articles is now electronic.
Exporting Multiple Records to EndNote

First, make sure you have your EndNote library open. To export records, you first need to mark the records you are interested in. If you mark records on multiple pages, you can see how many total records are marked by looking at the “# Marked Records” link at the top right.

Click on the “# Marked Records” link at the top right. You will be taken to a screen with the marked records. Click on the “Save, Print, Email” link at the top.

1 EndNote filter information provided by St. Olaf College (http://www.stolaf.edu/library/instruction/endnote/PCInstructions.html)
The “Save, Print, Email” link will take you to a page where you need to confirm the records you want to export as well as choose a format for exporting. Choose the “Save” option for “PC.”

A dialog box will appear. Choose to “Save” the file, which will be placed on your desktop and will be used for importing the records into EndNote.
Now go to your EndNote library. Click on the import icon at the top of the page

or you can use File > Import from the menu. The import dialog box will appear. Navigate to the CSA file on your desktop. (It will probably be named csaresults, and is a text file.) In the “Import Options” field, choose “Other Filter…”

The “Other Filters” option will bring up another dialog box from which you will choose the correct filter to use. You need to make sure you choose the proper database and database provider otherwise the import may not work correctly. In this case you will want to make sure you choose the database provider CSA for the corresponding database. You can maneuver to through the list by quickly typing the first two letters of the database.
Once you’ve navigated to the appropriate filter, click the “Choose” button. You will be taken back to the original dialog box. Set the “Duplicates” field as you choose and leave the “Text Translation” field at the default.

Click “Import.”

The records will be downloaded into your EndNote library. You will see the “Imported Reference” group has records in it. Each time you import records, the previously downloaded records will be overwritten in this group, but they live in the “All References” group, so you are not losing any information. You can also confirm the proper number of records was downloaded.

**Exporting a Single Record to EndNote**

When exporting a single record to EndNote, click on the title link, which will take you to the full record. Click on the “Save, Print, Email” link at the top of the page and follow the instructions listed above for importing multiple records.