Social Services Abstracts and Sociological Abstracts

Social Services Abstracts provides access to current research in social work, human services, and related areas, including social welfare, social policy, and community development. The database includes nearly 150,000 records from over 1,300 journals, dissertations and book reviews from 1979 to the present.

Sociological Abstracts surveys the international literature in sociology and related disciplines in the social and behavioral sciences. In November 2005, the database extended its back issue inclusion to 1952. You will find nearly 1 million citations from over 1,800 journals as well as abstract for books, book chapters, dissertations and conference papers.

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 letters 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 (e.g. ti=sleep deprivation)

**Advanced Search**

If you want to combine search terms and aren’t comfortable creating your own string, you can used 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.

Add more limitations to your 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 terms; 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 a hierarchical search for “childhood” the result looks like this.

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. Once you’ve decided on a term to search, place a check mark next to the term, and click “Add to Marked Terms” above the term list. You can continue to search for additional terms in the thesaurus, adding those you would like to search to the list of marked terms. Once you have completed your term list, click on one of the search options to the left of the list and click “Search.” A search using your terms will be run. If you would like to adjust the search parameters, you can do some by clicking on the “Command Search” tab at the top.
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. 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.

You will also need to check the box indicating you have read the copyright notice and will not violate it. When everything is completed, 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.

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1 EndNote filter information provided by St. Olaf College (http://www.stolaf.edu/library/instruction/endnote/PCInstructions.html)

2 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, and follow the instructions listed below for importing multiple records.
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 through the list by quickly typing the first two letters of the database.

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3 If you are using EndNoteX3, you will need to visit the EndNote webpage (http://www.endnote.com/support/enfilters-terms.asp) to download the proper filters. You can either download individual import files or all of the files available. Once you have completed the download process copy the file or folder into your EndNote application folder.
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**

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