LIBRARY RESEARCH IN COMMUNICATIONS
COMS 610 – MEDIA STUDIES SEMINAR

Joshua Chalifour
Communication Studies & Journalism Librarian | Digital Scholarship Librarian
joshua.chalifour@concordia.ca
Agenda

Library website tools

Research sources

Background & context

Books & articles: using the catalogue & databases

Managing sources & citing
library.concordia.ca

From the home page:

• Library catalogue
• E-journals
• Databases
• Spectrum (research repository)
• Citation guides
• Subject guides

Presentation practice rooms?
Key resources

**Communication Studies Subject Guide**

- Subject-specific databases, books, ebooks, etc.
  - bibliographic or full text
- Encyclopedias, dictionaries, handbooks
- Guides for courses, projects, writing, citation, etc.
- Librarian contact information

Go to the top menu:
Help & How-To -> Subject & course guides -> Communication Studies

Look under the **Humanities** heading

Avoid paywalls & access problems by connecting to databases through the library website.
1. Sources
Many types of sources

• Scholarly articles; peer reviewed
• Books (academic and non-academic)
• Reference books (encyclopedias, handbooks, etc.)
• News sources
• Magazines and trade publications
• Government reports, publications
• NGO publications, associations, professional
• Non-print formats (Video, audio, new media)
• Traditional vs. new media formats
## Contrasting types of publications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholarly Journal</th>
<th>Magazine / Newspaper / Trade Publication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articles are scrutinized for quality by other scholars in the field before publication (peer review)</td>
<td>Editor reviews articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authored by scholars in the field</td>
<td>Authors are journalists, practicing professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information is sourced with bibliography (previous research)</td>
<td>No bibliography. Information may be sourced by some fact-checking; interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose is to advance knowledge; report original research</td>
<td>Purpose is often current news and entertainment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Where to find and access information?

- Databases (e.g. Communication & Mass Media Complete)
- Repositories (e.g. mediArxiv.org, Spectrum)
- Library catalogue
- Google Scholar + other search tools (e.g. individual website searches)
2. **Background and Context**
Using an online encyclopedia

Subject **encyclopedias** from academic publishers:
- context, background, issues, definitions,
- editorial review, authoritative

1. Go to the Library catalogue
2. Find & connect to the **International Encyclopedia of Communication**
3. Try to find the **full text** of the article: **Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968**
4. Locate where the references used in this article appear
5. What university is the author affiliated with?
Online encyclopedia, 2

1. Use a different encyclopedia: International Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods

2. Find an entry in this encyclopedia about Visual Research Methods

NB: there are several ways to find the article in this encyclopedia.
Other reference sources

**Oxford Bibliographies**

- Annotated bibliographies
- Core works in communication and media studies
- Search by keyword or browse headings

Also consider consulting handbooks, dictionaries, etc.
Finding books using the Library catalogue

1. Try these basic keyword searches:
   - media and globalization
   - media and global*

2. You can use keyword searches to find specific types of material
   e.g. communication and encyclop*
   media and handbook*
Looking for works on a specific subject

- Research Methodology
- Proposal writing for grants
- Media and globalization
- Research Moral And Ethical Aspects
- Communication research methodology
- Scholarly Publishing
- Scholarly Electronic Publishing
- Universities and colleges

Browsing by subject heading:
- Click a subject heading in a record to see other books
- Use the catalogue’s subject heading search option to find some of these subjects
How do you find scholarly articles?

• Bibliographies you have
• Searching Google Scholar or other academic tools
• Searching specific journals
• Searching Library databases
• Other sources...

Many types of documents, including both academic and non-academic articles
Select the database you want to use

A) Use the *Databases by subject* section of the Library website
   - Browse by subject
   - Search by name or subject
   - Browse by type (e.g. journal articles, biographies, patents, sound)

B) Use the Library catalogue
   This will provide similar options as the Databases by subject button

Consider bibliographic vs. full-text
Boolean operators

AND

OR

NOT

Narrows search

Broadens search

Narrows search
Search improvements

Truncation * and Wildcards ?

interview* = interview or interviews or interviewing
wom?n = women or woman

Specific phrase “ ”

“reality television” = reality television
≠ television reality
Brainstorm & keep track of synonyms!

How **authentic** do **audiences** perceive **reality television shows** are?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>authentic</th>
<th>audience</th>
<th>reality television</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Synonyms</td>
<td>trustworthy</td>
<td>viewer</td>
<td>reality tv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>believable</td>
<td>spectator</td>
<td>reality show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sincerity</td>
<td>consumer</td>
<td>program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Wordnik.com](https://wordnik.com)  
[Thesaurus.com](https://thesaurus.com)  
[Wikipedia.org](https://wikipedia.org)  
[Wiktionary.org](https://wiktionary.org)
Database search example

(authent* or trust*) and (audienc* or view* or spectator*) and ("reality television" or "reality tv")
What do these do? Which is most useful?

Remember: parentheses group concepts and have an impact on the order of operations

(\text{authent}^{*} \text{ or } \text{trust}^{*}) \text{ and } (\text{“reality television” or “reality tv”})

\text{authent}^{*} \text{ or } \text{audienc}^{*} \text{ and } (\text{“reality television” or “reality tv”})

(\text{authent}^{*} \text{ or } \text{trust}^{*}) \text{ and } (\text{audienc}^{*} \text{ and view}^{*} \text{ and spectator}^{*}) \text{ and “reality television”}
Controlled vocabulary

• CV describes the subject of the article
• Subject, descriptor fields
• Many database have a thesaurus of terms
Field searching

Use limits to filter results
4. Citing & Additional Help
Citation styles

• Used to compile bibliographies in academic works (articles, books) and assignments.

• Provide integrity to the work by ensuring that an author formats his references in a way that is understood by others.

Consult the specific style guide to learn how

Concordia how-to guides on academic citing
library.concordia.ca/help/citing
Manage all your research sources
• Creates your bibliographies for you in your chosen style
• Easily insert citations while you’re writing

https://www.zotero.org
Getting help

In person at the reference desk

Consult a librarian

Subject guides

Online chat

Fig. Conversation. (Downey).