

# Journalism Library Workshop

Sonia.poulin@concordia.ca

The ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively [and ethically] use that information for the issue or problem at hand. <sup>(1)</sup>

# Today:

- Basics of database searching
- Major news databases
- Fact checking sources and where to find them
- Library website

# Clues Exercise

# Database searching

- Different interfaces (look different)
- Common principles – portable from database to database

# Databases

- A database is a collection of RECORDS
- Records are made up of fields, such as title, author, subject, text, etc.

# Fields vary with database

- Example from CLUES
- Example from Canadian Newsstand

# Field searching

- Limiting the results to those records with terms in specific fields



# Field searching

- Searching all fields vs specific fields
- All fields is the broadest way to search
- Default in many databases is all fields
- Full text databases

# Boolean operators

- AND

Both terms must appear

- OR

Either term must appear

- NOT

Term must not appear

# Combining operators

- Always use parentheses when combining synonyms using the OR operator
- Parentheses control the ORDER of operations
- Construction and (corruption or conspiracy)

# For example.....

Construction and (corruption or conspiracy)

Vs.

Construction and corruption or conspiracy

# Basic strategy

- Use keywords to describe your topic
- Combine your keywords using boolean operators or connectors
- Search within specific fields when needed or appropriate.

# Truncation and wildcards....

- Truncation searches for variations of a word root.

Ex: journalis\* retrieves:

Journalism or journalist or journalistic or journalists

- Wildcards normally replace one character within a word

Ex: wom?n retrieves:

women or woman

- Question: Will lab?r retrieve labor or labour?

# Proximity operators

- $W/3$  = within three words of one another
- Different proximity operators depending upon the database

Establishes a relationship between the terms

woman and journalists

woman  $w/3$  journalists

# News Databases Exercise



Look where?

# Published sources

- Canadian Who's Who (U of T)
- Current Biography (Wilson)
- Statesman's Yearbook (Macmillan)
- Canadian Encyclopedia (Historica)

# Published vs non-published

Published (may be electronic or print)	Non-published and Web 2.0 or User Generated websites
Books	Wikipedia
Magazines/Journals	Blogs
Newspapers	Social networking sites (Facebook)
Websites	Websites

## Published sources:

- Have an editorial team/board – process of review
- Information is fact-checked prior to publication
- Reputation of the publisher depends upon quality

# Reference Books are one type of “published source”

- Designed for QUICK, FACTUAL information or CONTEXT and BACKGROUND.
- Published by established publishers
- Information is fact-checked, reviewed prior to publication
- Many print versions existed before electronic versions, and have long been established as authoritative sources.
- Different flavours (types) of reference books for different kinds of information

# Different types

- Dictionaries
- Directories
- Almanacs
- Yearbooks
- Encyclopedias

# Directories: Organizations and People

- Biographical directories of people

Canadian Who's Who

International Who's Who

- Business directories

D & B Million Dollar Directory

- Specialized directories that focus on a subject/theme:

Directory of Community Services of Greater Montreal;

Associations Canada

World of Learning

- Canadian Almanac & Directory

# Context & Facts

- Dictionaries

Shocked and Awed: A Dictionary of the War on Terror  
Language of Canadian Politics

- Encyclopedias, handbooks

Canadian Encyclopedia;  
Encyclopedia of Journalism;

- Year books

Canada Year Book  
Europa World  
U.S. Statistical Abstract  
Statesman's Year-book

# Aggregates

- [Oxford Reference Online Premium](#)
- [Gale Virtual Reference Online](#)



# Finding reference sources

- Online Reference
- Database Finder
- CLUES (library catalogue)
- Subject Guides

# Criteria for evaluating sources

- User generated content?
- Government organization or body?
- Lobby group, trade, professional, civic association?
- Established publisher or self published?

# What is the purpose?

- To persuade? Present a point of view?
- To sell something?
- To inform? To entertain? To report research?

# Who is the author?

- What are their credentials? Are they listed? Can they be verified in another source?

# References

- Where do they get their information?
- Is it credited?
- What references are listed?
- Can they be verified?

# Reviews of the source

- How is the source regarded by others?
- Are there reviews of the source?

# Google tips

- Use quotes to find a phrase: “turcot interchange”
- **Group synonyms:** (violence OR abuse)
- Use site command to limit to specific sites: gc.ca  
Federal government sites

gouv.qc.ca      Quebec government sites

emsb.qc.ca      English Montreal school board

# For example....

- Curriculum site:emsb.qc.ca
- turcot interchange site:ville.montreal.qc.ca
- Violence statistics site:gouv.qc.ca
- “spousal violence” statistics site:gc.ca
- Violence (women OR spousal) site:gc.ca