

Cited-Reference Searching

“How-to” guide

■ WHAT IS “CITED-REFERENCE SEARCHING”?

- “Cited-Reference Searching” is a process where you **start with a reference** (normally a journal article or book) that you have read and which is **important for your research**.
- You then search for **other publications that have cited that reference**. In other words, you are searching for citations to a known and highly relevant reference.

■ WHY IS IT USEFUL?

- If the reference that you started with was highly relevant to your research, then it is quite possible that **other publications that have cited that reference are also relevant** to your research.
- Cited-reference searching is a **useful alternative to keyword searching**. Keyword searching is often difficult, especially in the humanities and social sciences. The English language is rich in synonyms, and there are so many narrower or broader terms which might also be relevant. With cited-reference searching, you are searching with **concrete search terms** (i.e. the title and author of the cited reference).

■ WHICH DATABASES SHOULD I USE?

- There are three databases that are particularly useful for cited-reference searching:

Web of Science	Incorporates three databases: <i>Science Citation Index</i> , <i>Social Sciences Citation Index</i> , <i>Arts & Humanities Citation Index</i> . Will find citations in major journals.
Scopus	Particularly useful in the sciences, but is improving its coverage of the social sciences and humanities. Will find citations in major journals and scholarly websites.
Google Scholar	A free database which will find citations in electronic journal websites and scholarly websites.

- **Web of Science**

- Select the **Cited Reference Search** option and enter the details of the cited reference.
- For **journal articles**, you can enter author, abbreviated journal name (**Cited Work**) and publication year, or any combination of these. For example, if you enter just the author name and a year, the search results will show all articles published by that author in that year. If you enter the journal name, you must use the Web of Science abbreviation.
- For **books**, enter the author name. In the **Cited Work** box, enter just the first syllable of the first word of the title, with the asterisk as truncation symbol, e.g. *hist** and preferably enter no year of publication.

- **Scopus**

- Select the **Basic Search** option.
- Enter the **title of the reference** in the search box, enclosed in double quotation marks. In the fields menu box, use the drop-down menu to select *References*. If necessary, use the second search line to also search for the author's last name in the *References* field.
- Alternatively, use the **Advanced Search** option. Enter the author's last name and some words from the title in the following format: *REF(watson molecular structure nucleic acids)*

- **Google Scholar**

- Select the **Advanced Scholar Search** option.
- Use the **exact phrase** search box for the title of the reference, and use the **where my words occur** menu to select *in the title of the article*.
- Use the **return articles written by** search box for the author's last name.
- When the reference is located, click on the **Cited by...** link to display the references which cite the reference.

■ OTHER DATABASES FOR CITED-REFERENCE SEARCHING

- In theory, you can perform cited-reference searching in **any full-text database**. If the database contains the full text of books or articles, then you should be able to search the references and bibliographies of those books and articles. This means that you can perform cited-reference searching in journal article databases like **JSTOR** and **ScienceDirect**. You can also use databases which contain the full text of books, such as **Google Book Search**.
- There are other databases which contain **abstracts only**, but which index all the cited references in the articles which they abstract. **Psycinfo** is an example.
- The search method varies. In **full-text databases** you may have to use a search option such as *All Fields* or *All Text* and search for the title of the book or journal article. If possible, search for the title **as a phrase**. Some databases provide an option to **limit your search to the cited references**. Look for a search option such as *References*.