This handout shows how you can use the PsycINFO database to do two things:

1. **Search for scholarly journal articles** published in the last 10 years which are literature reviews. These are excellent places to start your own literature review, because they gather and synthesize the research on a topic, identify gaps, and suggest areas for future research. They are NOT primary research articles. (Tip: You can choose a different methodology filter to find primary research articles in PsycINFO, e.g. qualitative research)

2. Use one article to **find others on the same topic** by tracing the sources cited in the article (i.e. listed in the article’s References), or finding sources which have subsequently cited that article.

**Putting the search command OR between two words or phrases tells PsycINFO to search for items that mention any of these words.**

**Putting the search command AND between two words or phrases (or parts of your search, like in this example) tells PsycINFO that the search results must include this term.**

**NOTE about the quotation marks:**

Putting **double quote marks** around 2 or more words tells PsycINFO to match those words exactly, side-by-side in that order, with no other words in between them, e.g. “law enforcement”. I did not put quotes around the phrase **use of force** because that would remove useful articles that used slightly different wording, e.g. use of *lethal force* or use of *excessive force*.

Check off the **Peer Reviewed** search filter and use the date slider to limit your results items published in the last 10 years.

Note: the ‘Academic Journals’ and ‘Peer Reviewed’ filters in PsycINFO work the same way. Either one would limit your results to scholarly journal articles.
Notice the option to limit your PsycINFO search to articles using a specific research methodology, including ‘literature review’. In this example, there are 6 lit review articles. We will look at the one published in 2009 by Harris (see #2).

**Cited References for: Police use of improper force: A systematic review of the evidence.**

Harris cited these 35 works in the References list for his literature review. You could use these citations to locate the primary research studies that he discussed in his review.

**Search Results: 1 - 10 of 35**

To view records related to the article shown above, mark checkboxes and click Related Records

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**Citing Articles for: Police use of improper force: A systematic review of the evidence.**

Since it was published in 2009, four other sources in the PsycINFO database have cited Harris’s literature review. These citations might help you build on and update Harris’s review.

**Search Results: 1 - 4 of 4**

These records cite the article shown above.

1. **Police shootings of unarmed African American males: A systematic review.**

2. **Policing.**