Find and Cite Three-to-Five Sources: Applying the Sociological Imagination to Critical Information Literacy

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**Challenge:** Do you ever ask students to complete an assignment that includes a bibliography requirement? Literature research and writing is an opportunity to apply the sociological imagination to both the paper topic and to the process of discovering and selecting the information sources that will inform student work. However, this is often a missed opportunity: either information discovery is seen as ancillary to the assignment and not discussed, or library instruction may not meaningfully integrate sociological concepts from your course curriculum.

**Approach:** The Sociological Information Literacy Framework
- Tool for identifying how to bring critical information literacy into the classroom
- Reflectively locate, understand, and use information in support of lifelong learning goals for developing informed citizens with higher-order thinking skills
- **Sociological Information Literacy** is an understanding of how information and scholarship are created, published, disseminated, and used by individuals and organizations that is informed by sociological thinking and scholarship.

**Next Steps:** Peer review, revision, and putting it into practice!
- Review and endorsement of the Sociological Information Literacy Framework by the Association of College & Research Libraries and the American Sociological Association
- Making meaningful connections between sociological and information literacy will provide a foundation to enrich instructor-librarian collaboration in the classroom and strengthen overall student learning.

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### Sociological Information Literacy Framework (Draft)

**Author:** Sociology Subgroup, Instruction & Information Literacy Committee, Anthropology & Sociology Section, Association of College & Research Libraries

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Sociological Literacy Framework Concepts</th>
<th>Framework for Information Literacy Concepts</th>
<th>Information Creation as a Process</th>
<th>Information Has Value</th>
<th>Research as Inquiry</th>
<th>Scholarship as Conversation</th>
<th>Searching as Strategic Exploration</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authority Is Constructed and Contextual</td>
<td>Evaluate based on information need and context, different types of authorities.</td>
<td>Different formats reflect varying messages and delivery methods.</td>
<td>As commodity, education, influence, understanding; role of legal and socio-economic interests</td>
<td>Iterative question asking, methods, analysis</td>
<td>Sustained discourse, varied perspectives</td>
<td>Iterative evaluation of range of sources, mental flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociological Eye</td>
<td>Sociology as a distinctive discipline</td>
<td>“the medium is the message”</td>
<td>Commodity: economic/financial structures support/constrain info production</td>
<td>Ask questions like a sociologist</td>
<td>Social context of scholarly discourse; (a) who is an expert in a field, (b) where the boundaries of a field lie, and (c) what can be said within these boundaries</td>
<td>Deconstruct search engines as products of human engineering and bureaucracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Structure</td>
<td>The impact of social structures on human action</td>
<td>Ownership of information systems impacts the processes of information creation and what information is made available</td>
<td>Ownership of information systems is concentrated; even where information is produced by individuals, it may be owned by private corporations (e.g., on social media platforms, transfer of copyright agreements)</td>
<td>Expert knowledge is shaped by established scientific systems and processes</td>
<td>Scholarly conversations are shaped by institutional structures: higher education, research firms, publishers, libraries, archives, and the WWW</td>
<td>Search engines as gatekeepers to information</td>
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<td>Socialization</td>
<td>The relationship between the self and society</td>
<td>Social roles may privilege some as authorities</td>
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<td>Stratification</td>
<td>The patterns and effects of social inequality</td>
<td>Social media as performative work</td>
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<td>Social Change and Social Reproduction</td>
<td>How social phenomena replicate and change</td>
<td>Ideologies impact accepted authorities</td>
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<td>Ownership of information systems is concentrated; even where information is produced by individuals, it may be owned by private corporations (e.g., on social media platforms, transfer of copyright agreements)</td>
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**Notes:**
- Compliance with AAUPL standards
- Need for clarity and specificity in the language used
- Importance of integrating sociological concepts into library instruction
- Opportunities for collaboration between instructors and librarians
- The role of information in supporting sociological understanding and analysis

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**Bibliography**


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**Peer Review:**

- **Call for Peer Reviewers**

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**Engage with us!**

- Join the Sociological Information Literacy Committee
- Stay updated on the latest developments in the field

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**Sociological Information Literacy**

- **Bibliography**
- **Framework for Information Literacy Concepts**
- **Information Creation as a Process**
- **Information Has Value**
- **Research as Inquiry**
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**Authors:**
- Sociology Subgroup, Instruction & Information Literacy Committee, Anthropology & Sociology Section, Association of College & Research Libraries
- Paula Dempsey, University of Illinois at Chicago Library
- Hailey Mooney, University of Michigan Library
- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting 2018
- Research Libraries 2015