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My research for this topic started in an unlikely place: a class on greening infrastructure in the Fall of 2015. The prompt for this essay instructed our class to begin with an article as inspiration for our topic. To find the article, we enrolled in a daily e-mail newsletter called “Above the Fold” which sends out discoveries in the environmental health field. After sorting through my many options, an article on urban rewilding caught my eye and brought me back to my class on green infrastructure. I recall being fascinated in class with how intertwined environmental and human health are and wanted to share this with others. To begin my research, I started with the book that was used in my infrastructure class called “Green Infrastructure for Landscape Planning: Integrating Human and Natural Systems” by Gary Austin. Although I no longer had my textbook, I found that it was available as an eBook on the library website and used it to outline my argument. As I skimmed chapters of the book, I began to do simple google searches for some of the concepts. At that time, I was aiming for a simple understanding of terms without reading through dense research articles. Through these searches, I found another important secondary source for my essay, a site called “Green Cities: Good Health” by the University of Washington. Both the Austin book and this site allowed me to outline my argument for the physical, social, and economic benefits to urban rewilding.

Before beginning my essay, I completed a short ELMS course outlining the library resources available to undergraduate students. This helped me begin to search for primary sources for my paper. I used a few sources directly from my secondary sources when they provided important information at the right level of detail. However, other concepts I needed to find statistics about such as the link between domestic violence and vegetation in an area.

This is when I turned to EBSCO, my favorite database. The reason why I chose EBSCO is because it allows a search of so many databases at once. My topic is interdisciplinary and could be in databases for community health, medical health, and government documents. As a public health major, I have struggled to find databases for my research needs in the past. "Public Health" is not listed as a subject in the database finder. For this essay, the subject of "Environmental Studies" was not accurate because the databases on that list mostly hold articles on wildlife health and do not relate them to human health. Through trial and error in previous classes, I have found EBSCO to be the best database for many of my public health classes.

Because I was searching in so many databases, it was important to create an effective advanced search to find the articles that I needed. I used the "AND" function frequently when doing my advanced search to be sure that I had articles that had all the information that I was looking for. For example, I would search for "Domestic Violence" AND "Green Space" OR "Natural Space" to get the best results. Once I finished this search, I would then narrow the results to peer reviewed articles in academic journals within about 20 years depending on the topic and the initial results I received. When I had multiple sources that were relevant to my point, I used their abstracts to evaluate which was the strongest source. Typically, the strongest sources were ones that had the largest study group. However, I also looked at the methods of the article to see if other factors that may have affected the results were accounted for. As I read the methods, I asked questions about how they defined the study group, the environmental conditions, and other factors that they were measuring. If my question could not be answered by the article, I did not use it. The articles that I chose had appropriately sized

study groups and thoroughly explained decisions and terms used. After I built my argument with my secondary review sources and my primary articles, I wrote my essay.

After submitting my rough draft, I received feedback from Dr. Payne-Sturges, my professor for MIEH300. While my sources were strong and I made many good points, I lost the persuasiveness of the essay because I became too informative. I ultimately failed to make my readers excited about my topic and therefore the essay was not effective. This is a common mistake in scientific literature and is part of the difficulty of scientific communication. It is more important to make sure that the reader is interested and engaged with the topic rather than them knowing every detail of the topic. My focus for the final draft was bringing my essay back to the college student level. This was my greatest lesson from my research and something that I will carry forward with me in my academic career. The field of public health aims to inform the population about issues that affect them and create a change within the population or government. A combination of thorough and accurate research with a powerful and engaging presentation creates a potent combination that creates effective essays and action from readers.