

Essay on problems with writing criminal law research papers

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



Problems with Writing Criminal Law Research Papers

Problems with Writing the Rough Draft

The main problem in conducting the research, and in writing the rough draft, was that it required a lot of effort to keep focused on the thesis statement. It was easy to get lured away from the primary objective of the study, because there is a lot of very interesting information out there that would have been nice to include in the research paper but, unfortunately, it did not quite fit.

Organization was another problem, also related to how the data fit into the general outline of the paper. For example, I would come across some data that I knew was relevant but I did not know where in the paper it should go, and that made a difference, because depending on where I placed it in the paper, a different factor would stand out as being more relevant; so in the end, I either had to toss the data out, or shift it where it would balance the various factors of the paper better, but not necessarily where it lent the greatest support to the thesis, perhaps as general background.

But the biggest problem was, and continues to be, the element of time. In my opinion, for every hour of writing, one should spend at least ten hours of research; that is, if you want to write a paper that is not just a reorganization or evaluation of someone else's data. You also need to sift through a lot of data to determine which data best supports your thesis, while at the same time you should not ignore data that strongly suggests your thesis is wrong. You do not have to use this data, but you should remain aware of its being out there while you develop your own thesis. This is where keeping focused

on your thesis statement really helps. And, related to the time element, sometimes you just have to make the terrible choice of editing out a substantial amount of material; information that is good, and relevant, but information that no longer supports your thesis, or even weakens it, or should be replaced with stronger data. Again, focus.

Another factor that was sometimes a problem, as well as a sobering experience, is the high quality of some of the research coming from some law students, whom I imagine to be quite young. Some of their studies were so well organized, and the analysis of the data was in such great depth, and then somehow all the information was brought together into a single unifying concept that supported their thesis, that it left me paralyzed and unable to even read what I had already written, let alone continue writing. But again, focus; it is the only thing that can save you.

Problems with Writing APA Citations and References

And then, when you finally manage to write something you can be proud of—because even if it lacks the depth of a Harvard law student’s manuscript, at least you know the work is yours and original—comes the tedious task of ensuring the citations all follow the APA format. A problem with that is that not a single citation that I came across was in the APA format, so they all had to be reformatted. Furthermore, some book publishers do not provide the city and state where their company is located, which are required in APA book citations. Making sure that your citations and references are in order takes a lot of time that is best spent on research, which is more difficult, but I enjoy.

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Ed. (2009).

Washington, D. C.: Amer Psychological Assn.