WORKING WITH SCHOLARLY SOURCES

I. What do you need scholarly sources for? (pp. 1-4)
II. Searching for scholarly sources (pp. 5-8)
III. Making sure a source is scholarly (pp. 9-10)
IV. Getting access to a scholarly source (pp. 11-15)
V. Reading your scholarly sources (pp. 16-17)
VI. Using & citing your sources (pp. 18-20)

Your final paper will be built on (A) your primary research of a media object, its production, and/or its reception, and (B) your use of relevant secondary academic sources. In other words, in light of what you learn reading (B) secondary scholarly sources, you will do hands-on analysis of (A) your media phenomenon.

Each (B) scholarly piece you read should help you in your hands-on analysis of your (A) media phenomenon by providing one or more of the following:

- Productive **context** on cultural matters, or on a specific text, medium, genre, media technology, etc.
- A useful model of a **research method**.
- Or helpful **concepts or theories** that you can apply to your phenomenon. Conversely, the reading could provide a theory or concept that breaks down in the face of your phenomenon, opening an opportunity for you to propose a new concept or theory.

But how do you find the right literature for your project, get access to materials kept behind paywalls, and cite sources properly? Let’s work through this together!
WHAT DO YOU NEED SOURCES FOR?

Figuring out what exact mix of scholarly literature is necessary for your project is not a one-step activity. It’s a complex, iterative* process that takes time. Often the act of looking for good scholarly literature will take you in new and exciting directions you couldn’t have imagined. (*Iteration involves repeating a process—in this case searching—and each time you do it you get closer to your desired result.)

Searching for scholarly literature is often used to do two things:

1) You might need to look through scholarly work on a variety of topics to figure out the project you want to do.

2) Or, after you already have a vision for your project, you might need to look at scholarly literature on different topics to flesh out to support different aspects of your project.

The document on “Getting Started” has some helpful suggestions for (1) starting your search from scratch. Here we’ll start with an example of (2) finding literature to support a project you already have in mind.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Media, Cultural Identity, and the Case of the Inamauri Panpipers*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Does first-hand analysis of these primary media sources</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• VIDEO - A group based in the Solomon Islands did a panpipe + vocal cover of Ed Sheeran’s “Shape of You” (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eaSfQ-qEEKc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eaSfQ-qEEKc</a>). The student analyzed the music video as a text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• INDUSTRY SOURCE – communicated with the group that posted the video to YouTube to learn about their goals and intentions.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Puts their analysis in conversation with secondary scholarly sources on...</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Globalization and cultural identity (AKA media imperialism debate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Music, intercultural communication, and cultural exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Digital platforms and participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The media of the Solomon Islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thesis</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I examine how music moves across geographic and cultural borders. Based on a textual analysis of “Shape of You” as performed by the Inamauri Panpipers and Mikaere, a music group from the Solomon Islands, I argue that globalized Western popular music can be recoded by less dominant cultures and nations in meaningful ways to proliferate national identities, negotiate a global sense of place, and participate in a cultural exchange of media.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Above is the description of a project completed by an MA student for JAMS 620. The student knew that she wanted to write about music and cultural exchange. Since the beginning of global media studies, debate has raged on the topic of media imperialism. It’s the idea that the media and culture of richer countries dominates and drowns out the cultures of poorer countries. This student went looking for a media text that would allow her to talk about these issues in a way that mattered to her. Specifically, she wanted to talk about the positive possibilities of musical exchange.

First she identified a really cool media object to study – a cover video of Ed Sheeran’s “Shape of You” performed by a group called the Inamauri Panpipers and the artist Mikaere who are all based in the Solomon Islands. The group posted it to YouTube, Facebook, iTunes, and Spotify. Next, she set out to find scholarly literature that would support her analysis of the music video. Below, I’ve pulled out some key literature from her bibliography and categorized it. Those marked by an asterisk (*) are course readings.

**Scholarly literature on globalization, cultural identity, and the media imperialism debate**


**Scholarly literature on music, intercultural communication, and cultural exchange**


**Scholarly literature on digital platforms and participation**


**Scholarly literature on the media of the Solomon Islands**

Her sources come from different academic fields, and vary widely in topic. But taken together they provided a solid foundation for her project. Some of the pieces provide cultural **context** on the Solomon Islands. Others provide **context** on popular music as a medium, and trace the history of global music exchange. Some demonstrate **methods** of how to analyze music, musical exchange, and digital video. Still others offer **concepts and theories** for thinking about globalization, cultural exchange, and digital participation. Many pieces provided a mix of context, methods, and theory.

Figuring out what sources she needed was something she worked out over time. You can’t really go into a project like this with certainty about what literature you might need or what things you might find in your first-hand analysis of your primary media texts. Indeed, looking at different pieces of scholarly literature will give you the great ideas you need to execute your project.
SEARCHING FOR SCHOLARLY SOURCES

Whether you are looking for something general on a specific topic before you know the exact shape of your project, or you are looking for something specific to round out your literature review for a project that’s already taken shape, the tools and tricks for finding scholarly literature are the same. (See “Getting Started” document for suggestions on how to start from scratch when you don’t yet have any topic in mind.)

Since searching is an open-ended activity, which can be stressful, consider setting aside a block of time for searching with a definitive cut-off. Even better, set aside few shorter chunks of time on different days. Give your brain some time to process what you’re exploring. Know that there isn’t a perfect answer to be found if you sink endless time into hunting for scholarly literature. Knowing you’ve set an end time will make the task less daunting.

Step 1: Brainstorming

Start by brainstorming some key terms to use in your searching. You should come up with as many relevant terms as possible because searching slightly different words can sometimes get you very different results. Let’s say I think I want to use “Despacito” as my case study and think about the politics of which songs and artists get global circulation. I would search for various combinations of terms.

- Race, reggaeton
- Transnational, reggaeton
- Justin Bieber, global music
- Luis Fonsi, reggaeton
- Daddy Yankee, Puerto Rico
- Global, reggaeton
- Colorism, Puerto Rico, music
- Despacito, reggaeton
- Ethnicity, music, Puerto Rico

If I’ve found loads of good content before I’ve used that many of my brainstormed word combos, that’s great. I can stop and assess if I need to keep searching further or if I have the tools I need for this stage of the process. After you’ve written your proposal, and probably even after you’ve written your literature review, you’ll have to come back and search again. That’s normal.

Tip: Pay attention to the results themselves. Let them guide you to better key terms you hadn’t even thought of yet.
Step 2: Search using (1) scholar.google.com, the (2) UWM library search tool - https://uwm.edu/libraries/search/ (make sure you are signed in!), (3) JSTOR - https://www.jstor-org.ezproxy.lib.uwm.edu/, or (4) books.google.com.

Scholar.google.com is frustrating in that you often have to go through another step after you find a source to see if it’s peer-reviewed and another yet to see if we have it at UWM. But its search powers are by far the strongest!

Once you open up a set of search results you can:

- Narrow your search by toggling options on the left-hand side.
  - Even better, in the UWM library search engine you can select to only see peer-reviewed materials.

- On Google Scholar - See what other publications cited any given piece by clicking the “cited by #” link under each search result.
  - This is particularly helpful if something seems really relevant but is also very old. Things that have cited it, by definition, have to be newer.
  - This will open a new window of results and you can even search within these results by checking the box under the original result on this new page.

- See what Google thinks are related articles by clicking the “Related articles” link under each search result.
Step 3: Take a good look at any result that looks particularly promising

- Many scholarly sources provide an info-packed abstract or couple paragraph blurb that you can read to get a sense of what an article or book is doing. You don’t have to start reading the whole thing right now, though. This is just the searching phase.
• In a notebook or a word processing file **take some notes.** You’re not going to remember a month from now why you were looking at any given source. Help future you out.

• **Take a look through the references** if you have access. Many publishers of scholarly articles will let you look at the references even if access to the full article is behind a paywall. Frequently, you can find an even juicier source in the references than the one you’re looking at now.
  o And if you look at even just a few different article’s references, you’ll start to see patterns. Meaning, you’ll be able to see what sources everyone working on a general topic are citing as key pieces of literature.

**Step 4: Set what you’ve found aside and keep looking**

• **Manage your citations** – a little work up front can save you a big headache later. Here are a few options:
  o You can use built-in technologies to pin or save citations through Google or the UWM Library site.
  o You can copy and paste citations and links into a word processing file.
  o You can use citation management software like Zotero, Endnote, Mendeley, or (UWM’s choice, for which they provide support) Refworks - [https://guides.library.uwm.edu/refworks](https://guides.library.uwm.edu/refworks).
  o Many of these citation management tools also allow you to tag keywords or write notes to yourself.

• Check in with yourself. Has your searching opened up new doors or sent you down new paths. Actively decide which avenues you intend to explore further and how much longer you can spend on the activity. Plan accordingly.

**“Phone a Friend” - You’re not in this alone.** If all else fails, or you just want some backup support…

• Ask a librarian! In person during business hours or online, 24/7 - [https://uwm.edu/libraries/ask/](https://uwm.edu/libraries/ask/).
• Buddy up with a 620 classmate and work through the task together.
• Come see me in office hours and we’ll search together.
MAKING SURE A SOURCE IS SCHOLARLY

Not all sources are created equal! The gold standard for scholarly work is **PEER-REVIEWED**. That means multiple scholars volunteered their time to carefully read the work and offer feedback, often multiple times over many months. Scholarly publishing takes a *long time* because we try to hold such work to very high ethical and quality standards.

If a journal is peer-reviewed, it will loudly announce it in the “About” section on its website. You can tell a book is peer-reviewed based on which press published it (see chart below).

On a more practical note, if you do not have a sufficient number of scholarly sources for certain assignment, you cannot receive full credit.

**Overall, the quickest way to tell if something is a scholarly source is to just generally look at it.**

- Does the text **look visually simple and kind of boring**?
- Does it look like a **wall of text**?
- Is it written in specialized language (i.e. **field-specific jargon**)?
- Is it **written by scholars whose credentials are prominently noted**?
- Does it include **citations** throughout and a **reference list** at the end?

These are all great indicators.

For more details and examples, see the chart on the next page.
# Differences Between Scholarly & Popular Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SCHOLARLY</th>
<th>POPULAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>Detailed report of original research or experiment.</td>
<td>Secondary report or discussion. May include personal narrative, opinion, anecdotes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Author</strong></td>
<td>Author’s credentials are given, usually a scholar with subject expertise.</td>
<td>Author may or may not be named. Often a professional writer. May or may not have subject expertise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience</strong></td>
<td>Scholars, researchers, students.</td>
<td>General public, interested non-specialists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>Specialized terminology or jargon of the field. Requires prior knowledge.</td>
<td>Vocabulary in general usage. Understandable to most readers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What does a page look like?</strong></td>
<td>Like a wall of text. If images are included they are carefully captioned, and explicitly discussed and unpacked in the text.</td>
<td>The more pleasant it is to look at, and the more glossy images included, the more likely to is popular.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>References/Bibliography</strong></td>
<td>Required. All quotes and facts can be verified.</td>
<td>Rare. Scant, if any, information about sources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Publishers</strong></td>
<td>University presses (e.g. Oxford University Press, New York University Press) and a small set of scholarly publishers, such as Verso, Polity, Sage, Routledge, Palgrave, and Springer.</td>
<td>Major media corporations, such as Hearst, Time, Inc., or Conde Nast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Where to find them</strong></td>
<td>Usually only available in university libraries.</td>
<td>Widely available (book, drug, and grocery stores).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Carefully reviewed or vetted?</strong></td>
<td>Yes! All quality scholarly work is peer-reviewed by multiple scholars who volunteer as reviewers.</td>
<td>Work is reviewed to the journalistic standards of the particular publication, which vary widely.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: This chart is built out from a University of Michigan handout that no longer appears to be posted to the web. My thanks to the librarian who thoughtfully made it and shared it.
GETTING ACCESS TO A SCHOLARLY SOURCE

So you’ve found a cool reading. That’s great! Unfortunately, it can be a pain to get access to scholarly sources. Never fear! Our library is here to help.

Rule: **Never. Never ever. NEVER NEVER EVER pay money for a scholarly reading.** Your tuition pays for the great library services this university provides, which can get you access to that article that’s currently behind a paywall. You just need to learn how to do it, and leave a little time for our librarians to work their magic. (Yes. Librarians are magical.)

Step 1: See if it’s freely available

Some accessible article PDFs turn up with the google scholar search result. Some scholars post their own writing to their website, like Lisa Nakamura. Sometimes other academics have posted PDFs to their course websites as readings.

- For all those reasons, it can be worthwhile to do a quick google search for “[title of article] pdf.”
- Of course, be careful. Use common sense when downloading a file from a site you don’t know and trust.

Step 2: Search for the reading in the UWM Library (make sure you are signed in!). Sometimes we have immediate online access.
• Yay! We have access to this reading. **Make sure when you acquire the full PDF that you also gather all the necessary info for citing the source.**
  
  o For an article: author(s), article title, year/date, pages, journal title, volume and issue numbers.
  
  
  o For a book: author/editors, title, year, publisher, city of publication.
  
  o Again, citation management systems can help automate the process, but they are not perfect. Check that you’ve really zapped up all the necessary data.

• Even when UWM technically has access, this system is not foolproof. Sometimes links just don’t work, or databases don’t communicate properly. Be patient. Try to work around issues. When all else fails, ask a librarian - [https://uwm.edu/libraries/ask/](https://uwm.edu/libraries/ask/).
Step 3: Search for the reading in the UWM Library (make sure you are signed in!), but unfortunately we don’t have immediate access. You’ll have to place a request with ILL.

- This article didn’t turn up when we searched for it. What to do next?
- Go back to the Google Scholar search result. Click on it to get more info. I’ve put pink boxes around the bits of info we’ll need.
• Now we know the name of the journal in which it was published. We can then search for the journal name, *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy*, in the UWM Library portal.

• Follow the Request a Copy prompts to get to the Inter-Library Loan (ILL) page.
• Use the citation info you gathered from scholar.google.com to fill out the form & submit your request. Yeah. It’s ugly. But it works!

![Interlibrary Loan-ILLiad](image)

• Sometimes the Request a Copy link won’t work.
  o No worries! You can reach the ILL page without going through the UWM library site. Interlibrary loan page - [https://wisconsin.hosts.atlas-sys.com/nonshib/gzn/](https://wisconsin.hosts.atlas-sys.com/nonshib/gzn/)
  o Or you can search google for “UWM interlibrary loan” and follow the links.
  o Under these conditions, you’ll need your student ID number handy to sign in to the ILL system.

• To be polite to the hardworking ILL folks, you should carefully check that the book, article, journal, etc. you want isn’t something we have access to at UWM before you make an ILL request.

• If you’re still having trouble with the system, ask a librarian - [https://uwm.edu/libraries/ask/](https://uwm.edu/libraries/ask/). It’s easiest to go in person during business hours, but online chat also works.

And of course, **leave some time for the article to arrive.** You’ll typically receive an email letting you know it’s available and how to access it within 1-3 days, but sometimes the process takes longer. **You cannot expect this process to work if you start searching the night before the assignment is due.** Librarians are magic, but they can’t turn back time.

For UWM Library videos on finding and getting articles - [https://guides.library.uwm.edu/infolit/module4](https://guides.library.uwm.edu/infolit/module4)
READING YOUR SCHOLARLY SOURCES

When you first start reading scholarly sources, it can be a little intimidating and confusing. It’s true for everyone, even your professors! But don’t worry, you are absolutely ready to be a junior scholar yourself.

We’ll talk in class about how to most effectively and efficiently read scholarly sources. And there are some other resources posted to our course site, like Jessica Calarco’s blog post, “Beyond the Abstract: Reading for Meaning in Academia,” and Paul Edward’s “How to Read a Book.” But here we’ll cover the basics.

1. **Every piece of scholarly writing is written to do something.**
   It’s meant to enter an already-existing conversation and, hopefully, change it!

2. **Every piece of scholarly writing is written from a specific and limited, partial point of view.**
   Scholarly writing has been heavily vetted/refereed, and most scholars do their work in good faith, trying to make the world better. But scholarly work is not perfect or infallible. You are allowed to question a reading’s arguments, evidence, theorization, and/or conclusions.

3. **You are reading each piece of scholarly writing to do something with it.**
   For class sessions, that’s to learn about a field of study and about interesting phenomena. When you are reading for your research project, you are trying to understand the shape of the research that’s already been done, and the shape of the conversations going on about it, so that you can enter the conversation.

**Go into reading your sources with a purpose** that can guide you and help you decide how carefully you need to read it, how much time you should spend, and what kinds of details you should write down.

**Example 1:** Let’s say you are reading a piece with the intention that it will be a cornerstone of you your final paper. Then you know you should fully mark up your reading on the page and, separately in a notebook or file, take thorough notes on it. That way, weeks later when you are writing your paper, you can remember what was interesting about the piece, where you disagree with it, and how you want to enter the scholarly conversation it highlights.

**Example 2:** On the other hand, if you are a reading a piece because you want to use just its method, you might take very careful notes about the method, but only lightly sketch out the rest.
Marking up a reading on the page involves highlighting key terms and ideas, but also writing out what you’re thinking as you’re reading.

- What questions does x claim bring up for you?
- Maybe star ideas you really like and write “???” next to parts you don’t think make sense.
- Or draw an eyeball next to something you want to look up afterward.
- I like to write “DEF” next to sentences where key terms are defined.
- Most importantly, make a note in the text when and where something gives you a good idea for your own specific project!

Basically, you’re producing signage for Future You, so she can quickly remember the things Current Reading You has really fresh in her brain right now.

For those readings you really want to wrap your brain around, it’s crucial to keep track of the following five things. (I recommend doing this for all course readings. It’s kind of wild to put in the effort to read the whole thing, but then not take the extra 5-10 minutes afterward to jot down the notes that will help you remember it.)

Five Key Things to Note Down

1. What is the topic? What’s the phenomenon being studied?
2. What are the text’s key arguments? What is it trying to stick up for?
3. What is the evidence that supports these arguments? What material does the author bring to prove the points she makes?
4. What are its conclusions? Do you agree with them?
5. Who is the author? What is their background (geographic, academic)? How does it impact what they’ve written?

If you have these five things noted down, it will be so much easier to return to a source and apply it, whether that’s to your paper, to a reading response, or on your exam.

In the end, if you read and take notes strategically with your purpose in mind, it’ll be so much easier to work your sources into your writing. The crucial point here is to be aware what you want to do with your sources and to always be thinking about how they relate to your project.
USING & CITING YOUR SOURCES

Now that you’ve got some great sources, how do you work them into your writing and cite them properly? Let’s find out!

For this class, you are required to use in-text parenthetical citations and provide a reference list at the end. You may use any citation style of your choosing, but you must apply it consistently and accurately.

Why is it so important to cite my sources carefully?

1. It shows that you give due credit to other people’s work.
2. It makes it possible for others to follow your citations back to the sources, so they can make their own assessment of them, or deepen their reading.
3. It saves you from being accused of plagiarism. (At UWM, a range of responses to plagiarism are possible, including suspension and expulsion.)
4. And it makes sure your work doesn’t look sloppy.

According UWM’s policies, plagiarism includes:

- Directly quoting the words of others without using quotation marks or indented format to identify them; or,
- Using sources of information (published or unpublished) without identifying them; or,
- Paraphrasing materials or ideas of others without identifying the sources.

Many students don’t know that paraphrasing without credit counts as plagiarism, at UWM and in general. That’s why it’s always safer for students to over-cite rather than under-cite their sources.

To get a sense of what putting our sources to use and parenthetical citations might look like, let’s check out a paragraph from an undergraduate student’s paper. This paper uses APA style. As you read, notice the different elements of her citations (i.e. author, title, year, page numbers) and how the student mixes her arguments with those of the scholars she cites.

(For more on her project, look at the box labeled “A New Hero” in the “Getting Started and Past Sample Projects” document.)

Depictions of Muslims in US media often rely on stereotypes and the othering of these groups. In “Conquering Evil: Arab-Americans’ and others’ interpretations of ethnicity in action-adventure heroes and villains,” media scholar Karin G. Wilkins (2008) examines the existence of
Arab villains and heroes within American movies. Middle-Eastern or South-Asian characters are often a mashup of stereotypes from different cultures. An Arab-American participant in Wilkins’ research said, “they look Indian, but they are supposed to be Arab...they kind of spout gobbled gook that doesn’t really mean anything” (p.14). The characters are quite clearly based on misconceptions rather than actual cultures. In the typical dichotomy between heroes and villains, people from other countries are more believable villains because they provide contrast to the “all-American hero” (p. 14). On the other hand, screenwriters sometimes add spice and surprise by flipping the pairing. According to Wilkins, the idea of “an Arab hero against a White villain seems to defy normative logic on the conditions of separating good from evil” (p. 19). Whether the hero or the villain, Muslims and Arabs in US media are singled out as inherently different from “us.” Such othering occurs even in niche media. In “Race and Ethnicity in Post-Network American Television: From MTV Desi to Outsourced,” media scholars Lia Wolock and Aswin Punathambekar (2015) point out that even in a show such as Outsourced, which was set in India and had a dominantly South-Asian cast, “the premise of the show frames its [South Asian] characters as perpetual cultural foreigners” (p. 12). The show frequently used Indian stereotypes in its portrayals, and the characters and storylines still abided by American values (i.e. offering call center support for an American company selling Americana) (p. 12). All of these types of portrayals can be problematic because they rely on American ideas of other cultures, rather than on the cultures’ ideas of themselves.

References

**Things to consider after reading:**

- At a minimum, proper in-text parenthetical citations include author name(s), year, and page number(s).
- Additionally, the first time the student brings up a reading, she provides the title of the article and the research field of the author(s) to help the reader get a sense of who the researchers are and what their research is about.
- Wherever possible, the student notes the exact page of the idea she is discussing.
- The student makes clear (1) what the researchers studied, (2) what the researchers found, and (3) how it’s relevant to her project.

**Citation management – Pros & Cons**

In this day and age, basically all seasoned scholars use citation management software to help them keep and organize citations and build bibliographies / reference lists. Of course, as with all software, there is a learning curve. If this is the only research paper you’ll ever write, it is probably easier to do your references by hand.

There are a handful of programs and extensions you can use, like Zotero, Endnote, or Mendeley. UWM provides support for Refworks. The UWM Library has video tutorials and other resources to help you get started with Refworks - [https://guides.library.uwm.edu/refworks](https://guides.library.uwm.edu/refworks).

Note: **The bibliographies or reference lists that these programs produce are NEVER 100% CORRECT.** You are the human here. It is your responsibility to provide correct and properly formatted bibliographic entries. Know the rules and check your bibliographies carefully.

**Style guide, citation, and bibliography resources:**

- [http://guides.library.uwm.edu/citationstyles](http://guides.library.uwm.edu/citationstyles) - UWM guides to various citation styles
- [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/) - Purdue’s Online Writing Lab is basically the gold standard in library citation guides.