

Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies  
620: Seminar in Global Media

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

10% of grade

Over the course of the semester, students will develop their research and writing skills through a multi-step project. Reviewing relevant scholarly literature and writing up what you find, as it relates to your project, is the second step.

**The purpose of this assignment**

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. The purpose of this scholarly literature review essay is to get you working with your secondary sources (B). It will help you dig into them, identify how they are helpful to you, and develop your own thinking on relevant media research.

**It should be clear from reading your literature review (1) the general topic of each scholarly reading you cover and (2) how each reading is helpful to you in the execution of your own project.**

Each piece of scholarly literature you cover should provide *at least one* 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 a helpful theory that you can apply to your phenomenon. Conversely, the reading could provide a theory that breaks down in the face of your phenomenon, opening an opportunity for you to propose a new theory.

By the time you write your final paper, you will have processed this background literature and be able to enter the scholarly conversation with your own contribution.

**Guidelines:**

- 750 -1000 words for undergraduates, 500 - 750 words longer for graduate students.
- Minimum of 4 secondary sources for undergraduates, minimum of 6 for graduate students.
  - Sources that count toward your minimum could be chapters from a scholarly book or articles published in peer-reviewed scholarly

journals. Check the “Working with Scholarly Sources” document for help verifying that your selected secondary sources are scholarly.

- You can use multiple chapters from the same scholarly edited volume if they are by different authors.
- Proper in-text parenthetical citations and a full bibliography at the end in a citation style of your choice (recommended: APA, MLA, Chicago). This will also include a citation for your primary media text (since that will come up in your introductory and concluding paragraphs,) and any other media texts or primary sources you reference throughout this paper.
- Structure
  - An introductory paragraph that describes your topic and project, and previews the kinds of secondary sources you will be discussing. (Perhaps grouping them into a couple bodies of pertinent literature.)
  - Body paragraphs will describe each source, including the name and field of the author(s), and the title. Most importantly, you must summarize your source’s topic, central argument, and relevant claims, and address how it’s useful for your research project.
  - A concluding paragraph that summarizes the body of relevant secondary scholarship for this project.

### **Grading**

Your paper will be graded on the appropriateness of sources, the quality of your synthetic summaries, the insightful connection of secondary literature to your project, clarity and polish of writing, and proper formatting and mechanics.

### **The chunky-clunky literature review problem**

It can be difficult to go from summarizing and responding to separate, discrete scholarly articles and chapters to a smooth essay with a strong flow and argument. It is understood that this is a skill with which undergraduate students will have less experience. While all should strive to produce a pleasing essay with a smooth and organic discussion of their pertinent scholarly literature—and that is something everyone will work toward in their final paper—*undergraduate students* should focus first and foremost on clearly explaining what each secondary source is, and how it is relevant for their larger project.

*Graduate students* should challenge themselves to, additionally, produce cleaner, more compelling writing.

### **Proper formatting & mechanics includes:**

- 12-point serif font. Double spaced. 1” margins.
- All pages numbered.
- Accurate in-text parenthetical citations and bibliographic entries.

- Well-crafted, grammatically correct sentences and paragraphs.
- Correct spelling and word usage.
- No typographical errors.

Don't forget, the **"Working with Scholarly Sources"** document posted to our Canvas site has lots of relevant info and tips for this assignment. Topics include how to get access to scholarly articles that are behind paywalls and how to properly employ in-text citations.

There's even a section that takes a look at a successful student paper and shows the different areas of scholarly literature she reviewed to build the foundation for her project.