



SPA198H: A Brief History of Love in the Western World

Library Research Seminar

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E.J. PRATT LIBRARY

Research Methods Assignment

1. Please go to uoft.me/spa198
2. Click on **Research Methods Assignment** (left-hand side).

Getting Started with Academic Research

- SPA198 Research Guide:
<http://uoft.me/spa198/>
- E.J. Pratt Library:
<https://library.vicu.utoronto.ca/>
- University of Toronto Libraries:
<http://oneseach.library.utoronto.ca/>.

Overview

By attending this seminar, we will learn:

- what the **peer review process** is and how it relates to the **scholarly communication cycle**
- the best strategies for locating books, journal articles and other **academic publications**
- the **criteria** that we can apply to determine which publications are the best sources for completing research assignments
- the **advantages** of consulting printed books (and not limiting your research to online sources).

What Are Some of the Challenges You Encounter When You Start to Research Your Topic?

Tips for Research Success

- Become friends with librarians and talk to us often
- Begin your work early
- Know the starting points for research in your discipline
- Consult a rich variety of sources (print and electronic)
- Browse the stacks to discover new ideas and approaches, and to further develop your topic.

What is a “Scholarly Journal Article”?

“Scholarly journal articles report on **original research** by experts in a particular academic discipline. Often they go through a **peer-review process**, which means that they are evaluated by reputable scholars in the field before they are published.”

What is a “Book Review”?

Book reviews are also published in scholarly journals, but they do not contain original research and are not peer-reviewed.

The purpose of a review is to summarize and evaluate a recently published title that contains original research on a specific topic.

Often, reviewers contextualize the ideas presented by an author in a particular book within the body of the existing research.

What is a “Literature Review”?

Literature reviews describe and assess original research sources (books and articles) that have been published on a specific topic by scholars.

A literature review is usually part of the introduction to a scholarly article.

The purpose of a literature review is to summarize ideas that have been established on a subject and analyze what their strengths and weaknesses are.

Reference Sources: Encyclopedias, Dictionaries & Handbooks

- Reference sources contain entries which provide an overview of a specific topic
- They are designed to provide background reading for your own development/refinement of a topic
- They provide such introductory information as definitions, major works and scholars who study the topic, the importance of studying a particular issue or idea, and a works cited list.

Example: *Handbook of Emotions* (4th. Ed.)

- A comprehensive, multidisciplinary compendium on what is currently known about emotion in human behavior
- Part one, “Interdisciplinary Perspectives” (page 3) includes chapters on history, philosophy, and sociology of emotions, including love
- Chapter twenty-one, “Gender and Emotion: Theory, Finding, and Context” (page 369) examines the construct of gender in the context of research on gender and emotion (identity, gender roles, and sexual orientation).

Example: *Women and Gender in Medieval Europe: An Encyclopedia*

- A comprehensive, multidisciplinary compendium on the daily life and the experiences of women in the Middle Ages
- The entries also discuss the evolving notions of masculinity during the medieval period
- Consult the following parts of the book: Table of Contents, Introduction, Alphabetical List of Entries, and Thematic List of Entries to identify a topic of interest

Group Exercise #1: Consulting Reference Sources

In groups of two (or more) search the encyclopedia to find an entry related to gender in the Middle Ages.

Then, answer the following questions:

- 1) How did you use the encyclopedia to identify an entry that interests you?
- 2) How is the entry arranged?
- 3) What type of information does it provide about the topic?
- 4) How can you use it to find additional sources?

Group Exercise #2: Formulating an Initial Search Strategy

In groups of two (or more) skim the entry entitled "courtly love" by E. Jane Burns. Then, answer the following questions:

- 1) How is the entry arranged?
- 2) What type of information does it provide about the topic?
- 3) What are the titles of some primary sources examined in the entry?
- 4) How can you use it to find additional sources?

Formulating an Initial Search Strategy

- **Scholar:** E. Jane Burns
- **Key terms:** courtly love, courtly literature, courtliness, courtship, romances, French literature, resistance, subversion, cross-dressing, clothes, attire, costume, gender, gender fluidity, gender binary, femininity, masculinity, women, men, sexuality...
- **Time period:** medieval (second half of the thirteenth century)
- **Primary source:** *Roman de Silence*
- **Secondary sources:** *Courtly Love Undressed* and "Courtly Ideology and Women's Place in Medieval French Literature."

Reference Sources: Encyclopedias, Dictionaries & Handbooks

- Reference sources often consist of numerous volumes and authors (in addition to editors)
- Compiling, editing, and publishing an edited, multivolume work is a long-term process, often spanning several years or more
- Subsequent and/or revised editions of the same title may take years to appear in print
- Therefore, they do not cite current and/or recent research literature on a specific topic

The Library Catalogue

- Searches the collections of all (44) libraries on the three campuses.
- Books
- Ebooks
- Periodicals (*titles* of scholarly journals, popular magazines, newspapers, but not *individual* articles)
- Audio-visual material (such as streaming video and DVDs), maps, and government publications.

Searching the Catalogue

- A keyword ("courtliness")
- A book title (*Courtly Love Undressed*)
- A journal title (*Romance Notes*)
- An author's (or editor's) name (E. Jane Burns)
- Subject
- A specific call number (or a book number)
- Series title (including *Palgrave Studies in the History of Emotions*).

Arrangement of Our Books

- **B:** Philosophy, Psychology, and Religion
- **D:** World History and History of Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, etc.
- **E** and **F:** History of the Americas
- **H:** Social Sciences (including sociology and women and gender studies)
- **P:** Language and Literature (including literary criticism).

Arrangement of Our Books

Reference: main floor

Stacks (the general collection):

- **A–G:** second floor (directly below the EClass)
- **H–Z:** ground floor (one floor below the main floor).

Get to Love Our Stacks ♥

Screen displays (such as on your phone or laptop), are typically not read (for a variety of reasons) with as much attention as print formats.

Therefore, it is also important to include printed publications in your research for **in-depth analysis**.

Books are vital because they provide needed **contextual**, **theoretical**, and **conceptual information** indispensable for understanding a given topic. Concentrated, careful reading helps generate ideas that lead to further investigation, and offer balanced analysis on a wide range of issues.

Dilevko, Juris, and Lisa Gotlieb. "Print Sources in an Electronic Age: A Vital Part of the Research Process for Undergraduate Students." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, vol. 28, no. 6, pp. 381–392.

RESEARCH METHODS ASSIGNMENT

Narrowing Your Topic: The 5Ws

Gender

When? Classical Antiquity? Medieval period?

Who? Focus on a subpopulation, institution, or key thinker

Where? Limit by geography

What? Limit by aspect or facet of topic
 – Masculinity? Femininity?
 – Emotions: e.g. courtly love
 – The Arts e.g. literature

Why? How? Disciplinary perspective or theoretical lens

Topic:

Masculinity in the Medieval Literature of Courtly Love

Search Strategy:

1. Identify main concepts in topic
2. Brainstorm synonyms to use as keywords
3. Select appropriate tools to search

Literature Database Search

Concept #1		Concept #2		Concept #3
Medieval	AND	Masculinity	AND	Courtly Love
OR Middle Ages	AND		AND	Amour courtois
OR	AND		AND	Fin'amour

Journal Indexes

Also known as “journal databases”: research tools that contain specific types of research literature not found in the library catalogue.

Depending on the scope, a database can be used to locate the following:

- journal articles
- magazine articles
- newspaper articles
- books and book chapters (print and online)
- book/film/theatre reviews.

Searching Journal Indexes

Journal databases can be searched using:

- a chosen topic (using keywords and subject headings)
- a chosen author
- a known title
- and other parameters.

MLA International Bibliography

- Includes book chapters, journal articles, and Web sites related to literature, literary theory and criticism

Formulating an Initial Search Strategy

- **Scholars:** Ute Frevert
- **Key terms:** affect, passions, emotions, feelings, sentiment, love, heart, courtship, femininity, masculinity, gender, women, men, sexuality...
- **Time period:** ancient, medieval, early modern, modern, nineteenth century...
- **Subject headings:** Emotions—History, Love, Love in literature, Love poetry, Love-letters, Love in motion pictures, Seduction in literature...

Obtaining Research Assistance



- In-person research help
- Book a research consultation
- Email research help
- Chat with a librarian.