

Assignment 6: Locating and Evaluating Alternative Press Resources

Please list the names of all group members here:

Purpose of the assignment: This assignment will introduce you to the fundamentals of understanding what the alternative press publications are and how you might go about locating them using the library. In this assignment I will be looking to see that you are able to:

- perform a search using appropriate Boolean operators, phrases, and other advanced search techniques to construct a well focused and narrow search that locates two alternative press publications supporting your thesis statement and research questions
- cite your full-text articles using the appropriate MLA citation style
- explain how your selected articles supports specific aspects of your thesis statement, research questions, and research focus
- evaluate your articles based upon clear and specific criteria

Introduction: To complete this assignment you will be working with your assigned group to locate and evaluate two alternative press publications (periodical articles). The alternative press is not well represented in many traditional periodical databases. Most libraries do not collect alternative press books, DVDs, and CDs in the same manner as they do material from “mainstream” publishers. The alternative press presents ideas and arguments that are not often found in “mainstream” material as many of the ideas contradict ruling ideologies and perspectives. You can use alternative press resources to complement the information you find in more traditional periodical and newspaper databases.

Complete the following instructions:

1. Remind me of your focused topic by writing out your argumentative thesis statement here, including any revisions you have made along the way.
2. Read the following descriptions and then choose one a databases you think might have material to support your focused topic (note: these databases can all be linked from MCTC Library’s homepage or under the Complete List of databases):
 - a. **Alt-Press Watch:** A full text multi-disciplinary database from *ProQuest* comprised of the newspapers, magazines and journals of the alternative and independent press.
 - b. **Alternative Health Watch:** A full-text database from *EbscoHost* of periodicals, peer-reviewed journals, academic and professional publications, magazines, consumer newsletters and newspapers, research reports, and association newsletters focused on complementary, alternative and integrated approaches to health care and wellness.
 - c. **Ethnic News Watch:** An interdisciplinary, bilingual (English and Spanish) and comprehensive full text database of newspapers, magazines and journals from ethnic, minority and native presses from *ProQuest*.
3. Using keywords, controlled vocabulary and incorporating any other appropriate advanced search techniques, tell me which database you chose and exactly how you located an alternative press article that deals with one or more specific aspects of your topic. Be sure to mention if the database you selected recommended any useful suggested topics or subjects with your search results and if the suggestions were helpful in your search for an article.
4. Include a screen capture of the article and provide an MLA citation.

5. Explain how this article is helpful in answering your research questions and supporting your argumentative thesis statement. Be sure to mention if it provides information that your other resources do not and/or if it presents the information from a different perspective. Be very detailed and specific in your explanation.
6. **Evaluate** your article based upon the criteria in your *Evaluation Resources* handout.
7. Using the same or different database, locate a second alternative press publication. Using keywords, controlled vocabulary and incorporating any other appropriate advanced search techniques, tell me which database you chose and exactly how you located a second alternative press article that deals with one or more specific aspects of your topic. Be sure to mention if the database you selected recommended any useful suggested topics or subjects with your search results and if the suggestions were helpful in your search for an article.
8. Explain how this article is helpful in answering your research questions and supporting your argumentative thesis statement. Be sure to mention if it provides information that your other resources do not and/or if it presents the information from a different perspective. Discuss how the second alternative press article complements the first one you located for this assignment. Be very detailed and specific in your explanation.
9. **Evaluate** your article based upon the criteria in your *Evaluation Resources* handout.

Assess your group work as a whole using the rubric on the next page. Mark the level in each assessment category that you think describes your group's work. I will mark where I think your work falls and you can compare the results.

Locating and Evaluating Alternative Press Resources Rubric

| Requirement | Insufficient (D or F level) 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 | Basic (C level) 7 7.5 | Proficient (B level) 8 8.5 | Advanced (A level) 9 9.5 10 |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <p><i>The student:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Clearly articulated the process used to identify and locate resources.</i> • <i>Used specific and effective search techniques appropriate for the topic.</i> • <i>Selected resources that were appropriate for the topic and demonstrated how resources support the thesis statement and research topic.</i> • <i>Evaluated each resource according to specific evaluation criteria. The student provided clear and specific evaluations.</i> • <i>Accurately used MLA citation style</i> | <p>Research process is not clearly stated or is confused in its application. Research process does not adequately take account of the topic focus and is much too broad in application.</p> <p>Consistent mistakes are made in applying basic search techniques. Confusion related to application of search terms and search techniques.</p> <p>Articles selected were not appropriate for supporting the topic focus. Little to no consistency in the selected resources with the research topic focus.</p> <p>Little or no demonstration of the appropriateness of the articles for topic relevance, or confusion related to resources relevance.</p> <p>Little or no evidence of evaluation of the article. Attempts at evaluation did not adequately fulfill the criteria but were mere assertions of credibility without evidence to support claims.</p> <p>Did not cite works, or citations contained significant errors that would affect retrievability</p> <p>Did not follow directions</p> <p>Did not complete assignment</p> | <p>Research process is articulated but needs more focus and clarity.</p> <p>Basic search techniques are adequately applied but little or no demonstration of advanced search strategies; errors are made in the application of search techniques.</p> <p>The articles are only vaguely related to the research topic, or the articles are very broad and do not adequately deal with specific aspects of the focused topic.</p> <p>Demonstration of the appropriateness of the articles for topic relevance is adequate.</p> <p>Clear evidence of evaluation of the article, but evaluation lacks depth and detail.</p> <p>Cited works, but citation contained errors</p> | <p>Clear research process that adequately takes account of the issues related to the topic.</p> <p>Clear use of basic and advanced search techniques. Minor errors in application of search techniques.</p> <p>Articles are appropriate to specific aspects of the research topic.</p> <p>Demonstration of the appropriateness of the articles is well documented and clearly stated. Good level of detail provided concerning relevance of the articles to the thesis statement, research questions, and topic focus.</p> <p>Clear evaluation of the article based upon the specific criteria. Evaluation is well developed and detailed for most of the criteria.</p> <p>Cited works with minor style errors only</p> | <p>A clear, concise, and well focused research process that takes into account all the relevant issues related to the topic.</p> <p>Used basic and advanced search techniques very well and has applied the search techniques consistently well.</p> <p>The articles are very well focused on the topic or specific sub-aspects of the topic.</p> <p>Demonstration of the appropriateness of the articles is very well documented with in-depth analysis. Clear and detailed explanation of how the articles support the thesis statement, research questions, and the various aspects of the topic focus.</p> <p>Strong and in-depth evaluation of the articles using the specific criteria. Evaluation is very well developed and complete for all criteria.</p> <p>Cited works with no errors</p> |