

Course Journal

YOUR NAME

2025-12-03

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1 Tina Wooldridge Journal

This journal renders as a **book**. Each dated entry is a chapter.

- **MC 501 entries:** 250–300 words
- At the **end of each chapter** you'll see **three prompts**. **Answer only one**.
- Write your answer in the **Response** box; the page shows an **automatic word count** and whether you're in range.

1.0.1 Add a new entry

1. In R, run: `source("scripts/new_journal_entry.R")`
2. A new chapter like `entries/2025-09-01.qmd` appears with three prompts injected.
3. The script updates `_quarto.yml` so the new entry is included in the book.
4. Render the book: click **Render** in RStudio or run `quarto render`.

2 2025-09-10

2.1 Choose one prompt to answer

Prompt A: Think of a media-related issue or question you find interesting (e.g., misinformation on social media, representation in film, streaming habits). Now imagine researching that issue without using any theory—just collecting facts. What would be missing from your findings? Reflect on how theory might deepen or improve your ability to explain or understand the issue. What questions might theory help you ask?

2.2 Response

"Let's use my interest in athletics as an example. A media-related issue is that not a lot of people watch women's sports. This issue has been publicized on social media by different pages and campaigns trying to bring awareness to women's sports. Women's sports lack representation on tv as well as streaming opportunities. Using just facts from platforms like Instagram, you may not necessarily know how misrepresented women are in sports. There are a handful of star female players in multiple leagues who have gained a deserved spotlight. However, that does not fully bring awareness to how women's sports are not as prominent as men's. By just collecting facts, you may learn of some star names like Paige Bruekers and Caitlon Clark, but you will not learn about how they are not paid correctly or how they are some of the first female athletes to help break the stereotype of women's sports not having viewers. You will miss the statistics and research of growth that women's sports have had in the past year. Things missing from your findings could be things like what the selective representation is towards women's sports. Are people encouraging women's sports media in their algorithms? Furthermore, the agenda-setting theory could help imply that because these women are not getting equivalent or more air-time of their sport, streaming services and media organizations are not telling their viewers to think about these events and to prioritize them. This not only impacts television viewership but also influences how digital media platforms prioritize content, shaping what appears in people's social media feeds and search results. You would not know this from simply viewing an ESPN highlight of a woman

on Instagram, or from an Instagram post promoting female athletes. This lack of coverage is a form of media gatekeeping, where a select few control the information the public sees and what they don't. A framing theory lens would also show how even positive coverage can subtly focus on their personal lives or appearances rather than their athletic skill, reinforcing a male-centered view of sports. These decisions are often rooted in historical biases and commercial interests, which prioritize the male sports audience as the primary consumer. This further explains why even star female players receive disproportionately less coverage. Theory helps us ask questions like why things are happening. Why are people starting a campaign on social media about women's sports, but not for men? Why are women in the WNBA petitioning for better pay? Why is there a perception that women's sports are inferior compared to men? These questions cannot be answered by only observing facts, because without theory facts cannot connect numbers, statistics, and growth, and cannot provide a full storyline.

2.3 Word Count & Range Check

****Word count:**** 0

****Required range (MC501):**** 450-500 words

****Status:**** Out of range

3 2025-09-16

3.1 Choose one prompt to answer

Prompt A: Reflect on the metaphor introduced at the beginning of the chapter: walking into a conversation that's already underway. Have you ever had that experience in real life (in class, online, or at work)? What happened when you did—or didn't—take the time to listen first? How does that scenario relate to the role of the literature review in research? Why is it important to understand what's already been said before adding your ideas?

3.2 Response

I have walked into many conversations that were already underway. I think that is a part of socializing and meeting people, but the tact that is important is knowing when to enter or dismiss the conversation. Sometimes I think it can be appropriate to ask what the topic being discussed is, however sometimes observing context on your own can also be the route to go. Nevertheless, without considering context and understanding the topic at hand, it is harder to relate to those in conversation and relate your personal experience to the ones they are talking about. There are unfortunate cases where not taking time to listen can result in making offensive comments because of lack of context and people's backgrounds, which were established prior to entering a conversation. Additionally, when you enter a conversation without listening and provide inaccurate information or input, those previously involved in the conversation could become frustrated with your involvement if it is irrelevant to the topic at hand. If you do not listen properly to a conversation before engaging in it, you could provide the complete opposite that does not pertain to anything others are saying. You could also supply repetitive information that others have already covered. For instance, if someone was mentioning a discount on an item in a conversation and had discussed it with members, it would be repetitive if you entered the conversation and started speaking about the same new discount you came across and could also in turn make participants tune you out because you made an impression of not being fully present in the conversation. This scenario relates to the role of a literature review because in a literature review you are understanding the context

and backgrounds of authors you may have not known previously. The literature review itself is the “listening” part of the research process. It’s the act of reading and synthesizing existing work before you add your own voice (your new research). Understanding where they stand and their positions on certain topics can help the reader, myself in this scenario, understand why the author is arguing specific points and disregarding others. It can help explain or make one curious about certain gaps in the writings. Furthermore, not having context to a literature review makes it hard to review. In order to review and critique something, you have to have full awareness of it and need to know why and how things work. Knowing history of authors and their work can help lend guidance as to why they did not cover certain topics, so where it might be a gap to someone just entering the conversation,. If one was informed of the conversation before reading an article, they may come into it knowing information gaps the article provided. These gaps are often where new research questions come from. A literature review helps you see what has not been said, which is your opportunity to contribute to the conversation.”

3.3 Word Count & Range Check

****Word count:** 491**

****Required range (MC501):** 450-500 words**

****Status:** In range**