

## Examining Sources: Initial Activity

### Instructions

1. Read handout “Characteristics of Popular and Scholarly Writing”. Keep this in your binder as it will be very useful in this first unit.
  
2. Read article from Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Issues in Crime and Criminology  
  
Half of the class will read the “No” side “Raps, Cops and Crime: Clarifying the ‘Cop Killer’ Controversy” by Mark S. Mamm and Jeff Ferrell and the other half of the class will read the “Yes” side “The Murder of Music” by Dennis R. Martin.
  
3. While reading, make notes on article (locate thesis, arguments, evidence, conclusions, interesting points, examples of bias etc.). I recommend reading the article at least twice before answering the questions.
  
4. When completed reading, answer the following questions on a separate piece of paper:
  - a) Who is the author(s) of the work? What are the author’s credentials for writing and publishing this work?
  - b) What is the main question that the author is attempting to answer?
  - c) What is the author’s thesis?
  - d) When judged against your previous understanding of the subject, is the information correct? Is the information objective and impartial? Explain.
  - e) Does the author present evidence to support the interpretations made? Or does the article consist mainly of an individual’s opinion? Explain.
  - f) How would you characterize the article (Scholarly vs popular)? Why? (List the criteria on which you based your decision)
  - g) Do you agree with the author’s argument and interpretations? Explain.
  - h) In your opinion, is this source a valid source for research? Justify your response.

With a partner:

- i) write a summary of the article’s main argument / evidence (maximum 5 points)
- j) meet with students who read opposing article and discuss articles and arguments / summary

**HOMEWORK:** find a source / information on the Internet that provides additional information about the argument and bring it to class tomorrow

Monk, Richard. Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Issues in Crime and Criminology. Connecticut: Dushkin / McGraw Hill, 2001.