

Researching topic #18 -- Traditional media – print (newspapers), network television
 [last revised 3/14/2021]

This prompt offers two kinds of help:

- A brief overview of the kinds of questions you might wish to explore as you study how climate change is likely to affect the food supply;
- A suggested strategy for how to search the literature as you prepare to write your paper.

OVERVIEW – SOCIETAL RESPONSES – TRADITIONAL MEDIA AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(1) Newspapers’ coverage of climate change can vary greatly.

One could start by first distinguishing categories of newspapers:

- “flagships” such as the New York Times, the Washington Post, perhaps some other big city and still independent papers
- newspaper chains that own several papers (or many) and exercise centralized control over content and editorial policy. Example: Gannett.
- Newspapers owned by Rupert Murdoch

Once categories are agreed to and prime examples are chosen, one could ask, for sample papers in each category, over a certain time period (ideally 2005 to the present):

How much coverage?

Content of coverage?

Is climate change acknowledged to be real and serious?

Is the science explained?

[You can research for articles in academic journal articles that have studied how climate has been covered in the print media. You can also do your empirical research – do content analysis of one newspaper over a longish period of time, maybe a year]

(2) One can do a similar analysis of television coverage

Categories?

Networks – ABC, CBS, NBC

Fox

MSNBC

Chain-owned local channels (the chain controls/dictates what news is presented)

How has coverage varied, over time, both the amount of coverage and the content of coverage?

NOTE: The first set of resources I typically recommend for doing the research (those listed on the next page, page 2) will not be particularly helpful for this topic. I suggest you move directly to the resources listed on pp 3 and 4.

SUGGESTED STRATEGY FOR SEARCHING THE LITERATURE

I recommend the following sequence for searching the literature:

- 1 Start with a search of the most recent **reports from top scientific bodies and government agencies**;
- 2 Search **academic articles** using Google Scholar (scholar.google.com);
- 3 Do a **more general search** using Google or another search engine;
- 4 Search the **best newspapers** and **reputable climate websites**.
(NOTE that I do not suggest using Wikipedia.)

1 Search the most recent **reports from top scientific bodies and government agencies**

(NOTE: There are many excellent reports one can consult. You will find a lot of repetition, so you do not need to consult every source. Here I start with a handful of the most recent reports, followed by a more complete list.)

These publications should, in most cases, supply you with all you need:

IPCC's most recent full set of reports:

<https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar5/>

EPA: https://19january2017snapshot.epa.gov/climate-impacts/climate-impacts-society_.html

U.S. Global Change Research Program:

<https://science2017.globalchange.gov/> (the science)

<https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/> (the impacts)

American Meteorological Society:

www.ametsoc.net/sotc2017/StateoftheClimate2017_lowres.pdf

A more complete list of best scientific and governmental sources:

International

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP)
World Meteorological Organization

Agencies of the U.S. federal government

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)
U.S. Global Change Research Program

Scientific bodies – U.S.

National Academic of Sciences
Climate Change at the National Academies (climatechange@nas.edu)
National Science Foundation

Other professional bodies – American Meteorological Society

2 Search **academic articles** using Google Scholar (scholar.google.com)

(NOTE: Narrow and focus your search by using several phrases in quotes – such as “climate change”. For example, if you are searching for how climate change will increase the frequency of extreme weather events, don’t just enter “climate change,” search, instead for” “climate change” AND “extreme weather events”)

Search terms to use (you may certainly choose others):

“climate change” AND x, where x can be:

Media

Newspapers

Television news

(NOTE: For some citations you find on Google Scholar, you can directly download the PDF. For other citations, you may be able to find and download PDFs if your University library offers on line access to academic journals.)

3 Do a **more general search** using Google or another search engine

Use the same search terms to do a general search on Google or another search engine.

This will bring up information more recent than you find on scholar.google.com (it takes several years for research to be published in academic journals).

4 Search the **best newspapers** and **reputable climate websites**

New York Times, Washington Post, The Guardian

On line sources

Climate Central

GRIST

Society of Environmental Journalists

The Daily Climate

Climate Nexus

InsideClimate News

DeSmogBlog

Skepticalscience.com

Yale 350

(NOTE about on line sources: You will run into a lot of denialist disinformation on the internet, on websites, on blogs, on youtube. FYI, skepticalscience.com has a comprehensive list of denialist talking points (and refutations of those talking points).

See, for example: <https://www.skepticalscience.com/argument.php>)

Finally, here are some specific suggestions to help you get started:

The top social science scholar of media coverage of climate change is Max Boykoff. Search for his works on google and scholar.google.com. Also search for Robert Brulle on scholar.google.com – for his article on climate and media.

And:

https://grist.org/article/the-good-the-bad-and-the-ridiculous-how-media-covered-the-national-climate-assessment/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=daily

New materials for the March 2021 revision

<https://edition.cnn.com/2019/09/15/media/kyle-pope-climate-change-reliable-sources-podcast/index.html>

https://grist.org/article/the-good-the-bad-and-the-ridiculous-how-media-covered-the-national-climate-assessment/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=daily

<https://www.mediamatters.org/research/2019/03/11/How-broadcast-TV-networks-covered-climate-change-in-2018/223076>

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/12/12/climate/year-in-climate-change.html?action=click&module=Top%20Stories&pgtype=Homepage>

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/12/13/climate/year-in-review.html?searchResultPosition=1>

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/climate/2020-climate-change.html?searchResultPosition=1>