What is a Popular Source?

Video Transcript

In this video, I want to look at the definition and value of popular source materials. So, what are popular sources?

Popular sources are publications that use language that is easily understood by general readers and is written for the public. They aim to inform readers about issues of interest and are much more informal in tone and scope. They also rarely give full citations and are generally not peer-reviewed.

Some types of popular sources include:

- General news
- Business publications
- Movies
- Magazines
- Some newspapers

I've defined popular sources and listed some examples, but what is the value of using popular sources in your research? Popular sources may help spark an interest in a topic. They're also useful for finding background information on a topic that is new to you.

You should consult popular sources if you want:

- Primary information about culture and society
- General information and commentary about political, economic, and cultural events
- Current statistical information of general interest and
- Information on popular opinions and beliefs.

Although you will use primarily scholarly sources in your academic research, remember that popular sources should not be disregarded completely.