Scholarly Party Worksheet

**Directions:** For this activity, imagine that you are organizing a party, specifically a scholarly party around a theme. You will invite other scholars who will have interesting things to say to each other on a specific topic.

It's important to include some people who know each other and also to have some variety, so that everyone isn’t just saying the same thing. It’s okay to have different perspectives and even a little disagreement. Remember that as the party planner, *you* get to direct the conversation.

## Step 1: Invite the guest of honor.

Start with a **scholarly article** that you have found for your research. The author(s) of this article is the guest of honor. Skim the article to find information and come to an understanding of the basics of the article. Your first task is to figure out more about the author: What discipline are they coming from, what are the author’s credentials and expertise (you may have to conduct a Google search), and what are their main ideas/findings?

**Journal Title:**

**Article Title:**

**Author(s) and credentials:**

**Discipline of author(s) and journal:**

**Main Ideas/findings:**

## Step 2: What is the theme of your party?

The theme (your research question) should be broad enough that it is relevant to a wide audience, but narrow enough that it keeps the conversation focused (Beware of the [Topic Monster](https://youtu.be/BDuqfJQhFeM)). What would prompt an engaging and important conversation that many people could contribute to?

**Your Theme:**

**How does the guest of honor contribute to the party discussion on your theme?**

## Step 3: Invite an old friend of the guest of honor.

From the **starting article’s references**, identify a source that seems relevant to your own theme. Make your selection based on the citation and don’t worry about finding this source yet.

**Title:**

**Author:**

**Publication Title:**

**How might these authors contribute to the party discussion on your theme?**

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## Step 4: Invite a new friend to the party.

Use [Google Scholar](https://apps.library.albany.edu/dbfinder/results.php?q=google) to find more relevant sources. Open Google Scholar and search for the title of your first scholarly article. Below the article details, click the “Cited By” link to find other sources that have cited this article. Identify two sources that are relevant to the party theme.

**Title:**

**Author:**

**Publication Title:**

**How might these authors contribute to the party discussion on your theme?**

**Title:**

**Author:**

**Publication Title:**

**How might these authors contribute to the party discussion on your theme?**

If no one else has cited your starting article, why not? Identify possible reasons why this might be the case.

## Step 5: Where else are these conversations happening?

**Browse databases by subject (**[**http://library.albany.edu/db/**](http://library.albany.edu/db/)**) to find other relevant databases for your research question.**

**Relevant Databases:**

**Use databases from Step 5 to find different perspectives on your research theme. As you identify more resources, take notes on what these authors might add to the conversation theme.**

## Step 6: Who is missing from the conversation?

Using the database from Step 5, identify gaps in knowledge or missing perspectives. This is a big question that you will need to revisit throughout the research process. Identifying gaps will help you consider what *you* can contribute to the conversation.

**Who is missing? What are the counter-arguments and other perspectives?**