

Writing and Rhetoric proved to be very helpful to me, as I developed stronger skills in integrating valuable information from a variety of viewpoints on a subject and then analyzing those ideas in my own way to provide a unique perspective on that topic. Having struggled in the past to organize my thoughts coherently in a paper, let alone find reliable, trustworthy sources, I knew I ought to take advantage of any resources on campus available to me for my research. The final Writing and Rhetoric assignment was to write a research paper on a topic of interest, so I took this opportunity to address an area that I feel very strongly about: the prevalence of child marriage in Bangladesh.

Despite my eagerness to get started with my research, I immediately found the process of discovering sources to be incredibly daunting. It was clear I would need to consult references such as UNICEF to obtain the facts and statistics behind child marriages, but there was so much more information from a variety of perspectives I wanted to gather, and I was at a loss where to begin. I felt intimidated by the millions of results that came up each time I used Google to search 'Child Marriage in Bangladesh'.

Luckily, just as my patience was beginning to wear thin, my class was fortunate enough to meet with Ms. Leslie Morgan, librarian of Africana Studies, and Hye-jin Jun, librarian of East Asian Studies. I was initially uncertain what information I would receive from this meeting, as I had been presented with similar lectures in high school, but I did not receive much useful information. Nevertheless, by the end of Ms. Morgan's first session, I was already eagerly anticipating beginning my research.

In this first meeting with Ms. Morgan, I was introduced to several databases that could assist me in narrowing down the sources I wanted to use for my project. My classmates and I were also given a source analysis worksheet to help provide us with an example demonstrating

how we could organize the information that we would find in various sources later on for our papers. I slowly began to understand what kind of information to look for in sources and became aware of the fact that I could locate more relevant sources for my topic based on the works cited by one source. During this first round of research, Academic Search Complete became my best friend. The advanced search engine on this database provided me with several useful articles that I could use in my paper. Analyzing a study conducted by sociologists in a small Bangladeshi community allowed me to be aware of what information I would need to include to make my paper useful to the reader, and not simply supply the reader with information as a means of taking up space. Ms. Morgan then provided my peers and me with the Hesburgh Library directory, in which I narrowed my research subject to Sociology as a result of sifting through the wide array of the available subjects on the library website. I ended up locating the sociology guide on this section of the website, leading me to ‘Scholarly Articles and Books’, which provided me with numerous databases covering the different subcategories of sociology, like eHRAF world cultures. This point was the catalyst for my research; I felt as though all the sources I needed seemed to be right at my fingertips.

Having explored countless databases and resources like WorldCat, ProQuest social science, and Academic Search Complete, I had to ensure that I was very organized in my approach to gathering this newfound information. Due to the filtered search options the websites offer, I was able to narrow down the sources published on specific marriage rituals in small Bangladeshi communities; this feature allowed me to hone in on the specific details of my topic and not get too bogged down in the multitude of sources available. I was able to develop a more focused understanding of what is currently happening in Bangladesh, and what steps could be taken to reduce the rate at which young girls are getting married. As a result, I ended up devoting

hours each weekend and on most weekdays to just researching and writing for my paper, sometimes even reserving study rooms at the library. Since this was my first paper, I wanted to guarantee I read through all the sources I could find so that they could be incorporated into my paper appropriately.

By the end of my research journey, I realized that the two librarians I met earlier on helped me kick-start my research. This catalyst pushed me into encountering the wide array of Hesburgh Library's online resources to narrow down my topic, whether it was GenderWatch or JSTOR, and the spaces provided by the library gave me a quiet spot to successfully integrate my research into a cohesive paper that ultimately provides possible steps to eliminating child marriage in Bangladesh.

In addition to developing my research skills, I have gained a greater sense of passion to pursue my areas of interest, like sociology and cancer biology. Given the online and on-site resources provided by the library, I envision myself continuing to research with the intent of advocating for the abolition of child marriage globally or even conducting independent research on potential therapeutic agents for endometrial carcinomas. Now that I am now aware of the fact that the Hesburgh Library offers a multitude of services, technologies, and spaces that will enable me to further my academic endeavors, I hope to continue taking advantage of this resource in the future.