**Annotated Bibliography for the question: “What is professional wrestling?”**

1. Barthes, R., 2009. *Mythologies.* (A. Lavers. Trans.). New York: Hillard Wang.
2. Castleberry, G.L., Reinhard, C.D., Foy, M. and Olson, C.J., 2018. Introduction: Why Professional Wrestling Studies now? Legitimizing a field of interdisciplinary study. *The Popular Culture Studies Journal,* 6(1), pp. 65-81.
3. Chow, B. and Laine, E., 2014. Audience affirmation and the labour of professional wrestling. *Performance Research,* 19(2), pp. 44-53.
4. Chow, B., Laine, E. and Warden, C., 2017. Hamlet doesn't blade: Professional wrestling, theatre and performance. In: E.L. Broderick Chow, Claire Warden, ed. *Performance and professional wrestling.* Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 1-6.
5. Gerald Craven and Moseley, R., 1972. Actors on the canvas stage: The Dramatic conventions of professional wrestling. *Journal of Popular Culture,* 6(2), pp. 326-33
6. Garis, L.D., 2005. The “Logic” of Professional Wrestling. In: N. Sammond, ed. *Steel chair to the head: the pleasure and pain of professional wrestling.* Durham and London: Duke University Press, pp. 192-212.
7. Gordon, J., 2016. Is everything wrestling? *The New York Times*, May 27. Available from: https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/27/magazine/is-everything-wrestling.html.
8. Henricks, T., 1974. Professional wrestling as moral order. *Sociological Inquiry,* 44(3), pp. 177-188.
9. Jansen, B., 2020. “It’s Still Real to Me”: Contemporary professional wrestling, neo-liberalism, and the problems of performed/real violence. *Canadian Review of American Studies,* 50(2), pp. 302-330.
10. Jenkins, H., 2005. Never Trust a Snake: WWF wrestling as masculine metadrama. In: N. Sammond, ed. *Steel chair to the head.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, pp. 33-66.
11. Jones, L., 2019. All caught up in the kayfabe: understanding and appreciating pro-wrestling. *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport,* 46(2), pp. 276-291.
12. Kerrick, G.E., 1980. The jargon of professional wrestling. *American Speech,* 55(2), pp. 142-145.
13. Laine, E., 2020. *Professional wrestling and the commerical stage.* London & New York: Routledge.
14. Mazer, S., 1998. *Professional wrestling: sport and spectacle.* Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississipi.
15. Moon, D.S., 2022. Kayfabe, Smartdom and Marking Out: can pro-wrestling help us understand Donald Trump? *Political Studies Review,* 20(1), pp. 47-61.

**Reflective Note**

I first went onto the University of Bath library catalogue and searched for the key word ‘professional wrestling’. The first two sources were Brian Jansen’s (2020) article ‘It’s still real to me…’ and the Chow, *et al.* (2017)edited collection *Performance and professional wrestling.*

Reading the first – significantly, a peer-reviewed article – it opened with what appeared a helpful definition of professional wrestling (hereafter, pro-wrestling), which led me to include it in my initial list, while also referencing several other sources, which, based upon article titles, I decided to invesitgate and subsequently decided deserved inclusion also (i.e. Chow and Laine 2014; Garris 2005). Amongst these was a *New York Times* commentary (Gordon 2016) that subsequently reappeared elsewhere, so felt a useful non-scholarly media reference.

One particular source I also identified as useful was Sammond’s (2005) edited collection *Steel* *chair to the head –* published by a university press – which would also reappear as an early ‘key text’ in other texts; specifically, however, Jenkins’ (2005) chapter in the collection, alongside the previously identified piece by Garris (2005) reappeared, so I added the former to the initial list.

Turning to *Performance and professional wrestling* (which was published by Routlege, an academic press, indicating a peer-review process),I first read the introduction by Chow, *et al.* (2017). This provided a clear introduction to the field of pro-wrestling studies in 2017 and identified three key sources – Barthe’s (1957) chapter ‘Spectacle of excess’ from *Mythologies* (which I would subsequently find cited in almost every text I read)*,* Mazer’s (1998) *Professional wrestling: sport and spectacle,* and the Sammond edited collection again, adding the first two to my list. As examples of contemporary scholars, I searched for publications by the editors using Google Scholar, identifying a book by Laine (2020) which I added based on the publisher (Routledge, an academic publishing house) and the book’s abstract on the publisher’s web page.

Turning to Mazer’s book as an identified major source, I first noted it was published by a university press, speaking to its academic creditials; I then skimmed the introduction and references, adding three ‘classic’ peer-reviewed academic articles (Craven & Mosley 1974; Hendricks 1974; Kerrick 1980) that Mazer identifies as precursors to her own work; written during a very different era of pro-wrestling, these seemed useful for historical context/comparison.

In all texts ‘kayfabe’ revealed itself a key concept to understand pro-wrestling; searching the library I identified two recent sources discussing this in detail (Jones 2019; Moon 2022). I then simply searched Google for ‘professional wrestling scholarship’ and found the website of the Professional Wrestling Studies Association (PWSA),[[1]](#footnote-1) which included a link to a spreadsheet[[2]](#footnote-2) listing 143 academic articles and 21 books on the subject. Reviewing these I noticed an article on the ’field of studies’ (Castleberry, *et al.* 2018), which upon reading provided an extensive review of the academic literature that appeared useful, so I included this as my final source.

1. <https://www.prowrestlingstudies.org/professional-wrestling-scholarship/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1nm2AIJqU1hq85DrhqbF01SEcueu8uu1uIkNUvtF6yUI/edit#gid=1370574419> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)