

Arak Journal, Refining A Topic

How did you refine your topic throughout your research process?

I think for me it was really important to remember that you know this is a research paper it's not just a reflection of my experiences as a Shoprite cashier, you know. There has to be some sort of like factual basis behind it, you know? Don't let those, like, preconceived notions and those observations really dictate the direction of your paper. For me it was kind of having that serve as inspiration but not necessarily like the basis or the the guiding light per se.

Before I could crystallize what I wanted to ask, what I wanted to investigate, it was still a bit of a nebulous thought. And the fact that there was a lot of text out there a lot of people asking similar questions didn't really help until I started to realize that there in the body of literature, there are different clusters investigating different aspects to the problem. There was an economic side. There was a nutritional side. There was a geopolitical side, a socioeconomic side. I got back to the root of my question that said, "You know poor people are often hungry, poverty and food insecurity." And with that, with that common thread, I guess I slowly started to narrow down on the literature that pertained most to me.

Originally I was kind of thinking about doing celebrities which is kind of interesting. I don't think I mentioned specifically celebrities at all in my paper... But I was kind of looking at it from the standpoint that there's just a lot of different stuff about, you know, how involved should celebrities be in politics, you know? Should they even have a say? Should they be advocates? Should they not? And I was kind of looking at that angle. But as I was trying to research it, it didn't really have anything. It was just a lot of opinion-based. I mean, I couldn't really find any sort of information that actually said "Yeah, celebrities have a huge impact on like how people vote and stuff like that." So I'm like, okay, maybe I need to kind of reframe this a little bit. So I ended up going more more specific but also a little bit more generalized. Like I kind of just nixed the celebrity thing and I'm like, okay let's just think about day-to-day people. And then how do day-to-day people get influenced? And it's usually through politicians, and then journalists.

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