

Arak Journal, Assumptions

What assumptions did you have about your topic and how did they evolve throughout your research process?

I guess the primary assumption that I had going in was, I felt that, you know, the relationship between producer and consumer was very one-sided. Like it was, you know, the producer is employing all of these tactics and the consumer is kind of mindlessly spending all of this money. And I see people with hundreds of dollars of groceries every shift. And as I researched, I realized that, you know, there is some truth to that, but the relationship is a little more...it's a little more mutually beneficial in that sense, you know? There is this duality between producer and consumer. And if I hadn't really researched further and kind of moved away from my own observations, I don't think I would have ever really grasped that second part of it. The latter is so essential to my thesis.

I guess it ties back again into my experience being a Filipino. Poverty and food insecurity and in my experience of what I've seen firsthand and with my neighbors in the Philippines, there was that high correlation. And then I saw that here too in America. But that really wasn't a satisfying enough answer for me. You know, one can't just be hungry because they're poor, nor can one just be poor because they're hungry. I really was thinking there must be something special about the relationship between the two that makes it so pervasive and almost universal. I wasn't satisfied with just, "If then, then that." And I also really wasn't satisfied with the idea that some people assume that this is a problem that's cordoned off in some far-off corner of the globe, that it doesn't pertain to us because we are an advanced nation, or we are a more rich nation, or it doesn't apply to us because our history has been different.

Clearly, after looking at it a little bit, after researching it, I found that's not exactly the case. So really, the assumption was that there must be something concrete there. There must be something more to it. And I guess I was a bit desperate for that because once you find a concrete cause, you ground the problem in something. You put it in the same plane as us. And that way, if you can give a problem a cause, you can just then afterwards start giving it a solution. I was kind of assuming going in that there would at least be a little bit of like a positive mindset in relation to politics and social media. I mean, I was kind of hoping there'd be something.

I know being a student, I hear a lot...you know, all these negative things that social media is doing, how it's impacting us, all these different terrible things that come out of social media. And I'm like, well, maybe it does have some benefits. And I was kind of hoping going in, and I find some. And the whole, like, idea that I had, I almost had this kind of drive to find something that would say, "Look, it's not, you know, this terrible object, like it's actually kind of beneficial."

I was realizing that my assumption that a lot of people don't see it that way was like kind of solidified as I was doing research which was really interesting. I assumed it was a very bipartisan issue. I thought the Democrats would probably support it a lot more. And then I did my research and the first huge bit of legislation I found came from Texas. Texas and New York actually have the best rape kit reform laws in the United States. That was fascinating to me, and then also, when I interviewed Representative Paul Baumbach, who is a Democrat, he talked to me about how everyone in our legislature had worked together on a budget bill for this in Delaware--how it wasn't that divided of an issue. I had just hated that I assumed that about...that because of their political affiliation, they could not be as worried about this as I am. And as soon as I went in my research, that changed.

University of Delaware, Library, Museums & Press animated logo