

Creating PIP annotations that stand out from the others!

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Term 4 is a significant term in the PIP process for my students. Term 4 is about ticking the following checklist:

- Present a summary of findings from WIDE reading that is appropriate in your area of interest - at least one source must be from an academic reading/ journal.
- Create annotations using the following scaffold for each piece of wide reading in your research.
- Crystallize a hypothesis ie from your HUNCH (an ideas about your topic) create a research question then from this create a statement or hypothesis to test!
- Be mindful that a good resource list must feature the following
 - Is it accurate?*
 - Is it appropriate to your research?*
 - Is the annotation insightful for its usefulness?*

What is an annotation? An annotation is additional information that is written about each of the resources accessed and used in the research. Annotations should be insightful and are more than a description about the source - they are a critique, a judgment or evaluation of how important the resource is and how reliable the information is.

A resource list is a list of books, journal articles, conference papers, websites and other resources such as people interviewed.

Compiling an annotated resource list is a compulsory component of your PIP and very helpful for your research because it ensures that you:

- Read the sources carefully to gain a proper understanding of the main points being presented. Just collecting sources for a resource list is useful, but when you have to write annotations for each source, you're forced to read the source more carefully.
- Critically analyse the arguments and supporting evidence used by authors.
- Compare and assess each source against other sources discussing the same issues. Every good piece of research has an argument. The purpose of research is to support or not a thesis or hypothesis. So a very important part of research is developing a research idea that is debatable, interesting, and current. Writing an annotation can help you gain a good perspective on what is being said about your topic by someone else. By reading and responding to a variety of sources on a topic, you'll start to see what the issues are, what people are debating, and you'll then be able to develop your own point of view and begin to achieve synthesis – a vital characteristics of a PIP.
- Reflect on the usefulness of each source in relation to your own research.

Writing an annotation

Start with writing and arranging the bibliographic entries just as you would any other bibliography. The annotation then follow immediately after the bibliographic information, on the next line.

The content of each of your entries may include the following:

1. Summary

A summary of a source, that is condensing the author's message into a single paragraph describing the main points of an argument, major methods of investigation, and its main conclusions - but omitting detail.

In general, a summary does not contain critical analysis of the arguments or your opinion of the source.

2. Analysis and Assessment

Following the summary, your annotation should include an evaluation of each source. This evaluation may include answering questions, such as:

- is the author's argument valid and reliable and how do you know this?
- is there evidence of bias, subjectivity, objectivity and how do you know this?

3. Reflection

In addition to objectively summarising and assessing the source, you should also reflect on its usefulness to your research and your topic. In particular, consider:

- How relevant is the content to your research?
- Has the argument impacted on your previously held views? How?
- What specifically does it add to your knowledge?
- How will you be using the source in your own work?

For referencing details using the OXFORD method, see the Deakin University Australian web site link below:

http://www.deakin.edu.au/current-students/study-support/study-skills/handouts/oxford-docnote.php#part_2: footnotes/endnotes_62_9

Scaffold for an annotated resource List for the PIP

Bibliography for the Source	
1. Summary of the source: condensing the author's message into a single paragraph	
2. Analysis and Assessment: Evaluate each source eg is there evidence of bias, subjectivity, objectivity	
3. Reflection: reflect on the usefulness of the source to your assignment and your thinking about the topic	
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Example of a Bibliography

and its annotations:

P. Burke (2005) Female Action Heroes: Different but Equal, or Equal and the Same, American Sociological Association, Washington

The complexity and sophistication of the rhetoric in this text makes it extremely valid, along with it being written for a well-known, credible source. The depth to the article helped in many sections of my PIP, but most notably in the first chapter, where it helped me to identify the social difference that is reinforced by superheroism and the polarisation of gender roles within this genre. It also helped me to classify the superhero genre in my introduction, an important part of the early stages of the process, as it allowed me to clearly identify which movies and series I would be investigating, and which were not applicable to my PIP.

Web site: R. Hausmann, L.D. Tyson & S. Zahidi (2009) "Global Gender Gap 2009 Rankings" from <http://www.weforum.org/pdf/gendergap/rankings2009.pdf> World Economic Forum, Geneva, Switzerland

I used a quantitative data statistic from this internationally recognised measure of gender equality for the opening of my second chapter, where I wanted to emphasise that social change has undeniably occurred in Australia and that the superhero genre represents patriarchal continuities and values inconsistent with this progression. This source is highly valid, being overseen by the world economic forum in association with the United Nations and it was useful in establishing an introduction for Chapter Two that set up my line of argument.

Interviews -Baby Boomers (49-63)

Patrick Brennan, 59 years old, interviewed 14/5/2010

Megan McGowan, 49 years old, interviewed 12/5/2010

While ten interviews were conducted in total (5 with each generation) I only ended up using half of these for my actual content, as the semi-structured format was so successful in achieving a great depth of information.

I was aware of the ethical issues associated with this methodology from the start, ensuring that at the beginning of each interview I clearly outlined the intent of my PIP and the fact that a variety of people may read it. I also gave every interviewee the option to remain nameless, but all were happy to have their full names provided, mainly due to the uncontroversial nature of my topic. The Baby Boomers were essential for gaining an understanding of this generation's attitudes towards female superheroes, especially due to the era they were adolescents in. This contributed to my understanding of their choice of 'superheroes', particularly the fact that many female Baby Boomers identified Catwoman as a superheroine, even though she was a villain. Without these interviews, that data may not have been as well understood or explained, and the continuity and change aspect of my PIP would not have been fulfilled to the depth it needed to be. Interviewing my own generation gave me the other side of the continuity and change aspect, and a greater understanding of our inactivity in relation to feminism, vital for investigating this as a reason we may not have equal representation in some popular cultures.

Cox, Eva, 2003, Civil Debate Needs to Recognise the Role of Society's Canaries, Sydney Morning Herald, <<http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2003/01/26/1043533953970.html>> (26 April 2008):

This article did not specifically relate to protest songs, though it highlighted the importance of dissidence, exploring the implications of the silencing of dissident voices. Cox used the parallel between canaries in mines and protest to make the point that dissidence acts as a warning that something in our world is amiss and is hence integral to social progression as it enlightens and educates people. This source was essential to my first chapter which examines the role of protest songs and society's need for political music.

Patashnik, Ben, 2007, Drowned In Sound- A great leap forwards? Protest songs today..., <<http://www.drownedinsound.com/articles/2513212>> (14 February 2008):

This article provided me with highly valuable insights into the reasons that may be causing the decline in the popularity of protest music. Furthermore, it presented me with information regarding the importance of protest music and its power as a vehicle for social change, offering the varied perspectives of several significant protest musicians including Billy Bragg and Frank Turner. I found Turner's statements to be of great significance in my research as they provided me with information alluding to attitudinal changes, the commercialisation of the music industry and the impact that technology has had on the decline in the popularity of protest music.