

Minor in Writing Capstone Annotated Bibliography

Cover Page

Title of Piece or Assignment / Course / Requirement Satisfied:

1. GroupThink / n.a / Directed Self-Placement Essay
2. TV and Intelligence / English 124 / Writing from First-Year Writing Course
3. The Dark Side of Banking / English 225 / Minor Requirement Course
4. The Bell Curve / English 221 / English Department Course
5. Why I Write / Writing 220 / Gateway Course
6. The Terrifying Fear of Not Being Funny / Writing 220 / MiW Blog Post Selection
7. Maternal Mortality: Balancing Medical and Emotional Paradigms / WOMENSTD 400 / Upper-Level Writing Requirement outside my field
8. Freud and Malinowski on Trobriand Myth / Anthropology 330 / Upper-Level Writing Requirement outside my field [no ULW courses in discipline]
9. My Cover Letter / n.a. / Optional Choice
10. My Resume / n.a. / Optional Choice

Annotated Bibliography (APA Formatting)

Marples, J. (2011). GroupThink. Unpublished manuscript, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

According to the Sweetland website, “The DSP will help you judge your own readiness for and comfort with college writing, and assist you in choosing your writing courses at the University.” In my case, this essay involved responding to a New Yorker article describing ‘GroupThink’, and how the process of brainstorming has developed over time. The prompt itself broadly requested that I “summarize and analyze” the article and “present my analysis as a persuasive essay”. After revisiting my four year-old response, it’s clear that I missed the second element of this prompt, as my essay doesn’t seem remotely persuasive in nature. In this essay, I outlined the article’s main point and explained why I didn’t agree with some parts; I failed to take a position and present it persuasively. For this reason, I can’t accurately summarize my main argument, because I didn’t really include one. Furthermore, to be honest, I don’t think this piece significantly contributed to my writing development. This lack of development stemmed from two major reasons: (1) the lack of specific feedback I received on it within my 25-person English 124 class, and (2) the arrogant nature by which I approached English 124 in general.

Marples, J. (2012). TV and Intelligence. Unpublished manuscript, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

The occasion for this piece involved taking a position on the issue of whether TV makes you smarter. The piece’s goal was to respond to two online articles that illustrated opposing views on this issue, and utilize new evidence to take a side. By evaluating my engagement with The Walking Dead and Doctor Who, I argued that the process of ‘plot-hole filling’ and morality analysis did, in fact, increase my intelligence. In general, I believe I met the occasion for this

piece effectively; however, in hindsight I think that I went over the top with my arguments. As described in my evolution essay, I tried to make an argument that sounded compelling as opposed to one that I actually necessarily believed. With this being said, the piece contributed significantly to my development as a writer; it represented one of the first times I was able to write an academic essay on a personal topic related to my hobbies. Therefore, it helped me develop the skills to integrate personal evidence into academic, persuasive writing.

Marples, J. (2012). The Dark Side of Banking. Unpublished manuscript, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

As part of my 'Academic Argumentation' class, this assignment involved crafting "an academic argument on a topic of your choosing". The prompt was intentionally left extremely open-ended, and I chose to write about how investment banking culture harms banking employees as well as the society around them. The open-ended nature of the prompt allowed me to evaluate issues at my own discretion; however, I think this led to a choice of scope that was too broad. In other words, I think that in order to better substantiate my argument, I should have chosen a smaller scope when approaching the issue.

Marples, J. (2012). The Bell Curve. Unpublished manuscript, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

As part of my English 221 course, Literature and Writing Outside the Classroom, I wrote a spoken word poetry piece titled The Bell Curve. This represented the optional portion of my portfolio, so it didn't involve a specific prompt. Due to this lack of prompt, there existed no intermediary step to distort my intention and my writing output. Therefore, this piece served as a pure creative output, in which I sarcastically ranted about how the bell curve system at Ross

causes students to focus on beating each other instead of the actual class content. Of all the writing I have done in college, this is one of the pieces of which I'm proudest, as it illustrates my ability to adapt to a new genre and express a personal belief.

Marples, J. (2014). Why I Write. Unpublished manuscript, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

The prompt behind this assignment is pretty self-explanatory; it involved answering why I write, in order to "come up with a provisional – yet, for the moment, true – response." My answer involved splitting my identity into three pieces: my academic identity, my professional identity, and my personal identity. In these sections, I described how writing helped me develop and maintain these identities. In terms of my approach to the assignment, I regret picking an 'answer' to the underlying question based on how well it could be structured. In other words, I approached the occasion like I would approach a consulting case interview, which involves providing a structure and comprehensive answer to the question. Essentially, by splitting the question into three parts, I created a mutually exclusive, collectively exhaustive perfect trinity of sorts that sounded really convincing. In reality, however, I think I failed to explore my true motivations for writing in an attempt to demonstrate a well-structure, plausible answer. In other words, while it is true that I *apply* this skill to three different areas of my life, those areas don't necessarily cause my writing in the first place. In reality, I write for three major reasons: (1) I enjoy writing, (2) relative to the peers in my discipline, I'm pretty good at it, and (3) my perceived skill creates pride and a feeling of differentiation. While this sounds a little more vain, it's infinitely more accurate. With this being said, this piece allowed me to explore *how* writing

influences different areas of my life, and this exposure to more reflective writing has certainly developed my personal narrative writing skills.

Marples, J. (2014). The Terrifying Fear of Not Being Funny. Unpublished manuscript, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

This open-ended blog post for the Minor in Writing Blog did not involve a specific prompt or rubric. I decided to write about how I felt anxious about the humorous element in my remediation project. While writing a supposedly funny script about the ridiculous banking crisis in 2009, I couldn't escape the embarrassing paranoia that my content wasn't actually that funny. With no specific prompt, I can't address how this piece met the formal occasion for my writing; however, I believed I illustrated my feelings on the topic effectively. This type of writing has developed my ability to reflect and write in informal genres.

Marples, J. (2015). Maternal Mortality: Balancing Medical and Emotional Paradigms. Unpublished manuscript, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

For this class, titled Women's Reproductive Health, the prompt for my research paper stated, "You are to write a research paper on a topic in women's reproductive health....critically analyze an issue of interest to you, using concepts and ways of thinking developed in this course." In response, I wrote a paper outlining how maternal mortality solutions often failed to address emotional aspects of birth by focusing on medical effectiveness. The main skill I developed when writing this paper was the ability to dive into a foreign discipline and write analytically within it.

Marples, J. (2015). Freud and Malinowski on Trobriand Myth. Unpublished manuscript, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

I'm currently taking Anthropology 330: Culture, Thought, and Meaning. I can't actually post the "prompt" for this assignment here or summarize it concisely, because it states "Please address all of the following questions" and then lists nine questions. In general, though, the assignment involved analyzing a myth of the Trobriand people through the lens of two different philosophers: Malinowski and Freud. My core argument described how Malinowski would see the myth as a reflection of the community, whereas Freud would interpret the myth as a reflection of one's individual feelings. Due to the specific listing of questions that needed to be answered, I believe I addressed the occasion for this piece effectively, by structuring my answers to those nine questions into an essay. However, I feel like this essay didn't contribute much to my development as a writer, because the prompt didn't leave much room for me to identify areas for discussion myself. In other words, it felt like I was responding to nine short answer questions, as opposed to determining myself which questions needed to be answered.

Marples, J. (2015). Jacob Marples' Cover Letter. Unpublished manuscript, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

Although there's no formal "prompt" for a cover letter, it has a pretty universally accepted goal. According to Ross' BBA Career Guide, the cover letter should convey two major points: (1) highlight distinguishing characteristics that meet the company's specific needs, and (2) information that adds to your resume, rather than just restating it.

In regards to the context for which this piece was produced, I think I met the occasion well. In other words, because almost every company I applied for decided to give me an

interview, it's clear that my cover letter passed the required 'standards'. I picked two desirable skill-sets, teamwork and leadership skills, and demonstrated these by describing my experiences in student organizations. However, in terms of how well my cover letter actually represents my 'distinguishing characteristics', I think it does a poor job. Although the cover letter is meant to provide flexibility to differentiate yourself outside of your resume, there are many restrictions that prevent this from happening. For example, I think one of my true differentiating characteristic is the passion I hold for writing; however, this would not be a good choice for a cover letter body paragraph because it doesn't satisfy the cookie-cutter skills that consulting firms seek. In other words, you can differentiate yourself in your cover-letter as long as you highlight 2-3 skills from a very specific pool. This pool includes: teamwork skills, analytical skills, project management skills, leadership skills, etc. Therefore, I think this piece of writing meets its practical goal—to get me an interview—but doesn't really represent any of my truly distinguishing characteristics.

Marples, J. (2015). Jacob Marples' Resume. Unpublished manuscript, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

To be frank, the purpose of my resume is to get me a job. Some might argue that the purpose is to represent your experience and skills on a sheet of paper, but I see this as a product of the overarching goal. Given that I have been invited to a significant number of job interviews after submitting my resume, I would like to think that it accomplished its intended goal. This medium also helped me develop my business writing skills, in which conciseness is prioritized over sentence fluency.