

## SAGE Portfolio

By Harry Vu

### Reflective essay

While working in the SAGES seminars, my comprehension of scholarly writing completely shifted, impacting not only my method of doing writing but even how I understand the intricate dynamics amongst research, citation, culture, and critical thinking. As I read back over my previous essays and compare them to the newer writing, I can see clearly a heightened concern for the particulars, a better understanding of why proper citation is necessary, and a better sense of the diverse cultural and ideological perspectives presented through research.

Initially, my writing was primarily centered on articulating individual opinions with little consideration of external opinions. However, during the composition of the essay "Should College Admission Office Be Color-Blind?", I saw the sheer worth of precision and exactness. Criticism received for this essay, like requests to provide some kind of proof and exact presentation of my thesis, pointed to the worth of deliberate, exact wording. The spurring this imparted urged me to further nurture my ability to use evidence wisely as well as to set arguments out more precisely.

The necessity of citations became profoundly clear while crafting "The Influence of Social Media Algorithms on College Students." Previously, citations seemed merely a mechanical requirement. Yet, during my research process for this project, citations took on a new meaning. They provided a source of credibility and depth to my arguments. By engaging with the scholar sources like Bakshy, Messing, and Adamic (2015) and Lazer

et al. (2018), my mind is broadened beyond the technical aspects of algorithms, opening my understanding in the philosophy behind these techniques. I began to realize and appreciate how these technologies interact with human behaviors and ideologies, making me more sensitive to the broader societal implications that come with software engineering. Technology in essence is the implementation of human ideology, breaking limits of convenience and knowledge, and introducing us to a new horizon. This lays the foundation for further pursuit of knowledge, wisdom and societal improvements.

Moreover, research brought forth an unexpected yet enriching benefit: it immersed me in diverse cultural and ideological landscapes. While developing my Anthology Project, I explored various poets and artists such as Forrest, Powfu, and Maya Angelou. This journey exposed me to vastly differing cultural contexts, illustrating how poetry and music transcend boundaries yet remain deeply rooted in specific experiences and traditions. Reading cited papers and resources helped me understand the value and significance of cultural authenticity and ideological diversity. It allowed me to appreciate not only the universal aspects of human experience but also the specific contexts that shape individual expression.

Finally, the very process of writing these essays has significantly sharpened my critical thinking and responsiveness skills. Each revision prompted by peer or instructor feedback demanded thoughtful engagement and reflective adjustments. I learned not simply to accept or reject criticism, but to engage deeply with it, interpreting suggestions and translating them into meaningful improvements. This practice has empowered me to think more critically about arguments presented in texts and respond more thoughtfully to counterarguments and alternative viewpoints.

Reflecting on my growth through the SAGES seminars, I now see writing not merely as a requirement but as profound intellectual exploration. My strengthened attention to detail, deeper understanding of citations, appreciation of cultural and ideological diversity, and enhanced critical thinking skills are all testaments to my evolution as a writer and scholar. These acquired skills not only enrich my academic pursuits but also equip me to approach future challenges with thoughtful curiosity and rigorous critical inquiry.