

Harpreet:

This is a super interesting topic, especially for our lives right now. I do like this line of thinking, as it is different from what a lot of the discourse around social media is (how dangerous it is because of algorithms, etc.). It is certainly an argument that could be argued from both sides. It may be necessary to explain what a micro influencer is, I'm not sure but could guess what it means. Is there a reason you say "human users?" This may be a good thing to compare to corporate or other organizations using the platform. I would encourage you to mention other methods other than the interpretive flexibility, either in support or as a counterpoint to your argument. Is it solely because of the users, and how/why do humans create these cultures? Or are there other factors at play?

Your claim and your areas of focus definitely match up and are appropriate. If I was writing this, I think I would have a hard time limiting my focus and staying on the argument. I think you have an appropriate amount of topics to support your argument, but I would recommend for you to pay attention to that if with many topics you can only analyze the surface level of each topic due to this length of paper. Again, I do really like your thinking and your work so far. The essay will be interesting to read and I think there are some very important points that can be discussed and argued. The essay in my view will accomplish what it sets out to, as long as there is enough detail for each topic. It may be difficult to do so in the length of paper however, so maybe some of the outline may need to be adjusted, but maybe not!

Juliana:

I like the topic a lot! Rubber is something so common and ubiquitous that it seems like it has always been available, but examining this would be really interesting to a reader. For the abstract: perhaps be more specific rather than global north and global south. The reader can probably guess somewhat accurately but I think it would help to name countries, regions, etc. in the introduction so there is clarity. I like the sources. Things you could focus on are how the supply chain operates and the human cost at each step. Some questions I could think of that may be interesting: what were the working conditions, how much time was spent working, are there off seasons, what were the wages?

I like the contrast between how the rubber plant had been used to the large scale production of rubber. That could be analyzed in itself as well if there is room, but I think limiting the focus to the human side is good. Some questions I thought of as well: When did the rubber boom end? Why did it end? I think talking about that and connecting it to the economic hole left behind could be beneficial. I think this essay has a fascinating and valuable focus, and is definitely worthwhile. From my interpretation, this paper accomplishes an analysis on the problematic systems the rubber industry was built on in its early expansion. I think all of your claims match up with the substance of your outline and abstract, so that's really good. There is definitely more than enough material in your sources to make this a detailed and substantive paper, and a lot of work looks to have been put in already, so I have confidence in your paper.

Mason:

I like the topic and the focus. It is limited enough in my view for this length of a paper to not be only surface level. One thing I can think of that may help the reader is explaining a bit of the successes of the agency (which I think you already plan to do in the history section). What have they accomplished? Then you could go into how and analyze the methods. One note is that the abstract is a bit informal in its language, up to you if that's something you want to keep for the final paper but I'm not worried about that. I do like the "front lines" and "tip of the spear" language. Those phrases are definitely used in the military, but in a much more literal sense. Often these agencies use these phrases for their own work (which is pretty much on the opposite of the front lines in the military system), maybe you could discuss why they like to do that or the implications of that?

The connection between universities and DARPA could be clarified. How does DARPA fund research at universities? How does DARPA push those boundaries? I like the envisionment of a future ARPA, but this is primarily a history and STS paper, not speculation of the future. If you could analyze that idea itself from an STS perspective (that line of thought is some sort of techno optimism from my view). It is hard for institutions to change, even one as different from typical federal agencies as ARPA is. A smaller personal suggestion is to switch the order of the competition and university parts of the paper. I think closing with the university part would make for a stronger paper, and it would tie into the conclusion which comes directly after. Lastly, I think you will find an argument over the course of writing and filling out the details of this. I don't see a strong one in your words right now, but I'm confident you can think of something.