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English 181-000

Exploratory Essay

As I was going through my sources, I was overwhelmed by the amount of directions I could take my final paper. I still have not decided concretely what exactly I want to do, but finding my sources did help narrow it down for me. I know that I want my theme to be centered around how the author uses the stereotypes and myths of Native Americans to give a convincing argument. I also want to talk about audience, but I am still figuring out a way to do this without diverting from my central theme and question.

Introductory Thesis: Although presented as an authentic story, Nasdijj’s portrayal of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and the Native American community give way to the falsified autobiography that pales in comparison to real stories by actual Native Americans.

My thesis will need to be reworked, probably multiple times, but this is enough to give me something to start with, even if it leads to other research or a new topic completely. I feel like my research question has expanded- so much so that I cannot put it into words that I can articulate in a way that easily clarifies what I am searching for. However, I plan to have 1-2 paragraphs per topic, with about 3 topics, that relates to my thesis. I am excited to start with my outline and shape things out the way they need to be for me to start writing.

I am concerned about diverting from the main topic. With all my research sources in my head, so many things are coming to mind to write about, but being selective and deciding which pieces actually correlate to the story and my thesis will be a difficulty. I will spend many hours focused on making sure that I stay on topic at all times throughout my paper.

Finding my resources was a little tough at first, and then I discovered the database Jstor which gave way to a multitude of articles and information that was relevant to my theme. Every source I have focuses on a different topic. I’m not sure yet if this is a good thing or if this will make things harder for me while writing my paper because I do not want my paper to become to a full slew of information that is not retained or understood by my audience. I also do not want to have many sources that talk about the same thing because I do not want to run out of things to talk about and analyze.

As I began to reread and then close read my original source, *The Blood Runs Like A River Through My Dreams,* I can see statements that can be used to explain information that I found in my research sources. I also really like the fact that my secondary source is a second hand account of Nasdijj’s life before and after he actually became Nasdijj because it gives insight on his actual life and can infer to the reasons why he wrote an emotional fiction story and portrayed it as real.

Overall, I believe my paper is coming together nicely with only a few doubts. My thesis is broad, but hopefully not too broad. If it starts to seem as if I have too much going on in my paper, I will have to go back and change some things and pull some details that I may not really need to talk about.

Secondary Source:

Chaikivsky, Andrew, et al. “Nasdijj.” *Books.* Esquire, 2006. 10 Nov. 2015.

This source was useful because it describes the way in which Nadijj went about fooling people into thinking he was an authentic Native American author. It showed how the author of this article debunked his hoax and exposed him for the white man he was. This can be a good source for clarification on what he did to become Nasdijj and why he did it.

Research Sources:

Nevitt, Amy. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. *New York: Rosen Pub. Group*, 1996. eBook Collection (EBSCOhost). Web. 10 Nov. 2015.

This source was useful because it gave me more reliable information about fetal alcohol syndrome which is, in fact, real. However the way he describes it in his story is different than it is portrayed in this source. Therefore it can be used to compare and infer with why he spoke of fetal alcohol syndrome the way he did instead of stating facts.

Jay Noren, David Kindig, and Audrey Sprenger. “Challenges to Native American Health Care”. *Public Health Reports* (1974-) 113.1 (1998): 22–33. Web. 10 Nov. 2015.

This source goes into details about Native American health care on reserves and the difficulties of getting good healthcare due to lack of funding and programs to provide for them the way they need it. It even includes charts and a survey that I could use to give real statistical numbers within Native American healthcare. This relevant to my topic because it can be a cause for fetal alcohol syndrome and a lack of prenatal care for pregnant mothers.

Fleming, Walter C. “Myths and Stereotypes About Native Americans”. *The Phi Delta Kappan* 88.3 (2006): 213–217. Web. 10 Nov. 2015.

This source effectively debunks all of the myths that surround the Native American community. I can pull several pieces from this article to explain the actual lives of Native Americans, despite what people are told and would like to believe. This source ties into Nadijj’s writing style and the facts he presents in his article that are potentially wrong and stereotypical.

Peyer, Bernd. “Reconsidering Native American Fiction”. *Amerikastudien / American Studies* 24.2 (1979): 264–274. Web. 10 Nov. 2015.

This source discusses how white male writers intentionally and unintentionally stereotype Native Americans while writing fiction about them. It also explains how different the fictitious stories are from the Native American oral traditions for story-telling. I can further use this source to explain how Nasdijj’s intentions could have been pure and gone the wrong way, or also how they could have been intentionally offensive to Native Americans.

Peyer, Bernd “Autobiographical Works Written by Native Americans”. *Amerikastudien / American Studies*26.3/4 (1981): 386–402. Web. 10 Nov. 2015.

This source provides summaries of authentic stories of Native Americans and their traditions. It gives titles and authors that I could look into further if I decide later on that I want to pull a quote directly from on of the autobiographies. This will be a good contrast to the actual story itself. A lot of comparisons can be made to make a strong argument.