

Critical Reading Skills Session

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Thank you, Hayley, and thank you everyone, it's lovely to see you again, and just for those of you who may not have been here for the time management session last week, or who have forgotten which is fine. My name is Jessica, I have a PhD in English literature so I teach in research, English, and that's my background, but we're here today to think about critical reading, and I'd love it if you could be interactive, like you were last week so if you have questions, put them in the chat. I'm going to be checking the chat regularly. And if you want to point of clarification, feel free to ask out loud or put it in the chat. I'll keep an eye on that. Critical Reading It's a phrase that gets used a lot, and, and the word critical gets thrown around a lot, I'm quite interested. What is your understanding of the word critical so I've got a few options there. A to point out flaws, be to think in depth. See, The word critical is about assessing claims or justifications D, I'm not actually sure but I know it's important. And he other or a combination of the above. So I'll give you a moment to think, What is your understanding of the word critical.

17:25

These are great, these are really great contributions. Now I've got a question for those of you who said that the word critical is about thinking in depth. What do you think it means to think in depth.

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Anyone have any ideas. Okay, I can see someone who said, Thora to consider both sides of an argument, forming your own opinions. Now that's an interesting, interesting one, yep. Evaluating pros and cons looking further than the claims analyzed between the lines. Okay, that's really interesting. Brilliant, I'll give you another moment if anyone wants to contribute, it's quite interesting to see a lot of the ideas coming up, or looking at the idea of deeper meanings or not looking at things at a surface level. Evaluating pros and cons of other views I think all of these are really good points, I would. One thing I'm going to suggest now and expand on later through this talk is that the, the phrase in depth might be more usefully thought of as in connection with so thinking about connections between arguments and between claims and justifications, but we will expand on that. So thank you all for your contributions there. So I've got another question for you. Why do you think we undertake critical reading exercises. Why do you think we do it.

19:23

Thank you. It's a good way to explore things further and to get a better understanding. That's great, understand other people's viewpoints to practice extracting and evaluating information I like that with

paying out for key information. Okay, this is great. This is really helpful. Brilliant. Now this is Oh excellent improving understanding but also forming new opinions and making new findings to have a broader understanding and be more receptive to be able to distinguish between the useful and non useful information quickly. That's a very good one. It's a good point. Now, here's just one more question. What do you find most challenging when it comes to critical reading, I've given a few options but you might not have one of these, you might not find that any of these is really your difficulty. Okay so speed, don't have the time don't know what I'm looking for, don't know how to position my own understanding in relation to the critical reading, okay excellent This is helpful. Okay. See also it mention. Okay, brilliant, this is really helpful. Okay. He do the fear you've missed something. Thank you for that. Okay, struggle to word my thoughts as I want to. We'll think about that as well. Thank you for thank you for being very honest about that struggle. So today we're going to think a little bit about what Critical Reading is how to recognize and assess types of claims, and then we're going to think about what frameworks and questions we can use to actually read critically. We'll also think about why critical reading matters, and we'll discuss ways to position your interpretation in relation to critical readings. Ah, thank you. Okay, so in terms of, I can see something in the in the chat someone said, they have an issue with keeping your thoughts, concise, and that's a really interesting point we will talk about it a bit this week, and I think that will also play into next week's talk on taking notes as well, but thank you everyone for your contribution so far, and please do feel free to interrupt with questions or further questions as we keep going. So as many of you have recognized, and so for many of you this is just a summary of what you already know critical reading is the act of recognizing that someone is making a claim, and recognizing the claim is supported by justification and by reasoning. In addition to this critical critical reading is not just recognizing the claim, and the justification, it is assessing the logical strength behind the claim and its reasoning. Does the justification, really seem to support the claim, do. Does there seem to be a relationship between the claim the justification, and the examples that are used. So critical reading is about recognizing and thinking about the connections between claim reasoning and interpretation of data, usually apply the idea of critical reading to secondary readings, although you can absolutely and should be reading a primary texts critically. So just for a quick definition here. Some of you may have heard of the terms primary and secondary texts. If you haven't, then at a later stage you'll probably see a bibliography that's divided into primary and secondary texts. And just to explain what they are a primary text is an original source, it's an original text. So it could be an autobiography a piece of fiction and musical composition. A documentary that's a primary source, a secondary source would be something that is studying an original copy. So it might be a critical study of Frankenstein, or a critical biography of Mary Shelley, or a study of examples their study of tactics in the in the Vietnam War.

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And I just think it's really important and useful to give a quick definition of what a primary text is and what the secondary text is because the definition is not. This text was primary and instrumental for my essay and this text was secondary, I just thought that I would clear that up because I know that I was confused by that. When I started my undergraduate degree. And so, yeah so critical reading is about recognizing a claim its reasoning and assessing the logical strength that connects the claims the reasons and the case studies, and therefore it's something that we can use when thinking about a primary text as well as a secondary text, but often the phrase is used to think about secondary reading and further research. Now, I think it's useful whenever you undertake critical reading to think, what am I

reading. And this can be a very obvious question, but it's a useful one to help because if you know what you're reading, you will know what questions to bring to it. So my cells. This can be useful actually depending on how you want to use them. There are a few sources that are useless. And I say this because sources can texts can tell us different things, maybe they're extremely biased. And that's interesting and useful to study the bias and acknowledge it, it's, but you want to know that it's a very biased texts that you're reading, and, and if you're evaluating a critical source, and you want to use something for academic research, or for an academic project. Make sure that you know how to evaluate whether or not it's going to be a trustworthy academic source. So, one way in which we can evaluate the academic integrity of a source is to work out if the if the text in question was peer reviewed. Now, this is a phrase that, um, what it means is that, whenever someone publishes a work through an academic institution through an academic journal, or in a University Press, or academic collection. It means that the person has not only had to research and study and work for a long time to produce that research, that had someone else who was also an expert and specialist in the field, read it, review it and send it back for editing. And quite often, these words will be double edited. And that's why, if you partake in any research projects, and your teachers at school might encourage you to use articles from academic journals or access to J store. If they've if they have that at school or something like that. Or they'll print out chapters from an academic collection maybe because information that goes up through an academic source has been peer reviewed and edited by other specialists in the field, which means it's, it's going to be generally more reliable than something on say Wikipedia, when you do help people who go around, checking it, but they don't have to be specialists in the field. And so the information is somewhat less academically reliable. So that's the first thing to look for when you're looking at a critical sort of think, what am I reading, is it something that has academic integrity and so can I use it as a resource for content.

28:05

And then, another good question to ask is, how old is it now the usefulness of this question varies between disciplines. So in some disciplines in some subjects, you'll find that sometimes a long time period passes, and not many people have necessarily written, and a new analysis of maybe Bach's Brandenburg concertos, but generally, the more up to date that the research is, the more it should be able to take into account, important findings from previous people who studied a subject, so check the publication date, check where it's from the academic integrity, and also a useful thing to think about before you read anything is how relevant is this piece of reading to my work. And I think criteria for relevance covers a few things so one is that you might be reading an article that looks at the same case study. So maybe you're writing an essay on Hamlet, and you found someone who's written several essays, you found a collection of essays on Hamlet, obviously relevant if you're looking at the same case study that you're writing on maybe what you're doing is you're looking at something that has a similar methodological approach. So, perhaps you're interested in. I don't know, human geography, and you're looking at, migration, and migration in a certain community after a particular time period, you might find another study that looks at migration in a community, but it's a different group that it's looking at, it's a different, different area, but it might have some similar approaches and you might want to read that to think, are the methods that I could use that this other person has used so relevant in terms of case studies, relevance in terms of methodological approaches, and maybe you'll find an article or a chapter that is really useful in actually defining terms or concepts that your work touches on. So, an example for this could be your studying a poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge and words like

romanticism keep coming up, you find a book or an article that looks at the question of what is romanticism, or how have ideas of romanticism shifted, and that would be useful for your reading because it helps define a term that is important for your work. I'm just going to pause there for a moment. Does anyone have any questions about this.

31:10

Okay. Ah, useful what makes a source critical that's a really good question, Isaac. Think a few things will make a source critical, a source is a critical source if it is a secondary source that is already thinking about something that's all, that's a primary text. So a source is automatically critical if it's a commentary on an existing text, so it might be a commentary on Rothko's abstract art, it might be a discussion of revenge in Macbeth, it might be a musical logical analysis of concertos, in the 18th century, but any source that's already thinking about a primary text is, is a critical source. And then you can read anything critically, so you could read a an opinion piece in the news article critically because you will be thinking about claims reasons and logical connections, but a piece is only critical as a piece if it's already thinking about something that's that exists as a primary text. Is that does that make sense. Okay, brilliant. Great. So we thought a little bit about what you're reading. Now I think it's also useful to think, why are you reading and we touched on this, when I was talking about what makes a source, relevant, and. Okay. Oh thank you, Polina, I can see a question. when looking at secondary sources whose integrity is questionable, and that cite a series of primary sources, is there any way of checking its accuracy, other than going through all of the primary resources cited. It's a difficult one. I would say, the safest way is to check the primary sources that, that are cited. If you're not sure about the reliability of a website or a source that you're looking at but it's citing primary sources, chase those primary sources and come to your own conclusions. That is, That's what a lot of research is actually sort of a puzzle hunt, which is fun, time consuming, but fun. Okay. So, going back to the question of why you're reading, I think it's really useful to know that there are different reasons why you might want to read a critical study, or why you would want to read something critically, and one of them is content, basic content you want to understand a situation a concept, an idea, a text, there's no way that you can write an essay, for instance, about the significance of the Battle of Midway if you don't know what happened at the Battle of midlife. Second reason why you might be reading something critically, or reading a credible source. And you might want to assess interpretations of a case study, so maybe you're writing about. I don't know, desire in a streetcar Streetcar Named Desire. So you want to think, Hmm, what do I think about blah, blah, what have other people written. Do I agree with that analysis, is it changing the way that I think about the play or character or the scene. And so, whenever you're reading to assess interpretations of the case study, it's really useful if you have your own analysis of that case study for yourself. So, if before you go and read other interpretations of the case study whatever it is, have some kind of basic analysis of it yourself to think, how am I approaching it, so that you can change your mind or see how your mind is directed or changed by what you're reading, or thirdly, as I suggested he might be reading to see how a methodology has been used or a term has been defined,

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also borrowed this useful table and it's actually it's produced by the brilliant club and I think it's quite a useful one, because it gives you a little series of questions that you can ask, when you're approaching a text for close reading. So it asks a few questions, like what is the author's main purpose. And I think that's a really useful one, and I would like to suggest, as I will touch on later but usually the main

purpose is to argue or to suggest that interpreting a set of data in a particular way, is going to be, is going to be productive for other people, that in understanding and interpreting data in a particular way, builds knowledge or adds to a field that's usually the purpose but it's good to think, in this specific article What is the author trying to do. What point of view has the author taken which is similar to what the purpose is but what point of view, has the author taken will also be important in showing any, any assumptions or limitations or even acknowledged biases that the author's take has taken, which are all absolutely valid, and I will talk about this in a moment. The word bias can be can be negative but it doesn't have to be, um, questions to close reading what assumptions is the author making is the author assuming that everyone is working, a particular definition of a word is the author assuming that everyone will interpret a particular idea in a certain way. And so the implications of the author's interpretation, are linked to this question of what assumptions are present in reading, what information is the author using also really, really useful, and if you're interested in expanding your research and expanding your critical reading, you can follow the sources that an author uses. Then you can start thinking, you know what are the important conclusions in this article. What question was this author trying to answer. And they use, they use for questions, you don't need to ask all of them all the time but I think it's really helpful to know that there are a series of questions that you can bring to it, a text, a critical text that can help direct what it is that you're looking for. So just a quick structural breakdown of critical readings. Most of the time when you encounter a critical text. In fact, every time you encounter a critical text. It should include a combination of claims justifications for the claim and applications of the logic of the claim. So the claim will say, this is, you know, this is how we should interpret this data or this is what's happening in this in this source or this is an important event because of this justifications have to of course, refer to the case studies, and the applications of the logic of the claim to this specific case studies has to happen there has to be an analytical breakdown the case studies, and an interpretation of the data, you can't just refer to a case study and say, Yes, well, if we look at this particular historical document we can see that the idea behind the Schlieffen Plan was strong, you need to interpret the data and do things with it. That's why we learned different analytical tools and terms in different subjects, so that you can actually interpret the data. And that is what is present in every critical reading. So just to break it down. What is a claim, because I said that every critical source makes a claim. Now, a claim is an arguable statement and I think that this is important, a claim is something that always has potential for disagreement, but also has reasoning as to why someone might claim it. So a claim isn't a fact. It's not a claim for instance that the sun is a gaseous bowl that emits heat and light, because that is the fact you can't actually reasonably argue against it, but you can make claims about the, you know, the, you can make claims about politics or about culture or about philosophy, you can make claims, whenever there's potential for disagreement. And there are three main types of claims, you'll come across claims effect claims of policy and claims of value.

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Now a claim effect is something that posits that something is the case that something is true or untrue. It's usually specific regarding time place situation and the people involved. So I've given some examples you might notice that my examples tend towards the literary. This is because my PhD is in English and the more you specialize the more you become hazy on the things that you learned earlier. So just a few examples of what a claim effect might look like. This time in a literary context, you might have someone making a claim effect in their article that Hamlet is about the dangers of procrastination, that's his Samuel Taylor Coleridge approach, or that Lady Macbeth irresolvable guilt to chase the

inevitable costs of ambition. So, these are interpretive claims, but their claims of fact, as it were, a claim of policy is slightly different so a claim of policy is. It looks like a method, so it's a method by which a problem can be solved or a situation can be improved, and you'll quite often come across these in social sciences, as you're debating, you know, whether which which programs really alleviate housing difficulties, what is the best policy, what do what do data sets and surveys suggest in a literary sense, you won't see this quite too much but here is what it might look like a claim of policy which is about methods by which situations can be improved or problem solved, or just methods that can help the examples I've given are one, the best way to interpret Wuthering Heights is to explore the incessant multiple narrative frames. Now that's a claim of policy because it's saying there is a way to interpret the book, you need to look at the narrative friends. Or another example, the most incisive way to understand grief and mortality in Dylan Thomas's poem, do not go gentle into that good night requires an understanding of how the poem works as a Villanelle it's making a claim of policies, understand the poem you need to understand the structure of the poem, as a Villanelle. So that's a claim of policy. And then finally we'll come across claims a value. So they deal with taste preference moral or aesthetic values. So, They usually position one thing in opposition to another, or they say that something was more valuable or less important. So, one, one example I've given here is a subjective claim of value would be that Barack Obama made a more effective use of rhetorical techniques in his 2008 election campaign speeches, then in his 2012 campaign that is subjective, but it's also debatable and arguable on every side. Now you might think. Why should I think in terms of claims, and I'd like to suggest that there are a few reasons so thinking in terms of claims provides a useful framework from which to understand the purpose of a text is this critical text, trying to make a clear, you know, make a claim of fact, this is what this text is saying this is what this source means is the critical text trying to make a claim of policy. This is the best method to understand this, or this is not the best method to approach this question. For these reasons, or is it trying to posit a claim of value that this is the more valuable way of doing things.

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So, yeah, so thinking in terms of claims, I think, can provide a concise framework to understand the purpose of a critical text, and it can also be helpful to enable you to agree with part of a critical text without necessarily agreeing with all of it. So you might agree with an interpretive claim, but you might disagree with the methods that's being used, or you might agree with the analysis, but you might not agree with the claim of fact or the interpretive claim that is drawn from that analysis. So you might sit back for instance and go yes I agree. There is a lot of zero in that passage, there's a lot of adforum Yep, there's a, there's a lot happening in terms of rhetoric, I disagree, that that is the effect it's having, and I do not think that that claim stands up, because of these reasons. So that's why I think thinking in terms of claims can help, and it also invites us to think. Just more rigorously in generally that if all critical writing makes claims. What assumptions or biases does each of the have. And this enables space for reasonable interpretive disagreement. I'm just going to pause for a moment there. Does anyone have any questions.

46:43

If not, that's fine, I'll keep going. And you can ask questions as we go along. Now, I've titled this slide the scholarly conversation, because I think a really important thing to know about critical reading and critical writing is that it's not about a fight. And I say this because I think it can be very easy to think that

the best way to engage with a critic is to disagree with them. It can be easy to try to show that you've engaged in critical reading, simply by invoking a critical a critics name and idea to say while critic X says this, I disagree, and think this. Okay, so I got I can see there's a question in the chat in a critical in a critical evaluation of a text you would say I agree with the claim of policy stating this but not the claim of value stating that, yeah, absolutely, that's what you can say Zahra that is exactly what you can say. And the reason why I think it's really useful to bear for think about critical writing as a conversation rather than a battlefield, is that when things are a battlefield you're trying to beat the opponent right you're trying to win an argument, say, I'm right this is, this is the way to understand this, this person thinks this but I think this therefore, my reasoning is stronger, and it's easy to think in that very adversarial way. But actually, a lot of academic work is more like a really slow moving conversation, a superbly slow moving conversation where each critical texts that's written is like a contribution to a conversation. It's as if you have a, a researcher or a group of researchers who say, Oh look, there's this particular set of data we're interpreting it this way and we think it's important, because of this reason, it's going to help us understand connections between fields, it's going to help us understand our research methodology differently, and another critic might respond and say that's a really interesting observation, I agree with you this set of data is significant. I agree with you that thinking carefully about it is going to reframe the way we think about methodology. I think there's another method that we can use, not that yours is wrong, but I like that idea. I'm just going to build on it and do something slightly different because it will help us see something slightly different. So, it's in that sense it's a little bit like a conversation where you might say to a friend. Oh, just give me a really mundane example, oh I really loved the show Loki, I didn't like Falcon in the Winter Soldier and someone might say, Yeah I can see where you're coming from, but I really liked the, the nuance in terms of thinking about cultural relations, and the response of Black Lives Matters that was in Falcon in the Winter Soldier and you might reply to it that was really useful and important. However, it's a show the pacing just didn't work, and what's happening there is, is what happens in academic writing, it's a bouncing off of ideas. It's a, it's an agreement in some ways a disagreement and others, and I can see that is a question in a chat is critical writing and reading used most widely with an academic look and research or can it be used in daily life, such as debates, it can absolutely be used in daily life, and that is really a lot of academics dream to make the research communicable enough that it's easy in everyday life, and a lot of the time, a lot of critical ideas funnel down to everyday debates. So, for instance, it's been in the news recently, and is causing controversy in America, and for various reasons. Critical Race Theory, for instance that started out as an academic discussion. And now people are talking about it in everyday, day to day situations.

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And in another level at another level, the skills of critical thinking, and critical reading and critical writing, are always going to help you in everyday conversations and debates, because they'll help you to think more deeply about the logical connections between reasons you're making between the interpretations of any data set. A show a film, you name it. They'll help you to think logically about connections between the data set reasons and claims, and they'll help you engage in conversation where you don't just try to argue the other person into submission. But you can diverged from and build from the insights, and I think that pattern of thinking about critical reading and critical writing is perhaps the most productive, we build from insights we diverged from insights. That's what we do in conversations in day to day conversations or positive, productive day to day conversations, and that is what happens with

critical writing and critical reading, Does that help Lola. Wait a moment. Okay, great. Yeah. So I think it's really important and useful therefore to apply this framework of the conversation. Whenever we're thinking about critical work critical readings and whenever you're responding to a critical claim. So, again, so just while I'm on that note, don't just invoke your critics name to dismiss a minor claim. I'll give an example, if it's a false one with a false critic, but I might say, although Sarah Hora talks about the symbolism of spring as being ironic in TS Eliot's the wasteland. I actually disagree because it's not the symbolism of spring it's the personification of spring. That's a really minor quibble. Because it's the point of, it's at the point of interpreting the data, but not in terms of making a broader claim about what's happening at the level of ideas or argumentation, and it seems to be invoking this made up critic, which is they call her Sally, or Sarah Hora whoops can't remember, I'm just invoking her name to dismiss her, and that's not really engaging with her ideas. It's just, invoking to dismiss. That's why I like the model of conversation. You're not just trying to invoke a name or an idea to dismiss it. You're invoking a name or an idea to build from or diverged from that idea. So I've given a little. I've talked a little bit about this already, but whenever you're assessing a critical claim it's good to consider the limitations, as well as the biases, and to see whether writers are explicit in acknowledging the limitations and biases of their work because every critical source every bit of critical writing is going to be limited and somewhat biased. I'm just invariably and this is the case for history as well I'm going to say everything that we write is biased by whatever sources we've had access to, by whatever methodologies, we're familiar with, by whatever values and ideologies, we hold that invariably shaped the way that we interpret data. So, all of our work is going to be somewhat biased, it's about recognizing what are my biases, how can I be aware of them, and how can I be aware of what biases, an author may have. And every work is also limited. And even if you get the most up to date. Cambridge University Press edition or something actually Cambridge University Press publishes books, quite a while after you send them in. So, that's not the best example but even if you get the most up to date, scholarly work, it's going to be limited because scholars don't have access to all of the materials they don't have access to all of the data and they don't have all the time in the world. So, every critical work is going to have its limitations because it how did you date, there was a word count, and there was, there may have been limited access to resources, for various reasons. So

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every work you're going to be looking at will be somewhat limited. And invariably, biased. And it's useful to see are the writers explicit in acknowledging any of this, are they explicit in acknowledging any definitions of terms that they are working from explicit in acknowledging any of the limitations of their arguments or claims. It's also useful to think, are there any case studies or analytical approaches that are prioritized over others, and if so what is the justification, because this is, this is reasoned bias, it's when you see when you see critics perhaps saying, you know, there are so many case studies that we could look at to study. Female authority in the 18th century domestic space, we have focused on these case studies. For these reasons, and it's useful to see that. Um, I see a great question, other ways of ensuring your own work isn't biased or is that almost impossible. There are ways in which you can ensure that your own work is more reasoned and make sure that you can always be open to being willing to challenge your own biases and that's what academic work can do really well, and critical reading and critical writing. They can enable you to be open to reshaping challenging and recognizing biases that you have. So I think the best way to think about ensuring that you are open to recognizing and challenging your own biases, is by reading critical work, to see how other people interpreted this

case differently, to me, I find that compelling, do I find that analysis compelling. If I find it compelling but I still don't like it. Hmm, what's happening there, and you can ask those questions. I see a question is there critical reading within science, or is it mainly humanities there is critical reading within science. Absolutely there's critical reading and what that often looks like, is what that can look like will be researchers who say this particular method is the best way to is the best way forward to diagnose this particular thing. So I'll just give a direct example because I, it's in my mind. So my sister is doing a PhD in oncology, and she and her research group have been working on a paper on single cell, single cell genome, typing, and they are using that article to assess a series to assess a series of ways in which in which genetics has been an aspect of genetics has been studied and they're suggesting that a particular method is better. and so they're making a critical claim that interpreting data sets and then publishing it. And so it's scientific critical writing. And from there it will be up to others in the field to look at it and say, to what extent do we agree with this does that look like the best way forward is that the most practical way forward for our lab. So, that is what critical reading in science can look like. Great with an E PQ, be an example of critical writing. Sorry. Apologies, I did my high schooling in a straily so what exactly. I've heard the term, a PQ extended project qualification. Yes, an EP Q would indeed be an example of critical writing then, because you would have to do the research to justify your work, You'd be assessing other ideas and working out where you build from and diverged from other ideas and opinions and approaches in order to write your work. So yes, that does require critical reading and critical writing Tolani. Okay. No worries. And yes, so there we go and, yeah, I think that, um, it's just useful to, to be aware of the fact that critical writing is about being as measured as you can and critical reading it, it's is very useful because it asks us to think not in terms of personal feeling or emotion but in terms of claims, reasoning, logic, what is the logical connection and how strong is the logic so it's helpful in that it gives us another framework to think

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outside and not outside but to think in a way that's parallel with but not always, shaped by not always determined by I think is the word it's not always determined by biases or limitations, but they're always going to be affected somewhat, and it's about knowing that being aware of it in our own writing and in the texts that we encounter. And so looking very carefully at the logical force behind the claim. the reasons, the interpretation of the data would writing to analyze results of your own experiment count as critical writing. Actually it would enter in as much as you will be. Whenever you write to analyze results you want to be thinking about implications of the results, so you'll want to be thinking about why the results came out that way, what some of the implications are, and by thinking in terms of effects impacts and implications, you're thinking about critical logical connections, so it is. It involves critical thinking in the writing. That's a good question Polina. So what I'm gonna quickly do right now is I'm going to model. Just a little bit of critical reading for you. So, this extract, it's on some screens you can all see it I will read it out loud but my eye is going down to the bottom because that's where I can see there's information about where it's from. So, this is a source it's written by Andrew O'Malley, it's called The Making of the Modern child children's literature and childhood in the late 18th century. It's published by Routledge, which is an Academic Press, and it is from 2003 So, not particularly recent, but also not ridiculously old. In my mind I still think 2003 is recent, but that just goes to show my age. So, things that I notice, it's an academic publication reasonably recent. Making of the Modern child so it's making a claim that childhood is modern, or childhood as we understand it is a modern phenomenon. It's looking at Children's Literature and childhood in the late 18th century so the title implies, that

children's literature is really important in shaping this idea of the modern child. And I've got that before I've read the text, just by thinking about the title, thinking about the source. Now, let's look at the text itself market for a variety of literature's specifically designed to cater to the pedagogical needs of children emerged in the second half of the 18th century, out of a complex nexus of historical economic, social and cultural factors, unique to this period in England. The onset of the Industrial Revolution, the democratic revolutions in America and France and the rationalization of the sciences and of medical practices ushered in radical changes to class relations and lead to the formation of new subject categories. Among them, The modern child instrumental in these developments were the middle classes who generated the vast majority of the pedagogical and pediatric literature as well as the children's books problem, which defined the child's subject and situated within a changing set of discourses.

1:04:48

Okay, so things that stand out to me in this market for a variety of literature's emerged. This is really interested in.

1:05:09

Thank you sir. This is a this is a study that's interested in the economic aspect of markets. It's, it's given me a time period it's making a claim effect that is specific to the second half of the 18th century in England. So I know that this is a claim that specifically about childhood in the 18th century in England, it's about literature designed to cater to children's educational needs. In England, the second half of the 18th century. It's telling me about the methods that are used, it's taking into account, historical, economic, social and cultural factors. What does some of those factors include, it's given me historical context for this, so I know that history, and the historical approach is central to the method. The onset of the Industrial Revolution, the democratic revolutions in America and France rationalization of sciences and medical practices, that's really interesting, it's, It's taking in to account range of cultural factors when thinking about children and childhood. It's going down to sciences, science, science and math says, here it's making a claim this ushered in radical changes to class relations and lead to the formation of new subject categories, among them the modern child. There we go. This text is just confirmed the suspicion that I had, looking at the title. This made this book is making the claim that the modern child is a new subject is a new idea, a new human category of age and personhood that emerged in the second half of the 18th century. What is its claim of method for in supporting this fact, it's saying we need to look at pedagogical and pediatric literature and children's books, because those books to find the child's subjects and situated it within these discourses about what it means to be human or what it means to learn. So what I've done looking at that is, you have looked at the title I've gone through and just thought, what are the claims that are sending out the claims of fact, the claims of policy, or the methods that have been used and the questions that I'm going to have going forward are how reasonable, are these claims in the light of the data that's presented, it does the rest of this book, go on to convincingly show me that all these revelations of the Industrial Revolution democratic revolutions rationalization of Sciences. Does that compellingly argue that new subject categories formed, including the modern child instrumental in these developments with the middle classes, does the data in the book compellingly suggests that the middle classes are largely responsible for shaping this idea of the modern child. And so those are some of the questions that I'm going to be having, as I read the rest of the book. That's just a bit from the first page as you can see. So I've just got a question

What were some of the things that I did in my response and what do you think you might be able to apply to your critical reading process. I'll give you a few moments to think about that. And please do add to the chat, or speak out loud. Yeah.

1:09:19

Yeah. Yep, this is some good comments, excellent yes I was looking at the source. From the beginning, started being critical from the title to think about core claims from the start. Yep. That's great. Yep, so I included a focus on the title. Yes. Excellent. So, interesting yes Isaac I see that you've put a comment I focused a lot on what I could infer from the text rather than what it overtly stated. Now, to an extent that is absolutely true. I did look at what was written and think, what are some of the implications of this, I will also just quickly add that. What I would go on to do next is I would read the rest of the book to see if it speaks to answers those questions or or ideas so I would test my own inferences against what is in the book, so. Yeah, so I would read and you infer and you think in question, and then you want to see if the rest of the source is going to answer or speak to or challenge your own inferences and questions. Yeah. Yep. Okay. Brilliant. So, I have an exercise for you. This is a group exercise, so please do feel free to type in the chat, as you see things as you observe them, so I have an extract from the start of an essay by Kate Lawson, it's on LM Montgomery's Emily trilogy. If any of you have read it, great. If any of you haven't, fine. You don't need to for this exercise. And so, basically, I will put, I will read this extract out loud, and I want you to think about these questions. So, you know what, what's the claim what's loss of case study, what do we know about the methodological approach. So, this is Kate Lawson's article The disappointed house trans loss into the uncanny and LM Montgomery's Emily trilogy. It's in a journal called children's literature volume 29 published in 2001, and the article is in pages 71 to 90 of the journal. That's what this bibliographic information at the bottom means. And this quotation specifically is from page 71 Okay. The three novels that make up the Emily trilogy, Emily, Moon Emily Klein's and Emily's quest were written by LM Montgomery from 1923 to 1927. The Emily series is a marked departure for Montgomery from what had become the sale and books. Although similar in tracing the growth and development of an orphan girl from childhood through adolescence to adulthood. The Emily trilogy as a whole can set darker forces of personality and identity been evident in Anna Green Gables and its immediate successes. This essay examines the repeated psychic of supernatural experiences in Emily's life and argues that they point to or figure, a traumatic lack an absence seen through the lens of Freud's paradoxical notion of the unheimlich Emily's uncanny experiences revealed that the familiar world in which she lives is also inhabited by figurations of loss and estrangement. Okay. So what are some of the things that you can observe and notice about this extract. Got some questions

1:14:08

at the top to help. Okay, brilliant yes thank you thank you Tilly Lawson is comparing different works by the same author. Yes, so there is a comparative element in the work that's Yep, those are good observations. Ah, excellent yes okay Magnus the central claim is that the books become darker with a paradoxical conflation of the familiar and the added element of horror. That is a really good insight. There is a reference to the repeated psychic or supernatural experiences. Yep. Yes, there is a claim that the Emily books are different to the Ann books, despite the similarities. Yes, that's good Phoebe Lawson is claiming that there are hinted at darker forces in the books. Yes, absolutely Helena that's right the trilogy The Emily trilogy. Most of the saying has deeper themes than the add books now.

Excellent, thank you thank you Alexandra that's a really good methodological insight, a claim policy that's being used and Lawson is being is taking ideas from Freud, when analyzing the Emily book so that's something that you can do that's called applying a theoretical lens, the theory of the uncanny, is something that Lawson is applying to her reading of the Emily books, so that's a really good insight Alexander, the central claim is that the exploration of supernatural events in the trilogy is not in fact supernatural book contains insights to trauma and the way it can well be child's mind. That is excellent Daisy Kate, that is a that is actually the central claim of this essay, and we can see that in the, in the way that the essay sort of points forward to a clear statement this essay examines the repeated cyclical supernatural experiences and argues that they point to or figure a traumatic lack an absence, and then it gives us a claim of policy to support that reading seen through the lens of Freud's paradoxical notion of the unheimlich Emily's uncanny experiences reveal that the familiar world in which she lives is also inhabited by figurations of loss and estrangement, resilient, those are some really good insights. That's really excellent. Yeah. And it's also helpful if you were to use this article to know that, You know, for instance, children's literature is a respected respectable journal to look at ideas in the title so it's already linking trans loss and the uncanny. In the article title, and it's telling us very specifically as lots of you pointed out, the case study is the Emily trilogy. Good question, and diagnosis, what does methodological approach mean, so it's a, it's a word of use a lot, and methodology means, how do you do things. So a methodological approach is, is a slightly fancy way, but also a very concise way of saying, How are you, analyzing this data. So Lawson's methodological approach is that she's going to be reading the Emily trilogy, through Friday and lens through the lens of the unheimlich and the uncanny. So her method is through this article her method is one of looking at what is what is in the Emily books, analyzing the scenes so close reading textual reading and textual analysis, what is happening with the supernatural and then interpreting it in relation to what Freud says about the uncanny the unheimlich. So that is a method combining close reading with a particular theory. Brilliant. So you can use other methods as well, you might have a method that's mainly

1:18:48

just looking at the data, looking at the text and then thinking about the historical time period, or thinking about the text in relation to other texts that look at similar themes so that's a sort of automatic study that looks at the Matic comparison study. Yep, that's what methodology means, I'm just gonna pause there have I use any other terms that people aren't sure about, please, please do ask

1:19:25

well feel free to just keep adding to the chat, I will keep my eye on it. Great, thank you being what is a theoretical lens. That's a really good question. So theory is whenever people think not about a specific case, but about patterns as to how people think or how the world works, so we can have we come across different theories. So for instance, Karl Marx and Engels thought about Marxism as a theory and that theory considers. Why do social classes develop the way they do, what happens in relationships between workers between industries, and those in charge of industries, how do those relationships work, and it's a theory because they're thinking about patterns and they're not thinking about a specific case study so they didn't sit down and go I'm going to pick specifically about workers in Germany. They tried to apply their ideas and theories will do that so Freud's theory, for instance of the uncanny isn't about a particular person streams, it's saying, we all feel most uncomfortable when, when we are in a familiar but slightly different situation, like you. It's your home but everything's reversed. For instance,

and so theory is any type of idea that's applied to broader ways of thinking, and I call it a lens, because if you think if you use that theory to think about a source that you're looking at, then you'll be thinking, Okay, I'm interpreting this data, while thinking about the ideas that Marx talked about with class, or I'm interpreting this text, and I'm thinking about Freud's idea of the uncanny, or you're thinking about, you know, I'm interpreting this source, and I am really interested in someone's idea about color signification. As I'm looking at this painting. So that's what a theoretical lens is I say it's a lens because it's like a way of looking, it gives you a way of looking at a text. Great, I see another question paradoxical when I use the word paradoxical. I mean, something that doesn't seem to make sense, but does. So it's not an outright contradiction, a contradiction is when you have two statements that cannot be true. But a paradox is when you have things that don't seem like they should sit together but do kind of like the, you know, the visual paradoxes where you look at the image and you go, are they going up the stairs are they going down the stairs, they're both going up and down the stairs and neither because of the way it's drawn. So that's what I mean by theoretical lens and paradox. Did that make a bit more sense. Okay, great, brilliant. Yes, I'm so glad you're asking these questions, it's really good to ask these questions because I find that a lot of words, get used, and then quite often, we assume that people know what they mean and then it's easy to feel the pressure to think like we should know what they mean without asking. So it's really really great but not asking really good. Okay. So, just while we're on critical reading, I'm going to talk a little bit about citation matters. And so any of you here, taking on any larger research projects, or longer, longer essays or research works this year. Yes. Brilliant. Okay, great. So those of you who are taking on longer research tasks, in particular, this will be immediately useful, but for everyone. I think it's going to be useful and I'm talking about citation.

1:23:42

So citation, and referencing is something that's really important, and I'm actually really quite passionate about referencing systems as well, which is a slightly different matter. But referencing really matters, and at one level, it's really practically important because you want to avoid plagiarism. You want to avoid plagiarism because we'll have practical level, you'll lose lots of marks if you plagiarize, but more importantly, the reason why you'd lose marks if you plagiarize, is because that shows that you're claiming someone else's intellectual property as your own. Pretending that you've done all the work that someone else has actually done. So citation and referencing is really important in principle, because it's a great way of acknowledging, other people's intellectual property. It's a really useful way of charting and making explicit, the history and shape of your own critical formation, how did I come to this idea that I'm presenting in my edu. I came to this idea in part because of the research I've done because of the insights, other people have made because of the theories that other people have developed because of the frameworks people have used for different cases that I've been able to borrow ideas from or to apply. That is how you've come to where you are. And so I think that referencing and citing critical sources properly is a really, it's a friendly thing to do it's a collegiate thing to do to acknowledge other people's work, but it's also really nice for yourself. So you can look back on your own intellectual journey and go that is how I've helped develop my ideas. These are the works that helps me to think more deeply about whether or not, you know, my initial inferences were accurate, how helpful or unhelpful, my personal bias is was in this research task. These are the sources that really helped me develop and challenge and grow my thinking. So that's really great. I also think that I'm referencing correctly is really great because it allows people to recreate your intellectual journey, and that means that they can test your critical reasoning, so your EQ your research project will be a case where you

say, This is my interpretation of a set of data and this is why I think it's significant. And if you reference the case studies and the secondary sources correctly and accurately, it means that all the people can follow. You're welcome. Yeah okay so I can look at this, this primary data set as well or I can I can access it. Oh, that's really interesting, yes I think that's a compelling link, I think that's a compelling bit of analysis, or oh, I can find this article too and see this person who came up with this theory. Ah yes, I think that's a really clever application of that theory that's that's really good. I understand your reasoning. So when you reference correctly, it means that people can do that, they can follow your own journey. And so things to include when you're referencing this varies slightly, depending on whether you're referencing a critic in a closed book exam, in which case you can't have all of the complete bibliographic data, or if you're writing a longer term assignment, but things that you should always have. If you're citing a critic, always have the critics name. So you can say, perhaps, Derrick averages idea of about why literature is singular, and suggests this. Ideally, we should say the knot here, the year in which the critical comment was published so ideally it would be good to be able to include just in brackets, when this was positive, so that you've got a sense of the theory, what do you do if you can't find the name of the critic. Well, it should be possible to if not, if to find, if not the name of the specific critic then perhaps a group or a group that the, that that critic belongs to. It is best to try to cite the name of a critic, if you can if you can't find someone's name, and it's anonymous give or give as much information as you can. So perhaps it's an anonymous review of from Blackwoods a review of a book in the 18th 19th century journal Blackwoods

1:28:41

still give as much information as you can about the year, about any other things you know about publishing houses or sources. So give as much as you can give. And if it's, if you're thinking about citing perhaps a critic who just some source by someone, you can't really trace on the internet or something, it's probably not the strongest source to use. Unless you're trying to argue that it's an example of a popular view. Okay, if they don't give a name, can't you give the website address, yes you should be able to give the website name the website address, I'll also talk a bit about websites on in detail but in general, if you're citing a critic as, as someone who's researched and studied something you should be able to find their name, or at the very least, the publication information. And if you can't find either of those things, then I'd say that that source is not a good critical source it would be a useful primary source if you're trying to say that, that website or that idea shows a popular view or reflects a popular idea. Okay, great. If you're using a uniform citation style and you can't find all the details. Is it okay to skip the details just for those sources. Yes, it is all right. But ideally you would be able to find all the sources if you can't, it would be good to check another source to confirm that the, the claims that are made or the data that stated is verifiable, so I think it would be useful to find another source that does say the same thing if you can't find all the details. When you cite evidence do you have to say whether it's primary or secondary in the bibliography you will. So in a longer term assignment. You will be asked to use a particular reference style. So, my next two slides. Next Helia my next two slides are about citation and referencing styles. So there are two that are quite popular. Well, I'm just going to talk about two APA and mhrp. So, in a citation style. What this means is that you will be citing any critics or sources that you use within the body of your essay, and you'll also have a bibliography at the end of your work. And the information contained is sometimes identical always got similar elements because they're about the same sources, but the bibliography is a set is separate. It comes at the end of your essay, you'll list every item alphabetically by the author's last name, and it should have. In APA, or the

the author's surname, then their first initial, the date the publication, title of the book, the place of publication and the publisher. So I've given an example, and in a bibliography, you will always differentiate between primary resources and secondary resources. And if it's relevant, then you'll have a third section, which says, references, which would be something like an encyclopedia or a dictionary, which isn't making a claim because claims are always debatable. Remember, something that's not debatable is something that looks at the history of a word or that looks at an encyclopedia. That's not trying to make an arguable claim that's trying to just present facts. So you would cite that as a work of reference, rather than a primary or secondary source. Did that make sense the primary secondary reference categorization.

1:32:52

Okay, right. And so, a reference work is something like a dictionary or an encyclopedia. So a reference work is different from primary and secondary texts, because a primary text is an original work like a painting, a composition, a piece that's a primary text, a secondary text is always a critical piece of writing so it's something that considers a primary text and a reference work is like a dictionary or an encyclopedia. It's something that isn't trying to make a claim in the sense that claims are always debatable, there's always room for disagreement with a claim. So with secondary works, there's always room for disagreement, a reference work doesn't want to leave that room and reference work is a dictionary or an encyclopedia. And so it's just something that tries to lay out as much as it can, objective facts or records. So, yeah, okay, so I can say some more questions. Is the Harvard referencing technique useful yes Harvard is useful, um, I think heart the Harvard referencing technique works quite well for subjects like law, because if the minimal information that you get into in parentheses. So, um, and I'll get I'll say I say there's a question about examples about citing primary and secondary evidence and I will get to that in just a moment. So, referencing techniques. Some references look like brackets at the end of a sentence within an essay. Harvard is one of those cells and so it's APA so you've got bracketed information at the end of the sentence whenever sources been cited, and it tells you a little bit of information and you need to go to the bibliography. To get the full information. So APA in the brackets, it will tell you the author's surname the date of publication and the page or the page numbers in brackets. So for example there are four referencing systems that are most widely used for racquets Kennedy 2003 page 17 The Harvard system doesn't have all of that information so I think Harvard is sir is year and page or something like that or it's just the name and the year, so it's really useful, I believe, things like law, if you're writing about legal cases or rulings, because it gives as much information as you need to go back to that particular case, I think whenever you're writing about, with multiple sources. So, with multiple sources, APA has more information in the brackets that makes it a bit more useful. So it allows readers to see the year the study, as they're reading through your essay so it's really good for scientific social geography and empirical papers, and it allows readers to focus in your ideas and not get sidetracked by footnotes at the bottom of the page, it's really good for comparing ideas so if you've got two main sources or critics you're engaging with it can be confusing in humanities subjects, um, because the year of publication might not always be the most helpful. Yes, you will always need a bibliography at the end of a research paper, if you're using APA, you will always need a bibliography or you will need that if you use M HRA as well. So MH RA or modern Humanities Research Association has its own style guide. Do I have a preference, I absolutely have a preference. I love an HRA, I think it's fantastic for Humanities and for research. So what happens with MH Ra is you don't have brackets in the text but you have a footnote that, or an EndNote

and number that takes you to the bottom of the page or that corresponds with the number at the end of the chapter,

1:37:04

and normally the footnotes come after a punctuation moment, and so the, what I love about em HRA, Oh, there are so many things I love about it. And my bias, I'm absolutely biased and the first footnote actually has the complete bibliographic data with a footnote at the end with a full stop at the end, I'm sorry. And so I've given a few made up examples there is no Janet Woods is Russian imaginary menagerie, but let's just pretend for a moment that someone called Janet Woods has written a book imaginary menagerie, say, I quote a passage from Janet Woods book, I'll have a number say number one, and at the bottom of the page. pages on there'll be number one, and the first time it will say, Janet Woods imaginary menagerie, brackets, Oxford, which is the place of publication, Clarendon Press, which is the publishing house 2021, year of publication, it's a recent book that one page 13. In, if it were a journal article, there's a different format that's used in MH Ra, I would have the article title in quotation marks, the name of the journal in italics, the volume of the journal, and the year in which it was published, now it's a yeah that's a different, different year. And then the page range. Subsequent references, I'm in MHMR I don't need to have all of the information it just needs to be the surname and the page, or if you've got a few things that author's written surname short title page. and I love the footnote system because it's, it allows me to either read your whole essay before they follow the footnotes or it allows them to stop when they're interested to trace the footnote and to immediately find the information so it's really easy for them to recreate and retrace your journey. There's a fun dynamic I think between what's in the footnote and what's in the essay, and the essay feels quite clean because you can choose to just read it without following any footnotes, they're just little numbers and there are no brackets that interrupt your reading. Um, the one thing that's a bit irritating about MH Ra, m, is that it does still need a bibliography at the end. So even though your first footnote, will have the complete bibliographic information, you will still need a bibliography at the end, and it's slightly different because you don't have the first name and the surname of the critic it goes the surname first name, full stop, and then the rest of the information is the same and it doesn't have a full stop at the end, which is, which I have to be honest, that is annoying, that's the one drawback of MH Ra, that in addition to the footnotes and endnotes need the bibliography still, you always need the bibliography, because it's convention. If someone doesn't want to trawl through your footnotes, you need the bibliography, and if you're using Harvard or APA, you will always need the bibliography because there's no way that people can know which you which edition you've used from the parentheses in the text. Yes, a bibliography is a collection of all of your references, and actually it can be slightly wider than that. So a bibliography is a collection of all the important all the sources that you use in order to develop your ideas. So it may be that at the end of your essay, you'll go, I didn't actually cite this particular critic, but their ideas were really helpful in pointing me to this idea or this term, and you might, you might include them still in your bibliography, and that is one reason why it's really important to have a bibliography, in addition to the footnotes and the endnotes because sometimes it can be the case that you'll read a study, and you'll, you'll find it really helpful for your own thinking, but it won't, it won't make its way to your footnotes or to your referencing in the body of the essay and you want to acknowledge, I still read this, this person still wrote something that helps me think about a word in a different way or pointed me down a new route, include that in the bibliography. Okay.

1:41:36

So, these are just two reference systems there are, there are many. The in addition to this, APA M HRA there used to be one that was popular Chicago, mainly M HRA, there's one that's MLA. There's Harvard, there are different systems. So it's always good to know which system you want to use and then just be consistent, and the internet is great. The internet has so many guides on how to use these different citation systems, and I'm going to put out a special shout out actually to the University of Swanzey, University of swans he has some really good guides on how to use APA and M HRA and MLA it's like, it's it's almost more useful than the handbook. But you can often find guides for a particular reference style on the internet. Okay, Great, see that's a question and if most of your essay is based on an idea you've read but you can't put a footnote for a whole page. Can you put it in the bibliography. I am afraid I don't fully understand, understand the question you can't put a footnote for a whole page. Sorry, would you, would you mind maybe unmuting and explaining your question a bit more. Oh, that's all right. Do you think you could type, a bit more so I'm sorry just for those of you who are wondering. The question is about footnotes and bibliographies, so I'll just wait to see what is clarified. And, yes, Just wait for a moment and see, I think, I mean one of the other things that say about. Generally, putting generally with references and footnotes seek. Oh I see, okay, If your research was based tonight on an idea, and that idea shapes, most of your essay can't always put the reference down in a footnote in. Yes, that is somewhat true but also, you can actually acknowledge, very early on in your essay. If your essay, really, is based on an idea or builds from a particular theory acknowledge that from the beginning and say, much of this essay builds from this particular insight or

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a lot of or, you know, much of the insight that's in this essay builds on this person's idea. So, um, and then you can put note and cite, and then later on throughout your essay, you can always make references back to whoever whomever that person is. So just for an example, I'm in. In an article that I that I was right. I, I built a lot on some of the insights made by a man named Hancher, so I acknowledge it near the beginning this article, builds from his insights on the relationship between Lewis Carroll and his printer and Charleston Neil, so illustrations of Alice, and I acknowledge that in the introduction and then subsequently occasionally made references to, you know, as Hatcher has pointed out x. And when we look at the text we see this. Can you reference videos yes you can, if so, how do you do that with APA, well it depends whether you're referencing a film a documentary or a YouTube video. Um, so there are different ways so look online. There are lots of great guides, if you've already cited someone, do you have to cite them every time they are referenced. Yes, but it can be a shorter citation. So, the first time you cite someone in M HRA, it's a full citation and then subsequently you can just cite them with their surname, and a page number or surname and line, or if it's or something like that. And then if you're using a system like APA or MLA or Harvard. It's always just going to be a short reference anyway. So, yes, that's the case. I actually think we've come to the end of our time now. So, thank you so much everyone thank you for all of your questions. It's been a really engaging, afternoon, and I hope that this has been a helpful session for you to think about what Critical Reading is what critical writing is and how we can build from and diverged from sources, yes this PowerPoint will be made available, and it will be available, I think, early next week.

1:47:09

Yeah, I should upload it on Monday. So, yeah, thank you so much, Jessica, that was really interesting, and it was great to see you by not asking questions and getting the book too. So thank you everyone.

1:47:25

Um,

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yeah, did you have anything else to say, Jessica. No, I do think, Okay, well, on that note, we will leave it I hope everyone has a really good weekend, and we'll see you for another patch week of sessions next week. Yeah. See you.