

WRITING AN ABSTRACT

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Going Overboard? Representing Hazara Afghan Refugees as Just Like Us

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In this paper we analyse two Australian television programs, Marking Time (2003) and Molly & Mobarak (2004), foregrounding the ways in which ethnic Hazara refugees from Afghanistan have been (re)presented. We argue that by minimising cultural and religious differences both Marking Time and Molly & Mobarak construct and represent Hazara Afghan refugees as like a "certain us", that is, as members of Australian core culture who are predominately white, family oriented and inclusivist. However, their differences are not concealed entirely and in both programs the Hazara also appear as the "other", that is, unlike us. We point out some problems associated with privileging similarity and the possible consequences of these representations within policy making and Australian society more generally.

Keywords: Citizenship; Drama; Hazara; Media; Refugees; Social Documentary

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Edited for UoPeople use by Joseph Szewczyk





IMPORTANCE

- It's usually the first thing that readers read so it's strategic to make a good impression.
- It's an overview of the most salient aspects of your research.
- A precise and engaging Abstract can help you get your work well known as Abstracts are published on multiple computerised databases.

WHEN TO WRITE AN ABSTRACT

- Many people write a draft abstract early in the dissertation writing process.
- The final version of a dissertation abstract can only be written **after** you have completed your dissertation.
- Conference abstracts are usually written before you write your paper.

WHAT TO INCLUDE – DEPENDING ON THE LENGTH

1. Your research question
2. Your main purpose
3. The importance of your research
4. A description of key previous research (optional)
5. The gap you are addressing
6. The approach/methodology you adopted (depending on the focus of your research)
7. Your key findings
8. The implications of your research

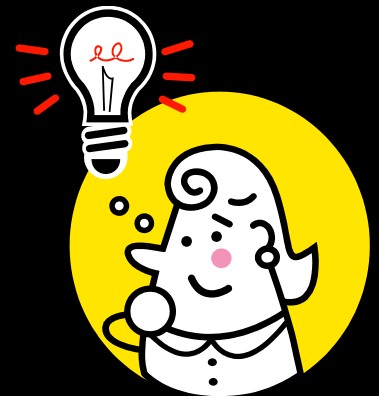
QUESTIONS TO ASK

- When working out what to include in your Abstract, it is helpful to ask the following questions.
 - What is the problem or question that my dissertation addresses?
 - Why is it important?
 - What have others written on the topic?
 - How did I carry out the investigation?
 - What did I find?
 - What are the implications of my findings?



AN ALTERNATIVE SET OF QUESTIONS

- Some might find this set of questions more useful.
 - Why did I do my research? What was interesting/useful about my project?
 - What was my methodology?
 - What were my main findings/results?
 - What were my principal conclusions?
 - What do my findings mean?



A COMBINATION OF QUESTIONS

- What is the problem or question that my dissertation addresses?
- Why is it important?
- How did I carry out the investigation?
- What did I find?
- What are the implications of my findings?
- Why did I do my research?
- What was interesting/useful about my project?
- What was my methodology?
- What were my main findings/results?
- What were my principal conclusions?

METHODS/APPARATUS FOC



- If your dissertation is about a new method or apparatus, you will want to include:
 - the advantages (of the method or apparatus)
 - how well it works

VARIATIONS ON THE THEME

- Abstracts written for the social sciences or sciences tend to focus on:
 - the scope
 - purpose
 - results of the work
- Abstracts written for the arts tend to include:
 - background to the study
 - central thesis
 - conclusions drawn

CONFERENCE ABSTRACT – A DIFFERENT TYPE OF ABSTRACT

- A conference abstract is submitted to a conference review committee.
- The purpose of the abstract is to convince the committee to accept your paper.
- If it is accepted, you will need to write a paper to correspond to your abstract.
- A conference provides you with an audience for your paper and an opportunity to get feedback on your research.
- As it is not read in conjunction with your paper/dissertation, it's particularly important to write your abstract in a clear, precise and engaging manner.

WRITING A JOURNAL ABSTRACT

1. Give a general idea of what the research is about.
2. Introduce your research question.
3. State why the research is important.
4. Review the arguments of previous researchers (two sentences).
5. Indicate a gap or limitation in previous research.
6. Report your findings.
7. Mention the implications of your findings for the field of research.

Thanks to Dr Michael Azariadis, Graduate Education Officer, UWA for the ideas above.

THE LANGUAGE OF ABSTRACTS - GUIDELINES

- Use the **past tense** to refer to what was done and what was found at each stage of the research.
- Use the **present tense** to comment on the significance of your research/findings.
- Use **active** verbs whenever possible, e.g. '*the study tested*' instead of '*it was tested by the study*'.
- Use **non-evaluative** language - report not comment on what you have done.

LENGTH

- Aim for
 - No more than 250 words

Abstract:

In this paper we analyse two Australian television programs, *Marking Time* (2003) and *Molly & Mobarak* (2004), foregrounding the ways in which ethnic Hazara refugees from Afghanistan have been (re)presented. We argue that by minimising cultural and religious differences both *Marking Time* and *Molly & Mobarak* construct and represent Hazara Afghan refugees as like a "certain us", that is, as members of Australian core culture who are predominately white, family oriented and inclusivist. However, their differences are not concealed entirely and in both programs the Hazara also appear as the "other", that is, unlike us. We point out some problems associated with privileging similarity and the possible consequences of these representations within policy making and Australian society more generally.

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WHAT NOT TO INCLUDE

- Definitions
- Acronyms, abbreviations or symbols
- Information that is not in the paper





TIP

- Write about each point in proportion to the emphasis it receives in your dissertation.

KEYWORDS

- Spend time thinking about appropriate keys words to put at the end of your Abstract.
- Appropriate key words help
 - indexers
 - researchers working in your area to find your work

Examples

1. Background check, character check, social networking, social responsibility
2. Citizenship; Drama; Hazara; Media; Refugees; Social Documentary

Clark, Leigh A. Roberts, Sherry J. 2010 'Employer's Use of Social Networking Sites: A Socially Irresponsible Practice,' *Journal of Business Ethics*, 95:507–525

Abstract

The Internet has drastically changed how people interact, communicate, conduct business, seek jobs, find partners, and shop. Millions of people are using social networking sites to connect with others, and employers are using these sites as a source of background information on job applicants. Employers report making decisions not to hire people based on the information posted on social networking sites. Few employers have policies in place to govern when and how these online character checks should be used and how to ensure that the information viewed is accurate. In this article, we explore how these inexpensive, informal online character checks are harmful to society. Guidance is provided to employers on when and how to use these sites in a socially responsible manner.

What paper is about generally.

Indication of previous research

Gap in policy

Focus of research

Usefulness of information in article

Abstract (journal article – not a dissertation)

In this paper we analyse two Australian television programs, *Marking Time* (2003) and *Molly & Mobarak* (2004), foregrounding the ways in which ethnic Hazara refugees from Afghanistan have been (re)presented. We argue that by minimising cultural and religious differences both *Marking Time* and *Molly & Mobarak* construct and represent Hazara Afghan refugees as like a “certain us”, that is, as members of Australian core culture who are predominately white, family oriented and inclusivist. However, their differences are not concealed entirely and in both programs the Hazara also appear as the “other”, that is, unlike us. We point out some problems associated with privileging similarity and the possible consequences of these representations within policy making and Australian society more generally.

What was done

What was of interest

What was found

Implications

MORE INFO?

- Melbourne University
http://courseworks.unimelb.edu.au/research_and_writing/abstracts
- Monash University
<http://www.monash.edu.au/lls/hdr/write/5.11.html>
- University of Nevada Las Vegas
<http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/writing/abstract.html>