Social Annotation as Formative Assessment

Jeff Clapp, Literature and Cultural Studies, EdUHK

19 June 2020

A project

- Colleagues in LCS at EdUHK took part in a teaching development grant project in 2018-19.

- The results are now published:

  Clapp, J., DeCoursey, M., Lee, S. W. S., & Li, K. (2020). "Something fruitful for all of us": Social annotation as a signature pedagogy for literature education. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*.

  https://doi.org/10.1177/1474022220915128

Annotating digital media

- An era of "open annotation" has begun in which it is increasingly possible to "annotate everything."

Example: Hypothes.is

- Hypothes.is has emerged as the dominant web annotation project. It allows the annotation of any webpage.

- Vannevar Bush, "As We Might Think," *Atlantic Monthly* (1945)

- https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1945/07/as-we-may-think/303881/

- https://web.hypothes.is

Social Annotation

- We decided to investigate the power of social annotation for humanities education.

- We decided to do this because we felt that that humanistic inquiry already centrally involves annotation.

- This allows a formative assessment strategy that is naturally integrated with existing practices.

Summary of participation

- Instructors: 10

- Courses: 11

- Students: 584

Overall Results

- Student surveys overwhelmingly show that students like SA and find it helpful.

- Instructor roundtables show that instructors agree that social annotation "fits" humanities education.

- Both groups confirmed that:
  - SA enables better feedback and communication
  - SA is highly engaging and fun
  - SA is a useful scaffolding for subsequent summative assessment

Research Background

- All of these results confirm previous research into SA (~90 previous studies).

- There is a recent meta-analysis:

    Ghadirian, H., Salehi, K., & Ayub, A. F. M. (2018). Social annotation tools in higher education: a preliminary systematic review. *International Journal of Learning Technology*, *13*(2), 130-162.
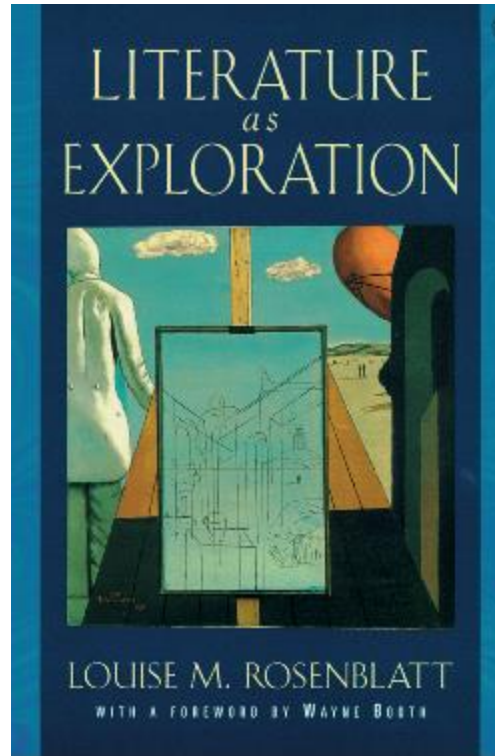
Research Background

- All of these results confirm previous research into SA (~90 previous studies).

- There is a recent metanalysis:

    Ghadirian, H., Salehi, K., & Ayub, A. F. M. (2018). Social annotation tools in higher education: a preliminary systematic review. *International Journal of Learning Technology*, *13*(2), 130-162.

Theory: Rosenblatt

Principles: Wilhelm
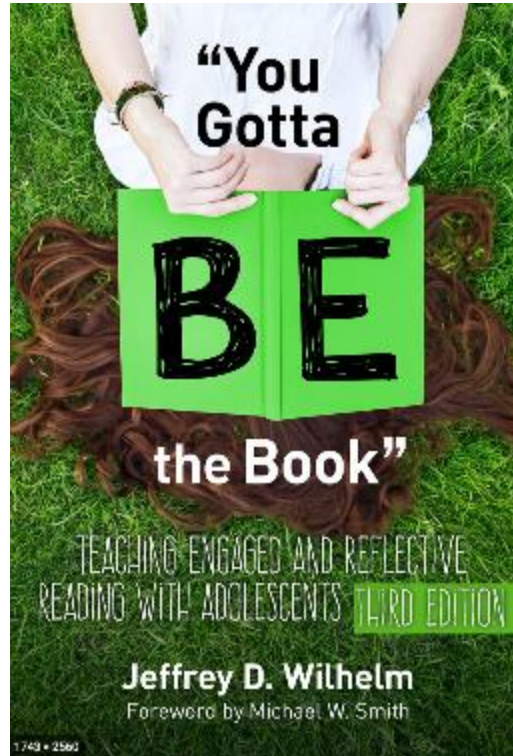
Example: VideoAnt

- Having "a very bad time" in *The Great Gatsby* (2013) (dir. Baz Luhrmann)

Example: Google Docs

- Having "a very bad time" in *The Great Gatsby* (1925) (by F. Scott Fitzgerald)

- [*n.b*. will be out of copyright at the end of 2020!]