I found the article written by Sonia Bodi was very informative and interesting. Although many of the ideas she presented I agreed with, there were also a few points that I’d like to argue against. First I would like to answer the question that was proposed in the title of this article: How do we bridge the gap between what we (professors) teach and what they (students) do? To fill in that gap, both sides need to work together. Students need to push themselves to expand their knowledge and help themselves become more inquisitive, critical, and reflective. Professors, on the other hand, should push and challenge the students to become better thinkers and help them use what skills they know to their advantage. When students and professors are thinking on the same page, they will start to understand each other’s viewpoint, thus making researching a paper more easier.

I agree that students do have a more difficult time to deal with the pressure of writing a research essay. "Choosing a topic and its focus is perhaps the most difficult task in research." This statement is very true. I sometimes complain when I have to write an essay focusing on a specific topic that a professor has assigned, but in reality, writing an essay on a topic you can pick yourself is even harder. Sometimes I have so many ideas to write down on paper I become overwhelmed and stressed; even though I am researching a topic that I myself have freely chosen. This is the time where, as stated in the Bodi article, that students "experience uncertainly and confusion." This quote was made after studying high school students’ behavior while researching topics. I thought about this statement while I read the rest of the article and came to a conclusion about the truth of this quote. Although I understand how to now, I was never taught how to write a proper research paper in high school; and I am sure that many people also feel this way as well. The teachers were very lenient about the way our research essays were presented, so it was never a big deal if I forgot to add a bibliography to the paper. This might be a possible answer to some of Sonia Bodi’s statements about the quality of first year students’ papers: some early year university students might just never have been taught properly.

Another problem that seems to affect students, from my experience, is the method of acquiring the information for the research paper. The Internet use to be where I got most of my information, and while I feel it is a valuable source, I know that libraries are even more beneficial. I can understand why students seem to turn away from Libraries
because all that information can be overwhelming and stressful. Therefore, another problem is presented before the actual research process has even begun. I really enjoyed the quote by William Blake: "You never know what is enough unless you know what is more than enough." It seems to add to the confusion of writing a research paper: How much information should I put in my paper? What are the most important topics and which topics should be left out?

As mentioned above, there were a few points I disagreed with. Quotes such as "students search in a haphazard, unplanned way, happy to find whatever" and "lack of patience" were easy for me to contradict. Although I have never been taught how to write a properly finished research paper, I have been taught how to write an outline. And though I may sometimes get overwhelmed with all the possible information I could write in my paper, I don't search for that information haphazardly and unplanned. I write an outline to help narrow down the field of topics I wish to write in my paper, but even with that, there are still vast amounts of information that I could research on. And unlike most scholars, who get paid to research and have all the time in the world, I can't afford to shift through all that information when I have a deadline. I don't feel it is fair to compare students with scholars, because it makes hard working students seem uneducated. Doing research is a way for scholars to make a living, and for most students, researching a paper is simply a way to make a grade. I feel that I do try my best while researching a paper, but the problem is, I don't have the time to look through all that information that scholars do have the time to look through. It is very hard to pick a focus that can have such vast topics. And I feel this is the main problem for many students, like myself.

I enjoyed very much reading this article. It allowed me to critically reflect upon the way students carry out their research papers. Sonia Bodi presented many valuable points that will help me focus on any future papers I will research.