**Rhetorical Evaluation of an Argument**

**English 2000 – Wingenbach**

Rough Draft: Feb 23

**Final: March 1**

This assignment is all about *entering the conversation* and calls for a close reading of a piece of writing and the use of specific details from the piece to support an assessmentyou will develop. You will need to read the article closely, examining its assumptions, assessing its reasons and evidence, and weighing its conclusions. Look at how it uses the different rhetorical appeals in the advancement of its claim or position. Your assessment should be founded in a careful critical analysis which culminates in a determination as to whether or not you think the author successfully supports its primary position or claim. It will be important to remember that you are not making a claim about the topic or issue covered in the article; you will be evaluating the effectiveness of the article.

**Assignment Objectives:**

1. Perform a thorough rhetorical analysis of a substantial article on your topic
   1. Identify how the article fits into the rhetorical situation
   2. Identify the rhetorical appeals used by the author of the article
2. Use direct quotations from your source article (**at least three**)
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of the article in an organized, clear manner

**Assignment Requirements:**

1. Formatting as prescribed by the class syllabus
2. 1500 word minimum
3. Correct citation of source article in analysis. This should be in MLA format unless your discipline uses another format. Ex: A history major might want to use Chicago citation.
4. A correctly formatted bibliography

**Steps:**

1. Collect and read at least four articles on the topic or subject of your choosing. These should be a mix of academic and non-academic articles from credible sources. Ideally, these articles should represent different understandings of the same topic. While this might seem like an unnecessary step, this is the *entering the conversation* part of the assignment. You have to familiarize yourself with what people are saying about a topic before your critique a piece of writing on that topic.
2. Carefully choose an article from this group to formally evaluate. This article does not have to be a peer-reviewed article from a strictly academic source. That being said, your article absolutely needs to be from a *credible source* and substantial enough to support this assignment. To put it another way, you aren’t going to have enough to write about if your article is only five pages long.
3. Read your article closely several times and make decisions about how it fits into the rhetorical situation. Who is the author? (This should be easy.) Who is the intended audience of the article? Why did the author choose to present his or her findings in the publication they did? Why did they choose that genre of media?
4. Analyze how the rhetorical appeals are being used. Which appeal or appeals are used most prominently? Where does the author draw his or her credibility? (Ethos) How does the article appeal to the values and beliefs of its audience? (Pathos) How does it use logic, data, and sound reasoning? (Logos) Assess how effectively or ineffectively an article uses each of the appeals. To help with this process you will be finding quotations from your article which support your evaluation. Your paper needs to have at least **three** quotations.
5. After analyzing the article, go back and draw up a thesis based on your findings. Your thesis should focus on the overall effectiveness of the article. We will have a workshop day for this and I discourage you from giving much thought to thesis statements until you have finished your analysis.
6. Add a well-constructed introduction and conclusion which introduce your reader to the article you have analyzed and remind them of what you have found, respectively.
7. Critical analysis papers are usually written in the third person, not using first person pronouns such as “I,” “me,” or “my,” or second person pronouns such as “you.”

**A grading rubric will be posted in Moodle shortly. However, I’m sure you can anticipate that you will be graded on following the assignment requirements, the depth of your analysis, and organization.**