

WRT 104; Spring 2014

Instr: L. Briggette

Project #4: Critical Analysis

→ **Revision workshop:** Wed. April 21st (in class)

→ **Final copy due:** Fri. April 23rd (Sakai dropbox)

Project #4 –Making Connections in a Critical Analysis: *Exploring Scholarly Work Related to Your Areas of Interest*

For our fourth and final project – a Critical Analysis – you will use a course reading, homework assignment, or project of some kind from one of your URI courses as a springboard (we'll discuss this). Your aim is to study something *you* have an interest in and to further explore. ***You will research, read, and work closely with two articles to compose a critical analysis of the two pieces of text.*** One of your articles will be academic or “scholarly,” and one will be from a magazine or newspaper. You will work to discover connections (or maybe notice *disconnections*) and the differences between the articles, and you will try to somehow relate them to your own life and experiences in your classes here at URI. You might consider this project as an attempt to answer: How do different authors write about the same topics? **As in all of our previous assignments, I would encourage all of you to make this work for you!**

Guidelines:

- The “scholarly” article you choose must be at least 10 pages in length (longer if you choose), and it must be “peer reviewed” or “refereed.” I will ask to see your options early on.
- The newspaper or magazine article you choose must be somehow related to the topic/content area of your scholarly article.
- Newspaper/magazine article must also be at least 2 pages in length and must present an analysis of some kind.
- An example: If you want to study the effects of media on the body image of young girls and boys, you could use an article from a major journal from the Media Studies field, and an article from, *Time*, *The Atlantic*, *The Boston Globe*, *New York Yorker*, *People*, or another appropriate magazine.
- Your first steps should be: Search for articles, chose articles, read articles, re-read articles, and THEN decide what to write. Think: ***reading, first—analysis, second—writing, third.***

This assignment will:

- Help you work closely with a topic that interests you!
- Help you learn the research process, and therefore work closely with a scholarly article that you yourself can connect to.
- To help you use pieces of text to move your own ideas forward.
- To establish connections between two texts that were not previously connected.
- To expose you to the type of work that will be expected of you in upper level courses here at URI.
- Allow you to gain knowledge of the “rhetorical moves” that will be expected in any career.

The Rhetorical Situation:

You are now working within a rhetorical situation; you will argue for the connections you make between your two article choices, and you will need to show “textual” evidence of those connections throughout your work using quotations. Once you recognize what your authors are arguing, you can analyze whether or not you find their arguments compelling, and you will say so in your analysis. Within your analysis, you will identify and explain the arguments your authors make, and you will argue for the connections you yourself make between those arguments. Furthermore, your Critical Analysis will have a specific message that is individual to you and the pieces of text that you choose. You are *making new knowledge* for yourself and for our learning community. We could consider our audience to be our community of learners here in WRT 104, in addition to incoming student communities. This is a chance for you to demonstrate the connections that are possible – connections that will move your own academic work to a whole new level.

Project #4 Timeline

- W. Apr. 2: Assignment posted to wiki for your review.
- 4/4 – 4/6: Brainstorming expected (you'll get guidelines)
- W. Apr. 9: Must have scholarly article chosen
- F. Apr. 11: Must have accompanying newspaper or magazine article chosen
- M. Apr. 21: Revision workshop in class
- W. Apr. 23: Final Draft due by class time via Sakai dropbox
- W. Apr. 23: Postwrite due by 10pm via Sakai dropbox

A carefully organized Critical Analysis will have the following elements:

- Written entirely in third and first person (no use of the 2nd-person, "you" perspective)
- An introductory paragraph (or two) that explains what you're critically analyzing and what you'll be attempting to explain throughout.
- A thesis statement/s that reveals the claims you're making throughout the essay.
- A brief rhetorical analysis of each article.
- Several uses of source quotations with MLA citation formatting for in-text incorporation of quotations (this requires "signal phrasing," which we'll discuss) as well as your Work Cited list.
- Several body paragraphs that address the major components of the assignment.
- A concluding paragraph (or two) that attempts to summarize what you've said in your critical analysis (more personalized *to your ideas and findings*); avoid generic and cliché statements like, "Everyone interprets ideas differently."
- Each paragraph should address ONE (and only one) discussion point or moment of analysis.

Nuts & Bolts:

- Typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12pt. font.
- MLA formatting for sources used throughout
- A Cover Page with a Title (first page)
- A Work Cited Page (last page)
- I imagine this to become at least a 5-ish page paper
- **Scholarly article:** You will report title, author, and publication to me by Wed. April 9th
- **Newspaper/Magazine article:** You will report title, author, and publication to me by Fri. April 11th
- **Revision Workshop:** Monday, April 21st – Bring at least THREE-to-FOUR PAGES of your draft thus far. You will work with a classmate to receive peer feedback on your work
- **Pre-portfolio Draft:** Due Wednesday, April 23rd by class time via your Sakai dropbox
- **Postwrite:** Due Wednesday, April 23rd by 10pm; it will count toward your grade
- This assignment is worth 15 points toward your final grade (reduced from 20 since so much work went into visual production of Project #3)
- You will be able to make revisions based on initial feedback, but there may not be time to revise for higher grades – I'll consider on case-by-case basis.

☞ We will have ongoing discussion regarding these details as we work incrementally on the project over the next three weeks. ☞