

**Oral and Written Communication Fall 2018**  
**(RHET 130-02):** MWF 11:45-12:50 pm, ED 310

Dr. Leigh Meredith

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**Theme: Soldiers, Students, Resisters, Rebels: Considering Relationships to Authority**

In 2017, San Francisco's mayor, Ed Lee, joined the mayors of many other major U.S. cities in publically affirming his commitment to keeping San Francisco a "Sanctuary City." In so doing, Lee and others were broadcasting their "non-compliance" with federal immigration officials - in effect, refusing to share information that might lead to increased deportations. But this was as much a *rhetorical* move as a policy statement. For these mayors were also declaring their cities' resistance to what many saw as the anti-immigrant ideology that lay beneath President Trump's own rhetoric and policy platform. Why did these mayors choose to signal their "resistance" to the president, the ultimate authority figure? Why did other mayors and other cities choose instead to comply? This semester, we will explore attitudes towards authority. When and why do individuals and groups obey - even if it means violating their deepest moral codes? Why and when do they challenge authority - even if it means risking their lives and livelihoods? How do we weigh the benefits and consequences of each course of action? We will read, watch and discuss texts representing various disciplinary approaches (sociological, psychological, literary, philosophical, cinematic) to these questions. In turn, we will learn to identify, explain, analyze, and argue about these questions in our speech and writing.

This course explores these questions through the lens of rhetorical theory. Rhetoric, the study of what language *does*, will help us identify and analyze arguments about when and why we obey or rebel. In turn, we will use rhetoric to take action in the world. This semester, we'll focus on *analyzing* theories, arguments, and contexts. Next semester, we'll use these analytical tools to actually *advocate* for change in the world.

**Course Description:**

Written and Oral Communication (130/131) is a two-semester course that meets the university Core requirements for writing and public speaking. In the first semester, students learn the basic practices of oral and written argument, writing 5000 to 6000 words of revised prose and delivering 2-3 graded speeches totaling 15-20 minutes of speaking time. In the second semester, students learn more elaborate approaches to argument, rhetoric, and analysis, writing 6000 to 7000 words of revised prose and delivering at least two presentations, totaling at least 15 minutes of speaking time.

The first semester of the course introduces students to the challenges and opportunities of academic writing and speaking. Within a context of rhetorical processes and vocabulary, students claim a voice in public discourse, learning to

connect purpose to audience, anticipate audience response, and develop rhetorical texts that are responsive to social, political, and rhetorical contexts. Emphasis is on written and oral argument, and, in particular, reading critically, using textual support in arguments, and backing up key ideas using audience-centered support—including inductive and deductive reasoning, narratives, illustrations, anecdotes, visual images, testimony, and factual evidence, such as statistics. Students engage in critical writing practices, such as drafting, revising, and editing to achieve focused and coherent writing, and they learn fundamental oral communication practices, such as creating speeches that are organized around a thesis and a focused set of main points, and delivered in an extemporaneous manner.

In the second semester, having mastered basic public speaking skills, students prepare oral presentations for more complex contexts, which may include more detailed argumentative speeches, debates, research reports, facilitation of class discussion, or other appropriate assignments. In both written and oral contexts, they learn to make arguments in an ethical manner, balancing emotion and reason, while fairly and accurately representing (and responding to) opposing views. Additionally, they analyze more complex cultural texts and learn to adapt arguments to audience and occasion, studying the rhetorical use of style and diction.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

#### Core A1 Outcomes:

- 1: Craft and present well-organized, thesis-driven speeches.
2. Present well-reasoned and appropriately supported oral arguments that are responsive to topic, purpose, audience, and occasion.
3. Deliver speeches using an audience-centered, extemporaneous approach.
4. Use rhetorical concepts and principles to evaluate the effectiveness of their own and others' communication in both academic and civic contexts.
5. Use rhetorical concepts and principles to practice ethical and socially responsible public speaking, and to identify and evaluate ethical problems in public address.

#### Core A2 Outcomes:

- 1: Critical analysis of academic discourse: Students critically analyze linguistic and rhetorical strategies used in long and complex texts from a variety of genres, subjects, and fields.
- 2: Integrating multiple academic sources: Students incorporate multiple texts of length and complexity within a unified argumentative essay, addressing connections and differences among them.
- 3: Academic research: Students develop sophisticated research questions and compose substantial arguments in response to those questions, incorporating extensive independent library research and demonstrating mastery of documentation in MLA and APA modes.
- 4: Style: Students edit their own prose to achieve a clear and mature writing style in keeping with the conventions of academic and/or professional discourse.

5: Revision: Students develop their own revision strategies for extending and enriching early drafts and for producing polished advanced academic writing.

**Required Textbooks:**

The following text is available for purchase or rent from the campus bookstore: *Writing Analytically*, 8th ed, by David Rosenwatter and Jill Stephen.

We will also be using: *Stand Up, Speak Out: The Practice and Ethics of Public Speaking* (Saylor Academy, 2012). This text is available for free at: [https://saylordotorg.github.io/text\\_stand-up-speak-out-the-practice-and-ethics-of-public-speaking/index.html](https://saylordotorg.github.io/text_stand-up-speak-out-the-practice-and-ethics-of-public-speaking/index.html) (link is also posted on Canvas)

Note that these texts will be used for both semesters. **Other readings and materials will be posted on Canvas.**

**Assignments:** Because this class is designed to develop your speaking AND writing skills, speaking and writing assignments are designed to work together, complementing and expanding on similar topics or skill-sets. The descriptions below suggest how assignments will help you achieve (and assess your progress towards) course learning outcomes (LOs).

\*Details, guidelines, and internal grade breakdowns (point values of proposals, drafts, etc) will be posted on Canvas and discussed in class. **Unless otherwise specified, all assignments should be submitted on Canvas before class the day that they are due.**

**3 Major Writing Assignments (45%):** Writing assignments will increase in value and complexity throughout the semester. Final grades for assignments will sometimes incorporate “building-block” elements, such as freewrites, drafts, and peer reviews. *Visiting the Writing Center for coaching on your writing (see “Student Resources” below for more info on the Writing Center) will earn you 5% extra credit for the relevant essay.*

- **He Said, She Said: Comparative Critical Analysis:** For your first paper, you will write a comparative analysis of two of the critical/theoretical texts we have read together so far. Your essay should do two things: (1) Carefully explain each thinker’s main claims about obedience to authority. (2) Discuss the extent to which each thinker agrees or disagrees about the reasons why we obey and/or the consequences of that obedience. Focus is on summarizing complex texts, developing a nuanced thesis, and using close-reading as evidence. 4-5 pages. 10% (LO. A2.1,2,4,5)
- **Into the Archives: Intrinsic Rhetorical Analysis.** You will find and select an editorial from the digitized archives of USF’s student newspaper, *The Foghorn*. The editorial should be historical, not contemporary, and should advocate for either rebelling against, or obeying, some specific authority, rule, or norm (e.g., Anti-Labor laws in the 30s, the Vietnam War draft in the 70s, Catholic Church curricula in the 90s). You will identify the article’s

argument and evaluate its efficacy, focusing on internal characteristics like structure, tone, appeals, and authorial voice. Focus is on close reading/descriptive analysis and applying rhetorical concepts. 4-5 pages. 15% (LO A2.1, 4, 5; A1. 4, 5)

- **Inside Out: Final Rhetorical Analysis of Artifact** You will combine your intrinsic analysis with information from your Flashback speech (see below), providing a contextual/historical analysis that situates your article in a particular place and time. Expanding on your previous thesis, you will explain and evaluate the artifact's argumentative strategies as a response to that specific historic and inter-textual context. You will present this work as an Adobe Spark webpage, creating a multi-media text with links, images, and video. ~8-10 pages. 20% (LO A2.1, 2, 3, 4, 5; A1. 4, 5)

**3 Major Speeches (35%):** Like writing assignments, speech assignments will increase in value and complexity throughout the semester. Also like writing assignments, final grades will sometimes incorporate "building-block" elements, such as freewrites, drafts, outlines, and final reflections. *Visiting the Speaking Center for peer coaching on preparing or delivering your speeches (see "Student Resources" below for more info on the Speaking Center) will earn you 5% extra credit for the relevant speech.*

- **TO re(BE)I OR NOT TO re(BE)I?: Narrative Speech** Tell us a story about a time when you had to decide between obedience and rebellion. What did you decide, and why? What did you learn about the risks and/or rewards of that decision? Focus is on mastering speech basics, analyzing personal experience, and forming community with classmates. 3-4 mins. 5% (LO A1.1,2,3)
- **Newsflash: Impromptu News Debates** Scheduled throughout the semester (~2 per week), these speeches will require you to a) summarize a recent editorial on a controversial issue of civic importance, b) briefly analyze the argument/source bias, and c) lead the class in a quick debate/discussion about the issue. Extra credit if you connect your issue to the theme of "sanctuary" in some way. While the speech requires some advance preparation, the focus is less on a polished speech structure and more on effective summary, audience analysis, and discussion moderation. 4-5 mins (plus debate). 10% (LO A1.1, 2, 3, 5; A2.3)
- **Flashbacks: Group Informative Speech** This speech works in tandem with your intrinsic and final Rhetorical Analysis assignments. Working in small groups, you will provide historical, cultural, and discursive context for your Foghorn article. Focus is on collaboration, research, and making sources "speak" to each other. 7-8 min plus 2-3 mins Q&A. 20% (LO A1.1-5; A2.1-3)

**Re-Writing the Reading: Canvas Posts and Weekly Writing Workshops (10%):**

On weeks when major assignments are not due, you will submit writing responses to class material on Canvas. These will require you to summarize, paraphrase, analyze, evaluate, and/or extend specific passages from the readings. They will

serve as the basis for Wednesday Writing Workshops, during which you will read your work and receive feedback from your peer writing group.

You will receive little or no written feedback from me on these assignments (credit is on a complete/incomplete basis). The point of this exercise is to help you continually stretch your analytical and writing muscles - the more you do it, the better you'll be at making your writing talk to other texts, and to pin-point where writing works and doesn't work. In addition, ***points for this assignment derive BOTH from posting your writing AND participating in in-class writing workshops (getting and giving feedback from others).*** In other words, if you post a response, but don't come to class on Wednesday (or don't really participate), you lose half of your points for that week's assignment.

**Participation and Attendance (10%):** Participation will be **crucial** to your success in this class. It is particularly important in a writing and speaking course that is based on discussion, group work, and a variety of in-class activities. ***You must come prepared to participate in each class, which means doing the readings and taking notes that summarize and respond to the readings even on days when you don't have to post anything on Canvas.*** Workshops (which may require you to bring in or create drafts in class), mini-presentations, and peer critiques will also be a component of this grade. Check out the **Participation Guidelines** on Canvas for more on what counts as participation in class discussion.

You have no "free" absences. If you choose not to come to class, you will lose participation and attendance points for that day. Attendance is tracked on Canvas, so you can check in every 2-3 weeks on your attendance grade (note that Canvas grades are based on a rolling fraction, so the more days of class we have, the larger the denominator. This means that absences early in the semester will seem like they count more. **You MUST attend all your scheduled speech days; if medical reasons or some other emergency event results in an absence during a speech day, please see the CASA Office on University Center 3rd Floor.** When warranted, they will distribute a letter requesting an adjustment of your absences. Your discussion with CASA will be considered confidential and only pertinent information will be released in such a letter.

**Exception:** When representing the University of San Francisco in intercollegiate competition (e.g., athletics, debate), students shall be excused from classes on the hours or days such competition takes them away from classes. However, such students shall be responsible for advising their professors regarding anticipated absences and for arranging to complete course work for classes, laboratories, and/or examinations missed.

**Grades and Adjustments: You must complete all graded speeches and writing assignments to pass the course.** Late written assignments will not be accepted unless you notify me via email **beforehand** with a viable reason. Late speeches will *not* be accepted because it affects the schedule for everyone (excepting the

emergency situations noted in the attendance policy above). I'm happy to address concerns about assignment grades **within a week** after you were notified of that grade.

## Grading

### Range of Grades

Letter grades will be calculated according to the following scale, although class participation may impact the rounding up or down of final grades.

A	= 94-100%	B	=84-86.9	C	=74-76.9
A-	= 90-93.9	B-	=80-83.9	C-	=70-73.9
B+	= 87-89.9	C+	=77-79.9	D	=60-69.9
F	= less than 60%				

### General Grading Rubric

*Writing Assignments: The following grading rubric will be applied to writing assignments in addition to grading parameters specific to individual assignments:*

A: A essays address the assignment prompt fully and thoughtfully, exhibit structural coherence, make significant claims that are justified by appropriate support. They are responsive to audience and meet typical expectations of academic readers, including research, meaningful claims, sufficient organizational signals, and a writing style that is linguistically precise and grammatically complex.

B: B essays meet major requirements of the assignment: their major claims are justified in a reasonable way, and they are generally responsive to the audience. Essays that meet a significant, but not all, of the expectations, tend to fall into the "B" category. An otherwise "A" essay that argues an obvious claim, or offers insufficient support, or contains a number of stylistic or mechanical faults are the typical characteristics of a "B" level essay.

C: C essays meet at least some of the necessary requirements of the assignment, and are comprehensible, exhibiting enough structure, organizational signals, and appropriate style to shape meaning. When essays fall significantly short in one or more of the most significant areas described above, or fall short in most areas, they tend toward a "C." Failing to meet basic assignment requirements--such as summarizing and responding to particular readings, meeting page- or word-minimum limits, failing to use proper research--will also lead a paper to get a "C."

D and F: D and F essays are deficient in many ways.

*Speech Assignments: The following grading rubric will be applied to all speeches in addition to grading parameters specific to individual assignments:*

A: A speeches goes beyond merely providing information on a generic topic; it adopts interesting, audience-aware angles of vision; they are well supported with sound reasoning and a variety of well-researched evidence, are delivered extemporaneously and in an audience-centered manner, with clear and astute organization revealed through main points, signposts, and transitions.

B: B speeches attend all the basic assignment requirements, and provide well-reasoned arguments in an audience-centered manner. They use transitional

elements effectively, and possess an adequate amount of internal coherence and consistency strong and carefully attentive to assignment requirements.

C: C speeches follow the basic requirements of the assignment, but may be significantly deficient in one or more ways in the areas described above. (e.g., a speech with well-researched content but no discernible main points may get a "C" grade; a well-crafted speech that otherwise may be an "A" or "B" speech will probably get a "C" if it is delivered from a manuscript rather than extemporaneously).

D and F: D and F speeches are deficient in several ways. They are usually deficient in meeting one or more basic requirements of the assignment (e.g., an organized, interesting speech may receive a D or F grade if it seriously violates time restraints)

### **Expectations and Policies:**

*Technology:* Please put away phones, etc. when in class. I'll often ask you to bring your laptop for classwork, but use it only for discussing readings, doing research, or participating in presentation or group work. When needed, you can also check out laptops from the Gleeson library.

*Classroom Etiquette:* Because this is a rhetoric class, we will consider how language issues from and impacts diverse audiences. Therefore, our single most important ground rule is to be respectful of others' perspectives. While we are likely to touch on painful and controversial subjects, hostile speech directed against someone's race, gender, religion, ethnicity, or sexual orientation is never acceptable. I may not catch every instance of hostile language, so if you notice a problem, please bring it to my/your classmates' attention.

### **University Policies**

**Time Management and Planning:** Students are expected to spend 2 hours outside of class in study and preparation of assignments for each hour in class. In a 4 unit class, assignments have been created with the expectation that students will engage in approximately 8 hours of out-of-class work per week.

### **Students with Disabilities:**

If you are a student with a disability or disabling condition, or if you think you may have a disability, please contact [USF Student Disability Services](#) (SDS) for information about accommodations.

### **Behavioral Expectations:**

All students are expected to behave in accordance with the [Student Conduct Code](#) and other University policies.

### **Academic Integrity:**

USF upholds the standards of honesty and integrity from all members of the academic community. All students are expected to know and adhere to the University's [Honor Code](#).

### **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):**

CAPS provides confidential, free [counseling](#) to student members of our community.

### **Confidentiality, Mandatory Reporting, and Sexual Assault:**

For information and resources regarding sexual misconduct or assault visit the [Title IX](#) coordinator or USFs [Callisto website](#).

### **Student Resources**

The Learning, Writing, and Speaking Centers at USF provide individualized support to assist you in better understanding course material and to aid you on your path to success. Services are free and include one-on-one tutoring, group tutoring, and one-on-one Academic Skills Coaching appointments to discuss effective study strategies. The Learning Center supports over 80 courses each semester. The Writing Center helps students develop writing skills in rhetoric, organization, style, and structure, through one-on-one interactive conferences. The Speaking Center helps students prepare for public speaking - including speeches, oral presentations, team presentations, and visual aid demonstrations. International students may also contact the Centers to learn more about communicating with professors and general academic study skills.

The Learning, Writing, and Speaking Centers are located on the Lower Level of Gleeson Library. Please contact them at (415) 422-6713 for further assistance or visit: <https://myusf.usfca.edu/lwsc> to make an appointment.

Various Student Success Workshops are offered by CASA.

### **Course Schedule: Written and Oral Communication (RHET 130)**

\* Note: Readings may be supplemented or replaced; changes will be noted in class and/or on Canvas. It is your responsibility to check Canvas regularly for updates.

Readings in *Writing Analytically* (WA)

Readings in *Speak Up, Speak Out* (SUSO)

Readings on *Canvas* (C)

### **August**

Week 1 (8/22-8/24): Outside the Law: Sanctuary, Rhetoric, and Rebellion

**Reading/Watching:** Fri, Aug 24: *The Essential Guide to Rhetoric*, Chapters 1 and 2 (“The Rhetorical Tradition” “Rhetoric and the Audience”) [C]; Ted Ed Video/Quiz/Discussion Questions: <https://ed.ted.com/on/XooY3X94> [C]

Week 2 (8/27-8/31): Rhetoric: A System for Thinking and Doing

**Reading:** Mon 8/27 Chapter 1, focus on p. 16-28 (“The 5 Analytical Moves”) (WA); Liz Robbins, “Outraged Mayors Vow to Defy Trumps Immigration Order,” *New York Times*, Jan 25, 2017  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/25/nyregion/outraged-mayors-vow-to-defy-trumps-immigration-order.html>

**Reading/Watching:** Wed 8/29 *Essential Guide to Rhetoric, Chapter 3* [C]; Trump and Obama's Inauguration Speeches [C]

**Reading:** Fri 8/31 Chapter 19, "Speaking Confidently: Your First Speech" (SUSO)

**Due: Wed 8/27 *Re-Writing the Reading (Canvas Post/Wed Workshop)***

## September

Week 3 (9/5-9/7): To Rebel or Not to Rebel Speech Week

*No Monday Class*

**Due: Wed/Fri** (depending on assigned speech day): **Final Speech and Outline for *Speech 1: To Re(BE)l or Not to Re(BE)l***

Week 4 (9/10-9/14): Why Do We Obey? Part 1

**Reading:** Mon 9/10 "Situating the Reading Rhetorically" (p. 53-56); Doris Lessing, "Group Minds," Erich Fromm, "Disobedience as a Psychological and Moral Problem," Lee Ross and Richard E. Nisbett, "The Power of Situations" [C]

**Reading:** Wed 9/12 Chapter 2, selection (p. 38-56) (WA)

**Reading/Watching:** Fri 9/14 Philip Zimbardo, "The Stanford Prison Experiment," Stanley Milgram, "The Perils of Obedience," Jerry Burger, "Replicating Milgram: Would People Still Obey Today?" [C]; Watch clips from Milgram experiment [C]

**Due: Wed 9/12 *Re-Writing the Reading (Canvas Post/Wed Workshop)***

Week 5 (9/17-9/21): Why Do We Obey? Part II

**Reading:** Mon 9/17 Michel Foucault, "Discipline and Punish (excerpts)" [C]

**Watching:** Fri 9/21 "The Breakfast Club" [C]

**Due: Wed 9/19 *Re-Writing the Reading (Canvas Post/Wed Workshop)***

Week 6 (9/24-9/28): Revising and Rethinking

**Reading:** Mon 9/24 Chapter 4: Responding More Analytically (WA); NY Times Book Review [C]

**Reading:** Wed 9/26 Chapter 6: Reasoning from Evidence to Claims (excerpt p. 148-153) [WA]

**Reading:** Fri 9/28 James Lopach and Jean Luckowski, "Uncivil Disobedience: Violating the Rules for Breaking the Law" [C]

**Due: Mon 9/25: Draft Thesis Statement**

**Due: Wed 9/26: Draft Paragraph**

**Due: Fri 9/28: Final Writing Assignment 1: He Said, She Said: Critical Comparison** [due at midnight]

## October:

Week 7 (10/1-10/5): Rhetorics of Rebellion

**Reading and Listening:** Mon 10/1 Campus Activism in the 20th Century: An Overview; Maggie Astor, "7 Times in History When Students Turned to

Activism," *New York Times*, March 5, 2018 [C]; Excerpts from the Backstory Podcast, <https://www.backstoryradio.org/shows/teen-activists> [C]

**Watching:** Wed 10/3 Protest speeches: Emma Gonzalez, Mario Savio, Alcatraz Occupation [C].

**Reading:** Fri 10/5 Mohsin Hamid, *Exit West* [C]

**Due:** Wed 10/3 **Re-Writing the Reading (Canvas Post/Wed Workshop)**

Week 8 (10/8-10/12): Archive Fever

**Reading:** Mon 10/8: Mohsin Hamid, *Exit West* [C]

**Reading:** Wed/Fri: Searching Foghorn Archives, reading select articles

**Due:** Wed 10/10 **Re-Writing the Reading (Canvas Post/Wed Workshop)**

\* **Note:** Mon 10/8: Pending confirmation, class meets in Gleeson Library for archive workshop; In addition, please plan to attend the Mohsin Hamid reading on Monday night

Week 9 (10/15-10/19): Consider the Text

*No Monday Class*

**Reading:** Wed 10/17 Chapter 6: "Reasoning from Evidence to Claims" (p. 160-176) (WA)

**Due:** Wed 10/17 **Re-Writing the Reading (Canvas Post/Wed Workshop)**

**Due:** Fri 10/19: *Pitch Prep (be prepared to give quick pitch of argument to group)*

Week 10 (10/22-10/26): Revising and Rethinking

**Reading:** Mon 10/22 Chapter 7: Finding and Evolving a Thesis [WA]

**Watching:** Fri 10/26 (Democracy Interlude): FilmmakingFrenzy.com entries for persuading people to vote in midterm elections [C]

**Due:** Mon 10/22: **Draft Thesis Statement**

**Due:** Wed 10/24: **Draft Paragraph**

**Due:** Fri 10/26: **Final Writing Assignment 2: Into the Archives: Intrinsic Analysis** [due at midnight]

Week 11 (10/29-11/2): Consider the Context

**Reading:** Mon 10/29 "A Short History of America First," *The Atlantic*, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/01/trump-america-first/514037/> [C]

**Reading:** Wed 10/31 Introduction to Collaboration, <https://writingcommons.org/collaboration-introduction> [C]; Independent Research

**Reading:** Fri 11/3: Chapter 8: Supporting Ideas (SUSO)

**Due:** Wed 10/31: **Individual Canvas Post (Draft Mind-Map)**

## November

Week 12 (11/5-11/9): Power in Numbers: Making Groups Work

**Reading:** Mon 11/5: Chapter 12: "Outlining" (SUSO)

**Reading:** Fri 11/9: Chapter 9 and 11: "Intros and Conclusions" (SUSO)

**Due: Wed 11/7 Group Canvas Post (Draft Outline)**

Week 13 (11/12-11/16): Flashback Speech Week, Part I

**Due: Wed, Fri Final Outline and Speech Assignment 3: Flashback (Group Informative Speech)**

Week 14 (11/19-11/21) Flashback Speech Week, Part II

**Due: Mon, Wed Final Outline and Speech Assignment 3: Flashback (Group Informative Speech)**

*No Class on Friday (11/23)*

Week 15 (11/26-11/30) Putting it All Together

**Reading:** Mon 11/26 "Segregated Student Housing and the Activists Who Defeated It," <http://acampusdivided.umn.edu/index.php/essay/segregated-student-housing/> [C]

**Reading:** Fri 11/30 Chapter 11: Choosing Words, Shaping Sentences

**Due: Wed 11/28 Focused freewrite on revisions for final rhetorical analysis (Canvas Post)**

## **December**

Week 16 (12/3-12/5) Ending and Beginnings

**Due: Mon 12/3: Find an article in a contemporary issue (past 5 years) of the Foghorn to compare/contrast with your historical article. What has changed? What's remained the same?**

Finals Week (12/6-12/14)

**Due: Thurs 12/14 Final Writing Assignment 3: *Rhetorical Analysis***