

ENG201
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Writing Assignment #3
Rogerian Introduction

This assignment concerns and applies itself to the theory of Psychologist Carl Rogers and emphasizes "empathic listening". When you empathize with somebody, you realize the importance of an issue concerning the individual it directly affects; putting yourself "in their shoes" so to speak. You must be able to demonstrate an understanding of the audience's position before presenting your own and only make an appeal to the audience so that they may shift to the writer's views. By being sympathetic and showing empathy toward the resistant reader's views, your audience may be persuaded more easily to accept compromise. Thus, this type of argument format is applied for the most part to persuade a resistant audience toward a particular standpoint. It is also with this paper that you will be incorporating a delayed-thesis.

The theory behind the delayed-thesis is that by revealing your position at the end of the paper, you increase reader sympathy for more than one view, and heighten interest in the tension among alternative views and in the writer's struggle for clarity. In the process of providing a delayed-thesis, your argument appears less threatening and will be accepted as a point of consideration for the "tough" audience by stressing self-examination, clarification, and accommodation as opposed to refutation. It is a win-win negotiation rather than a win-lose debate.

Like writing assignment #2, you will again have the opportunity to hand in a rough draft one week prior to the final due date intended for the purposes of revision guidelines and discussion. You will also need to explain (in a one page statement) the criteria involved in determining the type or types of argument to be presented in your paper, provide a Toulmin Schema, and the final copy of your paper will be five (5) to seven (7) pages in length following the guidelines of the MLA format including a title page, in-text citation, and a works cited page. In addition, you will also hand in hard copies of **ALL** sources highlighting the sections that you have cited in-text.

Issue Analysis

Concept: In every year there are ideas and issues that come under debate. What you will do in this paper is to find a piece of persuasive discourse from our year-a speech, an editorial, or letter to the editor, a cartoon, an essay-and extract an issue from it.

Research tasks: Start with your primary text. A wide selection of speeches can be found in periodical called *Vital Speeches of the Day*; if our library does not subscribe, look for it at central library. If you want a speech by a historical figure, you can look in a source specific to that person. Letters to the editors can be found in the Op-Ed pages of a newspaper; *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News and World Report* are only a few of the periodicals that publish opinion essays in each issue. Find a text that addresses an issue that interests you. Then “contextualize” the piece. Context means the world of ideas surrounding a text; to contextualize a piece means to explain how the piece fits into the surrounding world of ideas. So, if your speech is by a general during wartime, you should find out what was happening in the war at the time and how different groups of American’s felt about the war at the time. **Use seven sources in addition to your primary text.**

Analytical goal: Break down the rhetoric of the text. What was its rhetorical situation (its original audience and its author’s intentions)? How did it appeal to its readers, through logic or emotion or the character of the speaker? You should be able to assess the politics of the speaker: Are they relatively liberal or conservative on the issue? What other positions on this issue were taken by what other Americans? Is your author articulating a new position or rehashing an old one? How do you suppose an audience (or different kinds of audiences) would have responded to the things the speaker says? **This analytical goal section will become the article summary portion of your paper.**

Writing goals: In an essay of approximately **five to seven** pages, analyze your text and place it into its historical-cultural context. You should probably start with a concise summary of who was writing on what occasion, and of the text itself. This will help you with your delayed thesis while you adhere to the concepts of the Rogerian style of argument. You should then analyze the specific content in its context by comparing the ideas in the speech or essay with other ideas on the subject at that time. Is the speaker making an argument? If so, how persuasive is it? Explain the reception (or justify a speculation about its reception) based on the audience’s values and feelings about the issue. This should follow your perceptions.

This paper is called an issue analysis rather than a speech analysis because your focus should be as much on the issue as on the text. A paper that never moves beyond a discussion of the text itself does not fulfill the assignment. **You must understand the text, you must understand the context, and you must articulate the relationship between the two.** Thus, your argument will ensue.