

Rhetorical Analysis

Following steps 2-5 in Faigley and Selzer, pp. 81-83, write a three page rhetorical analysis of the selected piece assigned you (McNeill, Weil, or Edmundson). Give due attention to all three sections of your paper: introduction, body, and conclusion. (See student sample on pp. 75-80 of F& S text). While context is of some significance in each of these pieces, know that I expect you to invest most of your energy in textual analysis. We'll discuss each of these pieces in class, as they may shape how we conduct our class and our service.

Definition Argument

Following the steps set forth in F& S, pp. 125-126, write a 3-5 page definition of a controversial term that matters to you. Our readings may lead you to questions related to education: what is an ideal teacher? an ideal student? the perfect classroom? Or, the two quotations that head the syllabus may lead you to define real community or genuine service. Whatever term you choose, be sure it's a matter of consequence for you and convince your target audience to accept your definition.

Researched Argument

Use this assignment as a first step to move yourself "from generosity to justice." Write an 8-10 page researched argument that focuses on a controversial issue related to social justice. What's wrong with the picture you see in your service work, in the South Bend community, or in the larger world? What causes the problems? How effective are the current means used to address the problems? What would you propose as an alternative?

To satisfy this assignment, you may make a causal argument, an evaluation argument, a proposal argument, or a combination of arguments, as long as you enter a "conversation" about an issue in dispute by combining library research and individual research. You are to advance your point of view in light of scholarly thinking on the matter. You will need to identify a fruitful, issue-based research question and use your analysis of scholarly sources (at least four) and the insights gained from original research (personal observation/field research, interviews, focus groups) to develop your argument. In order to responsibly enter this larger conversation about the issue you have chosen, you will need to represent the ideas of others clearly and fairly in advancing your own position, as well as analyze the strengths and weaknesses of different ideas (including your own). Here are two key questions: **What does your analysis add to what is already established in the conversation?** and **What will your argument teach those interested in the issue?**

As you can see, this is not simply a review of what others have said.

As you approach this assignment, consider issues related to your service, look at the options posed by Jay Caponigro, or focus on one of the ethical issues raised by Singer,

Berry, or Kingsolver. Limit your focus to what you can adequately handle in 8-10 pages. Above all, be sure to write about something that matters to you.

Here are your six goals for this researched argument:

- identify a controversial issue
- create and sustain an argument that combines scholarly sources and original research
- include both analysis and exposition of information
- establish what is at stake in accepting the views of authors (including yourself)
- provide good reasons and relevant evidence to support your point of view
- identify, analyze, and address potential counterarguments

Reflection/Analysis Papers (Thanks to Andrea Smith Shappell)

Pastoral theologians Killen and DeBeer define theological reflection as “the discipline of exploring individual and corporate experience in conversation with the wisdom of a religious heritage.” They claim that “there must be a genuine dialogue of the equal partners, experience and tradition” and that “the outcome is new truth and meaning for our lives.” A fellow theologian, Robert Kinast adds, “Most simply, theological reflection is discovering the presence of God in one’s experience.”

In these two page pieces I want you to manifest the theological reflection you have done on your service. For each reflection piece, describe an event or encounter from your service experience, analyze it (look at causes, results, impediments, responses), then discuss its personal significance, that is, the ways it has effected change in you (thinking, feeling, perspective, behavior). What insight emerges from “the dialogue between experience and tradition”? Finally, somewhere in your piece connect your experience to our readings by referencing an idea from at least one of the authors we’ve studied.

Final Argument

To close the course, write a 3-5 page argument that stems from your service experience. You may choose to write a narrative argument built around a service experience that makes an implicit argument. If you do so, follow the steps set forth by F & S on pp. 170-171.

OR,

You may choose to write an evaluation argument in which you make a claim about the venue at which you serve and support it with evidence from experience (and, perhaps, from our reading). In this paper you will evaluate the effectiveness of the program that engaged you. You may also choose to evaluate your participation in the program. If you choose to write an evaluation argument, follow the steps set forth by F & S on pp. 157-158.

In any case, finish by writing an argument that matters to you.