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Rhetorical Analysis Essay (Essay 2)
English 101/201

In this essay you are asked to rhetorically analyze an advertisement or cultural artifact critically considering (and using) the terms (vocabulary) that you have been taught in class. We encounter dozens (if not hundreds or thousands) of advertisements and cultural artifacts almost daily whether we are conscious of them or not. Advertisements bombard us in our cars (billboards, radio), at work (radio/Internet), at school (*The Seahawk*), and most of all in our homes (television, radio, magazines, Internet) during our leisure time. It is crucial, therefore, that we develop a critical understanding of how advertisements and/or cultural artifacts operate on us and our surroundings. Only then do we have the power to choose consciously whether to accommodate, resist, or negotiate the cultural messages these advertisements and artifacts facilitate.

Your first task in this assignment is to choose an artifact or advertisement with which you have regular contact and easy access. You will then need to get a “copy” of that advertisement or artifact.

Acceptable items to analyze (speak with me if you prefer something different)

- A print ad (from: magazine, newspaper)
- A static ad (from: Internet)
- A commercial (no longer than two minutes)
- A cultural artifact (like a toy or grocery item/packaging)

Your essay should follow the same general structure as the invention (our in-class group work) for this assignment (production, distribution, consumption), with an introduction and conclusion. Below is a sample organizational (arrangement) structure.

Introduction

Briefly introduce: a) the ad/item, b) the medium in which it appears, and c) how you consume the cultural codes in the advertisement (accommodate, resist, and negotiate). Be sure to describe the item/ad and how you view or feel about the item/ad.

Production

Analyze the advertisement in terms of its visual elements (what is pictured) and its verbal elements (the "text" of the advertisement, whether written or spoken or the text on your artifact). Describe the cultural codes promoted in the advertisement through these visual and verbal techniques. Consider our equation here: The ideal X should be/do/have Y.

Distribution

Analyze the advertisement in terms of its distribution in the medium (the particular context in which the ad/item appears) you have chosen to examine. Describe the "technology" and "ideology" of the magazine or program, and speculate about how this technology and ideology affect the meaning of the ad/item.

Consumption

Describe in detail your reaction to both the cultural codes promoted in the advertisement and the codes promoted in the medium in which the advertisements appear. Describe your own active reading of the cultural codes in the item/ad and its distributing medium.

Conclusion

Briefly discuss ways the advertisers might make your particular item/ad better, and briefly discuss whether or not the medium ought to continue running the advertisement or the manufacturer should continue producing the artifact or change its distribution of the advertisement/artifact.

The Specifics

- Be sure to consult with me if you are unsure whether your advertisement or artifact will work for this assignment. Obtain a copy of the item or ad that you analyze for this assignment.
- Please see me or make an appointment in the writing center if you need any help at all
- Length (page number): Five-Six pages (MLA throughout)
- While there appear to be five sections in the example above, this is not a five-paragraph themed essay. The above example is meant to illustrate the parts you must discuss to fulfill the assignment. Do **not** use sub-headings in this essay.
- Due dates for peer editing and the final draft will be posted on the course wiki

Grading Rubric

Clarity, Grammar, Punctuation, (2 or more errors)	1/3 letter grade deducted for every 2 errors
Typographical Errors (2 or more errors)	1/3 letter grade deducted
Late (more than 24 hours)	1 Letter grade
No show to conference (or lacks appropriate materials), if applicable.	1 letter grade
Peer Edit (be sure you have completed your peer edit and have done a thorough job)	Did not peer edit: 1/3 letter grade Did a poor job of peer editing 1/3 letter grade
Wrong Format (headings, page numbers, MLA format); this also includes Microsoft Word—no “word perfect” or “microsoft	Depends on exact error and number of them, but in general as much as 1 letter grade or as little as 1/3 letter grade. Here

<p>works” documents. You are not required to have a works cited page for this essay unless you quote material from elsewhere. Cite websites properly. See the Purdue OWL, or look at the new MLA handbook. You will do better if you are consistent in your citation information. It is your responsibility to look up how to cite sources properly, but we will surely help you, if asked.</p>	<p>is where we will review your MLA citations and works cited</p>
<p>Follows directions (mostly 3rd person, explains topic: ad/item/artifact: production, distribution, consumption, accommodate, resist, negotiate, and why?)</p> <p>Meets page requirements (5-6 pages).</p>	<p>Not following the directions may cause a 1/3 letter grade deduction</p>
<p>Title/Introduction/Conclusion Explain your item/ad/artifact in the introduction. See the assignment sheet for a possible arrangement. Be sure to give your essay a unique title.</p>	<p>Lacking a sufficient introduction or conclusion may cause a 1/3 letter grade deduction.</p>
<p>Other Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use Transitions between paragraphs (no sub-headings) ● Use strong verbs and adjectives ● Use logic and clear metaphors (make sense) ● Proof-read your work carefully! ● Always use good descriptions 	<p>Lacking transitions, poor word choice, and sentences that are tough to understand or follow poor logic may lose as much as 1/3 letter grade for each major error here. Usually, if you take care and proof-read carefully, you’ll catch a lot of your minor errors.</p>
<p>What is 1/3 letter grade?</p>	<p>If you earn an A on your essay but lose 1/3 of a letter grade because of errors, your final grade would be A-. If you were to lose 2/3 of a letter grade, your grade would be B+, and, of course 3/3 of a letter is a full letter grade which would equal a B.</p>