Explanation for Assignment:

Overview

The Persuasion Effect Project gives you the opportunity to explore a range of viewpoints, opinions and arguments surrounding an issue, and to imagine how you might enter an ongoing public conversation about that issue, working rhetorically to craft your own argument and support it with evidence, logic and storytelling. Persuasive genres often seek to sway, influence, or otherwise move their audiences—not necessarily to change their minds completely about an issue, but to invite them to fully consider the merits of a specific point of view. Your Persuasion Effect Project can, depending on the medium you choose, have varying lengths: Primarily text-based documents should be about 1,000 words or 4 double-spaced pages. Video-based drafts: shoot for 3 minutes. Audio-based drafts: shoot for 3-4 minutes. Image-based drafts (like photo essays, infographics, comics, or political cartoons): shoot for at least 10 images and include at least 50 words of descriptive/explanatory text per image. Plan to make substantive use of 4-6 sources in this project.

Author

You, of course, will be the author of this persuasion-focused project. Persuasive writers adopt a wide range of authorial stances, from the deeply personal first person point of view, to more outwardly focused informational/logical perspectives. Select an authorial tone, voice and stance that you think will best work for your project.

Audience

The audience for this persuasive project is up to you, but it should be specific and well-defined. Ask yourself: who is discussing this topic in the public sphere? Who is making arguments? Who are the various stakeholders, or groups and individuals with “skin in the game?” Who needs to hear what I have to say? Who needs to change? Who out there can I hope to have an effect upon? These questions should help you focus the audience for your project, and make rhetorical choices as you draft and revise.

Message

The message of your persuasion-focused project should be your central argument, your main point, your big idea, your thesis, your compelling story of how you came to think and believe what you do. Start with a rough working message, and refine it as you research and write.

Occasion/ Context

The occasion and context for this project should be determined based on your audience, your message, and the current state of the ongoing public conversation you are seeking to join. Persuasive writers often seek to craft timely arguments that respond to recent events or recent commentary on an issue.

Genre

Some persuasive genres include: academic argument essays in various forms, position arguments, proposals, newspaper and magazine commentary (op-eds), public service campaigns, political speeches, campaign ads, political cartoons and comics, manifestos, memes and white papers.

Mode of Delivery

The medium for your project is up to you. Think rhetorically to choose whether you’d like to produce a text-based, video-based, audio-based, or image-based project. What medium would best suit the needs of your intended audience? What medium excites, intrigues or terrifies you? Choose that one.

Whatever mode of delivery you choose, you must document your sources (look at example texts to see how they do documentation when it’s not in MLA format) in such a way that a reader would be able to track back to your sources and examine them.