**Writing Practice: Rhetorical Analysis**

Every day you are bombarded with arguments, whether they are made in the commercials you see on television or in the texts you read for class. For this assignment, you will have a chance to examine an author’s argument, both its claims and the strategies it employs.

**Assignment overview:**

Choose and read one of the articles listed below. Once you have read the article, re-read and note how the author is using the rhetorical appeals of logos, pathos, ethos and kairos. Remember, he or she might rely heavily on one appeal and there might be another that he or she doesn’t really use at all. You don’t have to write an even amount about each appeal, because that might not be appropriate for the way the article is written. Finally, you are going to decide whether the strategies this author used were effective or not. Were you convinced by his or her argument? Why or not? You must use specific examples and quotes from the article to support your claims. Your analysis should be approximately 2-3 pages typed and double spaced.

**Choose from the following articles (all can be found in the back section of *Writing Arguments*):**

‘”Tomorrow Will Not Be Like Today’: Literacy and Identity in a World of Multiple Literacies,”

Bronwyn T. Williams, p. 429

“Youthful Indiscretions: Should Colleges Protect Social Network Users from Themselves and Others?”

Dana L. Fleming, p. 440

“New Model Army,” Donald Rumsfeld, p. 528

“Why Walmart is Good,” Steve Maich, p. 568

“Nobel Lecture,” Al Gore, p. 592

**Grading Criteria:**

* discusses the overall message of the argument and the audience the author is trying to convince
* discusses the rhetorical devices the author did and did not use in the article
* uses quotes from the article as evidence (and cites them correctly)
* clearly states whether or not you found the author’s argument convincing and why you feel that way
* is organized in a sophisticated and logical manner
* uses transitions
* has been thoroughly edited so that it is readable and appropriate for an academic audience; this includes grammar and formatting

**Requirements:**

* Typed, double spaced, Times New Roman or Arial font, size 12
* 2-3 pages
* MLA or APA format (whichever you prefer, but be consistent)
* Includes a works cited/bibliography and in-text citations

**Due Date:** Tuesday, September 6th in class

\*This is a mini/practice writing assignment and will not be graded as heavily as a full paper. However, I expect you to put significant time and effort into analyzing your article and practicing your critique of rhetorical appeals. Also, please focus on editing and formatting your paper properly, so it is organized and readable. This assignment will be worth three times a regular homework grade.

**Rationale:**

This is a shorter assignment that students complete before conducting a more detailed rhetorical analysis of a space online. The purpose of this assignment is to get students comfortable in their understanding of the rhetorical appeals and to do an analysis of argumentative piece of writing. As an instructor, I find it helpful if students practice rhetorical analysis with articles that I have read and assigned to the entire class, before I set them loose to analyze a website of their choosing for the next assignment.