

Major Assignment #1: Analysis and Synthesis

(20% of course grade)

Process Work (5% of course grade) due throughout unit /

Final Essay (15% of course grade) due Wednesday, 2/8/23

In this essay, you will analyze an assigned set of documents **to consider the author's writing process**. As a class, we will focus on the two authors we all have in common (_____ and _____). Recognizing that every text is more than just a single draft, we'll read published chapters alongside selected archival material from the authors' research, drafting, and revision work and in the context of public reception (including book reviews and social/political outcomes).

You have a fair amount of latitude in the focus of your essay, so long as you accomplish the goals of college-level analysis (careful reading of a text's details) and synthesis (bringing material together to make sense of the pieces). The *point* of this assignment is to carefully read a professional scientist's research and writing in its sociopolitical context, to see how such a person develops a meaningful piece of writing over time, and to give yourself a foundation from which to approach your own research and writing in Units 2 and 3. As a class, we will discuss analyzing the details of the text itself, the rhetorical context involved, and most importantly, the writer's process in crafting the text. You will create a thesis that **focuses on the writer's process**, taking into account both context and strategies, for careful analysis and synthesis.

You should present your response in a clear, organized, and well-supported manner, with a clear thesis, strong paragraphing, and appropriate use of quoted material (using MLA 9 for formatting/citation).

Your Source Material Options:

You should choose to consider the work of 1-3 of the authors in your course box. (If you choose to focus on 1 author, you'll be able/expected to dive deep into their materials, providing extensive examples from across the archives. If you choose to include a larger number of authors, your challenge will be to provide enough examples from each to really support your claims.) Regardless, you should include references to multiple items within your chosen archives, in consultation with your professor.

Your Audience:

Like your chosen author, you, too, are navigating a rhetorical situation in this paper, and you'll improve your communication if you consider your audience. You are writing for a college-level audience (in other words, other first-year UVA students in and outside of our class) to explain to them how this text is working in ways they might not have recognized in a surface reading. You'll want to write an essay that would be interesting and compelling to your peers, with clear points and substantial evidence throughout.

Process Work Includes:

- Mini-Paper
- Marked-up copies of source material
- Thesis statement drafts
- Outline drafts
- Initial essay draft (final draft must show significant revision from initial draft)

Final Draft Requirements:

- Your final paper must be between 1200–1500 words in length (usu. about 3.5–6 pages), NOT including your Works Cited page(s). Going over the word count is discouraged; going under is unacceptable. Include your word count at the end of your paper.
- You will also include a 250–400 word cover memo reflecting on the assignment. Address the following:
 - Who helped you with writing this essay? (Be sure to disclose any friends, family members, tutors, classmates, and AI tools, etc., who/which helped you, to avoid charges of collusion.)
 - What did you learn about research, rhetoric, and/or the writing process through writing this assignment?
 - What did you learn about essay writing through this assignment?
 - What changes did you make during the revision process and why?
 - What do you most want your reader to learn from your paper?
 - Optional: After you've answered all of the above, feel free to vent about things you hated about this assignment. :) Also, feel free to give your opinions about the issues involved. It's often challenging to write an analysis without a chance to express your own ideas about the subject matter.
- Sources and Citations:
 - You should use MLA 9 for all your citations in-text and in your final Works Cited page. I will provide Works Cited entries and in-text examples for all provided sources on this first paper.
 - **I prefer you not consult additional sources** in conducting this analysis. I realize that you may, however, find that you need to look up items like dates/timelines, or specific details suggested but not explicated in your provided sources. Be sure to disclose EVERYTHING you look up in your Works Cited page and/or your cover memo. Feel free to set up appointments with the Writing Center for help with citations (<http://writingrhetoric.as.virginia.edu/welcome-writing-center>).
- Formatting:
 - Follow MLA guidelines for page layout as well as citations. Use Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced, 0 pt. before and after each line, 1" margins all around. Include a complete heading, header, and an original title, as well as a Works Cited page.

Additional Notes:

- Each assignment in this unit is due at the beginning of class time and will be considered late thereafter. Unless you have arranged for an extension PRIOR to the due date, late penalties will be a flat 20%. You may get up to 10% of that penalty back through conscientious revision AND observing all other deadlines.
- Process assignments must be completed throughout the unit, in the context of our class. In other words, failing to submit drafts, attend class, etc., but providing independent process work with a final draft is not acceptable. Watch the course calendar/website and turn in assignments on time. Final drafts without appropriate process work will receive a failing grade.
- If you fail to submit an acceptable project within 2 weeks of the due date, your penalized grade will be considered final/permanent.
- On the other hand, so long as you submit your work on time, this course has a generous revision policy, and you may continue to revise major assignments throughout the semester for re-grading. All re-grades must take place during real-time meetings (i.e., in person or on Zoom) with your professor: You set up a meeting and bring all prior copies of the essay, along with a revised draft, and I will re-grade it on-site. You may revise your essays multiple times, so long as you follow this process each time. Each major assignment has individual weights associated with the regrades; essay grades (as opposed to presentation grades) receive full replacement grades. For THIS analysis/synthesis paper, the final regrade will fully replace the original grade (i.e., if you earn a D on the essay but later revise it up to an A, you will receive an A in the gradebook). ALL essay grades are considered final on Tuesday, 5/2, at 5 p.m.
- For more information on grading, refer to the Essay Grading Rubric.