

APPENDIX C

Rhetorical Analysis of an Artifact Collaborative Presentation

Assignment

In pairs, you will select an artifact from one of three archives located on campus, conduct a rhetorical analysis of the artifact, and then present your rhetorical analysis to the class in a 10-15 minute formal presentation. After your presentation, there will be a few minutes for questions and conversation. Practice and time your presentation in advance. The best way to present is to give an oral summary of your project with occasional references to notes or outlines. Use visual aids (handouts, PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.) to enhance your presentation and engage the audience. This is a professional presentation, so please dress accordingly.

Goals

- To develop archival literacy and research skills, including a language for primary and archival research and an understanding of similarities and differences of local and digital archival spaces.
- To analyze a primary source, make an argument about it, and explain findings and significance to an audience.
- To experience collaboration with a peer.
- To prepare you to conduct archival research in the DALN.

Select the Artifact

For this assignment, you can choose any artifact—a photograph, book, advertisement, magazine, newspaper, journal, letter, speech, painting, transcripts, rare documents, and so on. It just needs to be an artifact conducive to rhetorical analysis and come from one of the following archives held at Baylor (each located in Carroll Library):

1. Texas Collection. The Texas Collection is an archive of materials on the history, heritage, and culture of Texas and even has a special exhibit on Texas cooking.
2. University Archives. The University Archives holds the archives of Baylor. It includes founding documents, presidential papers, Board records, yearbooks, student records and handbooks, university publications, and other materials that document Baylor's past.
3. Keston Center for Religion, Politics, and Society. The Keston Center contains materials related to religious and political persecution under Communist and totalitarian regimes. It includes a number of underground publications written and distributed secretly during the Communist era.



from Baylor University Archives

The library archivists are excellent resources, so involve them in your research and analysis. If possible, try to digitize your artifact. Ask the archivist if you can scan the archive or take pictures of it. This will enable you to access the material more conveniently and to incorporate the artifact into your presentation.

Analyze the Artifact

After you have selected your artifact, you will analyze the context in which the artifact was created and the artifact itself.

1. Analyze the context.
 - a. *Who is the author?* Learn all you can about the author of the argument. What motivated the author to write? What is the author's purpose? What does the writer want to achieve within this community with this writing? What does he/she want these particular people to think

and/or do? Does the author borrow arguments and concepts from previous pieces he or she has written?

- b. *Who is the audience?* Through research, learn all you can about the place where the argument appeared and the audience. Who is the anticipated audience? How do the occasion and forum for writing affect the argument? How would the argument have been written differently if it had appeared elsewhere? What motivated the venue to publish the piece?
 - c. *What is the larger conversation?* Through research, find out what else was being said about the subject of your selection. When did the argument appear? Why did it get published at that particular moment? What other concurrent pieces of "cultural conversation" (e.g., TV shows, other articles, speeches, Web sites) does the item you are analyzing respond to or "answer"?
2. Analyze the artifact. Read and analyze the artifact multiple times, each time making notes about the author's rhetorical strategies. Your goal is to look at *how* the author is communicating.
 - a. *What is the main claim?* What is the author's argument? What reasons are given in support of the claim? What evidence is used? How is the argument organized? What are the components, and why are they presented in that order? How appropriate and convincing is the author's reasoning and evidence?
 - b. *What is the medium and genre of the artifact?*
 - c. *What persuasive appeals are used?* How does the author use ethos, logos, pathos, tone, style, and organization to be persuasive?

Prepare the presentation

1. Have a clear, focused thesis. Don't simply list the rhetorical strategies; instead, make an argument about the effective or ineffective use of rhetorical appeals.
2. Explain the significance of this analysis. Why does your analysis matter? What do we learn from analyzing this text? What is the "So what?" of your research?
3. Support your thesis with plenty of examples from the text. These examples are your "evidence," your support. Focus on *how* the text conveys its message more than the message itself.

Resources

- Gaillet, Lynée Lewis. "(Per)forming Archival Research Methodologies." *College Composition and Communication* 64.1 (2012): 35-58.
- L'Eplattenier, Barbara and Lisa Mastrangelo. "Archival Research in the Field of Rhetoric and Composition." *Exploring Composition Studies: Sites, Issues, and Perspectives*. Ed. Kelly Ritter and Paul Kei Matsuda. Logan: Utah State UP, 2012. 211-22.
- MacNealy, Mary Sue. *Strategies for Empirical Research in Writing*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1999.
- Norcia, Megan. "Out of the Ivory Tower Endlessly Rocking: Collaborating across Disciplines and Professions to Promote Student Learning in the Digital Archive." *Pedagogy* 8.1 (2007): 91-114.
- Ramsey, Alexis, Wendy Sharer, Barbara L'Eplattenier, and Lisa Mastrangelo, eds. *Working in the Archives: Practical Research Methods for Rhetoric and Composition*. Carbondale: SIUP, 2010.
- Selzer, Jack. "Rhetorical Analysis: Understanding How Texts Persuade Readers." *What Writing Does and How It Does It: An Introduction to Analyzing Texts and Textual Practices*. Ed. Charles Bazerman and Paul Prior. New York, NY: Routledge, 2009. 279-307.

Evaluation

This presentation will be graded on the following:

- **Preparedness.** The presenters are prepared and knowledgeable about topic.
- **Awareness of audience.** The presentation shows an awareness of the audience's needs and expectations, including what kind and how much background information to include.
- **Focused.** The presentation has a clear thesis or main point.
- **Developed.** Major points are supported with ample reasons, evidence, and examples.
- **Organized.** The order of the major points is appropriate to the topic and clear to the listener.
- **Effective quality of delivery.** Presenters step away from the computer console, do not read slides, have effective pace, and display adequate volume.
- **Helpful and useful handout.** Presenters distribute a helpful and useful handout.