

21W.730 EXPOSITORY WRITING: WRITING ABOUT SOCIAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES

ESSAY #2: INVESTIGATIVE ESSAY/COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Due Dates: Draft Class #16

Revision: Class #22

Suggested length: 8-10 pg., typed, double-spaced. Submit 2 copies with bibliography and cover letter. Please attach to revision the marked-up draft with my comments.

This essay is an investigative piece, which asks you to compare different images of, representations of or perspectives on a contemporary social or ethical problem or issue. This assignment challenges you as a writer to work with and compare different perspectives and sources while discovering or maintaining your own views. In your research for this essay, you can draw upon your own (and others' life experiences), service learning, academic and popular literature as well as journalistic and other media sources (newspapers, magazines, television shows, films). For this assignment, you are asked to do a small "community research project": visit at least one organization (e.g., social service, political or religious organization) that addresses this particular social or ethical problem, collect relevant pamphlets or literature and interview a staff member about the organization's philosophy and approach to this issue. (Web research is an excellent way to begin your community research and, potentially, to find some relevant documents. However, you need to set up an interview as well. Guidelines to successful interviewing will be discussed in class.)

The writing challenges of essay #2 are:

- *prewriting: "mapping" your topic; figuring out various angles on the issue;
- *drafting/revising: clearly and comparatively presenting different points of view, drawing upon secondary sources;
- *drafting/revising: fairly presenting opinions differing from your own;
- *drafting/revising: establishing an engaging style, maintaining your own voice as a writer.

While crafting this essay, remember that your options as a writer include: siding with one perspective (while recognizing the power of another); choosing a middle ground stance or simply recognizing the value of the debate in deepening your readers' understanding of the issue.

.....

Exercise 2.1: Topic Proposal: Due in Class #12(note change from course calendar).

Write a 2-3 paragraph proposal with a working bibliography of at least FIVE sources. In the proposal, tell the reader (a) why you've chosen the topic (b) why you feel the topic would be interesting for a wider audience and (c) some ideas for community research. Bring THREE copies of the proposal.

Exercise 2.2: Revised proposal: email the instructor after two days of Class #13 (with specific plans for community research).