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Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Xavier’s English Department, the Writing Center, and the College of Arts and Sciences Dean’s office for supporting this project. I would also like to thank Leah Hamilton, Niamh O’Leary, Lisa Ottum, Don Prues, Alison Russell, and Rebecca Todd for their time judging entries and helping to compile this book. I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Renea Frey for her generous assistance in proofreading and selecting award winners, as well as advising me in the process of editing this project. Perhaps most importantly, thanks to all of the student writers from ENGL 101 and 115 who submitted work to make this publication possible, and to the instructors who supported, taught, and guided their students to improve their writing.
Welcome!

As first year writers at Xavier, you may have questions or concerns about writing in your college courses. You may love to write and be excited about the new forms of composing you will learn in college or in your major, or you may feel intimidated and uncertain about what to expect. This book is designed to give you more information about writing in college and offer some examples of what successful college-level writing looks like, straight from Xavier students themselves.

In the first section of this book, you will find information about terms, ideas, and practices that will help you succeed with college-level writing and orient you to policies and resources for writing here at Xavier. As you read, you may find that you have heard some of this information before, though other parts may be entirely new. Phrases such as rough draft, peer response, and rhetorical appeals are likely to play a big part in your writing process in college, so being familiar with the meanings of these phrases can help you find your way in your writing courses. Additionally, this text will cover issues of academic honesty, plagiarism, and how to properly cite sources in research-based writing so that you can create quality work that acknowledges information you have learned from outside sources. Resources such as the Writing Center and Library will also be explained so that you know where to turn when you need additional support and information for your writing.

In the second section, you can read selected essays from first year students at Xavier who, like you, were recently in ENGL 101 or ENGL 115 working on similar assignments. Looking through their work, you can see what type of writing is expected so that you can better understand the genres you will be asked to write in your first year writing courses. You may have seen some of these before—such as a research-based argument—but you will be prompted to examine the writing more deeply with questions at the end of each essay, so that you can more fully appreciate the “how” and “what” of research writing. Other genres—such as the rhetorical analysis—may be less familiar, and seeing examples can give you an idea of what to expect from these assignments. These examples are not meant to be copied, nor do they represent a rigid set of expectations for an assignment, but rather offer a model of one way that this type of writing can be successfully crafted.

As you write papers in your ENGL 101 or 115 courses, be on the lookout for papers you wrote particularly well and consider submitting them for consideration for the D’Artagnan Award and next year’s Write Path publication. By submitting your work, you can support and encourage students who, like you, will be first year college writers next year. What you learn now can benefit your fellow students in the future, so please pass along your wisdom and work.

Everyone arrives at college with different backgrounds, experiences, and types of education. This book has been created to help put you on the “write path” in your first year as a Xavier student and to answer questions you may have about writing in college. Also, if there is anything that would have benefited you that was not included in this book, please let me know so that we can consider including it next year.

Good luck in your first year writing classes!

Sincerely,

Dr. Renea Frey
Writing Program Director

Kelly Austin
Editor, The Write Path
Introduction to The Write Path

College Writing—What Makes It Different?

Nearly everyone does some sort of writing in high school, but what kind and how much work you do may vary greatly from place to place. In your first year of college, one of the educational goals is to give all students a solid, common foundation in particular subjects, including writing, which can help you for the rest of the time you are at Xavier.

A common genre that students often learn in high school is the five-paragraph essay. While many of the conventions for this type of writing may transfer to college writing, you will also be expected to move beyond the five-paragraph essay to write increasingly complex, longer assignments. In many cases, you will be building upon writing skills you have already learned in high school and expanding them to fulfill new, more in-depth writing prompts.

For instance, you will still need to make strong, focused thesis statements that give the reader an overview of the claims you will be making in your work, and then organize the rest of your paper around supporting that claim with evidence. In most cases, you will also include elements like topic sentences that announce the content of a paragraph and transitions that allow the reader to easily follow your thought process. You should have a strong conclusion that gives the reader a “call to action” or explains the larger implications of your work, or clarifies why thinking about this issue or text in this way matters.

While many of these conventions may be similar to what you have done in high school, it is likely that your instructors in college will ask for greater detail, more depth, additional outside sources, and longer length papers than you typically worked on in high school.

Some other differences in college writing include the following:

- The type of evidence that “counts” in some assignments may include peer-reviewed scholarly sources, which are written by and for academics in specific disciplines. These pieces may be longer than popular articles, include more field-specific jargon, and be challenging to interpret for those who are new to a discipline.
- You will likely need to offer multiple perspectives in your work, including counter-arguments to your position or refutations of competing perspectives. It is not enough to only argue your side—you need to view, and fairly represent, issues from multiple positions.
- In some cases, you may be asked to write from a formal third-person perspective, but in other cases, such as narratives or auto-ethnographies, you may have to write in first-person, beginning your thoughts with “I.”
- You will likely write for different audiences, some of which may be a community of scholars, whereas other times, you may be writing for the public.
Different disciplines have different conventions, citation systems (e.g., MLA, Chicago, or APA), and expectations. As you write for different courses from across the university, you will find that writing varies between disciplines and that what counts as “good writing” may vary in each class.

How you conduct research, integrate quotes, and cite sources in your work may be more rigorous than what was expected in high school. As you enter college-level work, you become a part of a community of scholars who have high standards for academic integrity and attribution for work and ideas. (More on this topic later ....)

Even if you found writing in high school easy, the writing (and thinking) you will do in college will expand your previous skills. In addition, you will be writing for new audiences, about novel topics, and be asked to engage in assignments that will likely push beyond the work you did in high school. This learning can be both challenging and exciting, and the work you do in your first year writing courses serves as a foundation for the writing you will create during your entire time at Xavier.

Process Writing

How many of us have waited to start a writing assignment until the night before, and then frantically written all night, quickly proofread the paper once or twice, and then turned it in at the last minute? While this may succeed in “getting the work done,” few people (despite the claims every instructor hears) actually produce their best work under these circumstances.

A common practice in ENGL 101 and 115 courses will be to engage in process-based writing. In this approach, instead of writing assignments where you write on your own, turn in your writing, and then receive a grade, you will work on your writing gradually, in stages, with feedback from peers and/or your instructor at multiple points along the way. In many of your other courses, you will still be asked to create writing where the final product is what counts, but in your first year writing courses, we will also focus on the process.

Some of you may already be familiar with peer review—sharing your work with classmates to receive feedback and suggestions for revision—but in first year writing, this may be more directed and involve particular practices, such as reading out loud, filling out a worksheet based upon the writing you read, or writing a reflection about what you changed in response to your peer’s suggestions. In addition, you may receive feedback from your instructor at various points in your composing process, or be asked to submit a proposal, outline, or research plan for your projects. By focusing on the process, your instructor can guide you as you draft, review, revise, redraft, and revise your papers again.

A process-based approach to writing may include all or some of the following steps:

- Invention work, including brainstorming, heuristics, listing, free-writing, or other exercises to start you thinking about a topic
- Proposals or research plans that ask for details about what, how, and when you intend to create a project
• Annotated bibliographies, which require you to document, summarize, and analyze the sources you are exploring for your research
• Exploratory Essays (sometimes called Synthesis Essays) may be assigned, which will ask you to discuss all of the sources you have examined for your research and reflect upon how what you have learned informs your thinking about your topic
• Outlines or zero drafts where you begin the initial stages of your paper but have not yet composed a full copy
• Rough or first drafts that include all of your completed ideas but that are not yet in the “polished” stage of drafting
• Final or polished drafts that represent your best work, which has been revised, edited, and proofread after receiving input from peers, your instructor, and/or the Writing Center
• Reflections on your writing process, revisions, or finished work

Throughout this process, your instructor may choose various places to intervene, read your current work, and offer feedback or direction. Your peers, too, may be a part of this process, in both formal peer reviews and informal discussions in class. Unlike many of your other courses, your instructor may give you points along the way for different stages of drafting—your finished paper may not be the only writing that “counts” toward your grade.

For many reasons, it is important to keep up with this process as it is outlined in your class schedule. First, it may affect the grade you receive on the overall assignment, especially if various drafts have point values assigned to them. Second, in a course that utilizes peer review, it is important that everyone have a draft to share so that participation is fair and possible. Third, by receiving feedback along the way, you can be more confident that you are fulfilling the assignment correctly and change course sooner if you find that you are not. Lastly, composing your work in steps, even if it is unfamiliar to you, will give you new, valuable skills that you can use in other courses.

Though many students can get into the habit of writing their entire paper quickly the night before, to succeed in college-level writing, it is imperative to take more time planning, drafting, and revising your work. Even the very best writers who are accustomed to receiving A’s for their work can benefit from feedback and revision. Additionally, as you progress in your college education, you will encounter assignments that simply cannot be completed in one or two sittings. In order to produce your best work, as well as reduce needless stress, it is important to get into the habit of working on writing assignments in stages, over time.

When we “re-vise” we are actually “re-visioning” or re-seeing our work with fresh eyes. If writing assignments are put off until the last minute, there simply is no time to do this, nor is there space to receive feedback, visit the Writing Center, or read work out loud in order to catch errors in wording.
For these reasons, your first year writing courses will engage writing as process in some manner. This may be a new approach, or it may simply expand your past experiences. Either way, learning to see writing as an ongoing process will save you time, stress, and disappointment in the long run, and support your work in other courses. ENGL 101 and 115 encourage a foundation for best practices in writing that will serve you throughout your college career and beyond.

Rhetoric and Rhetorical Theory

You have likely heard the word “rhetoric” many times in your life, often in a derogatory manner that implies “merely words” or words without honesty or substance. Rhetoric, which will be addressed in both ENGL 101 and 115, is actually the art of speaking and writing effectively that dates back at least as far as ancient Athens in the Western tradition. Aristotle described rhetoric as “the faculty of discovering in any particular case all of the available means of persuasion” and this definition, or similar ones offered by Cicero, Quintilian, Augustine, and others, points to the study of rhetoric as the analysis and use of words to persuade an audience.

The ability to persuade effectively has implications for the use of that power, so some rhetoricians also address the idea of ethics within or alongside rhetoric. In the Jesuit educational system, there is a tradition called eloquencia perfecta, which is speaking (or writing) well for the greater good. As you study, analyze, and effectively use rhetoric, keep in mind that rhetoric, like many tools, can be utilized in both ethical and unethical ways. As you build knowledge and become more aware of rhetoric in the world around you, recall the practices of reflection and discernment that are also part of the Jesuit tradition—when you make choices about using your rhetorical skills, remember that rhetoric can serve the greater good, or merely be self-serving.

Though we may not be aware of it, we use and encounter rhetoric all the time in our daily lives. You might engage rhetorical means when you try to persuade your roommate to pick up her dirty socks, or convince your parents to support a trip abroad, or write a cover letter to apply for a new job or internship. In each of these situations, you use persuasion to try to convince an audience of your perspective. Conversely, you also encounter rhetoric everyday in magazine or online ads, opinion pieces in the school newspaper, or political speeches on television or the Internet. Even memes, by using stock images and brief lines of text, provide short arguments that make a claim and try to convince the viewer of a particular perspective.

Because we use and encounter rhetoric so often in our everyday lives, it is important to understand how it operates in order to use it effectively and ethically. It is also crucial to recognize how rhetoric works on you in your daily encounters with texts, people, and ideas. With knowledge of how rhetorical appeals work, you will be able to engage the world around you with greater discernment, which will allow you to make more informed choices about the arguments you regularly witness.
Rhetorical Terms and Appeals

In ENGL 101 and 115 you will likely learn about rhetorical appeals, or the specific ways that people are generally persuaded. There are three main appeals:

- **Ethos**: The character or authority of the speaker/writer, which includes the reasons you might trust what a particular person says, either because of her virtues or knowledge. Audiences are not persuaded by speakers they do not trust.
- **Logos**: This is the logic or reason behind an argument that appeals to our rationality. An argument has to make sense and be backed with evidence in order for it to be accepted by an audience.
- **Pathos**: The emotions we feel when faced with a situation can also affect our choices and beliefs. We may be moved by compassion or fear to take a certain action for a social cause, or may feel joy and fulfillment when we are convinced to spend the weekend on vacation with friends.

Ideally, all of these appeals will work together in well-constructed, logical arguments that speak to our values and are presented to us by ethical, knowledgeable people. As you can imagine, though, this is not always the case, which is why it is so important to discern and identify rhetorical appeals in our everyday lives.

Other terms you may hear in your studies of rhetoric include:

- **Audience**: All rhetorical acts engage a rhetor and an audience to whom the rhetor speaks or writes. You already tailor your messages depending upon your audience, whether you are aware of it or not. When writing rhetorically, you will make more conscious choices about wording, style, or method of delivery in order to reach your audience most effectively.
- **Purpose**: All communication has a distinct and specific purpose. Do you want your audience to take a particular action? Or believe a new idea? Knowing what you want to accomplish with your writing will help you craft more effective texts.
- **Kairos**: This refers to the timing of a rhetorical text—what is relevant today may no longer make sense three months from now. A rhetorically effective text will take into account the timing of events and will arise at the proper moment.
- **Exigence**: Rhetorical texts respond to stimuli or events and may pose a potential solution to a problem. The exigence is a state that demands attention and the rhetorical text is what arises in response to it.

**The Five Canons of Rhetoric**

1. **Invention**: Pre-writing work such as brainstorming, heuristics, listing, etc, that allows you to “discover” your argument
2. **Arrangement**: Putting together your argument in a logical, effective way that your audience can easily follow
3. **Style**: May include the wording, tone, or appearance appropriate for your text, audience, and purpose

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4. **Memory:** In classical rhetoric, this refers to memorizing a speech, but today it can indicate referencing citations, digital memory, or public/cultural memory that influences rhetorical texts.

5. **Delivery:** For classic oratory, this might include gestures or tone of voice, but in written texts may refer to the way writing is presented on a page, digital delivery, or forms such as video or podcasts.

Knowing these terms and understanding their application will give you a vocabulary to analyze, think, and write about the way rhetoric works. In ENGL 101 and 115 you will likely conduct a rhetorical analysis at some point, which will ask you to examine a text and analyze its rhetorical components. You may also be asked to consciously utilize rhetorical appeals in your own writing as a means of creating more effective arguments. These may be new genres of writing, and examples of effective rhetorical analyses and rhetorically grounded arguments will be offered later in this book.

Though you may not have realized it, you are already surrounded by rhetoric and confront rhetorical appeals everyday. By understanding how rhetoric operates, you will be able to identify the persuasive tactics you encounter in order to make more informed choices and to interrogate your own use of rhetoric to ensure that your rhetorical skills are used in a way that serves your values.

**Research, Citation, and Academic Honesty**

In college, you will be asked to write research papers in many of your classes. In ENGL 101 and 115, you will learn about the conventions of research and citation as part of your course work. Again, some of this may be review, but many students find that college-level research writing entails more careful documentation than their high school writing required.

Research can be viewed as an ongoing conversation between multiple parties within and across disciplines. As new ideas are discovered, academics write up their findings and publish them in scholarly journals, where they are reviewed by their peers. When you read scholarly articles, you are “listening” to those conversations, and when you write research papers you are “joining” that conversation by synthesizing information and applying it to your own interests.

One way that you can start to understand and analyze this scholarly conversation more thoroughly is through creating an Annotated Bibliography as part of your research work. Although what is expected for this assignment will vary depending upon the course, discipline, parameters of the upcoming paper you may write, concepts covered in class, or the preferences of your professor, all annotated bibliographies serve the purpose of both summarizing and analyzing the specific sources you are exploring in your research process. In addition to demonstrating to your professor that you are actively engaging with research on your topic, creating an annotated bibliography also allows you to contemplate sources more deeply, analyze their position or content, and consider how each source contributes to the work you are doing yourself. This thinking and writing process can be very beneficial to you as you conduct research, allowing you to pause and think critically about each source that you examine prior to using it in a research paper or other assignment.
For an Annotated Bibliography like this, you would list each source alphabetically by author in proper citation format (MLA 8th edition for English classes, but check with your professor if you are unsure or if you are working on an assignment in a different discipline), and then provide the annotation—a summary and analysis of the source—underneath the entry. If you receive an Annotated Bibliography as an assignment, be sure to check with your professor about what he or she expects to see in each entry and how it should be formatted, as this can vary greatly depending upon the course. Remember, too, that you can take this assignment to the Writing Center for additional feedback or help with citation methods.

Because scholarly writing depends so much on the ongoing research “conversation,” the academic community has very high standards for crediting and citing research that others have conducted. While standards for citing and incorporating sources into your own work may vary in high school, once you are in college, there are particular rules that you must follow in order to keep your writing and research practices ethical.

In college, you will likely be asked to integrate outside research with your own ideas. When you do this, you may make claims or express ideas that are yours, and then back them up with evidence that comes from outside sources. This is a more complicated process than, say, writing a research report that summarizes the ideas of someone else, or an opinion paper that simply expresses your own position. In college writing, you will often be asked to integrate both of these practices into a more complex written argument.

When you utilize research conducted by others, it is important to always attribute those ideas to their sources. There are a variety of ways that you might incorporate outside sources into your work, including:

- **Quotes**: A short passage that is written out word for word exactly as the original author stated it
- **Paraphrase**: A segment of someone else’s work that you have put into your own words
- **Summary**: Condensing the overall idea of a work into a much shorter format in your own words

*To maintain academic honesty you must cite the sources you use in all three of these cases.*

Citing a source typically includes in-text citations inside of parentheses at the end of the sentence where the outside source is quoted, paraphrased, or summarized. For MLA format, which you will use in most of your English classes, this will include the author’s last name and the page number of the article or book where you found the information. Your papers should always include a Works Cited page, where you list all of the sources you used for your paper, arranged alphabetically by the author’s last name; this should also include important publishing information, which will be covered in your class or found in an MLA 8th edition style guide.
Please note that as of March 2016 MLA has moved to 8th edition style guidelines, so the information in your textbook may not be updated if you are using an edition published prior to that time. You may need to consult an online database such as Purdue Owl, or purchase an MLA update supplement for your textbook.

Your ENGL 101 or 115 instructor will go over proper citation formats in class for different types of documents, but the first and most important step is to remember that you must cite these sources, even if you do not quote them directly. Although you may lose points for formatting a citation incorrectly or need to revise if you’ve made a mistake, citing outside work in the first place will allow you to avoid charges of plagiarism or academic dishonesty, which are much more serious.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Plagiarism can be defined as using someone else’s words or ideas without properly identifying the source. Plagiarism can carry dire consequences for students who engage in it, including failing grades for the assignment or course, and in some cases, suspension.1 Here are some basic types of plagiarism that can compromise a student’s academic integrity:

- **Intentional Misrepresentation:** This occurs when a student deliberately attempts to present another’s work as his or her own. This can include copying or paraphrasing someone else’s writing without attributing the source, buying a paper online, or having someone else write the paper.
- **Self-Plagiarism:** This type of misrepresentation happens when a student “recycles” a paper written previously for another class or context. In some cases, you may want to continue research that you have conducted for another class or project, but you may not use any writing that you have already turned in for a grade. If you decide to further previous research, it is best to check with your instructor and be totally honest about what you are doing so that your motives and writing process are completely transparent.
- **Unintentional Misrepresentation:** When a student is not familiar with community citation standards, or that these standards may be different from what you did in high school, it is possible to plagiarize due to uncertainty or lack of knowledge. When in doubt, cite your sources.
- **Patchwriting:** Rebecca Moore Howard (1993) defines “patchwriting” as “copying from a source text and then deleting some words, altering grammatical structures, or plugging in one-for-one synonym-substitutes.” This type of plagiarism is not always the result of dishonesty; sometimes it occurs because students are not familiar with the ideas or language they are attempting to incorporate. Nevertheless, it is still considered plagiarism even if the sources are cited.

1 For more information about the penalties for academic dishonesty, see: http://www.xavier.edu/library/xu-tutor/Xavers-Policy-on-Academic-Honesty.cfm
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• **Excessive Quotation:** Even if you cite your sources, you cannot cobble together a paper based mostly upon the words or ideas of others. When you use long quotes, do so sparingly and only when the author has stated an idea in such a way that it warrants the in-depth use of another’s specific words. (Also check MLA citation guidelines, as long quotes require block formatting that is different from short quotes.) Be wary, however, about using multiple sets of long quotes as this may border on plagiarism, even if you cite the sources. When you write papers in college, the bulk of the words and ideas should be your own.

In some cases, you may not need to cite a source. For instance, when referring to your own personal experiences or thoughts, original research you have conducted yourself, or when you use common knowledge or widely accepted facts, a source is not necessary. What constitutes “common knowledge” may vary widely, but is generally considered to be a fact that is easily accessible and consistent across many sources (e.g. the Declaration of Independence was ratified in 1776). However, if you are not sure if your information is considered common knowledge, cite the source.

Integrating sources correctly into your own work will also help you to avoid plagiarism, as doing so allows you to clearly show in your writing which ideas are your own and which ideas come from others. Although you may understand how a source supports or more fully clarifies your own work, it is important to explicitly explain that to your audience. Framing outside information will make your work more effective and also help you avoid accidental plagiarism:

• **Introduce** the integrated work with a short sentence or phrase that contextualizes the information for your reader.

• **Quote, Paraphrase, or Summarize** the work, including proper in-text documentation per citation style and then including all sources used in your Works Cited page.

• **Comment** on the work and how it relates to the argument or information you are presenting. This will help your reader understand how you interpret the work you are citing and its relationship to your own ideas.

Learning to effectively and ethically integrate research into your own writing is a key component of what you will learn in ENGL 101 and 115—skills that will also support your success in other classes throughout your time as a student. While other disciplines may use different citation styles (such as APA or Chicago) all disciplines value honest, ethical research practices and eschew anything that could be construed as plagiarism or misappropriation of another’s work. For these reasons, it is very important that you learn and understand the research and citation methods expected of you in college, as the consequences for not following these community standards can be dire, with long-term effects on your academic career.
Consequences for Academic Dishonesty

Your instructor will have a clearly stated plagiarism policy in your ENGL 101 or 115 syllabus and you should understand thoroughly the possible ramifications for not properly attributing your sources. Plagiarism often occurs when a student is pressed for time or overwhelmed by an assignment; sometimes, an otherwise honest student may make unfortunate choices in high pressure situations that lead to more work, trouble, and upset than taking the time to do the work honestly. If you find yourself in a situation where you are stuck or afraid that you cannot complete the work on time, talk to your instructor, or take your assignment prompt to the Writing Center for help or clarification. Even requesting an extension or having points docked for turning in a paper late are much less severe than a charge of plagiarism.

Students can mistakenly believe that their instructors will not know if they have plagiarized or copied a paper—in full or in part—from another source, but this is rarely the case. Software such as Turnitin catches many cases of plagiarism and instructors generally know the writing styles of their students. With Internet technology, it is very easy for instructors to search for key terms in their students’ work to see if a paper has been plagiarized or recycled from another source. Even under situations of stress, it is never a good idea to turn in work that is not fully your own—an honestly but poorly written draft can be corrected and recovered from, whereas an academic dishonesty charge will follow you throughout your college career.

Xavier’s Academic Honesty Policy states the following:

The pursuit of truth demands high standards of personal honesty. Academic and professional life requires a trust based upon integrity of the written and spoken word. Accordingly, violations of certain standards of ethical behavior will not be tolerated at Xavier University. These include theft, cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized assistance in assignments and tests, unauthorized copying of computer software, the falsification of results and material submitted in reports or admission and registration documents, and the falsification of any academic record including letters of recommendation.

All work submitted for academic evaluation must be the student’s own. Certainly, the activities of other scholars will influence all students. However, the direct and unattributed use of another’s efforts is prohibited as is the use of any work untruthfully submitted as one’s own.

Penalties for violations of this policy may include one or more of the following: a zero for that assignment or test, an “F” in the course, and expulsion from the University. The dean of the college in which the student is enrolled is to be informed in writing of all such incidents, though the teacher has full authority to assign the grade for the assignment, test, or course. If disputes of interpretation arise, the student, faculty member, and chair should attempt to resolve the difficulty. If this is unsatisfactory, the dean will rule in the matter. As a final appeal, the academic vice president will call a committee of tenured faculty for the purpose of making a final determination.
Please note that not only are there immediate consequences for academic dishonesty (including a zero for the assignment, an “F” for the course, or expulsion from the University), but also that this action will be reported to the Dean’s office of the college in which you are enrolled, and that a record of this action will be recorded. While the ramifications for any instance of academic dishonesty are definitely not worth the risk, in the case of a second or repeated offense, the consequences are typically much more severe.

In all cases, academic honesty and integrity are always the “write path” to take. Citing your sources clearly and integrating them effectively into your own work will make you a better writer and help ensure your acceptance into a community of scholars.

Resources for Students

Xavier University McDonald Memorial Library

We often think of the library as a place to go to find books, but the library actually offers many more services that will be of use to you as you research various projects. In addition to the books housed in the library, you can also use OhioLINK or Inter-Library Loan (ILL) to check out any book available in libraries across the state or country. This gives you access to many more books than could be contained in a single building on campus. Keep in mind, though, that these services may take a few days to process your request and get the book to Xavier for you to pick up, so always start your research process early.

In addition to traditional print books, the library offers services to connect Xavier students to a variety of journals, media, and other resources. By using Search @ XU, you can easily access thousands of resources. In ENGL 101 or 115, your class may take a trip to the library, or a librarian may come to your class to talk with you about how to search the databases and find the information you need. You can also drop by the library, connect via chat text, or email the librarians to ask questions or to seek help if you are having trouble finding information.

The library has a makerspace on the first floor, right as you come in the main entrance from the Academic Mall. The makerspace is open to all students to explore, design, create, build, and collaborate using technologies such as 3D printing and 3D scanning, robotics, circuitry, programming, a laser etcher and CNC mill, tools, crafts, and more.

In addition to the library services, you can also use the Conaton Learning Commons (connected to the library building) as a place to study or meet with classmates to work on group projects. There are 14 group study rooms in the CLC with capacities that range from two or three people, up to 10 people. Many of these rooms are equipped with white boards or plasma screen projectors with web access, so you can easily share your work and collaborate in these spaces. There are also two small computing labs with access to photocopiers, printers, scanners, and computer workstations. Other student support services in the Conaton Learning Commons include the Learning Assistance Center,
Math Lab, Writing Center, Language Resource Center, Academic Advising, and Digital Media Lab. All of these services are here for you to use and can help support your writing and research in a variety of courses.

*James A. Glenn Writing Center*

The Writing Center is another important resource for students at Xavier to help them develop writing skills and to support them with writing assignments in various classes. Located in the CLC 400 (overlooking the circulation desk), the Writing Center offers peer tutoring help with writing during any part of the drafting process. While this is a great place to come if you want someone else to look over your paper once you have a rough draft, the Writing Center tutors can also help you understand an assignment more fully before you start drafting, work with brainstorming ideas, give assistance organizing a paper, offer direction if you are halfway through an essay and get stuck, or provide information about documenting sources. At any stage of the drafting process, the Writing Center is an invaluable asset for students working on writing.

If you use the Writing Center, it is best to make an appointment in advance by calling (513-745-2875), since there may or may not be a tutor available if you just walk in. While most students go to the Writing Center in person, sessions can also be conducted via Skype or email at writingcenter@xavier.edu.

When you go, be prepared with your assignment prompt and name of the class and professor, as well as any notes, texts that your writing refers to, and drafts or outlines you have already done. Think about areas where you need the most help with the assignment and have questions ready to ask the tutor, as this will allow you to make the best use of your time. It is optimal to plan to go to the Writing Center a few days before an assignment is due so that you have time to make revisions, or even do additional research, before turning in work for your class. Sessions last about fifty minutes and the Writing Center is open a variety of hours (including Sundays) so that it is possible to find time in your schedule to make an appointment.

Some students mistakenly believe that the Writing Center is only used by people who struggle with writing or who are “bad” writers. The truth is, no matter how skilled a writer you are, receiving feedback on what you have written can improve the overall quality of the work you turn in. Everyone benefits from having reviews of their writing and almost all writing can be developed more fully. The Writing Center is a key support service for success in ENGL 101 and 115, as well as other courses and projects that require writing. Be sure to utilize this resource while you are at Xavier.

**Some Words About Success**

In your first year at Xavier, you will be building the skills you need to succeed in your classes, as well as your life beyond the university. The writing you will practice in your ENGL 101 and 115 courses is a part of that skillset, but it does not exist in isolation. Part of success in writing—or college, or life in general—is planning your time wisely so that you are able to meet all of your commitments
without being overwhelmed or stressed in the process. It may be a change for you to have to plan so many activities, assignments, and classes yourself, but learning to do so effectively will ensure that you are able to be successful in your courses.

Learning to write well takes practice, which is why we promote a process-based approach to writing. You may find writing more challenging in college than you did in high school, but as with learning any new skill, you will find that you develop efficacy the more you practice. Be sure to give yourself enough time to work on your writing assignments, even in courses where the process itself is not emphasized as much as it is in ENGL 101 or 115. Brainstorm, jot down outlines, take good notes on your research, write rough drafts, and visit the Writing Center. All of these practices will not only increase the likelihood of achieving higher grades on your papers, but also develop the skills you need to write well in all areas of your life.

Remember though, as with any skill, writing capability is acquired over time and with repeated practice. While feedback from peers, your professor, or a peer tutor can aid in developing your skills as a writer, these practices do not automatically guarantee that you will get the highest grade possible on an assignment. All students build competency over time, and peers, professors, and tutors can only address a few issues at once. Be patient with the process and engage all of the resources available to you at Xavier to ensure that you reach the highest level of writing success you can during your time in college.
Student Work

How to Use This Text

In the upcoming pages, you will find examples of student work from first year students who, just like you, took ENGL 101 and/or 115. These examples can be used in a variety of ways and are here to support the writing that you will do in your first year at Xavier.

One way that these student essays can help you is to illustrate what the different genres of writing you may encounter in ENGL 101 and 115 look like. It can be hard to craft a particular kind of writing, such as a rhetorical analysis or ethnography, if you have no idea what these genres are or should include. By looking at an example paper, you can see what typically goes into writing this type of paper, as well as observe how this can be done particularly well.

These papers do not serve as a rigid template for you to copy. Rather, you should use these texts as models for what to expect in a particular genre of writing, what you should include, what “works” about a piece of writing, and then consider how you can adapt or include those skills in your own work. By “stepping back” from a text and asking questions about how it is composed, you can analyze not only the content, but also the rhetorical and compositional strategies that are employed in creating that piece of writing.

To guide you through reading these examples, each paper will be fore-grounded by a reflection from the students themselves, discussing their writing process for that paper. You can see through their words what challenges, obstacles, strategies, and steps they took to get to the finished piece of writing that is published in this book. As readers, we often only get to see the product of a writer’s efforts, but in this text, you will also gain insight about the process that led to these essays. By reading these reflections by students, you might find that you relate to some of their struggles, or learn an important tip that could help you with your own writing.

After the reflection you will find the essay itself, followed by a short series of questions. These questions ask you to look more deeply at the writing itself, to ascertain what you think the writer was doing or intending at different points along the way. How does this writer transition from one idea to the next? What kinds of sources does this writer use as support for her argument? How are quotes integrated into this argument? These are the kinds of questions that may be presented after the essay itself, for you to consider and/or for your instructor to use in class to prompt discussion about the writing process.

By examining the writing of other students who were working under similar conditions, you can seek guidance and encouragement for your own work in first year composition and rhetoric courses at Xavier. Additionally, by analyzing the writing process in this way, you can learn more about the way that you write. How do you transition between ideas? Support your claims? Or integrate quotes? By getting into the habit of analyzing writing itself, rather than only its
content, you gain *meta-cognitive awareness* of your own writing process. By understanding how writing happens, you can acquire insight about what you do, how you do it, and why.

This knowledge can allow you to make more conscious choices and utilize the Jesuit principles of *reflection* and *discernment*. Through reflection on your writing, you can learn more about yourself as a writer and communicator, and then make more discerning choices about those practices. As you develop your skills as a writer in your first year courses, you will build the foundation of your future academic success, as well as establish tools with which to participate in your communities, careers, and civic lives. This text is designed to assist you in those endeavors and to serve as a guide for your first year as a college writer.

**The D’Artagnan Award**

The essays that you find in this book all come from entries for the D’Artagnan Award, an annual award co-sponsored by Xavier’s Writing Program, the Dean’s office, and the Writing Center. Each year, students are encouraged to submit their best work from ENGL 101 and 115 for this award. The submitted essays can be written in any genre and the top three winners, along with a selection of other exemplary student work, will be published in *The Write Path: First Year Composition and Rhetoric at Xavier* for the following year.

The name for this award was chosen specifically because D’Artagnan, like our first year writers, had to work hard to improve his skills, overcome obstacles, and rise to the challenge of new situations that require maturity and development. First year students who win this award become leaders for future students, as their work will become a tool to guide new first year writers on their educational journey.

As you use this text this year and develop your writing skills in ENGL 101 and 115, please consider submitting your favorite pieces for next year’s D’Artagnan Award. You can learn more about this award and submit work anytime throughout the year at [http://www.xavier.edu/english-department/The-DArtagnan-Award.cfm](http://www.xavier.edu/english-department/The-DArtagnan-Award.cfm).
This year the top winners for the D'Artagnan Award are spread across three main genres: Personal Narrative, Rhetorical Analysis, and Research-Based Argument. This reflects the submission of excellent essays in each of these categories. An Honorable Mention was also awarded in each category, rounded out by one or more additional essays of distinction.

Narratives can serve a variety of purposes in ENGL 101 and 115, and assignments involving narrative may vary greatly from class to class. Some genres that incorporate this form of writing include personal narratives, narrative arguments, and ethnographies. In all cases, a narrative will tell a story and typically ask you to write in first person, addressing your audience as “I.” Unlike more formal or “objective-sounding” academic writing, narratives use vivid description and words that evoke emotion in readers, painting a picture of a situation or feeling so that your readers have the sense of “being there” when you tell your story.

Personal narratives, like the three examples here, may require you to tell a story of some aspect of your life, placing yourself with a certain cultural context, or ask you to examine an important event in your life that has shaped who you are today. Your instructor may even ask you to frame your narrative around a particular theme or concept; for example, two of the examples in this section, “Drug Toxicity: Second-Hand Effects on an Addict’s Sister” and “A Knack for Language,” focus on the concept of voice.

The D'Artagnan Award Winner for the Narrative category describes one student’s experience with the effects of addiction. In “Drug Toxicity: Second-Hand Effects on an Addict’s Sister,” we learn how addiction affects family members—more specifically a sibling. (Due to the sensitive nature of this topic, the student author asked to remain anonymous.) In the essay, she focuses on a specific day: the day her family joins her brother at a rehab center for a family therapy session. While the essay focuses on this one day and the revelations the session holds, the writer also includes flashbacks and details from prior events, some years earlier. Framing the essay around one day allows the author to focus on the build-up and eventual release of emotions, while the flashbacks give us necessary context for her reactions.

Our Honorable Mention for the Narrative category is “Milestones of My Life,” by Abby Lenz. Here, she writes of running a half marathon with her father. Abby describes the months leading up to the race, from the moment her father invites her to join him to the final moments of the half marathon. Abby utilizes concrete, sensory details to recreate her experience. She uses this experience to illustrate her close relationship with her father. Her essay shows how one experience can help exemplify abstract concepts.
In “A Knack for Language,” Elizabeth Maloney presents a narrowly-focused narrative, the entire story taking place over a couple of hours. The narrative describes Elizabeth’s frustration with—and subsequent understanding of—a fellow employee. This limited focus allows Elizabeth to craft rich descriptions and detailed characterization. Elizabeth’s change of heart hinges on a key moment in the story, a moment that causes her to recast her initial assumptions about her colleague. In particular, Elizabeth’s use of dialogue—both internal and external—helps her recreate her “a-ha!” moment. The reader is able to witness the transformation along with her.

In your ENGL 101 or 115 classes, you may have the opportunity to write a narrative of some kind, and while your particular assignment may differ from these examples, there are guidelines of storytelling you can take away from the essays written by our student authors. As you read, notice how they tell their stories—what details they give, how you react or feel when you read, and the effects of their descriptions—and then remember these concepts when you craft your own narratives. We all tell stories in our lives every day, whether as an official assignment or not. Storytelling is an important aspect of culture and social interaction, and learning to craft an effective narrative in your writing gives you the opportunity to tell your story to wider audiences.

In the following student selections, you will read reflections from each student before reading their work. This will give you insight about the different processes that produced these pieces and offer advice from these writers that may help you in your own writing process. At the end of each essay, you will find questions to consider about the particular piece you have just completed reading. These prompts will guide you to explore the writing and rhetorical strategies used by these student writers so that you might gain deeper understanding of what makes this work effective.

The editorial team hopes that you enjoy reading these essays as much as we did and that you, too, are able to develop your writing, argument, and research skills in your first year at Xavier.
Reflection

After hearing the prompt for the personal narrative, I grew nervous; I am not a very outspoken person and I have never used my voice to change the world—or so I thought. When given the prompt, most students wrote about how they spoke out to change injustices in the community, so I did my best to use my little experience in finding my own voice to put a new spin on the idea. The most challenging aspect of this paper was allowing myself to put raw emotion into what I wished to convey; it is clear in the story that I am not a very vocal person, and so allowing myself to be completely candid and vulnerable was difficult.

Writing this paper required me to write in a stream-of-conscious way, as I wanted to get my actual thoughts into the paper. After I had completed the preliminary steps, and after composing my first paragraph, the one about playing duck duck goose, I was able to build from there. I also originally did not include the monologue, hoping to leave it up to the audience to interpret as well as finding it difficult to recall what had exactly been said that day, but ultimately found it enhanced the impact as a whole piece. The main idea I tried to incorporate was done through the use of impactful language and building from a body paragraph; I often start papers from the introduction or beginning, but in this case found that building from a central and impactful body paragraph made the process quicker and more efficient. I also had family revise it after two drafts were completed; in total I had two family members correct is as well as a roommate. In English 115, my professor, Dr. Frey, also had us peer review in class, and she left her own feedback as well, which was extremely helpful; she introduced the idea of the monologue which really anchored the paper.

Writing this paper was much more difficult than I had anticipated, but not in the sense that the actual style of paper was difficult. I found it very hard to share such a personal story, but in the end this story allowed for an important topic to be discussed. When writing a narrative, I encourage students to hone in on raw emotion they may feel for something, whether it be something personal or communal, but do not let the emotions you feel inhibit what you wish to convey.

Note: Due to the sensitive nature of this topic, the author has requested that she remain anonymous. Names and locations have been changed to protect the privacy of her family.
Drug Toxicity: Second-Hand Effects on an Addict’s Sister

When my mom asked me to come with Cora, my oldest sibling, and her to Recovery Road Rehab Facility, I felt as though I had been kicked in the stomach. Since my brother left home for treatment for his addiction, I did my best not to think about him or his situation. Over the years I had become quite adept at avoiding painful subjects and thoughts, but my mother asking me to do this would make me face those dark thoughts head on. I knew the right thing to do would be to “support my brother” and take the hour-and-a-half drive out to the countryside, but I had become so adept at restricting my feelings and I knew going there would break down my entire facade. I told her I would think about it as she poured over books researching the “12 Steps to Recovery,” trying to find her own way to understand what our entire family had been subjected to. Eventually she guilted me into the family therapy session, and I found myself in the car with my head pressed against the back window quietly listening to my oldest sister and mother talk.

As I sat there folded into myself on the black leather seat, I thought about the 8 years I had lived with a brother addicted to drugs. It started simply, as it usually does, but as his use escalated to things such as heroin pills, my pain did as well. I am the middle child in a family of seven, and I had always been known as the talker. As a child I was always making noises and rambling about every significant and insignificant detail of my day to my parents, my siblings, or anyone who would listen. As I grew older, and my brother fell deeper into “the black hole,” I began to lose what had once been an essential part of me. My voice, once so strong, clear and happy, became something of a curse. Words were always a way for me to express my emotions, as they are for many people, and due to this, they had an uncanny ability to trigger tears, anger, smiles, etc. Being in a family with an addicted member, your emotions tend to seem less important compared to the constant worry about that sibling dying from a drug related overdose, accident, or illness. Gradually, I dwindled into the ghost of that happy little blonde girl who could make friends with a tree. This seems to ring true for all families plagued by addiction; children tend to cope with these situations by withdrawing and becoming frightened observers. We lose the power in our voices in lieu of the dark cloud that washes over our parents’ faces, the anger that coats our older siblings’ tongues like cold metal, and as the innocent light fades from our younger siblings’ eyes. We forget the important impact our small voices can have; we forget the influence we have on others because we are too occupied watching members of our family succumb to their deepest, darkest desires, as they slowly rot before our young eyes. The pain of watching my charismatic, handsome brother slowly become less coherent, less connected, and much darker, tends to make me pause, even now, when I think about it. It is enough to shake the very depth of my heart into a sponge that merely soaks in anguish and worry like thick, black tar.
After the long drive from the city into rolling hills, I found myself in front of a large, sterile, yet friendly looking building. My breath caught in my throat and my eyes grew hot from tears. I walked behind my sister and mother, using them as a barrier between myself and the facility hiding my brother, who I was not sure I even wanted to see. We entered the building and I felt as though I was entering a battleground. A staff member put a neon pink bracelet on my wrist and we shuffled into the bright waiting room, the pleasant surroundings only serving to sharply contrast the turmoil boiling in my stomach. The only sense of true illumination was found in people's eyes as they gathered their family members in their arms. Jack was one of the in-patients descending the stairs, making my heart grow a bit lighter. It is true “you don’t know what you have until it’s gone,” and here he was: after weeks of talking to his disembodied voice on the phone, I could finally hug and talk to him. Despite the hate I felt for him, the love far overshadowed it. After the various activities of the day, we, along with several other families, were corralled into a small room with our counselor, Angel.

We sat in a circle, like one would imagine kindergarteners would to play duck-duck-goose, and that is exactly what I felt like: a small child dreading and waiting to be picked next to play the game. My face was already tear-stained and red from listening to families and friends look at their addicted brothers, sisters, fathers, or mothers ask the question of the day, “How did my addiction affect you?”

All of their collective stories brought back each memory, in perfect detail of my brother spiraling down, further and further, as each day I grew quieter and quieter. I vividly remember the day it started when I was in fifth grade, with the accident and death of my brother’s friend, Liam Smith. The next day at school during current events, my class discussed what happened while I sat in the back willing myself not to cry: my brother had been in the fatal accident as well and no one knew. Thus began the silencing of my voice; I asked myself, “How could my pain possibly compete with his after everything he went through as a mere sophomore in high school?” He grew worse as I entered high school, falling asleep mid-sentence, becoming temperamental, eating less, and rarely coming up from the basement. I grew afraid of him to the point I did not even want to be in a car he was driving; I feared for my life when I was with one of the people who was meant to protect me, always. I also began to feel the pressure of my parents to excel in school, sports, extracurriculars; I felt they hoped I would make up for the things my brother lost. Little did they know I began to crack piece by piece while attempting to make them proud. I began to not only lose my voice, but also my passion for life. My saving grace, of course, was found in the arms of a boy, as most good love stories are, and Will became my outlet for all the pain I felt during this time. It was like applying a cold compress to a burn—it alleviates the pain for a bit, but only as a temporary measure for the third degree burns I had suffered. I thought that my love story might save
me like all those chick-flick movies, until I realized I was only growing more removed; I could not avoid Jack forever. My boyfriend helped me try to cope night after night until eventually I went to Cora, my oldest sister. She was happy I talked to her about self-harm and the pressures my parents placed upon my shoulders, but I never brought Jack, my brother, into the equation.

During my junior year in high school, there were nights my brother was kicked out and nights he spent hospitalized. Finally, during the beginning of my senior year, one of the scariest, if not the scariest, but best days of my family’s life occurred, and my brother got his wake up call, hitting rock bottom. He was in a car accident, and from there was sent for the help he desperately needed.

Senior year was a time meant for celebration, but even with him in rehab, I constantly worried. The pain came to a head while I was sitting in my English class. A knock came, and I was called out of class. The teacher assured me I was not in trouble, and automatically my mind went to Jack: Had he overdosed? Had he died? That walk to the office was the longest of my life, and when I finally got there, surrounded by my principal, my dean of students, and my guidance counselor, I broke into tears. Why didn’t they tell me why I was here instead of me waiting each agonizingly long second wondering if Jack was dead? They assured me again I was not in trouble as they slid one of my assignments in front of me. I was asked, “Why did you write your paper on this?” Until that point I didn’t realize what I had been feeling may have not been vocalized, but was instead reflected in my schoolwork. I sobbed onto the desk and finally got out, “I thought you were going to tell me Jack was dead.” Over the course of the school year my work became increasingly dark as I struggled to deal with my brother’s addiction; the work I produced became so stark and ominous that my teachers eventually took action to get me help. While they tried to convince me to try therapy, I insisted again that talking does not change the facts, and that my problems were not nearly as important as my brother’s. I did not need to “talk” about what was happening in my life when I was so comfortable being silent; I told them that, “I had been mourning the death of my brother since his addiction began. Talking about it now would do nothing to change what I deal with.” This was the beginning of finding my voice despite the torment. Walking on broken glass is difficult, but as your feet grow accustomed to the pain, it becomes easier to tolerate, just as I was growing used to getting through everyday wondering if it would be Jack’s last.

I found myself back in the room, as Angel turned to Jack, saying, “Ask Rachel the question.”

“How has my addiction affected you?” he said. I had thought about all the stories I would tell him and all of the guilt I would unload on him, but instead, after eight years of silence all I could do was cry. I thought at this point I would have come up with all of the awful things he did to me and make him feel all the pain he caused, but looking at him across the circle all I could think of were
the nights I laid awake wondering if he would come home from the hospital, or walking down my long school hallway dreading the news I felt sure I would hear. Finally I was told to use the voice that had been screaming inside of me for the past eight years, finally I was able to speak, and after taking a deep breath I shakily began my own narrative.

“You are my older brother, and I am your younger sister. We were not meant to switch roles, where I would become the one waiting to hear you come home safely. I spent nights being a parent to our youngest sister, while trying to protect her from all the destruction you caused. And even through all this, every night you spent in the hospital the only place I wanted to be was by your side. You will never know the helplessness I felt lying at home crying on the floor just because I never knew which visit to the hospital would be your last. You have never had to worry about losing me, or Cora or Dominic, or Emily. But every day for the past eight years, we have lived in the uncertainty of not knowing whether you will come home or if we will find your body in a ditch on the side of a road. Do you know what it’s like being a 15-year-old in high school never knowing whether your brother will see you off to prom like you imagined? Do you know what it’s like never being able to talk to anyone because your friends would never understand or what it feels like when they get ‘depressed’ due to a few extra school assignments, while I sat at home everyday wondering if you’d be alive in the morning? And never being able to go to mom and dad because I felt that the way your addiction affected me would only make me feel selfish? I was completely alone, and even now when it is ‘okay’ for me to tell you how I feel, I still feel like the most selfish person in the world for feeling sorry for myself. I was supposed to look up to you and instead my most vivid memories of you are so full of pain that they will never leave my head. I don’t even know if you remember being so incoherent while driving me in the car that we almost crashed while you screamed at me about wanting to kill yourself. Just so you know, it really sucks having to watch you kill yourself. I know this addiction affected the entire family, but at least they had someone to talk to. I was left alone for the past eight years watching you rot. Mom and Dad may think I never understood, but I was the first person in the family to know how bad it was; you were so high your sophomore year you couldn’t even recognize who I was. You taught me how to make bongs when you should have taught me how to throw a football. You will never ever be able to understand what you put me through.”

After years of staying quiet, I was the one person who could make my brother say, “I am speechless.”

Up until that point I had planned on slowly pouring my pain on him like acid, so he could feel the way my body steeped for eight years lying dormant in that same acid, as life’s joys passed me by. But at this moment I like to think I underwent an important change. One thing we as a society often miss when speaking out against injustices is how that society does not acknowledge the respect the other party, as a member of the human race, deserves. For eight
years I wanted Jack to feel the pain I was forced to endure at his hands, but the way I finally used my voice was so much more effective without resorting to biting words and harsh insults. The importance of using one’s voice strongly, clearly, and lovingly without being drowned out by others was discovered by me on this particular day at Recovery Road.

Everyday, families are affected by addiction, disease, death, and suffering and in the wake of this; the casualty count is not just the one addict, the one cancer patient, or the depressed parent. Family suffering is like a bomb going off, and while the person at the epicenter is the most injured, the bomb can and will hurt those in the parameters. All wounds must be tended to, and I learned this the hard way. Siblings should be empowered to express themselves; in my case, my small voice was enough to silence my brother, and I assure you this is no easy task. In the case of my addict brother, I felt like talking about my pain was betraying him. After all, I lived such an easy life, how could I be so selfish to think I deserved any bit of the attention he needed? But I learned, as all sisters, brothers, mothers, fathers, partners, families learn as they face addiction, losing your voice in the face of adversity, not only hurts you, but your entire family.

Questions to Consider

1. This student author focuses her narrative on a single day, though the experience has spanned years of her life. While she frames the story around the day her family joins her brother at the rehab center for a family therapy session, the writer weaves details about her brother’s years-long addiction, and her reaction to it, into the tale. What is the impact of focusing on one day, instead of a chronological retelling of events? How do the flashbacks and background details help us better understand the author’s reaction to the therapy session? What examples in her descriptions were more powerful in telling her story?

2. The student writer talks about losing and finding her voice. How is the author able to illustrate the power of voice? What kinds of language does she use to demonstrate the concept of voice? What other stylistic or descriptive strategies does she use to highlight voice—both explicitly and implicitly?

3. This essay describes the second-hand effects of a family member’s addiction. In her cover memo, the student author advises students to “hone in on raw emotion” when composing a narrative. What are the challenges of writing about something so emotionally wrenching? How does tapping into that emotion affect the writer, as well as the audience? Is it necessary for a narrative to convey intense or profound emotion? Why or why not?
Reflection

When I was first assigned to write a personal narrative in my ENGL 115 class, I was unsure of what I wanted to write about. The biggest challenge was that I had to keep in mind that the personal narrative would later be used to create a graphic memoir, which led me to contemplate what event in my life could be described by both words and pictures. In class, I was given the opportunity to share my two narrative ideas with classmates at my table and receive advice from them. They urged me to pick the topic that seemed the most significant to me as an individual, which led me to choose to write about my first half marathon with my dad. After deciding on my topic, I wrote down all of the events I could remember surrounding the half marathon: my dad’s idea to run a half marathon, my preparation before the race, and my experience during the race. When I later composed my rough draft, I used these events as a base to then add in my thoughts and emotions surrounding the basic plot of the narrative. After turning in my rough draft, comments from a peer review and my professor suggested that I remove some insignificant details about the story, such as deliberating which of the three possible races my dad and I would run. They also suggested that I add more in the narrative about my relationship with my dad and the significance of the father-daughter experience, rather than the running experience. For my final draft, I added several sentences in the conclusion sharing how I was grateful to have this experience with my dad and how much his presence meant to me.

My advice to first year students who are writing a personal narrative is to focus on writing the story they want to share, not the story they think their audience wants to hear. The writer will be more successful if they choose a topic for their narrative that has personal meaning to them and is a core part of who they are as an individual. The writer will bring more passion to their narrative, and this passion will be evident and intriguing to the reader. The narrative is not meant to tell any story, but rather tell a story that reveals characteristics and aspects of the writer as a person.
Milestones of My Life

I looked at the home screen of my iPhone surprised to see a text message from my dad in the middle of a Tuesday afternoon. It was September 15, 2016 and as I hustled to my 1:00 pm anatomy class, I read his message in my head. He asked me if I would be interested in running a half marathon in the fall, because he would be willing to run it with me if I wanted. When I read his text, I felt like he had been telepathically reading my mind, despite being 230 miles away. The past couple days before he texted me, I had been thinking a lot about running. I was excited that I had recently joined the running club at Xavier, but I was really missing running with my high school cross country team. I missed the adrenaline and pre-race butterflies, the determination I felt when I continued to run as my legs felt heavy and exhausted, and the genuine feelings of joy and accomplishment when I crossed the finish line 3.1 miles later. I saw his text as an opportunity to try something new and challenge myself as a runner. After running in high school, I truly believed I was capable of one day running the 13.1-mile long race. I felt that now was the perfect time in my life to try a half marathon; I was in shape and would not have to risk injuring myself and being unable to run for a high school cross country or track season. I responded to his text only moments later, letting him know that I was very interested in running a half marathon in the fall.

Fast forward to October 5, and I am sitting in the passenger seat of my dad’s BMW. We are on a straight stretch of I-71 North, driving home from Xavier. Since this is the first time we have seen each other since I started college, we catch up on classes, family, and inadvertently the half marathon. I share with him my goals of having fun and hopefully finishing the race in under two hours. He tells me he is confident that if I keep getting some longer distance runs of 8–12 miles in each week, I should be able to hit my goal. I express to him my few concerns about running a marathon: Will the race get so crowded that we might get separated for a couple miles? Will people run over me if I am too slow, or will I get boxed in behind runners who are slower than me? He answered each question in a calm voice that expressed the wisdom and knowledge he gained from running both marathons and half marathons over the past fifteen years. He said I would not have to worry about losing him in a big pack of runners because we would start the race behind and beside runners in our pace group. Also, the race itself would not have an insanely massive number of runners, like the Boston Marathon and other races he has run. Knowing that he would be by my side every step of the way gave me courage and confidence that we would succeed together.
We then evaluated the possible races we could run in. We decided to do the Indianapolis Monumental Half Marathon for many reasons. Indianapolis would be a close distance to Cincinnati, making it relatively easy for my dad to pick me up from campus and return me to campus when we were done. Also, the Indianapolis race would be on a Saturday morning, so we would have time to travel Friday night, spend Saturday together, and still have time on Sunday to visit and get my homework done. My dad had also done some research online and heard a lot of good reviews about the race. The race was known to be a fast course with scenic city views and a large expo to visit the night before the race. He also heard that it was well organized with lots of volunteers ready to help and direct runners. That night, I was excited that we found a race; I could now mark November 5, 2016 as the day I would run my first half marathon with my dad.

It is 1:50 pm and Senora Sotelo calls out, “Que tengas un buen fin de semana!” as I exit the room behind my fellow classmates. I am hopeful that I will indeed “have a good weekend,” as I march back to my dorm room. I read the text that my dad is waiting in the parking lot behind Kuhlman, quickly throw a rain jacket and sports bra in my duffel bag, and rush outside to meet him. It is November 4th and we are about to begin our two-hour trek to Indianapolis. My dad informs me of the plan for the day. First, we will walk around at the expo and pick up our race packet, then find a restaurant nearby for dinner, and finally settle into the hotel for a good night’s rest. That night, my mom gave my dad and me a piece of dark chocolate for “good luck.” I then climbed in bed with my running shoes, bright purple watch, shirt, and zip-up leggings all laid out at the foot of my bed.

At 5:30 am, I am awakened to the sound of an alarm. Today is the day; in a few short hours, I will be running a half marathon. Time flies by as I get dressed, braid my hair, and ride to the race. My dad and I are back at the expo, waiting for time to pass before walking to the starting line. The scene of the expo is much different than the previous night. There were no longer tables full of vendors to entice the runners with shoes and free Gatorade samples; but rather runners of all ages filling the room. Some are standing and talking to friends, some are eating, and even others are stretching and lightly jogging around the room. My dad and I talk and stretch, knowing it is most important to stay relaxed and energized. After a visit to the bathroom, my dad and I head outside to the starting line.

The sky is not quite as dark, and the sun is starting to come up as my dad and I reach the starting line. The city looks very pretty and is full of fans gathered outside the bullpen to cheer the runners on. My dad and I are both wearing old baggy sweatshirts and sweatpants that could have come straight from the
1980s to keep us warm until the final moments before the race. A photographer comes by to take a pre-race picture of us, and shortly after we strip these layers off and leave them in the street to be donated. After the national anthem plays, the race begins. I start my watch as my dad and I run forward along with the pack. The feeling of the first mile is indescribable; there is a rush of adrenaline and I have never felt lighter on my feet. I feel like I could fly, but I try not to get too excited and speed up, knowing I should save my energy for later in the race. It is funny how I was shivering cold moments before the race began, but now I feel an internal wave of heat that warms my body.

As we run, we pass by the Colts Stadium, travel through a tunnel, and turn corners on the streets. We pass by various restaurants and skyscrapers, and around mile five, my dad and I run past my mom and brother. They cheer for us, my brother chanting my nickname, “Go Abbeast!” I smile to them and give them thumbs up. My dad rushes over to kiss my mother’s cheek, and my mom scolds him for slowing us down. We now enter the quiet part of the race and my dad and I “fuel up” with our energy gels. We are over six miles in and we are no longer in busy downtown Indianapolis. We pass through a few neighborhoods, and it is encouraging to see people in folding chairs sitting in their driveway to cheer us on. It is a nice escape from the crowded streets. As we approach a race photographer, my dad and I come up with a pose to make in the picture. I suggest making the famous “Xavier X,” and as we pass by the photographer, we smile and cross our arms to form an X.

It is now mile seven, and I am excited to be over halfway done. The half marathoners and full marathoners now separate onto different paths, and I am thankful that I do not have to take the long route with them. I tell my dad I am feeling good and we start to speed up a bit. I am genuinely surprised by how motivated I am and how fearless I feel as the miles pass by.

The next couple miles quickly pass and before I know it, my dad and I are approaching downtown Indianapolis again. As we cross the long concrete bridge, I check my watch to see we only have 5k (3.1 miles) left of the race. It is like I am starting a cross country race after running ten miles. I feel giddy and nervous, as I realize this is a critical time of the race. The race is coming to an end and it almost seems to good to be true. I think to myself: Am I really running faster than my goal right now? When will it “hit” me that I have been running for over an hour? Will I run out of “gas” before I reach the finish line? I shake these fears and doubts from my head as we come closer and closer to the end. As he talks to me and keeps me motivated, I cannot help but feel extremely thankful to have my dad as company beside me each step of the race.
Finally, we turn the corner and are at that final 0.1-mile stretch of the race. My dad and I speed up toward the finish. We are in a race against time and at precisely 1:38:40, my dad and I cross the long-awaited finish line. I smile to myself and think, “Wow, I just finished a half marathon.” My dad and I embrace one another in a hug, feeling extremely ecstatic. Not only did I finish a half marathon, but I ran it at an average mile pace of 7:32. The pace of 7:32 was roughly a whole twenty seconds faster per mile than my intended goal pace. Shiny silver finisher medals with thick red ribbon are wrapped around our necks, and paper Gatorade cups are shoved in our hands. My dad and I stop for one final photo, and I have never looked happier (or sweater) than in that picture. After we are handed chocolate milk, I head over to the edge of the fence to hug my mom. I feel as if the flock of people around me is invisible, and my dad and I are on top of the world. As we walk back to the parking lot, we pass by many different parts of the racecourse. I walk past these and reminisce in the memories of the race. My legs feel slightly weary, yet at the same time they feel strong and powerful from running 13.1 miles. After showering at the hotel, I put on my new black “finisher” quarter zip. I proudly sport the jacket around all day as proof that the race was more than just a dream. Eventually, the sun sets and November 5, 2016 comes to happy end. It is no longer an anxiously awaited date in the future, but a meaningful and memorable day of the past.

Today, when I look around, I can see memories from the race all around me. I look through the camera roll of my phone and see that picture of my dad and me smiling side-by-side with medals around our necks. When I open the door of my black mini fridge to grab a drink, I see the rectangle Indianapolis Monumental Marathon magnet clinging to it. Although these pieces of memorabilia are great, they are not nearly as valuable as the experience and memories I have of running a half marathon with my dad. My dad has always been a source of strength and support in my life, in more aspects than just running. He builds me up and helps me have faith in myself when times get tough and new challenges await me. Looking back on that day, it is not the fact that I ran 13.1 miles in 1:38:40 that I remember and cherish. Rather, it is the memories leading up to the race and the memories I made within the 1:38:40 with my dad. If I would have run the race by myself, it would have merely been an accomplishment to check off my bucket list. Running the half marathon with my dad however, gave us a chance to further strengthen our father-daughter bond and embrace our shared love for running. From that race, I learned that the most meaningful MILEstones in life (pun intended) are the ones spent doing what you love with the people you love.
Questions to Consider

1. Abby uses dates and markers of time to structure her essay. How do these markers help her highlight significant moments? How do the time markers help provide structure to her descriptions? How do the different time frames add to her overall story?

2. Abby’s story spans a few months. She mentions in her reflection that her peers advised her to condense some details. How does an author determine what’s important in a narrative? What are some of the challenges of describing an experience that spans weeks or months? Which details of Abby’s story did you find most compelling or effective? Why?

3. In her reflection, Abby mentions that she wanted to write a story about her relationship with her father. She uses the specific experience of running a race with him to illustrate their closeness. How can we use specific experiences to illustrate a larger concept? How do stories act as a way to explore abstract themes, like relationships or love?
Reflection

In my opinion, the most challenging aspect of narrative writing is not finding a story to tell; rather, it is finding the significance of your story and reflecting on the lessons it teaches your audience. When I began to draft my narrative for English 101, I knew exactly what I wanted to write about. However, I was unsure of how to transform a humorous anecdote from my summer job into a meaningful piece of writing. Over the course of several weeks, I worked with my English 101 instructor and my peers to revise my essay. At the beginning of the writing process, my paper simply recounted an event. While it contained humor and dialogue, it lacked reflection, which is an essential component of narrative writing.

The peer editing process was instrumental in transforming my essay into a well-balanced piece. While I was hesitant to read my rough draft aloud to my classmates, this step is ultimately what benefited my writing the most. My advice to writers is to first get your ideas down on paper and then work with your professor and peers to transform your words into a beautiful and meaningful story. Additionally, I encourage you to use your unique voice to shape your writing. Unlike most types of writing you will do in college, narrative writing encourages self-expression. Have fun using humor and dialogue and do not be afraid to make a genuine connection with your audience!

A Knack for Language


“Cashiers, answer the phone!”

Ding! Ding!

“I can’t. Two barista orders just popped up!” I shouted down the line to my manager as I frantically pushed buttons on the espresso machine. The chaos of Friday lunch rush placed all my Panera Bread co-workers into a frenzy. Well, all but one.

“NEVAEHHHHH!” I squawked, spotting one of my fellow cashiers standing idly by as the rest of us took orders and prepared drinks. “ANSWER THE PHONE!” Nevaeh had been working as a cashier at Panera for over two weeks, but the only task she would willingly do was prepare bakery items ordered by customers. When it came to taking orders or answering the phone, she
would rudely force a co-worker to do it for her. I had always cast her actions off as laziness, failing to analyze why she stayed away from jobs that involved interacting with customers. If I had sooner realized that a task I found simple might not be that way for everyone, I could have prevented myself from making a hurtful mistake.


“GIRL,” I repeated, my tone shifting from anxious to annoyed, “You have to answer the phone!”

Nevaeh vacantly blinked her dark chocolate eyes. “I ain’t gonna answer it,” she sassily retorted, arms crossed. My patience was quickly diminishing. I shoved the whipped cream can I was gripping into her pudgy hand and picked up the phone.

“Hi! Thank you for calling Panera Bread. I apologize for your wait! My name is Elizabeth. How may I assist you today?” I cheerfully and apologetically conversed with the customer on the line as my eyes sent daggers towards Nevaeh. An assistant-manager critiqued her as she incorrectly finished making the barista drinks I had started. She was forced to remake the drinks, squinting at the recipe cards, and taking her sweet time as she worked. I could not fathom how Nevaeh could be so slothful, especially when the employees around her were being so industrious and courteous of one another.

The customer on the phone requested to speak to a manager, so I scurried to the café’s back office to pass the call off. On my trek back to the front of the store, I passed Tiffany, one of my comical fellow cashiers. When our eyes met, I stopped in the middle of the walkway to mimic Nevaeh’s feisty street tone. “I ain’t answerin’ no phone,” I harshly mocked, “Welcome to Paneros! Oh, you wanna order, ma’am? Lemme get someone else to help you.”

Tiffany snorted, slapping her leg. “Sista isn’t gonna last more than a month here at ‘Paneros’ if she won’t talk to customers or answer the phone,” she teased loudly. To our dismay, we heard the squish of non-slip shoes rounding the corner. Tiffany and I shared a frantic glance, knowing who it would inevitably be—Nevaeh. Her furrowed brow and stone cold expression indicated that she had heard our roast. Tiffany’s chestnut-brown cheeks turned a deep shade of red, and my eyes immediately darted to the ground. We were both humiliated to have been caught making fun of our co-worker.

Nevaeh passed by us without saying a word, so Tiffany and I dashed to the front of the store. We resumed taking orders, casually complimenting and joking with customers as Nevaeh silently completed her usual task of preparing
bakery items. When business died down around two o’clock, I went out of my way to find tasks to do to avoid Nevaeh. As I needlessly scrubbed down the side of the espresso machine, I heard a troubling sound.


“Nevaeh!” Our manager called from the back, “Can you answer the phone, please?”

I froze at the espresso machine, rag in hand. I glanced at Nevaeh to see her next move. She was staring at me, her normally indignant expression wiped from her face. Instead, her pitiful eyes begged me to answer the phone for her.

“I-I … I can’t,” Nevaeh admitted with a look of defeat. I quickly picked up the phone, running through my usual chipper greeting. As I listened to the caller’s questions about Panera’s menu, I tried to wrap my head around what Nevaeh had said. What does she mean, she “can’t”? I wondered. How hard is it to answer the phone? Lost in thought, I realized that I had failed to fully comprehend the question of the customer with whom I had been conversing. His thick European accent made him difficult to understand. I asked him to repeat his concern and sensed frustration in his voice when he did so. I replied to his question to the best of my ability, fully realizing at the end of the call that it was not the answer he had been searching for.

As I hung up the phone, I suddenly realized what Nevaeh had meant. It wasn’t that she couldn’t physically answer the phone. Rather, the issue was that she feared it would be difficult for the customer on the other end to understand her slang, just as I could not understand the European gentleman’s accent. This also explained why she felt more comfortable preparing pastries than waiting on customers. Nevaeh lacked confidence in her ability to communicate, and Tiffany and I had added to her insecurities by making fun of her.

I reflected on my own lively interactions with customers. Taking orders and chatting people up was by far the simplest task for me, and my favorite part of the job. I delighted in making customers smile with compliments and positivity, which were effectively communicated by my polished and eloquent tone. My ability to artfully use language was a gift that had tremendous power, and I should not have taken it for granted.

I turned to Nevaeh, who gave me a small, appreciative grin. I beamed back at her, deciding to take advantage of the truce her expression implied.

“All right, girl, I’m going to teach you to answer the phone next time it rings,” I said merrily, placing my hand on her shoulder. “And while we’re at it, let’s practice saying ‘Panera’ instead of ‘Paneros.’”
Questions to Consider

1. Elizabeth uses a good deal of dialogue throughout the essay. How does the dialogue-heavy introduction draw the reader in, even before describing the setting or the characters? How does dialogue add to the story she’s telling? When might a writer choose to include dialogue as opposed to summarizing a conversation? Why?

2. In Elizabeth’s reflection, she mentions she initially got swept away in the description and dialogue of the story, and forgot the reflective portion of the story. Any good narrative is going to have a point, the “so what?” of the story. What is the significance of the story she’s telling? What is her “so what?” Consider where Elizabeth locates her reflection. Why does she place it there instead of, say, at the end of the piece? What is the impact of this reflection on the essay overall?

3. This personal narrative describes a moment where someone is confronted with her own misconceptions and must acknowledge them. Have you ever experienced a moment when you realized you had misjudged a person? How did you address the situation? Were you able to rectify your misconception with the person involved, as the author here was?
Category: Rhetorical Analysis

The next genre of writing we will explore is the Rhetorical Analysis, a type of analytic approach for interpreting texts that focuses on rhetorical appeals that work to persuade an audience. As discussed in the “Rhetorical Terms and Appeals” section near the beginning of this book, rhetoric examines particular aspects of persuasive texts in order to understand how they work. In a rhetorical analysis, you will be asked to analyze texts—which could be magazine ads, editorials, political speeches, images, videos, newspaper articles, commercials, or a host of other types of texts—from a rhetorical perspective.

While students often have experience with analysis prior to coming to college, many first year writers report that the rhetorical analysis is a new genre for them. Because of that, examples of this type of essay may be helpful to you so that you can get an idea of what might be expected in an analysis of this sort. Although your instructor may have specific guidelines and parameters for the assignment that are different from the examples you see here, all rhetorical analyses ask the writer to investigate a text to see how it operates rhetorically. You might consider aspects of a text such as pathos (how the text moves the emotions of the audience), ethos (the authority or character of the speaker/writer), and logos (how logically an argument is presented), as well as the timing of the text you are critiquing, the context in which it was published or distributed, the audience for which it was intended, the style or tone it takes in order to connect with the audience, the medium in which it is composed, etc. By engaging in rhetorical analysis, you will become more aware of the rhetorical texts around you in your everyday life and be able to discern the ways in which you are persuaded. Additionally, through this awareness, you can learn to craft more rhetorically effective texts yourself, as you will when you create various arguments as part of your classroom assignments.

The selected essays in the Rhetorical Analysis category each approached this assignment by examining very different texts as their starting point. First, the D’Artagnan Award winner for this category, “A Stand on Sexual Assault” by Ally Orth, analyzes how a poem read by pop star Halsey at the 2018 Women’s March explores the effects of sexual assault. Honorable Mention entry “The Rhetoric of a Campaign” by Kathryn Longfellow examines the rhetorical devices of a political ad for Senator Tammy Duckworth, focusing on the multimedia aspects of the video. Cambrie Gielow analyzes a speech called “Let Women Fight,” where the speaker argues for allowing women in combat roles. Finally, Brittany Wells investigates how an editorial by former president Jimmy Carter persuaded her to reexamine her views on the legalization of prostitution. In this diversity of genres and topics, readers can see how broadly rhetorical analysis can be applied and the depth of meaning it can offer by the close examination of the rhetorical strategies employed in any given text. Whether the object of
analysis is current or historical, a public speech or a poem, rhetorical analysis
 can offer insights about how a text works to persuade, as well as the way it
 connects to larger social issues.

Each of these student authors arranges their essays in a way that walks read-
ers through the text they are analyzing in a logical fashion without resorting
to an organizational scheme that is broken down in a simple “three points”
fashion based upon pathos, ethos, and logos. While it may be easy to arrange
a rhetorical analysis in a format where you analyze each of these three appeals,
one per paragraph, this often leads to segregating the appeals more discretely
than is optimal. Often, an argument may rely upon multiple appeals at once; for
instance, a strong appeal to reason—such as statistical data or verifiable facts—
may also serve to build the ethos of the writer as someone who is an expert
in his or her field. While analyzing rhetorical appeals “separately” may make
for an easy organizational strategy, it often leads to less sophisticated analysis.

Organizing a rhetorical analysis can be challenging, especially for writers
who want to present a more nuanced analysis than the simple “three points”
strategy outlined above. Organization can be based upon the structure of the
text, such as Ally’s strategy to take the reader through a poem in the order that
it unfolds, or it can be driven by the strongest rhetorical appeals that the writer
notices in the text, which is the strategy employed by Kathryn, Cambrie, and
Brittany. In any case, crafting a thesis that outlines what you will analyze and
tell the audience about the text is crucial in keeping your rhetorical analysis on
track, focused, and easy to follow for your readers.

As you read these essays, note the way the student authors highlight aspects
of the texts they are analyzing, showing how these texts work to persuade,
engage, and move a reader to hold a particular point of view or take a certain
action. When you begin to analyze texts rhetorically, you will become more
aware of how you are persuaded, as well as how you use rhetorical appeals in
your own everyday life.
Reflection

The inspiration for this essay came after I listened to famous artist, Halsey, recite a poem about sexual assault at a women’s march. Subsequent to hearing the poem, I found myself listening to it repeatedly and even inviting friends to listen because of its relevancy and ability to empower. Due to the profound effect the poem had on me, I was inspired to rhetorically analyze it and identify how and why the poem resonated so well with not only me, but also the people all over the world who also heard the poem.

The most challenging portion of this essay was organizing my thoughts and then formulating a clear structure for the essay. When a student is passionate about their subject matter, thoughts come easily. However, some ideas can become superfluous and distracting. While revising my work, I had to remove portions of it in order to maintain a clear and concise essay. Fortunately, my peers and professor were able to aide me throughout the revision process, which was a tremendous help. With that being said, the biggest piece of advice I could lend to first year writers is to never be afraid to have someone else read over your work and give you constructive criticism. Peer editing is vital because it allows a fresh set of eyes to look over what you have written and find ways to improve it. By gaining multiple perspectives on an essay, you’re able to ensure your work is not only free of error, but the best that it can possibly be.

A Stand on Sexual Assault

I am listening to the words pour out of my friend’s mouth as she discusses every unwanted and lascivious act that man did to her. The tears are rolling down her neck, the same neck he left purple bruises on. In a few days, her bruised skin will fade away but the images of what occurred that night as she begged him to stop will eternally reside in her memory. This is not an isolated account. One out of four women will experience sexual abuse while in college. Sexual abuse is a tragedy too many young women have to suffer through in silence. On January 21, singer Ashley Frangipane, better known as Halsey, shares her poem addressing sexual assault at a Women’s March in New York. While Halsey’s use of strong language and vivid rape accounts intimidated some, they simultaneously and effectively empowered and educated the thousands of people listening on the sickening topic of sexual assault.

Halsey promptly captivates the crowd with a detailed description of her experience in the waiting room of a Planned Parenthood with her best friend who fell victim to rape in 2009. She continues, revealing her various accounts
A Stand on Sexual Assault

of sexual abuse throughout the years leading all the way up to 2018. These accounts resonate with her audience of young women who have been exposed to sexual abuse or are passionate about advocating for the topic, making her bridge effective. The underlying purpose of the speech was not to persuade but rather to specifically raise awareness and empower women to stand together to end sexual abuse.

One of Halsey’s most powerful aspects of the speech includes her appeal to the audience’s emotions. Halsey includes several personal accounts of the various times she experienced sexual assault growing up. She shares her earliest recollection of assault in the speech stating, “It’s 2002 and my family just moved and the only people I know are my mom’s friends, too, and her son/He’s got a case of Matchbox cars and he says that he’ll teach me to play the guitar if I just keep quiet/And the stairwell beside apartment 1245 will haunt me in my sleep for as long as I am alive.” Including this experience in the poem evokes emotion from the audience, helping strengthen her claim and also connect with her audience. The quote exemplifies that her first experience with sexual assault occurred at a time when she was young enough to still be intrigued by playing with toy cars. This puts an image in the audience’s head of how young and vulnerable she was, evoking feelings of pity that a helpless child was sexually taken advantage of. Halsey continues to appeal to the emotions of her audience by progressing onto a later stage in her life when she once again experience assault: “It’s 2012 and I’m dating a guy and I sleep in his bed and I just learned how to drive/and he wants to have sex, and I just want to sleep He says I can’t say no to him This much I owe to him He buys my dinner, so I have to blow him.” This time the personal anecdote she uses elicits feelings of anger and disgust because now even after she is cognizant of the sexual abuse that is happening, she still is powerless. Halsey includes this account to trigger strong emotional reactions that will hopefully encourage and empower her audience to stand up against sexual assault.

While Halsey’s appeal to emotions is effective, it is also aided by the fact that she had credibility coming into the speech. Halsey is a famous pop singer with a large fan base and a voice of influence among young woman all over the world. Having a celebrity deliver a speech intrigues the audience and gives more value to what is said, making the audience more willing to agree. This type of credibility is situational because it was a predetermined authority she had due to her profession and fame. Many young girls look up to Halsey and will be inspired to take a stand and advocate for the termination of sexual assault after hearing a role model talk about it. Not only did Halsey possess credibility derived from her own character, but also from the cause itself. Halsey proves true to be qualified to speak on the topic of sexual abuse after she shares her various narrations of sexual abuse. The audience is now more likely to agree with and also act on her claim after knowing that Halsey has too herself been abused just like many of the other women listening have.

Collectively Halsey’s use of emotional appeals and her character contribute to her artistic logos used throughout the speech. Halsey uses constructed arguments that appeal to common sense rather than statistical or factual evidence to
fit the style of her poetic speech. Halsey uses constructed arguments to illustrate her disbelief that even celebrities experience sexual assault. Halsey formulates, “I believe I’m protected ‘cause I live on a screen/Nobody would dare act that way around me/I’ve earned my protection, eternally clean.” Here she uses an enthymeme to prove the point that since she worked hard to earn her fame in theory she should be immune from sexual assault. However, it is clearly false for she knows that no matter what a person’s social class or status, no one is protected from becoming a victim of assault. The addition of this enthymeme connects with her audience and reminds them that sexual assault can affect anyone; therefore, everyone should take a stand against it. Halsey continues with this idea and includes current rape allegations of celebrities to exemplify the issue of sexual assault by adding, “But then heroes like Ashley and Simone and Gabby, McKayla and Gaga, Rosario, Aly/Remind me this is the beginning, it is not the finale.” By using current events that are commonly known by the audience she is able to bolster her claim that sexual assault is prevalent in many people’s life and also invigorate her audience to speak out against sexual assault just as many of the celebrities she named have recently done.

Despite her effective elements of rhetoric, critics may disfavor the use of foul language such as f-bombs and sexual references. In one line Halsey exclaims, “And I’ve followed damn near every one of my dreams I’m invincible and I’m so fucking naïve,” which may not have resonated well with all listeners. Other lines gave such vivid details making listeners uncomfortable including when Halsey said, “You see, my best friend Sam was raped by a man/that we knew ‘cause he worked in the after-school program/And he held her down with her textbook beside her/And he covered her mouth and he came inside her.” While some listeners may not have enjoyed the foul language and descriptive imagery used, it was essential in conveying her point and accurately portraying the harsh reality of sexual assault. By making the audience uncomfortable, Halsey is able to aide her audience in empathizing with what sexual assault victims go through. Her speech was in no way mundane or censored, but neither is fighting the war on sexual assault, which is exactly why Halsey’s malediction and inclusion of copious graphic personal accounts were effective.

In essence, Halsey’s rhetorical strategies worked together to deliver a powerful and effective speech. Her goal was to inspire her audience to take a disheartening topic like sexual assault and use it to unite and rally against it. She closes off her speech saying, “For the people who had to grow up way too young/There is work to be done/There are songs to be sung/Lord knows there’s a war to be won.” This quote essentially outlines the underlying message of her speech that women need to come together and speak out against sexual assault in order to make a difference by leaving the audience empowered.

**Work Cited**

Questions to Consider

1. Ally chooses to organize her analysis according to the structure of the poem. She moves through the piece chronologically, analyzing a different section as she goes. However, she is able focus on a different rhetorical device for each section. What are the benefits and challenges of organizing an analysis according to the order of the text? What would be the benefit of organizing an essay topically, by rhetorical device? What’s the best way to organize your analysis?

2. The author of the poem Ally analyzes is Halsey, a famous pop singer. Ally focuses on Halsey's situational ethos—the familiarity and credibility she brings as a public figure. What are the ways an author can develop their ethos, both situational (the experience and knowledge an author brings with them) and invented (the image or persona an author deliberately crafts throughout a piece)? What other strategies can an author use to cultivate credibility, public figure or not?

3. Near the end of her analysis, Ally concedes that some of Halsey’s tactics might be off-putting to some people. How does it impact her analysis to acknowledge that not all audiences will be persuaded by this piece? How is Ally able to refute this possible objection to the poem? How does this counterargument work to bolster Ally’s analysis?
Reflection

As an Illinoian and a supporter of Senator Tammy Duckworth, her campaign against Senator Kirk, and subsequent election, meant a lot to me, thus making the selection of one of her campaign ads to rhetorically analyze a logical choice. As I began working with the ad, I realized that choosing a video to work with was a challenging yet resourceful decision. I found that my biggest challenge was in deciding how to explain what was happening in the video without simply narrating the campaign ad. This was especially difficult to discuss, as many rhetorical elements, such as music, relied on others to be influential on the audience. Their dependence on one another mandated that the elements be discussed in the same paragraphs.

While working on this paper, I developed many drafts beginning with an outline. I’ve found that developing an outline out of bullet points helps when analyzing, as notes taken haphazardly on a subject translate easier to an outline than to a draft. From my outline, I then developed a rough draft that was reviewed by my peers. After peer review, my revision process took the form of making the edits suggested by the reviewers, and then editing about a paragraph a day until the due date. I had a few friends read the essay over and offer additional suggestions a few days before submission, as well as read the essay out loud in its entirety to myself multiple times over the last few days to make final tweaks. Developing a process to edit papers that begins as close to the date it was initially assigned as possible is the best advice I can give to first year writers. Not everyone’s process will be the same, but every process needs time to occur, so try your best to avoid procrastination and give yourself the time needed to develop your best work.

The Rhetoric of a Campaign

While most of the country was distracted by the 2016 presidential election, another influential election was happening in America: 34 seats in the Senate were up for reelection (“2016 Senate Election Interactive Map”). In Illinois, Senator Mark Kirk’s seat was up for grabs and a woman named Tammy Duckworth campaigned fiercely for it. In one of her campaign videos, Duckworth interviewed former Secretary of State, Madeline Albright. During her interview, Albright discussed Duckworth’s plan to help Syrian refugees and how Senator Mark Kirk had been spreading fear in the Senate for years.
The Rhetoric of a Campaign

Duckworth’s campaign ad utilized many audio and visual rhetorical elements, such as music, shifting images, and Albright’s interview, to engage audiences and convince them that Senator Duckworth is the person Illinois wants in the Senate in such turbulent times.

Music guides viewers towards specific emotional responses to this campaign ad and to Tammy Duckworth’s policies. This use of pathos as an undercurrent unconsciously manipulates viewers into reacting according to the campaign’s wishes. Specifically, the music begins with simple, slow, minor chords to allow viewers time for emotional responses to the images shown on screen. This built-in time lets viewers unconsciously reflect on how fortunate their lives in America are. Out of reflection comes hints of guilt and buckets of sympathy for Syrian refugees. There is a slow shift in the music when the ad begins discussing Duckworth’s competition, Senator Mark Kirk. By adding more moving notes and switching to a major key, the mood becomes gradually more militant. As Secretary Albright denounces Kirk’s campaign as “pure demagoguery” the composer adds a slow drum beat. The simple addition of a beat accents Secretary Albright’s words against Kirk making his claims seem even more hateful and biased. This beat grows until it is a constant presence in the music. The rhythm it adds matches Albright’s words regarding Senator Kirk’s exaggeration of facts to get the U.S. involved in Iraq. The tone of the music shifts a third and final time when Secretary Albright begins discussing Tammy Duckworth’s status as a wounded veteran. The composer adds more layers to the music, which creates a mood that raises Duckworth above the competition morally and gives hope to viewers. The affordances of video allow the music in this campaign ad to perfectly match and expand on the tone and message it portrays.

Alongside the music and Secretary Albright’s narration are the images on screen. At first, the images show Syrian communities fleeing with only the clothes on their back, the poverty they live in, and crying children in their mothers’ arms. These images pull at the viewer’s heartstrings and create an undeniable pathos. The ad uses our American values perfectly to encourage action and sympathy at the sight of these images. The video also capitalizes on our human want for truth and for justice by showing quotes from credible news sources about Kirk’s mistake in supporting the war in Iraq. These quotes, pulled directly from recognizable sources, simultaneously give the ad both an ethos and logos appeal. Their inclusion gives viewers a person to blame for the sufferings they had previously seen. The third shift in images shows Tammy Duckworth and American soldiers. The campaign circulates images of Duckworth recovering from her double amputation after fighting in Iraq and of her receiving a Purple Heart for her heroic actions overseas. They also include images of American soldiers playing with Syrian children and of refugees
holding American flags. The inclusion of these images reminds the viewers that these refugees are people and that the United States is a nation of generous heroes. The final image of Duckworth is of her smiling, looking healthy, and ready to represent Illinois in saving refugees.

This campaign ad would not have been effective if it weren't for former Secretary of State Madeline Albright's narration. She carries the ad by adding an immediate ethos to Duckworth's campaign and sense of wisdom behind the arguments. Madeline Albright was the first woman to serve as Secretary of State in the United States. She worked with Bill Clinton during his administration and was a witness to the beginnings of the Iraq war (“Madeline Albright”). She knows all the ins and outs of what happened in D.C. during those years.

However, even without knowing her background, the camerawork perfectly reflects her status. It is positioned a respectable distance from her, only revealing her upper torso and head, and is slightly below her. This positioning gives her the commanding presence she deserves as an authoritative figure. Albright’s interview is interspersed with the previously mentioned images flawlessly. Her main points are punctuated by images of refugees, negative quotes about Kirk, and Duckworth’s sacrifice, while the viewers also get shots of her face. By seeing her facial expression and listening to her words, viewers can infer that Secretary Albright is passionate and confident about what she is saying. Strong language such as, “greatest humanitarian crisis since WW2,” “demagoguery,” and “the war in Iraq was one of the biggest mistakes that this country made” (“Secretary Madeline Albright on Tammy Duckworth”) only add to Albright’s credibility by demonstrating how intelligent and frank she is on these issues.

Overall, Tammy Duckworth’s campaign ad uses ethos and pathos masterfully by matching music, narration/interviews, and images, creating an airtight argument for Duckworth taking Mark Kirk's Senate seat. The rhetorical elements used are timely regarding world issues and circulated widely via internet and television. Duckworth’s campaign took a different path in this video by only examining one of Duckworth’s many plans for her time in the Senate. By isolating one issue rather than looking at a whole plan, the campaign provides voters with real opinions rather than dancing around issues. In the end, the campaign was a success as Duckworth won the Senate seat over Mark Kirk for Illinois and has already begun acting on behalf of the Syrian refugees.

Works Cited


Questions to Consider

1. In her reflection, Kathryn mentions that she chose to arrange the essay according to a specific device or technique used in the political ad, rather than according to the rhetorical appeals ethos, pathos, and logos. How does this organization impact the analysis? What are the benefits of focusing on specific devices, as opposed to a one-appeal-per paragraph approach?

2. This rhetorical analysis focuses on a video, a political ad in particular. What kinds of evidence does Kathryn provide for her claims? How does a visual text operate differently than a written text? What are the difficulties of describing and analyzing visual and aural components? What are some of the more compelling pieces of evidence Kathryn gathers in her analysis?

3. Kathryn mentions that one challenge of a rhetorical analysis is to not summarize the piece—especially of a short multimedia text. How well does this essay walk the line between summary and analysis? When is summary necessary or helpful? How can you avoid too much summary in your analysis?
Reflection

Initially I wanted to write about Black Lives Matter, but after my professor informed me how little information was out there in its opposition from a factual standpoint, I decided to pick a different topic. I had recently been invited by a friend to attend a trauma-informed yoga session at The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Downtown Cincinnati for the exhibit “Staring Slavery in the Face: In Libya and Beyond.” This exhibit discussed modern-day slavery (both sexual and otherwise) in Libya, but while we were there we were allowed to look around at all of the exhibits, including one on modern-day slavery in the sex-trade industry. The exhibit presented both arguments for and against the legalization (i.e., legalizing it is good because it allows for regulation vs. legalizing it is bad because it will make it even more prevalent and the U.S. government will then collect taxes and benefit from women’s oppression). To be honest, I left the museum unsure of which way I felt about the matter, but after analyzing this piece by former president Jimmy Carter, I think that Carter is correct that the solution lies in education and empowerment of the women. I’m just not sure whether that is best coupled with or without legalization.

As for the writing process, I prefer to do a lot more work early on and then narrow everything down. I always start by printing out whatever document I am analyzing and using colored highlighters to divide the topics visually on the paper and annotate it. I reviewed rhetorical devices beforehand to look for them within the piece and began breaking up the paragraphs. I write out a very loose outline on paper and plan topic sentences (which I like to call mini theses), as well as the actual thesis before writing the outline. I write transitional sentences into the outline so that the paper doesn’t feel choppy and awkward after putting them there retroactively. I also went to the Writing Center to verbally process where I wanted my outline to go and to get a refresher on what a good rhetorical analysis looks like. My peer editor in class suggested I break up certain paragraphs to make the paper less difficult to consume. I appreciate the help of other readers because I will always understand my own writing, and it is much better to have someone else point out where you became confusing.
Throughout his political career, Jimmy Carter often attempted to please all people and all sides, flip-flopping from his Civil Rights Activism background to trying to appeal to the conservative vote. After years of mastering this difficult balance, Carter eloquently holds his stance with grace and confidence. Famous for claiming he'd never tell a lie and never avoid a controversial issue, 35 years out of office and Carter is still true to his promises. In his article “To Curb Prostitution, Punish Those Who Buy Sex Rather Than Those Who Sell It” for The Washington Post, Carter boldly lays his cards on the table regarding his opinions on prostitution.

Carter diplomatically questions his bipartisan audience’s victim-blaming method of criminalizing prostitution without affronting or ignoring the opposition, ultimately bolstering the audience’s trust in his knowledge of and capability to comment on the topic despite personal affiliation. Carter structures his thesis purposefully, introducing both his awareness of the larger conversation surrounding the issue, while juxtaposing it with a bold statement of his stance. “I agree with Amnesty International, UNAIDS and other groups that say that those who sell sex acts should not be arrested or prosecuted,” explains Carter, “but I cannot support proposals to decriminalize buyers and pimps.” Here we see the author use antanagoge by placing criticism with compliment to develop an assertive yet considerate and approachable tone. This choice both reflects his political background as 39th president of the United States and his rhetorical proficiency. Furthermore, Carter’s continual recognition of the opposition reveals his expertise and ethos. He says, “Some assert that this ‘profession’ can be empowering and that legalizing and regulating all aspects of prostitution will mitigate the harm that accompanies it.” This quote’s calculated placement at the top of the first body paragraph creates a sense of empathy for the opponent’s opinion.

Carter is able to empathetically appeal for eradicating victim penalization in sex trade by calling upon rhetorical devices, persuasive language, and moving anecdotal evidence. While there is a time and place for a Rogerian argument, Carter intentionally refutes the other side with gusto. After introducing an alternative vantage point in his first body paragraph, the author begins a new sentence, stating, “But I cannot accept a policy prescription that codifies such a pernicious form of violence against women.” The word “but,” traditionally a conjunction in this context, was placed after the period and was the start of a new sentence. This grammatical offense can be assumed to be intentional and stylistic due to Carter’s skill in writing. This, combined with the consonance found in “policy prescription” intentionally slow the pacing of the reader’s consumption of his words and connects to an oral tradition of storytelling.
Carter uses this selection of words to draw attention to his other choices in this sentence, such as “codifies,” and “pernicious.” The connotation of coding implies that these laws rely on secrecy and that they are deeply written into the way our government is or should be run. Additionally, the form of violence was not merely that, but rather described as pernicious, an intellectual and emotional word. Throughout the rest of the commentary Carter describes the experience of prostitutes and the opposition’s proposition as “disturbing,” “abusive,” “painful,” “ naïve,” and claims that this sort of system “demeans the beauty of sexual relations.” This persuasive language helps Carter appeal to his audience emotionally using pathos. It can be extrapolated from his skilled use of rhetorical devices that Carter understood the convincing power of literary methodology. For example, parallelism, such as “Prostitution is not the ‘oldest profession,’ as the saying goes; it’s the oldest oppression” sticks with the reader and grabs their attention. Additionally, amplification, such as “They (sex-trade survivors) told of the abuse they suffered—abuse that should be understood as torture,” uses repetition and redefinition to drive home Carter’s belief.

Finally, Carter’s various nods to slavery are made more effective ten-fold when understood by an American audience deeply guilt-ridden by it. This comparison to slavery is introduced throughout the paper through anecdotal evidence and logical comparison. Carter fears boys will learn that girls are “commodities to be bought and sold” in a society okay with sex trade in which “mutuality is extinguished, and the act becomes an expression of domination.” Language such as “bought and sold” and “domination” call upon deeper meanings when tied to slavery. This is why Carter explains in the next paragraph that sex-trade survivors at a global summit to end sexual exploitation at the Carter Center “compare their movement to the abolition of slavery, an institution that once also seemed like a permanent fixture in society.” These rhetorical devices, persuasive language, and anecdotal evidence allow Carter to emotionally connect with his audience and persuade them to agree with his argument.

The logical nature of Carter’s personality appears in his poignant illustration of cause and effect backed by examples and statistics. Carter helps the audience visualize two potential futures in contrast to one another. The first being one in which full legalization is adopted. Carter predicts that “it will not be the ‘empowered sex worker’ who will be the norm—it will be the millions of women and girls needed to fill the supply of bodies that an unlimited market of consumers will demand.” It is the author’s assertion that it is “naïve” to believe a balance between opposing sex trafficking and a decriminalization of “buyers who create the demand and the pimps who profit from the supply.” Notice, too, that Carter calls back upon the language of commerce in juxtaposition to human life to remind the audience of the absurdity of this claim. The second future is one which Carter informs us already exists successfully in other parts of the world, known as the Nordic Model. Calling attention back to his credibility, Carter explains that in his book A Call to Action: Women, Religion, Violence and Power, he explains a model he believes is “consistent with advancing human rights and healthy societies.” This strategy not only decriminalizes prostitutes, offers them housing, job training and other services, and educates the public
about the dangers of prostitution, but also declares purchasing and profiting from sex as “serious crimes.” Carter uses statistical evidence to defend, with reliable sources, that “In Sweden, demand for prostitution has fallen dramatically under this model. Conversely, Germany and New Zealand, which have legalized all aspects of prostitution, have seen an increase in sex trafficking and demand for sexual services.” By illustrating his opinion and projections not merely through emotive language, but rather also through factual backing, Carter transforms his argument from a good one to a reliable one.

The balanced and thoughtful implementation of emotional appeal substantiated by methodical and logical assertions was the greatest literary strength of this commentary. Carter balanced critiquing his opposition with keeping them on his side in order to have reliability among his audience. Additionally, his syntactical and grammatical choices show his strength as an author and his careful effort to persuade. Finally, Carter’s deep understanding of an American audience and what it means to be deeply guilt ridden by slavery allows him to create a highly persuasive emotional argument by connecting the oppression of women within sex trade to America’s enslavement of African people. Carter created an impactful and effective argument that left the reader not only convinced, but informed.

Works Cited

Questions to Consider

1. Brittany organizes her essay in terms of the rhetorical appeals to emotion and logic; however, she breaks each appeal into smaller devices or techniques. How does focusing on multiple devices as part of a bigger appeal affect her analysis? What are the benefits of organizing the essay this way? What are the challenges? How is Brittany able to tie together these various devices?

2. In her reflection, Brittany admits that she didn’t know much about this topic before reading Carter’s article. How does she use her analysis to better understand the topic? Is it better to write about something you already have an opinion on, or to write about something you don’t know? What are the advantages and challenges of each option?

3. With any analysis, there will always be more devices and strategies employed by the author than you can include in a brief analysis. Brittany identifies a variety of devices used in Carter’s article. How do you make decisions on which devices and appeals to include, and which to leave out? How can you make connections between devices without the paper reading like a list?
Rhetorical Analysis of “Let Women Fight” by Megan MacKenzie

Cambrie Gielow
Rhetorical Analysis

Reflection

When we started discussing Rhetorical Analysis in class, my professor provided us with some ideas of works to analyze but also gave us the opportunity to pick one on our own. I was intrigued by Megan MacKenzie’s article, “Let Women Fight.” I found myself to be really compelled by the argument she was making for women in the military. We were expected to break down the argument the author was making and how the author went about this through different literary techniques. I began by reading Mackenzie’s article multiple times and highlighting and annotating what stood out to me. I made it a point to make note of the different types of techniques she used, such as logos, pathos, and ethos. I used these to make up the bulk of my rhetorical analysis. I found what helped me the most was to focus on analyzing the author’s argument without trying to create my own argument about the topic discussed.

For this essay, I went through a peer review process. This helped me most to make sure I was not straying off topic, as I wanted to stay focused on analyzing the author’s argumentative technique. I would advise to pick a work that interests you, as I found it to be much easier to work on the essay because it was a topic I was interested in. I would also advise first year writers to use their resources as much as possible: the writing center, professors, and peers. These can help make the writing and revising process a little less stressful and help you be proud of the work you are turning in.

Rhetorical Analysis of “Let Women Fight” by Megan MacKenzie

Megan MacKenzie, author of multiple books based on gender restriction in the military and post-doctoral fellow for the Women and Public Policy Program at Harvard University, addresses the U.S. Military’s ban on women in combat throughout her article “Let Women Fight.” Published in the November/December 2012 issue of the magazine Foreign Affairs, she addresses the sexist ban against women participating in direct combat in the military. MacKenzie addresses three main arguments used to support why women shouldn’t be allowed to serve in direct combat: women are not as strong as men, women do not belong in combat, and women would disrupt the cohesion of the so-called band of brothers. MacKenzie goes over specific bans that have been put in place against women serving in the military. She discusses that although there have been advancements, they are few and far between. Overall, MacKenzie
creates a solid argument as to why women should be allowed to serve in direct combat despite gender stereotypes by using credible data and evidence, personal accounts from women, and emotion, also known as pathos.

Throughout her article MacKenzie repeatedly uses data and evidence to emphasize her argument. She begins to discuss the 1984 Women's Armed Service Integration Act, an act that seemingly was working for inclusion of women throughout the military. However, MacKenzie makes a specific point, “The act limited women’s number to two percent of total service members and formally excluded them from combat duties” (MacKenzie 341). This use of evidence reinforces MacKenzie’s argument against the direct combat ban on women. She exposes this act that was seemingly put in to help women in the military when truly it did not. She continues to strengthen her argument by explaining advancements in this act, “The exclusion policy was reinforced in 1981, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the all-male draft did not constitute gender-based discrimination since it was intended to increase combat troops and women were already restricted from combat” (341). Through her use of evidence MacKenzie strengthens her argument and her credibility. She adds depth and background to her argument making her point stronger by using factual evidence, showing her argument is not simply based on opinion. She emphasizes the little change that occurred after this act due to women still being restricted from serving in direct combat. She refers to the decisions that lead to this, “In January 1994, a memorandum from then Secretary of Defense Les Aspin rescinded the ‘risk rule’ barring women from any positions that could expose to direct combat” (342). The use of references to these specific acts and the analysis of the evidence referred to creates a strong and credible argument for MacKenzie, as factual evidence is hard to refute.

MacKenzie strengthens her argument by referencing the work of women fighting against the gender restrictions; some of these women have the experience and credibility of serving in the military themselves. She begins by discussing the work of two women who filed a law suit against the secretary of defense, “Command Sergeant Major Jane Baldwin and Colonel Ellen Haring, both of Army Reserve, filed a lawsuit in May against the secretary of defense and the army’s secretary, assistant secretary, and deputy chief of staff claiming that the exclusion policy violates their constitutional rights” (342). Using these women helps create an even stronger argument because MacKenzie ties in a personal account that women committed against the military because of the gender-based restriction they experienced first hand. She continues by recounting another woman fighting back, “Senator Kristen Gillibrand (D-N.Y) introduced the Gender Equality in Combat Act in 2012, which seeks the termination of the ground combat exclusion policy” (342). MacKenzie expands and strengthens her argument with the use of a separate woman’s work against this restriction by recounting work of a Senator. Through this use of women’s personal experiences she shows that the issues at hand are not simply on paper; they affect women every day, which in turn strengthens her argument. She continues with another example from a woman who actually got the chance
to serve in a combat position after the army opened up positions for women, “Cicely Verstein became the first woman to serve in one of these newly opened combat support roles” (343). By using example after example of women working against these gender restrictions MacKenzie only strengthens her argument. She proves how important this issue has become by showing how these restrictions have personally affected women. Also, by giving these examples throughout the article, MacKenzie shows that the issue at hand affects more women than it may seem to, MacKenzie shows she is not the only one who sees an issue here.

MacKenzie continues to create a strong argument by using emotion, or pathos, to bring the reader closer to the issue. She recounts real life events of women in battle to bring the reader directly to the scene and into the shoes of these women. She quotes a former marine, “Women are being shot at, are being killed overseas, are being attached to all of these combat arms units .... The [combat exclusion] policy has to catch up to reality” (343). By bringing the reader directly to combat with these women she creates a stronger argument. The reader creates a stronger connection to the situation by MacKenzie’s use of this scene, forcing the reader to understand what these women are feeling. She also uses this quote to connect with the previously discussed policies and the importance of their improvement, thus strengthening her credibility and argument. She continues bringing the reader into the shoes of these women by quoting journalist Stephanie Gutmann, “When butts drop onto seats, and feet grope for foot pedals, and girls five feet one (not an uncommon height in the ranks) put on great bowl-like Kevlar helmets over a full head of long hair done up in a French braid, there are problems of fit—and those picayune fit problems ripple outward, eventually affecting morale, and readiness” (343). Even though this quote does not directly come from a woman who has been in the military, it still has the effect of bringing the reader closer to the issue at hand, strengthening the argument. MacKenzie continues her argument by discussing threats that the stereotypes of women endure while serving in the military. Therefore, not only do women experience job restrictions, they are at risk to other disadvantages as well. MacKenzie expands her argument, “Women who choose military service confront not only restricted career options but also a higher chance of harassment, discrimination, and sexual violence than in almost any other profession” (347). MacKenzie uses this to broaden her argument, showing that it is already hard enough for women but these gender-based restrictions make the situation worse. She creates her pathos by incorporating these imminent threats to women. The use of emotion creates stronger argument for MacKenzie due to the reader being pulled in closer to the scene where the issues lie.

Throughout her article MacKenzie repeatedly creates a strong argument for women in the military wanting to serve in direct combat. She uses factual evidence, statistics and emotion to create a strong, credible argument. Her argument broadens as she analyzes data and shows her audience real life accounts of women who have been affected by these restrictions. By referring to these women, she backs up her use of factual evidence and creates a strong argument against the gender-based restrictions. Not only does MacKenzie’s
use and analysis help to create a strong argument, her anticipation of rebuttals does as well. By the end of the article MacKenzie creates a strong and persuasive argument due to her use of evidence, analysis, and real life events. She pulls the audience in and makes them understand the positions these women are forced into by gender bias. Overall, it would be surprising to see if one’s opinions was not slightly swayed by MacKenzie’s well-rounded, credible, and strong argument backed up by evidence and first-hand accounts from experienced women.

**Works Cited**


**Questions to Consider**

1. Cambrie focuses her analysis on specific rhetorical devices, often demonstrating how one device—like factual evidence—can both bolster the author’s argument (logos) and build her credibility (ethos). It can be tempting to divide a paper into the broader appeals of ethos, pathos, and logos. What are the advantages of examining how one device can serve multiple purposes? How might the devices and strategies in a text achieve multiple rhetorical aims?

2. In her conclusion, Cambrie demonstrates how the major points of her essay build on each other, working to create an overall effect, like the pieces of a puzzle. She illustrates how the different devices combine to accomplish the author’s purpose. How do the different devices in the text you’re analyzing work together? How is it more effective to connect your points of analysis to the whole, rather than just identifying or listing rhetorical devices?

3. Each paragraph of the essay includes multiple quotes or examples to illustrate Cambrie’s analytical claims. With each example, she provides some context for the quote, a signal phrase, and follows the quote with an analysis of the examples significance. How does this framing of the examples aid Cambrie’s overall analysis? What’s the impact of using multiple examples for each device, rather than just one? How does this use of evidence both bolster Cambrie’s analysis and add to her credibility?
Although you may find that your classes require you to write different types of research-based arguments, or that your prompts are very different from the ones for which these essays were written, there are elements you will see in these research-based arguments that will help you with your assignments. When reading the essays, notice how the writer sets up his or her argument. Is it engaging to the reader? What kinds of evidence do these writers use? How are sources integrated? Think, too, about how papers begin and end. What draws a reader into a paper? How do papers conclude in a way that is memorable and effective? Each of these essays offers in-depth arguments that rely upon multiple outside sources. Notice how the arguments are arranged. What claims come first, second, and third? Is the order effective? Why might the author have chosen to set up the argument in this manner?

Alex Ackerman, our D’Artagnan Award winner for the Research-Based Argument category, selects a current public controversy for her essay, “The Confederate Flag in the Contemporary United States.” Alex advocates that the Confederate flag should not fly in public spaces, but argues it would be appropriate for the flag to be flown at historical sites or museums. Alex structures her essay as a Rogerian argument, a type of argument that includes counterarguments and seeks to establish common ground between different points of view. In a Rogerian argument, a writer must be able to fairly and impartially articulate stances counter to their own. A Rogerian argument is less about trying to be right and more about creating compromise and understanding. Alex locates research from opposing points of view and explains the different sides of the controversy. She then seeks to locate a solution that will meet the concerns of multiple parties.

Two essays were awarded Honorable Mention in the Research-Based Argument category. The first essay, entitled “Silence and Shame: The Devastating Aftermath of Sexual Assault on Male Survivors” by Manasa Pradhan, takes on the issue of male sexual assault. Manasa’s argument is a definitional argument—that is, it makes claims about what constitutes sexual assault on males, and the particular challenges faced by male survivors. Manasa uses a variety of types of evidence, including anecdotes. In her reflection, she says she had hoped to use more “hard data,” but that there isn’t much on the impact of sexual assault on men. Manasa then located other types of evidence to support her claims.

Our second Honorable Mention essay, “Examining the Origins of Racial Bias” by Camryn Backman, is a causal argument, which means that she focuses on the causes of the issue rather than proposing a solution. In this case, Camryn seeks to find the causes of racial bias in the United States. Beginning with questions about the causes of this situation, Camryn draws conclusions from research about the effects of upbringing and social media on a person’s implicit bias. Camryn frames her exploration in light of recent examples of racial bias from Xavier campus life. Focusing on local events allows her to also look
forward to ways to prevent events of racial bias from occurring. Because causal arguments focus on cause and effect, looking towards a solution is a natural progression.

Our last Research-Based arguments both were composed as part of a series of connected assignments. Brittany Wells’ essay “Breaking News: Oldest Profession Is a Profession” is an extension of her rhetorical analysis earlier in this volume. In her analysis, Brittany examined an editorial on the legalization of prostitution by former president Jimmy Carter. Here, Brittany builds on what she learned from her rhetorical analysis and constructs a position essay on the topic. Wells uses multiple sources to support her claims for legalizing prostitution, citing several other countries’ policies as examples.

Our last essay is a proposal called “Mental Health Matters” by Jonah Nichol. Like Brittany, Jonah’s professor had students write multiple papers on the same topic. Like Manasa, Jonah started by writing a definitional argument on a specific topic before composing a proposal about the same issue—in Jonah’s case, the mental health of college students. The proposals for this assignment were also directed at a particular office on campus. The proposal format gives the essay a more defined structure. For this essay, students also conducted field research by conducting a small survey and interviews. The information gleaned from these sources was then combined with more scholarly research. Jonah’s argument also relies heavily on visual evidence and examples.

In all of these cases, students have produced exemplary work in their first year writing courses and learned skills for research writing and argumentation that will serve them in other courses. Although each discipline has its own set of rules and expectations for writing, many of these skills—such as integrating sources, making claims, using evidence to support one’s position, etc.—will be necessary in a variety of contexts. Your first year writing courses will help you develop these skills more fully so that you are able to utilize them effectively throughout your time at Xavier.
The Confederate Flag in the Contemporary United States

Alex Ackerman
D’Artagnan Award Winner
Research-Based Argument

Reflection

I chose this topic for my research because it was something that related to our class theme of free speech and was something about which I felt passionately. Originally, I was unsure of what approach to take in regards to the structure of my paper; talking with my professor greatly helped me decide on the Rogerian model of argumentation. The combination of discussion with my professor, peer review, and the Writing Center helped me to improve the quality of my paper and to work through the challenges that I encountered, such as the structure of the paper. Due to this project, I now have more knowledge that allows me to be able to support my opinions with research and understand the other side of the argument, even if I disagree with it.

The most important aspect of my research that I would like a reader to take away from my work is the importance of empathy and education in order to open up conversation, and I hope that readers will have a better understanding of this after reading my paper. The most challenging aspect of my research was finding articles to back up my claim that the flag is an inherently racist symbol because there was little research that directly “proved” these ideas. However, I enjoyed reading the scholarly articles and journals that I found, and I would certainly like to continue this research because it is an important part of America’s history and presents many different challenges to address. I think that it is important to consider the fact that it is difficult to admit that something to which you feel connected is inherently racist. I tried to make it so that education was the focal point of my solution rather than pointing fingers at those who feel connected to the Confederate flag because of “pride.” I genuinely enjoyed this assignment, as it pushed me out of my comfort zone to research a topic under the umbrella of free speech, and it helped me to clarify my own point of view through research.

When writing a paper, it is important to seek out one’s professor or help from the Writing Center to improve one’s essay. Furthermore, revision at multiple stages was helpful in refining my writing. The series of steps of the writing process, including an annotated bibliography, zero draft, rough draft, and final draft, were all important components that enabled me to fully develop and expand my research and argument. I often struggle with my first draft, so I had to remember that it is better to have something rather than nothing. For my zero draft, I did not pay attention to organization as much; rather, I focused on writing the important ideas that I wanted to convey. As such, revising was an important part of my writing process, and attending office hours and the Writing Center was valuable to this process. Everyone is at different levels in
The Confederate Flag in the Contemporary United States

In recent years, controversy after controversy related to the Confederate flag and its position in public spaces in the United States has shaken the country to its core, bringing to light the question of its inherent nature as a symbol. While there are a variety of differing points of view regarding the Confederate flag, individuals tend to fall into two key groups: those in favor of the flag and those who oppose the flag and what it represents. This current divide, in part influenced by events such as those in Columbia that gained national attention, has created an elevated sense of tension among a variety of groups and individuals, especially in those who encounter the Confederate flag and other Confederate imagery on a regular basis in their hometowns. Due to these heightened tensions, people have given voice to their strong beliefs by means of protests; both sides participate in these protests, which often contribute to the escalation of tensions. At the root of these tensions and protests is the question of the Confederate flag’s role within the United States as a symbol and its placement in public areas; individuals interpret the significance of flying the flag publicly in a variety of ways, and this interpretation contributes to the conflict of whether or not the flag should be endorsed on a public level. Thus, the very definition of the flag and what it promotes wildly differs across a variety of individuals, making it difficult to reach a single solution and take a subsequent course of action. In order to resolve this dispute, the Confederate flag should be removed from public areas due to the fact that it stands as a racist symbol and as such poses harm to African Americans; instead, it is should be preserved by means of a neutral museum that will present history as it truly happened, as doing so will benefit the country as a whole.

Those in favor of the Confederate flag take the stance that the flag is a symbol of pride and heritage rather than hate, in addition to the idea that it honors Confederate veterans. Ben Jones, chief of heritage operations for the Sons of Confederate Veterans, acknowledges the fact that the flag has been “appropriated and desecrated” by people in order to promote a racist agenda. However, he argues that just because it can be used for racist messages does not mean that the flag itself is inherently racist, a belief shared among many supporters. The commemoration of Confederate veterans is connected to the importance of heritage, given that many supporters of the Confederate flag are descendants of those veterans. Shannon Blume, an attendee of Charleston protests regarding the flag, spoke that “the South” is unfairly “bash[ed]” when the Civil War is discussed due to the fact that “slavery was country-wide;” she believed that the Confederate flag and monuments serve to “honor [Confederate] men”
Another Charleston protestors in favor of the Confederate flag highlighted the importance of honoring Confederate veterans, saying that he was “flying [the] flag for the people who died … for [the] flag” (Goodman). These quotes serve to exemplify the important intersection of heritage and remembrance of Confederate veterans. Numerous Southerners are emotionally invested in the legacy of the Confederacy and thus feel personal connection to the Confederate flag when it is flown in public areas.

Furthermore, those opposed to taking away the flag argue that to remove it from public space is revisionist, since that action would rid American citizens of reminders of their country’s past and the realities of the nation’s history. Belinda Kennedy, the owner of a Confederate flag store in Alabama, states that customers are purchasing the Confederate flag in larger quantities because they perceive that “they are just pushing back at people who are trying to revise [their] history” (Layne). Confederate organizations after the Civil War sought to “see that truth in history shall be taught,” highlighting the importance of the disparities in truth between Confederate and other narratives (Bailey 237). These ideas raise an important point, given that it is important for Americans to remain aware of what happened while slavery was legal so that they can learn from the past. That being said, there are better ways for American history to be memorialized that do not pose as much harm to certain individuals and are still neutral.

In order to begin dialogue regarding a solution to the issue of the Confederate flag, establishing the Confederate flag as a racist symbol will open doors to understanding so that steps toward action can be taken. What the flag stood for during the Civil War to the Confederacy exemplifies the very conflict of the Civil War. The states seceded primarily due to slavery, and this history is embedded in the flag itself (Bailey 240). Thus, Confederate narratives surrounding conversation about the flag, such as the Lost Cause, directly erase the racism connected to the flag’s history, due to the fact that Southerners “fought so that [they] could own slaves” (Bailey 240). The Lost Cause philosophy of the Confederacy shifts the conflict of the Civil War from the issue of slavery to that of states’ rights, thus adjusting the portrayal of the North and South in the war (Horton). This principle is largely historically inaccurate, and acknowledging that the Confederate flag’s origin is tied to a entity who fought to maintain slavery is the first in entering in respectful debate about the flag’s role in public spaces.

Continuing into the twentieth century, many white people used the flag against African Americans during the Civil Rights Movement and later, especially as a means of intimidation. For example, in January 1987, a group of white supremacists wove the flag in the faces of Civil Rights demonstrators while simultaneously “pelting” the protestors with “rocks and bottles” (Martinez 206). These means of intimidation clearly have racist motives meant to discriminate, and the fact that the group of white supremacists waved the Confederate flag at the protestors shows the flag’s inherent connection to racism, hence its use.
by white supremacists. In addition, many modern instances involve the use of the Confederate flag, as seen in the case of Bree Newsome, a woman who scaled a flagpole outside of the South Carolina capitol in order to remove the Confederate flag (Holley and Brown). In another instance of controversy, the KKK protested the removal of a monument of Robert E. Lee in Virginia; the KKK has repeatedly made use of the Confederate flag as part of their agenda of hatred and intimidation (Forman 525). Once racist groups such as the KKK appropriate the flag for their own use, the racist ties of the symbol remain connected; just as the Confederacy desired to uphold the systems of slavery, subordinating black people, the KKK’s ideology promotes this continued subordination in a post-Civil War America. By flying the Confederate flag, the KKK establishes their connection to the Confederacy and its ideals. While it can be argued that only certain people use the flag to represent racism, the inherit nature of the flag, in part due to its origin, reflects racism on its own.

While some people are “traditionalists” in that they see the flag as a reminder of the “southern inheritance of honor and chivalry,” many African Americans are directly harmed by the flying of the Confederate flag in public spaces (Martinez 200). During slavery, there is no doubt that African Americans experienced immense suffering due to their position as subhuman within society. Due to this inhumane treatment, now more than ever it is important to prioritize their voices in order to avoid making the same the mistakes. While the trauma faced by slaves at the time is in the past, the trauma that African Americans face today is not. In a study conducted by the director of the Mount Sinai Traumatic Stress Studies Division, it has been discovered that trauma can be passed down from generation to generation (“Can Trauma”). While the specific study was conducted with the descendants of Holocaust survivors, there is no doubt that African Americans who were former slaves underwent serious forms of trauma, such as lynching, beatings, whippings, and rape, creating an “atmosphere of mistrust, apprehension, and violence” (Schweninger 34–35). Given that many individuals have inherited the effects of trauma from their ancestors, seeing the Confederate flag in public spaces only exacerbates these harmful effects. Seeing the Confederate flag in public areas negatively impacts the emotional health of African Americans in addition to their mental health. One African American woman who attended a protest in Charleston after Newsome removed the Confederate flag said to reporter Amy Goodman that she “know[s] not to ask for … help” if she comes across “a yard with a Confederate flag” due to the fact that she would be putting herself in an unsafe position (Goodman). Newsome herself expressed the need to “bury hate,” of which the Confederate flag is an “endorsement” (Goodman). Prioritizing the voices and values of the Confederacy shows to African Americans in the United States that their safety is not valued. This reminder is painful and very real for many African Americans every day.

However, this pain is not just mental and emotional. Threats and violence against African Americans have taken place at the hands of white supremacists, causing them direct harm. Recently, preceding the white supremacy rally in
Charlottesville, a group of white supremacists beat an unarmed black man, DeAndre Harris, in a parking garage; however, one of the attackers, a member of the hate group North Carolina League of the South, pressed charges against Harris for allegedly harming the attacker (Levenson and Watts). This example demonstrates a larger pattern of violence against African Americans, specifically by white supremacists; for example, the KKK repeatedly lynched countless numbers of black people before, during, and even after the Civil Rights Movement as a means of intimidation and as an assertion of their power (Forman 526). Given this reoccurring problem, it is important to realize the connection between white supremacy and the Confederate flag and their subsequent ties to violence against black people. The physical damage imposed upon African Americans shows that their lives are directly impacted by the ideals originally promoted by the Confederacy and taken into the hands of white supremacists.

Because of the racist nature of the Confederate flag and the inadvertent harm it poses to African Americans, it is necessary to provide a more neutral means of historical documentation that does not glorify the values of the Confederacy. Distinguishing between glorification and objective presentation of information is the first step in reaching a common ground between those of differing points of view. Museums enable education, an important aspect in understanding the past, providing a means by which people can educate themselves about the history of the United States. However, the Lost Cause narrative was in part spread through museums established by the Confederate Memorial Literary Society (CMLS), promoting the values of the Confederacy. When one compares the museums established by the CMLS to more objective museums such as the Smithsonian, one can compare the different narratives presented and how those narratives affect the viewers. For example, the white women of the CMLS established the Confederate Museum in Richmond, Virginia in order to provide a solely Confederate lens regarding the Civil War and history afterwards, primarily focusing on Confederate veterans and the battles in which they participated (Hillyer). Providing a point of view that does not glorify the Confederacy but still shows the Confederate symbols will allow for the education of Americans without upholding the ideals propagated by slavery and white supremacy. This understanding of the past will enable Americans to move forward with regards to race relations. While education and understanding the past is not the only component of moving forward, it is an important step that will create more open dialogue between people of differing points of view.

Due to the harm that the Confederate flag poses to African Americans as a racist symbol, the flag should specifically be removed from public spaces in which a variety of individuals regularly encounter it. For example, in the case of Bree Newsome, the Confederate flag flew outside of the capitol building in Columbia. In this specific case, the Confederate flag should not be flown because it was in a public space, where it caused mental, emotional, and physical harm to African Americans; Newsome, because of the harm it posed to her, took action in a way that she saw fit (Goodman). However, the removal of the flag is not wholly unique. This debate extends beyond simply the Confederate
flag, given that citizens have called for the removal of a variety of symbols tied to the Confederacy. Confederate imagery as a whole includes monuments, highways, and land markers, extending its reach into American culture through the normalization of such representation. Monuments and museums played an influential role in propagating the values of the Confederacy, as they serve to memorialize the leaders of the Confederacy and their ideals. The Daughters of the Confederacy, similarly to the CMLS, established Confederate imagery across the United States as a means to legitimize their values and create a sense of control within the country. For example, the women in the Daughters of the Confederacy placed markers honoring Jefferson Davis along the highway named for him from the east to west coast, sparking much controversy, since the Confederacy’s reach did not spread to the Pacific during the Civil War (Hague and Sebesta 288). This action was intended as an assertion of Confederate ideals, which directly pose harm to African Americans. These steps in maintaining a neutral lens through view people can view the flag will help prevent historical revisionism by a variety of groups and individuals.

However, as previously mentioned, the removal of the Confederate flag and other Confederate imagery is not without controversy, as it has inspired protests from both sides. It is important to consider the fact that the removal of the Confederate flag will benefit those both in favor and against the flag and what it represents. By establishing museums that will provide a neutral lens through which to view the Confederate flag, Southern states will benefit from the revenue that the museums bring. There is no doubt that many people retain a personal connection to the flag due to their heritage and connection to veterans. Even with the removal of the flag from public spaces, those individuals will still be able to fly the flag on their own property. This removal would not affect the ability of people to raise the flag outside their homes, advocating their support for the South. Removing the flag from public spaces would be removing the nostalgic lens with which people view the flag. Placing it in a museum or other vehicle for viewing it from an accurate, historical point of view will enable people to stay aware of the past without glorifying what the Confederate flag stands for. Education about America’s history is imperative, as it will lead to understanding amongst everyone that can open doors to future improvement of conditions across the country. Empathy for a variety of groups of individuals is the first step in order to resolving racial conflict and tension, and misunderstanding history and its vital role in shaping the United States will not enable this necessity. While it is impossible to truly grasp what black slaves experienced under the system of slavery, opening dialogue that will give those who are silenced a voice can create an environment that encourages informed citizenship and understanding amongst all American citizens.
Works Cited


Questions to Consider

1. In her reflection, Alex explains that this is a Rogerian argument, a type of argument that focuses on establishing common ground between differing points of view, in hopes of achieving greater understanding or coming up with a fair-minded solution. What are the results of this approach to argument? How does the essay handle counterarguments? How might a Rogerian argument help an author reach a broader audience? Does the essay convey a sense of dialogue and education, as Alex hoped?

2. Alex talks about writing a “zero draft,” a sort of discovery draft where a writer just gets ideas down on paper. What is the advantage of a zero draft? What strategies are helpful to you as you write arguments? What new strategies have you learned this semester?

3. This essay places the counterarguments before Alex’s own stance. What is the impact of discussing and responding to counterarguments first? How does this structure allow Alex to address her own stance more fully? What other ways could you structure your argument?
Reflection

This particular essay was assigned as a definitional claim essay, and I decided to look into what defined the sexual assault aftermath for male survivors. During my first year, I was very involved in gender-based violence and sexual assault education and activism efforts through groups like BRAVE, Xavier Students Against Sexual Assault, and It’s On X. It was always something I was very passionate about, so I was eager to explore the topic on an academic level. This assignment provided me with the perfect opportunity to do so. As sexual assault is often misclassified as a women’s issue, I wanted to shed some light on a group of survivors that are silenced much too often: men. The biggest challenge with this topic was definitely the lack of research that was available. There were few research studies conducted, and most of the studies had relatively small sample sizes. However, after diversifying my sources and looking into a multitude of testimonies, I was able to find noteworthy patterns in the way men processed sexual assault and how different it was compared to women. These testimonies provided great depth, and although it wasn’t what we might typically consider as “hard data” with statistical figures, it was very relevant and appropriate for my topic. Therefore, it’s very important to know what kind of data you will be looking for and to keep an open mind about what type of data would best support your argument.

As important as it was for me to truly be passionate about the topics I explored and wrote about, making sure you’re clearly communicating your point is just as important. The only way to accomplish this is through intensive revision. After proofreading my essay, our class frequently engaged in many peer review sessions which were so helpful in making sure my essay was cohesive, followed the requirements, and made sense overall. However, to make sure my essays had enough depth and a good stylistic approach, I would frequently visit my professor during her office hours every step of the way. This typically included one visit after I had drafted an introduction and exposition, one after a complete rough draft, and a final visit to go over the my edited final draft. Going to office hours frequently, even if it’s just for a few minutes, allows you to find discrepancies earlier on so there are no major holes in your essay.
further into the revision process. I highly recommend taking advantage of office hours, because having that one-on-one time with an expert is so valuable. I truly believe going to my professor’s office hours made the greatest difference in my quality of writing. I would also advise first year students to really get involved in the writing process by exploring something that truly interests you. There is typically a great deal of autonomy with essays, so take advantage of that and write about something you are passionate about. It makes the process so much more enjoyable and rewarding.

Silence and Shame: The Devastating Aftermath of Sexual Assault on Male Survivors

The notion of acting “like a man” or to “be a man” is nothing that society is unfamiliar with. However, the connotations of assertiveness and dominance that this notion carries do not always align with our true human instincts. For example, in the case of Aiden Cullen, who was injured during a Brentwood basketball game when he lost a tooth, the 8-year-old tossed his tooth to the sidelines and continued to play. As much as his father felt the need to check up on his son, he chose not to when he heard all the other parents commenting on “what a tough kid” Aiden was (Plaschke). Although anyone’s natural instinct would be to have their broken tooth looked at and the wound treated, 8-year-old Aiden, as well as his father, felt pressured to limp along in uncomfortable silence for the sake of the game. This situation is all too familiar for athletes or even those who have ever leisurely played sports. Now let’s apply this idea into the context of sexual assault where the victim happens to be male. Sexual assaults are examined in two phases, “first, the actual violation, then, the second assault experience in which social institutions revictimize survivors” (Washington 713). The aftermath of sexual assault for a male survivor is a unique destructive journey. This “second assault” phenomenon manifests itself in the form of emotional seclusion, loss of masculinity, and the potential development of internalized homophobia, thus also forcing survivors to limp along in an uncomfortable silence.

Before the 1980s, statistics on male sexual assault survivors were almost non-existent because research was primarily based on gendered-constructions towards the issue. Sexual assault was and still is predominantly seen as a crime perpetrated by men towards women. With almost an exclusive focus on the assault and aftermath of female survivors, male survivors continue to be silenced on an institutional level—even though the national statistic today states that 1 in 10 sexual assault survivors are male (RAINN). By turning a blind eye to this nuance of sexual violence, we have allowed for the birth of absurd cultural myths like “men can’t be forced to have sex against their will” and “male sexual
Manasa Pradhan

assault victims are gay” (Coxell and King 382). Figure 1 shows a perfect example of how male survivors feel cornered by societal stereotypes. Specifically, regarding men as being more sexually driven and using this idea to invalidate the experience of male survivors (“Project Unbreakable Entry”). These cultural attitudes construct a double standard for how society responds to such crimes. An example of this cultural standard on an institutional level can be seen in one of the personal testimonies in “Second Assault of Male Survivors of Sexual Violence” by Patricia Washington. Sam, a male rape survivor, tells his story of being brutally gang raped when he was out for a walk. After he was taken to the hospital, he was approached by a resident who didn’t look at his cuts, examine him, or do a rape kit. Instead, she asked him whether the man who was with him was his lover. Without being treated according to any of the guidelines for rape cases, Sam was sent home and was told to “be careful next time” (Washington 722). This incident clearly exemplifies how the resident perceived the horrific incident as just being “rough” gay sex, thus demonstrating our insensitivity and neglect of male survivors. We simply don’t associate the connotation of the word “man” with being a potential victim, when in reality people of all gender identities are affected by this horrible crime. Such mindsets contribute to high reporting barriers, thus making the assault aftermath more isolated and labyrinthine.

Masculine norms play a big role in how survivors perceive their self-worth after their assault. One of the biggest questions that haunts them is “Why wasn’t I able to fight back?” By conforming to masculinity standards, men associate themselves with independent and assertive behaviors. These norms therefore influence the general outlook that men have towards sexual assault and how the blame should be allocated. In an interview, conducted by Heather L. Hlavka from the department of Social and Cultural Sciences at Marquette University, Derek, a potential survivor who doesn’t disclose any information about his supposed sexual victimization, was asked about his general views on sexual assault. When asked about whether he believed it was possible that the victim...
wasn’t able to fight, Derek responded, “No, not that I’m aware.” The interviewer then continues to explain that sometimes the victim is unable to react and then asks Derek who’s fault it is, to which Derek answers, “… the person that it happened to, the person that got touched. Cause they didn’t do it right. They didn’t, well, fight or be strong right away” (Hlavka 488–489). Derek’s responses demonstrate the principle of victim blaming. Regardless of whether he applied these questions into the context of his own potential assault, his attitudes of victim blaming mirror those of society as a whole. These attitudes are especially problematic because it ignores our natural biological tendency to “freeze up” in situations of upcoming trauma—thus indicating the “conflict of interest” between masculine standards and these natural responses to trauma.

The “second assault” phenomenon plays out in survivors’ emotional health as well. Specifically, survivors who suffered sexual violence as children described “the pain of having a secret they could not tell, hiding from the reality of their situation as well” (Forde and Duvvury 304). In this particular situation, bearing the burden of lacking accessibility to resources, survivors are forced into a state of emotional isolation that can lead to severe anxiety and depression. The shame associated with the loss of masculinity survivors experience can also lead to the contemplation of suicide (Forde and Duvvury 305). The biggest and most common emotional side effect is PTSD for all survivors alike. However, the nuance of PTSD and the effectiveness of treatments for it are once again restricted by conformity to masculine norms. The suppression of emotions prevents processing, which is crucial in the treatment for PTSD. Men might also avoid seeking support for their PTSD out of fear of feelings of being out of control resurfacing (Elder et al. 199). This lack of steps taken toward recovery puts the survivor on an island where they feel forced to suffer the pain of their aftermath alone.

Another aspect of the devastating aftermath for a male survivor is the development of homophobia or internalized homophobia for gay survivors. Homophobia might develop regardless of sexual orientation due to the survivor associating sexual assault in general with homosexuality. Internalized homophobia, on the other hand, is defined as being “a set of negative attitudes and affects toward homosexuality in other persons and toward homosexual features in oneself.” This is largely based off of the rape myth about sexual assault being closely connected to or even causing homosexuality (Gold et al. 550). For male survivors who aren’t gay, they might socially isolate themselves and their pain out of the fear of being labeled as a homosexual. For gay survivors, there might also be additional shame and self-doubt associated with whether their homosexuality “caused” them to be assaulted. Their marginalized sexuality might make them feel like they almost deserved to be assaulted because their existence deviates from the norm of being straight. Internalized homophobia can be especially devastating for gay survivors because it goes completely against their natural tendencies by creating a space of fear where there would have normally been attraction or indifference.
When it comes to survivors, gendered constructs of sexual assault make resources more geared towards female survivors, thus pushing away the few male survivors who actually seek out help. In one example, when a survivor sought out a rehabilitation program, he asked his psychiatrist whether he had any experience dealing with male survivors. The psychiatrist’s response was, “No, I have only dealt with female survivors, but what’s the difference?” This greatly angered the survivor (Washington 720). Although many aspects of the aftermath, like PTSD and self-blame, are common among all survivors alike, gendered norms create different nuances when it comes to the emotional burdens they carry. While victim blaming is socially common among survivors of all genders, the approach to allocating the blame on the victim differs. For example, while male survivors are commonly asked, “Why didn’t you fight back?” women are more commonly asked, “What were you wearing?” Although both of these approaches are based on gendered constructs, the questions that women are asked pertain more to the idea of slut-shaming while men are shamed for their inability to live up to masculine norms. These differences make the processing of the society-inflicted shame and the trauma itself quite different. Gendered roles also make males less reluctant to seek support services in the first place; therefore, there is an additional masculine conformity barrier that needs to be broken down before the survivor can process their experience and heal.

The survivor experience is unique for every individual. As tragic as the aftermath journey is, every individual is unique, which makes their support needs unique as well. However, recognizing that everyone’s trauma is valid is of utmost importance. Whether in a social or institutional context, male survivors clearly lack a voice. By feeding into a culture where victim blaming prevails with distorted ideals of masculinity, we invalidate our male survivors and push them further into isolation. Even on Xavier University’s campus, although there are male survivors, the sexual assault support group at the McGrath Health and Wellness Center currently remains a women-only group. This portrays, on even the smallest institutional level, how men face high barriers to seeking help. Especially in college, when social norms to “grow up” and “be a man” intensify, male survivors of sexual violence are choked by all the shame associated with not being able to live up to such normalized standards—ultimately dragging out their eternal journey of devastation … as opposed to seeking out specialized support services to make the transition from victim to survivor.

Works Cited


“Project Unbreakable Entry.” Project Unbreakable. Tumblr, projectunbreakable.tumblr.com/.


Questions to Consider

1. In her reflection, Manasa mentions that she at first was searching for “hard data,” but found that there is a lack of it on the topic of male sexual assault. She recommends looking for a variety of types of evidence, as she did. What types of evidence does Manasa use instead of hard data? What kinds of evidence are available to you in developing an argument? How do different types of evidence function? How can you use different types of information to work together to support your claims?

2. When composing an argument, Manasa recommends selecting a topic that you are passionate about. How can your passion and energy for a topic aid in the writing process? What are the benefits of writing about something you care about? What are some of the challenges? How can you be aware of these potential pitfalls?

3. Manasa describes this essay as a definitional argument. How does a definitional argument function differently than, say, a pro-con argument? What is similar? What different types of claims and evidence does a definitional argument rely on? What kinds of topics lend themselves to definitional arguments? Can you identify some specific controversies where definitions are crucial to understanding the claims of different perspectives?
Reflection

For this particular paper, my class was instructed to research either the causes or effects of a social justice issue. Coincidentally, I had just attended Michael Brownstein’s lecture about implicit bias at Xavier shortly before we were given this assignment; therefore, I knew that there was so much information I could delve into within the context of implicit racial bias. Writing my essay about racial bias would also help introduce me to some of the literature related to my major (psychology) and help me learn more about a social psychological topic that interested me.

To compose my paper, I started by researching the causes of racial bias. I looked for peer-reviewed articles in well-known sociology and psychology journals and spent time stringing together my ideas until I had formed a coherent outline. Then, I tried to find more personal narratives of people’s experiences with racial bias in order to make my essay more persuasive. Finally, I wrote my paper and revised it several times. I always made sure to print out each draft, which I think is helpful in order to mark areas that need improvement. Whenever I suffered from writer’s block, I made sure to go to my professor’s office hours for help. I also had my paper peer-reviewed during class.

The biggest challenges that I faced while writing were adding a motif and sentence flow. Incorporating a motif in a paper was something that I had never done in high school, and it was a challenge to think of ways to creatively sprinkle one throughout my paper. After brainstorming, though, my motif became more clear. Also, when I write, I sometimes tend to draw out my sentences when I could easily get the same message across using fewer words. Reading my essay out loud to myself definitely helped me rethink some of my sentences and fix grammar mistakes.

My advice to first years is never be afraid to reach out to your professors when you need help. It might seem uncomfortable the first time you go to office hours, but they are there to help you! My writing improved immensely just from talking through my paper with another person. There are also other valuable resources on campus, such as the Writing Center, that can help you edit your paper or brainstorm ideas. Taking advantage of these resources will help you become a better, more confident writer.
Examining the Origins of Racial Bias

A brisk, autumn wind swirled through Xavier University’s campus the evening of October 26, 2016. As students completed their homework, one student was sending a shocking Snapchat to her friends that soon rattled the campus. The anonymous white student sent a picture of herself with a blackface, captioned with “Who needs white when black lives matter” that soon circulated through the school, wreaking havoc. The girl’s picture was only the start of the sandstorm, as students and teachers woke up the next morning to see a skeleton, clad in traditional African garb, being lynched in a Fenwick dorm window. A former Xavier student, concerned about the situation, wrote, “I am hurt, disappointed, and disgusted by events and pictures that have surfaced from my former home … [This is] sending a clear message to anyone on Xavier’s campus who is not white” (Sommerfeldt). Though the sharp chill of racist messages has slowly dwindled, the Xavier blackface and lynching event is still widely discussed. During orientation, first year students started their Xavier careers by hearing a first-hand account of the emotional effects of the chilling 2016 event. As disappointing as it may be to see the need to discuss racism on campuses, administrators need to initiate conversation about injustice. Racism against African American students on college campuses is perpetuated by racial bias. Students’ upbringing can expose them to racial bias that leads to racist tendencies. Similarly, the lack of personal relationships with people of different races can affect the way a student sees others. As the most tech-friendly generation yet, social media plays an increasing role in the spread of racial bias. Creating a campus that recognizes the problem of racial bias and works to implement programming to help prevent it should be of upmost importance to college administrators.

The term “racial bias” refers to “the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner” (“Understanding”). Racial bias was first studied in the 1970s with the Implicit Association Test (IAT). During an IAT, a person’s automatic associations between concepts are recorded. A score is calculated from these measurements that corresponds to a person’s level of bias towards a particular subject. For example, a faster speed in associating the word “black” to “lazy” and “white” to “hardworking” may imply racial bias towards blacks and an unconscious belief that African Americans are really less diligent than whites (“Implicit Bias”). Unfortunately, racist beliefs seem to rustle college campuses across the country. Consider preconceived judgment for a minute. I know that I get nervous when meeting someone for the first time. I always wonder what they’ll think of me, but I never am concerned about whether or not I will be judged solely on my race. However, some African American students do worry about this sharp judgment. Even Martin Luther King Jr. referenced this concept in his famous “I Have a Dream” speech by saying, “I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character” (“Judged”). Racism does not agree with the values of any school, but it still occurs. However, do administrators
just want to stand by and watch this blatant, crackling racism happen, or do they want to initiate conversation about racial bias in attempt to create more transparency on campuses? Racial bias cannot be stopped until it is brought out of the darkness and diverse opinions are recognized and welcome.

A child’s upbringing implants the unsettling seed of racial bias that can lead to racist tendencies in the future. Parents usually nurture these ideas while their child grows older. In a personal narrative, Charles Dew discusses growing up in the rural south. He describes his bitter racial prejudice as “a process of osmosis [more] than anything else. I learned from watching how others around me behaved, starting with my own family.” Charles’ racist tendencies only ended during his time at Williams College, when he realized that he was not any different from his African American classmates (Dew). Charles Dew is not the sole person affected by his surroundings. A study was performed in order to find the correlation between upbringing and racial bias. A survey that measured the attitudes towards African Americans was given to 89 parents and their children, the majority of whom were white. Parents were given six statements and asked to rate their level of agreement with them on a scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Children were asked to complete a racial IAT test. The results showed that children who were close with their parents tended to have very similar survey answers to their parents and vice versa (Sinclair, Dunn and Lowery). One conclusion is that the turbulence of racial bias is learned by children’s parents. Figure 1 illustrates a tweet from former President Obama in which he quotes Nelson Mandela and says, “No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin or his background or his religion.” The attached picture shows President Obama smiling at three children happily standing together. At what point does this parental influence take over and unity among children becomes severed? Children’s understanding of other people is carried into college, sometimes fostering a division and lack of cohesiveness between students. Administrators can acknowledge this crisp division and form core classes and programs that tailor to not just the white majority. An open dialogue between faculty, students, and administrators can help address racial bias.

A lack of personal relationship with people of varying races can contribute to racial bias among college students. Ijeoma Olou acknowledges this problem in a personal account and expresses how misunderstood she feels as a black woman growing up in a predominately white society. She writes, “While I …
know enough about white culture to write a book or two on whiteness … y’all know almost nothing about us.” She argues that if whites made more of an effort to learn about black culture, whites would be more aware of their own racial biases (Olou). Olou’s opinion is proven by research studies, including one that focused on different social groups defined by race. In this study, participants were shown pictures of a white person and then a black person. The subjects’ fear response was recorded. Then, participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire regarding the level of contact they had experienced with people of the opposite race. Results indicated that individuals are more likely to associate with the image depicting their race and that the fear response associated with people of varying races may be reduced by positive contact with ethnically diverse people (Olsson, et al). I might have had this same fear response if I had not gone to school in the city of Buffalo, New York. Growing up, I lived in a predominantly white suburb and had little interaction with any other races. However, during high school, I became friends with an exchange student from South Korea and an African American girl from the inner city with whom I could still discuss my love for Ed Sheeran comfortably. I discovered that we are all more alike than many people believe. Ultimately, the best way to decrease such unsettling racial bias is to have students interact with people of all races. Walls can be broken down by starting a conversation, and administrators need to keep this in mind in order to properly address racial bias on campus.

There is no doubt that the present generation is the most tech-friendly one yet; however, with this increase in technology comes an increased gust of racial bias. Years ago, if someone was in southern Kentucky, they were confined to expressing their crisp ideas in their own area. Today, people can take their racist platforms nationwide. Figure 2 shows a portion of a conversation two high school students had on Snapchat, a social media app where users can send chats and pictures to each other that “disappear” within twenty-four hours. In the chat, the students used derogatory language towards African Americans and referred to them as slaves. One student said, “Just jet on over to Africa and smuggle a new one over,” while another student responded, “I’m punishing him,” with an image of a slaveholder whipping his slave (Panoo). This language is extremely concerning, and social media makes it easier for these ideas to spread. Snapchat is not the only platform that students are using to express racial bias. In 2012, a study was done that examined the prevalence of racial slurs used on Twitter per day. Researchers examined all public tweets over a nine-day period for any derogatory remarks. The study concluded that there are approximately 10,000 uses of racist comments per

![Figure 2: Racial Bias on Snapchat.](image-url)

A Snapchat shows disturbing language used to describe blacks. Data Source: Panoo
day on Twitter. Of the ten most common words was the “n-word” used to
describe African Americans (Bartlett, et al). Clearly, racial slurs and racial bias
are common on social media platforms. Administrators should be concerned
with fostering a different growth in student’s attitudes and not accepting blatant
racism on campuses.

Despite the clear evidence in our everyday world that minorities are greatly
discriminated against, reverse racism is still commonly believed to be a legiti-
mate issue by whites. Some students and administrators, for example, think that
African Americans are just as biased to whites as whites are to blacks, making
racial bias not just a “white issue.” A poll conducted by the Public Religion
Research Institute in 2017 found that “almost 6 in 10 whites (57%) and two-
thirds of white working-class Americans (66%)” see discrimination against
whites to be as big of a problem as racism against African Americans (Struyk).
However, a study regarding white and black students demonstrates that racially
biased attitudes are not held by African Americans as much as they are held by
whites. Participants were asked to take an IAT test to measure their implicit bias
toward people of various races. White children showed “a robust in-group bias”
while black students showed virtually none (Newheiser and Olson). From these
results, African American students are seemingly less biased than their counter-
parts, meaning that reverse racism is essentially insignificant, at least
in the early years of life (Newheiser and Olson). Figure 3 portrays a car-
toon demonstrating the reverse racism argument. While the white
student has many advantages on
his side, he still points out the one
policy that perhaps gives African
Americans some advantage: affir-
mative action programs. However,
whites may fail to realize bountiful
privileges. Reverse racism can be
largely disproved, and, therefore,
cannot be used as a blanket argu-
ment against the discussion of
racial bias.

Racism is alive, as evidenced
by the brewing of white supremacy
rallies happening down south. The psychological impacts of racial bias are long
reaching and affect nearly every aspect of life from education to salary to safety.
College administrators need to consider their role of addressing this racial bias
that exists on their own campuses. In order to provide safe and healthy cam-
puses with students who work well together in projects such as research and
volunteering, administrators need to be transparent about racial bias and its
effects. Until racial bias is taken seriously in our culture, racism against African
Americans will keep causing turbulence.
Works Cited


“Understanding Implicit Bias.” *Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity*, Ohio State University, kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/research/understanding-implicit-bias/.
Questions to Consider

1. Camryn composes a causal argument, an argument designed to investigate the origins of a phenomenon or trend. What are the main reasons Camryn gives for racial bias and the racist incidents on campus? Why is it important to understand the causes of something? Proposals are a different kind of cause and effect argument—a forward-looking causal argument. How can a good causal argument work to set up a proposal? How is Camryn’s argument poised to develop into a proposal?

2. In her reflection, Camryn mentions first conducting scholarly research on her topic, and then searching for narratives of individual experiences with racial bias. Camryn then employs these multiple kinds of evidence in her argument. Identify several types of evidence that she uses. How effective is each piece of evidence? How do the different types of support work together to bolster her claims? How does using more than one type of evidence affect the overall argument?

3. In her reflection, Camryn describes her writing process, as do the other student authors in this volume. What are you learning about writing as a process? How has your writing improved as a result? What steps of the writing process are new to you? Which are most helpful? What strategies are not as useful for you? What aspects of writing as a process will you take with you into the rest of your college writing?
Reflection

My professor, Rita Rozzi, offered infinitely helpful tools, worksheets, and hours of outside instruction. More than any other tip I can provide, I recommend utilizing Xavier’s resources.

When developing the idea for both papers [her rhetorical analysis—also in this volume—and this research paper], I selected a topic I felt I didn’t know much about. My professor asked us to pick a topic we felt passion for. Little did we know she’d later make us argue against it! Previous to writing the papers, I was convinced that sex work was sexist, undignified, and objectified women, undermining their value and turning them into a product for consumption against their will and best judgment. As a pro-life feminist, I find myself at a crossroads on many similar issues regarding dignity, human rights, and women’s choice. I found, however, that looking at the facts of the issue as opposed to my personal choice changes the perception of the issue.

I used The Writing Center twice for every paper I wrote, once to plan and outline, and once before submitting the paper for clerical and grammatical checks. I begin by creating a rough outline on paper, and when I am ready to begin conducting research, I physically print out all of the scholarly articles, journals (I suggest JSTOR), and op-eds on the subject matter, and ensure there are approximately 30% from the opposing side. This adds credibility and variety to your sources. Once printed, I use six different colored highlighters to read and highlight different relevant aspects of the paper such as ethos, logos, pathos, any rhetorical devices, and one color per body paragraph theme.

After writing my paper, I email it to the professor and ask her to look over it briefly for any obvious errors such as formatting. Some professors are willing to do this if you put in the effort to have the paper done a few days early—make sure to check first. I do write my thesis first, but after writing the paper I place it over each paragraph I write to check each sentence for relevance to the thesis. My greatest advice is to read your papers out loud to a friend or preferably at The Writing Center. Many faculty and staff are more than willing to help you, but you must first help yourself by being timely, grateful, and hard working!

Breaking News: Oldest Profession Is a Profession

Prostitution has often been referred to as the oldest profession, and while many have argued that a job without dignity isn’t a job, others have argued that without the legalization of prostitution, it is precisely the limitation of their rights that undermines a prostitute’s dignity. The legalization of prostitution maintains the humanity and freedom of sex work, a noble desire mirrored by its opposition,
with a more effective methodology of obtaining it. Ensuring safety, preventing financial exploitation, and asserting the rights of workers is only possible in a legalized system where the government involves workers in creating and maintaining the regulation of the sex work industry. The oppression model, one which claims sex workers are oppressed, unhappy individuals, would have you believe that prostitution should not be legal because it would decrease public safety, undermine dignity of the worker, and oppress women by empowering male sexual exploitation of women. However, legalizing prostitution would allow for more safety and regulation of crime and public health, fuel a healthy economy, and preserve personal freedom and liberty.

Legalizing prostitution ameliorates public health by providing access to regulation and resources. The oppression model claims that “victims” enter the field at 13–14 years of age, engage in “survival sex” (sex sold out of “dire necessity or to support a drug habit”), and that they risk contracting sexual diseases and abuse from the buyer (Weitzer, “Prostitution” 28). These myths are rooted in studies and figures collected from street prostitutes, a group that makes up only 20% of all prostitutes (Weitzer, “Prostitution” 29). Additionally, Weitzer cautions against these statistics in his article “Prostitution: Facts and Figures,” that “random sampling of this population is impossible” (“Prostitution” 29). Indoor workers, who make up the bulk of sex workers, are cited as having lower rates of childhood abuse, are older when entering the field, are more educated, and use softer drugs. “Research finds that many indoor workers made conscious decisions to enter the trade,” Weitzer says; “they do not see themselves as oppressed victims and do not feel that their work is degrading” (“Prostitution” 29). One may object to Weitzer’s argument, as he has no first-hand experience as a sex worker, but his decades of research included direct accounts from women who “do not believe the oppression model applies to them” (“Prostitution” 29). Sex work is diverse, and thus so too are its needs. Generalizations in statistics have long obfuscated the truth about sex work, ignoring that it has dignity and provides opportunity when legal and regulated.

Despite claims that legalizing prostitution empowers a criminal underworld, decriminalizing sex work reduces crime by redefining the role of police as protectors of justice. The key element of legalizing prostitution, Weitzer argues in “Legalizing Prostitution: Morality Politics in Western Australia,” is that “the ability to operate legally can empower workers to report victimization to the police, whose role can be redirected to safeguarding workers instead of arresting or harassing them” (90). Legalizing prostitution redefines the police’s role in the sex work industry and returns them to being a guardians from injustice, rather than an arm of a legal system that is ineffective at protecting sex workers. Singer points out that “no one wants to legalize coercion, violence or fraud in the sex industry” and goes on to assert that criminalizing sex work makes it “much riskier for sex workers to complain to the authorities when they are enslaved, beaten or cheated.” Decriminalization led to better health for sex workers in Australia where Singer cites The Sex Workers Outreach Project who
Brittany Wells

asserts that decriminalization “led to better health for sex workers” by providing access to the protections of the labor market, “including insurance, occupational health and safety programs and rules of fair trading.” Any objection to a sex worker’s safety in the oppression model is eliminated when we return respect and dignity to the occupation and make it legal for women who are caught in sex trafficking to free themselves.

Furthermore, the sex industry would improve the economy by increasing tax revenue if it were a legal, de-stigmatized occupation. Those who oppose the decriminalization of prostitution would argue that prostitution shouldn’t be seen as a taxable income because it isn’t a job to begin with. However, according to Ronald Weitzer in his piece, “Legalizing Prostitution: Morality Politics in Western Australia,” in the sex work paradigm “the actor is treated as a worker selling services, and no presumptions are made about any inherent features or deeper meanings of this activity” (90). This is antithetical to the oppression model which claims that “Prostitution is not the ‘oldest profession,’ as the saying goes; it’s the oldest oppression” (Carter). Sex work is a dignified and empowering occupation when legalization and regulation is introduced.

Legalizing prostitution allows women to reclaim their sexual power as a financial tool, enabling them to get themselves off the street. Not only is sex work a valid career choice, but it’s one that Jeanne LoCicero and Udi Ofer argue is “one of the more stabilizing and accessible ways to support yourself and your family.” Sex work is often described as a last resort, and while many suggest lessening the impact of factors that may lead someone to enter sex work, the myths that anyone who entered sex work did it out of coercion simply aren’t true. Men have profited off women throughout reproduction history, exploiting women’s femininity and consuming her power. The assumption that selling sex oppresses women assumes that the woman had less consent to give in the first place. By reinstating choice without fear, women reclaim the power that androcentric historians, through a patriarchal lens, assumed could only be used to oppress them. Peter Singer tells us that many prefer the sex industry’s greater pay and shorter hours. He goes on to say that many view their work as requiring “greater skill” and offering “even a more human touch” than alternative occupations. The beneficiaries don’t stop at those directly involved in the sale and receiving of sex; prostitution is worth more than $14 billion in the U.S. (Moran). Calling the sale of sex “sex work” not only more adequately encompasses the diversity of the industry, but also creates more dignity and verbally decriminalizes prostitution. It is essential that sex work’s economic value be recognized as a motivation for its decriminalization, destigmatization, and legalization.

America is more than its economy; criminalizing sex work undermines the human rights of the American people. In a country whose battle cry is freedom, why don’t we allow consenting adults to make their own decisions? Without legalization, the sex workers’ ability to enforce regulation and assert their needs for safety is impossible. Consensual sex work in the United States has been
confused with sex trafficking by those who subscribe to the oppression model, and “the stigmatized and criminalized nature of sex work routinely forces sex workers to operate at the margins of society in clandestine and dangerous environments with little recourse to safety or state protection” (“Amnesty International”). LoCicero and Ofer echo that this stigma “needlessly puts adults in peril” and assert that “the government should not throw consenting adults in jail for private sexual conduct.” It is precisely the fact that prostitution is illegal which undermines consent. According to LoCicero and Ofer, “studies suggest that ending sex and other labor trafficking would actually be easier if the sex industry were decriminalized.” In a society where their work is illegal, it is the legal repercussions that limit a prostitute’s freedom of choice whether to remain in the business or report trafficking and child exploitation.

Sex work is morally neutral, but has the ability to empower women. The idea that sex work is “sinful and evil, inherently exploitative and abusive of women, and detrimental to society,” as Weitzer states Australians’ opposing legalization claimed, is rooted in sexual shame and embodies anti-sexual rhetoric used to prevent women from using their bodies in ways that benefit them rather than the men who profit sexually or monetarily off of them (“Legalizing Prostitution” 89). Sex work, in a legalized and regulated context, shatters the myth that women cannot enjoy making money off of their sexual skills. The fear of women fully realizing their sexual potential is rooted in misogynist ideology, not in female empowerment. The very idea that women require full protection rather than empowering regulation encompasses this antiquated ideal.

The Dutch Policy on Prostitution is the culminating proof that legalizing prostitution works. The brothel ban was lifted in 2002, but “no legislation governing prostitution was introduced” at the time (Netherlands 1). The bill outlined as the solution to this is the legislation now instated in the Netherlands. Working areas are required to provide condoms, running water and a panic button, and to govern safety. “Regulations on the operation of brothels govern the position and status of sex workers,” according to The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “protecting their physical and mental integrity and prohibiting forced prostitution, the employment of minors or people without valid residence permit” (Netherlands 2). The regulations also limit the nuisance in the neighborhood feared by the opposition. The foundation of the Dutch policy is based in belief that “strengthening the position of women is the best way to prevent sexual violence” (Netherlands 14). The Nordic model to “make selling sex legal but buying it illegal” has been accepted by most scholars as the best solution to decriminalization (Moran). According to Carter, after adopting this methodology, Sweden’s demand for prostitution has “fallen dramatically” while Germany and New Zealand, who legalized all aspects of prostitution, have seen an increase in sex trafficking. A difficult balance between legalization and regulation can occur, but only after decriminalization occurs. The regulation
and protection the Dutch Policy allows mirrors the Nordic model, with some nuance making it a better approach. Under the Dutch policy, no one is required or offered by employment offices, after being unemployed, to take a position in sex work. This is the main difference between the Nordic model and the Dutch Policy (Netherlands 13). An argument for full legalization is flawed, but a Dutch model educates sex workers and their employers on social insurance, creating lasting justice.

The legalization of prostitution is the solution to solving the vices that accompany its virtue. Given that “prostitution takes diverse forms and exists under varying conditions, a complexity that contradicts popular myths and sweeping generalizations” (Weitzer, “Prostitution” 30), the solution must be individualized and account for storytelling and conversation. In a society that criminalizes prostitution, the endangered sex worker cannot access legal aid without incriminating herself. Drenched in stigma and shame, the only way to free women who feel confined by sex trafficking or coercion is to invent a new society in which it is safe for them to talk and feel respected doing so. Legalizing prostitution is essential to our country’s safety, economy, and freedom.

Works Cited


Questions to Consider

1. This essay is an extension of Brittany’s rhetorical analysis, included earlier in this volume. How can you see the ideas from this paper developing in her analysis? How did she elaborate on the ideas presented in her analysis? How does the additional research inform and extend her stance? Sometimes professors will ask you to stick with a topic for one or more papers. What’s the benefit of exploring a topic across several assignments?

2. In her reflection, Brittany mentions that the process of researching this topic—both for her analysis and for this research paper—caused her stance to change. How can thorough research help inform our opinions? Why is it important to research stances that are different from ours? Why is it important to examine credible news sources that may not share your views? How can we learn from the opinions of others?

3. Brittany articulates a clear stance on a controversial topic. Does she persuade you, or at least get you to consider her stance? What evidence was most compelling? Which sources seem most credible or authoritative? What points made you reflect on (or rethink) what you thought you knew about the issue?
Reflection

When brainstorming my proposal, I thought about issues that face college students, not only at Xavier, but also at other institutions around the nation. After searching for such issues, research clearly showed that mental health problems are plaguing college students across the United States. This discovery allowed me to land on my topic of mental health.

The hardest part of writing this proposal was writing in a professional format that appeared skillful, concise, and clear. In order to incorporate these important elements within my paper, I regularly worked on the proposal with my peers, at the Xavier Writing Center, and with my instructor, Professor Lyon. More specifically, I would consistently and thoroughly read my paper out loud to these individuals, making it easier to hear the coherency of my ideas, as well as identify the errors within my paper. If there were any advice that I could give to first year students, it would be to utilize the office hours of your professor. They will help you become a better writer and that is what they are there for! I would also recommend utilizing the writing center. Finally, never underestimate the importance of the revision process!
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Abstract

The purpose of this proposal is to raise awareness of Xavier University’s mental health resources among first-year students. The main point of this report is to include a mental health installment in Xavier’s GOA program, which will inform students of the mental health resources available to them. To gather data for the proposal, secondary research was conducted using Xavier’s online library. Next, students were surveyed in Buenger Residence Hall, and two GOA committee members were interviewed on the implementation of the mental health module. From the data collection process, it was found that Xavier is ineffective in informing first-year students about mental health resources. Furthermore, the data revealed that Xavier students, as well as Xavier’s GOA committee, would be receptive to a mental health GOA installment. These results indicate that Xavier needs to advertise their mental health resources to first-year students. Thus, this proposal recommends a mental health installment in the “personal wellness” GOA module. This proposal, called “Mental Health Matters,” will not only be easy to implement, but will be financially feasible. Ultimately, this mental health installment will help students reach mental health resources faster, thus putting them in a better position for success.
Mental Health Matters

GOA
First Year Journey Program

Introduction

Mental health issues are becoming an epidemic among college undergraduates, and Xavier University students are not immune. As a result, Xavier offers a wide variety of mental health resources to their students, including mental health clubs, wellness centers, and support groups. However, many students are unaware of the mental health resources being offered to them. Subsequently, the purpose of this proposal is to raise awareness of Xavier’s mental health resources among first-year students. Given the purpose, the main point of this proposal is to include a new module in Xavier’s GOA program, which will inform first-year students of the mental health resources available to them. This proposal will be beneficial, as mental health issues amongst college students are becoming increasingly common. A nation-wide survey conducted by the American College Health Association reveals that the number of college students with diagnosable depression is on the rise, and has increased 6.4% since 1998, as shown in Figure 1 (Buchanan 21). Moreover, this survey shows that 43% of respondents have felt “so depressed it was difficult to function,” as shown in Figure 2 (Buchanan 22). Clearly, mental health issues are plaguing college students across the country.

Figure 1: ACHA Survey Results
Number of college students with diagnosable depression has increased

Figure 2: ACHA Survey Results
Students who felt “so depressed it was difficult to function”
Background Information

Prior to presenting the proposal, mental health issues must be defined. First, mental health issues increase anxiety in college undergraduates. This criterion is further supported by research at a small liberal arts college, which shows a significant relationship between depression (a common mental health issue) and anxiety (Rawson et al. 324). Moreover, mental health issues propagate negative/harmful thinking in college-aged students. One study of 1249 first-year college students proves this point. In the study, researchers found that suicidal ideations in first-year students, as well as low perceptions of social support, are strongly related to depression (Arria et al. 238). Finally, mental health issues prevent students from fulfilling their academic potential. Research conducted at the University of Wisconsin-Madison proved this when they found depression to be strongly correlated with decreased academic productivity and performance (Heiligenstein et al.).

Mental health issues have major impacts on college students. Research shows that these issues, specifically depression, are directly associated with decreased GPA, increased alcohol consumption, increased self-injurious behaviors, and withdrawals from college (Buchanan 21). In sum, mental health distress among college undergraduates jeopardizes student safety and success, and ultimately harms university image. The remainder of this report will identify and describe a methodology, data summary, and a data analysis. Each of these aspects will serve as a precursor to the proposal’s final recommendation: implementing a mental health module into Xavier University’s GOA program.
Methodology

Prior to the proposal, data collection was undertaken with the help of Xavier University resources, students, and staff members. This process of data collection began by gathering secondary data using Xavier’s online library in order to attain background information on mental health issues. After gathering secondary data, a student survey was prepared. This survey was completed by ten first-year students in Buenger Resident Hall, and functioned to measure their awareness of on-campus mental health resources. Finally, after student surveys were conducted, GOA committee members Ms. Mary Fugate and Ms. Sarah Brinker-Good were interviewed on the potential implementation of a mental health module. This data was then used to develop the proposal. The order of this methodology can be further seen in the figure below.

![Figure 3: Chronological Steps of Data Collection](image)

The data, although useful to the proposal, has limitations. First, the student survey is limited by a small sample size of only ten students. Additionally, the results to survey may have been affected by students’ negative attitudes towards Xavier’s GOA program.
Data Summary

The following is a summary of the major findings gathered from conducting secondary research, student surveys, and faculty interviews.

Secondary Research

Extensive secondary research revealed mental health programs that are successful in raising mental health resource awareness among first-year college students. For instance, Pace University, an institution accredited with the JedCampus Seal for mental health, offers a two-hour mental health panel to LGBTQ students during welcome week. This panel aims to inform first-year LGBTQ students of the mental health resources available to them on their campus (“Proud for Pride”).

Student Surveys

In the survey, 60% of students said they were unaware of any Xavier mental health resources other than the McGrath Wellness Center. The survey also showed that 90% of students know the location of the McGrath Wellness Center. However, 60% of students were not informed of McGrath’s location, and were forced to find the building on their own. Only 20% of students were aware of the available mental health resources after McGrath’s closing hours. Furthermore, the survey revealed that only 30% of students were aware of mental health clubs and support groups at Xavier University. After answering the first five questions, 90% of students claimed that Xavier is ineffective in informing first-year students of mental health programs, as seen in the Figure 5. Finally, the survey showed that 80% of students believe a mental health module in GOA would help advertise Xavier’s mental health resources.

Figure 4: 90% First-Years Say Xavier is Ineffective in Informing Mental Health Resources
Faculty Interviews

In the interview, Ms. Mary Fugate and Ms. Sarah Brinker-Good claimed that the purpose of GOA is to inform first-year students of the resources available to them on campus. Ms. Fugate and Ms. Brinker-Good also gave their perceptions of GOA’s current mental health resource information, explaining that the program currently informs students of psychological services at McGrath. Additionally, the interviewees shared the process required to implement new GOA modules, in which a committee meets and agrees upon new material prior to implementing it. Finally, Ms. Fugate and Ms. Brinker-Good insisted that time constraint will be the largest barrier in implementing a new module into Xavier’s zero credit GOA program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose of GOA is to inform first-year students of resources</th>
<th>GOA only informs students of McGrath mental health services</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time constraint is the only barrier to a mental health module</td>
<td>GOA committee must meet to implement change</td>
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**Figure 5:** Key Information Gathered from Xavier Faculty Interview
Data Analysis

The data gathered reveals that Xavier University is not effectively informing first-year students of the mental health resources available on campus. Ultimately, Xavier must create a mental health information session for first-year students. This session would inform students of all mental health resources offered to them.

Secondary Research

Pace University, an institution recognized by the JED foundation for its outstanding achievements in promoting student mental health, includes a mental health panel for LGBTQ students. This panel has been greatly successful and beneficial for LGBTQ students for a multitude of reasons. First, the program informs first-year LGBTQ students of mental health resources prior to the start of the semester (“Proud for Pride”). In this system, LGBTQ students are able to reach mental health resources faster. Research shows that this fast access to mental health resources greatly improves the outcome of mental health crises for college students (Kessler et al. 1092). Currently, Pace University only offers this panel to LGBTQ students, as they are three times more likely to experience a mental health condition when compared to their peers (“LGBTQ”). However, as previously discussed, mental health issues are becoming more common among all college undergraduates. Consequently, programs that raise awareness for mental health resources should be available to all students, early in their collegiate careers.

Analysis of Student Surveys

Considering that over half of students surveyed only know of McGrath as a mental health resource, one can say that Xavier has done an insufficient job in advertising their mental health resources to first-year students. This conclusion is further supported given that the majority of students were unaware of the mental health clubs/support groups offered by Xavier. Fortunately, Xavier has an opportunity to promote its mental health resources, as 80% of students expressed a desire for a mental health GOA module. This module could enable Xavier to become effective in raising mental health resources awareness, thus fulfilling the needs of their students.
Administrator Interviews

The interview with Ms. Fugate and Ms. Brinker-Good gave key information on the implementation of new material into Xavier’s GOA program. First and foremost, GOA’s purpose, informing students of on-campus resources, suggests that the GOA committee would be receptive to a mental health installment. This installment could further fulfill GOA’s objective by promoting Xavier’s mental health resources to first-year students. Additionally, Ms. Fugate and Ms. Brinker-Good insisted that GOA is a zero-credit-hour class, and therefore must remain a six-week course. Consequently, an entire new mental health module cannot be added to the class. However, existing modules may be edited so that they include information on Xavier’s mental health resources. Finally, the interviewees’ concern with time constraint, as opposed to cost, suggests that editing an existing module is financially feasible. Ultimately, a mental health session supports GOA’s purpose, and is feasible from multiple aspects.

Moving Forward

This data proves four main points, as shown in Figure 6. First, Xavier has done an insufficient job in promoting mental health resources. Next, Xavier students have expressed an interest in a GOA module that would advertise Xavier’s mental health services. Moreover, there are programs at other universities that are successful in advertising their mental health services to their students early in the semester. Finally, the implementation of a mental health installment in the GOA program is feasible and would be supported by the GOA committee. Ultimately, this data confirms that Xavier University should include information about mental health resources in the GOA program.

Figure 6: Summary of the Key Information from Data Analysis
Recommendations

The implementation of the mental health module in Xavier’s GOA program will fulfill this proposal’s purpose by increasing student awareness to mental health resources. The following information describes, in detail, the “Mental Health Matters” proposal, as well as the steps required for the proposal’s implementation.

Mental Health Installment

Although an entire mental health module cannot be included in the GOA program due to time constraints, a mental health installment can be inserted into the existing “personal wellness” module. This installment will focus on the mental health resources available to students at Xavier University. First, the information session will incorporate McGrath representatives, and/or representatives from Xavier’s mental health clubs. These individuals will then be able to advertise their services to first-year students. After students have been informed of the mental health resources available to them, they will be provided with Xavier folders containing contact information for each of these resources. The use of the folder, as opposed to traditional paper handouts, ensures that students will not dispose of the information being given to them. This installment, if performed correctly, will be carried out in a timely fashion of 20–30 minutes.

Steps for Implementation

First, contact information to Xavier’s mental health resources will be designed onto a custom Xavier folder. After this “contact folder” is created, the proposal for the mental health installment will go to the GOA committee. After being approved by the GOA committee, GOA instructors will be given the new, revamped module information. Once each of these steps is completed, the new GOA module will be placed into effect by Fall 2018.
Feasibility

This proposal is feasible, as Ms. Fugate and Ms. Brinker-Good showed that the GOA committee would be receptive to a mental health installment. Moreover, the proposal is financially feasible, with the only cost being custom folders. According to Folders.com, 1,500 custom folders (enough for the incoming Xavier class) would cost a total of $1,290. This cost is very reasonable, given Xavier’s size and resources.

Look Towards The Future

This mental health installment will help first-year students receive mental health resources faster, leading to reduced stress, anxiety, and depression. Ultimately, if “Mental Health Matters” is placed into effect, then Xavier students will be better prepared for success. Thank you for considering my recommendations. If you have any further questions, please contact me by email or by phone.
References


Fugate, Mary and Sarah-Brinker Good. Personal interview. 28 Nov. 2017.


Appendix I—Student Survey Questions

1. Are you aware of any Xavier mental health resources other than the McGrath Wellness Center?
2. Do you know where the McGrath Wellness Center is?
3. Did any Xavier administration/programs specifically tell you where to find the McGrath Wellness Center?
4. Do you know what mental health resources are available past McGrath’s hours?
5. Are you aware that Xavier has mental health clubs and support groups?
6. Do you think Xavier effectively informs first-year students of all mental health resources available on campus?
7. Do you think a GOA module could help inform first-year students of mental health resources?

Appendix II—Faculty Interview Questions

1. How long have you acted as a GOA instructor at Xavier University?
2. What, in your eyes, are the strengths of GOA? What does it aim to do for First Year Students?
3. How do you perceive mental health programs to be addressed in GOA?
4. What steps does the GOA committee go through in determining what information to include into GOA? How can I fit mental health into this?
5. What potential barriers might be there in implementing a new mental health module?
6. Could you see there being any serious costs in implementing a mental health module into GOA? What costs would there be?
Questions to Consider

1. This particular research-based argument is a proposal, an argument that aims to solve a problem. Students in this class were asked to structure their argument in a particular way, including table of contents, an abstract, and specific sections. What is the impact of this form on the essay? How does the structure help frame the argument? What types of forms might you be expected to use for your discipline? What structure have you noticed in scholarly articles? What are the advantages of conventions in a genre?

2. In his reflection, Jonah notes that he wanted to write about an issue facing college students in general, and Xavier students in particular. For the final version of the argument, Jonah addressed the proposal to a particular campus entity. What is the impact of framing the argument in terms of local issues? How does the narrow sense of audience affect the claims? How does the audience affect the kinds of information Jonah needs to include? How does the narrow scope and the audience determine the type of evidence Jonah uses?

3. Like Camryn and Manasa, Jonah includes images in his argument. This particular essay relies heavily on visual elements, like flow charts, pictures, graphs, Xavier graphics and colors. What function do the different images serve in the essay? How does the essay use particular images (like graphs and flow charts) to help make its claims? How do the images reinforce the argument? What impact would these visual elements have on the intended audience? What kinds of images might you consider using in an argument?