Persuasive Media Rhetorical Curation Assignment

Objective: to engage and evaluate visual, aural, and other digital networked media as instances of rhetoric and persuasion; to practice making arguments in digital networked spaces.

Description: In this assignment, you will identify and then describe, analyze, and evaluate the *rhetorical* features of a particular media artifact (a film, television series, video game, or website). You will find ways to clearly and persuasively encourage your viewer/listener/user to understand your chosen text as rhetorical and in the ways you describe.

The project will proceed in three phases:

- Phase I - Selection
  - In this phase, you will search widely -- on the web, in our library, in discussions with friends and in class -- to identify a film, TV series or episode, video game or website that you would like to work with closely.
  - As you search, look for elements of rhetorical influence we have discussed so far:
    - Does this artifact encourage identification with a particular viewpoint or perspective?
    - Does this artifact invite you to understand the world in a particular way, through explicit argument or through implicit formations of image, sound, and structure?
    - Is there a different point of view that this artifact discourages you from identifying with (again, through both explicit and implicit argument)?
  - Compose an approximately 300 word Proposal or pitch that explains what it is about this artifact that you are drawn to and want to study in greater detail. Links and images might make up part of this Proposal.
  - Phase Culminates: with your posting your Proposal to the class blog by Friday, 5 October.
- Phase II - Research and Analysis
  - In this phase, you will look closely at your chosen text to identify the range of ways the artifact or text uses, encourages, or mobilizes rhetorical tools in its argument (explicitly or implicitly).
  - Your goal should be to identify as many different ways that the artifact seeks to solidify your identification with its viewpoint.
  - At minimum, consider its use of each major medium: text, image, audio, and video.
  - In addition, think about how these individual elements are related to each other, how the pieces of the argument are structured with one another, edited or designed to work together as a single artifact.
  - Try to remember to put yourself in the position of someone who does not agree with the claim of the central argument, then ask yourself whether you would find

each individual piece of the argument persuasive and why.

- ○ Compose a Research Summary in which you organize your analytical notes as something more coherent, i.e., something another person could read and make sense of (however, this document need not be in the form of an essay that includes every detail you might ultimately include in your analysis. An outline would be a better metaphor for what this document would look like).
- ○ Phase Culminates: with your emailing of your Research Summary to me by Monday, 22 October.

- ● Phase III - Exhibit Creation
  - ○ In this phase, you will arrange your notes, research, analysis, and other materials relating to your artifact into a web "exhibit": a "place" on the web you can link to that arranges your evaluation of the effectiveness of the artifact into a clear and coherent presentation of your analysis and research.
  - ○ Some web tools you may want to look at as possible venues for this purpose:
    - ■ wordpress.com
    - ■ storify.com
    - ■ pbwiki.com
    - ■ wetpaint.com
    - ■ prezi.com
    - ■ [nearly any of the tools at 50ways.wikispaces.com, depending on your chosen artifact]
  - ○ While aesthetics will not be a major component of your evaluation, you should still focus some of your attention on the structure and arrangement of your Exhibit in order to emphasize clarity, coherence, and engagement for the viewer. Ask yourself, "Would I want to keep looking at this site?" (You may want to think about the use of a range of media forms -- text, audio, image -- to help present your exhibit, focusing especially on the way those elements are coordinated with one another to produce a coherent whole.)
  - ○ Phase Culminates: with your posting of the link to your Rhetorical Curation Exhibit to the class blog by Monday, 5 November.

Evaluation Criteria:
- ● Does my Proposal explain what it is about this artifact that I am drawn to and want to study in greater detail?
- ● Does my Research Summary clearly and coherently lay out the details of my research?
- ● Does my Research Summary engage in a deeper analysis of the artifact's rhetorical elements?
- ● Does my Exhibit present my evaluation of the artifact's rhetorical elements clearly and coherently?
- ● Does my exhibit encourage the viewer/visitor/user to stay and learn more about the artifiact?