

CPCC ENGL 112-06
Spring 2015
Ms. Laura Knudson

Assignment: Rogerian Argument

For this assignment, you will structure and make an argument in the spirit of Carl Rogers, in which you (among other things) work to find solutions to a problem in common with others. This argument should be persuasive, but not confrontational.

You will need to establish common ground with your audience (and again, in order to do this, you will need to determine *who* that audience is). You will need to make use of neutral terms, and stay away from inflammatory or one-sided arguments. You will want to be as fair and objective as you can be, making use of a strong thesis statement that does not step beyond the boundaries established by the use of Rogerian argument.

As to your topic – you are free to choose anything you like, bearing in mind the purpose of this assignment is to show how well you understand and can engage in Rogerian argument. Would a topic such as gun control, the death penalty, or abortion *really* be a good idea for this assignment? (Aside from the fact that those topics are done to death in college writing classes, these are topics we don't usually change our views on until faced directly with them, so they make poor topics for our purposes). What are some good topics, then? We will do some brainstorming in class, but here are some suggestions:

- ✓ Think of areas of your life in which you participate in a *discourse community* (A **discourse community** is a group of people who share a set of basic values and assumptions, and ways of communicating about those goals. Linguist John Swales defined discourse communities as “groups that have goals or purposes, and use communication to achieve these goals”). What is a problem you and others in your community might share?
- ✓ Take some time to browse the op/ed section of the local paper and see if there are problems discussed there you might be interested in writing about.
- ✓ Visit the Pro/Con website our library subscribes to – there are plenty of possibilities there.

LOGISTICS:

WE WILL HAVE WORKSHOPPING IN CLASS ON THE DAY THAT THE ESSAY IS DUE SINCE IT'S DUE THE DAY WE COME BACK FROM SPRING BREAK (3/17).

WORKSHOPPING AND FINAL DUE DATE: MIDNIGHT ON 3/17.

LENGTH SHOULD BE BETWEEN 1,200 AND 1,500 WORDS.

You will utilize at least two sources for this paper; therefore you will need to do some research and correctly cite your sources.

All standard requirements for this assignment apply (submit as a Word document, in MLA format, on BB, with a workshoping memo, etc.).

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“We think we listen, but very rarely do we listen with real understanding, true empathy. Yet listening, of this very special kind, is one of the most potent forces for change that I know.”

Carl Rogers



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