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Final Paper: Creating and Occupying Your Research Space due May 26th

The final paper requires you to present your own position relative to a current political issue. You may use class articles and videos on immigration and abortion, or you may choose to examine another controversial political issue of your choosing. See procon.org for inspiration and ideas. I encourage you to find a topic that interests you and that you can take a firm stance on.

You will need to use a minimum of 3, and a maximum of 6, sources. Using specific references from these texts, put these authors in conversation and establish your own stance on the issue. Reference *They Say/I Say* for templates and appropriate vocabulary. Your position may be that the authors' arguments are effective in different ways, that one argument is superior to the other, or that all contain significant shortcomings. However, you should work to successfully add something to the conversation, and you should draw on evidence from other texts to support your position.

In order to do this you will evaluate both texts using the techniques we have learned in this class. You will join their conversation as you work to extend, qualify, complicate, and/or illustrate arguments and claims with your own argument and claims. Your work should include evidence that supports your claims, strategies that are evocative, and an organizational format that presents a cohesive and comprehensive research analysis that offers new insight for your audience to consider. Feel free to use any of the rhetorical strategies we have covered this semester, and draw from the in-class writings and discussions where you have already explored where you stand in relation to these authors.

Successful Papers will do the following:

1. Follow the prompt carefully.
2. Introduce the larger conversation exploring one controversial issue. **Only choose one.**
3. Provide historical context for the politics surrounding this issue.
4. Why is this topic important?
5. Support your claims with reasons and evidence, establish how your position extends, complicates, challenges or qualifies prior arguments.
6. Use an effective organizational structure that carefully guides the reader from one idea to the next.
7. Conclude your essay with a call to action: how is it possible to openly and respectfully discuss or remedy this divide in America?
8. Proofread and edit your papers fully making sure grammar, punctuation, and mechanics are correct and personal pronouns are taken out.

9. Use proper MLA format.

Requirements:

- 5-7 pages not including Works Cited. No block quotes or tables/figures will be counted towards the page requirement.
- MLA format
- Works Cited page (MLA format). NO WIKIPEDIA.
- Digital upload to SafeAssign by midnight.

Important Dates:

- May 16th: Discussion board Thesis Workshop
- May 26th: Final Draft due before midnight. NO late papers will be accepted, as grades are due immediately. Early submissions are welcome.

Helpful Hints:

First, establish what “they say”:

- Identify a current political argument.
 - What claims are essential to support their argument?
 - How well do they support these claims in terms of their choice of evidence and strategies used?
- Identify their purpose – what action would they like their audience to take or what mindset are they trying to change? What more does the audience need in order to make an informed decision?
 - Was the audience provided the information necessary to make an informed decision?
 - What could increase the audience’s depth of understanding regarding this topic? How could this conversation be extended, qualified, complicated, or illustrated?

Second, establish what “you say”:

- Find an area of focus that the texts overlooked or did not expand upon.
- Contribute to the conversation by making an argument that qualifies, extends, complicates, and/or illustrates the conversations that your sources have started.

Third, stake your claim in the conversation:

- Develop your argument by presenting evidence to support your claims.
- Use the strategies you learned in class to convince your audience.
- Use resources from the list to validate and support your claims.
- Draw from your experiences and make your point shine!

Fourth, conclude with an invitation for others to join the conversation:

- Revisit the most important points discussed in this paper.
- Restate your contribution.
- Explain why this conversation is important to the audience.
- Make a suggestion as to what work is left to do to add to the conversation.



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