

Response to Rhetorical Analysis

This was not a particularly good set of essays. Most of you displayed a pretty good understanding of Derr's argument. While some of you were able to translate the understanding into a clear analysis in which you explained the logos, ethos, pathos, and style, many of you had problems with the analysis. There were two main problems with analysis: some writers either just summarized Derr's points in more detail OR made some analytical claims without providing evidence for support. Recall, that to do logical analysis, you would need to focus on reasons, evidence, and explanation and explain how he uses these three items to make his point. To focus on pathos, you would focus on emotional appeals—you'd need to explain what emotion he's appealing to, how he does it, and for what effect. Many of you mentioned the doomsday scenario at the beginning, but you didn't notice that he ultimately critiqued that appeal which is used by others. Most of you did a good job with the discussion of ethos—that was the strongest part of the content for these essays because you commented on Derr's credibility in terms of his education, his treatment of opposing views, and his citations (or lack of them). Almost all of the essays were well-organized and had good topic sentences.

Grammar: There were 31 major errors in this set—that's an average of 1.72 per essay. Let's try to cut that in half next time (there were more fragments than anything).

Self-evaluation: One of the most trouble things I learned in the self-evaluations was that many of you knew you weren't quite understanding what you were supposed to put in the actual paragraphs even though you seemed to grasp how to organize the essays. My recollection is that I asked you MANY times if you knew what you were supposed to include in the paragraphs, and that every time I asked, you said yes. PLEASE tell me if you don't understand what you're supposed to do—chances are that if you don't understand, there are several other people who don't understand either. There's no way I can know if you understand the concepts before you turn in the essays if you don't tell me.

What now? The good news is that this essay only counts for 5% of your final grade. Try to use this as a learning opportunity to help with the next paper. Definitely ask me questions if you don't understand the problems with the essay or how to fix them.

Corrections:

1. Read over the comment page of your essay and make sure you understand all my comments. If you don't understand them, you should talk to me during office hours so I can explain.
2. Check the grammar, mechanics, punctuation, spelling/diction, and sentence errors that I have marked on the essay with handbook numbers and symbols. Look up the numbers and symbols on the inside back cover of *Bedford Handbook* (you'll have to look up particular chapters in some cases), and make sure you understand the mistakes. If you don't, come and see me during office hours. Correct all of these errors IN A DIFFERENT COLORED INK ON THE ACTUAL ESSAY. MAJOR ERROR NUMBERS ARE CIRCLED.