

### Unit 3: The Lens Essay, due **Thursday, April 20**

**Skills:** argumentative writing; drawing connections between texts; summarizing, interpreting, and applying theoretical frameworks, to show the reader something s/he wouldn't otherwise see.

**Percentage of Final Course Grade:** 15%

**Word Count:** 1200 words

Please note that word limits are binding: an essay that does not meet the minimum word count, or that exceeds the maximum word count by more than 100 words is going to be penalized.

**Readings:** "Is Google Making Us Stupid" by Nicholas Carr OR "Is the Internet Making Us Smarter" by Clay Shirky; an exhibit reading of your choice.

#### **Assignment Description**

Write an essay in which you use a lens (term or concept) from one of the essays listed above to carry out an analysis of an Internet-related exhibit - that is, a situation/controversy/text that carries the potential for rich interpretation. (We will assemble a list of potential exhibits in class.) In keeping with the theme of the course thus far, the pairing of lens and exhibit should help the reader re-vision the Internet and its possible future(s). In short, **use the lens to show us something about your exhibit that we wouldn't otherwise see.**

#### **Comments (to Students)**

Since the beginning of the class, we've talked about writing-as-telepathy: projecting a clear picture of an object, situation or text into your reader's mind. In this unit, you'll practice using a *critical lens* to complete that objective: that is, using a critical concept to re-frame/re-vision an object or situation.

Successful papers will guide the reader through an argument that clearly explains...

- 1) the significance of your chosen exhibit
- 2) What your lens concept is
- 3) *how* your lens re-frames our understanding of that exhibit (How does the concept help you describe and explain your exhibit? What does your new application tell you and your reader about the exhibit?)
- 4) how the reader might have to re-evaluate *your lens concept* in light of your chosen exhibit (is there a weakness in the concept that your exhibit exposes?)

Remember, too, that as always, you are writing for a general audience, not for me and not for the class. In other words, someone who has not read your chosen text(s) should be able to understand your writing!

**Tutoring:** I am asking everyone to meet with a tutor at least once during the next 2 weeks, either before your First or Final Drafts. SEEK students should meet with SEEK Tutors (M402; M-Th 10am - 4pm). All other students, see the Learning Center Writing Tutors (AG27; M-Fri 10am - 5pm). By visiting **the Atrium Learning Center to work with a writing tutor**, students will be referred to the appropriate Tutoring Program at any time the Learning Center is open. **Bring your last essay, with my recommendation at the back, as a reference.**

### **Dates**

Due **Wednesday, March 29, 10 am: Blog Post** on your chosen Lens-Exhibit pairing. Include a brief explanation of why you think this pairing will be illuminating or of interest to a general reader.

Due **Tuesday, April 4, 10 am:** Rough Draft of Lens Essay due on Openlab. Bring your physical copy to class on Wednesday. GROUP 1: consult with a tutor by this date.

**Friday, April 7, end of day:** GROUP 2: consult with a tutor by this date.

**Wednesday, April 19, end of day:** GROUP 3: consult with a tutor by this date.

Due **Thursday, April 20: Final Draft of Lens essay** due online and at the beginning of class. The hardcopy should include **A) a copy of your rough draft, B) your 2 partners' peer review comments, C) a brief description of your revision agenda stapled to the back, and D) a record of your consultation with a tutor.** Your revision agenda should address 1 grammatical issue and 1 organizational/content issue. **I will deduct points for any missing items.**

### **Format Checklist**

Does my essay...

- 1) appear in a Word .doc format (for electronic uploading to Blackboard)?
- 2) include a thoughtful, *italicized* title (NOT "Lens Essay")?
- 3) have a header with my *surname* and *page number* on the top right corner of each page, if the essay is more than one page?
- 4) include my *name*, *assignment name* (i.e. Lens Essay), *course and section number*, *instructor name*, and *due date* on the top left corner of the first page?
- 5) Have a staple that attaches multiple pages (if I have more than one page) for my physical copy?
- 6) Have any required supplemental documents attached to the back of the essay? (e.g. peer review comments)

Essays that fail to comply with these conventions of academic writing will be penalized.