

Short Assignment #4: All the Rebooted Ladies, Put Your Hands Up! Synthesizing Opposing Arguments



↑Who ya gonna call?

Outcomes: 1, 2, 3 ([SA 4 Rubric.docx](#) )

During the first half of the quarter, we've focused on the mechanics of adaptation, from identifying genre conventions to analyzing rhetorical strategies, and everything in between. Now, as we shift our class's focus to the ethics of adaptation, we'll be working with complex moral and cultural issues that arise when we disrupt or alter a text's context, genre, or argument.

Your Task

MP #1 allowed us to begin practicing intertextuality—how we place texts in conversation with one another—as you used both a source text and an adapted text to develop a complex claim. The goal of this essay is to enter a textual conversation, rather than solely analyzing the rhetorical techniques present in two texts. **Through this assignment, you will craft an argument about all-female remakes of blockbuster films.** To create this argument, you will be reading and synthesizing three articles addressing all-women reboots and adaptations, where two authors approach this issue from opposing perspectives and a third creates a hypothetical dialogue to argue a nuanced stance on the topic.

A synthesis paper is not simply a summary. Instead, a synthesis paper:

- Pulls together information not only to highlight the important points, but to further your own argument as you draw your own conclusions
- Combines and contrasts information from different sources
- Not only reflects your knowledge about what the original authors wrote, but also creates something new
- Combines parts and elements from a variety of sources into one unified entity

For this paper, your task is to synthesize all three arguments and develop your own claim for the issue. This claim should either agree with one of the positions presented in the essays and

explain why by interacting with the texts, or develop an original, nuanced claim (that recognizes that the way we discuss women in Hollywood and women in film impacts not only the actresses involved, but also the stakes for audience members).

In synthesizing these three arguments, and in presenting your own position on the issue of all-female reboots, a successful paper will engage with many of the following questions (*though, again, not necessarily in this order!*):

- What are the authors' stances about all-female reboots?
- What aspects of this issue does each author focus on? Are there inconsistencies in their arguments?
- How do they use different appeals to argue their points? What kinds of evidence do they use to support their position? What motivates them?
- What's your place in this argument? How might your own perspective affect your thinking on this ethical issue? Do you have any biases? Blind-spots? Insights?
- What are the stakes of this argument—why does this conversation matter? Who is affected by this argument, and in what ways?

Your Readings:

1. "[The trouble with an all-female 'Ocean's Eleven' and other pink-aisle reboots](#)([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#) ([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#)" by Alexandra Petri, *The Washington Post*.
2. "[Why an All-Female Reboot of 'Ghostbusters' Was a Genius Idea](#)([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#) ([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#)" by David Fear, *Rolling Stone*.
3. "[The Flaw of the All-Female Reboot](#)([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#) ([Links to an external site.](#))[Links to an external site.](#)" by Jade Budowski, *Decider*..

Rhetorical Situation/Audience: Like these essays, your paper should be written as an **online article**. This is a little different from a blog, in that you're not as restricted by length and that you're expected to provide full context for the topic (in case your reader is unfamiliar with the issue). You should consider including links, pictures, gifs, etc. Get creative and remember our discussions on multimodality!

Format: Times New Roman, 12 pt font, 1-inch margins, double spaced. 2-3 pages, roughly 700-1,100 words. Credit each writer, and make sure that I know who you're quoting each time you reference a text.

DUE DATE:

We'll talk more about this assignment in class, and as always, never hesitate to ask any questions!

SA #5: Annotated What? Pitch It Perfect



This assignment only requires you to pitch two summaries for each source, while the money-making machine that is *Pitch Perfect* could have more sequels than a horror film franchise. Spooky.

Outcomes: 1, 2, 3 ([SA 5 Rubric.docx](#) )

In Short Assignment #4 you created a conversation between texts by synthesizing three articles and developed your ability to process and summarize texts. Now, we'll continue our work with summary, but in preparation for your argumentative research paper (MP #2). For your second major paper, you'll need three to five sources, which you'll begin working with here.

Your Task

Your task for this assignment is to develop a thorough understanding of your MP #2 sources by summarizing each source and evaluating where it will be useful to your paper. **For each of the three MP #2 sources you've chosen to work with, you will write two separate paragraphs that independently summarize source's content and evaluate how it will be useful in your paper. In each of these paragraphs, you will tailor your summary and analysis to a different, specific audience—or, "pitch it."**

The audience that you're pitching your summary to should directly influence your writing. Your audience will affect your tone, the level of context you provide, your word choice, and more! You can be as creative as you want to be with your audiences, but you must let me know which audience your paragraph is being pitched to.

Some potential audiences might be: Your sibling, your parents, your roommate, your boss, a child, your instructor, a robot learning to love (sort of joking, but you could), the original writer/director/producer, a reader of a textbook, etc. Have fun with it, but make sure you're paying attention to that audience! Your two paragraphs should each sound distinct and well-crafted to your intended readers. They should also primarily concern themselves with summarizing, not just creating a story around your audience.

A Partial Example (We'll finish these summaries together in class!)

Source One: Anne Cheng, "The Ghost in the Ghost," LA Times.

Audience 1: Someone Who Has Just Woken Up From A Ten Year Coma

Wow, man. You've missed so much in the last ten years. It's been b-a-n-a-n-a-s. The 2016 election was crazy, memes have taken over the Internet, and Hollywood whitewashing is somehow still a thing, especially with Asian characters. They adapted a film from a popular anime, *Ghost in the Shell*, and they cast Scarlett Johansson as the lead. She was the lady in *Lost in Translation*—she's become a big star because of superhero films. She's white, and they cast her as the Asian lead! Anne Cheng wrote about it in an awesome article, "The Ghost in the Ghost," which showed that there was a lot more at stake in this whitewashing controversy than just actor representation, man. There's a huge issue in the way that Western film portrays Asian women...

Audience 2: Scarlett Johansson

I love you, ScarJo, but yikes. I know that *Ghost in the Shell* is expected to rake in a lot of money, and it's a major motion picture, but *come on!* You know that it's an adaptation of a popular anime. Anne Cheng's article "Ghost in the Ghost" did a great job of laying out why you've made such a massive mistake. You're not just impacting fans of the anime, but your characterization of Major perpetuates some, well, Major issues in how Western film portrays Asian women...

Format: 12 pt Times New Roman font, double-spaced, 1-inch margins, look at the spacing of the above example!

Length: Again, you should have two paragraphs per source, for three sources. *That's six substantive paragraphs. Your paper should be 2-3 pages, perhaps a little longer if necessary.*

DUE DATE:

As always, we'll talk more about this assignment in class! Feel free to email me or visit me during my office hours with any questions.

MP #2: Step Right Up and Make Your Case! Argumentative Research Paper



The Cat in the Hat knows a lot about controversy (ha ha).

This adaptation sparked outrage over its adult humor and inappropriately sexual jokes in a children's film, contributing to an ongoing discussion about how we adapt children's literature into films that cater to both child and adult audiences.

Outcomes: 1, 2, 3 ([MP 2 Rubric.docx](#) )

In our class thus far, we've largely dealt with the mechanics of adaptation. Now, as we finish our discussions on the ethics of adaptation, you'll draw from your knowledge of argument and inquiry to delve into a complex pop-culture controversy and create your own claim.

Your Task

Develop a line of inquiry that identifies a controversy in either the field of adaptation or a controversy in in pop-culture more broadly (if you choose to work with a controversy that's not specific to adaptation, please see me during my office hours so that we can discuss your ideas!). You might begin searching for research questions in areas that include (but are in no way limited to!) our discussions on ethical issues of race, gender, politics, and representation in the act of adapting texts.

From that initial line of inquiry, you must develop a complex claim—specific and nuanced—that you will support in your paper, both through your own argumentative reasoning and evidence, as well as through the use of three to five outside sources. Your complex claim could specifically work with a controversy related to a specific text (for example, we talked in class about the issue of casting Scarlett Johansson as an Asian character in *Ghost in the Shell*, and both the LA Times "Ghost in the Shell" debate and Anne Cheng's "Ghost in the Ghost" would be perfect examples of sources for this assignment). Remember: the more specific your claim, the more depth you'll achieve in your argument.


Sources (3-5)

In gathering your sources and researching your issue, remember our discussions of ethos. Consider:

- How is your own credibility as a writer, and the credibility of your argument, affected by the sources that you choose to include in your paper?

- How might sources that are incorporating additional research, fact-checked, and circulated through respected publications add credibility to your paper? In contrast, how could relying on sources that aren't as respected (heavily biased pieces that don't include citations, Wikipedia articles, etc.) impact your effectiveness as a writer?
- How might including to and responding to sources that present counterpoints to your argument strengthen your overall claim?

While I am creating space for you to incorporate a variety of sources, be aware that sources that negatively impact the effectiveness of your argument may need to be replaced for your final portfolio. A successful paper will incorporate at least one source obtained through a UW library database.

Rhetorical Situation/Audience: For this assignment, I'm letting YOU choose your genre--it can be multimodal (like a painting, map, video, podcast, a business pitch presentation, etc.) or entirely text-based (a traditional essay, a mock lab report, etc.). The choice is entirely up to you, but I'll be checking on everyone's planned projects. You must produce AT LEAST 3-5 pages of writing for a piece with an extensive multimedia component as a Creator's Memo  where you'll integrate any sources that aren't readily visible in your project itself. For genres that are primarily text-based (including online articles), you'll need to produce 5-7 pages of writing.

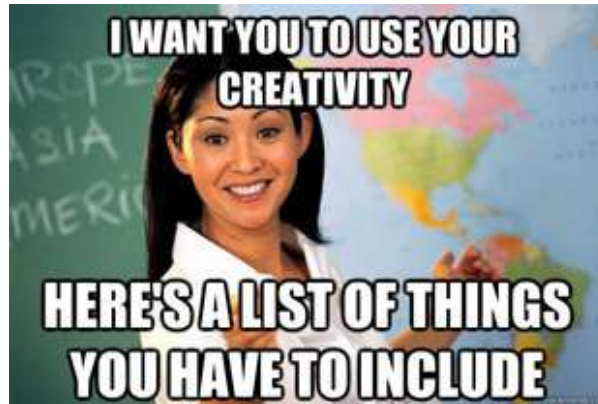
Format: 12 pt, Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins, double spaced. 3-5 sources. You MUST have a works cited page, and your final paper should be formatted to the style guide of your discipline (more on this in class!)

DUE DATE:

As always, we'll talk more about this assignment in class! We'll be spending 2/13 working with a UW librarian to begin researching sources.

Feel free to email me or visit me during my office hours with any questions.

Creator's Memo MP #2



Self-aware-teacher-meme is self-aware.

Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4

Your Creator's Memo is meant to supplement your MP #2 multimodal project if what you've created does not already generate 5 - 7 pages of written text.

Your Task

In this Creator's Memo, your task is to provide viewers of your project with a general overview of your creative piece, the research that inspires and supports your work, and the ethical implications of your project (stakes). Your memo should be thoughtfully organized and take your reader through your piece's argument and your creative process in a logical way (no stream-of-consciousness! Don't treat this like an extra-long free-write!). You should use direct quotations from your research to support your claims and your artistic choices.

Questions to Consider:

What inspired you to choose this topic? Were you familiar with this issue before you chose to write about it? What personal connection do you have with this issue?

What issue/controversy is your project addressing? What argument within that conversation does your project make?

How did your research inform your artistic decisions? What research supports the overall argument that your project is making? Build the logos and ethos of your project! Show your audience that your work is based on well-informed and thoughtful research and a strong, compelling argument.

What counterarguments could be made against the argument that you've made? How would you respond to them?

What are the implications of your project? What would you hope viewers or readers "get out of" your project?

How does your position/perspective within this issue affect your response to this controversy and the work you've created?

What makes this controversy or issue important to talk about? What's at stake in this conversation?

Rhetorical Situation/Audience: People viewing your project, specifically myself and your peers.

Format: 3-5 pages, Times New Roman 12pt font, double spaced, 1-inch margins. Works Cited page!

Short Assignment #6: The Final (Draft) and the Furious (Editing)



Outcomes: 1, 4 (Plus the outcomes targeted by your Major Paper's original assignment)

So far, we've undertaken two major papers as a class, both of which have challenged you to apply our course's outcomes in a substantial paper of at least 5-7 pages. Now, we'll be working with one of these papers to practice the fourth outcome of our course, revision and collaboration, and to begin the process of compiling our portfolios.

Your Task

Select one of your major papers to revise for your portfolio. You might choose the paper that you're most confident with, or you might choose the major paper that you think creates more opportunities for a substantial edit! The choice is up to you. Remember that your portfolio's goal is not only to reflect your strongest papers from this quarter, but also to reflect how much you've grown and improved in developing and conveying complex thoughts.

This major paper revision should draw from feedback you've received from me, your classmates in peer review, and your own instincts as an editor. **You'll turn in a revised copy of your selected major paper as well as a Writer's Memo that describes your revision process and choices in detail.**

A successfully edited major paper will display a great deal of polish. I will be looking at your final draft with closer scrutiny than your first drafts, and I will be evaluating you with the full rubric. Remember that this draft does not necessarily need to be the final draft of included in your portfolio, but this should be a very substantive edit from your first draft.

The Writer's Memo

Your Writer's Memo should be 1 1/2 to 2 pages. *A memo that is only 1 page will not receive full participation credit.* Your Writer's Memo could consider the following questions:

- Why have I chosen this major paper? Why do I think that it's representative of either my best writing or my best revision work?
- How does my audience or genre directly impact the way I'm presenting this information?
- What were the issues that you identified with your paper for revision? How did you address these concerns?
- What could you further tweak your paper to be even more successful?

- Which of the outcomes do you think your paper does a particularly good job of demonstrating? Why?
- Indicate a sentence or paragraph that you've edited or added that you think exemplifies the benefits of your revision.

Tips for Editing

- To focus on your writing on the individual word level, try to read your paper aloud, either to yourself or to a roommate, friend, etc. Hearing your writing can help you identify awkward sentences
- Ask a classmate, roommate, friend, Writing Center tutor, etc. to look over your paper and help you assess areas you could edit.
- Go back to the feedback you've been given by both myself and your classmates.
- Don't forget to go back and edit/review new paragraphs/sentences/etc. that have been added in the revision process so that they're given a second assessment as well.

Length: Major Assignment (5-7, not counting Works Cited) + 1/12 - 2 page Writer's Memo

Format: 12pt Times New Roman Font, double spaced, 1-inch margins, Works Cited and consistent annotating in your style guide

DUE DATE:

As always, feel free to send me any emails with questions or meet with me during my office hours!