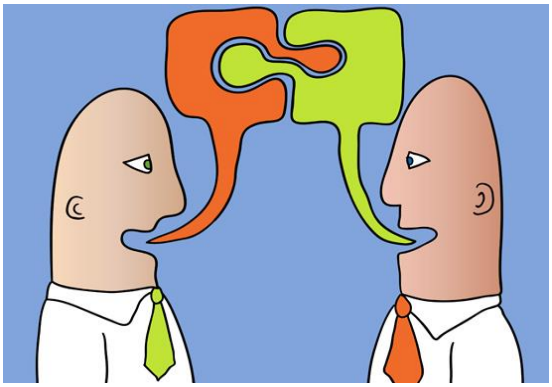
SA#4 Putting Texts Into Conversation With One Another



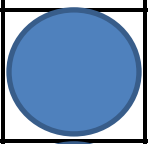
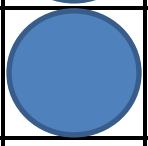
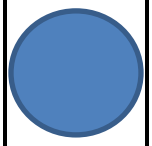
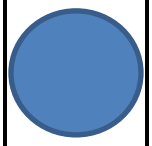
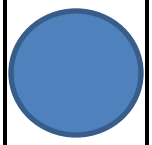
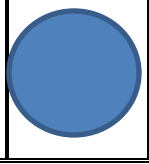
In MA1, you had the chance to develop a complex, debatable claim in an argumentative essay. Now we are going to practice putting the ideas from different texts into conversation with one another. (This will be a useful skill for MA2, which will be a research paper requiring you to integrate at least three different sources into your paper)

The Task: After reading the course readings "Conversation 1" (How to Detect Propoganda & Terrorist in Chief) and "Conversation 2" (Terrorism and the English Language & Obama Vampire), **write a 2-3 page essay that puts at least two of these readings into conversation with each other in support of your own goal.**

The Process: To get started, think of possible themes for your paper. What interested you about these readings? What did these readings make you think about? Or, if you hated the readings, why did you hate the readings? Why didn't you find them interesting? (Some of the best writing is in response to things that the writers didn't like!) Once you have a theme, generate a claim as we've been doing in class. Remember, your claim should be interesting, and it should show the reader why what you have to say is important (stakes) and it should acknowledge other points of view (like counter-arguments).

Note: Even though it has **an argument**, this paper is **not** restricted to controversial topics like the last assignment. You do not need to begin with a claim that is controversial. For this assignment, your goal should be to use one of these texts to say something interesting about the situation in another of these texts. (Or, you could use two or more of these texts to help you talk about a different subject of your own choosing!) If you choose to make a claim that is not controversial, it **should still tell the reader something new**, by either filling in a gap in your readers' knowledge or by modifying existing knowledge.

Audience: For this paper, you may choose your audience. Any audience is fine! However, you **must then develop your claim and offer textual support in a manner appropriate for that target audience**. Readers of your paper should be able to tell, broadly speaking, what group of people you are primarily writing too.
NOTE: The paper must still be in English, even if your target audience is not from an English speaking country!)

SA#4 Rubric	Outstanding	Strong	Good	Acceptable	Inadequate
How well does the paper demonstrate understanding of the course texts?					
How well does the paper put multiple texts into conversation to support the main claim?					
How well does the paper demonstrate analysis? Does the paper closely examine the textual evidence in order to support its main claim?					
How well organized is the paper? Does the paper use effective topic sentences and show how each paragraph connects back to the main claim?					
How well does the paper take its intended audience into account?					
How well does the paper use MLA style for citations?					

This assignment targets outcomes (1) **(2)** and (3).

Due: Thursday, May 5th by midnight. Please upload your paper to Canvas.

SA#5: RESEARCH PROJECT "SKELETON"

This assignment is an outline for your next Major Paper (MA2), but you can think of it as a "skeleton" which you will "flesh out" when you actually write the paper.

The skeleton (outline) should be 1-2 single-spaced pages and include the following:

A Research Question:

This is the question that motivates your research and intellectual inquiry. What is it that you are trying to find out? What is it that you are trying to explain?

Your Main Claim:

This is your paper's thesis or "complex claim." It doesn't have to be perfect yet, but it should answer your research question and should clearly let your reader know what you will be focusing on in the essay.

4-6 Topic Sentences:

Each topic sentence should introduce a minor claim you want to make that relates back to your main claim.

At least Five Quotes (From at least Three Different Sources):

You don't have to use all of these quotations in your final essay, but consider what moments in these texts you might use as evidence. Each quotation should be doing something **DIFFERENT**. If you have two quotations that are just repeating the same point there is no reason to include both of them.
DO NOT FORGET→ Explain in one or two sentences how each of these quotes may help you to support a particular topic sentence or your main claim.

A Stakes Sentence:

Why does this argument matter? Why should we care? How would you respond to a reader who said, "So what?"

A Works Cited Page:

This should include at least 3 sources. At least **one primary source** (what you are studying) **and at least 2 secondary sources** (something that talks about what you are studying)
(You may use class readings, but at least one source must be totally new!)

Audience:

For this assignment, your audience is anyone who is interested in seeing your plan for your next major paper. I am part of your audience, as your teacher, but your most important audience here is yourself, so make sure that this writing is useful for you!

Genre and Situation:

Don't forget, writing an outline or a "skeleton" is its own genre, which responds to a particular situation. Think about this writing situation and use the styles and strategies that you think are the most important. When you write this outline, think about how you will follow the conventions of outlines. Thinking about these things may help you when you have to prove that you have fulfilled the outcomes in the portfolio!

Due date: Please upload your "Skeleton" to the course website by midnight on Thursday, May 12th.

SA#5 Rubric	Outstanding	Strong	Good	Acceptable	Inadequate
Does the main claim answer the research question? Is your main claim complex?					
Do the topic sentences clearly help support the main claim?					
Do your quotes clearly work to support either a topic sentence or your main claim?					
Is the Works Cited page in proper MLA format?					

MA#2
Changing the Way We See

Much of the early work of this course has been on our personal relationship to languages and how language is related to identity. In SA4, we began to look at how language can also be used to manipulate people. Now, with this last major assignment, we are going to use our own research and analytical skills to write an original essay about a source of manipulative writing or propaganda.

The task: **Choose a text that you think is being deliberately manipulative.** This text can be a piece of writing, a movie, song, play, tv show, comic, etc . **This text will be your primary source.** Have you recently read a heavily biased news article? Have you seen a movie that made a country or group of people look good? Have you seen a movie that made a country or group of people look bad? Have you read a comic that gave a one-sided view of a political situation? Have you visited a web page that made you feel angry and you want to explore why? These may be good places to start!

Next—Generate a research question about your primary source and answer this question with a complex claim: **What claim do you want to make about this text?** Use the stasis questions (p. 289) to help you find an interesting claim. You could answer a "**Value" question** (Is this kind of text or message good or bad?) You could answer a **"policy" question** (What should be done about this kind of text?) You could answer a **"consequence"** question (What is the result of this kind of text?). The more time you spend coming up with a specific, interesting, and creative claim, the more interesting and persuasive your whole essay will be!

You can, of course, **use the skeleton which you created for SA#5 to help you do this**!

Finally, **write a 5-7 page research paper** in which you support your complex claim.

→Whatever text you choose, make sure that you can say something interesting about it! If what you are saying is not controversial, it should at least be something new! Readers will not likely be interested in reading something that they have heard before.

After generating your claim, do more library research to **find at least two secondary sources that may help you support your claim**. The secondary sources can be about your specific kind of text, or they might be about a more general topic that you can still connect to your main claim.

Notes:

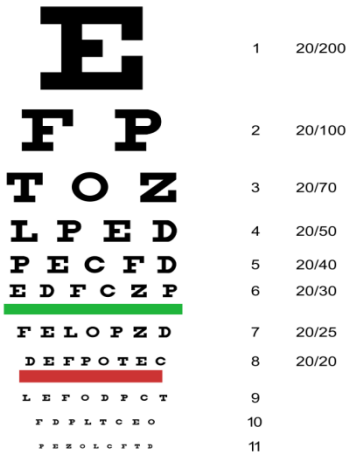
You will be required to use at least **one primary source and at least two secondary sources** to help support your argument. You may use assigned readings from our class if they suit your topic, but **at least one source must be totally new!**

Audience: Please write this paper for a formal, academic audience.

MA2 Rubric	Outstanding	Strong	Good	Acceptable	Inadequate
Is the main claim (thesis) interesting and not obvious? Is it complex?					
How well does the paper properly integrate a variety of support? Does the paper create a "conversation" between texts and ideas?					
How well does the paper demonstrate analysis? Does the paper closely examine the textual evidence in order to support its main claim?					
How well organized is the paper? Does the paper use effective topic sentences and show how each paragraph connects back to the main claim?					
How well does the paper show the reader why its argument is important?					
Does the paper use proper MLA citation format?					

Due Date: Please upload this paper to the course website by Thursday, May 19th Be prepared, again to share your paper in peer-review.

Revision of MA#1 or #2
Improving the Way We See!



Congratulations! You have finished all of the main, first-draft writing for this course! Of course, now we are going to begin revising papers so that we can have better evidence to prove, in the final portfolio, that we have met the course outcomes!

The task: **Choose your MA1 or MA2** and revise it, not just for spelling or grammar, but for its "focus," "organization" and its "content."

You should spend several hours on this assignment, re-thinking your ideas, and strengthening your support. Revision should take about as long as writing the original draft!

MA REVISION Rubric	Outstanding	Strong	Good	Acceptable	Inadequate
How well have you **revised for ideas**? Is the main claim more focused? Are your supporting examples stronger?					
How well have you **revised the organization**? Do you have stronger topic sentences? Have you worked on "logical transitions"?					
How well have you **responded to the teacher's feedback** on your first draft? Have you made an effort to address the questions and concerns made in the comments?					
Have you revised and improved the paper **beyond the ways** suggested by the teacher? Have you shown your own initiative in improving the essay?					

This essay will be due, on Canvas by Thursday, May 26th.