

English 110
Spring 2015
Dr. Ida Stewart

Essay 1: Object Analysis

Identify a specific cultural object/artifact/icon that is being repurposed (or revised, remodeled, represented, remade, reused, or reclaimed) in a specific new context (such as an advertisement, a piece of art, a monument, a product design, an article of clothing, a bumper sticker, a tattoo, some graffiti, etc.).

How does the act of repurposing shed new light on the intended or unintended meanings of the object? In an essay, develop a thesis that makes a very specific argument about how and why the cultural object is being repurposed, while also addressing the significance of its repurposing. Support your claims with evidence—specific, significant similarities and differences that you observe between the original and repurposed object.

This essay builds on all the skills you have been developing this semester: observation, interpretation, synthesizing ideas, making the implicit explicit, identifying and exploring significant similarities and differences, developing a thesis from your ideas and observations, and thinking critically about the ways in which a writer/artist's decisions are shaped by the complex relationship between the intended purpose, audience, and surrounding context.

Essay 2: Researched Object Analysis

For this assignment you will revise and expand upon the paper you wrote for the previous assignment, reformatting it as a researched analysis that considers, among other things, the ways in which various cultural and historical contexts shape the object's meaning in its various forms.

Your goal is the still the same broad goal you had for the first essay: “In an essay, develop a thesis that makes a very specific argument about how and why the cultural object is being repurposed, while also addressing the significance of its repurposing.”

But, in order to more completely analyze, understand, and articulate the significance of the object's repurposing, you will need to research the history of the object and the contexts in which it has been used and is being repurposed. You will likely need to seek out sources that provide background information about your object, who created it, when, why, and how it has been used. You should also seek out the analyses of other writers and thinkers who, like you, are exploring the ways in which the object (or another object like it) has been used and made to mean. (It's unlikely, but possible, that you are the first scholar to ever think critically about this object or its repurposing; if so, you will need to broaden your research and apply related analyses to your topic “as a lens” and consider the significant similarities and differences between your object/repurposing and others like it.

In light of your research, your original ideas should change and become more complex, refined, or specific. By engaging with the ideas of other scholars and integrating them into your own essay, you are joining in an ongoing and ever-evolving academic conversation.

Your final essay should make use of at least four outside, “secondary” sources; however, you should consult many more sources throughout the writing, rewriting, searching, and researching process. These secondary sources must be drawn from either books or articles that were published in newspapers, magazines, or academic journals. These sources must be accessed via the University of Delaware library.

You should also explore at least one additional repurposed form of your object.