Assignment 3: Digital-Born Visual Essay/Personal Narrative

For our final assignment, you have two options:

Option 1:
You can return to the world of visual rhetorics, not only as our primary focus of analysis but this time, also, as our primary *mode* of analysis. To that end, I would like you to put together a digital-born visual essay of the sort discussed in class. The focus of the essay can be but doesn't have to be on technology or digital experience of some sort, though at the very least it should be focused on something that makes use of the audio-visual medium you're working in. Additionally, you are required to make some kind of claim/argument using visual/digital rhetorics to do so, and you may not repeat a claim you've already made in another paper (though you may expand upon it – please talk to me ahead of time if you're thinking about this option).

Two notes about logistics: first, I **do not care about the quality of the project**. You will not be graded on how "polished" the assignment is. In fact, because I can't expect you to know the nuances of video editing, even as these resources are increasingly available (Handbrake, keepvid.com, iMovie, your phones, etc.), the project need not necessarily even come as a video file. If you work well in PowerPoint and can give me a slideshow with embedded videos and images, that's terrific. If you only know Word and want to give me a script telling me how you imagine the project to go, perhaps with links to YouTube videos, or screenshots of Facebook's persuasive design, or whatever it might be, that's fine, too.

But it's for that reason that, second, should you choose this project, I am requiring you to also submit a three- to four-page reflection paper. In that reflection paper, you should discuss in more detail the argument you're trying to make in your project and some of the processes you took to make it. That argument may be abundantly clear, of course, in the video itself, especially if you choose to do some kind of voiceover. Even so, the reflection paper should discuss that argument: what you're hoping to draw out, why you think it's an important claim to make, what it tells your audience about technology or digital experience. And then discuss how you put the project together, what your intentions were, what you hoped to do but couldn't because of technological limitations, and, finally, and most importantly, *what is the significance of using visual/digital rhetorics* in making your claim. Why use visual/digital rhetorics rather than written? And did you find yourself still implementing things like ethos, pathos, and logos? If so, how? To be clear, you are **not** presenting the argument over again; you are discussing the nature of the argument and the dynamics of making an argument through a visual medium.

Option 2:
You can write a personal narrative that, ideally (but not mandatorily), integrates the technological/digital, and that in some way has some kind of thesis of its own, some kind of point you want your reader to better understand by the narrative's end. The big question here, of course, is how you integrate the technological/digital into the paper. Your options are unlimited; you could

   a)   write some part of it in the style of texting
   b)   offer a narrative about the influence of digital devices on you
   c)   include screenshots of your laptop to aid in whatever narrative you're telling

Or honestly you could do anything else. Just remember that it has to be a **personal narrative** and it needs to make some kind of **claim**. That claim can be about whatever you want it to be: something about yourself and the way you live, something about our digital culture, or heck, something about writing in digital spaces! It's up to you!

Please note two things: first, if you can't find a way to incorporate the digital, please reach out to me. Second, remember that submitting a paper you've submitted before counts as **self-plagiarism**. Do not submit a personal narrative you've written before for high school – and that includes common app essays.

Learning outcomes:
1) To write and "think" with attention to the visual
2) To present an argument in a visual/digital way (or to think through the digital/technological in writing about yourself)
3) To practice writing in "alternative" rhetorical contexts and situations
4) To continue building awareness of and critical thinking skills towards visual/digital rhetorics

Assessment will be based on the following:
1) Strength of primary claims, organically working with your analysis/narrative
2) Clarity of analysis/narrative, with "evidence" (anecdotal or analytical)
3) Specificity and detail of imagery and images, and attention to tone and mood
4) Demonstration of visual/digital rhetorical thinking and writing
5) Citing of sources, if you use them (and you can use them in the personal narrative, of course)
6) **Please note that for the visual essay, the focus of the grade will be on the reflection paper**

Visual Essay Guidelines:
● No time length
● The visual component must drive a claim
● Reflection paper: 3-4 pages, double-spaced

Personal narrative guidelines:
● 5-6 pages, double-spaced
● Times New Roman (12 pt.)
● One-inch margins

Due: First draft is due **anytime between Thurs., April 9th and Sun., April 12th, by 11:59 p.m. EST**
          Second draft is due **by the time of your Portfolio**

Upload to our shared Google folder with the file name "[First name][Last name] – Paper 3, Draft #."

NB: Be sure to upload your files to your folders as a Google doc or Word doc. No PDFs, please.