**“Rambos of the road” by Martin Gottfried (text 306)**

In his essay, Gottfried tells of an incident that occurred around midnight in a small town

and no traffic around. Gottfried tells this story to lead to his thesis statement, “It seems to methat there has recently been an epidemic of auto macho” (Gottfried 307). The “auto macho,” asGottfried calls it, is commonly referred today as road rage. The narration story that begins the essay leads into his thesis by way of giving a traffic incident as an example. After giving his thesis, he go on to support that thesis with more examples of dangerous, unwise decisions that drivers make because of anger or stress. To further illustrate his main idea of road rage, Gottfried recounts another incident in which a driver confronts a bus driver whose bus wasblocking traffic. Gottfried concludes his essay by saying that this style of driving has “thementality of a hoodlum and the backbone of a coward” (308).

**“Conforming to Stand Out: A Look at American Beauty” by Nick Ruggia (text, 318)**

Ruggia begins his essay by comparing survival of a species to survival of humans.

Ruggia continues by noting that almost everyone in modern America can acquire the basic resources necessary to survive. Therefore he seems to feel that more and more numerousAmericans feel pressured to be “beautiful,” particularly women although men are getting drawn into the pressure to beautiful/handsome. Ruggia ends his first paragraph by giving his thesis where he states the three points his essay will cover: the thin craze, plastic surgery craze, and the body art craze.

In order to support the thin craze part of his thesis, Ruggia give statistics to support or illustrate his point about the this craze. He includes both women and men in giving his statistics. To support his plastic surgery craze, he gives examples of the how some choose to enhance their physical features through the skill of cosmetic surgeons. To discuss the body art craze, Ruggia uses examples of how many American now use piercings and tattoos to artistically make themselves more attractive.

Throughout his essay, Ruggia gives examples to support his thesis. That is exactly what exemplification or illustration writing does—support with examples. These supporting examples can be statistics or examples from life where certain examples are noticed and recorded.

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**“Abolish the Penny” by William Safire (text, 541)**

In his essay, Safire strongly feels that the time has come to abolish the penny in America; after all, he points out that the consumer cannot buy anything for a penny now days. His claim is a claim of policy—pennies are outdated, almost worthless, bothersome and wasteful; therefore the solution is to abolish them.

Safire supports his claim by pointing out that many pennies simply drop out sight because they go in piggy banks. Some drop behind chair cushions or get stashed in some old sock somewhere because they are literally more trouble than they are worth, especially to retailers. Who wants to stand around and wait for a customer to fumble around trying to find a couple of pennies. For that reason, many retailers have a penny jar on the counter; the penny jar saves time for the seller and the buyer.

Safire continues with his view about the penny when he shows that the United States is among the last of the industrialized nations to to abolish the pesky little bit of coinage. Whatabout the price of $4.98 instead of $5.00? Doesn’t that actually save the consumer 2 cents with the purchase. Safire says that retailers would probably round down to $4. 95 and save the consumer even more. This would cause the nickel to flourish, which would actually be a good thing for the mines in the United States, particularly the ones in Arizona. For those who feel that abolishing the penny would dishonor Abraham Lincoln, remember that he is also honored on the $5 bill.

Safire closes his essay by stating that we should get out the bumper stickers that read: Abolish the penny!

**“Pull the Plug on Explicit Lyrics” by James Strum (text, 552)**  
In this essay, James Strum makes a thesis statement that clearly reflects his opinion that

since explicit lyrics can have a negative effect on youth, such lyrics should be off-limits to children who are under the age of 16. His thesis is clearly a claim of policy.

Strum believes that the government takes a rather laissez-faire attitude that allows the music industry to regulate itself. In fact, Strum points out that the artists and music industry

decide what music should have the “Parental Advisory: Explicit Content” label placed on whichreleases.

Strum admits that explicit lyrics might not be a problem if it were not for the negative effects that such lyrics produce in listeners. People think about the lyrics and are influenced by what they think about. He believes that children are far more susceptible to the subtle influence to such lyrics and are more likely to act out on what they hear. Strum proposes the age of 16 as the cutoff age for restrictions on explicit lyrics.

**“Freegans: They Live off What We Throw Away” by Jan Goodwin (text, 434)**In this essay, Jan Goodwin carefully defines her point of view or her definition as to what

“freegans” are and are not. Explanation as to the meaning of something is important, but explanation of what something is not might be equally important. In definition writing, this is referred to as definition by negation. Therefore, Goodwin tells the reader what freegans are and by negation, tells what they are not. (A full explanation of Goodwin’s essay is given on thedefinition assignment given in this section.)

**“Dude, Do You Know What You Just Said?” by Mike Crissey (text, 438)**In this definition essay, Crissey discusses the meaning of the word “dude,” a word that

originally meant “old rags.” A scarecrow was referred to as a “dudesman.” Beyond the meaning of the word, Crissey discusses how even the pronunciation of the word might pertains to its meaning. While most might associate “dude” with males, Crissey points out that even females can be referred to as “dude.” However, the use of “dude” seems to have boundaries. So, why make such a fuss about a word? According to a source referenced in Crissey’s essay, we studywords and meanings because we need to understand language because that is the way we communicate.

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**“Right Place, Wrong Face” text, 233**In this essay, author Alton White begins by informing us that he grew up in a family of

seven children of which he was the youngest. His parents brought him up to a gentleman and respect others. However, his whole belief system was challenged by an event that happened to him when he was arrested without just cause.

On this Friday, White was taking his time and enjoying the day before heading off to the bank. As he finally left his apartment and headed for the exit, he noticed people in uniforms rushing to enter the building. At first, he thought they might be paramedics. When he opened the door for them, he realized they were police officers. Soon afterwards, he was searched, stripped of his backpack, put on his knees, handcuffed, and told to be quiet. Since he did not fit the description of the reported suspects who were in the building, he could not understand why he was being treated the way he was. He was taken downtown to the police station and enduredwhat was called “standard procedure.”

The whole incident was passed off with the explanation that he was just in the wrong place at the wrong time. Remember that he did not fit the description of the suspects and was in the building where he lived. His story is a troubling one that has a definite narrative point: racial profiling can victimize innocent people.

“The Alternate **History of Susan Chung**: One Woman’s Quest to Find Her Birth Parents” text, 257

This essay Nicole Soojung Callahan discusses the situation she faced when she

experienced her first pregnancy. While the author states that she was always curious about her birth parents, she became more than just curious when she was expecting her first child. While she expected her life to change with pregnancy, she states that she did not anticipate that she would face such a strong desire to learn more about her original family that had given her up for adoption. In between work and childbirth classes, she began her search.

She faced her first difficulty because her adoption records were closed. She found an intermediary, Donna, to petition the court for her adoption file. After a two month wait, Donna called and informed her that she had five sisters. Donna also speculated that her parents may have given her up because they had wanted a boy. Somewhat hurt by this, Callahan pressed for more information. Donna told her that since she had been born over two months premature, the doctors told her parents that she would probably be blind and deaf with other possible disabilities.

Other bits of information revealed that her parents were recent immigrants who worked 14 hour days and had no health insurance to help with any of the costs of a premature baby who

might face untold health difficulties. While some information was hard to deal with, Callahan nonetheless came to the realization that her birth parents had made what they thought would be the best choice for their newborn baby, and they had made that choice out of love. They had even given her a name while she was still in the hospital, Susan.

Callahan closes her essay with the realization that she has many unanswered questions. She decides that she will have to ask her original parents about them in a letter.

**“Eating Chilli Peppers” text, 287**This essay by Jeremy MacClancy illustrates the power of good description writing. He

begins his essay by introducing the reader to the gastronomic experience of consuming hot pepper. The pepper he singles out in particular is the tabasco pepper.

Notice the second paragraph of his essay. He compares the pepper as being like aiming a flame-thrower at your mouth. He describes the eating experience in similar terms to obtaining critical mass for a nuclear explosion. In the aftermath of the pepper experience, you start tosweat. Your eyes water; your nose drips; your heart beat quickens. Exceed your body’s limit oftoleration and coughing, sneezing, and spitting result. He compares this experience to a fire breathing dragon returning to life. This paragraph is an excellent example of descriptive writing at its best. The five senses are clearly represented, and no doubt remains about the results of the hot pepper experience.

MacClancy continues talking about the effects, good and bad, of eating hot pepper. He even compares this practice of eating hot chillies to a mild form of masochism or self- punishment. He informs the reader that in some places, eating hot pepper can even be turned into a contest of strength. Regardless of whether the reader enjoys the sensation of spicy food,MacClancy’s essay gets the point of eating hot pepper across with good descriptive writing that almost enables the reader to taste the pepper itself.

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the following three will just be internet readings

1. "Internet Addiction" p. 131 (No class notes; for you to read and critique)

2. "Black Men and Public Space" p. 154 (No class notes; for you to read and critique)

3. "Right Place, Wrong Face" p. 233 (No class notes; for you to read and critique)