Essay #2: Rhetorical Analysis of an Argument

**Purpose:**

A rhetorical analysis examines and explains how an author attempts to influence an audience. That is, rhetorical analyses use specific evidence from the text to establish a generalization (thesis) about the text’s rhetoric (in short, how it persuades its audience by employing the rhetorical appeals, using good reasons, constituting a fitting response, and using the available means to reach an audience). As you plan and draft your analysis, think about the rhetorical situation of your writing and how to best reach your specific audience.

**Directions:**

Use the article that you chose to write on for Essay #1 as the basis for this essay.

But rather than summarize the article, ***analyze the rhetorical strategies the writer employs*** ***in their argument, determining whether this writer was effective in communicating their specific purpose to their specific audience.*** Assume you are writing for an audience who has already read the text.

**Specifics:**

* Remember: your purpose is to **provide a way of understanding how the article persuades its audience.**
* There are several ways to approach writing this essay, however, I recommend you begin by figuring out the rhetorical context of this article (author, purpose, audience, occasion, larger topic). While your does/says statements (from Week 1) that led you to the article’s summary will definitely remain important, use this information to move past summary into the *why* ofrhetorical appeals (logos, ethos, pathos, kairos).
* Due to the length restrictions of the paper, you do not have time to discuss every strategy the writer uses. Your thesis should be strategic and persuasive, as well as narrow enough to support the information you wish to include.
* Your chosen article is the only source you should consult. Any quotations or source incorporations that are not present in your chosen article, but used as evidence, will be docked.

**Structure/Organization:**

I. Introduce the article by giving context and identify its basic claim.

A. Ask what will help your readers understand how the article works to persuade its audience. Consider what type of argument it presents and how it goes about creating that argument (rhetorical appeals and theory).

***Think about:*** How does the writer establish credibility, present evidence, use counterarguments/rebuttal, draw the audience in with tone, word choice, and avoid bias? Is there something the writer fails to do?

B. Thesis. Provide **your** stance (without using, “In this essay, I will” statements; use a strong thesis). Again, this claim should communicate the main ways the article rhetorically persuades the audience and **makes a judgement about its rhetorical effectiveness.**

II. Throughout the body of your paper, use specific examples for your chosen article to support your claims. This is where taking notes or re-visiting the article is key, **as you will need some direct quotes as well as paraphrases and summary**. Arrange the body of your paper so that the readers move through it in an orderly way.

III. Conclude in a way that seems fitting for your claim and presented evidence.

**Length + Format:**

* 3-4 pages double-spaced (about 800-1,000 words); do not exceed 4 full double-spaced pages.
* MLA formatting is required. *In-text citations and full citation of the article* (no other sources outside of it) are expected.

**Deadlines:**

Saturday of Week 2: Rough Draft (2.5 pages for full credit)

Saturday of Week 3: Final Draft with Works Cited entry (full citation of article)