

Project 1: Defining Gossip, 3 Ways



Purpose/Goals: This project will invite students to begin crafting their own definitions and conceptions of what Gossip means to them as well as how it is situated socially and culturally. In addition to addressing one of the central themes of this course, this project creates the space in which students can use creativity to engage with multiple media and modality that position the composing process both inside and outside of traditional academic discourse. By composing in multiple media through multiple modes, students will explore the different ways their voices as writers/creators/composers/designers take shape.

The Assignment: This project requires the incorporation of three different media through which students will establish a well rounded definition of Gossip with a balance of their personal understanding as well as the texts we read for Unit 1. Each student must compose in the following media/genres:

- A “traditional” essay (**1250 words**) for an academic audience; you decide the gender distribution of your audience.
- A comic strip (**6+ Panels**) for one of the following audiences: a) Middle Schoolers b) Elementary Students c) High School Students; you decide the gender distribution of your audience.
- A third way, students can choose any form to compose in: podcast, newsletter, pamphlet, video, dance, music, short story, Facebook page, photo collage, and the list goes on. If you can compose it, then you can choose it. However, the majority of the components should be created by you instead of creating a mash-up/remix. You decide and define your own audience...Society/People/The Community is not narrow enough.

Each text should convey the same purpose (defining gossip) and consider the audience to which you are composing; however, you should adhere to the conventions of the medium in which you are composing. Be aware of how you define your audience and how you intend to connect to them. The length requirements of the third medium will vary depending on your selection. Plan to discuss this at your individual conference with me. The focus of each project is essentially the same: Define/Explain/Position gossip as you see it, and in connection to the texts we have read that define/position gossip. Consider the following questions to help you conceive of your definitions:

- How do you define Gossip? Why? What experiences inform this? What music? What Movies? What TV shows?
- How does cultural and social experiences inform this? What about social media?
- What are the core concepts defining gossip by the scholars that we have been reading?
- Where do you agree and disagree with these “Scholarly” notions? How does this challenge you to re-examine your definitions?
- What is gossip? What isn’t gossip? How do you know? Does context/rhetorical situation matter?
- How does gender fit into this conversation?
- In what ways will you address your audiences? How can you convey the same message in different media to different audiences? What are the challenges here? How can you make the challenges work to your advantage?

Remember, you will submit each draft to the corresponding draft submission (P1,D1; P1,D2; P1, D3) as a PDF. If you are hand drawing your comic strip a digital copy is not necessary until draft 3, and your third medium could appear in a variety of ways that we will discuss. Each time we workshop, you will **at least** submit drafts of the “traditional essay” digitally to BB; other media drafts may be hard copy or project stages in the programs that you are using. The traditional essay will be the first component we work on. Then you will “remediate” the content into your other media. Once your project is complete (to be included with draft 3), you will compose a **“Rhetorical Rationale” of at least 750 words**, which will explain the choices you made to create each component of this project; this piece of reflective writing will help me and your readers understand your decisions and show what you think you did.

Project Duration: 4 Weeks; Final drafts due inside the E-portfolio.

Workshop Dates:

September 3rd--Traditional Essay

September 5th--Comic Strip StoryBoard

September 10th--All three Media/Genres

September 24th--All three, final Workshop

Conference Week: September 23rd-27th. All draft submissions, regardless of conference date, due Sunday September 22 @ 5:00 PM via Blackboard.

