

Optional Final

Hist 150c6

Handed Out: May 12, 2015

Due: May 12, 5:00pm

Place copy in D. Gibbs mailbox, in Social Sciences 215

Select an opinion article from the *New York Times* or another reliable newspaper on any current political topic from the past three years. Write a 3-5 page, double-spaced paper that analyses the argument, noting the argument's main theme; the premises and evidence presented to support the theme; and the logical fallacies or uses of manipulative language (if any). Above all, I would like you to evaluate whether the argument is persuasive and valid, according to the rules of logic. Your paper should summarize the main points of the article, so that I and my teaching assistants will understand the content.

Suggestion: You can look for articles by specific *New York Times* columnists including Paul Krugman, Maureen Dowd, Nicolas Kristof, Thomas Friedman, Gail Collins, or David Brooks. Or you can use articles by other writers or from other publications if you prefer.

You should then do some of your own research, regarding the opinion piece you are evaluating. Find an additional three (or more) articles pertaining to the subject, in order to check the facts and more fully to evaluate the writer's argument; and also to see whether the writer has omitted or glossed over important evidence that contradicts his or her thesis. When citing your sources, make sure to use proper footnote style.

Use [ProQuest Newstand](#) or some other database to locate the article you will analyze, as well as additional materials to support your analysis.

Make sure to attach copies of the articles you are discussing to your own paper. Also attach your graded second midterm paper (so I can verify that your optional final paper is not just a recycled version of your second midterm).

You will be graded based on how well you analyze the article in question; how well you apply the rules of logic and argumentation; how thoroughly you research the topic; and how clearly you write your essay.

Please cite your sources using Chicago Style. For a guide on how to use Chicago Style, [click here](#).