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On the World's Stage

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The Multiple Genre Argument

Research in Progress for ENGL 1301: Composition I

Faculty Mentor: W. Scott Cheney, Ph.D.

The following papers represent research work begun by students in English 1301, the first course in the two-semester composition sequence at Collin College. Students in 1301 are introduced to the concept of academic research by learning to ask research-focused questions and then use the library resources to find sources that provide answers.

In what follows, students have written creative research-based essays called Multiple Genre Arguments. When we experience controversial issues in our everyday lives, no one hands us a ten-page research paper that outlines the issues and tells us what to do. Instead, we have to wade through the controversy and the corresponding piles of paper to figure out what the issues really are and how we should best respond to them.

In a Multiple Genre Argument (MGA), the author creates this context—the collection of material that constitutes the paper trail surrounding a specific issue. During this process, the author becomes familiar with *all* sides of the issue and ultimately has to choose the most convincing side of the argument. Though an MGA includes some traditional academic forms, the point of the project is to create a tangible context surrounding a specific controversy.

In their book *Multiple Genres, Multiple Voices*, Cheryl Johnson and Jayne Moneysmith explain in more detail what an MGA looks like:

In a [Multiple Genre Argument], writers create an argument that explores alternative perspectives by using multiple genres written from different points of view. Genres might include a letter, a dialogue, a report, or even a poem—in addition to the traditional essay. Students bolster their argument with research that is reflected within these genres, creating an “organic” whole, though the “whole” may not be linear. By combining an array of voices, with the rigor of scholarship, the [Multiple Genre Argument] offers a fresh and powerful approach to research and argument.

Their idea of “combining an array of voices, with the rigor of scholarship” sums up the purpose of the MGA. To say it another way, the project presents the ideas of all sides of the issue and adds scholarly research to make one side of the argument the most convincing.

James Popiolek

W. Scott Cheney

ENGL 1301

25 November 2014

On the World's Stage

I. Diary of a Young Girl: Afghanistan

It has been three days since our village was destroyed. Al-Qaeda came in, laying waste to our families and kidnapping our villagers for their cause. The only reason I survived was because I am a little girl; the men of Al-Qaeda have no use for me. Standing in the rubble of my former home, I thought that life for me was over. How could I continue my life when even the meager amount of possessions I had was destroyed? That's when the man came. He was wearing camouflage and carrying a large gun, and he had a flag sewn on his shoulder. That's when I realized this man was an American—the kind of person I was told to hate. I expected him to have this hatred for me, but he did not. He gave me food and clothing, and his group was able to set up some shelter for my family and me. One of my kinsmen was able to communicate with them, and he was able to express the American language to us in a way that we could understand. However, spoken language was not needed as he and his fellow soldiers mostly communicated with their kindness.

These “evil” men have shown us nothing but compassion since they have arrived. The American soldiers do not come to our country to destroy but to protect. They are here to help us not to fight us. Their aid to my village has been more than I've ever

witnessed, even among my own clan, and it is beyond a level that I even thought possible. My village and I are forever indebted to these American soldiers, and I do not know why some of my people teach us to hate them.

II. Anti-War Sermon: New York City

Brothers and sisters, can you remember the last time you did something nice for someone? Perhaps you made a donation or you paid for someone's drink behind you in a restaurant. As good Christians we must exhibit kindness and compassion on those who exist alongside us. Mark 12:31 tells us, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (ESV), and Matthew 5:38-45 instructs us to "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you" (ESV). But in our culture today, it is extremely difficult to do this. It is easy to love our neighbor when they are being nice, but what did you do to the last person that cut you off on the highway? I bet you didn't buy them a drink at your local coffee house! But all humor aside, it is imperative that we hold dear Christ's commandments to us, or great deeds of evil will befall our world.

One such evil is war. My friends, why is it that we feel the need to massacre our own kind? After all, "the treatment of Christians in [other] countries" is absolutely horrendous and do we not all believe in a God (Rubin)? How can we possibly justify children of the same Father mercilessly fighting each other for nothing but the advancement of our petty earthly desires? We must live Psalm 34:14, as it tells us to "Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it" (ESV). Nothing good comes out of war, my fellow believers, and it is up to us to stand up to this horrendous concept. To

bring the light of the Lord onto our world, we must live out the Bible in our daily lives. We should not only encourage our fellow humans to spread love in their community, but, as disciples of Christ, we also are obligated to spread His love worldwide. Write letters to your Congressman or Congresswoman against the war. Protest the draft; do not allow your sons and daughters to be involved in this dangerous and violent game. Reject the evil intentions of our country against its enemies, and shun your evil desires against your neighbors. Doing these things are the only way that we may hope to present ourselves as true followers of our Lord and Savior. May God bless you all as you go out into your daily lives.

III. Radio Interview: U.S. Foreign Ambassador and Host

Host: Good evening, everyone, and welcome to the ENGL 1301 Radio Station! Today, we are going to change it up a little bit with an interview, and boy, is it going to be a good one. I have Michael Samson, a United States Foreign Ambassador, on the show today to clear up some misconceptions and address some of YOUR thoughts on American Foreign Policy. How are you doing today, Mr. Samson?

Samson: Oh please, call me Michael. Thank you for having me! I'm just happy to be here and excited to have the opportunity to speak to the American public. I'm looking forward to answering everyone's questions.

Host: Okay, Michael, let us dive right into it. Chad from Los Angeles has a complaint. He

is arguing that America is allocating too much of our budget to foreign aid; he does not really know any numbers, but he knows the government has spent a lot. Why is such a large part of our budget foreign aid?

Samson: It is interesting that Mr. Chad brings that up. Did you know that most “Americans believe 25% of the federal budget goes to foreign aid” when “in reality, less than 1% of the budget goes to foreign aid” (“U.S. Foreign Aid”)? This misconception causes many Americans to resent our politicians; they think that the money that should be helping them is going overseas. However, in light of this statistic, I would dare to say that we could actually be giving more to foreign aid efforts.

Host: That is certainly a fascinating statistic; thank you for sharing! Putting our foreign spending in perspective probably helps a lot of people’s ill feelings towards our budget. Now, another listener from Orange County is wondering how much of an impact our efforts have. She argues, “in more corrupt nations, politicians and civic leaders are often charged with misappropriating funds designated for the people” (Bonasso). Mr. Samson, are we really accomplishing anything with our foreign aid?

Samson: Well, I cannot deny that other countries misuse our money sometimes. This is an inevitable occurrence. However, the impact we make despite this misuse is profound. For instance, “3 million lives are saved through...immunization programs,” and “literacy rates are up 33 percent worldwide in the last 25 years” (“U.S. Foreign Aid”).

Host: Wow, that's incredible!

Samson: Yes, and did you know that, "since 1990, more than 1 billion people [have] gained access to clean water" ("Impact of Foreign Assistance")?

Host: Amazing! We are really making a difference in the world, aren't we, Michael?

Samson: Absolutely. Even with the small percentage of money we send to other countries, we are making others' lives significantly better.

Host: Well, Michael, we are out of time, but thank you so much for coming in today. You certainly opened my eyes to all the great things we are doing overseas. On behalf of my listeners and me, thank you; you did a great job informing us about American foreign policy.

Samson: It was my pleasure. Thank you for having me. I am glad you learned a little something about our foreign policy!

IV. Opinion Columns

"Bring Our Boys Home!" – May 2010

Today, I feel that it is important to discuss a topic that is no doubt heavy on all of our minds. This topic is the recent outbreak of war that our country is now experiencing.

How can we send our young people off to places where heinous deeds such as “the bombing of the Khobar Towers” and “car bomb[s]” occur (Dris-Aït-Hamadouehe)? We cannot respond to aggression with more aggression; we need to bring our troops home and let these foreign countries settle things amongst themselves. I have a son who is in the United States Army, currently serving in the Middle East. Every day I worry for his life, and I pray for him and for his wife and children who are left without him. I urge you all to strongly oppose your children joining the military. War serves no purpose except to enact senseless violence on the human population. I pray that none of you have to ever feel the inevitable anxiety and fear that overwhelms you when your child is at war.

– Margaret

“Our Military is a Blessing” – June 2010

Before I start, I would like to say to anyone who has a child enlisted that my heart goes out to you. In my family, my daughter and my son both decided to join the military. I also would like to formally thank your children for their service. The courage they show every day is something I am truly grateful for and will likely never understand. Now, with all due respect, I would like to humbly disagree with some of your assumptions. War is not about violence and death. War is about those who know what is right stopping the advances of those who do not. For instance, during the Cold War, “the Reagan Administration was eager to have the Japanese take up specific military tasks in...strategy against Soviet expansionism” (Hasegawa). Our alliance did not fight the Soviets because we felt a lust for blood; instead, we fought to keep the peace and

protect our countries. So, in essence, war is about peace. War is about the sacrifices of brave individuals who have a calling to help people. Of course, I worry about my children every day, but I know that they have joined a noble cause and are out doing good for this world. Please send me an email at steve62@yahoo.com if your children are away and you need help. I would love to help support you through all this. God bless you!

– Steven

V. Letter Back Home

Dear Mom and Dad,

I miss you guys! Everything started moving so fast once I was deployed. I started off in basic training, learning some basic maneuvers and how to use a gun, but it did not seem like long before the military sent me overseas. War is unlike anything I have ever seen before. I did not know that people could harbor such hostility towards each other, and no amount of training or preparation could have prepared me for what I am facing here. The environment can only be described as volatile, and “mistrust on both sides” of our alliances along with the “gross violations of human rights” here does not help matters at all (Javaid). However, I cannot forget why I am here, and that is to “rid off the terrorism” that plagues the Middle East (Javaid). Although certainly bad is happening here, there is also so much good that people fail to recognize when they talk about this war. American soldiers are making inroads to establishing a sort of democracy in some of these places. We are “fighting the bad guys” as one child simply told me after we drove the terrorists out of her family’s encampment and into the mountains.

I know that you worry about me a lot, but I assure you, that everything will be okay. I am here because I am proud to be a citizen of our amazing country, and I wish to spread the peace and other things that we take for granted at home around the world. That is why I fight. Tell my beautiful Bethany that I love her and my little Benjamin that I will see him soon. Also, I am thinking about you and Pop all the time. Hope you guys are doing all right. I will see you in a little while. I love you!

– Johnny

VI. Newspaper Article

“AN ASIAN ALLIANCE!”

By Nathaniel Jones

Northeast Asia is coming out of “turmoil as the most dynamically developing region in the world” and is now the cause of an alliance between the United States and Korea (Mon-soon). Some experts are now unsure of what will happen, as “Northeast Asia is marked by political and security uncertainties that inherently lurk behind the region’s dynamic growth” due to a sudden interest in the area by some large countries, namely Russia and China (Mon-soon).

However, Song Mon-soon, a speaker who came to Harvard College, believes a Korean–U.S. alliance is necessary to ensure stability in a region that is experiencing a turbulent time. He believes this cooperation will ensure peace on the world’s stage for at least the foreseeable future. The alliance will allow the U.S. to mobilize troops to defend the area against potential invasions, as well as to open a peaceful political network

between Asia and America.

Despite the uncertainty of some, politicians on both sides of the alliance are feeling incredibly hopeful. Because both countries already have fought long and expensive wars, they hope that this alliance as a preventative measure will bring a degree of peace and stability to the globe. Leaders on both sides agree that the conflicts should be prevented at all costs, and they hope this alliance will prevent any tension from erupting.

The foreign policy of the U.S. is to help those in need. If the U.S. sees a problem, we mobilize whoever or whatever we need to solve that problem, whether we provide humanitarian aid for an epidemic or military support to stabilize or defend a region. Throughout time, the U.S. has proven a foreign policy that is beneficial to the globe, and this new alliance is just another way for us to say, "We are here to help."

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