

COMM/FILM/PCUL 2F00: New Media Literacy
Assignment Two (A2) - 25%
A1 Final Due Date: Fri, Apr 7th at 11:45PM.

DESCRIPTION: For this assignment you will write an editorial response to Jon Ronson's piece, "How One Stupid Tweet Blew Up Justine Sacco's Life." <http://nyti.ms/2i6ghVZ>

LENGTH: minimum 900 words and maximum 1000 words

PURPOSE: The purpose of the assignment is to compose a persuasive response to Ronson's piece based on your opinion and with support from facts. It is an exercise in:

- learning another's standpoint, how to assess it critically, and determine your own
- evaluating credible facts and support of your opinions and standpoint
- developing a strong argument with facts to support it
- concise and persuasive writing

SUBMISSION: Upload your assignment via Sakai. Go to "Assignments", click on Assignment 2, and click on 'Add Attachments'. You will upload your assignment as a single file.

PARAMETERS:

- Your whole assignment must be uploaded as a single .doc file, or as a single .pdf file.
- Mac users: you can convert a Pages document into a word .doc by going to the menu bar and choosing: 'File' – 'Export' – 'Word'.
- Files that cannot open and/or incorrect files will receive a grade of 0.
- We will not be tracking down assignments: you must submit properly, on-time.
- Check and double check to ensure that the file is attached and is the correct file. After submitting, definitely review your submission so you can see/confirm the file.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that you have uploaded your file into Sakai. You have a maximum of five re-submission attempts BEFORE the deadline passes.
- Late assignments are not accepted will receive a grade of 0 (unless there is medical documentation).
- Assignments sent via e-mail will receive a grade of 0.

A GUIDE TO THE EDITORIAL

What is an editorial?

- Generally speaking, an editorial is a letter or an opinion published in a newspaper.
- Editorials can be written about anything and from any standpoint. A strong editorial incorporates facts to support opinions.
- Look at some online Editorials from main newspapers to get an idea:
 - The New York Times: <http://nyti.ms/1SqmV4e>
 - The Globe & Mail: <https://tgam.ca/2iV3B1s>
 - The Toronto Star: <http://on.thestar.com/2cmCibf>
- As you read through a few editorials consider, the following questions:
 - What is the opinion/call to action in the editorial?
 - What evidence is used to make/support its argument?
 - How persuasive is it? Is it effective?
 - What do you notice about the language and tone of the editorial?

How do I begin?

- Start by reading Ronson's piece a few times.
- As you're reading it, think through the following queries: What is/are the central argument(s) presented by Ronson? What facts are used to support these? What are potential gaps or weaknesses in the argument?
- If there are things (references, words, etcetera) you're unfamiliar with in the editorial, look them up. Understand Ronson's piece inside out: understand it very deeply.
- Ask yourself: What stands out for me? What do I find interesting? What angers or excites me? Do I agree with Ronson's take on the issue(s)? What is my take?
- The focus of your editorial is for you to decide.
- You might base your editorial on the Sacco case, or one of the other examples Ronson mentions, or, you might want to share your opinion on public shaming on social media (but be clear).
- The editorial is based on your opinion, but opinion(s) must be supported by facts. Your facts must be drawn from reliable outside sources: this means you must find sources other than Ronson's editorial. You must include at least four reliable outside sources . You should consider linking some of your discussion to course themes and concepts we've discussed, and citing appropriate course reading.

Develop a 'thesis'

- Please don't get bogged down by the word 'thesis'.
- Think of the thesis as the main point(s)/arguments of your editorial. Ask yourself: what opinion(s) am I persuading my reader towards?
- You need to have a clear sense of your thesis before you begin writing.

Background Information

- Once you decide on your main point(s)/arguments, you will need to do some background research to support your opinion(s).
- For instance, perhaps you disagree with Ronson's treatment of public shaming on social media. What points do you disagree with specifically? What is your take on these points? Use facts to support your opinion/argument.
- Alternatively, you might agree with Ronson's examination of public shaming on social media. What points do you agree with specifically? Why these points? How can you expand on these points in support of Ronson? To do this you will need to bring in additional facts in support of your agreement with Ronson, drawn from outside sources.
- Think of it this way: facts support your opinion, and build a persuasive argument for your reader. While two is the minimum number of outside sources required, I would suggest that you gather as many facts from sources as is necessary in order to make your argument a highly persuasive one.

EDITORIAL STRUCTURE

- A good editorial presents a clear position that is strongly and persuasively argued.
- A good editorial is organized. Plan its structure in advance.
- A good editorial is succinct: it is clearly expressed, easily understood, and to the point.
- Write clearly, integrate facts with your opinion(s) and adhere to spelling and grammar.
- Your editorial will have an original title created by you, something other than "Editorial" or "Assignment 2." Think of a title that grabs attention and captures your piece's spirit.
- The New York Times' editorial page editor Andrew Rosenthal provides seven tips for writing an effective editorial. Listen very closely to [what Rosenthal says in the video](#) .

Introduction

- Briefly summarize the Ronson piece in a few sentences.
- Explain how your editorial offers points of departure from Ronson (in other words, explain the ways your editorial is different than his), creating an original argument.
- Briefly explain the focus of your piece. What is its point? Why should your reader continue reading? Your introduction is meant to hook the reader and draws them into your editorial.

Body

- The body of the editorial should develop three main points/arguments. Each of these three main points/arguments are to be presented as separate paragraphs (but linked to each other, as the argument should flow).
- Each point/argument must be clearly outlined and supported by facts (from sources).
- Organize your points from weakest to strongest. Your points get stronger as you go on.

Conclusion

- In a few sentences, briefly reiterate the main arguments of your editorial. A reiteration is not a restatement: you are not just repeating yourself - you are emphasizing clearly.
- Your conclusion is one last attempt to convince the reader of your 'thesis' (i.e. the main point/argument of your editorial). You are making a last attempt to win them over.
- At the end, you want to keep the reader hooked and offer them something: a call to action, food for thought, or a contextualization of the argument in a larger context.

Reference List

- You must cite the sources of the 'facts' or support used in the editorial (minimum of four). You must cite properly in APA format. A Reference list must be provided, and is also formatted in [APA style](#).

Important Notes:

- You are required to stay within the minimum and maximum word count or you will be penalized a half a mark.
- Do not use any direct quotes in your module submissions. Instead, rephrase and cite properly, or you will be penalized a half a mark
- Please pay attention to your writing style - grammar and punctuation matter. Have someone proofread your work. Watch your typos & autocomplete, especially if you're working on mobile devices.
- You must include at least four reliable outside sources. You must cite the sources you use in APA format, and include an APA formatted Reference List of works cited in the submission.
- Submissions that do not cite material properly will not be accepted and will result in a zero.

- Please name your A2 file properly with course number, last name, and assignment name. For example: 2F00KennedyA2.doc
- Students are responsible for ensuring that their assignment was successfully submitted and accepted. Double check that you have submitted your assignment (logout/in and check). You have more than enough time to complete this assignment and submit well before the due date. DO NOT wait until the last minute to submit your assignment.
- We will not accept late submissions via email from students detailing personal technical issues. You must have the correct technology to take this course. Waiting until the last minute is not recommended.

GRADING RUBRIC

A

Top of the class.

The editorial covers all that is specified and does so with astute clarity and precision.

There is a logical progression of opinion, ideas and information.

Facts are incorporated to support opinions/arguments.

Supporting evidence/facts are reliable and credible. Makes clear connections to course themes.

The writing is clear, and the editorial is organized and engaging.

Citing and reference list follows APA style.

B

The editorial covers all that is specified to meet the criteria well.

There is a progression of opinion, ideas and information, but the structure is loose.

Facts are incorporated to support opinions/arguments.

Supporting evidence/facts are mostly good. Makes loose connection to course themes.

The writing is clear, but riddled with minor errors.

Minor issues with citing format or minor formatting issues in reference list.

C

The editorial somewhat covers what is specified, but needs some work.

The presentation of opinion, ideas and information requires more focus and detail.

Facts are somewhat incorporated to support opinions/arguments.

Supporting evidence/facts are questionable. Weak connection to course themes.

The structure of the editorial is disorganized and riddled with errors.

Several errors with citing format and formatting issues in reference list.

D

The editorial disregards the requirements.

The presentation of opinion, ideas and information is unfocused and lacks detail.

Few facts are incorporated to support opinions. No connection to course themes.

The structure of the editorial is disorganized and riddled with errors.

Numerous errors with citing format and formatting issues in reference list.

F

The assignment does not meet basic acceptability expectations in multiple ways. Such lack of due effort and/or lack of due adherence to instructions merits failure.