Exercise 3: Evaluating a Text | Due: Sept. 11

Goal:
The goal of this exercise is to practice evaluating and analyzing sources, to better understand a conversation we are investigating.

Assignment:
Being part of a conversation involves more than voicing your own opinion or simply repeating what others have said. We must learn to analyze and think critically about our sources, so we can use them in a strategic yet responsible way. **Your assignment is to analyze a source relevant to your topic (your Big Question) and present an examination of what strategies the author deploys to achieve their rhetorical objective and frame the conversation, as well as an evaluation of the source's credibility and relevance within the conversation.**

The final product should do the following, in **one to two double-spaced pages** (12-point Times New Roman font, one-inch margins on all sides, no extra space between paragraphs, no superfluous spacing)**:**

- Introduce your source, identifying the author and publication, and its relevance to the topic/conversation you are researching;
- Present the findings of your analysis of the source's intended audience, purpose, genre, tone, rhetorical devices, etc., as well as its credibility and relevance;
- Lead readers to a conclusion about the ways in which the text/author makes their argument and shapes understanding of your topic;
- Identify the strengths and limitations of the argument and the extent to which you find it rhetorically effective or ineffective, and how the text fits into the larger conversation;
- Present sufficient and relevant evidence/examples from the text to support your analysis (with appropriate quoting/paraphrasing and citations).

Invention and Inquiry:
In preparing this assignment, select a source that you have collected related to your topic that brings you closer to your **Big Question** (preferably one that seems to be making an argument or taking a stance on the topic). Explore the context in which the document was published (author, publication source and platform, publication date, socio-cultural and political environment, etc.) **Remember that you are not taking a position on the topic but making a claim about how your source argues *their* position on that topic and its effectiveness**.

Analyze the source according to rhetorical methods discussed in class, with particular emphasis on the author's argument and evidence, use of language, intended audience, purpose, genre, tone, rhetorical devices, etc. Annotate the text and make notes about the ways in which the author deploys rhetorical strategies to achieve a particular objective given the situational and textual constraints.

Audience and Tone:
The audience is your instructor and your peers, that have some education and knowledge of the subject but not necessarily a deep understanding of it. Your tone should be informative, but not overly formal.

If you have any questions or concerns about this assignment, I encourage you to e-mail me or come see me during my office hours. Also consider visiting the Miller Writing Center for help.