Empowering Students to ‘Theme’ First-Year Writing: An Exploratory Essay Assignment

**THE THINGED TEXT**

- Identity-technology
- Identity-consumerism
- Resistance (and the risks)
- Environment (and consumerism)
- Awareness
- Gender roles and relations
- Class
- Race

**THE EXPLORATORY ESSAY**

“Identifying the issue” (see handout)
...in pedagogical and curricular contexts

**THE HANDOUT**

- Identifying the issue
- Contextualizing the issue
- Analyzing the issue
- Synthesizing the issue
- Evaluating the issue
- Writing the essay

**THE ISSUE**

- Identity-technology
- Identity-consumerism
- Resistance (and the risks)
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Empowering Students to ‘Theme’ First-Year Writing: An Exploratory Essay Assignment

THE SHARED TEXT

- Identity-technology
- Identity-consumerism
- Resistance (and the risks)
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“Identifying the Issue” (see handout) …in pedagogical and curricular contexts
Issues:
- Identity-technology
- Identity-consumerism
- Resistance (and the risks)
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"Identifying the Issue" (see handout)

...in pedagogical and curricular contexts
+ MY GOALS

- Generation of knowledge, co-creation
- Cultivation of community
- Student investment and ownership
- Writing to work through an issue
• introduce students to **different forms of college-level writing**, including, but not limited to, academic discourse, and guide them in writing for **different purposes and audiences**.
• provide students with guided practice of **writing processes**—planning, drafting, critiquing, revising, and editing—making effective use of written and oral feedback from the faculty instructor and from peers.
• help students develop **information literacy** by teaching search strategies, **critical evaluation** of information and sources, and **effective selection of information for specific purposes and audiences**; teach appropriate ways to **incorporate** such information, **acknowledge** sources and provide citations.
• help students **read texts** and **make use of a variety of sources** in expressing their own ideas, perspectives, and/or opinions in writing.
WHAT WORKED AND WHAT DIDN'T

- Generation of knowledge, co-creation
- Student investment
- Community

But (re: ownership and using writing to work through an issue...)

- Sometimes became too focused on source material in later stages of project and lost sight of their goals
- Sometimes didn't engage with source material to challenge conceptions and experiences articulated in first paper
- In sum, I'm still struggling to figure out how to help them bring themselves (their values, experiences, etc.) into conversation with scholarship. The separation of Paper 1 from research process may have reinforced that gap.
THANK YOU!

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