

Articles to Respond to:

- Diener and Hagen, “A Very Bordered World”
- Cantú, “Living on the Border: A Wound That Will Not Heal”
- Muñoz, “Leave Your Name at the Border”
- Tan, “Mother Tongue”
- Moyers and Alexie, “Sherman Alexie on Living outside Cultural Borders”
- Raviv, “If People Could Immigrate Anywhere, Would Poverty be Eliminated?”
- Golberg, “World Without Borders”
- DeVan Filer, “Our Most Famous Border: The Mason-Dixon Line”
- Scott, “Communication Strategies across Cultural Borders”
- Tam, “How it Feels When White People Shame Your Culture’s Food – Then Make It Trendy”
- Kapadia, “I Still Don’t Understand the Cultural Appropriation of Food”

From Graff & Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say*, “Chapter Four: Yes/ No/ Okay, But” (on Canvas)

Disagree—and explain why: (see **page 61** for templates)

- Consider that “the author’s argument fails to take relevant factors into account; because it is based on faulty or incomplete evidence; because it rests on questionable assumptions; or because it uses flawed logic, is contradictory, or overlooks what you take to be the real issue” (p. 59).
- Or you can disagree by “agree[ing] with the evidence someone else has presented but show through a twist of logic that this evidence actually supports your own, contrary position” (see p. 60).
- Remember: “You can single out for criticism only those aspects of what someone else has said that are troubling, and then agree with the rest” (p. 61).

I disagree with Bruenig and Stoker’s view that a \$2,920 check would “keep people out of poverty” because, as other experts have shown, poverty is not so easily escaped.

Gladstone contradicts herself. On the one hand, she argues that the “rags-to-riches” American dream is a myth. On the other hand, she provides us numerous examples of its reality.

Agree—but with a difference: (see **page 62** for templates)

- When agreeing, “it’s important to bring something new and fresh to the table, adding something that makes you a valuable participant in the conversation” (p. 61).
- Consider “point[ing] out some unnoticed evidence or line of reasoning that supports X’s claim...[it[ing]] some corroborating personal experience or a situation not mentioned by X...pointing out unnoticed implications or explaining something that needs to be better understood” (p. 62).

Hanauer’s charge that plutocrats need to do something about income inequality is extremely useful because it sheds light on a related issue: politicians who don’t do something.

Agree and disagree simultaneously: (see **page 65** for templates)

- “The parallel structure—“yes and no”; “on the one hand I agree, on the other I disagree”—enables readers to place your argument on the map of positions...while still keeping your argument sufficiently complex” (p. 65).
- Remember that your argument “can be tipped subtly toward agreement or disagreement, depending on where you lay your stress” (pp. 65).

+disagreement: Although I agree with Brooks up to a point, I cannot accept that people in the college-educated class are intentionally limiting the opportunities for children of other classes to “join their ranks.”

+agreement: Although I disagree with much that Brooks says, I fully endorse his final conclusion that the invisible barriers holding lower class individuals back have the most devastating effect on social mobility.

ENGL 1020 – ENTERING THE CONVERSATION ASSIGNMENT

Regardless of the discipline you choose to enter—Art History, Engineering, Philosophy, Biology, Law, etc.—you will need to learn how to take stock of the arguments people in that field have already articulated and discover ways to build upon their ideas, to enter the academic conversation with an argument of your own. While the content of debate in different disciplines may vary greatly, the way in which debate takes place is actually very similar across disciplines. The **Conversation Essay** offers you an opportunity to practice the rhetorical moves required to successfully engage in this sort of academic debate, whatever your field of interest (Grant Williams, 2014).

When writing for academic purposes, you are contributing to a larger conversation taking place among scholars. Therefore, you need to place your ideas within that larger conversation. What do others have to say about this topic and how does your contribution relate to, and extend, this larger conversation?

Choosing Your Topic: You can choose any of the articles we read in class to respond to (see back for full list). Pick an article that you're familiar with. It may be helpful to return to your summaries and see if they help remind you of your position on the article when you were reading it.

Developing Your Argument: Disagree, agree, or agree/disagree with the author's argument, or a particular aspect of that argument. You can do this by pointing out a gap, raising questions about, or extending the knowledge in some way of the author's argument (see back for more information and templates).

Audience: Like the rhetorical analysis, you should envision your reader as someone who has read the article you are responding to. *Do not get bogged down in summary.* Your goal is to persuade them of why you disagree, agree, or agree/disagree with the author.

Format: 4 (full) to 6 pgs. Type-written. One-inch margins. Double spaced. Times New Roman. 12-point font.

Organization:

Your paper should begin with 1-2 paragraph(s) that do the following:

- **Establish the larger conversation** by introducing your primary source's main argument. This is where you are showing the larger conversation taking place and what you are responding to in your paper.
- **Establish your position** by stating whether you disagree, agree, or agree/disagree and include your reasoning. This will help lead into your thesis. Your thesis should be clear, specific, and debatable. *Feel free to use any of the "They Say/I Say" templates from the reading, but do not feel like you are required to do so (see back for more information).*

The remainder of your paper will focus on constructing your own argument and should do the following:

- **Support your position** by explaining your position through sound reasoning and evidence. There are many ways you can structure your explanation. You can keep returning to the author's argument, responding to different aspects that you wish to refute or expand upon. Or you can carefully build your argument and return to your "yes/no/ok, but" position in your final paragraphs. Support for your argument doesn't have to be facts or direct quotations from other sources. It can rely on logic (logos) that is demonstrated through clear articulation.
- **Use other sources.** In addition to your primary source, ***you must use two other sources** to support your argument. You've read a number of articles this semester and should choose from these for your sources (see back for full list). *If you're struggling to find a way to use other sources in your paper, please contact me for suggestions.*
- **Conclude** your paper with a return to your thesis and closing thoughts on the issue.
- ***Works cited is required for this paper.** Proper citation will be factored into your score.