

Peer review

ENG 180, Section 040, Bradley Dilger

As was the case before: for this review, you will work directly with one other person. I will assign the review groups.

Criteria

Read each other's draft essays, and discuss the following questions. You will answer these questions in writing during the break—not today!

- 1) Mark any correctness errors which you see for correction—suggest improvements if you can, or underline or circle sections you have trouble understanding.
- 2) What is the argument of the essay? Is the argument apparent after the first paragraph or two?
- 3) Is the topic interesting or relevant? Why or why not? If not, how can it be made so? Explain in detail and make suggestions for improvement.
- 4) What rhetorical techniques are used? Are they successful? Why or why not?
- 5) Does the writer establish an effective *ethos*? How? If not, what can or should be done to build one?
- 6) Is the draft thoughtful? Does it make you think? Point out the most thought-provoking and interesting sentences. Does it seem like the writer cares about his or her work? Why or why not?
- 7) Does the essay have a good beginning, middle, or end, as defined by Hjortshoj? Why or why not? Comment on these parts of the essay. Which is the strongest? What could be done to improve them?
- 8) Does the draft, overall, meet Hjortshoj's definition of a good essay? Why or why not? If not, how can it be improved?
- 9) Is the writer's argument a success? That is, can you understand his or her argument and the reasons for making it so?
- 10) Does the draft follow MLA format, as established in *Reading Rhetorically*?
- 11) Conclude with any other comments or suggestions you have.

General guidelines

- ✓ This review is the first you will get for your draft. Mine will be the second.
- ✓ While you are expected to point out difficulties and make suggestions for improvement, try to praise your partner's work as well. Be honest, but don't be cruel.
- ✓ Don't defend your writing—keep quiet and listen to what your partner says about your essay. If you don't understand his or her critique, ask questions—but don't try to explain away problems found in your writing.
- ✓ Professional reviewers use a system of proofreaders marks to annotate writing they are editing. You don't need to do that; just try to be consistent.

- ✓ Number the paragraphs of your partner's work from start to finish to make commenting on the review easier. ("In paragraph six, you begin...")
- ✓ Don't write out your review today, but do it sometime during the break, to build on the discussions you finish today. Reading and understanding a draft takes time—returning later and re-reading, you will be a lot better critic.
- ✓ I am happy to help you and your partner today or by email during the break.

Expectations

If done well, peer review is challenging and time-consuming. You will need time today and some time during the break.

You need to do whatever work is necessary today to ensure you can turn in a finished review the Tuesday after the break—read the essay carefully, exchange contact information, discuss preliminary points for improvement, etc.

This review is worth 20 points. I will give more points to those whose reviews are exemplary. So the more you help, the better for you.

I will put a sample of an "A" quality review on the course web site soon.

On March 20, you must **bring two printed copies of your review to class**; one for me and one for your partner.