

RWS 200: Paper #2 Prompt

Identifying Demagoguery

Rough draft or Outline due: March 2

Final paper due: March 7, Posted to your [blog](#)

Length: 4 (full) Pages min. 6 pages max.

In Patricia Roberts Miller's short text ("Characteristics of Demagoguery") and her longer article ("Democracy, Demagoguery, and Critical Rhetoric") she outlines "standards for good public discourse" that support democratic decision making and reasoned debate. She contrasts this with forms of persuasion that are flawed, manipulative, appeal to fear or popular prejudice, and close down debate. In short, she presents a set of criteria for evaluating arguments. In this assignment, you will use concepts and arguments from a frame or "lens" text—specifically, Patricia Roberts Miller's writings—to analyze and evaluate a text of your instructor and your own choosing.



How to structure your paper

Part 1. Introduction

- Introduce Patricia Roberts-Miller, and her two texts.
- Introduce, and contextualize, the text you are analyzing
- Identify the audience that your text was intended for and why
- Explain how you will use Roberts-Miller's definitions and ideas as a "lens" to analyze your text.
- State your thesis, which should clearly explain how your work is demagogic, and why the rhetor utilized techniques of demagoguery in their argument

Part 2. The Body

In this section, you will identify 3-4 techniques of demagoguery, as identified by Roberts-Miller, in the text that you have chosen.

Make sure you:

- Start with a topic sentence for each the demagogic technique you are identifying.
- Explain, briefly, based on your understanding of Roberts-Miller's text, what this technique is, and how it usually works
- Analyze how the rhetor you have chosen has used it and why
- Analyze why the rhetor might have chosen this technique for the intended audience
- Finally, discuss whether this technique relies on Rhetorical Fallacies (be sure to identify which one)

Part 3: The Conclusion

- Consider your analysis in its entirety: what does it say about your text?
- Explain what it means and why it matters that your text is demagogic
- How has this text undermined reasonable debate and logical arguments (or has it)?

As always, the Modern Language Association (MLA) format is a must:

- Times New Roman or Soutane, size 12 font
- Double Spaced with 1" margins
- Page numbers
- Works Cited page
- **Stapled**

This assignment may require you to do a modest amount of general-knowledge research to get a better understanding of the speaker, speech, or context. Remember that you do not need to cite general-knowledge research in your paragraphs or the Works Cited page.