

RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION: MEDIA AND THEIR EFFECTS
ENGLISH 150-B & D
SPRING 2011

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN WORK

Unless otherwise directed, these guidelines should be followed when possible.

- 1) Assignments should be typed and submitted in hardcopy. Typed assignments should be double-spaced, use a standard 12-pt font, with one-inch margins at the top, bottom, left, and right of each page.
- 2) Each item submitted should have the following information in the upper left hand corner, double-spaced, and starting one inch from the top:
Your Name
Professor Walter
Course Number/Section
Assignment Title
Date Submitted
- 3) Essays should be given a title, centered, one double-space below the items in number 2.
- 4) Each page should have the last name of the student and the page number in the upper right-hand corner one-half inch from the top. (Use the header function of your word processor. If you're not sure how to insert a header, check your software's help system or ask me.)
- 5) All pages should be stapled together. Major writing projects should be turned in inside a folder with its supporting material as required (earlier drafts, peer reviews, prewriting, cited material, etc.)

Please see the reverse side of this document for a sample first page formatted using these guidelines.

Sarah Gunnarsdóttir

Professor Walter

English 150-B

Project 1 Peer-review Draft

5 September 2010

Towards a New Revived Canon of Memory

In 1965, with the publication of his celebrated *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, Edward P. J. Corbett sought to revive classical rhetoric as the basis for composition instruction in the United States. In the book's Preface, he argues that classical rhetoric is "still useful and effective" and suggests that it might even be a better system than the existing instructional systems currently in place (vii). After all, he notes, Renaissance schoolboys "were not as much intimidated by a blank sheet of paper as their modern counterparts are" (viii). Whether or not it is true that blank sheets of paper did not intimidate Renaissance schoolboys, there is no doubting the importance of Corbett's text. As important as Corbett's book is, however, its revival of classical rhetoric was really a revival of the canons of invention, arrangement, and style. Corbett had little to say about delivery and even less to say about memory, about which, he writes:

The fourth part of rhetoric was *memoria* (Greek *mnēmē*), concerned with the memorizing of speeches. Of all the five parts of rhetoric, *memoria* was the one that received the least amount of attention in the rhetoric books. The reasons for the neglect of this aspect of rhetoric is probably that not much can be said, in a theoretical way, about the process of memorizing; and after rhetoric came to be concerned mainly with written discourse, there was no further need to deal with memorizing. [. . .] The courses that one sometimes sees advertised in the newspapers or magazines—"I Can Give You a Retentive Memory in Thirty Days"—are modern