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Introducing Evidence and Argument in First Year Courses

Cortney S. Basham

Western Kentucky University, cortney.basham@wku.edu

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E&A Fellows Project for Charrette

Name: Cort Basham
Department: Interdisciplinary Studies – School of Professional Studies

Project Title.
Introducing Evidence and Argument in First Year Courses

Project Objective(s). Briefly describe the intent of the project.

1. Examine and distinguish between the different types of evidence including but not limited to personal experience, expert opinion, surveys, reliable documents, eyewitness accounts, research studies, and meta-analyses. This addresses E&A ESSENTIAL SKILL #1.
2. Equip students with a basic understanding of the different types of evidence used to form various types of arguments, assertions, theories, claims, and beliefs. This addresses E&A ESSENTIAL SKILL #1.
3. Develop students’ ability to recognize the evidential basis for various types of arguments used in and across academic disciplines as well as wider society and culture.

Project Description. Briefly describe intended activities, targeted courses/programs, and LIST PROJECT LEARNING OUTCOMES.

1. Students will engage and articulate basic definitions of the terms “evidence” and “argument.” Vincent Ryan Ruggiero’s text Beyond Feelings will be used as a core reading. Ruggiero focuses on critical thinking in this book, and it contains specific chapters entitled “What Is Truth?” (Chapter 3), “What Is Evidence?” (Chapter 6), and “What Is Argument?” (Chapter 7). I have used this text in upper level courses for many semesters with great success. They connect well with WKU E&A initiatives by providing a basis for understanding these concepts by defining these concept and providing “real world” examples of how they operate. For example, Chapter 7 (“What Is Argument?”) explains the component parts of an effective argument (premises, questions, assumptions, logical conclusions, and the like). Using these readings in the freshman year fosters understanding of these concepts as they relate to all three E&A ESSENTIAL SKILLS early in the students’ higher education experience.

2. Students will construct an annotated bibliography comprised of scholarly sources based on a selected TED Talk. Students will Use TED Talks as disciplinary perspectives on E&A and related concepts like truth and knowledge. For example, see Columbia University neuroscientist Stuart Firestein’s “The Pursuit of Ignorance”, in which he discusses what science is and is not. UC 175 already uses TED Talks in one core assignment, and applying the E&A language to the work they are doing on that existing assignment will deepen its connection to the QEP mission. An existing Library Skills Annotated Bibliography Assignment requires students to exercise the skills laid out E&A ESSENTIAL SKILLS #1.

3. Students will write a personal reflection which examines their own preferred sources of evidence. This helps students recognize their own biases, assumptions, and preferences regarding information sources as they relate to their existing lenses. Reading the chapters from Ruggiero coupled with assignments related to them addresses all three E&A ESSENTIAL SKILLS.

These measures cut across all courses in the IDST program (Interdisciplinary Studies [IDST]), but a valuable opportunity exists for it to be introduced at the freshman level in UC 175-UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE. The University Experience Program is housed within the IDST unit, and provides basic instruction on critical thinking, basic library skills, and many other issues relevant to students transitioning into higher education. About 1,200 WKU freshmen take UC 175 each academic year, and the core curriculum (especially acquiring basic library and research skills) dovetails nicely with the E&A ESSENTIAL SKILLS and with the objectives outlined above. These skills are presently addressed in the course, but this proposal outlines an intentional plan with a core set of readings and course content that will establish concrete connections with the new QEP.

These skills would flow into IDST courses more broadly as well. By definition, Interdisciplinary Studies aims to see complex phenomenon through various disciplinary perspectives in order to gather specific disciplinary insights and integrate them to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the issue at hand. IDST operates in cross-disciplinary ways in its very nature.
**Relationship of the project to E&A objectives and student learning outcomes. What specific E&A priorities are addressed?**

All three E&A outcomes are addressed by this project, with emphases on E&A SKILL #1. However, understanding the language of the QEP is a core goal which fosters greater understanding very existence and purpose of the E&A QEP.

**Anticipated plan for assessing project success and INCLUDE A RUBRIC OR RUBRICS (If applicable).**

Current rubric for the Library Skills Annotated Bibliography is below. I will likely make some tweaks to it in consultation with the University Experience coordinator.

I will post a rubric for the “Evidence Reflection” paper at a later time.

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**LIBRARY SKILLS ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ASSIGNMENT RUBRIC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for Evaluation</th>
<th>70pts.-60pts.</th>
<th>60pts.-50pts.</th>
<th>50pts.-40pts.</th>
<th>40pts.-0pts.</th>
<th>Points Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TED Talk Selection</td>
<td>Topic is sufficiently defined, focused and appropriate for a college-level research paper. Follows directions presented on the assignment handout.</td>
<td>Topic is less clearly stated and could be more focused.</td>
<td>The topic is not sufficiently defined or narrowed for the assignment.</td>
<td>Topic is not appropriate for the assignment or no topic is indicated.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography/Information Sources</td>
<td>All Bibliographic requirements are met including: *One Book *One Scholarly Journal Article *One Website *One Reference Source *Two other sources of the student’s choice (No Wikipedia)</td>
<td>Most requirements were met. May be lacking scholarly article or other required sources. (No Wikipedia)</td>
<td>Lacking substantial requirements such as scholarly articles or books. Too many websites. Includes Wikipedia and other non-scholarly information source.</td>
<td>Most requirements were not met. Not enough information sources. Sources do not comply with requirements. Includes Wikipedia as an information source.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annotations</td>
<td>Sources in resource list were critically evaluated. Student explains why each source was selected and how it is of value for the research topic. Annotations are at least three well constructed sentences.</td>
<td>Most sources in resource list were critically evaluated, appropriate, and demonstrated to be of value for the topic. Annotations are two-three sentences.</td>
<td>Student did not explain why some sources were selected. Sources (especially websites) may be of questionable quality, dated or inappropriate for college research. Annotations are one-two sentences.</td>
<td>Annotations are one poorly constructed sentence or no details were provided.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citations</td>
<td>A clear citation style (MLA, Chicago, APA) has been chosen and followed for each information source.</td>
<td>A citation style has been chosen and followed for most of the information sources but some inaccuracies may be present.</td>
<td>A citation style has not been chosen and followed for each information source. A mix of styles is present for each information source.</td>
<td>No citation style has been followed.</td>
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<td>Additional Comments</td>
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<td>Overall Score</td>
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</table>
All thinking has purpose and generates questions. Teaching and learning help us to become better thinkers by intentionally engaging in the questioning/answering/thinking process daily. It also affords us boundless opportunities to practice the vital process of critical thinking. In the end, the goal to foster adaptive, flexible minds which appreciate the complexity of life and “connect the dots” of being human. It should be said that this course is a reading- and writing-intensive course. Failure to engage in these activities will be detrimental to course performance and final grade.

Course Description:
This course allows for the direct application of an interdisciplinary approach to learning to a specific cultural topic or theme. Major theories and models of IDST, such as those set forth by academic specialists Julie Thompson-Klein, William Newell, and Allen Repko, will provide a foundation for exploring an overarching concept in an interdisciplinary manner. Students in the BIS degree have diverse scholarly backgrounds and emphasis areas of study, so you will learn how to integrate and collaborate in your individual research surrounding one concept. By confronting the same theme via your unique concentrations, you will foster a better understanding of what it means to work, study, and interact in an interdisciplinary manner.

This particular course will focus on the various ways humans have thought about the “end of the world” (hereafter referenced as “The End”) as a means for understanding IDST. This topic is interdisciplinary in nature, as many popular views on The End stem from religion, science, technology, geology, war, astronomy, biology, and the list goes on. In many cases, The End comes from an overlap of these areas. A few examples of these overlaps include God sending an asteroid to destroy the earth; nuclear fallout from a global religious war; technology paving the way for an Antichrist figure; or human choices leading to a global climate meltdown or massive pandemic. These scenarios and many others surface in popular culture of all sorts in the USA and elsewhere. In short, how people think about The End affects how they live in the present, and examining those realities provide rich ground for interdisciplinary thought.

Students in this course will investigate, discuss, and critique the issues, ideas, and theories relevant to interdisciplinary study. This is a research-intensive class that requires students to read, write, and participate in various ways. Especially important will be demonstrating the questioning, answering, and thinking process through the integration of multiple disciplines.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

- **Analyze the development of self in relation to others and society.** Each student will learn how interdisciplinary methods synthesize multiple perspectives and different backgrounds. This raises awareness of each person’s limited, but valuable perspective in larger conversations surrounding our complex world.

- **Examine diverse values that form civically engaged and informed members of society.** The student will demonstrate their interdisciplinary awareness of the main issue in a research portfolio or critical project. Intentionally selecting the most appropriate disciplines for a given phenomenon allows students to better grasp the underlying assumptions of various disciplines and cultures.

- **Evaluate solutions to real-world social and cultural problems.** The student will gain new insight through methods of integration toward the question at issue or research topic in ways that cannot be solved by one area of study. Achieving a deeper understanding of the complexity of one
phenomenon allows students a way to practice seeing other complex, real-world problems from various perspectives and effectively communicate the limits of disciplines and interdisciplinarity.

Readings

All required readings are posted as PDF files, handouts, or links on the Blackboard website for the course in accordance with Educational Fair Use standards. Note that some readings may have more than one file to keep the size of the file small and thus, easier to access. These will be clearly labeled on our Blackboard site. Completing all readings provides context for discussion boards and other assignments, and is vital to success in this course. These may include but may not be limited to the following:


-------------------. *Fallout*. Columbus, OH: The University of Ohio State Press, 1998. (Selected pages)


[http://webshare.northseattle.edu/IS/readings/The%20Role%20of%20Interdisciplinary%20Studies%20in%20Liberal%20Arts.htm](http://webshare.northseattle.edu/IS/readings/The%20Role%20of%20Interdisciplinary%20Studies%20in%20Liberal%20Arts.htm)

[http://dl.keywin.org/e/2/e2af12a66b80fb72fe75bd1f42cc8431.pdf](http://dl.keywin.org/e/2/e2af12a66b80fb72fe75bd1f42cc8431.pdf)

Trafton, Joseph L. *Reading Revelation*. Macon, GA: Smith & Helwys, 2005. (Selected pages)

In addition to required readings, each student will be responsible for reading and interpreting the articles, essays, and textual information gathered as part of their own research projects. Some of the course readings may serve as sources for the paper in certain situations.
Grading Policy:

All graded components are listed below. A detailed assignment description will be provided for each component at the appropriate time.

Ten one-page reading reflections (200 points total [20 points each])

Five Blackboard Discussion Boards (200 points total [40 points each]). These DBs will be set up for “class discussion” to happen over the course (generally, one per week). A student much post at least two substantive posts in each DB to get any credit. Full credit is earned by being a driver of questions, conversation, expounding on class readings, and other activity that contributes to the course.

Three Short Essays (300 points total [100 points for each of the three (2-3 page) essays])

- Essay #1: How Will It End? A Reflection on Personal Beliefs and Assumptions DUE: Sunday, October 16 by 11:59pm
- Essay #2: Reading Revelation: Imagery of The End in the New Testament Book of Revelation DUE: Friday, October 21, by 11:59pm
- Essay #3: Film Analysis (the chosen film must be approved by the instructor) DUE: Sunday, November 20 by 11:59pm

Colonnade Connections Assessment and Evidence and Argument Artifact
Final paper (6-8 pages, minimum of six scholarly sources) related to an instructor-approved complex phenomenon connected to The End (200 points total).

1. Research proposal (25 points). DUE: Wednesday, October 26 by 11:59pm
2. Initial Source List (25 points). DUE: Wednesday, November 9 by 11:59pm
3. Final paper (150 points). DUE: Sunday, December 4

Final Semester Reflection Paper (100 points)

1000 POINTS TOTAL

*LATE SUBMISSIONS WITHIN 24 HOURS OF THE DUE DATE CARRY A 10% PENALTY. LATE SUBMISSIONS WITHIN 24-48 HOURS CARRY A 20% PENALTY. NO WORK MORE THAN 48 HOURS LATE WILL BE ACCEPTED.

*The final paper will consist of a longer, more detailed essay (6-8 pages) with visuals or data presented in an attempt to wrestle with an interdisciplinary question regarding The End. The student must formally submit a proposal for research by the set deadline for instructor approval. After approval, the student must then compile an initial source list by the set deadline. Ultimately, these papers are meant to feature the student’s interdisciplinary methods of approach to their question and demonstrate work consistent with the course’s listed Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). There will be specific due dates and requirements for each stage of the project.

Each student will be responsible for completing all of the assigned materials to be able to actively participate (in a well-informed manner) in Blackboard discussions. Specific instructions and due dates will be given for each graded assignment.
Your participation is directly related to the success in this course (both individually and collectively). Success in this course consists of class contribution, written work, and various other assessments. Since the class is a building process, there are various costs related to missing any one reading or assignment. Circumstances will only be considered at the discretion of the professor with as much fairness as possible. Moreover, “patterns” of behavior often prove most telling regarding a student’s level of engagement in any given course. Therefore, strive to establish a pattern of consistency regarding all course components.

Grading will be based on the assessment of the student’s performance in completing each of the course requirements. Furthermore, all activity and submissions done via electronic technology are the sole responsibility of the student. That is, if you post something without the submission/text being recorded (like posting a document that cannot be opened or is empty), it is not a credit toward handing it in on time. Always re-check and make sure it posted correctly. Of course, your accessibility to Blackboard for course requirements and your navigation of the Internet for research, images, web links, articles and media files are all mandatory. Do not wait to check on accessibility to important course files or downloadable files from Library Internet sites until the last minute.

**Blackboard, Net-tiquette (Etiquette for Online Activities), and Online Policies**

For all written work, your responses should be done in a **college level writing** style (proper spelling and grammar) and clearly address the issues being discussed.

**Class emails will be sent via Blackboard to students – you must check and use your university registered email account for this class.** Please use proper headings (I.E., be specific in the subject line) and your name at the end for all emails. If you utilize an email address other than your WKU account, be aware that the professor’s university required filter for spam might not allow the receipt of your email. Additionally, unless requested by the professor, do not send email submissions in place of Blackboard assignments.

All information and readings shared via Blackboard by the professor and for student coursework will be “done for educational purposes only” to maintain copyright laws. However, the professor retains the rights to all personally created pedagogical materials for this course.

For ALL difficulties or problems with Blackboard, library access, software issues or hardware problems, you must pursue every avenue at hand before contacting the professor. Blackboard has a terrific “Help” section to assist you with this course and concerning the different technical issues or procedures. WKU’s Informational Technology website, [http://www.wku.edu/it/](http://www.wku.edu/it/) offers online help and video tutorials (there are videos just for helping you with Blackboard). Even their Helpdesk has a live chat or phone option (270)745-7000. Additionally, the WKU Library site, [http://www.wku.edu/library/](http://www.wku.edu/library/) has different help sections, including an online ask-a-librarian, to assist you with the location of materials.

**Writing Requirements:**

When working on the essays or the final project, think about how your writing exhibits your understanding of the material covered in the readings or other course activities. Use your critical thinking and various skill sets to draw your own conclusions. **Do not use non-adjudicated sources for any information in this course** – this includes websites like Wikipedia or Ask.com and the like.

Additionally, you will be expected to maintain professional attitudes regarding all aspects of your readings, written assignments, and outside research throughout the semester. In addition, I must remind you that **academic dishonesty of any sort will not be tolerated**. Please consult the WKU student code for references to academic dishonesty and disciplinary measures. If you take another person’s work or ideas and represent them as your own, it is considered plagiarism. If you have questions or concerns on writing or citing sources, ASK me. As we are working with the Internet for research on a regular basis – **always keep track of your**
sources – by including the website addresses with saved downloaded files or referenced material. You must practice becoming meticulous in documentation of your sources.

If you have questions concerning writing at the college level, I suggest contacting the WKU Writing Center or consult the website for all students at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/ for more information. In this class, and most all courses, student work will be checked by plagiarism detection software. Please think about how you utilize information in every course and never misrepresent or fail to give credit to outside sources in all of your writing. In other words, it must be your work.

Other Concerns:
The professor reserves the right to make any changes to the course or syllabus when necessary for attaining the course objectives within the semester timeline. All students will be notified in writing of all changes within a reasonable timeframe.

Reasonable accommodation will be provided for all persons with disabilities. For calendar and scheduling purposes, any necessary adaptation should be identified within the first week of the course. In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the WKU Office of Student Disability Services at the Student Success Center (DUC A200). The phone number is 745-5004; TTY is 745-3030. Per university policy, please do not request accommodations directly from the professor without a letter from the OFSDS. You may also contact them for questions and concerns.

Potential Film List for Essay 3: Film Analysis

| 12 Monkeys                      | Shawn of the Dead                  |
| 28 Days Later                  | Signs                               |
| Apocalypto                      | Soylent Green                       |
| Contagion                       | Terminator                          |
| Dawn of the Dead               | The Mission                         |
| Day After Tomorrow, The        | The Road                            |
| Deep Impact                    | WALL-E                              |
| Donnie Darko                   | War of the Worlds                   |
| Dr. Strangelove                | World War Z                         |
| End of Days                    |                                     |
| End of the World, The          |                                     |
| Gattaca                        |                                     |
| Ghostbusters                   |                                     |
| Hunger Games                   |                                     |
| I am Legend                    |                                     |
| Independence Day               |                                     |
| Left Behind                    |                                     |
| Logan’s Run                    |                                     |
| Love                           |                                     |
| Mad Max (original or new remake) |                                   |
| Matrix, The                    |                                     |
| Melancholia                    |                                     |
| Miracle Mile                   |                                     |
| Mission, The                   |                                     |
| Moon                           |                                     |
| Night of the Living Dead       |                                     |
| Outbreak                       |                                     |
| Planet of the Apes             |                                     |
| Red Dawn                       |                                     |
| Rise of the Planet of the Apes |                                     |
| Rosemary’s Baby                |                                     |
IDST 390: The Ends of the World: Final Paper

This assignment will serve as both the Colonnade Artifact and Evidence & Argument Artifact addressed in the Connections: Social/Cultural category.

This final project will consist of a longer, more detailed essay with visuals or data presented in an attempt to wrestle with an interdisciplinary question regarding The End.

1. The selected topic must be verified by professor prior to starting the project and approved after submitting a one-page research proposal. This proposal should communicate
   1) how this phenomenon is complex and requires IDST
   2) how this phenomenon constitutes an appropriate choice for this course; and
   3) which two or three specific disciplines will be employed by the student in the research with rationale for these choices.
   This component is due by 11:59pm on Wednesday, October 26. (25 points)

2. An initial source list must also be submitted for approval before moving into the final stages of completing the paper. Minimally, two distinct disciplines must be represented in the source list (minimum of six scholarly sources). Avoid DotCom sources, Wikipedia, Ask.com, and similar sites. Ultimately, these papers are meant to feature the student’s interdisciplinary methods of approach to their question.

   List each source following proper format (APA, MLA, or Chicago). Then, write two or three sentences which describe how this source will likely contribute to your final paper.

   This component is due by 11:59pm on Wednesday, November 9. (25 points)

3. The final paper should consist of the following sections (150 points):
   a. Introduction and establishment of the IDST phenomenon
   b. Rationale of chosen disciplines employed in the research
   c. Discussion of insights from discipline #1
   d. Discussion of insights from discipline #2
   e. Discussion of insights from discipline #3 (if applicable)
   f. Synthesis of disciplinary insights
   g. Discussion of connections to core IDST course readings (Repko, other)
   h. Attempt to apply new learning to larger social and cultural issues
   i. Conclusion and next questions

4. All papers must follow MLA, APA, or Chicago format. The default style for IDST scholars is APA, but if your prior major or emphasis area relies on one of the others you may use the style with which you are most skilled and comfortable. Follow all citation rules and refer to the Purdue OWL as a first source for all writing questions.

FINAL PAPER MUST BE UPLOADED BY 11:59pm on Sunday, December 4.
## GRADING RUBRIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connections Student Learning Objectives</th>
<th>1 (D or F)</th>
<th>2 (C)</th>
<th>3 (B)</th>
<th>4 (A)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Analyze the development of self in relation to others and society. (40 pts)</strong></td>
<td>Poor (does not meet basic expectations)</td>
<td>Competent (meets basic expectations)</td>
<td>Good (exceeds basic expectations)</td>
<td>Excellent (far exceeds expectations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Does not clearly recognize the value of disciplinary and IDST perspectives in broader cultural conversations surrounding complex phenomena</td>
<td>Recognizes the value of disciplinary and IDST perspective in broader cultural conversations surrounding complex phenomena</td>
<td>Attempts to communicate the value of disciplinary and IDST perspective in broader cultural conversations surrounding complex phenomena</td>
<td>Effectively communicates the value of disciplinary and IDST perspective in broader cultural conversations surrounding complex phenomena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examine diverse values that form civically engaged and informed members of society. (40 pts)</strong></td>
<td>Does not draw insights from at least two disciplines; and/or relies on weak sources</td>
<td>Draws insights from at least two disciplines from mostly strong sources</td>
<td>Draws insights from at least two disciplines from a strong set of sources</td>
<td>Draws insights from at least two disciplines from a strong set of sources and demonstrates an understanding of the value and limit of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluate solutions to real-world social and cultural problems. (30 pts)</strong></td>
<td>Does not attempt to synthesize insights</td>
<td>Attempts to synthesize insights of at least two disciplines</td>
<td>Effectively synthesizes insights from at least two disciplines and attempts to apply new learning to larger social and cultural problem</td>
<td>Effectively synthesizes insights from at least two disciplines and succeeds in applying them to larger social and culture problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sources (20 pts)</strong></td>
<td>Relies on DotComs and weak or very few sources of any kind</td>
<td>Relies on a mix of weak and strong sources</td>
<td>Uses strong, relevant sources and meets minimum number of required sources</td>
<td>Uses strong sources which are focused on the chosen disciplines and the issue at hand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Note: IDST stands for Interdisciplinary and Socially Transformed.
| Format (20 pts) | Haphazard and/or lack of citations or works cited page | Mostly follows APA, MLA, or Chicago citation format and lists all cited sources on a works cited page | Follows APA, MLA, or Chicago format with minimal errors; generally well-organized works cited page | Follows APA, MLA, or Chicago format consistently including the works cited page |
WHAT IS EVIDENCE?

Based on Chapter 6 of Vincent Ruggiero
BEYOND FEELINGS
9th edition
CHAPTER 6: WHAT IS EVIDENCE? 1

- What is truth?
  - Exercise: Write a truth statement
  - Bacon “Causes” Cancer

- What is proof?

- What is evidence?
  - “Being shown instead of told” (Ruggiero 73)
  - Facebook/Chain Emails, Snopes, and Evidence
  - What is the “best” kind of evidence? Limitations?
CHAPTER 6: WHAT IS EVIDENCE?

• Personal Experience
• Unpublished Report (a friend said, gossip, hearsay)
• Published Report
• Eyewitness Testimony
• Celebrity Testimony
• Expert Opinion
• Experiments
• Statistics
• Survey
• Formal Observation
• Research Review
CHAPTER 6: WHAT IS EVIDENCE 2

• Kinds of Evidence
  • Order of familiarity (73)
  • “Vividness and dramatic quality” does not defeat limitedness
  • Example?

• Personal Experience
  • Parenting (again): everyone/no one is an expert

• Unpublished Report (Gossip/hearsay)
  • Where did the story originate?
  • Confirmation?
  • Fact-checking social media memes
CHAPTER 6: WHAT IS EVIDENCE? 3

• Published Report
  • How clear is the documentation?
  • How reliable is the writer/source? Assumptions/agenda?

• Eyewitness Testimony
  • Circumstances affecting what was seen? The “whole thing”?
    • Technical fouls in sports
    • Potential distortions? Examples?

• Celebrity Testimony
  • Endorsement of products (5 hour Energy)
  • Talk show commentators
CHAPTER 6: WHAT IS EVIDENCE? 4

• Expert Opinion (may also includes professors!)
  • Sticking to discipline or expertise

• Experiments
  • What is the power of lab experiments? Limitations?
  • What is the power of field experiments? Limitations?

• Statistics
  • Who created them? For what purpose? Source?
  • Accurate visualizations (Hans Rosling’s work on world health)
  • NY Times Mapping America Census Project
CHAPTER 6: WHAT IS EVIDENCE? 5

• Survey (77)
  • Advantages?
  • Limits?

• Formal Observation
  • Restaurant, hospital lobby, playground, athletic event
  • Limits?

• Research Review
  • Analysis and Meta-Analysis
CHAPTER 6: WHAT IS EVIDENCE? 6

• Evaluating Evidence (79)
  • How objective are you? Can anyone be 100% unbiased?
  • Limits? See list on Ruggiero, page 79

• What is “sufficient evidence”?
  • Certainty is a TOUGH standard
    • Seek it, but especially difficult in controversial issues
    • Examples of being “certain”?
      • Should the death penalty be legal?
      • “Beyond a reasonable doubt”
  • **Sufficient evidence**: one view has the force of probability
  • In all other cases, evidence must be considered insufficient
    • Restraining judgment
CHAPTER 6: WHAT IS EVIDENCE? 7

• Applications (81)
  • Examining Opinions
  • Spanking?
  • Creationism in biology classrooms?
  • Capital punishment?
  • Lower legal drinking age to 18?
  • Legalizing marijuana?

• On what evidence are your beliefs based? *
WHAT IS ARGUMENT?

Based on Chapter 7 of Vincent Ruggiero
BEYOND FEELINGS
9th edition
CHAPTER 7: WHAT IS ARGUMENT?

• What does “argument” mean?
  • In general conversation and culture?
  • “Winning” and “losing” versus “presenting a case” based on evidence
  • For Ruggiero (and us)?

• Argument and Logic
  • In math, $2 + 2 = 4$
  • Argument and logic sometimes work similarly
    The law prohibits teachers from leading class prayers in public schools.
    Wynona leads students in prayer in her public school classroom.
    Therefore, Wynona is breaking the law.
CHAPTER 7: WHAT IS ARGUMENT?

• Parts of an Argument

  • The premises are either true or false (correct or incorrect).

  • Reasoning that links premises to the conclusion is either valid or invalid. IE, the conclusion and ONLY that conclusion, must logically follow premises.

  • Correct premises plus valid reasoning equal a sound argument. NOT truth, but a sound argument.

  • Either an incorrect premise or invalid reasoning will render an argument unsound.
    • (See Vincent Ruggiero, BEYOND FEELINGS, 86)
CHAPTER 7: WHAT IS ARGUMENT?

• Learning to think in questions
  
  All men are mortal. Are all men mortal?
  
  Socrates is a man. Is Socrates a man?
  
  Therefore, Socrates is mortal. Does this conclusion follow logically from what is stated in the premises?
  
  Does any other conclusion follow equally well?
  
  Is this line of reasoning sound?
CHAPTER 7: WHAT IS ARGUMENT?

• The Argument: Any activity that involves physical exertion is properly classified as a sport. Bodybuilding involves physical exertion. Therefore, bodybuilding is properly classified as a sport.

• See page 86.*