

## Roughrough Draft

The name says it all. This assignment allows (forces?) you to start the writing process. It's a chance for you to create a draft out of the sources and thoughts you currently have so that you can see the holes left for you to fill. On second thought, maybe a better name for this assignment is Roughincomplete Draft. I challenge you to brainstorm, outline and partially compose your essay. You might not have all your sources, and you might not know every single sub-topic you want to address or point you want to make, but that's no reason to avoid the work of actual composition. The sooner you get down to business and start the initial (painful) process of drafting the beginnings of your essay, the easier it will be to write a more complete rough draft next week. I suggest you take the following steps (though, you are only required to submit evidence of numbers 3 and 4).

1. Take some time to read over the essay prompt. Annotate as you go (take notes/plan on the assignment sheet itself). Ask yourself if you have appropriate sources and think about what aspects of the prompt you are going to focus on in your essay. Ask yourself if you have enough information to write for 7 pages.
2. Take some time to read over all the assignments you've done for Unit 3 so far. This includes your Working Annotated Bibliography. Annotate as you read, noting things you know you will include in your essay. A hint: if I indicated that you made a good point or asked a great question, this should probably be included in your essay.
3. Brainstorm. Start with a fresh, clean document or piece of paper and make a list (or a cluster, or a web) of all the points you want to make and the sub-topics you plan to include. Then, organize the elements of your brainstorm. You could create an outline; draw arrows to make a flow chart...just prove that you are starting to think about the most logical way to present this information. (This component of the assignment will be submitted for a grade.)
4. Now: start writing. In some sort of organized format of your choosing, create a plan. You might write an actual (detailed) outline. This outline could include a list of questions you are still trying to answer, conclusions you've made; answers to the questions in the prompt; an explanation of which parts of the prompt are going to be at the forefront of your essay; a list of quotations you plan to use and with notes on how they will help you; the order in which you will address the parts of the prompt; or, you could even write a first draft. It is likely that your final product will be some combination of the above.

After reading your roughrough draft, I should be able to discern the following: what general order will your paper likely follow? How will the scholarly essays and the popular media sources connect or relate to each other in the essay? How do these sources help to explain and support your original ideas? What is the guiding thesis, statement, or question that serves to thread your essay together? Which parts of the prompt are important to you—how will these components be highlighted in the essay? What are your answers to some of the questions in the prompt?

This assignment must be typed, but it may take the form of notes or an outline. Feel free to move back and forth between sentences/paragraphs and bullet points or lists of questions. I highly encourage you to include any quotations you want to use and cite them properly now (so you don't have to do it later). I also encourage you to make note of the blank spaces in your essay and indicate your plan for filling these spaces. Please note: The more complete this assignment is, the better your grade will be and the easier it will be to write a draft.

CITIZENS TO TAKE UP ARMS  
 TO GET WHAT THEY WANT. THERE  
 IS ALSO THE POSSIBILITY  
 THAT WHEN POLITICIANS USE  
 VIOLENT OR SACRED  
 RHETORIC, THE  
 NATURE OF THE  
 LANGUAGE IS  
 SO STRONG THAT  
 IT STALLS  
 NEGOTIATIONS +  
 INHIBITS  
 COMPROMISE,  
 LEADING  
 TO NEW  
 ANSWERS  
 ASSUMED AND  
 RANDOM  
 GUN VIOLENCE  
 CONTINUES.

POSSIBLE THESIS:  
 GUN VOCABULARY, OR GUN LANGUAGE MIGHT BE  
 SPURRING RANDOM GUN VIOLENCE IN MORE WAYS  
 THAN ONE. THERE IS AN ESTABLISHED AND ACCEPTED  
 (IN SOME CIRCLES) IDEA THAT POLITICIANS' USE  
 OF VIOLENT RHETORIC ENCOURAGES <sup>MIGHT</sup> FRUSTRATED

BRAINSTORM - GUN VOCAB/LANGUAGE IN EVERYDAY SPEECH

- VIOLENT RHETORIC

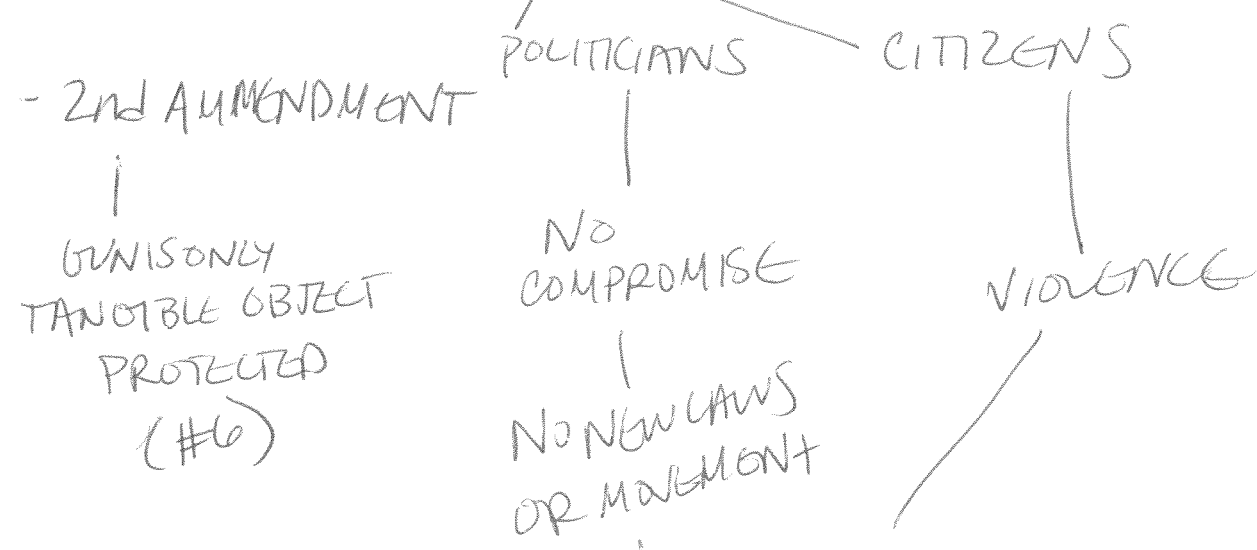
- SACRED SPEECH - DO BOTH SIDES OF THE GUN CONTROL BATTLE TALK THIS WAY? HAVE THEY ALWAYS?

- RESULTS OF VR + SS

- POLITICIANS WHO USE VR + SS

- CITIZENS WHO USE VR + SS

- CLOUDING PEOPLE'S ABILITY TO REASON, + COMPROMISE



SUGGESTIONS:

- JUST RECOGNIZE THE POLARIZING/PARALYZING RESULTS OF SPEECH?
- USE CHANGING THE WAY WE TALK AS A STARTING POINT IN NEGOTIATIONS?

Field/Sample Roughrough draft

My inquiry: What kind of language do people (citizens, media and politicians) use to talk about gun violence and how does this language affect the debate raging around gun control in America?

My possible thesis: Politicians use violent rhetoric when debating or discussing the topic of gun control because this topic has become sacred in America. (Define sacred now, or later?) Violent rhetoric is contradictory in nature in that it both inflames passions and douses progress. In other words, it works to rouse emotions in listeners, but also effectively stops the possibility of compromise or diplomacy as far as gun control laws. For that reason, I suggest that this violent rhetoric fuels violence in two ways: by encouraging citizens to partake in violent acts against an "enemy" who was made to seem "evil" by a politician and by maintaining the status quo as far as gun policies go in America, thus enabling random gun violence to happen again and again. (I know this last part is phrased awkwardly and seems unclear. I need to work on specific wording.)

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

People use gun vocabulary or words associated with guns all the time. Think of the following: "finding a silver bullet, stick to your guns, holding a smoking gun to my head, he's an easy target, caught in the crosshairs." This language is embedded in the English language for better or for worse-it is part of our honorable history as a country that revolted, gained independence and tamed The Wild West. All of these examples are "mainstream phrases" (Baker). We are often "not even conscious of" the regularity with which we drop these phrases (Baker).

### BUT

It is important to remember that language is powerful; it has the ability to influence how people think. Words define issues, and "in American politics, the person who gets to define the issue wins" (Levs).

-Explain connotation and denotation

-Explain positive and negative word associations

Examples) gun control/gun violence-no one says gun control b/c in America, control is a word with negative associations (England used to "control" us) (Levs)

-Explain that positive/negative and connotation/denotation are both ways that language works to "include some things and exclude<s> others" (Levs)

### SO

When politicians use words, they choose them carefully. For example, Sarah Palin chose to paint Gabby Giffords as a target prior to the Tucson shooting (Make it clear that she called GG a target). She chose to use words associated with violence (specifically gun violence, I don't think anyone would argue Palin was looking to invoke the image of someone using a crossbow) to encourage her supporters to go out and fight to make sure that their target was hit and GG was not re-elected. The Pima County Sheriff stated that this language "was the primary cause of the shooting" (Engels 121). Question: Do I need to provide context by explaining the Tucson shooting, or is that general knowledge?

-Give other examples of violent rhetoric that isn't associated with the Tucson shooting here: **I NEED TO FIND THESE**

## VIOLENT RHETORIC

Engels claims that violent rhetoric (or, gun language/vocabulary) is part of a structure-our democratic structure (127). He also says that just because language is not necessarily actionable (i.e. just words) does not mean that it doesn't have the power to incite violence. (This is not specific enough!) In fact, Engels argues the opposite. He claims that her language, which is full of "violent metaphors" works to encourage violence despite the fact that she identifies herself as someone who is against violence. So, violent rhetoric is language that advocates and pushes for violent action, no matter what the words actually say (129) (THIS IS REALLY UNCLEAR- MAKE THIS MAKE MORE SENSE).

## SACRED RHETORIC

Marietta says that sacred rhetoric works to define certain values (such as the right to bear arms) in the most absolute sense possible-sacred rhetoric describes "a sacred value <which> is held to be absolute, resisting tradeoffs with other values" (768). Many citizens consider the second amendment to be a "nonnegotiable boundary," something that is not to be compromised at any cost" (768). This means that people who hold the second amendment as sacred refuse to weigh any costs or benefits to its existence. For example, these citizens do not consider gun violence, as a reason to compromise this law-because there is no compromising around it. Many people feel the same way about gay marriage-there is no compromising because it is sacred-it cannot be changed for any reason.

## CONNECTION BETWEEN VIOLENT RHETORIC AND SACRED RHETORIC

Rhetoric about convictions and feelings considered to be sacred is often violent because it is absolute---this is where we get the phrase "from my cold dead hands" which refers to Charlton Heston's testament that he would have to die before he would consider allowing the government to infringe upon his right to bear arms (Marietta 767). Sarah Palin used violent rhetoric about convictions she held as sacred (making sure republicans won) and the result was actual violence. RECAP TUSCON SHOOTING HERE?

BUT, even this didn't stop the violent rhetoric. Sarah Palin used violent rhetoric AFTER the Tucson shooting to explain why she wasn't responsible! EXPLAIN BLOOD LIBEL HERE. Sarah Palin continued to use violent language, which indicates that even the tragedy in Tucson did not influence or change her feelings about the second amendment.  
-Talk about how she said the only one responsible was the shooter (Engels 125).

## BECAUSE OF HER REFUSAL TO CHANGE HER LANGUAGE

Negotiations about gun control also came to a standstill. This might be the most obvious example of sacred/violent rhetoric that involves gun language causing violence, but it is certainly not the only example of rhetoric about gun control that has caused negotiations to come to a standstill. The sacred rhetoric used in debates about gun control is so polarizing that there is no room for diplomacy or compromise. This is why there is no forward movement in the discussion about gun control.

(Does this idea need to come earlier?) Marietta wrote her article in 2008 and claimed that both sides of the gun control debate did not hold their convictions as sacred-only the right who wanted to maintain the dignity of the second amendment (775). I want to argue that now, in the wake of all the recent gun violence (list them all here!) both sides do use sacred language.  
START MY IDEAS AND CONCLUSIONS HERE!

- Examples of sacred language around gun control on both sides of the debate:
  - Engels for anti gun
  - Altheide and Johnson for pro gun control

Even though both “sides are speaking different languages” they are both using sacred rhetoric of a violent nature (Levs). They even use some of the same words and phrases, but “many of the most frequently used words and phrases in this debate mean different things to different people (Levs).

Describe the specific aftermath of Newtown (the most recent tragedy) as far as debate/new laws and measures taken. (See *The Week* for a brief summary of what’s happened so far.)

Point out that though individual states have taken some steps (CT), we are still basically where we were with gun control on a national level. This is because neither side is willing to negotiate, compromise, or even recognize that the opposing viewpoint might have some legitimacy. Each has worked so hard to paint the other as evil, definitively wrong, that there is no room for either side to take a step back and evaluate the legitimacy of the other’s debate (even if they disagree with it). This is what Marietta claims sacred rhetoric does: it incites to action but it does not push for progress (777).

The result of action but no progress: angry citizens, (some who might be prone to violence), angry citizens who adopt the same rhetorical style as the politicians (because they hear it all the time), a democracy that is stalled-neither politicians or citizens are willing to acknowledge the other side as legitimate, logical or valuable. We have forgotten that it is possible to acknowledge another viewpoint as legitimate without agreeing with that viewpoint. This means gun laws stay the same-everyone has the same access to guns and the same random shootings that have become rote, commonplace, acceptable (caused guns to be listed as a health threat (Altheide and Johnson 354)).

Without the ability to accept that people on the other side of the argument are also people who are allowed to reach their own conclusions and create their own values, we are destined to be at a stalemate for the foreseeable future. In order to stop the gun violence, a first step might be to put a halt to the sacred rhetoric that polarizes the sides, and instead work to re-name gun rights and the gun debate as something negotiable and unfixed with two legitimate and well thought out sides. Once this happens, we can start negotiating and possibly come up with a solution that will put an end to the random gun violence and maintain individual gun rights.