

Jackson 3

Jordan claims that passion should not be a part of the impeachment proceedings, but she uses her passion for the Constitution to connect to her audience's emotions and sense of patriotism: "My faith in the Constitution is whole, it is complete, it is total. And I am not going to sit here and be an idle spectator to the diminution, the subversion, the destruction of the Constitution." She stirs her audience's emotions by repeatedly creating the sense that the Constitution is in physical danger of being destroyed. Not only is it in danger of being figuratively destroyed by Nixon's crimes, but also a failure to impeach him could also destroy the document's integrity. She makes this destruction literal when she says, "If the impeachment provisions will not reach the offenses charged here, then perhaps that eighteenth-century Constitution should be abandoned to a twentieth-century paper shredder." This dramatic image encourages the audience to imagine Nixon actually shredding the Constitution as he ordered the shredding of documents that could link him to crimes. In addition, she makes the American people responsible; "we," meaning both the committee and the television audience, might as well be shredding the Constitution to bits if Nixon is not impeached.

Jordan makes a strong case for impeachment by first appealing to logic and then using her passion for the Constitution to connect to her audience's patriotism. Significantly, because this speech was also televised, Jordan also emerged to a national audience as a powerful speaker. Her clear, rhythmic style is both dramatic and easy to follow. Jordan's reputation as a powerful speaker continues to this day, as does the importance of her speeches, such as this one and other keynote addresses she made throughout her career. In particular, this argument for exercising the checks and balances within our government in order to protect the Constitution and the American people from possible tyranny is an argument that resonates with events today.

Jackson 4

Works Cited

- Jordan, Barbara. "Statement on the Articles of Impeachment."
 American Rhetoric: Top 100 Speeches. 25 July 1974. 21 Nov.
 2007 <[http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/
 barbarajordanjudiciarystatement.htm](http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/barbarajordanjudiciarystatement.htm)>

Steps to Writing a Rhetorical Analysis

Step 1 Select an Argument to Analyze

Find an argument to analyze—a speech or sermon, an op-ed in a newspaper, an ad in a magazine designed for a particular audience, or a commentary on a talk show.

Examples

- Editorial pages of newspapers (but not letters to the editor unless you can find a long and detailed letter)
- Opinion features in magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News & World Report*
- Magazines that take political positions such as *National Review*, *Mother Jones*, *New Republic*, *Nation*, and *Slate*
- Web sites of activist organizations (but not blog or newsgroup postings unless they are long and detailed)

Step 2 Analyze the Context

Who is the author?

Through research in the library or on the Web, learn all you can about the author of the argument.

- How does the argument you are analyzing repeat arguments previously made by the author?
- Does the author borrow arguments and concepts from previous pieces he or she has written?
- What motivated the author to write? What is the author's purpose for writing this argument?

Who is the audience?

Through research, learn all you can about the place where the argument appeared and the audience.

- Who is the anticipated audience?
- How do the occasion and forum for writing affect the argument?
- How would the argument have been written differently if it had appeared elsewhere?
- What motivated the newspaper or magazine (or other venue) to publish it?

What is the larger conversation?

Through research, find out what else was being said about the subject of your selection. Track down any references made in the text you are examining.

- When did the argument appear?
- Why did it get published at that particular moment?
- What other concurrent pieces of “cultural conversation” (e.g., TV shows, other articles, speeches, Web sites) does the item you are analyzing respond to or “answer”?

Step 3 Analyze the Text**Summarize the argument**

- What is the main claim?
- What reasons are given in support of the claim?
- How is the argument organized? What are the components, and why are they presented in that order?

What is the medium and genre?

- What is the medium? A newspaper? a scholarly journal? a Web site? or something else?
- What is the genre? An editorial? an essay? a speech? an advertisement? What expectations does the audience have about this genre?

What appeals are used?

- Analyze the ethos. How does the writer represent himself or herself? Does the writer have any credentials as an authority on the topic? Do you trust the writer? Why or why not?
- Analyze the logos. Where do you find facts and evidence in the argument? What kinds of facts and evidence does the writer present? Direct observation? statistics? interviews? surveys? secondhand sources such as published research? quotations from authorities?
- Analyze the pathos. Does the writer attempt to invoke an emotional response? Where do you find appeals to shared values? You are a member of that audience, so what values do you hold in common with the writer? What values do you not hold in common?

How would you characterize the style?

- Is the style formal, informal, satirical, or something else?
- Are any metaphors used?

Step 4 Write a Draft**Introduction**

- Describe briefly the argument you are analyzing, including where it was published, how long it is, and who wrote it.
- If the argument is about an issue unfamiliar to your readers, supply the necessary background.

Body

- Analyze the context, following Step 2.
- Analyze the text, following Step 3.

Conclusion

- Do more than simply summarize what you have said. You might, for example, end with an example that typifies the argument.
- You don't have to end by either agreeing or disagreeing with the writer. Your task in this assignment is to analyze the strategies the writer uses.

Step 5 Revise, Edit, Proofread

For detailed instructions, see Chapter 4.
For a checklist to evaluate your draft, see pages 61–62.