

Understanding Sudan

A Teaching and Learning Resource



Individual Assignment: Rhetorical Analysis of Sudan/Environment Issues

Have students read two articles with two very different views of the Darfur Crisis:

Lydia Polgreen, "A Godsend for Darfur, or a Curse?", *New York Times*, July 22, 2007.

Farris, Steven. "The Real Roots of Darfur", *Atlantic Monthly*, April 2007.

Or

Have students read two articles with two very different view of desertification:

Swift, Jeremy. 1999. "Desertification: Narratives, Winners and Losers", in Leach and Mearns, eds., *The Lie of the Land*, Oxford and Portsmouth: James Currey and Heinemann.

United Nations Environment Programme. 2007. *Sudan: Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment*, UNEP, Geneva.

You will write a paper on the rhetorical dimensions of these readings, analyzing the rhetorical position of these two articles. A rhetorical analysis focuses on how the writer composes an argument to persuade an audience. Questions to address:

What strategies do each of the authors employ to propagate an argument?

What clues are there in the text about its audience and rhetorical situation?

- What rhetorical devices, such as metaphor, irony or paradox are used in the text?
- What form does the evidence take to support claims? For example is it anecdotal, statistical, based in warrants?

Length/Format: 1,250 words (five pages) minimum. Use proper MLA manuscript format, with 1" margins all around, numbered pages with your last name in the header, double-spaced in a 12 pt. font, preferably Times Roman. Staple, please, without a binder or a cover sheet.

Notes: A successful rhetorical analysis not only argues about the subject text's persuasiveness, but is persuasive in doing so.

Your analysis should take its form from a clear thesis statement, with the thesis to be stated within the first paragraph. The thesis should be arguable within the scope of the assignment, which means you

should avoid a thesis that is vague or too broad. A great thesis statement will not only be arguable, but will convey a bit of attitude. Remember, your thesis is not your topic, but rather is your take on the topic.

Assume that your reader is an educated person who is familiar with the essay you are analyzing.