Assignment #2
Genre Analysis
ENG 4/574

Description
Based on the topic you have identified, or using a different topic solely for the purpose of this assignment, identify a genre and three to five instances/texts of that genre (graduate students should use five instances). In your analysis of the genre, I want you to identify characteristics of that genre, i.e., define the genre, and to identify particular characteristics of the three to five texts you have chosen. Deviation from a genre often indicates a failure at the genre or genre dynamism; be sure to identify how you think the deviations are working in your texts. Note that you are working with texts and not with artifacts themselves, for example, you could compare the instruction guides from three cameras, but I do not want you to compare the cameras themselves. My definition of texts is expansive, extending to include video games, Web sites, television shows, and so on. Check with me if you have questions about your genre and your texts.

Examples of genres and texts within them:
- Scientific article in your field (choose three different examples of scientific articles in your field)
- Progress status reports (choose three different types/three different projects)
- NSF proposals (find examples of proposals submitted to the NSF)
- Presidential apologies (Bush’s recent speech re. Katrina, Nixon’s resignation, Clinton’s address)
- Diet guides (A guide to Atkins, a guide to Weight Watchers, a guide to South Beach)
- Violent computer games (Quake, Halo, Doom)
- E-commerce sites (Target, Wal-Mart, Costco)

If you prefer to engage in a different type of text-based analysis, that is okay, but verify your plans with me before you proceed with them.

Your analysis may include a table format presentation, but must include a narrative section explaining what you have found. See the evaluation criteria below for more detail. I want this analysis to be relatively simple; if you choose to use this method for your final project, you could expect to produce a report comparable to the examples we read for class today. That said, but I imagine a simple genre analysis would require three to five pages.

Due date
- Beginning of class on Monday, September 26
- Submit via e-mail to gretchen.haas@mnsu.edu
- Include “ENG 4/574 <your first name> <your last name> Genre Analysis” in the subject line

Evaluation Criteria
- Using your texts, you should clearly define the genre by identifying characteristics of the genre.
- Defining a genre involves more than simply defining its characteristics; you should also reference the purpose of the genre. Since a genre is a form that supports a recurring function, the function of the genre should be definable.
- Identify instances where your texts deviate from generic conventions and evaluate how this deviation contributes to the text’s failure or, if the deviation contributes to the text’s success, consider how the deviation may indicate the changing nature of the genre.
- Your analysis will be stronger if you can cite any secondary research relevant to your chosen genre.
- Give your analysis a sense of context by including a credible research question that would require this method of investigation.