<u>**Writing for a General Audience: The Op-Ed Assignment**</u>

Annotated Bibliography including at least two sources due 03/09 by 11:59pm (10% of grade)

Final Draft Due 03/16 by 11:59pm

700-900 words

The headline reads "op-ed" piece, a term referring to the "opposite editorial" page of newspapers, a page traditionally reserved for columnists, letters to the editor, and other guest "opinionators." It operates as a complement to the newspaper's own editorial positions, usually expressed in an unsigned article and offering the official opinion of the newspaper's editorial board.

A good op-ed piece is topical, offering a perspective on a current item of interest to the readers of the publication. The writer offers a unique, focused look at the subject, often using both logical and emotional appeals to persuade readers.

The writer's tone is balanced and consistent, and his or her voice unique--humorous or cynical, angry or sorrowful, objective or contemplative, but definitely the voice of the writer. Op-ed pieces are the product of an individual, not a committee.

Also, while it may seem obvious, it bears repeating: the best op-ed pieces are lively, informative, and good pieces of writing.

Your assignment, then, is to write an op-ed piece on something humanities-related that you are passionate about.

The Annotated Bibliography should cite your sources using MLA format, then give a brief summary of the content, an evaluation of the source and/or author, and a way you might use the source for your op-ed.

Keys to the Genre (also check out the tips on our website):

• Know your publication

o Short paragraphs

o 700-900 words

o Includes a visual element

• Know your audience and your subject

o Appeal to emotion, authority, logic, or a combination?

o What words will your audience need defined? How will you define them? (hint: dictionary definitions are boring).

o How will you hook your audience at the beginning?

• Know your opinion

o Are you arguing a claim of fact, a value claim, or a policy claim?

o **DON'T FLIP-FLOP ON YOUR THESIS**