

Paper #2 Rhetorical Analysis

For this paper, you will be doing a rhetorical analysis of George Packer's article, "Coming Apart," in The New Yorker, September 12, 2011, 62-72. The first draft of paper 2 does not necessarily have to "look" like an essay; you will be analyzing various aspect of Packer's article in a series of paragraphs.

1. Analysis of The New Yorker style: at this point, you have at least 4 issues of the magazine. Looking at all of them, what do the physical attributes (cover, article layout, ads, cartoons, typography, use of color, etc—lemon!!) suggest about the magazine's mission, editorial expectations, and target audience? Also, write a one- or two-paragraph about The New Yorker's history. Locate and examine a hard copy of The New Yorker published in 1932 and compare it to a 2011 issue. What is the same? What has changed?
2. Author credentials: investigate Packer's background and track record (Hint: remember FP #3) and summarize them in several paragraphs. What do your findings suggest about Packer's credibility and "worthiness" to be published in The New Yorker?
3. What is the **topic** of the article?
4. What is Packer's **thesis**? Is it implicit or is it explicitly stated? If it is explicit, where is it stated?
5. How is the article organized—what is its overall structure? (Hint: the physical layout will help you answer this question.) Describe in detail each section topic.
6. What is the structure of Packer's argument? To answer this, outline his essay, using the "formal outline" template in Keys for Writers, 26-27.
7. What is your assessment of the drawing included with this article? What does it add to Packer's essay? Comparing it to the visual images that accompany other articles, is it appropriate to The New Yorker style?
8. Gather some basic information on Packer's topic (Hint: FP #3). Assess Packer's own research and accuracy.

9. Describe Packer's writing style—its level of formality, paragraphing, sentence structure, vocabulary level.
10. Describe your reading experience of Packer's article. How informative was it? How did he keep your interest? How persuasive was he?
11. In the end, considering your assessment of the magazine and the topic, why did the magazine's editors decide to publish it?