SECOND ANALYTICAL PAPER

Instructions: Write an original essay analyzing the treatment of the same news event as it was covered in the <u>New York Times</u> and the <u>Wall Street Journal</u>, using George Lakoff's theories in "Metaphor, Morality, and Politics" to demonstrate the implicit political bias of each article.

Length: At least 4-6 <u>full</u> pages of text, double spaced, following MLA format precisely, <u>plus</u> an <u>accurate</u> Works Cited page. A template is available on the class website, http://citizen.obenauf.net, so that we can both focus on your writing and argumentation. I will not grade any paper that fails to meet minimum expectations of length and formatting, so you should consult your <u>MLA Handbook</u>, <u>The Elements of Style</u>, my template, my <u>Guide to Writing</u>, and the Revision Triage Checklist to meet basic conventions of formatting and scholarly writing, and then ask me for help if you still have questions.

Due: Monday, March 10, 2025, in hard copy at the start of class.

Notes: You should choose a significant <u>hard</u> news story that has happened sometime in February. This assignment works best for national news items, but some international stories may work. Do not write on pop-culture stories, soft news items, opinion pieces or editorials, business or science reporting, book reviews, obituaries, retrospectives, etc. You may use either the print or on-line versions of the <u>NYT</u> and <u>WSJ</u>, either from their websites or through a reputable database such as ProQuest, but they should be equivalent in their coverage and the date each appeared. The stories must be original reporting by each newspaper (no AP or wire reports, except for accompanying images).

<u>Your analysis should use Lakoff's theories to examine the bias in the news coverage, rather than using the news coverage to test Lakoff's theories.</u> You might consider who the reporter interviewed and how quotations were deployed as you attempt to separate facts from spin. Do any of the same quotes or tweets appear in both? How are they framed? Are they cut differently? You are invited to describe any photographs, maps, charts, or other graphics that accompany each article, as well as the captions for such materials, so long as you consider what these items suggest about the publication's slant. You may also wish to address other factors that may signal a bias for or against the subject, such as where each publication placed its article (e.g., front page vs. buried on p. B23) and the length of each column (you may need to copy the article into a word processor to run a word count).

The use of any AI technology at any stage of the process is prohibited.

Sample outline:

A. Your <u>introduction</u> should announce the topic of your paper, the key theoretical devices you will be using, and other important details leading up to your thesis. For example, your introduction will likely need to sketch out the key facts that both newspapers agree upon. Here's how I might approach the introduction:

> The American essayist E.B. White observed in his 1956 essay "Bedfellows" that "I have yet to see a piece of writing, political or nonpolitical, that doesn't have a slant. All writing slants the way a writer leans, and no man is born perpendicular, although many are born upright" (104). White suggests that relatively balanced reporting in such trustworthy outlets as the <u>New York Times</u> and the <u>Wall Street Journal</u> reflects a certain bias. In their coverage on [date the columns appeared] of [the event], which took place on [date of event], the <u>Times</u> and the <u>Journal</u> agreed on certain basic facts. For example… [list the main facts] However, in [title of story], [reporter's name], writing in the <u>Times</u>, shows [describe bias briefly] through [briefly forecast the main point or two of the first part of your paper]. In contrast, in [title of story], [reporter's name], writing for the <u>Journal</u>, signals [describe bias briefly] through [briefly forecast the main point or two of the second part of your paper]. Although the bias of each might not be obvious alone, a comparison of the two suggests that the <u>New York Times</u> takes a [describe slant], whereas the <u>Wall Street Journal</u> takes a [describe slant].

At some point you will need to introduce Lakoff's theories. It is up to you to decide whether you want to expand an already heavy introduction with even more information, or to provide that context in the body of your paper when you first draw on the "strict father" model of conservatism and the "nurturant parent" model of liberalism. As with other names, you should **give Lakoff's full name the first time you mention him and then refer to him by last name only. You must quote Lakoff's article and cite it throughout your paper in order to develop your argument.** It is not possible to demonstrate bias without describing the bias—and Lakoff gives you that framework.

B. The <u>body</u> of your paper will have three main components. First, you will need to explore the slant of the <u>New York Times</u> article fully; this will fill perhaps two pages. Begin by describing the key details and laying out your evidence before you comment on what the data suggest to avoid giving the appearance that you knew what you expected to find and then projected such an interpretation onto the article. Second, you will do the same thing for the <u>Wall Street Journal</u> article, which will also fill approximately two pages. Third, you will need to compare and contrast the two as you build to your conclusion, another couple of pages.

C. Your <u>conclusion</u> may be brief (just a paragraph or two), but you should go beyond merely summarizing the main points of your paper. You could situate in the broader political context of the event you have been discussing and its implications for Lakoff's conservative "strict father" worldview and liberal "nurturant parent" model. Or you might see how radical outlets covered the same event. A brief discussion of editorials on the subject in the <u>Times</u> and the <u>Journal</u> could nicely wrap things up, especially if the opinion pages diverge from the facts of their own hard news reporting.