



SHSU Common Reader Program

2018-2019

Curriculum Infusion Guide

At a moment of crisis over our national identity, venerated journalist Dan Rather has emerged as a voice of reason and integrity, reflecting on—and writing passionately about—what it means to be an American. Now, with this collection of original essays, he reminds us of the principles upon which the United States was founded. Looking at the freedoms that define us, from the vote to the press; the values that have transformed us, from empathy to inclusion to service; the institutions that sustain us, such as public education; and the traits that helped form our young country, such as the audacity to take on daunting challenges in science and medicine, Rather brings to bear his decades of experience on the frontlines of the world’s biggest stories. As a living witness to historical change, he offers up an intimate view of history, tracing where we have been in order to help us chart a way forward and heal our bitter divisions. With a fundamental sense of hope, *What Unites Us* is the book to inspire conversation and listening, and to remind us all how we are, finally, one.

Curriculum Infusion Committee

Lisa Brown	Kevin Clifton
Mae Lane (Cox)	Mary Funck
Mike Vaughn	J. Bart Stykes
Christine Cardinal	Simone Camel
Melissa Mednicov	Todd Primm
Jeff Wozniak	Brandy Doleshal
Susan Strickland	Candice Wilson

The Curriculum Guide is written as an aid to course instructors across the university to make integration of educational activities related to the common reader as straightforward as possible. Feel free to use and modify these suggestions as needed for your students. We hope the reader serves as a common educational experience illustrating to students the importance of lifelong learning and that true understanding is often interdisciplinary.

-Best regards, *the Curriculum Infusion Committee and FYE*

SHSU Common Reader <http://www.shsu.edu/commonreader>

Professional & Academic Center for Excellence <http://www.shsu.edu/pace/>

College Success		
Communication, written/oral/visual Critical Thinking Public Policy/Government	Academic Skills	<p>Presentation Strategies</p> <p>Rather highlights several impactful speeches in <i>What Unites Us</i>. Select a few of these speeches for students to view in class (e.g. FDR’s First Inaugural Address, JFK’s Rice Moon Speech, MLK’s “Beyond Vietnam”). As they review each speech, they should take notes on the presentation strategies.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does the speaker exhibit obvious performance anxiety? If not, how do you think the speaker was able to manage it? 2. Does the speech have a strong beginning and ending? If not and if so, explain why. 3. How does the speaker engage the audience? 4. If applicable: Does the speaker use multimedia effectively? Would the speech have been enhanced by the use of multimedia? <p>After watching each of the speeches and taking notes, the class can discuss their responses: What did you enjoy about the speeches? What did you dislike? Why do you think these speeches are legendary? What presentation strategies should you incorporate in your presentation preparation process? How will you do so?</p>
Community Engagement Communication, written/oral/visual Critical Thinking Social Justice Teamwork and Problem Solving	Academic Skills	<p>Service</p> <p>Rather’s essay on “Service” provides an excellent lens to reflect on a course service requirement. Before your service project, read Rather’s essay and define the following terms from the text: sense of togetherness, unity of purpose, acts of assistance, traditional and non-traditional service, and humanize. After you have completed your service project, use these questions that are taken from Rather’s discussion in his essay to reflect on the experience.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Did you feel a “sense of togetherness” throughout your service project? What created this feeling? If you did not feel it, what could you have done to create it? Please refrain from giving advice to the service sponsor on how they could have changed their organization or structure. 2. Were there aspects of your service project that “were meant simply to inspire a unity of purpose”? If so, what were they? 3. Was the service that you performed for your project traditional or non-traditional? Explain why. 4. Did this service project inspire you to engage in other acts of service, traditional or non-traditional? If so, explain what they might be.

		<p>5. Elaborate on an “act of assistance” that you performed in your service project. Why did you do it? Rather says that acts of assistance are “a vote of confidence in our common humanity.” What do you think he means by that statement? Based on your experience, do you agree or disagree?</p> <p>6. Did your service project humanize you? If so, in what ways? If not, why do you think that it did not?</p> <p>7. Rather writes that service is a necessity in a democratic society. What do you believe he means by this idea? Do you agree or disagree? What value, if any, does this idea give to your class service projects?</p>																																				
Critical Thinking Teamwork and Problem Solving	Academic Skills	<p>Evaluating Sources Pre-Activity Discussion: If we do not critically evaluate sources, what does Rather believe is at stake according to “The Press” and “Science”? Students will be given two articles on a challenging topic that Rather discusses (i.e. 9/11 or vaccination). One article should be an academically reputable source and one should be an un-vetted opinion piece. Students should discuss whether or not each source is reputable and can be used for academic writing and for constructing a strong personal position. Then, students will grade each source using the CRAAP test in Student Success in College (p. 124) or a CRAAP rubric. Post-Activity Discussion: How did you evaluate sources before being introduced to the CRAAP test? Now that you have used the CRAAP test, how should adjust your evaluation method? Why is each criterion in the CRAAP test important to evaluating sources? How can using the CRAAP test help you with research? With personal decision-making? With constructing a personal opinion or argument?</p>																																				
Critical Thinking Communication, written/oral/visual	Academic Skills	<p>Reflective Reading Schedule</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Students Assigned</th> <th>Day</th> <th>Assigned Reading</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>1</td> <td>Night Flights and What is Patriotism</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>2</td> <td>The Vote</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>3</td> <td>Dissent</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>4</td> <td>The Press</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>5</td> <td>Inclusion</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>6</td> <td>Empathy</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>7</td> <td>Immigration</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>8</td> <td>Science</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>9</td> <td>Books</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>10</td> <td>The Arts</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>11</td> <td>The Environment</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Students Assigned	Day	Assigned Reading		1	Night Flights and What is Patriotism		2	The Vote		3	Dissent		4	The Press		5	Inclusion		6	Empathy		7	Immigration		8	Science		9	Books		10	The Arts		11	The Environment
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			12	Public Education
			13	Service
			14	Audacity
			15	Steady
			16	Courage and Acknowledgements

Each student is responsible for addressing the following prompts for their assigned reading: 1) How does Rather define the title of your section? 2) Summarize the main idea of this section in your own words. 3) Rather provides examples to explain his perspective. Can you come up with any personal, historical, or contemporary examples that would also illustrate his position? 4) What is the relationship between the title of your section and unity and/or patriotism? Do you have any critiques of the connections Rather makes?

Business		
Academic Skills	Curriculum Areas	Activity Description
Communication Public Policy Social justice Journalism	Business Social Science	<p>Dictionary.com defines discrimination as "... making a distinction in favor of or against, a person or thing based on the group, class, or category to which that person or thing belongs rather than on individual merit." The author of <i>What Unites Us</i> discusses many examples of discrimination against individuals based on their association with a group, specifically on the basis of race, gender, and sexual orientation. Extensive legal protections prohibiting discriminatory behavior have been established since the 1960s. Discrimination, however, continues to persist in our society in general, with its impact extending to activities within the business sector. Complete (any or all of) the following activities for examining discrimination in business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Describe an event or action toward a group that demonstrate discrimination in the business arena? What protections are available to this groups or were developed in response to this event? ▪ Discuss trends in business advertising that either support discriminatory stereotypes or aim to dispel stereotypes. ▪ Individuals can have deep-seated beliefs that may unknowingly influence their behavior towards individuals belonging to specific groups. Harvard University sponsors Project Implicit, a non-profit organization researching implicit social cognition, which are thoughts and feelings outside of conscious awareness and control. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Describe and provide examples of how implicit thoughts/feelings can impact a work environment? ○ Visit the project's website (https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/) and complete the exams on social attitudes (implicit associations about race, gender, sexual orientation, and other topics). Discuss, in a small group setting, (a) the results of your exam; (b) how your family or place of origin might have impacted your social cognition; and (c) what corrective actions you might take to improve your social cognition.
Communication Social justice Journalism	Business Social Science	In the recent past, professional athletes have used their position to draw attention to their beliefs regarding racial discrimination. Sports franchises are ultimately a business operation. As with traditional businesses, sports franchises have

		<p>a public image they seek to uphold, their employees have expected behavioral norms, and the supply and demand for their product impacts the franchise’s ‘bottom line’.</p> <p>Discuss, in a small group setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Both the actions and the response to these actions in the light of the distinction between patriotism and nationalism. ▪ The role of the media in providing coverage and commentary on these events. ▪ How the action of franchise owners may have been impacted by the need to balance the demands of employees (athletes) with the demand of customers, the team culture, the personal stance of ownership, and legal considerations. ▪ Whether the action of these athletes ultimately had a positive or negative impact on reducing discrimination.
<p>Communication Critical Thinking Journalism</p>	<p>Business Humanities Social Science</p>	<p>The changing (diminishing) role of the press. In “The Press” section of the text, Rather elaborates on the vital role journalist play in maintaining our democracy (to ask hard questions and refuse to be deterred). However, he also describes how journalism’s historical business model is faltering in today’s modern society.</p> <p>Associated activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create a SWOT (Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis for journalism (either written or broadcast). Your analysis should elaborate on ways in which the industry can remain viable in the current environment. <p>Create a poster to present an investigation on either (1) an event in which the press was instrumental in uncovering major wrongdoing on the part of a business enterprise; or (2) an event in which the press misused its power – in which it conducted yellow journalism.</p>
<p>Communication Critical Thinking Sustainability Teamwork & Problem Solving</p>	<p>Business Science & Engineering Technology Health</p>	<p>The environmental cost of business. The author states, “For too long the cost of doing business ignored the cost of the business to the environment.” In particular, he discusses the impact of human activity on climate change. Read the attached Harvard Business School article “Climate Change in 2018: Implications for Business” by Henderson, Reinert, Dekhtyar and Midgal. (http://www.hbs.edu/environment/Documents/climate-change-2018.pdf)</p> <p>In groups of 3 – 4 students, assume you hold the position as a manager for a firm in the oil and gas industry. Create a short presentation on how you believe the business should respond to mitigate the impacts of climate change while maintaining the viability of your business. Alternatively, this debate could be conducted as a panel discussion.</p>
Criminal Justice		
Academic Skills	Curriculum Areas	Activity Description
<p>Critical Thinking Analytical Problem Solving Social Justice</p>	<p>Criminal Justice Sociology</p>	<p>Early in his career, Rather reported on a Ku Klux Klan rally, where a cross was burned. He wondered what “African Americans would think” about this “level of hatred” (p. 25). Cross burning is a kind of speech; it expresses certain beliefs. Although free speech is a fundamental right, there are limits. In fact, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in <i>Virginia v. Black</i> (538 U.S. 343, 2003) that cross burning with the “intent to intimidate” can be banned without violating the First Amendment. In contemporary America, there may not be as many cross burnings as in the past, but hate groups are on the rise, and as Rather put it: “today bigotry is often clothed in euphemism” (p. 25). Find one peer-reviewed article (within the last 5 years) on how racial and ethnic bigotry clashes with the core values of fairness, due process, and justice in America. Write a 2-page essay on the coercive effects of racial and ethnic bigotry on the social fabric of</p>

		society. Comment on whether you believe that Rather is optimistic or pessimistic about the criminal justice system's ability to pursue equal justice for all without prejudice or discrimination.
Education		
Academic Skills	Curriculum Areas	Activity Description
Critical Thinking; Technology Integration; Content Literacy Communication Research Analysis	Preservice Teacher Methods Courses	Dan Rather writes about our system of education as well as those in Finland and Singapore (p 201). Students can choose a country with a highly ranked system of education, research how its system of education is organized, and share the information with others using some form of technology, such as creating a podcast, a YouTube video, etc. In addition, students can also compare and contrast that system with our system of education. Finally, students can make recommendations about any aspects of their research country's education system that would be beneficial to adopt in our system.
Critical Thinking Diversity & Intercultural Research Analysis	Education Social Science	When writing about Finland and Singapore, Dan Rather also wrote about how teachers are regarded in those countries, how they are educated, and how much additional training and support they receive as in-service teachers (p 201). Students could, either using the country whose system of education they researched or find a different country whose system of education is highly ranked, investigate how teachers are regarded there, how that country educates its teachers, as well as the training and support they receive as teachers. Then, students could compare and contrast their country's approach to teacher education and training with the approach we take in Texas, and finally make suggestions for our state based on what they learned about the country they researched. For their final product, students could create an infographic to display their research.
Critical Thinking Emotional Intelligence Analysis Reflection Diversity & Intercultural	Education; Preservice Teacher Methods Courses; Content Literacy	As a response to the chapter about books (p 141-153), have students write a reflection about their own experiences with books, their memories of reading in school, their own experiences with libraries (if they have those experiences), and what reading currently means to them. In that reflection, also ask students to address what those experiences will mean to their future students/how their personal experiences will impact their future classrooms.
Critical Thinking Analysis Research	Education Criminal Justice	Research the long-term impact of Brown v. Board of Education on public education. Include implications for students, teachers, individual schools, and school districts, as well as the impact on education as a whole. Discuss at least three major impacts.
Fine Arts		

Communication, written/oral/visual Critical Thinking Social Justice History	Fine Arts Humanities	Art History Project Dan Rather cites Jacob Lawrence’s <i>Migration</i> series and Billie Holiday’s “Strange Fruit” as two examples in which artists critically engaged with historical and contemporary events in their art. Students should research specific moments in history in which artists responded to events in the world around them. How did these artists respond to events? How did they create work as a call to action or attention to social injustice? Students should then write a paper or produce a poster that conveys this information.
Community Engagement Communication, written/oral/visual Critical Thinking Social Justice History	Fine Arts Humanities	Socially Engaged Art Project Dan Rather writes about Jacob Lawrence’s <i>Migration</i> series and Lin Manuel Miranda’s <i>Hamilton</i> musical as two examples in which artists critically engaged with historical events to produce art works. Rather describes Lawrence’s work as showing him “the power of art to move me.” Students should research a historical or contemporary event that they believe more people should be responding to and produce an artwork that will engage the viewer both visually and socially.
Community Engagement Communication, written/oral/visual Diversity Social Justice Patriotism	Fine Arts Humanities	What Unites Us Art Exhibition Dan Rather analyzes various aspects of what it means to be a patriot in <i>What Unites Us</i> . He argues for a patriotism that is engaged with one’s own local, state, national, and international community. Rather writes, “Patriotism can burst to the surface through many geysers of expression.” (Rather, 155) He also describes how vital freedom of expression is to artists and to the foundation of patriotism. In any medium, students may create an artwork that reflects and expresses what such an engagement means to them.
Communication, written Diversity Public Policy Social Justice Patriotism	Fine Arts Humanities	What Unites Us Graphic Design Poster Dan Rather discusses how he defines patriotism (as active and constructive) in <i>What Unites Us</i> . By focusing on one of the themes Rather uses as “what unites us,” students can choose from themes such as freedom, community, exploration, responsibility, and character. Students should then choose a specific historical event Rather discusses to show the link between this event and patriotism. Students should work together to create a poster that visually conveys this information to further engage a wider audience in Rather’s discussion.
Science & Engineering Technology		
Community Engagement Sustainability Patriotism History	Science & Engineering Technology Social Science	The Backyard Garden: a Litmus for National Pride? Family gardens were once found in many backyards across our country. Specifically, Victory Gardens (i.e., backyard vegetable gardens, planted to increase food production during times of war.) were once a focal point of family and community values and national pride. These gardens provided a sense of purpose to families, as well as a “means of production” that provided food for each family. This book touches on how many of our nation’s core values have eroded and or changed though time. The dramatic decrease in family gardens is a prime example of this trend. First, have students research the concept of Victory Gardens. What are they, what role did they play in national pride/individual purpose, etc. Identify parallels to the victory garden concept and the main themes of the book – sense of community, ethnic importance, environmental responsibility, etc. Students can conduct surveys of family and friends to explore how local trends in family/backyard gardens have changed over the past few generations. Secondly, have the students collect information on our own SHSU Bearkat Community Gardens. Have the activity culminate with a visit to the Bearkat Community Gardens where students can volunteer their time to help “Feed the

		Growl” here at SHSU. Note: garden beds are available for adoption each semester at the Bearkat Community Gardens. Some classes may elect to go through the garden adoption process and work to maintain a garden for a semester-long activity/project.
Sustainability Critical Thinking Public Policy Teamwork	Science & Engineering Technology Social Science	It has been said that “nature doesn’t need us, but we need nature.” We rely on the natural world around us for the clean air we breathe and the water we drink. However, America is among the planet’s most wasteful and environmentally impactful countries. Has this always been the trend and more importantly, how will our relationship with the natural world change in the future? This is a small group discussion activity, with optional written summary. First, have students review the Responsibility/Environment section of the book, then discuss what our role is as stewards of our environment. Do we have a responsibility to protect our environment and natural resources or is the natural world there to solely provide resources for humans? How has our national environmental perspective changed through time? Secondly, discuss the current administration’s views on climate change – paying particular attention to the role the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is playing is re-writing many environmental policies (e.g. fuel mileage standards, clean air, climate change stance, etc.). How has our government’s perspective shifted over the past generations with regards to environmental protections? Finally, discuss the role of our government in protecting both our economic success/future and our natural resources. What is our government’s responsibility to protect the natural world/resources for future generations and/or to facilitate economic growth?
Sustainability Critical Thinking	Science & Engineering Technology Social Science	This book highlights how protecting our environment must be part of what unites us. While this fact may be true, how can each of us accurately assess our environmental impact and make informed decisions moving forward to best conserve resources and minimize our environmental impact? First, have students consider their lifestyles and their perceived environmental impact. Is their impact small/medium/large? What, if any, steps do they take to be environmentally minded? Next have students consider the number of Earth’s worth of resources would we need if everyone on the planet lived like they do. Have the students record what they think this number is. Then have the students conduct an assessment of their ecological footprint using http://www.footprintcalculator.org . This calculation will provide detailed information on each individual student’s ecological impact and the final calculation on the number of Earth’s worth of resources. After completing the ecological assessment, have the students dig deep into their current lifestyles to identify ways they can make changes to decrease their ecological footprint, with three concrete suggestions. Also, have students consider how environmentalism and sustainability science can be included in their future decisions (e.g., what happens when they buy a home, start a family, make other future life decisions). What might be some roadblocks to fully incorporating these concepts in the future?
Health		
Academic Skills	Curriculum Areas	Activity Description
Community Engagement Public Policy Patriotism	Health Social Science Humanities	The Measure of a Life is its Service Dan Rather shares his pride for his family throughout the book, and he explains their choices to devote themselves to careers focused on service instead of compensation. Likewise, “a measure of a life is its service,” is the motto of SHSU. Pretend a member of Congress has hired your group to help her/him draft a law codifying this presumption of an

		American duty to serve her/his fellow citizens. Explain Rather's position on why all Americans should be required/encouraged to do something philanthropic, and consider the following questions in your draft: Should the inspiration for service/adherence to the new law be through a carrot/stick approach? What are the parameters of this duty? What are the exceptions? What current laws or theories support the development of this new law? What unintended consequences could occur? Can you write the law to counteract any ill effects? What effect would this law have on health policy? EMTALA requires health care organizations to provide emergency medical treatment for patients in a potentially fatal condition, but impoverished, noncritical patients are not afforded such care. Will your law change this? If so, how and why?
Critical Thinking Public Policy Social Justice History	Health Social Science Humanities	Bound to repeat it? Dan Rather eloquently discusses Justice Ruth Ginsburg's time working for gender inequality in a position at the ACLU before she joined the Supreme Court. Further, he explains how the subjective truth and personal experiences of the sitting justices affects the opinions written by the Court. Please split into groups of four students, and find one Supreme Court opinion from the past [1790-1990] and one from your lifetime [1990-2018] that specifically affects equality and public health, such as cases regarding contraceptive coverage or employment discrimination. Each group must choose unique cases. Once you have chosen a case, please write it on the board to eliminate it from the options of other groups. Then, please read through your selections as a group. Select a group member to share a short summation of each case, and please be prepared to discuss the answer to the following question with the class: Given what you have read and considering the current Court, what do you expect for future cases regarding public health?
Community Engagement Diversity Social Justice	Health Fine Arts Humanities	Face of the Cause Dan Rather explains how artists share truth in a way that is relatable to many, and he goes into great detail about the myriad of ways they have aided social justice issues. Identify an artist & a project of theirs that championed a public health cause, such as Tom Hank's performance in the film <i>Philadelphia</i> that helped to raise awareness and reduce discrimination towards Americans with HIV/AIDS. Write your artist's name on the board so another student doesn't choose it, and then research the specifics of their project and involvement in the cause. Were their efforts successful? If so, how? If not, why? Has science or celebrity been a more effective tool for garnering support for the cause? Please be prepared to share your answers with the class.
Communication Critical Thinking Intercultural Public Policy	Health Social Science	Boots on the Ground Dan Rather describes growing up in East Texas and how his father taught him to look for squirrels where the pine trees and the nut trees converge because they are drawn to the height of one and the food source of the other. He also describes how the Intuit tribes in the Artic noticed the thinning of the seal's hides in recent years as the ice has started melting. He emphasizes the value of the observations of native people regarding the areas in which they live. Write a page describing how this relates to public health research and health policy development. To what extent are the observations of and communications with local populations necessary to developing good health policy? Use examples. If you are having trouble finding examples, please consider the documentaries <i>Fed Up</i> , <i>The Waiting Room</i> , and/or <i>Sick Around the World</i> .
Community Engagement Critical Thinking Public Policy	Health Humanities Social Science	Time Keeps on Slipping Into the Future Dan Rather discusses how partisanship and political divisiveness have disrupted environmental policy that used to be a concern for both parties. He goes on to suggest that future citizens are going to get, "mugged by reality," when the consequences of current environmental policies affect the future American population. Write a 1-2 page essay discussing

History		what current health policies have long term consequences in the future? How do micro and macro perspectives affect policy development? Focus on the economics, ethics, and science behind health policy development in your discussion.
Diversity & Intercultural Public Policy Social Justice	Health Criminal Justice Humanities Social Science	Privilege Walk Dan Rather and Elliot Kirschner’s chapter on empathy asks us to consider who we blame for poverty and discrimination. Individuals come from different circumstances which result in different levels of education, health, economic security, etc. The “Privilege Walk” experiential learning activity allows participants to begin to critically think about how people are marginalized or benefit from the systems designed by today’s society. A complete lesson plan designed to allow educators to conduct a privilege walk can be found at: https://peacelearner.org/2016/03/14/privilege-walk-lesson-plan/ The activity can be completed in 60-80 minutes; the lesson plan includes many questions for debriefing participants.
Critical Thinking Diversity & Intercultural Public Policy	Health Humanities Social Science	Social Determinant’s of Health Dan Rather and Elliot Kirschner write “Science is much more than an accumulation of facts; it is about the willingness to reevaluate our assumptions in the face of data to better see, understand, and improve our world”(p. 137). Often, we have assumptions related to why or how diseases are experienced in communities. The Center for Disease Control (https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-of-health) has identified five areas of Social Determinants of Health, they include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Stability • Education • Social and Community Context • Health and Health Care • Neighborhood and Built Environment Identify a disease for which you have an opinion related to the influence of society and/or personal behaviors on that disease process. Gather facts about the disease including epidemiological data, program efforts at prevention, and treatment. Write an essay that considers how the social determinants of health intersect with the disease process. Include a reevaluation your assumptions.
Social Sciences		
Written and Oral Communication Critical Thinking Public Policy Social Justice History	Humanities	Social Movements: Dissent in Action After reading Rather’s essay on dissent (p. 35-51), discuss Rather’s thoughts on the role of dissent in a functional republic. Zoom in on at least two of the dissenters he mentions in this essay. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What social injustices did they seek to challenge? ▪ In what specific ways did their actions (grand or small) push back against injustices? Finally, use Rather’s essay as a lens to discuss a more contemporary social movement (e.g., Black Lives Matter, the Women’s Marches, Right-to-Life marches, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What role has dissent played in the social movement to this point? ▪ Has dissent in this instance led to a positive change in the contemporary political or legal climate? ▪ Defend your answer by drawing on relevant course content.
Written and Oral Communication	Humanities	An Exercise in Sociological Imaginations

<p>Critical Thinking Diversity Social Justice History</p>		<p>Read Rather's section on empathy (p 91-104). Mills coined the term <i>sociological imagination</i> to understand how one's biography (or lived experiences) intersected with historical place and time. The sociological imagination then becomes a lens through which individuals see the world and respond to social problems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discuss some of the key moments in Rather's life that he recounts throughout his essays (or in specific chapters). In what ways were these moments situated in the broader historical time and Rather's geographical place? How did these experiences seem to shape Rather's stances on racial/ethnic, class, and gender inequality that are presented throughout his reflections? ▪ Discuss your own sociological imagination. How have your lived experiences intersected with your historical place and time to shape the way you see the world? ▪ Lastly, conclude by noting specific similarities and differences between yours and Rather's sociological imaginations. In what ways do these similarities or differences lead to similar or opposing stances on inequality in the contemporary US?
<p>Written and Oral Communication Critical Thinking Mass Media</p>	<p>Humanities Science</p>	<p>Science in the Media: Fact Checking 101 Read Rather's essay on science (p 125-139). Rather points a somewhat grim picture of the current roles of science, and the quest for truth, in contemporary media sources. Drawing on Rather's essay, define science, the discuss the importance of science in media outlets. Then, select a current science debate that has gotten a lot of media attention recently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Select two media sources that pertain to the competing sides of your argument. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Be sure that you put careful time and attention in selecting your media sources. You should be able to defend one as being more scientific and critique the other for being less scientifically sound. ▪ Critically assess the scientific merit of each media source. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In what specific ways is each source either (1) scientific (having its argument rooted in fact) or (2) not scientific (providing less compelling evidence or rooting its argument in opinion). ○ Who is the expert cited in each piece? Assess their level of credibility. <p>Lastly, conclude by defending your stance on the current topic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be sure to explain how your stance is informed by your critique of the scientific knowledge that was used to support the argument. ▪ Set forth criteria for what constitutes a scientific source based on your critique of two media sources and Rather's essay.

Additional Resources

National Public Radio interview: <https://www.npr.org/2017/11/03/561643959/dan-rather-an-unlikely-essayist-on-what-unites-us>
What Unites Us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/whatunitesusamerica/>
Official book page: www.whatunitesusbook.com
Controversial Issues from both sides: <https://www.procon.org/>
Foundation for Critical Thinking: <https://www.criticalthinking.org/>
SHSU Common Reader: <http://www.shsu.edu/commonreader>
Association of American Colleges and Universities commentary on common reading programs: <https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/creating-common-ground-common-reading-and-first-year-college> While not mentioned, our program has the best elements.