## Trigger Warning Reflections, Arguments, and Policy Proposal Assignment

“Women in Literature” class

Guided Reflection Using VoiceThread

### Purpose of assignment

The goal of this assignment is for you to weigh in on a few specific ideas and arguments about the use of “trigger warnings” in our “Women in Literature” class this semester, and then to propose 1-2 guidelines we should follow. For example:

* What personal narrative about having past trauma triggered—intruding on and destabilizing one’s mental and physical state in the present—by speech or images can you find in Roxane Gay’s essay?
* Can you relate your own personal narrative—or that of a friend—to hers?
* Also, what argument in Gay’s essay do you find most persuasive and why?
* Based on your reactions to her personal narrative and arguments, what concrete guidelines should be in our class “trigger warning” policy for the semester?

### Learning outcomes

By the end of this assignment, you should be able to:

* Define what a trigger warning is
* Recall personal narratives of people who have been triggered by specific speech or images
* Compare and contrast a “pro” and a “con” trigger warning use position
* Declare your own recommendation for a policy guideline on the use of “trigger warnings” in this class

### Steps to Assignment Completion:

* *First,* read, watch, and listen to the high-touch resources listed below. As you do so, highlight or jot down a definition of trigger warnings, a personal narrative, and at least 1 pro and at least 1 con argument.
* *Second,* respond to the VoiceThread on this topic posted in Sakai. In your response, be authentic and specific about your reactions to details in the thread. Feel free to quote directly from the resources below and/or to link to other resources with which you are familiar.
* *When the class has completed this assignment*, I will summarize our provisional “trigger warning” proposal and post it on Sakai. At any time in the semester if you have further thoughts or think we should briefly revisit and revise the proposal, please email me and/or respond to the forum discussion thread on this topic.

### High-Touch Resources:

Roxane Gay “The Illusion of Safety/The Safety of Illusion” (2012)

* <https://therumpus.net/2012/08/the-illusion-of-safetythe-safety-of-illusion/> (read)
* [Roxane Gay speaks at Willamette University](assignment%20sample_guided%20reflection_V%20Bell.docx) (2:10) (watch)

SciShow Psych “Do Trigger Warnings Really Help? (2018)

* [Do Trigger Warnings Really Help?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o28MAoe13Nk) (watch)

### Assessment:

This is a formative, low-stakes assignment, in which points for completion of all the elements is the most important work I am measuring.

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| Criteria: 10 points total | Complete | Partial | Incomplete |
| Definition of Trigger Warning2.5 points | Defined in your own words AND in direct reference to details in the resources | Defined only in your own words or in resource reference, but not both | No clear definition at all |
| Identification of and Sharing of Personal Narratives2.5 points | Inference about Gay’s personal narrative and briefly sharing your own or that of a friend | Inference only about Gay’s personal narrative OR only sharing your own, but not both | No discussion or summary of any personal narratives |
| Comparison and Contrast of Pro and Con Arguments2.5 points | Full sentence articulation of one pro and one con argument, with detailed reference to the resources | Articulation of only either pro or con, and unclear/too general reference to the resources | Little to no articulation of pro or con arguments |
| Declaration of a Policy Guideline2.5 points | Careful description and rationale for a policy guideline | Unclear guideline and little discernible rationale | No clear guideline and no discernible rationale |

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