English 1B Spring 2017  **Rhetorical Analysis of a Website**

**Overview**: We started with rhetorical analysis of arguments; now you will apply those analytical skills to a more complex kind of argument: the website a company uses to describe and sell its product/service.

**Topics**: You can choose either a not-for-profit organization OR a company that either emphasizes an earth-friendly, enlightened, socially responsible ethos OR responds to charges that it is a “corporate villain.” If you want to target a website not on this list, I *might* approve it, but give me a reason. My information come mostly from this site (and the book) <http://www.betterworldshopper.com/r-retail.html>. It seems like a credible site to me, but its opinions are not necessarily mine. (The list is below.)

**Content:** you will **describe** (tell us what’s there), **analyze,** (tell us why the words/visuals/audio bits are there, what effect they are intended to have) and **evaluate** (discuss strengths & weaknesses) of the site. Questions your paper will answer include the following (but not in this order, necessarily):

* Who seems to be the intended audience and how can you tell? What do they value?
* What is the context for the argument (events/conditions related to the product or company history)?
* How are the three appeals (ethos, pathos, logos) being used? One paragraph for *each* is a good idea. NOTE: For the ethos appeal (crucial in this assignment) note where the company discusses its virtues—how “green,” ethical, and responsible it is? What does that statement of emphasize? If it defends itself from charges of wrong-doing, where and how does it do that?
* How are visuals/audio used? (You will incorporate a visual into your essay, too.)
* Overall, what do you think are the site’s strengths and weaknesses as an argument that says that this is not just a company/organization that offers a good product or service, but that it is making the world a better place in some extra way?

“Good Guy” Companies Global Girlfriend, Ten Thousand Villages, New Belgium Brewing, Toyota, Lexus, Patagonia, Divine Chocolate, Aveda, Yes to, Ember Jewelry, Santa Cruz Organic, Bainbridge Ometepe Coffee, Clif Bar, Dannon Yogurt, Chipotle, Trader Joe’s, Greendisk, TOMS shoes,. Companies on the Defensive Exxon-Mobile, Monsanto, PG&E, Microsoft, Solyndra, Chevron-Texaco, Wal-Mart, Archer Daniels Midland, General Motors, LA Gear, Citibank, Nestle, Kraft, Macy’s, Ralph Lauren, Koch Industries. Non-Profits: Head First Development, 826 Valencia, Rising Farmworker Dream Fund, Room to Read, Books for Africa, Heifer International, Grameen Bank, Ashoka, Habitat for Humanity, Doctors Without Borders, Amnesty International, World Bicycle Relief, Bicycle Exchange, African Children’s Choir, Greenpeace, Oxfam, Engineers Without Borders (there’s an SJSU branch!). Note: Try Charity Navigator for more info about these and many others: <http://www.charitynavigator.org/>

* **Length/format rough draft:** 1200, **final draft**: 1400 words, typed in MLA format .
* **Include** one visual from the site in your essay itself, with a caption to explain what it shows about the company’s strategy.
* **Audience:** your classmates and professor in 1B. This means you can use rhetoric jargon.
* **Topic Proposal** just tell me what Web site you will do and include the URL

**Due Dates**: Topic Proposal Rough Draft Final Draft