Sample Character Dossier for use in Argument and Persuasion class.

**Main Objective:** Practice thinking about what audiences care about and how to be sensitive to their differences in order to keep a dissenting audience reading your paper

**Key terms:** Common Ground, Audience Analysis, Mature Reasoning

**Tools:** use a power point slide with Creative Commons Licensed portraits

**Character Dossier:** the objective of this activity is to practice thinking more about your audience and how to convince that audience to assent to your thesis by using mature reasoning and audience analysis. First, as a group, decide on a photo from which to create a fictional person, and then work together, filling out the profile.

1. Class (mindset and behavior, not solely income)________________
2. Race/ Ethnicity________________________
3. Gender________________________
4. Age: circle a range: 16-26; 27-50; 50-65; 66-80; 81+
5. List a meaningful historical event this person has lived through________________________
6. Explain why is the above historical event most memorable for this person____________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
7. How does this person feel about being a parent, either now or in the future?___________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
8. What does this person think about death?________________________________________
9. How does this person feel about religion?________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
10. Why does this person feel that way about religion?________________________________
     ____________________________________________________________________________
11. Current Occupation:_____________________________
12. What would this person like to be doing in 5 years?_______________________________
13. Explain how this person views the current US government_________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
14. Local peer group, club, or activist group for this person___________________________
15. Name a soap box issue for this person___________________________________________
16. Name your person____________________________________________________________
17. **Now assume your group’s person, the one described above, is the author of an argument essay.**
   **Pair up with another group. Their person is now your audience for your hypothetical essay:**
18. **Select an issue and a position** your person will argue:_________________________
    ____________________________________________________________________________
19. Now compare and contrast the differences of your audience and author. Describe the principles, values, beliefs, goals, and characteristics that differ between audience and author.

   (Use the “Audience Analysis” table in Timothy Crusius’s Aims of Argument, 6th ed, page 251 for reference).

19. Now compare the common ground: what can the audience and author agree on?

20. After conducting this analysis, what opposing views in your paper would you be sure to validate for your audience before making him or her listen to all your reasons and evidence?

21. If you wanted your reader to change his or her mind and come to a new understanding of the issue, what do you think would be the most compelling types of evidence for this particular reader?
Assessment and feedback for this presentation:

One of my goals of this presentation is to create discussion about the use of fictional characters for analysis and role play. Please take a moment to fill out this dossier as a form of feedback on today’s activities. I’ll post a synthesis of responses on my website.

My discipline ___________________________ My college _________________________

How might an instructor use fictional character dossiers in any of the following disciplines?

Comp/Literature

History

Sociology

Psychology

Nursing

Political Science

Philosophy

Art

Other:

Other Comments: