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# *Writer's Statement about "Using Rhetorical Strategies to Examine War Protest"*

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RADHARANY DIAZ

The study of American wars—Vietnam in particular—has always been a topic of interest for me since my early years in high school. When we were assigned this project in Professor Martinez's class, I knew that this is what I wanted to focus on, but struggled to find an image (or "genre") that would allow me to apply rhetorical strategies in order to illustrate how each of these concepts worked. Once I found the "I Want Out" poster, everything clicked and I was able to envision my final product of this project almost immediately. I knew that this image would enable me to bring about the appropriate examples that we had discussed in class and read about in our textbook. Although the process of putting together my blog to express my ideas was engaging and actually quite fun, putting it all into a video format became the real challenge.

Professor Martinez wanted us to prove what we had learned, but made it very clear that this would not be our traditional four-page essay paper. Considering how extensive rhetorical strategies are in nature, condensing all of the information that I had gathered into a 5-6 minute video was extremely difficult. I wanted to make sure that I was making my points clear enough for others to understand without subtracting so much (for time's sake) that it would lose its substance.

My audiences for this project were both my professor and classmates. The writing ultimately was an effort to bring forth real-world situations and apply rhetorical strategies in order to clarify their purposes. This idea of having an audience brings me to another challenge I faced while developing the narration for my video, which turned out to be the essay portion of the blog once I transcribed it. The authors we were introduced to stressed the importance of audience receptivity. I had to ask myself: "How can I make this something that's educational yet interesting to my classmates?" This question is what guided me in creating the 5-6 minute timeframe, the selection of music I used, and the amount of quotations I included. Had the video exceeded that amount of time, the viewers would be more likely to lose interest. Choosing a background melody that was appropriate for the topic being discussed was also an obstacle as I tried to search for a contemporary sound that would be recognized by my audience, but also something that had relevance. Lastly, I was careful in only highlighting certain quotations that I felt captured the essence of each point I was trying to make. I didn't want the audience to have to read through a lot of information because we had already done enough of that during our class time. My optimal goal was for my project to have the perfect balance of engagement/entertainment and insight. Reading articles by Keith Grant-Davie and Laura Bolin Carroll were extremely informative, but I'm grateful to have been given the opportunity to show our understanding of these ideas through our own means.

## **Radharany Diaz**



Radharany Diaz is currently a sophomore in the College of Health & Public Affairs pursuing a B.A. in Legal studies and a minor in Journalism Studies. Although her career interests are vested in the field of law enforcement, she has developed a passion for writing in the past several years. She was selected as a finalist for the 2014 Knights Write Showcase and will be presenting this very project in the poster section of the event.