RWS 100
Fall 2016
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Prompt for Essay One: Account of an Argument
Clive Thompson's "Public Thinking," from *Smarter Than You Think: How Technology is Changing Our Minds for the Better*

Rough draft due: September 23
Final draft due: October 3
Length: 5-6 pages (not including Works Cited)

To be successful, your paper must:

1. Help your readers understand what the text is about (assume they haven't read it) and why the issues are significant or worthy of discussion.
2. Contextualize the text by relating it to larger cultural conversations. Accurately describe the author's project, argument, and the rhetorical situation (using outside sources if appropriate).
3. State the purpose of your paper clearly and provide a basic "road map" so readers can envision how your paper/argument is structured. Use "metadiscourse" (writing about writing) to help guide your readers by talking about the structure of your paper, not its contents.
4. Identify the most important or interesting claims made by the author and how they relate to the overall argument. Spend the bulk of your time analyzing and evaluating how your author supports his claims. In particular, examine the evidence and/or strategies the author employs to structure the text and how and to what extent they work to persuade his audience.
5. Focus on analyzing (discussion of *how* and *why* something works) examples, not description (summary of *what* something is).
6. Use an effective organizational structure that carefully guides the reader from one idea to the next.
7. Edit your final draft carefully to catch typos and sentence-level errors (for clarification on grammatical rules and conventions, refer to *Keys for Writers*).
8. Integrate quotes effectively by contextualizing and explaining them gracefully in your own prose.
9. Utilize proper MLA formatting both in-text and in your Works Cited (for help with MLA formatting, refer to *Keys for Writers* or Purdue's Online Writing Lab).
10. Turn in a **stapled hard copy of your rough draft, peer review worksheet, and final draft** on Monday, October 3.