Anderson/ENGL 102-048

Homework for March 29

(Your final draft of the Op-Ed is also due on Tuesday)

Please read Carole Blair’s “Contemporary U.S. Memorial Sites as Exemplars of Rhetoric’s Materiality.” In this book chapter, Blair discusses how a public space can be a text and a rhetor; she claims that any rhetorical text, like architecture, “’is really a verb, an action’” (30). She provides rich rhetorical readings of five memorial sites which include the Vietnam Veteran’s Memorial, the NAMES Project (AIDS Quilt), the Civil Rights Memorial , Kent State’s Memorial and the Witch Trials Tercentenary Memorial. Blair uses five questions to situate these memorials:

What is the significance of the text’s material existence? (30-37)

What are the apparatuses and degrees of durability displayed by the text? (37-38)

What are the text’s modes or possibilities of reproduction or preservation? (38-39)

What does the text do to (or with or against) other texts? (39-45)

How does the text act on persons? (45-50)

Try to read it twice. On your second reading mark the margins where you think there is something significant or that it surprises you or where you have questions/confusions. After you have read this twice, you will create a double entry journal as you have done before. Use at least six quotes from different parts of the chapter to demonstrate you have read the whole piece.

Blair’s chapter is not easy to read and some of the material in the beginning is dense and difficult. You are not expected to understand everything, and that is okay. Pay attention to her discussion/description of the memorial sites (beginning on p. 23). Find specific answers to the above questions and use those in your response. How do you understand Blair’s concept of viewing memorials and commemorative sites as aa rhetor and a text? In other words, what are these sites communicating to the public?

Bring your work to class to discuss on Tuesday.