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Unit Three Reflection

Unit Three provided me the unique chance to juxtapose writing a performance of a genre and an analysis of said performance, and allowed me to develop an implicit understanding of the differences associated with writing each. Manifesto is a genre which, while fixed in purpose, is flexible in form. It co-occurs with other genres, allowing an author the ability to write in any genre which he or she chooses as long as the result fulfills the purpose of a manifesto. An academic essay on the other hand is both rigid in purpose and form. The freedom I was allowed writing “You’re Doing it Wrong” was not present when writing “On ‘You’re Doing it Wrong’”. Academic essays exist for a singular purpose, and hundreds of years of optimization have produced a rigid, efficient style. This phenomenon is not bad (it eliminates the possibility of ambiguity); it just makes the genre mildly unpleasant to write in.

In particular, the voice of “You’re Doing it Wrong” and “On ‘You’re Doing it Wrong’” differ wildly. The former is a passionate, flagrant declaration that the paradigm under which we train and hire software developers is wrong, and the latter a detached essay concerning the fulfillment of the requirements of a genre. The first has an opinion, the latter does not. The dichotomy between these writing styles was difficult to implement in close temporal proximity, thus I had to make myself wait between writing each text to ease the transition. Writing a manifesto got me into the “mood” of writing manifestos, and thus it was difficult to transition between that state and that of writing an academic essay.

In regards to meeting the learning goals set forth by the NEU Writing Program, I think this assignment does well. Unit Three meets the first goal by having students write in the genres explored in

Unit Two. Goal two is met by allowing the students to choose those facets of their genre performances within certain (logical) boundaries. Goal three by not providing a prompt for the genre performance. Goal four is met because of the peer review process. Goal five is derived from the analysis paper and its requirement of researching critical sources. Goal six is merely the implementation of goal five. Goal seven from the ambiguous nature of the genre performance. Goal eight is met by the requirement of both critical sources and genre examples in the analysis paper. Goal nine is met from the fact that in order to successfully implement a genre, one must have read a significant number of examples. Goal ten from the peer review process. Finally, goal eleven is met by this reflection paper.