A Modest Proposal

Due: Wednesday, August 27

This proposal is where you start your research toward your final, persuasive essay. The purpose of this two-page assignment is to give you a space to generate ideas relating to the work you have done so far and to provide you with an opportunity to formulate a research question to address when writing your final paper. You should have a topic that interests you, a topic that matters. Make sure that an argumentative claim may be made about it. Make sure, too, that such a claim can be argued reasonably and completely in eight to ten pages.

Guidelines

Typically, a proposal is a pointed, organized genre. You must address the following inter-related questions in your proposal in order to receive full credit:

- What is the research question you will be exploring? Once you have a topic, you'll form a “research question” about that topic. Examples of research questions include: "Is deer hunting a violation of animal rights?" or "Do conventional IQ tests show racial bias?"
- Why have you chosen to explore this research question? Why is it a worthy question? Identify the controversy or the question at the heart of your research project. You should have a sense of at least two sides of the question.
- What are related sub-questions to the over-arching question that you might consider?
- What are your ideas for structuring the paper? As you narrow your topic and start compiling sources, you will eventually be able to shape your research question into a thesis statement. After reading what experts have to say about your topic, where do you stand on the issue? The thesis statement is the argumentative claim that supports the entire essay. Identify the objectives and goals of your research.
- What is your preliminary position in relation to your research question (whatever shape that might have at the moment)? Explain why you chose this topic. Why is it important and interesting to you?
- Identify four resources you think you will use. At least two should have academic rigor.

Your research question should guide your preliminary research. You might start with a keyword search in Mountainlynx (on the WVU Libraries Web Site) and in some of the databases (particularly Lexis-Nexis and EBSCOHost). You might also consult some of
the academic encyclopedias in the reference room of the library and the newspaper indexes and other sources.

Format
Follow MLA style for formatting your proposal. The final copy must be in 12 point Times New Roman, with the appropriate heading and pagination. Title your proposal. You must be in class to turn in the assignment; it is due at the beginning of class on the date due. No late proposals will be accepted.

I will read your draft:
- to determine your success in writing a proposal;
- to guide you to a successful research question and final paper;
- to find answers to all of the above bullet points.