1. You should have had at least three arguments, because we went over two arguments in class. You should have had at least one argument of your own.

2. Your background is supposed to remain neutral in respect to the Alpha C topic. Some of you started arguing in your background. Some even attacked the writers of the news articles.

3. Good papers often present two types of articles on the same event or subject.

   A) The first is the straight news or feature report that is supposed to present the "facts" or the different positions taken on an issue. A news article or feature story is not supposed to take a position of its own. We have called these "descriptive" or "analytical" essays.

   B) The second is the op/ed article that is supposed to present the writer's opinions or views on the same issue. We have called these "editorial" essays. An op/ed piece is supposed to take a side or a clear position on a topic or issue. That is its function.

   C) If the writer of an op/ed piece is a regular columnist or editor of the paper, e.g., the New York Times, Newsweek or the Sacramento Bee, the editors of publication usually check to make sure the opinions expressed are consistent with any relevant facts or other forms of information presented in the publication's news or feature articles.

   D) In other words, the opinions expressed are those of the writer, but since the writer represents the publication, care is taken to make sure that those opinions are interpretations or comments on what has been presented as fact elsewhere in the same publications. This is one of the major reasons that the op/ed pieces written by regular columnists for major publications (e.g., Greenfield, Dowd, Weintraub, Kushman) are taken so seriously by many readers who look to these writers to help them "make sense" of the facts presented in the news.

4. Hence, what Todd says in her "Greek" article about being able to express her own opinions in an op/ed piece is only partly true, if we assume that the State Hornet is following standard journalistic practice.

5. So Todd is supposed to express her opinions. That is her job, so to speak. But her analysis
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should at least be consistent with the facts as presented elsewhere in the *Hornet*. This is the logic that underlies Alpha Option Topic C.

6. Let me diagram this as follows:

   NEWS STORIES ON E

   EVENT (E )—> HORNET

   OP/ED ARTICLES ON E

7. Of course, not all op/ed pieces are related to news events. For example, Todd's commentary on "Singles" is simply a personal commentary on student life that is not supposed to refer to any specific situation. However, her article on "Religious Demonstrators" does refer to specific events that occurred on campus and that were covered by the *Hornet*.

8. But Todd is correct when she says that one should not confuse an op/ed piece with a straight news story. They have different functions and the facts in each case are used differently.

9. The whole point of a news article is to get the "story right." It attempts to provide a neutral and factual description of events and situations.

10. An op/ed piece begins where a news story ends. It tries to present personal interpretations of the facts. It tries to explore the implications and meanings that the writer feels are hidden or implicit in the facts. It tries to get the reader to think about the facts in new and different ways.

11. Some of you attacked Todd for giving her own opinions as opposed to the facts.

12. In the case of books, lectures and other types of presentations, the element of factual or even logical consistency is not always critical. It depends on who the presenter is and what type of publication he or she is involved with.

13. For example, in Yona McDonough's case, her publishers wanted to sell as many of her books as possible. The purpose of the book, *A Real Life Barbie Turns Forty*, was not to publish the results of scientific surveys on children. Rather, it was to appeal to buyers in the target audience.

14. In Dr. Kline's case, the purpose of his lecture was apparently to spread the word about
what he believes are the dangers of animal rights activists to a very general, non-medical audience. Unlike Greenfield, Kline did not have an editor that required that his comments be consistent background facts. So it did not seem to matter that he ignored some of the news events similar to those included in our handout from the NY Times. Of course, even a newspaper editor might have let some inconsistencies go by assuming he is an expert in the field.

15.