

Project 4: Analysis of Science Accommodation

In the ethnographic essay, you investigated discourse practices within a particular community to understand how language works in relation to membership in a community. For this project, we will explore the kinds of writing and thinking valued in a particular academic community by comparing them to more popular forms of writing and thinking.

This assignment asks you to find a mass media report or discussion about a scientific finding and trace it back to the original report from which it was taken in order to analyze the differences between the two types of discourse. Present your findings as an academic paper that analyzes how the finding has been popularized (the term for this is accommodation).

As you analyze each text, consider questions such as:

- How can you describe the rhetorical situation for each text?
- What genre does each text work within?
- How does the introduction of the scholarly article follow or diverge from the CARS model? How does the introduction in the popular piece differ?
- How subtly or obviously are claims stated in each? How does each piece present the significance of these claims?
- How are nonspecialists accommodated in the mass media piece? (see Jeanne Fahnestock's "Accommodating Science" for elaboration on how this happens)
- What sources are used in the original science report and in the media accommodation of it? If the accommodation draws on interviews or other sources not found in the original report, what is the effect of these changes?
- How does each text deal with contradictory evidence?

Be sure to attach your observations to the values and priorities implicit in both texts. You be able to account for these differences without making sweeping claims about academic or popular discourse in general. In addition, be sure to support your claims with specific evidence from the texts and apply concepts from our readings.

Format: 4-5 double-spaced pages, 10- to 12-point font, APA format

Draft due: Wednesday, November 9

Final due: Tuesday, November 22