

## Reflective Rationale – “The Catch-22 of Code Switching”

For my genre remediation project, I decided to remediate Blog #2, which was titled “The Catch-22 of Code Switching.” The final product was two new genres, which included a five stop travel guide to Washington, D.C. and a poem. I feel that both remediations were creative ways to remix my original blog, which synthesized Vershawn Ashanti Young’s essay “‘Nah We Straight’: An Argument Against Code Switching” and Gloria Anzaldúa’s essay “How to Tame a Wild Tongue.” In the synthesis, I used both sources to argue that there is a “catch-22” to code switching, meaning that there is an unattainable standard to please those who are for code switching as well as those who are against it.

The travel guide to D.C. features five stops which are intended to highlight black history and culture, while educating others about the black experience and its relation to the catch-22. The five stops include the Village Cafe and Market, the Lincoln Memorial, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, the Smithsonian Museum of African American History and Culture, and Ben’s Chili Bowl. The exigence of the travel guide is the issue of racial injustice as well as the issue of code switching and the unrealistic expectations attached to the concept. These issues are all addressed in “Nah We Straight.” In Young’s essay, he introduces how code switching, the act of switching one’s language based on the environment one is in, is inherently harmful and enforces “racist logic” (51). The guide is intended for students, tourists, and civilians seeking further education on the African American experience and the idea of the catch-22. Tourists and students are actively seeking to learn new things and gain informative experiences, which makes this travel guide a good resource for them.

My decision to construct a travel guide was influenced by my intention to create a format that was easy to follow, while still ensuring that it remained engaging and informative. Included in the guide, stop #1 at the Village Cafe and Village Market and stop #5 to Ben's Chili Bowl provide opportunities to celebrate and support black culture. Similarly, stops 2, 3, and 4 provide opportunities to learn historical accounts of the black experience. Stop #5 in particular relates to the "Nah We Straight" essay because it was a source of inspiration for Young's argument against code switching. By learning about the BIPOC experience, users of the guide will come to understand the struggles and biases that face the black community. In addition, users will be able to better empathize with minority groups because they will be better educated on the environments in which blacks have been forced to change in and adapt to. Once the history and struggles are better understood by people, they will more clearly be able to identify the role language plays in forming biases, opinions, and assumptions, thus allowing users of the guide to grasp the concept of the catch-22.

While composing the new genre, my main goal was to ensure that I chose sites that would provide accurate, in-depth information. In addition, I specifically chose to design the guide in a way that would appeal to travelers and entice them to participate. The layout and high quality pictures were used in order to help the guide appear professional. Some constraints I encountered included the fact that I only included five stops on the guide, as there are numerous other sites which I could have suggested. Also, I was not exactly sure where I would publish the travel guide or how I would market it to tourists.

The three stanza poem addresses similar issues to the travel guide. The exigence of the poem is the concept of code switching along with Young and Anzaldúa's arguments against it. The

audience of the revised text includes people seeking further information on the catch-22 concept, as well as those who are curious about the concepts of code switching and code meshing.

It was my hope that by writing a poem I would be able to provide my audience with a piece of writing that was both informative and thought-provoking. Young's essay is pretty lengthy, so I also wanted to create a remediation that could be delivered in a more concise manner. I wanted my readers to read the poem and take time to reflect on its significance. Each pair of lines in the poem rhymes. This was a writerly choice I made in an effort to help the poem flow and keep it engaging. When writing the poem, I encountered challenges when attempting to think of words that rhymed with each other that made sense and still related to my topic. Possible constraints of the poem include the fact that it is only three stanzas, meaning that there is not a lot of room for explanation and that the lines could be interpreted differently by different readers. Additionally, it may be hard to encourage people to read the poem without providing background information.

Both the travel guide and poem prove to be effective remediations of my blog. Both remediations connect to Young and Anzaldúa's arguments in a way that is informative and engages the audiences. Overall, I am very proud of the final product of my two remediations. When I go back home to Maryland, I hope to find time to follow the travel guide I have created. I believe the strongest portion of my project was the travel guide remediation, as I think it was a creative way to remediate my synthesis blog. I enjoyed creating that aspect of the project the most because it allowed me a chance to be creative and express my passion for design. I feel that there was slight room for improvement in the guide, as I did not explicitly state or explain how the catch-22 idea was related to each of the stops. If given more time, I feel that I could have also expanded the length of my poem in order to provide more background on the sources and topics

which I reference. In addition, I feel that I could have named the poem so that its content was more easily identifiable to the audience.

I am aware that the issue of racism which plagues our nation is not going to be solved by a poem or 5-stop travel guide. Yet, I am confident that the travel guide and poem are valuable resources that can and should be used to educate society about racial injustice issues. Through this remediation project, and the reading of sources like “Nah We Straight,” I have come to recognize that as long as there is an effort present to educate yourself and others, there is progress being made. I am grateful for this project because of how it allowed me a chance to be creative, an opportunity which I feel has been lacking in my other classes. I really enjoyed designing the layout of my travel guide and the way in which it reignited my passion for design. In conclusion, I am proud to say that I did my best on the project and am pleased with how it turned out.

## Works Cited

Anzaldúa, Gloria. "How to Tame a Wild Tongue."

<https://cofc.brightspace.com/d21/le/content/267424/viewContent/3527945/View>

Young, Vershawn A. "'Nah, We Straight': An Argument Against Code Switching." 2009.

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