

The anatomy of a rumor speech assignment

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The Anatomy of a Rumor Purpose: To inform my audience about the psychological origins of rumor Central Idea: Rumor is a peer inspired, unverified form of information that is psychologically driven Pattern of Organization: Topical Introduction: I. We've all been there. Somehow or somehow we have either heard, taken part in, or even began a rumor. Most likely, we've done each of those things. But what makes a rumor, and why are they even in our lives anyway? II. The 1st deed. F Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary defines a rumor " as a statement or report current with no known authority for its truth. " III. Rumors are peer-inspired, unverified pieces of information that are psychologically driven. ' V. My research will help explain why we, as humans, actually want and need rumors in our lives. V. We will discover that rumors are a form of information, rumors continually transform as they travel, and that rumors serve an emotional purpose. (Transition: First, rumors must start from somewhere.) Body: I.

Rumors are a form of information. A. As human beings, we are always hungry for information. B. For information to spread, it must begin with one person before further passing through social groups. 8. 1. Even an innocent bit of information that was thought to be true can evolve into a rumor. 8. 2. According to psychologist Dry. Robert H. Knapp, unconfirmed pieces of information make the most successful rumors because they can be modified to make a more interesting statement. 8. 3. The rumor then propels farther into circulation because of public interest. Do you remember playing the game of Telephone as a child?) II. Rumors continually transform as they travel. A. In the game of Telephone, the farther the message travels around

the circle of people relaying the original message, the more distorted the message becomes. A. L. A rumor is much the same because as a rumor travels, it grows. A. 2. As the rumor grows, it transforms. B. Sacs Sunniest, head of the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs and author of *On Rumors*, calls this process "Rumor Cascades." 8. 1.

A rumor cascade is like the snowball effect. 8. 2. A rumor cascade is constantly pulling in new believers who adjust the story as there are to believe and spread the rumor (Sunniest) (Finally, why do we need rumors?) III. Rumors serve an emotional purpose. A. Emotional wishes, fears, and anxieties are managed by rumors. B. A rumor is used as a psychological defense mechanism against the unknown. 8. 1. Take any initial news reports, for example 8. 2. Many people jump to conclusions with false stories until actual information has been verifiable confirmed and released. C.

Nicholas Diffusion, Professor of Psychology at Rochester Institute of Technology and the author of numerous books and articles on rumor, believes that rumor satisfies basic human needs in times of ambiguity and threat. C. I. The very presence of an explanation is comforting. Rumors are derived from fears and anxieties Conclusion: I. As we can see, rumors do serve a purpose in our lives. II. Rumors, though not always reliable, are a source of information; rumors are always changing as they travel; and, rumors serve some emotional purpose. III. Though we may not always get along with rumors, rumors will always make a way into our lives.

Hopefully, after this discussion, you can now have a better understanding of what lies behind a rumor. Works Cited Barrens, Laurence and Leonard J.

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