

Abstract Examples

LANGUAGES, LITERATURE, & SOCIAL SCIENCES

Title: THE RHETORIC OF DEATH RITUAL DURING THE ROMAN REPUBLIC AND EARLY EMPIRE

Major(s): History

Department: Social and Behavioral Sciences

Abstract: The power of unspoken rhetoric is a ubiquitous undercurrent of all societies. Unspoken rhetoric, embedded within monuments or through the vehicle of ritual, is a constant reminder to the people of virtues that should be followed, beliefs that are common to the culture, and political statements of control. During the period of the late Roman Republic and early Roman Empire, the rhetoric of death was thick with commentary: commentary that was more often than not directed at the living rather than the dead. Funeral rituals were important for remembrance of the dead especially in connection to the state. For the living, the rituals presented a form of social commentary in how to live a dutiful, virtuous life in the eyes of the Republic and Empire. Funeral rhetoric also served as a vehicle for transmission of power and a tool to assert power and define where one stood in the social orders of society. Epigraphic evidence presented by Brent Shaw and Richard Saller offer interesting evidence for continuation of family name, wealth, and power being transferred within the rituals of funerals.

This is important background information, and it is elegantly presented, but readers still don't know specifically how it relates to the presentation.

Overall, this is a well-done abstract, but readers cannot easily get an instant snapshot of the presentation.

Average readers from other fields might not understand what "epigraphic evidence" is. It might be more effective to use simpler ("layman's") terms.

Title: COMPARING AMERICAN POETS OF THE MODERN AGE

Major(s): English Literature

Department: Language, Literature and Mass Communication

Abstract: Each presenter will read a poem from a different poet whose works were affected by the modern age such as T.S. Eliot, e.e. cummings, Wallace Stephens or Robert Frost, and then briefly discuss the unique form and/or style each of the poets used to express one or more of the five elements related to this time period: Multiplicity, Diversity, Complexity, Anarchy and Chaos.

While this abstract clearly and succinctly explains the content of the presentation, it should also add a line or two telling why this is of importance or of interest. It is lacking a "hook."