First writing assignment: Due Wednesday, February 8, in class

Do this writing assignment within a continuous block of time not longer than two hours.

Your task is to write a 2 page, double spaced essay about a structure of your choosing. The structure should be big enough or complicated enough that you think engineering was required during the design process. This essay is your first attempt at critiquing a structure as structural art, from the social, scientific, and symbolic perspectives.

In thinking about the structure, consider, among other things, the following: the materials that the structure is made of, the loads that act on the structure, how the structural members transmit these loads to the ground, the technical purpose that the structure serves, whether there is significant ornamentation on the structure, whether the structure is beautiful, what social purpose, if any, the structure serves, the degree to which an engineer may have been involved in its creation.

In your essay, make evaluations of the structure, do not simply report facts about the structure, but support your evaluations with statements like those we have been making in class about structures such as the Eiffel Tower, Gateway Arch, and the bridges of Thomas Telford and John Roebling. Concentrate on specific details of the structure; “The building is beautiful,” does not say very much without specifics. What, exactly, about the building is beautiful, and why do you think so?

If possible, include a photograph of your structure which does not count towards your two pages. If your photo is obtained from a published source, cite the source. If you cannot obtain a photograph, you could include sketches, or could consider a different structure. Feel free to consult with Prof. Arwade in choosing.

The two page, double spaced limit will be strictly enforced. Nothing after that will be read.

Have Fun! This is new stuff that can be very exciting to think about.