Michael Chabon: “The Comforts of Not-Home”

Mr. Eble, AP Language and Composition

**Directions:** Read Chabon’s article “The Comforts of Not-Home” from the November 2012 issue of *Bon Appetit*. Complete the following questions / areas of rhetorical focus, which are a primer for class discussion.

**Section 1—“YOU PEOPLE MAY ASSEMBLE”**:

What idea / argument about people’s celebration of Thanksgiving does Chabon note in this section?

Note the following rhetorical strategies and schemes/tropes Chabon utilizes in order to present this message:

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| Metaphors / similes, Zeugma, Anaphora, Rhetorical Questions |

**Section 2—IT WAS AN OLD HUNTING LODGE**

Explain how Chabon presents the Old Hunting Lodge; how does the allusion to Rivendell (from *Lord of the Rings*) play out throughout the rest of this section and the piece?

How does Chabon present Margaret Grade, the caretaker and remake of Manka’s?

**Section 3—WE NUMBERED SIX**

Rhetorically, how does Chabon present the Thanksgiving meal? How does his narrative demonstrate the message of the piece?

Chabon utilizes **zeugma** in the following line: “We sank into thick sweaters, leather club chairs, and companionship.” *What effect does this have on the telling of the tale?*

**Section 4—TEN YEARS HAVE PASSED**

What does Chabon reveal about Manka’s? What does this ending section reveal about his perception of Thanksgiving? About the message he’s presenting about the holiday, and about meals?

**AFTER YOU’VE FINISHED:** Chabon spends more time describing the milieu, the environment, than he does describing the food. Select an “eating environment” for close observation and purposeful commentary; describe how that environment (perhaps more so than the food) shapes social interaction or individual introspection.

For discussion: How do our eating environments shape us? How can we glean meaning about our culture from our eating environments?

**For Thanksgiving Break:** Write an analysis of your Thanksgiving food environment; use your experience on Thanksgiving to present an implicit claim based upon this “eating environment.”