**Rachel Green**

**Response 20**

I think the most powerful exercise we did during this course was the discussion we had about the Simmons case. I have always been interested in the Supreme Court and growing up with my mom who was a lawyer, I consider myself to be an informed citizen when it comes to discussions about how the courts operate. However, I have never spent ample time reading or studying specific cases. I had never thought about how someone’s moral opinion on a certain topic could differ from the decision they might make in a court room. Scalia’s dissenting opinion showed this to me for the first time.

This realization will have an impact in the future on the way that I think about what controversial topics. What might be the right answer in one situation may not be the correct answer in the next situation. I think that throughout the class that has been what I noticed most. In all of our discussions, there was no single correct answer. To put it one way, it is impossible to be completely objective. As humans, in discussion, we cannot help but allow our opinions to creep in (no matter how subtly). This being said, striving for objectivity, especially in higher education, is not something that you can really enforce. In cases where there are two or more sides, professors should present all sides and allow students to form their own opinions.

My views on violence did not change during the course of this class, but they were further solidified. I believe that whether it was listening to testimonies from the parents of the Columbine shooters or reading about Annabelle and her vicious killings, I gained a broader perspective on the inner workings of the brain. I think that everything I learned in this class can be taken into the future to help me make better decisions and decide which research to believe and whose opinions I should be questioning.