**Blog Post Assignments**

Our blog posts will become more and more focused on your own interests and reading lists although you are always welcome to touch on our shared class texts. Most importantly, the blog posts will be more polished versions of the writing I am expecting you are doing on a more regular basis. Taking *Writing Analytically’s* suggestion that we all keep a “commonplace book” (110) and my own urging to free write for 15-30 minutes a day, I welcome your blog posts to be revised versions of those more loose and exploratory writings.

**Blog Post #2 due Sunday 9/17, by midnight: pick one**

Both of these blog post possibilities draw on our *Writing Analytically* reading. They require you to think about close reading, but on a more meta level. This assignment asks you to close read patterns and repetition in the field of literary studies and/or in your own interests. Once you have located these interesting patterns or keywords, I want you to really ask questions about what might be at stake. Why do they matter? So what? See *WA* “The Method” (26), “Asking So What?” (33).

* Keywords: What are the keywords of your emerging intellectual inquiry? Respond to, revise, or otherwise expand upon 1 or 2 keywords we have already encountered in class via our reading in Culler or through other essays and texts. You might draw from *Keywords for X Studies* books (http://keywords.nyupress.org/), from your syllabi for other courses, and/or from popular sources. Get creative in your thinking. Where, how, and why do your keywords matter? (Key terms make an appearance in “Reformulating Binaries,” p94.)
* Patterns and difference: track a recurring motif in your text, group of texts, or in the broader work of your writer/group/set of interests. What is the significance of this motif in the text/s? How does the pattern shift or change? To what larger issues does the pattern speak? One way to think about this is to notice difference in a similar pattern and talk about the significance (or to look for a similarity across what looks disparate). See *WA* p99 for more.

**Blog Post #3 due Sunday 10/1, by midnight: pick one**

Similar to last week’s blog posts, these also require you to think about close reading on a more meta level. Again, really ask questions about what might be at stake. What does this mean? Why does it matter? So what? See *WA* “The Method” (26), “Asking So What?” (33).

* Reformulating binaries: locate a binary either in your chosen texts or one that is popping up in your own thinking and interests. Follow the suggestions in *WA* to reformulate this binary and unpack the implications. This move helps us keep from oversimplifying. See pp94-on.
* Patterns and difference: track a recurring motif in your text, group of texts, or in the broader work of your writer/group/set of interests. What is the significance of this motif in the text/s? How does the pattern shift or change? To what larger issues does the pattern speak? One way to think about this is to notice difference in a similar pattern and talk about the significance (or to look for a similarity across what looks disparate). See *WA* p99 for more.

**Blog Post #4 due Sunday 10/8, by midnight: pick one**

In this blog post you need to dig deeper into your reading list to think about one of your texts there. For all of these options, you will need to rely on what *WA* calls “10 on 1.” In fact, I suggest you do a 10 on 1 as prewriting so that you can make sure you are exploring the many possibilities of these frameworks. In *WA* see Chapter 10.

* Publication history: narrate the history of the publication of your focal text. Did pieces of it appear in magazines, journals, or elsewhere in advance of the whole? What do those sites of early publication indicate about the text (e.g., its politics, prestige, audience)? Are there subsequent editions of your text? What values do these confer on the text?
* Primary/archival document discovery + analysis: find, analyze, and contextualize a primary or archival document relevant to your focal text. This might be a contemporaneous speech, monument, film, news story, piece of legislation, editorial, image, advertisement, a holding in the college’s Special Collections … again: get creative. What new insights into or resonances with your text/emerging project does this document generate?
* Author biography: write a short, pointed author biography. Aim not to summarize the whole life, but rather to highlight a particular episode or period of the author’s lived experience that you think sheds some light on your focal text.

**Blog Post #5 due Sunday 10/29, by midnight: pick one**

These post options draw on *WA* exercises which ask you to uncover assumptions (p. 91) and read against the grain (p. 117), OR work to make personal responses more analytical (p.153).

* Listening for the unconscious: we have seen that the gaps and silences in texts are themselves productive of meanings, often ideological ones. What is your text *not* explicitly stating? What meanings does it repress, deliberately or otherwise? Why? Why does it matter to listen for them?
* Personal reflection: what is it about this text that draws you? When did you first encounter this work? What were the conditions of your first reading/viewing? How has your sense of the text/s changed?

**Blog Post #6 due Sunday 11/5, by midnight: pick one**

* Occasional criticism: try narrating an *occasion*—political, historical, institutional, cultural—as an avenue into analysis of your text. Imagine that this is the introduction to a longer essay/thesis; this is the “hook.” This is another version of thinking about a lens or an interpretive context (*WA* talks about lenses beginning on pages 118 and 213. Interpretive contexts begins on page 136.)
* You chose: pick one of the other above suggestions and write using that prompt.

**Reminder about Comments**

**Due:** By the end of the term you will need to have posted 12 comments on you peer’s blog posts.

**Length:** 75-100 words

In your comments, strive to engage with the post through making connections. This can be by asking questions and/or offering connections to other moments in our readings, ideas from class, or other blog posts. Or, you are free to make connections to material from outside of our course—in other words, other classes you are taking/have taken, pop culture, film/TV, etc. Make sure you articulate *why* you think these connections are relevant for the particular post on which you are commenting.

Comments are part of building our class community and a way for us to continue class discussion beyond the walls of our classroom. Plus, commenting allows us time to reflect on what others have said, both in class and online (thus allowing us to “discuss” both orally and through writing). I strongly suggest you read your peer’s posts and comments regularly!