**Paper #3: Final Paper Project**

Length: 5-6 pages or 1200-1500 words (*Please indicate word count at the end of the essay)* PLUS a Writer’s Memo of 1-2 pages

**Essay Draft Due 5/4:** bring 2 copies of your essay draft (*not* the Writer’s Memo) to class for Peer Review

\*Note: The more complete a draft you have, the better your peer group will be at helping you think about revisions.

**Final Draft with Writer’s Memo Due Monday 5/9:** VIA EMAIL to [kersh@dickinson.edu](mailto:kersh@dickinson.edu)

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**Assignment Details:**

For this essay, you need to make a *claim about your life*. Over the course of the semester, we have read a number of texts which take up the issue of “identity” and “normal” from a variety of different angles. Put a moment (or moments) from your own life in conversation with something we have read together in class. The idea is that you will take the critical tools we developed in this course and apply them.

I want you to specifically use texts from our class to help you analyze, or close read, your own experiences. What story do you have that needs to be told? How have you changed from that event, experience, or relationship? What changed you? How? Why? So what? Think of your life as a text, and close read it. I want you to push past an obvious, or cliché, reading and explore deeper, implicit meanings. BE SPECIFIC. Try to remember details, thoughts, dialogue, or other information that will help you as you perform your close reading. Remember, your life is the text here, so use it to support your reading. Use what we have done in class to help you analyze this moment/these moments.

**How is this paper like the others I have written?**

Just like in both of the previous papers for this course, *I am looking for your ability to close read and then make an interpretation based on the data you gather from your close reading* (a.k.a your use of “The Method” from *Writing Analytically*). Also, like other assignments for this course, I am asking you to use one of our theoretical or fictional texts as a lens through which you will look at your own story. You may incorporate aspects from your blog posts, but I expect this paper to *go further, delve deeper,* and come up with a *more sophisticated close reading* of the text(s) than you have done so far. Really look closely and develop your own reading of it a moment from your life using our course readings to help you formulate your argument. Think of your moment(s) as a text to be analyzed: What does it say? What does it *mean*? *So what*? How do we make sense of it?

*Please make sure to quote from other readings we have had for class*. Make sure to note pages numbers for any quotations and, *as always, cite any source you use for this paper.* You *do not* need to rely on outside sources, but if you do make sure to properly cite *all sources* (even if it is Wikipedia).

**Helpful Hints:**

Read parts of *Writing Analytically* to help you develop an argument that utilizes two or more texts:

* pp99-100 provides useful method for finding details to write about in the section called “Difference within Similarity”
* “Apply a Reading as a Lens” on pp 118-119 walks you through using one text to analyze another.
* pp 154-155, contains “Strategies for Making Personal Responses More Analytical”
* finally, pp156-158 talks about how to compare two texts in the section “Comparison/Contrast”

Also, these passages might be useful:

* pp. 165-168 walks you through how to use evidence (in our case, evidence is language from the text) and connect it to claims.
* pp. 228-231 gives good advice about what makes strong claim and how to write one.
* What goes in my Intro? What goes in my conclusion? See “Locating the Evolving Thesis in the Final Draft” on pp 249-250

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**Writer’s Memo Instructions:**

Write a 1-2page (250-500 words) letter to me about your growth as a writer and thinker over the course of the semester. Questions to consider are:

* What do you think is working well in your final project? About what are you most proud?
* Outline, in some detail, what your overall writing process was and how it evolved over the course of the semester. (For example: class discussion, in-class writing, revision, writing center visit, peer review, etc.). What was the most important thing you accomplished in these steps? Were there any particular obstacles you encountered along the way? BE SPECIFIC.
* Finally, what has writing this paper—or participating in this class more generally— taught you? In other words, what are you taking away from this semester?
* *This is a letter, not a paper. You may write it informally, so long as that doesn't lead you to take it less seriously.*