**ENG 1121: Final Research Project**

Your final research project will build on the themes and genres we have explored this semester. While there are several options to choose from, all projects will build on the course’s themes by conducting research and analyzing information and texts to compare different perspectives on a particular social or ethical problem, drawing upon such sources as academic literature, journalistic and popular media, theater, oral histories, and more. This assignment challenges you as a writer to compare different perspectives and sources while discovering or maintaining your own views. For readers, comparative essays like this can serve to deepen and complicate their understanding of social issues.

All projects will engage will use language and literacy as we have come to understand it to say something you think, feel or care about passionately. All projects will begin with a topic, question, or concern—preferably one raised in the class—followed by research and the synthesis of that research in written form.

You must include a variety of sources in your research including:

1. At least one of the texts we have read together in class
2. Two peer reviewed sources
3. An interview or oral history (you can either find a published interview or interview someone yourself)
4. One digital or non-traditional source (for example a blog post, comments, memes, etc.)
5. Archival or experiential research, field work or exhibit (note: this could include the class trip to *Sweat* or the Literature Roundtable with Sarah Schulman).

You will include an annotated bibliography explaining your research choices which will be due on **May 11th.**

You will choose from among the following topics:

1. **New York Author Study: Sarah Schulman**

For this topic, you could focus on the work of Sarah Schulman and write a literary analysis about *The Cosmopolitans* (or another one of her works). You would analyze the work in order to explain what you think the author is trying to show about New York City and social, political and ethical issues that affect life in the city using both her literary work, her comments at City Tech, and other research which you would conduct yourself based on the guidelines above. For example, you could focus on the theme of gentrification as it relates to *The Cosmopolitans*. The final paper should be 5-7 pages typed, double-spaced (not including works cited page) and use MLA citations.

1. **Traditional Literary Research Paper**

For this topic, you would choose one of the works of literature we have read in this class and focus on a theme or important social, political, or ethical issue raised by the text. For example, you could focus on drug addiction, violence or racism in Jesmyn Ward’s *Men We Reaped* and also conduct other research related to the topic to explore the issue from multiple perspectives. Or, you could focus on deindustrialization, labor unions or class inequality in Detroit or Reading, PA through an analysis of *Skeleton Crew* or *Sweat.* For the latter, you could also focus on xenophobia, NAFTA and/or the working class today as it relates to electoral politics. Here too, you would supplement your reading of the text with other research based on the above guidelines. The final paper should be 5-7 pages typed, double-spaced (not including works cited page) and use MLA citations.

1. **Creative Research Option: Drama or Memoir**

For this option, you would choose a theme of the course or an important social, political or ethical issue raised by the text (or by current events) and write a memoir or a play expanding on this theme. You would still incorporate research into the creative work using the above guidelines. In addition to the annotated bibliography, you would also include a one to two page explanation of why you chose the genre you did (as well as how the texts we read in class influenced your understanding of the genre you chose), the social, political or ethical message of the piece, how you incorporated the research and the reasoning behind any other important stylistic choices you made. The memoir option would be 5-7 pages with an additional 1-2 page explanation; the play should be about ten minutes long (or about ten pages) with an additional 1-2 page explanation. Note: the explanation should include MLA citations and a works cited page.

Please note: all options build on prior work from this class, thus, you will not be starting from scratch but rather expanding and deepening your work on this topic or in this genre for the final project.

**You will hand in your research project proposal on May 4th.**

Your research project proposal should include:

1. Your topic
2. An abstract or a paragraph description of your project including a brief explanation of the theme or social, political or ethical issue you are exploring in relation to this topic as well as an explanation of how you will approach the issue.
3. The text from the class you will be referring to or modeling your work upon.
4. At least two other sources you plan on using (include full bibliographic information using MLA format.

**On May 9th, we will be going to the library for research assistance.**

**On May 11th, you will hand in your annotated bibliography.**

An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles, and documents. Each citation is followed by a brief (usually about 150 words) descriptive and evaluative paragraph, the annotation. The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited.

**On May 23rd, you will hand in your final project and present it to the class (briefly).**