**ENG 1121: Writing Assignment #1: New York Stories**

**Professor Behrent**

***After reading the excerpts from* The Cosmopolitans*, choose one of the following assignments:***

1) Choose a story you know well that is set anywhere EXCEPT for New York City—you can use the plot of a novel, short story, folktale or fairytale—and reimagine the story set in New York City in the year of your birth.\* Write 2-3 pages of the story. Include a brief “Note on Style” to introduce your work (see Sarah Schulman’s “A Note on Style” as an example).

2) Choose two neighbors (loosely defined) who are “underdepicted.” You do not need to know anything about them—they may be composite images of people in your neighborhood but they should be based on people you have observed well enough to write about them believably. Write 2-3 pages of a story about these two people set in the year of your birth.\* Include a brief “Note on Style” to introduce your work (see Sarah Schulman’s “A Note on Style” as an example).

***For either assignment, you should:***

* Think carefully about the form and style you choose to best convey the story you want to tell. Before you begin, write a few sentences as a ‘Note on Style’ for your own work that can help guide (and explain) your creative choices
* Incorporate specific details about the setting, including descriptive language, sensory imagery, and specific historical references and detail that help to place the story in New York in the year of your birth. In your “Note on Style,” include references to these sources.
* Consider how, in Schulman’s words, your story helps us “see and internalize how different kinds of people experience the world in a desire to open ourselves to the broad variety of humanity” (“A Note on Style” 376). This too can be explained in your ‘Note on Style.’

\*Note: if you would rather choose a different year in which to set your story, you may BUT you should have a clear reason and explain it in your ‘Note on Style.’

The first draft of this assignment is due in class on **Tuesday, February 21st.**

**By Thursday, February 16th**, you should have chosen one of the assignments and begun brainstorming. In addition to reading Chapter Two of *The Cosmopolitans*, you should bring to class: a fact about NYC in 1958 and three facts about NYC in the year of your birth.