ENG1121, E115

Response paper 4 – “The Other Place” argument synthesis

Due: Mar 15

In “The Other Place,” Mary Gaitskill’s narrator describes both his life as a father and his life as a child. While the story has a number of different themes, two essential through-lines are the narrator’s connection to his son, and the narrator’s sense of a dark and other-worldly place where there is little consequence for danger.

In an interview with the *New Yorker*, Mary Gaitskill tells journalist Deborah Treisman, “I can’t take the reader into the mind of a serial killer, because I don’t know that mind. But I can take the reader into the mind of somebody who harbors some of those feelings, and people are interested in it because they recognize those feelings.”

For this response paper, you are being asked to synthesize these readings by expanding ONE of the following theses:

1. As Mary Gaitskill demonstrates, a fiction writer **does not** need to have personally experienced a topic in order to write authentically about it.
2. As Mary Gaitskill demonstrates, a fiction writer **does** need to have personally experienced a topic in order to write authentically about it.

Your synthesis must be at least 1.5 pages but no more than 2 pages. In your response you should cite “The Other Place” as well as Gaitskill’s *New Yorker* interview. You are welcome to do research beyond the materials provided. Regardless of whether you do so, you will need to submit a Works Cited page along with your response paper.

During the course of your work, it is strongly suggested that you review pages 130-173 of our textbook, to ensure that you understand the components of an argument synthesis, as well as the strategies you can use to develop and support your argument.