**Essay 1 – Analyzing a Text (*or* Observing the Observer)**

**Assignment**

Write a 3–4 page textual analysis of one of the course readings. Focus your essay on formal elements of the text such as style, tone, voice, diction, imagery, metaphor, irony, ambiguity, paradox, antitheses, etc. paying particular attention to recurring patterns of these elements. From your observations of these formal elements, pose a series of analytic questions and make inferences about the author's purpose. Do not write a lengthy summary of the text.

**What course objectives does this assignment address?**

* Use writing and reading for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating.
* Read, analyze, and interpret essays and texts across a variety of genres, disciplines, and media for the purposes of academic inquiry, rhetorical and textual analysis, and understanding, improving, and critiquing writing processes and reading strategies.
* Integrate a student's own ideas with those of others and practice summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting, and documenting this work in various writing projects.
* Develop flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proof-reading.
* Learn to critique their own and others' works.

**What learning will I apply to this assignment?**

* Strategic Reading
* Analyzing Texts
* Peer Review
* Revision Strategies

**What sources might I use in this assignment?**

* Colson Whitehead, from *The Colossus of New York*
* Chris Ruen, "The Ironic Nature Walk"
* James Weldon Johnson, from *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*
* Mario Puzo, from *The Fortunate Pilgrim*
* You may also propose an alternative reading, either from the syllabus, or from your own reading. Talk to me beforehand if you plan use an alternative reading.

**What objective criteria must the assignment meet?**

* Your essay must be at least 750 and no more than 1,000 words long (approximately 3-4 double-spaced pages).
* You must address the formal elements of the text; do not include a lengthy summary of the text. Limit your summary to one or two sentences in your introduction.
* Include appropriate direct quotes from the text to illustrate your analysis.

**When is it due?**

* First draft – Friday 9/18 by email in a MS Word file to my City Tech email.
* Revision – Tuesday 9/29 in printed hard copy at the beginning of class.