**Essay 3: Essay on Ethics and Lauren Wilkinson’s *American Spy***

This essay asks students to practice these writing skills: library research, close reading, comparison, quotation, analysis and synthesis, and writing an accurate works cited page.

Write an essay that examines the ethics of at least two characters in *American Spy*, especially how characters may change ethics depending upon the situation. Students should rely primarily on our handout on five types of ethics. Students might consider tracking the ethics of opposing characters (such as Sankara and Slater or Marie and Slater). But students can also track similar characters such as Marie and her father or Marie and Helene. This essay encourages students to dive into the novel and explore specific scenes in which major turning points occur. Some questions that may be helpful in formulating a thesis: What ethics does a character start with and end with? What motivates a character to act a certain way? And what is the end result of a major decision?

Your essay will be graded in terms of **FOUR** major features:  
1. First Page: A clear introduction, title, thesis, method, and a conclusion that is more than a summary (25 points)

2. Formal Writing: Concrete nouns, well-structured sentences, and clear paragraphs (25 points)  
3. Close Reading of Texts: accurate exploration of the novel and the ethics handout; (25 points)  
4. Quotations, In-Text Citations, Works Cited Page: at least 6 direct quotations; works cited page (25 points)

**Research component**: Students must include a Works Cited page in MLA format. Student may use **at most two library sources** to support their argument. **Students must also print out the pages that they quote from** (not every page of an article, just the pages that are quoted…I will post examples).

Primarily, I want students to engage with the novel and ethics, but I also want students to be able to contextualize arguments by researching topics such as the CIA’s role in African politics in the 1980s, the Cold War, Sharon Scranage, the FBI, Utilitarian ethics -- among others. Students may use book reviews, books, newspaper articles, encyclopedia articles, peer reviewed articles, and author interviews (among other sources). Quality matters, though. If students select unreliable or poorly written sources, it will affect the quality of the student essay.

Note: there are not many peer reviewed articles on the novel as it is so new, but there are many peer reviewed articles on ethics, Cold War, the CIA, Sankara, Scranage, Ghana, COINTELPRO, etc. The following three sources may be helpful places to start, but there are thousands of reliable sources:

1) Short newspaper article: https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2015/6/4/reviving-thomas-sankaras-spirit/

2) Medium length academic peer-reviewed article: https://permanent.fdlp.gov/gpo153159/sr\_491-mobilization\_negotiation\_and\_transition\_in\_burkina\_faso.pdf

3) Book: *Thomas Sankara: An African Revolutionary*, by Ernest Harsch (Ohio University Press, 2014) This book is available in the City Tech library as an eBook.

Details: This essay must be **at least 900 words long**—use the word count feature on your word processing program. It must be typed, double-spaced, and use Times New Roman 12-point font. Please use spell-check and grammar-check. Use our Standard Journal/Essay Format, which is modified MLA style (see the Purdue OWL on our OpenLab website for guidance).

**Due Dates:  
Dec 6: First Draft due in class for peer review.  
Dec 15: Final Draft Due in class. No late papers will be accepted. Early submission is accepted.**