Essay 3: New York City Research Project (2 parts)

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Topics:

1. The topic must involve a physical place in New York City. Once you begin your exploration, you may shift the primary focus to an event or person (or group), but you still need to include place as a secondary focus. This is not a history paper; this is a place-based argument paper.

2. The project topic should begin with a place that interests you.

3. The topic/place must be able to support a research paper. What this means is that a number of publications about your place must exist so that you can find, read, and evaluate this information.

4. I must approve your topic.

5. Your topic must be able to support a strong thesis. Your beginning thesis should involve a “how” question (you can change it later). For example, this question is too big: how has New York City changed over the years? A better question: how did the Brooklyn Bridge change the economic relationship between Brooklyn and Manhattan? Another good example: how did the team of Washington Roebling and his wife Emily successfully complete the most complex and largest bridge in the world, even though Washington was disabled by the “bends” and Emily had to overcome misogyny? A problematic example: what is the history of Prospect Park? A better question: how did the designers of Prospect Park (Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux) decide on its shape and features?

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Part 1: The Annotated Bibliography:

This assignment, the Annotated Bibliography will prepare you to write the final essay of the semester: the New York City Place-Based Research Paper. In order to write a successful research paper, you will need to come up with a subject, specific questions that you want to answer, and, of course, a thesis. In addition, you will need to spend a considerable amount of time reading about your subject; the hours that you spend will be both exhilarating and frustrating. Research is hard! But, it is also rewarding.

The annotated bibliography is a **storage place** for your sources; it is a place to put all the notes and citation information that you discovered during your hours at the library, while reading, or while poking around the library catalog. Each time you find a new source, such as a book, website, journal, or newspaper article, you must record its vital information. Then, underneath this vital information—the citation—you need to write a brief summary so that you know what the source is about.

Specifics:

1. Your annotated bibliography must have at least seven different legitimate, useful sources.

2. You must have a balance of sources: three books (ebooks or print books), one scholarly journal article, one newspaper article, one primary resource (interview), and one additional source (your choice). These are the minimum requirements. You may go beyond these numbers.

3. Your annotated bibliography must be alphabetized.

4. It must be formatted correctly: MLA citation followed by a short paragraph summary (a. Author’s thesis, b. Author’s conclusion, c. How you think the source may be helpful in your research (new))

5. Approximate length: 2-3 pages, depending upon spacing. You may use 1.5 spacing for the annotations and skip a space between entries.

Example:

Graham, Barbara. “The Future of Love.” *Utne Reader*, Nov/Dec 1996, www.utne.com/mind-and-

body/future-of-love-fulfillment-contradictory-desires. Accessed 4 Nov. 2010.

In her article “The Future of Love,” Barbara Graham describes how our unrealistic expectations about passionate love can lead to a troubled marriage. She uses current research on biochemistry and psychology to suggest a new model for relationships (a). Ultimately, Graham claims that understanding how relationships work can dispel harmful myths surrounding love and marriage (b). This article is especially helpful for my research in two ways. First, it provides science-based support for my questions. Second, Graham helps me to see how professional writers can prove a thesis and still provide balanced evidence (c).

Due Dates for the Annotated Bibliography:

Revised dates:

Nov 21, M: Journal 7: Topic summary + 5 key questions: due --one page, typed, double-spaced.

Nov 28, W: Peer review of annotated bibliography: --At least 7 total (including two books)

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Part 2: New York City Research Paper

Now that you have researched your topic and written your annotated bibliography, it is time to write the actual essay. Remember to begin with a brief introduction that highlights your involvement with the place. Here are two questions whose answers may be excellent ways to begin your essay: why did you choose your place or site? And, what relationship do you have to the site or the people or events associated with the site? One way to involve yourself with the project is to interview someone who is an authority on your site.

Research Essay Specifics:

1. Length: 5-6 pages of typed prose. Attach your revised annotated bibliography to the end of the

research essay.

2. A clear introduction, thesis, method, and clear paragraphs that explore your subject.

3. A conclusion that reflects upon future research and further questions.

4. At least Six direct quotations. Each of these quotations must be in the form of an in-text citation.

And you must include a photocopy of original text that you cited.

5. Typed, double-spaced, MLA format. No cover page.

In-Text Citation Example:

In *Delirious New York*, the architect Rem Koolhaas states that “between 1890 and 1940 a new culture (the machine Age?) selected Manhattan as laboratory: a mythical island where the invention and testing of a metropolitan lifestyle and its attendant architecture could be pursued as a collective experiment” (9-10).

Why do we need in-text citations anyway? Answer: The above in-text citation tells readers that the information in the sentence can be located on pages 9 and 10 of a work by an author named Rem Koolhaas. This information is not made-up; it exists in a place where anybody can look it up. Citations make research accurate, defensible, reproducible, and also, open to interpretation by other scholars. Simply put, if readers want more information about Rem Koolhaas and his ideas, they can find it by going to the Works Cited page, where, under the name of Koolhaas, they will find the following information:

Koolhaas, Rem. *Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan*. Monacelli, 1994.

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Due Dates:

Dec 5, m: Peer Review of essay draft

Dec 7, w: Peer Review of complete draft of research essay (Annotated Bib and Essay)

Dec 12, m: \*\* Final draft of both Annotated Bibliography and Research Essay are due

NO LATE ESSAYS WILL BE ACCEPTED