Unit 3: The Art of Writing
Paper #3: 6-7 page Close Reading Paper or Creative Analysis

Due Dates (the final due date is inflexible):
Wednesday, 11/29—Typed first paragraph due in class
Monday, 12/4—2 copies complete rough draft
Wednesday, 12/6—Your choice of Unit 3 second draft or Unit 1 or 2 revision draft
Monday, 12/11—FINAL DRAFT (and any revision) DUE AT 12 NOON IN SH 2631!

Grade Breakdown (30% of your final grade in the class):
First Paragraph: 5% Unit 3 portfolio grade
Rough Draft: 10%
2 Peer Review Sheets: 5%
Second Rough Draft or Draft of Unit 1 or 2 Revision: 5%
Final Draft: 75%

Assignment: There are two options for this final paper assignment:

1. Scholarly Close-Reading Paper: In this option, you are asked to write a 6-7 page sustained analysis of a creative text by focusing on one theme in that text. By “creative text,” I mean that you should choose a text that is doing something artistic or experimental with its medium—so “Shooting and Elephant” would work even though it’s non-fiction. If you feel you can make the case for something like “The Action of Natural Selection” as a creative text, I encourage you to go for it. You should choose either a text we have looked at in this class or another text from WAW. You should not write about a text you have already written about in one of your other papers. In this paper, you should:
   - Pick a text and theme within that text that interests you. Decide on an argumentative thesis to help you focus your analysis of the text.
   - Your analysis should be based on your own close reading of the text, and should integrate elements of close reading as discussed in class. You should analyze both the “what” (theme-as-content) as well as the “how” (form) of the text.
   - We’ve practiced working with multiple texts in this class. For this final paper, I would like you to try to focus in on one text. Your thesis, in other words, should be based on the way a particular theme is expressed in one text. You may use one additional creative source to back up your reading if necessary (in the form of one or two comparison/contrast paragraphs, for example), but I want the focus to be on your chosen text.
   - You do not need to limit yourself to a theme we have discussed in class, but some potential themes you might consider are: identity (Gattaca, Fight Club, Kingston, Orwell, Stallworthy, etc.), the politics of gender (Fight Club, Kingston, Brannon, Yusufali, etc.), the politics of race and oppression (Orwell, Gattaca, Yusufali, cummings, etc.), family (Carver, Gattaca, Kingston, Fight Club, etc.), memory and/or the unknown (Kingston, Carver, Fight Club, etc.), silence (Kingston, Carver, Orwell, etc.).
   - Use correct MLA style (as discussed in class) for the formatting of this paper.
2. Creative Analysis Project: This option is in two parts.
   • First, write a 3-4 page creative piece that addresses a theme that comes out of one of the readings in this class. You can look at the list of potential themes above or identify a different theme. Consider, for example, the way Kingston is able to analyze themes such as memory, family, and gender roles in her creative memoir. How does her style help her to illuminate these themes in her writing? Your creative piece can be in the style of one of the creative writers/artists we have looked at in this class, or it can be in your own style.
   • Second, write a 3 page analysis of your own work. Close read your creative writing by describing what you are doing (theme-as-content) and how you are doing it (form).
   • Your 3 page analysis should conform to MLA style as discussed in class; your creative project can assume any form you choose.

Why this Assignment? Both versions of this paper ask you to analyze a text closely—to really look at something and, when you think you’ve figured it all out, to look at it again. This skill (known as “close reading”), is something that is widely transferable within and without the university. In its most abstract sense, close reading teaches you skills to think carefully about what it is you’re seeing, hearing, feeling, etc. The truth is, you are all already close readers. This assignment merely asks you to develop the skills you already possess.

What I’m Looking For (out of 75 points for the final paper draft):
   • Correct MLA formatting. (10)
   • Correct grammar, spelling, and mechanics. Pay particular attention to those areas covered by my comments on previous papers and/or in Grammar Wednesdays. (10)
   • An argumentative, interpretive thesis about your chosen theme. (10)
   • A close reading that provides specific details from your chosen text in order to support your argumentative, interpretive thesis. (20)
   • For the critical writing of each option, paragraphs that are stylistically sophisticated with strong control of language, logical organization, and smooth transitions. For the creative part of option 2, creative, original, and well-executed work. (25)