A Teacher’s Almanack

A Guide to Expository Writing 101

2015 – 2016
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A LETTER OF WELCOME

Dear Colleagues,

Expository Writing is the only course that all Rutgers University students are required to take, and about 6,000 students take Expos each year.

Expository Writing at Rutgers has bold and ambitious goals. It aims to teach students to read non-fiction texts carefully and with sensitivity, when most of the undergraduates who take the class have rarely been asked to confront non-fiction prose at all. The course hopes to encourage critical thinking that enables students to make independent claims, claims derived from analytical readings of texts that address some of the most complex and pressing issues of our time. Our students are asked to consider topics they have rarely confronted, especially in an English or Writing course, such as global warming, cultural and national conflict, and genetic engineering. Finally, Expository Writing urges students to communicate their ideas to the world with confidence and clarity that can only be achieved through revision, from the reformulation of a phrase to the wholesale reversal of one’s prior position. Revision is an essential part of the writing process, but few incoming students have been asked to revise their work to the extent Expos requires of them. These are lofty and ambitious goals indeed.

But what is at the heart of Expository Writing, and what makes me admire the pedagogy of *The New Humanities Reader* so much, is its deep and abiding optimism, which insists that Rutgers undergraduates can achieve the goals the course has established. The course maintains the belief that entering students can read and synthesize complicated texts from disparate disciplines, make independent claims based on those texts, and then articulate those claims in a coherent and meaningful way. Expository Writing represents a hope that our students will successfully grapple with and solve the problems that loom so large in the reader.

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to Rutgers and to the 101 Orientation, and I hope that you will find the mission of Expository Writing as inspiring as I do. I invite all of you to share the course’s mission with your students in the most explicit terms; tell your students what faith their university has in them, and that the challenges this course will present are an articulation of that faith. With your help, your students will rise to the occasion.

Best wishes for a productive semester.

Sincerely,

Regina Masiello
Assistant Director, 101 Coordinator
I. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PEDAGOGY

The New Humanities Reader encourages students to see themselves as participants in an ongoing written “conversation” about some of the most important issues of our time: globalization, urban development (and redevelopment), biotechnology, environmental decline, the encounter between different regions and cultures, the changing nature of identity, and the search for enduring values beyond the prospect of seemingly random change. This conversational model of writing assumes the notion of a community that includes the authors of the assigned texts, the teacher, and all other students in the class. In other words, as the students read, they can imagine being in conversation with the author in terms of what the author is saying; when the students participate in class discussion, they are in conversation with their peers and the teacher about the reading; when the students write an assignment concerning two or more texts, they can assume that the authors are in conversation with them and each other as they lead them in discussion; when the students write, they show their work to a group of their peers to converse with them about the merit and meaningfulness of their work; when teachers grade the final draft, they are in conversation with the students through their written marginal and end comments. In all ways, therefore, the Writing Program’s pedagogy is a collaborative one. It assumes that in the absence of definitive “answers,” the writer’s most important task is the understanding of complex issues and the communication of this understanding to others.

The New Humanities Reader presupposes that the context for writing is always prior reading and critical thinking, and in this spirit it is an anthology rather than a textbook or rhetorical text. The point of this anthology is to elicit writing that closely approximates the work students are likely to do in many of their college classes and, later, in their professional lives. To encourage complex thought, teachers should construct “sequences” of readings and assignments that will lead incrementally toward essays that synthesize multiple sources while making an independent argument.

Reading, interpretation, connective synthesis, and the use of textual evidence should receive highest priority during the first half of the course. We want our students to develop independent claims and to engage the essays in the reader conceptually. Strong academic writing incorporates cycles of reading, pre-writing, drafting, peer review, rereading, and revision. Revision, as part of this cycle, is not only about the formal presentation of the paper, but also about developing one’s ability to rethink a position or to re-examine one’s previously held conclusions. Revision, therefore, is as much about conceptual and intellectual flexibility as it is about rewriting individual sentences.

We ask our students to think complexly, and communicating this complexity with clarity must be a priority. Grammar and formal presentation must be addressed. To this end, students are asked to read and re-read, to think and re-think, to draft and re-draft, so that final drafts represent the polished delivery of a synthetically generated claim. Students should be taught grammar, clarity, and structural coherence in the context of revision, and student writing generated within the context of the course (as opposed to workbook-style
exercises or lectures on correctness and style) should be the center of all revision related conversation. The conversational, collaborative and community based model of the course must be encouraged so that students can acquire and then mobilize a shared discourse about their writing and the writing of their peers. Together, students learn to develop claims successfully by drafting and revising.

The idea that knowledge comes into existence through conversations among informed reader/writers, which can be thought of as a social process involving a “co-construction of meaning,” contradicts several of the assumptions underlying the curriculum in many high schools. Typically students have learned how to summarize or repeat information, or to offer “personal responses” to literary works or to themes assigned by the teacher. Few first-year students have read prose texts as lengthy and complex as Steven Johnson’s “The Myth of the Ant Queen” or Joseph Stiglitz’s “Rent Seeking and the Making of an Unequal Society.” In the presence of extended arguments that challenge and, at times, even threaten to defeat their best efforts at understanding, students need to be reminded that many good readings begin as misreadings, and that re-reading, writing, and revising initial interpretations are fundamental to the discovery of knowledge in every field.
II. CLOSE READING

Critical thinking and analytical writing are predicated on the practice of careful reading. Making students conscious of how they read and why they read is at the center of Expository Writing. When students confront conceptually dense passages of text, unfamiliar vocabulary, or syntactically challenging sentence structures, their first instinct may be to avoid the discomfort or anxiety these passages provoke. But for the purposes of Expos, and for the purposes of careful reading in all of college and in the world, students must become comfortable grappling with challenging texts. The Writing Program calls this confrontation close reading, and this kind of work with text requires engaged textual analysis that can help build independent and original claims.

Teachers should begin modeling the practice of close reading on the first day of class, and should emphasize that the work of close reading is essential to good analysis, and an essential part of working with quotations in their papers. Activities should be designed around the practice, and each time a new essay is assigned (usually the day a final draft is due), teachers should isolate a passage for close reading in class. Return to this practice in order to reinforce the notion that close reading is an integral part of generating ideas and of using textual evidence.

Close Reading Strategies

- **Choose dense passages**: When modeling close reading in class, it is helpful to choose conceptually (and sometimes grammatically) dense passages for analysis. The beauty of dense passages is that every word is meaningful, so when you ask students “what word or phrase seems important here, and why?” they can rarely be wrong, and the word or phrase they choose can always be used to begin generating discussion.

- **Don’t give background, just jump right in**: Teachers sometimes feel that they need to introduce a text, give some background to help students understand it, or explain some basic parts of its argument that students might have missed. Don’t do this! The goal of our pedagogy is to make students independent and active learners. The beauty of close reading is that it forces students to do the work of confronting what they do not understand so they can develop strategies to make sense of all of the complex and unfamiliar texts they will encounter at college. Among the strategies they should learn are looking for repeated words or phrases, thematically related words, key terms that help to name concepts in the text or that seem to speak to the core meaning of the passage, apparent contradictions, and unusual grammatical or syntactical choices.

- **Practice active reading**: Teachers often forget that we need to instruct students to do some of the basic things that well-practiced readers of complex texts always do, such as reading with a pen or pencil in hand and making comments in the margins.
or on post-it notes. Some teachers require that students make a certain number of marginal comments per page, and go around the room to check for visible work that demonstrates textual engagement. Encourage students to use their marginal comments not only to mark what seems important, but also to ask questions of the text or make connections with other things they have read.

- **Read, re-read, and then read it again:** When modeling close reading in the classroom, read the passage in question out loud. Then ask the students to read it quietly to themselves. Multiple readings create more sophisticated understandings of texts. Tell students to read, read carefully, and then do it again.

- **Isolate key terms and phrases:** When working in class with a passage from an essay, ask students which words seem important, and why they seem so. Help students become conscious of textual signs that indicate when a term is critical (such as repetition, modulation, etc.). Many students are inclined to think the “big” words are the ones that matter. Help them attend to the small words as well; pronouns, prepositions and articles often imply collectivity, isolation, selectivity and connectivity.

- **Use close reading to teach grammar and syntax:** We often assume that students come to college with a basic vocabulary for discussing grammar. We think: “shouldn’t they at least already know the terms ‘subject,’ ‘verb’ and ‘object’? Weren’t they taught to identify ‘articles,’ ‘prepositions,’ and ‘pronouns’?” Likely they were taught these terms at some point in their K-12 education, but few have been required to use those terms. As a result, that grammatical vocabulary has been largely forgotten. Emphasize that grammatical terms are part of the basic vocabulary any college student should have, and if they have forgotten these terms they should take time to learn them. Discussing an interesting sentence in class is a great opportunity to teach students some of this basic vocabulary.

- **Make connections:** Students should attend to how parts of an essay speak to one another, contradict one another, or complicate one another. Making connections within a text is critical to understanding the text as a whole. As students begin to work with multiple texts they should begin to do the work of making connections between them at the level of specific language.
### III. COURSE STRUCTURE AND PACING

#### Expository Writing: 15 Week Class Plan (Fall 2015)

Please use this 15-Week Class Plan to determine the pacing of your course. The schedule provides a sense of where you should be throughout the term, as well as information on administrative procedures you need to keep in mind for each week. This offers a workable schedule for the entire semester—a rough draft or a final draft due each week. To maintain this pace, it is important that you return work to students promptly; please do not collect a new set of final drafts before you have returned the previous set. Once you establish this rhythm, you can carry it through to the end of the semester. **Please remember that the final exam in Expos should take place on the last day of class (and should be written in blue books).** If you find you have some extra time in your schedule over the course of the term, please use that time for revision exercises or student conferences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>September 1 – 4</th>
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| • Complete first day writing sample***  
• Distribute syllabus  
• Discuss course pedagogy  
• Photocopy, distribute, and discuss grading criteria  
• Assign reading 1  
• Explain and practice close reading by working in class with a passage from reading 1  
• Discuss reading 1  
• Assign paper 1 | • Classes begin Tuesday, September 1  
• Add / Drop Period  
• Encourage students to visit course Sakai site |

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<th>Week 2</th>
<th>September 8 – 11</th>
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| • Rough draft paper 1 due  
• Define goals for peer review  
• Peer review drafts | • Change of Designation of Days: Tuesday, Sept. 8 = Monday Classes  
• Encourage students to visit class Sakai site  
• Last day for students to drop a class is Tuesday, September 8  
• Last day for students to add a class is Wednesday, September 9 |
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<th>Week 3</th>
<th>Week 4</th>
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<th>Week 6</th>
<th>Week 7</th>
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<td><strong>September 14 – 18</strong>&lt;br&gt;Writing Centers open for enrollments—refer students who need tutoring (be sure to indicate in your comments what your students might need to work on with tutors)&lt;br&gt;Rosh Hashanah begins at sundown on Sunday, Sept. 13</td>
<td><strong>September 21 – 25</strong>&lt;br&gt;Referrals to Writing Centers&lt;br&gt;Yom Kippur begins at sundown on Tuesday, Sept. 22</td>
<td><strong>September 28 – October 2</strong>&lt;br&gt;Sign up for folder review</td>
<td><strong>October 5 – 9</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Midterm Folder Review:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Bring graded papers 1 and 2 from all students; copies of your assignments; and your grade book and attendance records.</td>
<td><strong>October 12 – 16</strong>&lt;br&gt;*This is a great time to ask students to fill out a midterm self-evaluation. This practice is optional, though it often turns out to be informative for both students and instructors. *</td>
<td><strong>October 19 – 23</strong>&lt;br&gt;*This is a great time to schedule conferences with students. This is optional, but students often benefit from talking with instructors at this point in</td>
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**Week 3**<br>• **Return rough draft of paper 1 with teacher comments**<br>• Workshop sample student work: identify strengths and weaknesses<br>• Final draft paper 1 due<br>• Assign reading 2<br>• Practice close reading by working in class with a passage from reading 2 | **Week 4**<br>• Discuss Reading 2<br>• Assign Paper 2<br>• Rough Draft Paper 2 due<br>• Peer Review drafts | **Week 5**<br>• Final Draft Paper 2 due<br>• Assign Reading 3<br>• Practice close reading by working in class with a passage from reading 3 | **Week 6**<br>• Discuss reading 3<br>• Midterm exam (one full class period)<br>• Assign paper 3 | **Week 7**<br>• Rough draft paper 3 due<br>• Define goals for peer review<br>• Peer review drafts<br>• Return and discuss midterms<br>• Final draft paper 3 due<br>• Assign reading 4<br>• Practice close reading by working in class with a passage from reading 4 | **Week 8**<br>• Discuss reading 4<br>• Assign paper 4<br>• Rough draft paper 4 due<br>• Define goals for peer review<br>• Peer review drafts |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Workshop student writing</td>
<td>the term.*</td>
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</table>
|      | **Return rough draft of paper 4 with teacher comments**  
|      | • Assign second rough draft of paper 4 | October 26 – 30 |
| 10   | • Final Draft Paper 4 due  
|      | • Assign Reading 5  
|      | • Practice close reading by working in class with a passage from reading 5 | November 2 – 6 |
| 11   | • Discuss reading 5  
|      | • Assign paper 5 | November 9 – 13 |
| 12   | • Rough draft paper 5 due  
|      | • Define goals for fifth peer review  
|      | • Peer review drafts  
|      | • Assign second rough draft of paper 5  
|      | • Peer review second drafts | November 16 – 20 |
| 13   | • Final draft paper 5 due  
|      | • Assign reading 6 | November 23 – 25  
|      | • Change of Designation of Days: Wednesday, Nov. 25 = Friday Classes  
|      | • Thanksgiving Break from November 26 - 29  
|      | • Writing Centers suspend tutoring for Thanksgiving |
| 14   | • Exam prep: discuss reading 6 | November 30 – December 4  
|      | • Student Evaluations |
| 15   | • Final exam preparation session  
|      | • Final exam | December 7 – 10  
|      | **Final Folder Review:**  
|      | Bring the following: all graded papers, copies of assignments, rosters with grades in pencil, grade books, attendance records, final exams graded pass/fail in pencil, and completed grade information sheets. |
After Final Folder Review

• Hold a final office hour to return folders and discuss students’ grades. Submit final exams to the director with whom you have folder review.
• Do not post or e-mail grades!
• Return folders to the Writing Program office on the campus where you teach; watch for a memo with details regarding end-of-semester procedures.
IV. SAMPLE SYLLABUS

SAMPLE SYLLABUS
(Available on the “Expos 2015 - 2016” Sakai project site)
Expository Writing
Fall 2015

Instructor:
Instructor’s Email:
Class Meetings: Days, Times, Location
Office Hours: Days, Times, Location

The certified learning goals for 355:101 are:
1. To communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English, to a general audience.
2. To evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly.
3. To analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights.

Course Description
In this course you will read and write about a variety of texts concerning a range of fascinating, relevant, contemporary issues. Course goals include helping you to read deeply, think critically, and write interpretively and effectively, creating your own independent argument that synthesizes multiple sources.

Required Texts
• Miller and Spellmeyer, The New Humanities Reader, 5th Edition
• Miller-Cochran and Raimes, Keys for Writers, 7th Edition
• Selected student papers to demonstrate and correct errors, or as models of strong writing

Course Requirements
• Write a first day writing sample
• Read six selections from The New Humanities Reader
• Write five out-of-class essays, minimum of five typed pages each
• Write a typed rough and final draft for each assignment (and demonstrate significant revision between drafts)
• Give three brief oral presentations in class, including one on grammar
• Complete an in-class midterm exam (essay format, graded pass or fail)
• Complete an in-class final exam (essay format, graded pass or fail)
  Students must pass the final exam to pass the course.
• Keep all rough and final drafts in a folder, for mid-semester and end of semester folder review.
• Regularly check your Sakai Course Site at sakai.rutgers.edu. (To access Sakai, you will need your Rutgers Net ID and password. You will receive announcements from Sakai at your Rutgers e-mail address, so remember to check that account frequently.)
Grading

- The final course grade will be determined by your highest level of sustained achievement until the end of the term.
- You must complete the midterm exam to pass the course.
- You must pass the final exam to pass the course.
- Half a letter grade will be deducted from the final draft for each day its rough draft is late, one full letter grade will be deducted from a final draft for each day it is late.
- The lowest passing grade for a paper and for the course is C.
- Papers that exhibit significant errors of punctuation, grammar, spelling, or syntax (generally, three or more errors per page) risk failing.
- All grades are subject to departmental review.

Policies

- Attendance at all classes is expected. After four absences you risk failing the course.
- Punctuality is important. Lateness of twenty minutes or more counts as half an absence. After missing forty minutes of class you will be marked absent.
- You must submit rough and final drafts of all five papers to pass the class (there should be substantial revision between rough and final drafts). You must also complete the midterm exam, and pass the final exam to pass the class.
- If you are two final drafts behind, for any reason, you automatically fail the course.
- If you transfer into a section of Expos late, you have one excused absence only. If, for example, you miss the first three classes of the semester, only one will be excused and you will have two absences.
- You must review and abide by the University’s Policy on Academic Integrity. This can be found online at: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu.
- You cannot drop Expos 101 without a Dean’s permission.
- Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments (ADAA) of 2008, and Sections 504 and 508 that mandate that reasonable accommodations be provided for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a disability and may require some type of instructional and/or examination accommodation, please register with the Office of Disability Services for Students, which is dedicated to providing services and administering exams with accommodations for students with disabilities. The Office of Disability Services for Students can be contacted by calling 848.445.6800 and is located on the Livingston campus at the following address: 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Suite A145, Piscataway, NJ 08854.
Finding Support At Rutgers

Rutgers Health Services
- [http://health.rutgers.edu](http://health.rutgers.edu)
- Medical [http://rhsmedical.rutgers.edu](http://rhsmedical.rutgers.edu)
- Counseling, Alcohol & Other Drug Assistance Program & Psychiatric Services (CAPS) [http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu](http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu)
- Pharmacy [http://rhspharmacy.rutgers.edu](http://rhspharmacy.rutgers.edu)
- Health Outreach, Promotion & Education (H.O.P.E.) [http://rhshope.rutgers.edu](http://rhshope.rutgers.edu)

Academic Deans and the Office of Academic Services
- [http://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu](http://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu)
- [https://sebs.rutgers.edu/academics/](https://sebs.rutgers.edu/academics/)
- [http://www.business.rutgers.edu/](http://www.business.rutgers.edu/)
- [http://www.masongross.rutgers.edu/content/undergraduate-academic-advisors](http://www.masongross.rutgers.edu/content/undergraduate-academic-advisors)
- [http://pharmacy.rutgers.edu/content/academic_services](http://pharmacy.rutgers.edu/content/academic_services)
- [http://soe.rutgers.edu/oas/advising](http://soe.rutgers.edu/oas/advising)

Dean of Students
- [http://deanofstudents.rutgers.edu](http://deanofstudents.rutgers.edu)
- [https://undergraduate.rutgers.edu/for-students/student-resources/campus-deans](https://undergraduate.rutgers.edu/for-students/student-resources/campus-deans)

Writing Centers
- [http://wp.rutgers.edu/tutoring/writingcenters](http://wp.rutgers.edu/tutoring/writingcenters)

Office of Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance
- [http://vpva.rutgers.edu](http://vpva.rutgers.edu)

Center for Social Justice & LGBTQ Communities
- [http://socialjustice.rutgers.edu/](http://socialjustice.rutgers.edu/)

Office of Disabilities Services
- [https://ods.rutgers.edu](https://ods.rutgers.edu)

Public Safety
- RUPD [http://publicsafety.rutgers.edu/rupd/](http://publicsafety.rutgers.edu/rupd/)
- Department of Transportation Services [http://rudots.rutgers.edu/](http://rudots.rutgers.edu/)
Writing Program Policies

The Writing Program’s policies on grading, attendance, and academic integrity are represented on the sample syllabus above; please respect these standards and alert students to these policies. **Review the following items before the first day of class, be sure students understand these policies before the end of your first class meeting, and review these policies throughout the semester:**

- After four absences, students risk failing the course. Students who miss six classes automatically fail the course, and should retake it at a time when they are better able to commit to it.

- Teachers must contact students who have missed class three times to remind them of the course attendance policy. Once a student has missed six classes, his teacher must notify him that he has failed the course.

- A student who is twenty or more minutes late to class earns half an absence. Once a student has missed forty minutes of class, he or she is considered absent.

- If a student transfers into your section from another section at the start of the semester, the student has one excused absence only. If, for example, a student misses the first three classes of the semester, the student has two absences.

- In accordance with University policy, absences for religious observance are excused.

- **If a student is experiencing dire circumstances, he or she should be advised to contact the appropriate Dean.** For a list of Deans, see the following site: [http://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/staff-directory](http://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/staff-directory). Please refer students struggling with academic issues to the Academic Deans, and students struggling with personal issues to the Dean of Students. A dean will speak with a struggling student, and will need documentation from the student verifying the student’s circumstances. The Dean will determine an appropriate action, if any, and will contact you with his or her recommendation. Students who appear to be struggling in the course are always welcome to talk with a Writing Program director.

- Students may switch class sections through add/drop, but they are not allowed to drop Expository Writing without a Dean’s permission. It is useful to remind students that they cannot “drop” Expository Writing. Students who are unaware of this policy will sometimes stop attending class while they seek permission to drop, only to discover they cannot drop the course and must return. Alert students at the beginning of the term that they should not stop attending class while seeking a Dean’s support.

- Students must submit all five papers, must complete the midterm exam, and must pass the final in order to pass the course.
• Instructors may set their own policies about late papers. Given the pace of the course, late and missing papers may become difficult to accommodate. The following penalties are recommended: a half-letter grade (C+ to C) if the rough draft is late and a full letter grade if the final draft is late.

• All drafts must be typed and instructors should not accept handwritten work.

• Instructors must comment on the rough drafts of papers one and four.

• Instructors must comment on all five final drafts.

• Instructors cannot assign minus or “split” grades.

• Instructors must provide students with some means of contact outside of class (an e-mail address is typical).

• Instructors must maintain (establish and regularly update) a course Sakai page.

• Instructors must require students to submit papers to Turnitin via the course Sakai site.

• Instructors must attend mid-term and end of semester folder review.

• Instructors are required to hold one office hour each week for each section of Expository Writing. If, for example, an instructor has two sections of the course, that teacher must hold two office hours each week (one for each section). Instructors must hold office hours on the campus where the class meets.

• Instructors cannot give special permission to add a student to their sections. Students must follow the add/drop process to add an open section. The Writing Program generally does not over-enroll sections.

• All plagiarism issues must be referred to the Writing Program office on your campus. Please speak with a Writing Program Director before addressing a potential plagiarism issue with a student.
Students will come to your class with a great deal of practice in writing to demonstrate prior knowledge (a skill that will continue to have value for them in many other courses). They may have had less practice writing to discover a position of their own in relation to other writers, and even less practice communicating that position to others in a cogent way.

Early in the term, teachers should be less concerned with seeing a fully developed argument and more concerned with deepening the students’ understandings of the texts and encouraging the making of sustained and pertinent connections. Emphasize conceptual engagement in early papers, as opposed to focusing primarily on rhetorical form; emphasize the importance of ideas to deepen their sensitivity as readers and thinkers.

At the same time, students must recognize that thinking, speaking, and writing are fundamentally social acts. Understanding by itself is never adequate; the point, finally, is to be understood. As the semester progresses, open reflection and risky engagement with texts are framed as first steps in a process that ends with the convincing presentation of a new way of seeing. Without risk, the writer learns nothing; without coherence, the same fate awaits the reader. Organizational effectiveness and general clarity should be emphasized during the later weeks of the semester.

Teachers should construct sequences of readings and assignment questions. Sequencing asks students to revisit essays and asks that they think connectively as new ideas are introduced to the class discussion. Sequencing requires students to read closely and to think synthetically. During the 15-week semester, students will complete two reading sequences.

**The Five Paper Model for Expository Writing**

- Students are required to **read a total of six essays** from *The New Humanities Reader*.
- Students will write **5 graded papers**. Each paper must be a minimum of five pages.
- The structure of each assignment throughout the semester is as follows:
  - Paper 1 – Reading 1
  - Paper 2 – Readings 1 & 2
• Midterm Exam – Readings 1, 2 & 3

• Paper 3 – Readings 1, 2 & 3

• Paper 4 – Reading 4 & one of the first three readings
  (The instructor may choose one particular reading from the first sequence, or the instructor may allow students to use any one of the first three readings.)

• Paper 5 – Readings 4, 5 & one of the first three readings
  (The instructor may choose one particular reading from the first sequence, or the instructor may allow students to use any one of the first three readings.)

• Final Exam – Reading 6 & One of the previous five readings from the semester
  (The instructor may choose one of the previous five readings to pair with the sixth reading, or the instructor may allow the students to choose which one of the five readings they wish to pair with reading six. The final exam should ask students to pair reading six with only one other essay from the course of the semester.)

• Teachers must comment on the rough draft of Paper 1, and on the rough draft of Paper 4. No grade is given on rough drafts.

• Teachers must grade and comment on all five final drafts.

• Do not assign minus grades or “split” grades.

• Students conduct Peer Review for every paper they write.

Building An Assignment Sequence
When choosing essays for a sequence, consider larger contexts or themes which might draw readings together about such issues as urbanization, aesthetics, human psychology, the effects of technology or modernization, globalization, perception and so on. Once you have a context or theme that draws your essays together, create each assignment with a view towards developing that context/theme and adding layers of complexity to it. The sequence should help students identify topics as points of connection, in which students might not only connect authors in terms of saying “and” or “furthermore,” but also “but” or “however” as they acknowledge the complexity of issues.
The Assignment Sheet

Class discussion should revolve around textual complexity, forming connections between texts, and the discussion of ideas. This idea driven conversation can be sabotaged by questions about formatting, assignment requirements, or guidelines. To keep the conversation in your class on ideas, use your assignment sheet to give clear instructions so that practical matters do not become the center of discussion.

• Name the Reading or Readings
You should name the readings you expect students to discuss at the outset of each assignment. This becomes especially important as the semester progresses and you expect students to return to readings they had discussed previously. Some students will not immediately understand that this means they should discuss all of these readings in conversation with each other. Be explicit about which readings need to be discussed. It is advisable to set the list of readings for the assignment apart by giving it a label (“Readings”) and listing the author and title of each piece.

• Use the Visual Elements of the Page for Emphasis
With computers, we can all be good page designers, able to use white space, lists, boldface, and other visual cues to help students understand our assignments. A good assignment will use boldface to highlight the specific question that is being asked, and will use the blank space of the page to organize the various components of the question. Your priorities are communicated by your use of space.

• Ask a Question
Some assignments, including those by some very experienced teachers, never really ask a question of students. Without a question to answer, students have no clear prompt for writing. Not only should your assignment ask a question, but it should also highlight that question (perhaps with boldface or by putting the question into its own paragraph, or both). This enables students to focus on what you are asking. Your question should not be posed as an either/or scenario, as some students might assume they are limited to one of two predetermined answers. For example, the question “Can uncertainty preserve happiness?,” invites to students to answer either “yes, it can” or “no, it can’t.” This question might be more fruitfully posed in the following manner: “What is the role of uncertainty in the preservation, creation or destruction of happiness?” This formulation asks students to consider a multiplicity of possible answers.

• Highlight the Main Question
Highlight the main question in some way, perhaps by putting it in bold, making it an independent paragraph, explicitly labeling it “Question,” or all of the above. This will then provide a prompt for an effective and succinct instigation for writing.

• Utilize the Language of the Essays to Introduce the Question
Before one can pose a meaningful question, the assignment must provide the student with a brief introduction to the issue at hand. A class that has focused on
issues of happiness and uncertainty (in their readings and in class discussions), for example, would benefit from a paper assignment that places the assignment question in the context of these previous considerations. While providing this context, instructors should use the critical language of the assigned texts, thereby modeling the very work we want our students to do. If we ask that our students engage with the language and the ideas of the texts, we ought first to do it ourselves in the assignment question.

• **Ask Follow-up Questions or Give Advice**
  After you have written your question, imagine how your students might begin to formulate an answer. What advice can you give them? What additional questions (clearly segregated from the main question) might help them understand what you are asking and how it applies to the texts under consideration? Think also of the kinds of thought questions that might invite students to consider your assignment question from a less obvious position. Introduce the possibility of an alternate approach to the question. Please mark these thought questions explicitly, telling students that they need not answer all of them in order to address the assignment.

• **State the Learning Objectives (or, “What I’m Looking For”)**
  With each paper you likely will be looking for different skills, or “learning objectives.” With the early assignments, you might want to emphasize the importance of connective and interpretative work, guiding students away from papers which are primarily composed of summary or which treat the texts in isolation. In later assignments, once your students can adequately distinguish between summary and analysis, and can grapple with complicated passages from the readings, you might specify the learning objective is having a strong thesis.

• **Give Due Dates**
  Either at the top or at the bottom of the page, you should have clear due dates for both the Rough Draft and the Final Draft. And be sure to remind students to bring extra copies of their Rough Drafts for Peer Review day.

• **Provide Specific Formatting Instructions**
  Please specify the basic formatting you expect students to follow in preparing their papers. Be sure to repeat the minimum page requirement of at least four pages for the Rough Draft and at least five full pages for the Final Draft on all assignments. Be explicit about your expectations: the paper should have one-inch margins; should be typed; should be double-spaced and in a 12 point font; the paper should have the student’s name and the due date in the upper left or right hand corner; assignments should be stapled in the upper left hand corner; pages should be numbered; and each paper should have an original title.
The Assignment Question

The most important part of any writing assignment is the main question it asks. You might want to ask a number of questions in your assignment, but having one main question (or no more than three related questions) can focus student responses. Once you have decided upon a main question, you might use secondary or rejected questions to organize class discussion or group activities.

Begin with “How” or “Why”
Questions can take a wide variety of forms, but the most successful tend to begin with “How” or “Why” rather than “Who,” “What,” “Where,” or “When.” Other ways of asking these types of questions include “In what ways” (equivalent to “how”), “what is the relationship between” (or “how are they related”), “For what reasons would” (which is basically another form of “why”).

Point to the Text
Be sure that the question directs students back to the text and that the texts can be used to address the question.

Open It Up
Make sure your question is open-ended enough to allow for a variety of responses. It should not be possible to answer only “yes” or “no.” The best questions are often those that even you are not sure how to answer. Such questions set students with a task and motivate them to develop an original project to fulfill it.

Push Beyond the Explicit
The best questions don’t ask for an explication of the text (which will tend to produce summary) but instead direct students to consider the implications, complications, or applications of its ideas.

Types of Questions

The following are some categories of successful questions that follow the pedagogy of the New Humanities. These questions are modeled on the kinds of questions professors across the university in all disciplines pose on paper assignments, and they encourage responses that are based on connective thinking and analysis.

Close Reading
Students are asked to examine implicit assumptions or arguments within the text (usually about some “big question”) by looking closely at a specific motif or recurrent theme. Often, a close reading will direct students to decode symbolism, unpack the implicit meaning of specific terms, or untangle the relationship between form and content.

• How does the way that O’Brien has written his essay relate to his own claims about storytelling?
• How do symbolic representations or cultural symbols, such as a veil (Nafisi), operate in the formation of community?

**Synthesis**
Students are asked to combine ideas from one reading with those of another to produce a more complex idea or a more complex representation of the world.

• How might XXXX contribute to “living fully” (Sacks), and to what ends?

**Frame and Case**
Students are asked to use a theoretical idea from one reading to “frame” (or create a paradigm for interpreting) the “case” (or example) offered by a second reading. This type of assignment works well when you have one strongly theoretical reading and one or two rather descriptive or narrative readings. The ideal frame and case question will encourage students not only to use the frame to read the case but also to use the case text to complicate the frame. A frame and case assignment can also be used with three readings. You might use a synthesis of two texts to create a frame for interpreting a third, or consider two texts as dueling paradigms with the case text used to demonstrate the validity of the preferred framing text. Frame and case questions are often formulated in the following manner: “What is the role of idea X in example Y?” or “How would writer X interpret writer Y?”

• How might Gladwell’s theory regarding the power of context predict the ways in which the Citadel academy responded to Shannon Faulkner as described by Faludi?

• How might the forces that give rise to “Generation Me” (Twenge) be explained using “the power of context” (Gladwell)?

**Terministic Frame**
Students are asked to use a term offered by the instructor’s assignment, to invent a term of their own, or to apply terms from one of the readings in order to frame their interpretation of a second reading. This works like “frame and case,” but here students focus on using terms as the frame.

**Dueling Paradigms**
Students are asked to examine the competing worldviews or models of society implied by two texts and either decide which paradigm is more compelling, explain how both might be compelling in their own right, or try to explain the root of their differences.

• Is scientific progress as described by XXXXX driven by the workings of the psychological immune system, which “makes us strangers to ourselves” (as discussed by Gilbert)? Or, conversely, does genetic technology or synthetic biology have the potential to redefine the workings of the psychological immune system, putting happiness within more people’s reach?
Action Horizon
Students are asked to use ideas from the readings to describe a plan of action in the real world. This question asks students to develop an “action horizon” to describe how real problems might be solved by applying ideas from the readings.

• How and why did the media get Matt Shepard’s murder wrong, as described by Loffreda? What would it take to provide better coverage of such tragedies?
• Loffreda records her frustration at hearing teachers speak of their own “uselessness” and “irrelevance” in the face of Matt Shepard’s murder. What is it that teachers can or should do at such times? What role should secular institutions play in trying to shape the way their students see and understand the world?
Sample Assignment Sheet

PAPER 3
Expos 355:101

Readings: Karen Ho, “Biographies of Hegemony” (New Humanities Reader)
          Cathy Davidson, “Project Classroom Makeover” (New Humanities Reader)
          Susan Faludi, “The Naked Citadel” (New Humanities Reader)

For the midterm exam, I asked you to think carefully about how Susan Faludi used the words “stripping” and “remolding” in “The Naked Citadel.” In her discussion of the fourth-class system, she claims that The Citadel hopes “to ‘strip’ each young recruit of his original identity and remold him into the ‘whole man’” (75). For paper three, I want you to consider another important term in this quotation: “identity.” Using the connections you made between Faludi’s terms and the terms in Davidson and Ho’s essays, I want you to consider the following question: to what extent is an individual’s identity influenced, shaped, or otherwise impacted by the institutions with which he or she comes in contact?

Questions to Get You Started:

- What is an identity? Do the authors define it? How are you defining it? Is it stable? Does it change?
- What form does influence take? Influence, shape, and impact are pretty generalized terms. How can you make them more specific?
- Which institutions are you going to discuss? Banks? Colleges? Are all colleges the same? All banks? Remember to be specific and to draw on the textual evidence you have available.
- What kind of “contact” will you be considering? Physical? Cultural? Economic? Are these kinds of contact connected?
  N.B.: Remember that these questions should inform your thinking, but should not be answered as a list.

❖ Rough Draft Due: Thursday, March 12 (four full pages)
Please upload (as an attachment) to Assignments 2 on our Sakai site (sakai.rutgers.edu) by 12:00 PM on Thursday, March 12. Bring two hard copies to class for peer review.

❖ Final Draft Due: Tuesday, March 24 (five full pages)
Please upload (as an attachment) to Assignments 2 on our Sakai site (sakai.rutgers.edu) by 12:00 PM on Tuesday, March 24.

Late rough drafts will result in a half-letter grade deduction from the final draft of Paper 3. Late final drafts will result in a full-letter grade deduction from Paper 3.

Required:
*stapled *double-spaced *1-inch margins *12-pt. font (Times New Roman)
*MLA format (Your headers, page numbers, and quotations should be formatted properly.)
Sample Assignment Sequences

Sequence 1: John Warren

Paper 1

Readings:
- “The Mega-Marketing of Depression” by Ethan Watters (pg. 512-532)

Question: In “The Mega-Marketing of Depression,” Ethan Watters develops a narrative that highlights the stark differences between the American and Japanese conception of depression, and what happens when one culture attempts to exert its ideals onto the other. As the discussion divets deeper into how cultural conceptions of illness are formed and shifted over time, the author paints a much more complicated picture of how all of this affects us individually. In discussing various cultural explanatory models, Watters says, “This interplay between the expectations of the culture and the experience of the individual leads to a cycle of symptom amplification... Explanatory models created the culturally expected experience of the disease in the mind of the sufferer” (Watters 518).

Considering the Watters’ ideas in conjunction with other current events, respond to the following prompt:

| To what extent are cultural norms shaping our reality? |

While you are not obligated to respond to the following questions, they may assist you in thinking about your response to the prompt:

- How do we define culture and what makes it a “norm?”
- How do foreign ideas challenge and shift cultural conceptions?
- To what extent is biology shaping our reality?
- How much control do we have over the shaping process?
- How do our individual experiences both inform and complicate “reality?”
- Considering the implications of this text, as well as recent world events (the Baltimore riots, the Charlie Hebdo terrorist attacks in Paris, etc.), what is our responsibility to exert more control over the larger cultural conversation? What are steps that we might take to be fully in charge of our own lives?

Use the author’s examples to inform YOUR analysis. Expand your ideas based on close reading of the texts. (You should aim to have at least 1-2 text quotes in EVERY body paragraph of your essay.)
Paper 2

Readings:

- Selections from “Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other” by Sherry Turkle (pg. 457-483)
- “The Mega-Marketing of Depression” by Ethan Watters (pg. 512-532)

Question: In Selections from “Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other,” Sherry Turkle explores how our relationship with technology has shifted over time from one of projection to one of engagement. The result of this, according to Turkle, is that the very technology that we created is now reshaping the way we view our own humanity, and not always for the better. Turkle, an academic psychotherapist, is especially interested in the impact of computers in treating patients. When discussing the development of computer psychotherapy, Turkle says, “Thirty years ago, with psychoanalysis more central to the cultural conversation, most people saw the experience of therapy as a context for coming to see the story of your life in new terms... Today, many see psychotherapy less as an investigation of the meaning of our lives and more as an exercise to achieve behavioral change or work on brain chemistry” (Turkle 460). After noting the initial “romantic reaction” against this new mode of treatment, she goes on to say, “Computers “understand” as little as ever about the human experience... They do, however, perform understanding better than ever, and we are content to play our part” (460).

In “The Mega-Marketing of Depression,” Ethan Watters explores how cultural conceptions of depression can be formed and shifted over time. In discussing various cultural explanatory models of depression, Watters says, “This interplay between the expectations of the culture and the experience of the individual leads to a cycle of symptom amplification... Explanatory models created the culturally expected experience of the disease in the mind of the sufferer” (Watters 518). When discussing the concluding comments of Dr. Laurence Kirmayer’s paper, Watters goes on to say, “Cultural beliefs about depression and the self are malleable and responsive to messages that can be exported from one culture to another” (519).

Considering both Turkle’s and Watters’ text ideas, respond to the following prompt:

| In what ways are our experiences with technology limiting our potential? |

While you are not obligated to respond to the following questions, they may assist you in thinking about your response to the prompt:

- In what ways are our experiences with technology enhancing our potential?
- How has technological (or pharmaceutical) progress changed the way we both conceive of and treat an illness?
- How can technology (e.g. social media, video games, etc.) be an explanatory model and what role, if any, does symptom amplification play in each of these different contexts?
• What is the relationship between virtual experiences and real experiences? How does all of this impact our sense of self?
• Consider how terms and concepts found in Watters' text can be used as a lens to frame an argument about Turkle’s text and vice versa.

Use the author's examples to inform YOUR analysis. Expand your ideas based on close reading of the texts.

You should aim to have at least 1-2 text quotes (w/analysis!) in EVERY body paragraph of your essay and make sure that you stay engaged with BOTH authors. Use YOUR thesis to moderate a panel discussion featuring the authors.

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Paper 3

Readings:
• “Son” by Andrew Solomon (pg. 368-390)
• Selections from “Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other” by Sherry Turkle (pg. 457-483)
• “The Mega-Marketing of Depression” by Ethan Watters (pg. 512-532)

Question: In “Son,” Andrew Solomon develops a narrative that explores how cultural norms and attitudes towards children with exceptional identities have changed over time. Solomon, who struggled to find acceptance of his own sexuality while growing up, particularly highlights how the categorization of being gay shifted from criminal to medical, then ultimately to an identity over the course of his own lifetime. Contemplating how all of this may have happened, he goes on to describe how various cultural phenomena, such as the Internet, have enabled individuals to freely develop and articulate what Solomon describes as horizontal personalities. Elaborating on these ideas, Solomon says, “As the line between illness and identity is challenged, the strength of these online supports is a vital setting for the emergence of true selves” (Solomon 385).

Considering Solomon’s ideas, along with Turkle’s thoughts on sociable technologies and Watters’ study of the shifting attitudes towards depression in Japan, respond to the following prompt:

**How can virtual environments enhance our experience of self?**

While you are not obligated to respond to the following questions, they may assist you in thinking about your response to the prompt:

• How has the development of social media affected the development of our horizontal identity?
• How can virtual environments engage multiple senses of self?
● How is the concept of self (or identity, personality, etc.), as described by Solomon, Turkle and Watters related?
● How can our experiences with social media allow us to recast our narrative or history (Solomon 386)?
● How has the Internet impacted the categorization of illness and identity, and to what extent has technological progress moved us closer to Solomon’s ideal of a *syncretic mechanics*?
● What are the similarities and differences among all three authors’ definitions of *healthy*? (Solomon is pretty explicit about his position, but Turkle and Watters will require some close reading.)
● To what extent does our experience in virtual environments amount to a contraction of self, rather than an opening of self?
● Consider how terms and concepts found in one text (e.g. *explanatory models*, *horizontal identity*, etc.) can be used as a lens to frame an argument about the other texts.

Use the author’s examples to inform YOUR analysis. Expand your ideas based on close reading of the texts.

You should aim to have *at least two text quotes (w/analysis!) in EVERY body paragraph* of your essay and make sure that you stay engaged with *at least two authors* per body paragraph. Use YOUR thesis to moderate a panel discussion featuring the authors and their respective texts.

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**Paper 4**

**Readings:**

- *Selections from* “Love 2.0: How Our Supreme Emotion Affects Everything We Feel, Think, Do and Become” by Barbara Fredrickson (pg. 105)
- “Son” by Andrew Solomon (pg. 368-390)

**Question:** In *Selections from* “Love 2.0: How Our Supreme Emotion Affects Everything We Feel, Think, Do and Become,” psychologist Barbara Fredrickson proposes a radical shift to the way that we both think about and experience love. She describes love as a complex biological system that is comprised of several interacting parts. Fredrickson urges her readers to upgrade their view of love, and to look beyond the conventional limits and societal categorizations of relationships. Fredrickson says, “When you limit your view of love to relationships or commitment, love becomes a complex and bewildering thicket of emotions, expectations, and insecurities. Yet when you redirect your eyes toward your body’s definition of love, a clear path emerges that cuts through the thicket and leads you to a better life” (Fredrickson 108).
In “Son,” Andrew Solomon says, “Modern Love comes with more and more options” (Solomon 384). Throughout his text Solomon discusses the plethora of options now available for both romantic and familial love and how these new options have blurred previously accepted boundaries. He devotes a significant amount of time exploring the complicated relationships that exceptional children often encounter as they attempt to find love and acceptance from their families and the world around them. Solomon claims that despite these children’s so-called horizontal challenges, several of the families that he profiled were able to shift their thinking and cultivate a learned happiness. Solomon says, “It is astonishing how often such mutuality has been realized—how frequently parents who had supposed that they couldn’t care for an exceptional child discovers that they can. The parental predisposition to love prevails in the most harrowing of circumstances” (Solomon 373).

Considering the ideas from both of these texts, respond to the following prompt:

How can love be defined in the twenty-first century?

While you are in not obligated to respond to the following questions, they may assist you in thinking about your response to the prompt:

- What is the relationship between thinking about love and feeling love?
- How do our vertical identities complicate what we feel?
- What does love teach individuals?
- What are the potential risks and benefits of viewing love from a scientific perspective?

Use the author’s examples to inform YOUR analysis. Expand your ideas based on close reading of the texts.

Paper 5

Readings:
- “The Ecstasy of Influence: A Plagiarism” by Jonathan Lethem (pg. 210)
- Selections from “Love 2.0: How Our Supreme Emotion Affects Everything We Feel, Think, Do and Become” by Barbara Fredrickson (pg. 105)
- “Son” by Andrew Solomon (pg. 368)

Question: In “The Ecstasy of Influence: A Plagiarism” Jonathan Lethem argues that rather than being a crime, the act of sharing and appropriating the words and expressions of other individuals provides tremendous value to both the so-called artistic fugitive and
society as a whole. Contrary to the idea that an artist is drawn to their respective discipline solely as a result of the urges of their inner creative voice, Lethem argues that for most artists the initial urge to create begins with the admiration of the work of another revered artist. Lethem says, “Most artists are brought to their vocation when their own nascent gifts are awakened by the work of a master. That is to say, most artists are converted to art by art itself” (Lethem 214).

Considering Lethem’s ideas along with Barbara Fredrickson’s biological perspective of love and Andrew Solomon’s thoughts on love and identity, respond to the following prompt:

**To what extent is our connection to art and ideas a form of love?**

While you are not obligated to respond to the following questions, they may assist you in thinking about your response to the prompt:

- To what extent does our connection to art and ideas enhance our personal relationships?
- What aspects, if any, of Frederickson’s biological science are at play in Lethem’s larger thesis project?
- How can art and ideas enhance and expand the boundaries of self and identity?

Use the author’s examples to inform YOUR analysis. Expand your ideas based on close reading of the texts.

You should aim to have at least two text quotes (w/analysis!) in EVERY body paragraph of your essay and make sure that you stay engaged with at least two authors per body paragraph. Use YOUR thesis to moderate a panel discussion featuring the authors and their respective texts.

**Sequence 2: Abbie Reardon**

PAPER I ASSIGNMENT

Text: Ethan Watters, “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan”

In “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan,” Ethan Watters discusses the problems that can result from corporate desire for profit in the global health industry. Watters’ argument about the pernicious effects of the globalization of depression is premised on two ideas: that mental illness is in large part a cultural construct with socially normative forms of expression, and that the creation and standardization of disease categories shape the “illness experience” over time (515, 516).

Given the text’s interest in the homogenization of modern theories and treatments of mental illnesses, it is intriguing (and perhaps counterintuitive) that “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan” both opens and concludes by referring to “stories.” The first sentence explains how Watters “went to visit Dr. Laurence Kirmayer in Montreal because he had a particularly good story to tell” (513), while the last asserts that the idea
that SSRIs balance brain chemistry “is more of a culturally shared story than a scientific fact…” (529). The types of stories invoked in these two sentences are different, yet their shared presence in the text suggests the importance of narrative to Watters’ argument about transcultural notions of depression.

Using specific quotations, examples, and details from Watters’ text, write an essay that responds to the following question: **How and why do narratives influence the “illness experience”?**

N.B. You will need to be very precise about your interpretation of these terms, since “narrative,” “influence,” and “illness experience” all require contextualized analysis in order to be specific and therefore useful.

Some further questions that may be helpful in developing your argument (You do not need to answer all or any of the following; I provide them as possible ways of beginning to think about the question above):

- What are the various forms of narrative present in this text, and who creates/disseminates them?
  - Potential approaches might include: stories told by individuals, by cultures, by corporations, by media outlets, etc.
  - What happens when these narratives are in competition? Can they coexist? Why?
- Does Watters seem to pit stories against science in his argument? How does the text represent the relationship between the two?
- Should we conceive of the imposition of new narratives of depression as a form of cultural imperialism? What might be the ethical implications of doing so?
- Think about the form of Watters’ text, which reads more like a story then a traditional expository argument. Why might Watters have presented his research in this manner?

**PAPER II ASSIGNMENT**


When Azar Nafisi created an all-women class in which she asks her Iranian students to read works of Western literature, she sought to acquire “freedom denied me in classes I taught in the Islamic Republic” (284). In her narrative, this freedom comes from the subversive act of interpreting and imaginatively engaging literature that had been banned in their totalitarian society. Nafisi proposes that interpretation offers a way to, as she writes of Scheherazade, “embrace different terms of engagement” with the world other than the oppressive terms imposed by Iranian sociocultural policies (290). While Ethan Watters analyzes a different explicit subject matter, his text also explores the ways in which narratives and new interpretive “explanatory models” are “upending long-held cultural beliefs” (517; 519). Yet the social consequences of creativity and interpretation are far less optimistic for Watters than for Nafisi.

By engaging significantly with both texts to provide the primary evidence for your argument, write an essay that addresses the following question: **Is the act of creative interpretation inherently liberating, or does its significance depend on its context and consequences? Why?**

The following are questions you might consider when formulating your response to the prompt in bold:

- Are the forms and function of interpretation in both texts equivalent? In what ways are they similar? In what ways different? So what?
• Why are definitions so important to both texts? How might both authors’ emphasis on the power of shifting definitions and the significance of “coded words and expressions” (Nafisi 292) influence how you think about the implications of interpretative acts?
• What do you make of the fact that both texts investigate the interpretation of “Western” culture and ideals? Does Western ideology receive the same treatment in both accounts? How might cross-cultural exchange influence interpretation?
• Is there an ethical dimension to creativity and interpretation? What are the implications when an interpretation held by a powerful group/individual is in conflict with others?

PAPER III ASSIGNMENT

Texts: Maggie Nelson, “Great to Watch”
Ethan Watters, “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan”

The three texts we have read so far this term have aimed to complicate the ways in which we conceive of their respective subjects, proposing a move away from binary models of thought, and prioritizing instead the concepts of “contradiction, fluctuation, incoherence, and perversity” (Nelson 311). In Nelson’s argument in “Great to Watch,” which interrogates the relationship between violence, habits of spectatorship in contemporary culture, and knowledge, she implicitly proposes that how we know – our processes of interpretation – may be even more important than what we know. Central to this line of thought, for Nelson, is the concept of the “boundary.”

While the “boundary” is implicitly significant in all three texts, Nelson’s argument regarding the need to think more critically about how we understand and interact with society makes this issue explicit. As Nelson explains, “Not all boundaries or mediating forces are created equal; not all serve the same purpose,” such that it is not the case that “the function of that boundary need be a constrictive or restrictive one” (308).

Citing specific evidence from all three texts, develop an original argument in response to the following question: **In what ways might the concept of the boundary be productive rather “constrictive or restrictive”?**

**NB:** Make sure the argument you craft in response to this question is specific and proposes a clear framework for the different ways in which you see “boundaries” manifest in these texts. In other words, make the stakes of your argument – the “So what?” claim – very explicit.

PAPER IV ASSIGNMENT

Texts: Maggie Nelson, “Great to Watch”
Jonathan Lethem, “The Ecstasy of Influence: A Plagiarism”
Both Lethem and Nelson’s texts propose that contemporary society stands to gain from recognizing the interdependence of ideas that might ordinarily seem separate. Lethem’s argument about the need to reconceive of creativity as a “commons” depends upon his conviction that a text or other cultural artifact “that has infiltrated the common mind to [a great] extent…inexorably joins the language of culture. A map-turned-to-landscape, it has moved to a place beyond enclosure or control” (224). Lethem’s language here should resonate with your previous writing about Nelson’s understanding of boundaries. Indeed, we might think of Lethem’s notion of a “commons” that is “beyond enclosure or control” as a form of what Nelson describes as “the mediate,” something that “relates people to each other, with relation signifying the process of being brought together and given a measure of space from each other at the same time” (308).

Additionally, both Lethem and Nelson suggest that embracing this understanding of a cultural commons can “enliven us as human beings” (Lethem 222), thereby producing a more “worthwhile sense of human freedom” (Nelson 311). Yet neither author is blind to the challenges posed by a society marked by “malice, power-mongering, self-centeredness, fear, sadism, or simple meanness of spirit” (Nelson 301), qualities which jeopardize the possibility of “human freedom” that both texts celebrate.

Citing specific evidence from both Nelson and Lethem, write an essay that presents a coherent argument in response to the following questions: What is the relationship between reimagining culture as a “commons,” and “human freedom”? Does the “violent” nature of contemporary society (as per Nelson) influence this relationship? How?

**PAPER V ASSIGNMENT**

Texts: Karen Ho, “Biographies of Hegemony”

+ TWO additional texts of your choice

All of the texts we have read this term have aimed to complicate the ways in which we conceive of their respective subjects, highlighting the need to “unravel and challenge homogenizing discourses” and to prioritize the “particularity and contextuality” of social phenomena (Ho 168). In “Biographies of Hegemony,” Karen Ho employs this type of critical lens in her investigation of how the ideology of “smartness” facilitates the self-sustaining, normative power of Wall Street and the most “elite” Ivy League universities. Throughout her argument, she calls attention to the “generic” qualities valued at the heart of the recruitment and social construction of investment bankers, recapitulating her argument into the following sentence in the final paragraph: “The open-ended, ‘generic’ recruitment at Princeton and Harvard not only naturalizes students that are ‘the best,’ the elite among the elite, but also sheds light on what actually constitutes smartness for Wall Street” (186).

Ho’s critique of the problematic pervasiveness of the “generic” resonates of conversations we’ve had about all four previous texts, and provides a new term which can help us forge surprising connections between Ho and our other readings.

Citing specific evidence from “Biographies of Hegemony” and any TWO of our previous readings, write an essay that addresses the following question: To what extent is contemporary society dominated by a “generic” worldview, and how might valuing the “generic” work against the prospects for greater equality and/or freedom?
The following are questions you might consider when formulating your response to the prompt in bold:

- Do the texts suggest a potential corrective or alternative worldview to the “generic”? How so? (Or why not?) How might Ho’s interest in “biographies” be relevant to this question?
- In what ways does Ho’s argument complicate our understanding of the “global”? What is the relationship between the “global” and the “generic”?
- Ho’s argument presents “smartness” as the most important example of a “generic” signifier, but might there be others that are significant – in her text, others, or common to all of our readings?
- Are there contexts in which a “generic” worldview is valuable? How might you mount a defense of the “generic” as a worthwhile epistemological or ontological model?

**Sequence 3: William Burch**

**Paper 1**  
**Reading:**
- Ethan Watters, “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan.”

Read the following prompt and consider the question in **bold**. Answer the question clearly and concisely, using a strong thesis statement as the basis for what you think, followed by detailed analysis of relevant portions of the assigned text as support for your claim. Avoid compare/contrast or summary-based discussions; put your textual evidence into an analytic conversation with an original claim that answers the question.

**Question:**
Marketing anthropologist Kalman Applbaum describes his “mega-marketing” campaign as a plan to “alter the total environment in which these drugs are or may be used.” As Watters elaborates, the plan to market antidepressants involves not only the medication itself, but also the context for its usage. In other words, the public must be convinced that depression is an illness that requires treatment before they’ll purchase antidepressants to treat it. But the relationship between the marketing techniques Watters describes and the public to which depression gets marketed is less straightforward. Use evidence from Watters’ essay to address the following question: What is the relationship between mega-marketing and Applbaum’s “total environment”? Or, more generally, to what extent can marketing create its own conditions?

In the course of your thinking, you might consider the following questions, though you are in no way obligated to address any of them.

- What does marketing mean in Watters’ essay? Is there a difference between marketing and mega-marketing?
- Is marketing a neutral phenomenon that simply describes a public desire, or are there ethical stakes to the marketing of depression?
- What are the specific ways GlaxoSmithKline goes about marketing its antidepressants?
- What role does marketing play in mediating the relationship between Japan and the West, as Watters describes it?
• What does the phrase “total environment” mean?

**Paper 2**

*Reading:*

- Ethan Watters, “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan.”

Read the following prompt and consider the question in **bold**. Answer the question clearly and concisely, using a strong thesis statement as the basis for what you think, followed by detailed analysis of relevant portions of the assigned text as support for your claim. Avoid compare/contrast or summary-based discussions; put your textual evidence into an analytic conversation with an original claim that answers the question.

In their essays, both Watters and Moss describe marketing campaigns for which what makes most economic sense and what is in a consumer’s best interest appear opposed. In Moss’ essay, when asked about the relationship between economics and health, Geoffrey Bible (former C.E.O. of Phillip Morris) claims, “People could point to these things and say, ‘They’ve got too much sugar, they’ve got too much salt’ …Well that’s what the consumer wants, and we’re not putting a gun to their head to eat it. That’s what they want. If we give them less, they’ll buy less and the competitor will get our market” (267). Bible claims to be in a double bind. Either he gives consumers what they want or he risks losing their market share entirely. In both this example and the others that Moss describes, there appears to be a tension between what the individual consumer needs and what the collective marketing demographic wants. Use evidence from Moss’ essay and from Watters’ to address the following question: **What is the relationship between the individual consumer and the collective demographic to which a marketing campaign is targeted?**

In the course of your thinking, you might consider the following questions, though you are in no way obligated to address any of them.

- Could any of the campaigns Moss describes be understood as mega-marketing campaigns?
- Is there any kind of ethical imperative in this transaction, or are marketers simply trying to optimize their business?
- If marketing does imply some kind of ethical burden, is it one placed on the marketers or the consumers?
- Are the collective demographics at which marketing campaigns are targeted actually different than the individual consumer, or are these demographics simply composed of individuals?
- Is the pharmaceutical campaign Watters describes similar to Moss’ addictive junk food? How do they differently approach their markets?

**Paper 3**

*Reading:*

- Ethan Watters, “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan.”

Read the following prompt and consider the question in bold. Answer the question clearly and concisely, using a strong thesis statement as the basis for what you think, followed by detailed analysis of relevant portions of the assigned text as support for your claim. Avoid compare/contrast or summary-based discussions; put your textual evidence into an analytic conversation with an original claim that answers the question.

Question:
Though they operate at different scales, all three essays that we’ve read so far examine the negative outcomes of different marketing campaigns. Joseph Stiglitz in particular writes, “Since one or more of these conditions [market failures] exist in virtually every market, there is in fact little presumption that markets are in general efficient.” Moss and Watters, though they might not make so bold a claim, describe examples of marketing campaigns whose markets are working ineffectively. For this paper, use the thinking we’ve done so far this semester to evaluate these claims. Use evidence from all three essays to address the following question: To what extent does the supply and demand logic of the free market have an ethical imperative attached to it?

In the course of your thinking, you might consider the following questions, though you are in no way obligated to address any of them.

- What is the relationship between a marketing campaign and the market to which it is addressed?
- Do all three of our authors mean the same thing when they describe a market? Watters, for example, suggests that markets can be created, whereas Stiglitz writes about markets in a more abstract way.
- Does the scale of a marketing campaign make it more or less ethical?
- Does the negative outcome of a single marketing campaign necessarily mean that there are ethical dimensions to the free market? In other words, does the fact that a particular company might do something ethically questionable mean that the free market itself is ethically questionable?
- What is the relationship between a singular market (mothers buying Lunchables for their children, for example) and the free market?

Paper 4

Reading:
- Karen Ho, “Biographies of Hegemony.”
- Any one of the other three essays we’ve read so far this semester.

Read the following prompt and consider the question in bold. Answer the question clearly and concisely, using a strong thesis statement as the basis for what you think, followed by detailed analysis of relevant portions of the assigned text as support for your claim. Avoid compare/contrast or summary-based discussions; put your textual evidence into an analytic conversation with an original claim that answers the question.
Question:
In response to the question of why investment banking has so dominated Harvard undergraduates, one of Karen Ho’s respondents claims, “It’s not about investment banking. It is about the possibility that with all our running around trying to impress everyone all the time, it becomes hard to know what we really want” (181). Ho claims that banking has a “monopolistic hold” over students’ future aspirations. These passages suggest that one of the primary ways Ho’s culture of smartness operates is through the management of desire. That is, one of the ways Wall Street firms recruit undergraduates is by teaching them what to want and what success looks like. Use evidence from Ho’s essay and one of the other we’ve read this semester, along with the thinking we’ve done in class about markets to address the following question: **How can the marketplace and the logic of marketing help us understand the relationship Karen Ho describes between Ivy League students and investment banking?**

In the course of your thinking, you might consider the following questions, though you are in no way obligated to address any of them.

- What kind of supply and demand does Karen Ho’s culture of smartness offer? What is being demanded?
- How is a market that demands people different than one that demands either food or pharmaceuticals?
- If the Wall Street recruitment process is a kind of market, is it a free market? Is it regulated?
- Are there similarities between Watters’ mega-marketing campaign and the Wall Street recruitment processes that Ho describes?
- Could Ho’s culture of smartness be contributing to the kind of inequality that Stiglitz warns against?
- Is the culture of smartness that Ho describes ethical?

**Paper 5**

*Reading:*
- Steven Johnson, “The Myth of the Ant Queen.”
- Any two of the other three essays we’ve read so far this semester.

Read the following prompt and consider the question in **bold**. Answer the question clearly and concisely, using a strong thesis statement as the basis for what you think, followed by detailed analysis of relevant portions of the assigned text as support for your claim. Avoid compare/contrast or summary-based discussions; put your textual evidence into an analytic conversation with an original claim that answers the question.

**Question:**
All semester, we’ve been thinking about the marketplace, both as a bundle of interactions and as an ecosystem that orients its participants in particular ways. Indeed, all of our authors have pointed out a perceived problem that results from the free market when it operates at larger scales. Steven Johnson’s essay gives us the tools to think about both the way markets generate and also how they become organized into larger environments. He writes, “Complexity is not solely a matter of sensory overload. There is also a sense of complexity as a self-organizing system…” This sort of
complexity lives up one level: it describes the system of the city itself, and not its experiential reception by the city dweller. The city… self-organizes out of millions of individual decisions, a global order built out of local interactions” (199). Use evidence from Johnson’s essay along with two of the others we’ve read, to reflect on the work we’ve done all semester about the marketplace as an organizing structure. Address the following question: **To what extent is the marketplace reducible to or greater than the local interaction of a single economic transaction?**

In the course of your thinking, you might consider the following questions, though you are in no way obligated to address any of them.

- Does the free market that we’ve seen in other essays favor Johnson’s first type of complexity or his second?
- How might the market inform the way we think about non-economic concepts? Do our more explicitly economic essays explain or clarify any of Johnson’s examples?
- Does a marketplace – free or otherwise – actually indicate a system of organization? How is it similar to or different from the examples that Johnson describes?
- Does Johnson’s argument about the complexity of self-organizing systems deflate or expand any of the moralizing arguments made by our other authors – Stiglitz and Ho most explicitly?
- According to Johnson, what is the relationship between an individual and the system in which that individual participates? Does this logic hold true for individual consumers and entire demographics? For individual students and entire recruitment systems? Individual rent seekers and entire systems of inequality?
VI. REVISION

Once students have written their rough drafts, they will embark on the process of revision. Our focus on revision reinforces the claim, central to *The New Humanities Reader* pedagogy, that writing is a process, and that the conversation between authors—students and others—should be developed in an open-ended process of revision that may actually lead to a change in perspective. Just as we encourage students to think that their first readings of the essays in *The New Humanities Reader* cannot be the final one, so the first writing of their paper is not the final one. Also, from a practical perspective, students usually write themselves into a viable project. While they start to answer the assignment question at the beginning of their rough drafts, it is often the case that a synthetic thesis (which connects the assigned readings with the students’ own ideas) only emerges towards the end of the process. Revision invites students to observe their own development, build upon successful moments of composition, and sometimes discard the writing that helped them develop a claim in favor of new writing that develops a coherent thesis around which they can structure their papers.

Peer Review

Students must become independent readers of their own writing. This skill is necessary throughout college and in the professional world. Students learn to read their own writing critically by reading the writing of their peers—writing that has been generated in response to shared class assignments. Some students are resistant to their peers’ comments; they imagine their peers are inexperienced and unable to offer valuable advice. And in some cases, this is a justified criticism of the peer review process. However, the value of peer review is not only in the comments one might receive from a helpful reader, but also in the experience of reading the work of others and learning what is successful and what is not successful in their partner’s papers. The value of peer review is in the training our students receive in reading and discussing their own writing. This value must be made explicit in the classroom, and should be discussed openly before peer review begins.

Peer review should focus on different aspects of paper writing throughout the course of the semester, and should change to reflect the focus of the class. For example, an instructor might only ask about summary versus interpretation on the first two papers. Once the class has mastered that distinction, the instructor might move to a new set of conceptual issues or writing skills. Although teachers comment on the rough drafts of papers one and four, students should be doing a peer review of those rough drafts as well.

In order for peer review to run successfully in class, a shared discourse about writing must be established in the classroom. Students need a language with which to discuss their
writing and the writing of their peers. Before asking students to read one another’s work independently, model the discussion of writing in class by using sample writing from the students themselves. When discussing their writing, emphasize how one speaks with respect as well as how one offers revision-oriented comments. Guide the class through a discussion about both the strengths and the weaknesses in the sample writing. Use the following question to motivate discussion: “What work has the student done?”

Peer review groups usually consist of two or three members. Students will need an appropriate number of copies for class, so indicate on your assignment sheet how many drafts students will need for class on that day. Students give their peer readers their drafts, and peer readers use the directions from peer review sheets to comment. After students have completed the peer review process, it is critical that students have time to share their comments with one another. This period of discussion allows students to converse with one another about their writing; they use the discourse established in class to work with one another in a smaller setting.

Most teachers rely on peer review sheets during peer review days. These sheets give students instructions, ask specific questions, and create tasks for students to complete as they read one another’s work. Below are the kinds of instructions one might include on a peer review sheet:

- Go through your partner’s paper and mark with a star all the places where you think the writer is interpreting and thinking rather than supplying information directly from the readings in the form of summary. Also mark places with a large S where you feel the writer is providing unnecessary summary that does not seem to help her develop an argument.

- Which of the starred moments in the draft seem especially interesting or promising? That is, what place in the essay does the writer say something that seems most original or interesting? What is strong about this moment?

- What is the writer’s argument, in your own words? That is, how does she respond to the main essay question? What answer does the essay suggest? Do you agree with the writer’s argument, as you see it? Why or why not?

- Is the writer’s argument or project coherently represented in the introductory paragraph of the paper? Is the paper trying to accomplish what the thesis announces, or is it attempting (or accomplishing) much more than that? Perhaps the paper is actually doing something the thesis does not promise at all?

- How does the writer utilize multiple sources to produce his idea? In other words, how do the assigned essays come together to inform the writer’s position?
• Does the writer quote the readings in most paragraphs of the essay? Where should the writer do more to incorporate or quote from the readings? What passages or ideas from the readings should she or he especially consider?

• Locate at least one place where the writer can strengthen connections between essays. Explain the connection: Is the connection between the essays clear? Does this connection relate back to the main argument? How might he or she explain this connection more carefully?

• What are some of the things that the writer should work on in revision? For example: Does the writer address the basic elements of the assignment? Does she try to form an argument that addresses the essay question? Does the writer generally work to present analysis rather than summary? Has she incorporated the other readings into the essay well enough? Does she or he use quotes or discuss these writers’ arguments directly? Does the writer use specific references to the text to illustrate points? Does the writer try to engage the texts in conversation rather than just using them to back up her or his narrow argument? Does the writer acknowledge the arguments of these writers and work to separate her or his own voice from that of the writers (not repeating things said by the writers as though it were her or his own opinion)?

• Look at two quotations that the writer uses, and talk about how accurately and how well the writer deals with those quotes. First, pick a quote that you think the writer could definitely discuss more thoroughly. Second, look at the longest quote that the writer has used. Is this quote too long? Is it being used in place of writing or in place of some sort of directed summary? If you think the choice of quotation is useful—or if you think it should be shortened—what is the most important part of the quote? What part should the writer discuss most? What might the writer say about the quote? Does the writer explain how the quotation works and why it is important?

Student Created Peer Review

Once students have become accustomed to reading their own work critically and to commenting on the work of their peers, some teachers ask the class to generate a peer review activity on the day peer review is to take place. These teachers ask students to create a list of questions they are to address as they read one another’s papers. This exercise puts the students in control of the revision process, and contributes to creating a writing community in the classroom. Again, the success of this kind of peer review depends on the shared discourse about writing that has been established through the discussion of sample writing in the classroom. You might guide your students to generate their own peer review by providing them with the following categories:
Project
- Can you find and understand the author’s project and identify two or three main supporting ideas? Can you restate the project in your own words? Do it here, if you can. Can you mark the places in the paper where the project and the ideas emerge? Write ‘project’ in the margins where you see this happening.

- Does the project really respond to the assignment? Why or why not?

- Is the project sufficiently developed? Is there enough detailed, relevant, supporting evidence? If not, what ideas need support?

Organization
- Does each paragraph’s topic sentence relate directly to the project? If not, write a suggestion to help the writer make that relationship stronger.

- Are there any places where the author needs better transitions between paragraphs? Within paragraphs?

- Are there any places where the author seems to get off track? Is there any evidence that is not really relevant?

- Are there any places where the essay breaks “unity”?

- Are there any problems with unity within paragraphs?

- Is the essay coherent? Can the reader follow the author’s ideas? Indicate places where the coherence breaks down.

Use of Text
- Look at the author’s quotations. Has the author selected “idea” quotes rather than “fact” or “summary” quotes, and used those quotes to strengthen, launch, or complicate her/his own argument?

- Are there quotes that are not smoothly integrated or embedded? (Do not rewrite the paper for your author, but suggest what she or he might want to accomplish).

- Are all quotations and paraphrases properly cited? If not, show specifically where and tell what the problem is.

- Is the author using unnecessary summary? Where?

- Are all three texts used, in reasonable balance? If not, what’s the problem?

- Are all three texts interpreted fairly? If not, what is the author misreading?
**Presentation**

- Normally, peer reviewers stay away from commenting on presentation. No peer reviewer should become another student’s editor, and many students are not necessarily skilled enough in grammar, mechanics and syntax to avoid giving bad advice. However, many of you requested feedback on presentation, so . . .

- Are there one or two kinds of error that you see the author repeating over and over again? Mark the places and identify the kinds of errors the author needs to address.

**Teaching Revision**

The use of sample student papers to focus on revision strategies is critical. Using sample work not only encourages students to see all writing as work in process, but also creates a sense of shared purpose in the classroom. Self-directed revision is arguably more effective than commenting directly on every rough draft, as it gives students the ability to be their own best readers and critics (in Expos and in other courses as well).

- Use photocopied passages: You may photocopy representative passages from several student essays and ask the class as a whole to consider their successes and the opportunities for revision they present. (This revision work may also be done in small groups.)

- Try group revision of selected passages: You may photocopy and distribute one page where a student writer has introduced but not really engaged with a quotation. Each student might redraft that paragraph, and some students might share their revisions with the class.

- Make global comments: You may write a composite set of comments in response to the rough drafts as a group for distribution to the students, identifying (and perhaps providing brief examples of) the most common or important areas for revision. Then ask the students to apply those global comments to their own work, identifying the common errors and correcting them.

- Emphasize the importance of re-reading as part of revision: Many students attempt to revise without re-reading the assigned texts, even when the primary need for revision is misunderstanding (or too simplistic an understanding) of the texts. Ask students to select one of the quoted passages in their papers, and have them re-read the pages from which the quotations were taken.

- Develop revision stamina: While teaching revision usually begins with passages of student work, be sure to eventually ask students to work with entire drafts as well. It is essential that students be able to revise an entire paper as well as smaller pieces of drafts.
VII. THE MIDTERM AND FINAL EXAMS

The Midterm Exam

The Midterm should be administered after the completion of paper two and after the class has read and discussed the third reading. The exam should ask students to connect the new (third) reading with the first two readings, and it should serve as a meaningful preview of the third paper topic.

The in-class Midterm Exam (graded pass/fail) serves multiple purposes:

• Students practice for the in-class final exam, which they must pass in order to pass the class. It is almost unfair to expect students to perform well on the in-class final without having prepared students for timed writing, which they will also experience as a requirement in other classes at Rutgers.

• Students benefit from using the midterm as a lead-in or fast draft of paper three. This is especially useful for students who struggle beginning a paper or complain of “writer’s block,” because students see that, indeed, they can produce writing on demand.

• Students are more willing to reconsider or complicate their positions on paper three because they have already spent time thinking about the new text for the midterm. For students struggling to develop an independent claim (which is needed to earn a B range grade), the extra draft the midterm provides can work to complicate a thesis.

• A failing midterm often gives students the psychological push they need to sign up for tutoring or to put more effort into the remainder of the essays.

• A passing midterm is sometimes a student’s first passable work, and thus it may give them hope in continuing toward passing work in the remaining papers.

• The midterm gives instructors a mid-semester indication of where students stand in the course; instructors can use the midterm to assess which skills their students seem to use with dexterity and which skills still need work.
Sample Midterm Prompts

• In your previous paper, you reflected on the effects of conflicting values on the media situation in Laramie, Wyoming, as described by Beth Loffreda. In this essay, please use Leslie Bell and Beth Loffreda’s articles to consider the following question: how does Azar Nafisi represent conflicting values in Iran in her essay and why might she use this approach?

• Using Leslie Bell’s “Selections from Hard to Get: Twenty-Something Women and the Paradox of Sexual Freedom,” Daniel Gilbert’s “Immune to Reality,” and Susan Faludi’s “The Naked Citadel,” please answer the following question: To what extent are psychological defense mechanisms (like “splitting” and the “psychological immune system”) at work at The Citadel?

• Gladwell, Stout, and Nafisi give us examples of individuals who choose to live in divided states of mind, or find their minds divided against their will. Using examples from Stout, Gladwell, and Nafisi, compose an essay that answers the following question: How can a divided self protect or endanger an individual?

• In our last paper we considered how Malcolm Gladwell and Susan Faludi address the ways individuals and social groups arrive at a sense of right and wrong because of context. Using Gladwell, Faludi, and a third author, Beth Loffreda, address the following prompt: How do stories, or the ways events are reported, influence our sense of right and wrong?

The Final Exam

On the last regular day of classes you will administer an in-class, open-book final exam. The Writing Program is the only Department at Rutgers allowed to administer a final exam during regularly scheduled classes instead of during the exam period (which would complicate the process of folder review). The exam is essay format and is graded on a Pass/Fail basis. Students must pass the final exam in order to pass 101.

The final exam asks students to connect and write about a newly assigned sixth reading. The exam continues the practice of sequencing, and requires students to make an independent claim, make connections, and use textual evidence to accomplish the work of the paper. The exam is not meant to “trip up” your students. In thinking about which essay to use for the final, aim for a “soft pitch” which clearly relates to the other readings of the class versus one in which the larger context or textual connections are obscure. You might want to select, in particular, an exam reading that clearly sequences with the fifth essay, which will be fresh in students’ minds, or which relates to several other readings (which allows students to choose the one most familiar to them).
In writing the final exam question, some instructors use a directed question, which asks students to work with the new essay and one of the previous essays selected by the instructor. However, a more generous exam question will be phrased in such a way that students can select which of the previous essays they would like to use in conjunction with the new reading. Whatever approach you take, students must engage at least two texts in the final exam.

In preparation for the final, you should have students come to the penultimate class meeting having read the exam essay. Allow them to discuss the essay in small groups. You should not direct this discussion. If you are planning on a question that gives students a choice about which of the previous essays to use in their response, you might tell students that they should select which essay they want to use with the exam reading in their response. That allows students to focus their reading of the new essay, as well as their discussion, on the reading they will actually use during the final.

The purpose of the final exam is to check that students embody the lessons of our class and that they are the people who wrote the papers they submitted during the term. The exam is thus about “the body,” as it were, so it is essential that it be administered in class and that students take it in your presence or in the presence of a proctor (if they miss the original exam session). They are allowed to use dictionaries and should refer to their textbooks (especially to quote passages). No notes, other than those they have written in the margins of their texts, can be used.

Note: If any students miss your final exam session, please leave a copy of your exam question with the Department secretary so that it can be made available to your student during an exam make-up session. You should also remember to pick up any exams from students who missed your last session so that they can be graded before your final folder review.

Sample Final Exam Prompts

- In describing Mitchell Sanders’ desire to get his story right, Tim O’Brien says “In a way, I suppose, you had to be there, you had to hear it, but I could tell how desperately Sanders wanted me to believe him, his frustration at not quite getting the details right, not quite pinning down the definitive truth” (444-5). In his essay, “How to Tell a True War Story,” O’Brien often returns to the notion of “being there” or of instinct, and how those things might change or determine truth. He shares this concern about perception (its generation, its reliability, etc.) with many of the other authors we’ve read this semester. Using Tim O’Brien’s essay and any other essay we have read this term, answer the following question: How does one arrive at an understanding of “truth”??
- At the end of “Homo religiosus,” Karen Armstrong sums up one of her main concerns as follows: “Religion as defined by the great sages of India, China, and the Middle East […] did not require belief in a set of doctrines but rather hard, disciplined work, without which any religious teaching remained opaque and incredible” (38). Using Armstrong’s discussions of the rewards gained through experiential knowledge, deeds, actions, and trials, and examples from one of the other essays we have read this term, please answer the following question: **What is the value of hard work and close attention?**

- Work with Twenge and Gilbert, and respond to the following question: **How might the case Gilbert makes about our “ignorance of our psychological immune systems” lead us to reassess the use of self-esteem programs in education?**
VIII. Classroom Practices

One goal of *The New Humanities Reader* is to foster student writing that goes beyond the staid formulae of personal response or book report. The pedagogy of *The New Humanities* encourages students to actively engage in connective thinking not just in the context of the composition classroom but in their other courses and in the world in which they live. To encourage student engagement, we recommend an active learning approach that creates a collaborative classroom environment that puts students in conversation with each other and with the authors of the readings. All of these activities are conceived of as working in the context of the students’ own writing: theirs are ultimately the primary texts with which we deal. With this in mind, the activities described here take the instructor through the full arc of a single paper assignment. In the course of a 15-week semester, with five papers to be completed, an instructor can expect to spend four to five class periods on a paper cycle. The cycle would look something like this:

- Day 1—Introduce a new reading, and perhaps hand in the final draft of the previous assignment
- Day 2—Discuss the reading, and give the new assignment
- Day 3—Rough draft due—peer review
- Day 4—Work on revision and the mechanics of writing
- Day 5—Final draft due, proof-reading, next reading assignment

Each of the steps in this cycle lends itself to different kinds of in-class work; an activity that works well on a new reading assignment will not necessarily be appropriate for working on rough drafts (though there can be very useful moments of overlap). The activities collected below have been divided into sections based on the stage in the paper-writing process at which they have been best used, and/or in terms of which part of *The New Humanities Reader* pedagogy they are relevant to. It is essential to revisit the different parts of the writing process at various points in the cycle.

The most productive learning environments typically feature a number of different but related tasks. A class might begin, for example, with individual “free writing,” then move to work in small groups, and then gather students to a discussion with the entire class. Tasks for the individual student can be used either to prepare them for a discussion in a larger group or to help them absorb the ideas that come up in general class discussion. Small group activities make students accountable for their ideas but relieve the pressure of both individual work and whole class work, fostering collective knowledge in a context which allows every student’s voice to be heard in a less threatening context than the full-class discussion. And whole-class activities are essential for exploring the different interpretations of a text that are available, and providing a forum for the teacher to approach the issues a class is having globally, without singling any student out for particular attention. Each kind of activity reinforces a different part of the writing process and ultimately fosters our goal of teaching exploratory and connective thinking.
Assigning a New Reading

The pre-reading part of the paper arc, occurring when the instructor presents a new reading to the class, is a crucial point in the entire process. At this stage, we want students to be able to engage with the concepts introduced by a new essay both as a discrete entity and in the context of prior readings. Both reading comprehension and contextualization are critical—a student needs to start to understand the concepts introduced by the new essay, and needs to connect those ideas with other texts.

This stage focuses students’ attention on particular parts of the new text, without the expectation that the students have read the whole text. This requires preparation on the part of the teacher, in order to focus students’ attention, and to help them to comprehend the new, possibly intimidating, prose that they see before them. Typically students are asked to work from part to whole and back again, puzzling through sections of the text or working with quotations, then trying to synthesize the overall argument and connect it with prior readings.

Discussing a Reading

In order to reinforce the idea that reading and writing go hand-in-hand, as well as to give students concrete points of access to the text, instructors usually assign some reading questions for students to consider as they begin a new selection from the textbook. Early in the semester, these questions may take the form of review questions, intended to test and encourage reading comprehension. But questions should ultimately call for as much interpretation as summary. The “Questions for Making Connections within the Reading” at the end of each essay are intended as reading and pre-writing exercises. If students address these questions as they read, they will be prepared to participate productively in class discussion and to enter into the writing process with confidence. Even if you only ask students to write a list of their own questions as they read, they will come to class more ready to make sense of the text than if they were to read it with no guidance.

Throughout this reading and re-reading process, students will often find that as one question is answered or one problem resolved, another question or problem—often a more complex one—emerges. This trial-and-error or exploratory method of conducting class discussion is messier than lecturing to the students, or simply answering their questions as they arise, but it has several advantages over lecturing. Not only does the exploratory method usually cover the same textual issues that a lecture would, but it also raises important issues that you yourself might not have thought to raise. The exploratory method also models—and gives students practice in—learning as discovery, rather than as delivery of understanding from teacher to student. Finally, the exploratory method gets all students (not just those who are already comfortable talking in class) involved in understanding the text, especially when small-group work precedes full-class discussion. Here are some suggestions for making group work successful:
• If you are having small group discussions, you can include a step that involves writing on the board. (Incidentally, this also helps to get “slow” groups up to speed, because they see that other groups are ahead of them.) You might ask students to establish a list of important terms and write it on the board, to define a term and write the definition on the board, or to choose a significant passage from the text and write the passage on the board.

• When small groups report, assign several students in advance to ask questions of each group after they report. If students know in advance that they are “on call” to ask questions, they will be more engaged with the class.

• In full-class discussion, ask each student who speaks to choose the next speaker. Students often feel more comfortable participating in response to another student’s request, than answering the teacher’s question.

• Always recognize every serious effort to participate as beneficial to class discussion. Find ways to reward students when they make a clear effort to be involved in class discussion. Even if a student is “wrong,” we can find ways to make use of every student comment. (For example, “Pat has pointed to an important passage. Let’s all spend some time working with this passage to see if we can extend Pat’s idea.”)

• Many of the readings in our book are about controversial situations or issues. Staging an in-class debate might help students crystalize their own positions, while imagining counterarguments. If you decide to hold a debate, you could create two debating teams, and ask for about five volunteers on each side. You might even ask students to position themselves on the side that they initially do not think they believe in, as often, by playing ‘devil’s advocate’, they are forced to expand their understanding of opposing viewpoints or to complicate their own views. The advantages of holding a debate are that students learn not only to articulate clearly, which will help them in their writing, but also to anticipate and evaluate clearly what others are saying. Those students not on the debating teams can ask questions when the presentations and rebuttals are complete, and then a vote can be taken to see which team had the most convincing position.

• Divide the class into small groups and ask them to generate a list of the larger contexts for this essay, locating quotations from the piece that point to that context or larger conversation. At the start of the semester, it might help students if you choose quotations for them, but later in the semester they should try to identify good quotations themselves. For example, with Sacks, we might list the different methods of adaptation for someone recently blinded, the role of the visual imagination, the way the brain works, and so on. Not only does this generate the themes of the essay, but it also helps students to see that these texts are not isolated writings but participate in larger conversations when considered alongside one or two other readings. It additionally gives them practice in locating these larger conversations.
When working in groups in this way, there should be a group leader who then comes forward in front of the whole class, and who talks about the chosen quotations and the connections between them from the different readings, to the whole class.

- Either schedule class in a computer classroom when beginning a new reading, or ask your students to do some online research of their own to learn about the background of the author of an essay they are about to read. There is fascinating information found on Google, for example, about the rich life of Oliver Sacks. In the case of students having researched this as homework, one or two students could give an oral presentation to the rest of the class about their research discoveries, and this could then turn into a larger conversation.

**Getting Started on an Assignment**

On the day you distribute a paper assignment, design an activity that helps students work together to make sense of the challenges the assignment might pose. Getting students to engage your assignment in class has the advantage of exposing difficulties or problems the assignment question might present.

Have students read the assignment together and write for a few minutes about how they might address the question. Once they have written for five to ten minutes, put them into groups of three or four to work on the following tasks: In your own words, what is the question asking? What process will you use to answer the question and write the essay? What answers do you think you might find? Do not distribute a paper assignment and then immediately dismiss class. Like the essays we assign, teach students to read paper assignments closely; ask them to identify and question key terms, and to look for implications.

**Collaborative Interpretation or Composing**

Probably the most standard exercise in Expository Writing classes is to put students into small groups of three to four students and give them a reading or writing task. At the end of the task, an elected group leader will report the results back to the rest of the class. For example, you can ask them to find two quotes from Sacks’ “The Mind's Eye” that they would use to construct a paragraph that begins to address the question that Sacks asks in his essay: “But to what extent are we - our experiences, our reactions - shaped, predetermined, by our brains, and to what extent do we shape our own brains?” Each group’s leader would then be responsible for presenting the group’s response to the rest of the class.

**Working with Quotes**

Another group activity involves putting students into groups where they are directed to choose two quotes from the text or from two different texts that they then connect in a paragraph with a strong topic sentence. Each small group then elects a group leader to speak to the class. On the first occasion you do this activity, you might actually type out
five quotes from the reading onto a piece of paper, with instructions that each group should choose two quotes that they think can be connected in a paragraph. This way you have a chance to model for them which quotes would be most fruitful for discussion. On subsequent occasions, make students responsible for locating and choosing the quotes they will use.

**Classroom Activities**

Instructors of Expository Writing are expected to adopt a student-centered and active-learning pedagogy. Students are expected to assume responsibility for understanding the readings and for reaching positions of their own through critical thinking inspired by collaborative discussion. Instructors should not lecture in an Expos classroom. Instead, they should develop meaningful activities that direct students back into the readings, invite conceptual thinking and analysis, and inspire an ongoing conversation with peers and the texts themselves.

What follows are sample activities that you may adopt in your classrooms, or that you may use as models when developing your own activities. These activities are also available in electronic form on the Expos project site to make them easier to adopt or revise. Teachers are encouraged to develop new activities each semester; each class presents its own challenges, has its own needs, and ultimately pursues a unique conversation about the assigned readings. Classroom activities should reflect the conversations that the students maintain, and should be customized to reflect the discourse of the classroom. Activities should also evolve over the course of the semester to reflect the skills students have acquired, or to address collective challenges that become evident in rough drafts. You will recall that while we comment fully on all final drafts, only rough drafts one and four receive written feedback. Classroom activities should be designed to respond to the collective challenges that emerge in rough drafts two, three, and five. In addition, these activities should preview the kinds of tasks in which students will be expected to participate during peer review. Classroom activities should mobilize the same language you use in your comments and in your peer review sheets.

**“TEN ON ONE” Text Analysis Exercise**

Instructor: Brendon Votipka

In this exercise, we’ll work from the following premise: When attempting deep and rigorous analysis, it can be more productive to make ten observations or points about a single representative issue, example, or idea than to make the same basic point about ten related issues or examples. Rather than “jet skiing” across the surface of the text, I ask you to "scuba dive" and explore the text in service of discovery. Use this exercise to extend your CLOSE READING skills and explore implications in the text.

Select a one-sentence idea quote from the author’s essay and re-write the text word for word in your notebook. Ask yourself “So What?” as you re-read the text. Reveal ten
observations, implications, connections, or questions in response to this quote. You should list your observations in numbered bullet points following the correctly cited text. (Don't merely summarize! Ask challenging questions, explore language and subtext from multiple angles, and consider what the text implies. Discuss any word choice or punctuation that might be important. You might also want to consider how the sentences before and after your quote relate to your observations. It is perfectly acceptable to contradict yourself in different bullet points; this might be the beginning of understanding the complex ambiguity of the text.)

**Notable Quotables**
Instructor: Max Shulman

FOR EACH ARTICLE THAT WE READ, STUDENTS SHOULD PREPARE A SHORT PRESENTATION KNOWN AS A “NOTABLE QUOTABLE.” Every student should present at least one notable quotable during the semester.

Directions to the Students:
− As you read the text, pick a sentence that you think is important in the reading.
− This should be a sentence that is central to the argument of the writer. It is probably not part of the author’s proof or evidence – e.g. “In a blind survey 95% of students prefer Expos class to root canals.” This kind of quotation is evidence. What we are after in the Notable Quotables is a quotation that contains argument.

You will present the sentence to the class and make your own argument as to WHY THIS IS AN IMPORTANT SENTENCE.
− How is it central to the argument?
− Is it the thesis statement of the article?
− How does it fit into the argument as a whole?
− Does it connect to any other article we have read? How so?

Offer a CLOSE READING of the sentence to show us how much we can get out of it. What does it mean? What is its significance? How is it changing our minds?

Presentations are to be no longer than 3 minutes. Make your statement, and make it clearly. This is about conveying an idea in public.

**Evaluate the Thesis Exercise**

Sample Introductory Paragraph from Paper #2 to Discuss as a Class

When introduced to an entirely new environment, we are never completely sure of the underlying effects that may alter our perceptions of what is appropriate behavior. When we join establishments there are often times new traditions we are expected to follow, or to a more extreme we may just have to conform to a new implied set of laws for our own survival. Our instincts alert us not to question our higher authorities rule despite how hostile a situation may become. In Malcolm Gladwell’s essay “The Power of Context”, the writer describes many different scenarios where the complexity of the given circumstances could alter our ethical decision making abilities. Most notable was the
Zimbardo prison experiment and the impression the surroundings made on the volunteer inmates and especially the role accepted by the guards. When Susan Faludi decided to write “The Naked Citadel”, she was also trying to find the hidden reasons behind the unusual behavior of people in relationship to society. The difference was that the Citadel was not an experiment. These were the real life unethical actions made by a highly impressionable student body that were just beginning to learn the difference between what is right and wrong. The details will show that the relationships formed by both groups were partly because of the shared space that they inhabited. In each case, it was the institution that was common between both groups which showed how our conditions can make a profound impact on our ethical standards.

Notes on Class Discussion:
Some Questions to Ask of the Thesis
• Is the thesis clearly stated in the opening paragraph?
  o What, exactly, is the thesis saying?
  o Does the rest of the paragraph funnel into the thesis?
• What questions does it leave unanswered?
  o Can you ask “how” or “why” of it?
  o “According to whom?”
  o “By whose standards or set of values?”
• Is this really an argument?
  o Could somebody reasonably disagree with this statement?
  o Are there alternative explanations?
• Does it use the texts BUT ALSO make an independent claim?
  o Does it just restate an author’s argument as your own?
  o Are all of the authors implicated in the thesis?
• Is it complex enough to be worth arguing?
  o Does it synthesize ideas from more than one text?

Exercise
1. Write your thesis statement on the board.
2. When the class is done writing statements on the board, select one statement that does not belong to you.
3. Write down this thesis statement, take it back to your seat, and analyze it.
4. When your time is up, locate the owner of the thesis and discuss your comments with your partner.
5. Revise your thesis based on feedback.
6. Rewrite it on the board.
7. Repeat steps one through five.

Drafting A Paragraph
Your job today is to draft a paragraph that sets forth a claim about how Ethan Watters’ ideas in “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan” can connect with ideas from one of
the other essays we have read. I suggest you draft that on Google Docs as a way of starting your draft. Once you write and revise on Google Docs, then post that paragraph in response to the prompt in our Forum on Sakai – very much like we did in previous lab activities this semester. Remember, the draft is due next class!

The Question
How can Watters’ discussion of culture serve as a lens through which to view another writer’s ideas? Alternatively (or in addition), how does that other writer inspire you to re-evaluate or qualify elements of Watters’ ideas?

Getting Started
I recommend you draft the paragraph in Google Docs or some other word processing program. When you are happy with what you have written, please post your finished product in reply to the Forum on our Sakai site.

Writing has to start somewhere -- and it hardly matters where we start, since all writing has to be revised to be any good. But if you have trouble getting started, here is one order in which to do things:

1. Why do you want to put this particular author together with Watters? What issue or issues seem to be at stake in putting them together? How might the conversation between them help you to address this issue? Write a few sentences that try to get at the main theme on which you are going to focus.

2. Begin by looking at a specific passage or example from Watters’s essay that connects with this issue. Type out the quote and write about it. Discuss what the quote says, and why is it important to understand it. Which words are most important? Why? How does it connect to the issue you raise above? (You are welcome to begin with the other writer if you think that will work better).

3. Quote a passage or describe a specific example from the second essay you are going to discuss. (You can use two pieces of evidence from the second reading if it helps clarify your point.) Type that quote or example and discuss it.

4. Make a connection between the second quote or example and the idea from Watters. Write about the connection.

5. Formulate a clear independent claim based on the connection you have made. What point are you making? What connection have you noticed? How does it address the issue you raised at the outset? Write it down.

6. Once you have worked through the first five steps, re-read what you have written and revise in order to foreground your claim (from #5) to turn it into a topic sentence for a paragraph -- and to make the rest of the paragraph function as support for that claim. Revise!
Self-Assessment and Reflection

A midterm self-assessment assignment asks students to reflect on their progress. Ask them to go through their work thus far and to write a note or an e-mail about how they have improved and what they need to do in the coming papers. Use this as an opportunity to assess the activities you have done so far in the course. It’s best to have students respond to a set of guiding questions that you distribute. The questions can go beyond self-assessment to invite an assessment of the class, of your comments on papers, and of class activities. The following instructions and questions are commonly found on successful midterm assessment activities:

- Reread your first three papers, along with my comments. Once you are done, write a short “report” to me via e-mail evaluating your work and thinking about things you can do to improve. I will respond before the next paper is due. Try to give a thoughtful and honest assessment. To do this well should probably take from thirty minutes to an hour of your time.
- What have you learned in this class about college writing that differs from what you had thought or learned before?
- What do you consider to be your greatest strength(s) as a writer? What things are you doing well?
- What are your weaknesses? What do you need to work on in future papers?
- Compare your weakest paper with your best paper so far. What things are you doing in your best paper that you were not doing in the weakest paper? What improvements have you made that can help you in future papers?
- What concrete steps do you think you can take to improve your performance in the class?
- What class activities or exercises have been the most helpful in improving your writing? Can you suggest any in-class activities you might find helpful, or things you would like us to do or cover in class?
- Is there anything you feel a bit confused about and wish I would explain again? Are there any remarks I have made in class or on your papers that you have not understood? Is there anything you are concerned about as relates to the class?

Final Reports to the Class

This self-assessment happens late in the term, and allows students to articulate the skills they have acquired throughout the course. Each student addresses the entire class, and presentations consist of descriptions of achievement and/or struggle in the course. The student can discuss the work he or she did to resolve a problem or to achieve a particular success. Use this kind of assessment to remind students to apply the lessons of Expos to their writing throughout their college careers.
IX. Grading

Grading can be anxiety provoking, both for students and teachers. Having common grading criteria can help. The following are the standards used in the Rutgers Writing Program:

- The official final grades for all papers in the Rutgers Writing Program are A, B+, B, C+, C, and NP. Please note that there are:
  - no "D" grades
  - no minus grades
  - no split grades such as C+/C (these can lead to ambiguity)

- While the F or NC can indicate that a student has not passed the course at the end of the semester, instructors should use the mark "NP" (not passing) to indicate that an individual essay is not passing quality. This mark encourages revision.

Official Grading Criteria

Papers need to fit all four categories (thesis, working with assigned text, organization, and presentation) to some degree to receive the grade defined; however, **thesis and working with text should be weighted more heavily than organization and presentation in determining a paper’s final grade.** Papers are not expected to fulfill every point to receive the grade.

Reasons why a paper might not pass:

**Thesis**
- The paper has no clear or emerging thesis. It may work with the readings through reference, paraphrase, or quotation, but it provides no indication of how these moments of textual work contribute to a larger point or position in the paper.
- Alternately a paper may have a thesis, but rely too heavily on summary and fail to engage responsibly with textual evidence.
- Papers that do not show significant revision from the rough draft to the final draft may not pass.

**Working with Text**
- Although the paper may make reference to the issues raised by the assignment question, it does not engage with the assigned readings but over-generalizes about the texts.
- The paper does not work effectively with text, as it demonstrates a lack of basic reading comprehension, or misinterpretation, or a failure to grasp the outline of an assigned author’s argument.
• The paper depends largely on summary of the assigned reading that is not pertinent to the assignment question.

ORGANIZATION
• It may have too little coherence from paragraph to paragraph, or it may lack an organizational structure. Use of paragraphs may be weak.

PRESENTATION
• The paper has significant sentence-level error that makes it difficult to follow. Serious patterns of error might include sentence integrity, verb agreement, and number agreement. Less serious patterns, including misused apostrophe and other spelling errors, can contribute to a paper earning an NP, especially when they occur with high frequency.
• Alternatively, students may fail to proofread their papers, possibly resulting in errors that they may be able to correct on their own.
• In either case, if a student’s errors are so numerous or severe that they impede meaning, the student should not pass.

C range:

THESIS
• In a C paper there is evidence of an emerging thesis—something the student wants the paper to accomplish—or the beginnings of a focus or argument. Often, C papers fail to articulate their thesis in the paper’s introduction.
• Papers often achieve a passing grade by taking a clear position once—perhaps at the end of the essay—even when the project is not sustained in the rest of the paper.
• The thesis may be vague or general.

WORKING WITH TEXT
• The C paper demonstrates the student’s ability to work with more than one source of text and engage with the ideas in the readings. The C paper can make connections within a text, or between texts.
• The C paper generally lacks a clear sense that the student’s voice contributes to the conversation.
• Although a passing paper may include summary, the quality of the summary demonstrates sufficient reading comprehension and often helps the student begin to define a focus.

ORGANIZATION
• Passing papers, in places, create coherent relationships within paragraphs even if they have not developed a larger organizational structure. Students have a sense of how to write paragraphs, even if the relationship between the paragraphs is not clearly presented.
PRESENTATION
• A passing paper has fatal sentence-level errors under control. Although errors may appear on each page, they do not significantly impede the meaning of the essay or undermine the writer’s credibility.

C+ range:

THESIS
• C+ papers have a thesis, but it may not be clearly articulated. In other words, C+ papers often have thesis or position statements that do not represent the true achievement of the paper, and do not express the paper’s actual project.
• There may be a sense that the writer has not realized that there is a thesis in the paper.

WORKING WITH TEXT
• C+ papers have several moments of solid work with text. However, the paper may not indicate how these moments contribute to the project.
• C+ papers more consistently attempt to engage with the more complicated ideas and examples from the readings than do C papers.
• The moments of working with text may remain implicit: connective thinking may not be explained fully or at all.

ORGANIZATION
• C+ papers are often distinguished from B papers because they lack a meaningful structure. There may not be a clear relationship between the paragraphs.

PRESENTATION
• C+ papers have errors under control. That is, there should be no patterns of error, just a few irregularities in either mechanics or citation and formatting standards.

B range:

B papers may include "C" moments in an otherwise well-reasoned and well-developed thesis.

THESIS
• B papers do everything the C-range essays do, but they offer a sustained and meaningful structure and/or a thesis that is often more complex than in a C-range paper.
• The student advances more independent ideas. However, B papers may be distinguished by a repetition rather than a development or reconsideration of these ideas.
• B papers can represent the thesis of the paper in the introductory paragraph with some degree of accuracy.

WORKING WITH TEXT
• The paper shows the student beginning to take interpretive risks, responding to the assignment and to the readings in thoughtful and distinctive ways.
• The paper demonstrates that the student is able to work with textual evidence in a number of ways. It does not rely solely on summary, reference, or paraphrasing, but is able to work with quotations and think connectively to contribute to the thesis.

ORGANIZATION
• The paper demonstrates a reasonable coherence in its overall presentation: the relationships between the paper's paragraphs are clear and coherent.
• The presentation and development of the thesis is controlled and organized.
• Topic sentences and transitions between paragraphs are smoother than in a C-level paper.

PRESENTATION
• Presentation errors must be minimal.

B+ range:

Sometimes, a paper achieves the B+ level because it executes several of the elements of a B paper particularly well.

THESIS
• B+ papers do everything a B paper does, but the independent thinking is consistently developed.
• A B+ paper is itself more complex because it engages with more of the complexity in the readings.
• B+ papers begin to, but may not fully, understand the actual complexity of their own argument. They often exhibit a turn in thinking that is not yet fully integrated into the way they forecast their thesis for the reader. Possible moments of insight are sometimes not as fully developed as an A range paper.

WORKING WITH TEXT
• B+ papers show that the student is able to assume confidence and authority in working with the full range of textual evidence.
• B+ papers may have more sophisticated work with text, including an ability to analyze text with particular insight.
• These papers demonstrate connective thinking in which student’s ideas are in control through most of the paper.

ORGANIZATION
• B+ papers are particularly well organized. Each paragraph clearly functions within the paper and contributes to the thesis with an overall fluid movement.

PRESENTATION
• Presentation errors must be minimal.

A range:

An A paper might have one or two "B" or even "C" moments, but they do not significantly detract from the overall force of the paper.

THESIS
• An A paper does all the good things that B-level papers need to do, but an A paper is usually distinguished from B range work because the student understands his or her own thesis from the beginning and clearly represents that understanding to the reader.
• The thesis is clear and original, and exhibits complexity of thought and discovery. A papers generally develop theses that cut across the readings in unanticipated ways.
• An A paper moves through its own thesis step by step, though the individual paragraphs.
• An A paper develops and presents its independent ideas persuasively throughout the paper.
• Sometimes a paper achieves an A because a student develops a thoughtful and well-defined interpretive approach and an awareness of his or her own position in relation to the positions of the assigned essayists.

WORKING WITH TEXT
• A papers are distinguished from B-level work by student-centered connective thinking that engages with the ideas in the readings. The paper presents the sustained development and effective articulation of a position that is related to ideas in the readings, while it is not reducible to relationships readily identifiable in the readings.

ORGANIZATION
• The organization is logical, fluid, and clear.

PRESENTATION
• Presentation errors must be minimal.
• There is often an eloquence and elegance of writing style.
Determining Final Grades

The Final Grade will be determined by the student’s highest level of sustained achievement at the end of term. A student must earn her highest grade twice in order to demonstrate that she can sustain that level of achievement. As always, any questionable or borderline grades will be discussed in Folder Review.

Please tell students that Expos is not graded on improvement (this is part of the Expos mythology that pervades the campus). If the class was graded on improvement, the student who started with an NP on Paper 1 but earned a B by Paper 5 would receive an A for improving so much, while a student who had been earning a B all semester would get a lower grade because he did not improve as dramatically. You may want to use an example like this to demonstrate to your students that improvement would not be a fair measure. Students who fail the Final Exam fail the course. Cases where a student has written passing work but failed the exam should always be examined in folder review. The final exam is graded Pass or Fail only and is never factored into the grade for passing students.

Final grades for the course are determined by paper grades and not by classroom behavior, participation, or attendance (except in the case where a student has failed the course for excessive absences or missing work). Any penalties exacted for late papers or missed drafts should have been deducted from the individual paper grades.

Teachers cannot exact later penalties in addition to those imposed on the papers themselves, nor should teachers award higher grades to students whose attendance and participation were outstanding, unless their work merits it. Diligent effort, after all, will naturally contribute to higher grades. Note: we recommend that, when making deductions, teachers indicate the reasons for the lower grade clearly on the paper itself or on the final paper so that if a student appeals the grade the department will understand the reason the grade was lower than the paper’s quality might indicate.

Non Passing Final Grades

At the end of term, please fill out a Grade Information Sheet (several of which will be attached to your Final Roster) for ALL STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE A NON-PASSING GRADE other than a “W”, and give it to the Director with whom you are doing Folder Review. This helps us keep track of failing students and to monitor the reasons as to why they are not passing. Below is a list of possible Non-Passing Final Grades:

**F**: This is a punitive failing grade. It is assigned only to students who have a failing performance on the Final Exam and/or on Papers, in combination with any of the other following problems:

- Six absences during the term
- The student was two final assignments behind
- Missing assignments
- Missing rough drafts
- Frequently late work
NC: Students have attended the class regularly, completed all five rough and final drafts of the papers, taken the midterm and final exams, but their work is not yet passing. This is a non-punitive failing grade given to indicate that despite the students’ efforts throughout the term, their work is not yet passing. Even though some students have improved throughout the semester, they may not be strong enough as writers to complete 101. Once students retake the course, the grade is replaced. To pass 101, students should be ready for English 201, a course in which they will be expected to read long and complex texts that they must synthesize into a research paper that asserts a point of view. Those who, for example, are still struggling with reading comprehension or sentence-level error are not ready to take on the demands of an independent research project.

TF: The “temporary fail” is almost never used in 101, and only when students have already demonstrated passing work on two of the last three papers but are missing one assignment OR the final exam due to illness or other adverse circumstance. Instructors should never promise to assign a TF grade to students who need extra time and should never grant extensions beyond the last day of class. Students receiving TF grades must complete all missing work by the deadlines set in the Final Exam Memo and instructors must submit a Change of Grade Form with the department secretary in Murray 108 before the start of the following semester. All TF grades must be discussed in Folder Review.

W: If a student appears on your final roster with a note of “W” in the grade area, the student has officially withdrawn from the course. You do not have to fill out a Grade Information Sheet for a student who officially withdraws. A “W” cannot be assigned to a student by the instructor, and students cannot withdraw from 101 on their own. Students may only withdraw from 101 with a Dean’s permission (and that permission is only granted in exceptional cases). Even if students claim to have withdrawn from the course or say they will seek a withdrawal from their Deans, they must be given an “F” if their names appear on your final roster without a preexisting printed “W” in the grade area.

TZ: The TZ should only be assigned when a student is unable to finish his/her course work due to a verifiable emergency situation. Documentation from a Dean is required. All TZ grades must be discussing in Folder Review.

All grades are subject to departmental review. Instructors are expected to apply the department’s grading criteria when grading papers. If a director feels that those standards have not been applied accurately, he or she will adjust grades accordingly. Departmental review helps to protect both students and teachers by making the grading process less subjective and more transparent.
X. Commenting

While many of the mistakes our students make are readily apparent, identifying each of these errors may not be the most valuable commenting practice. Instead, commenting becomes most productive when it takes the following question as its starting point: *what work has the student done?* Teachers should begin their comments by identifying the "promising moment" (or moments) in their students’ papers. A moment of conceptual complexity, a particularly well-analyzed quotation, or a finely crafted sentence can all serve as promising moments to which attention should be drawn. These moments deserve more than a star or check mark in the margin (which might leave a student wondering what made the moment successful in the first place). Teachers need to provide an explanatory comment along with the indication of praise (e.g., “this is particularly strong engagement with the text because you are pointing to specific words in the quotation which develop your claim”). When successful moments are praised, students benefit in two ways: first, they have a model to imitate in their very next drafts. Second, having been provided with evidence of their ability to succeed, they become more receptive to the constructive criticism that will inevitably follow.

Once instructors have identified the promising moments in their students’ papers, they must move on to the task of identifying errors. When commenting on student papers, instructors need to remember the triage method: treat the most serious problems first. Instructors should call attention to the three most pressing problems in any given paper. If, for instance, a paper has no emerging project, or no idea it wishes to develop, this should be identified as a pressing issue. If a paper does not engage with the assigned texts, or is not thinking connectively about the texts, this problem should be identified as pressing. When trying to determine which errors are most pressing, instructors should consider the grading criteria, and the fact that thesis and work with text are weighted more heavily than organization and grammar.

Most students have a handful of grammatical errors that they make again and again. This is what we call a “pattern of error.” Once a pattern of error is identified, it is beneficial to circle and correct it the first few times it occurs, and to attach a name to the error (this way the student can look it up in the grammar guide). Some instructors choose not to identify each occurrence of the error in the paper, and to instead extend an invitation to the student to work on identifying and correcting the remaining errors during office hours. Instructors should identify patterns of error rather than identifying each and every grammatical problem in a paper. By identifying a particular pattern of error in a paper, the instructor sets a reasonable task for the student’s next draft: the student must avoid that pattern (not every single error he made in his last paper).
Patterns of Error and Grading

According to the grading criteria, a non-passing paper “has significant sentence-level error that makes it difficult to follow,” while “a passing paper has fatal sentence-level errors under control… Although errors may appear on each page, they do not significantly impede the meaning of the essay or undermine the credibility of the writer.” Patterns of error need to be taken into account both in terms of their frequency, and the nature of the error itself.

When a pattern of error appears more than once in every paragraph of a paper, it is considered frequent and severe. When a pattern of error only occurs once or twice in a paper, it is considered mild.

As for the nature of the error itself, certain errors, including subject-verb disagreement, verb tense shifts, sentence boundary issues (run-on and fragments), and, to a lesser extent, unclear pronoun reference, are called “fatal” errors, as they are considered severe enough to hinder the author’s ability to communicate effectively. A paper that has several fatal errors on each page may not pass.

“Non-fatal” errors include articles, preposition choices, word choice, spelling and some punctuation. Some of these, particularly the first three, may still be severe enough to prevent a paper from passing if several occur in almost every sentence. In order for students to move beyond a C+ in the class, however, they must have their errors reasonably under control.

Teaching Students to Recognize Patterns of Error

Sometimes you will be faced with sentences that seem overwhelming in their grammatical confusion. Here is an example from one student’s third essay:

A) “An outcome of re-thinking that people was brought up with kindness towards other can make us realize that different positive approach to problems that’s been going on.”

The temptation may be either to mark this as “awkward” and move on (which doesn’t really tell the student how to address the problem) or to start listing problems in the margin and overwhelm the student. Neither of these approaches is likely to be very effective. Instead, it is better to focus on a pattern of error, an error that occurs again and again in the student’s paper. In order to do this, we need to find other sentences that are awkward in a similar way. Looking earlier in the same paper, we find:

B) “Re-considering a more humanitarian method of solving other problems, on the other hand, would make some difference in some situations that’s been happened lately.”

and
C) “Since now that the journalist was killed, Americans are more raged than ever.”

Sentences A and B show us that the student runs into problems when trying to contract verbs in subordinate clauses. This seems to be part of a larger difficulty with subject-verb agreement. Once you have noticed a problem like this, go through the paper marking several of the subject-verb errors with a line in the margin. Then, name the error, and explain in your comments that although you’ve marked it in three or four places, the error occurs throughout the draft.

Mark only one or two fatal errors and one or two non-fatal errors in each paper. The problem with comparatives (“more raged” instead of “angrier”) in sentence C, while it looks particularly unnatural, is probably not serious or common enough in the student’s writing to be worth calling attention to at this stage. The student’s difficulty with subject-verb agreement takes precedence. Two or three patterns of error are probably as much as the student can learn about within two weeks before the next paper is due.

In the end comment, mention to the student that he or she has x, y or z pattern of error and that this needs to be addressed either in office hours with you or with a tutor.

1. When the student comes in to talk with you, start with the “cleanest” example you can find—the sentence with the fewest problems apart from the one you are trying to isolate. Given a choice between sentences A and B above, you would probably pick B.

2. Explain to the student what the problem is—in this case the student needs to uncontract her verb to “that has”, find the subject of “has” and decide if it is singular or plural—and help her correct it.

3. Once the student understands how to recognize and fix the problem, take her back to the final clause of sentence A and have her fix it on her own.

4. Then give her the whole sentence and see if she can find the other subject-verb problem.

5. After this, you might have her correct the rest of the mistakes you marked on her own as “homework”.

One problem may lead directly into another. Looking at sentences A and B side-by-side you might point out to the student how she uses “that’s been going on” in one sentence and “that’s been happened lately” in the other. She understands how to use a gerund correctly in one sentence but not in the other. Isolation and comparison allow her to see the difference. You may find that many ESL students who have had formal grammar training recognize the problem immediately and already know how to solve it. This should not get them off the hook because they may not be able to control the error on the final exam if they make it carelessly when they are tired. These students should still meet with
you in office hours and drill on practice sentences from their papers.

You do not need expertise in the meta-language of English grammar to help students, but it is a good idea to label problems as much as you are able using terms that students can find in a common grammar book for class. This helps you build a common language for talking with the student about his or her pattern of error.

**Activities for Addressing Patterns of Error**

By the third paper, it should be clear which errors occur most often in your students’ papers. Just as lectures on the assigned texts are less enabling than activities that require the students themselves to interpret them, so the discussion of grammar, clarity, organization, and related issues should occur in the context of workshops that require revisions and then some discussion of the results. (Not every revision is an improvement, of course.) These sorts of activities are most effective if you can talk about the mistake in the context of the students’ own writing. Examples from grammar handbooks tend to be too simple to be really useful.

Many teachers scan the rough drafts pulling sentences that contain common grammar mistakes. It helps to take one or two from every paper so that everyone sees that they have a problem and no one feels singled out. Put all of these sentences together into a worksheet and hand them out in class. You might introduce this exercise by going over some examples of the two or three most frequent or serious problems. Then have the students correct the sentences either alone or in groups. At the end of the period, you can go over the “answers” in class.
Marginal and End Comments

The importance of making careful, specific, and extensive marginal and end comments on students’ final drafts cannot be over-emphasized. Think of these comments as an ongoing conversation with your students. Your marginal and end comments will help your students see their work from the perspective of the reader. Additionally, your comments on the draft of one paper will help students be more thoughtful and deliberate in the writing of their next papers.

Marginal Comments

We ask our students to imagine themselves in conversation with the authors of the essays they read. We ask our teachers to imagine their marginal comments as their own contribution to that conversation. Marginal comments should first and foremost engage with the students’ ideas. Vague check marks or unexplained lines in the margins do not contribute to the conversation, but questions that force students to return to a given line of thinking and reconsider its direction push the conversation forward. For example, a student writing about the catastrophic effects of losing one’s sight in adulthood may claim that the loss of vision is insurmountable. An effective marginal comment would ask the student to consider some of the examples in Oliver Sacks’ essay “The Mind’s Eye: What the Blind See” in order to question this conclusion. Or, a student writing about happiness might be asked to pause to consider how a term like happiness is defined (culturally, personally, religiously, etc.). These kinds of marginal comments ask students to consider (and reconsider) the ideas they are developing.

Instructors should make marginal comments as revision oriented as possible. Rather than writing “good quotation,” explain what is good about the moment in the paper. Is it the student’s choice of quotation? Why is it a good choice? Is it the analysis of the quotation? What might the student do again to engage in the same kind of analysis? Comments that provide explanations for why a quotation is good (such as how it supports the student’s thesis, how it relates to the overall meaning of the paper, etc.) will enable students to develop their skills. The more the teacher’s comments engage with the students’ ideas as specifically addressed in the work, the better.

Avoid being too negative or demeaning in your comments. Comments such as, “I hardly see what you are getting at here” are of no value, and can in fact create animosity and a feeling of being demeaned. Being helpful, positive and constructive in your comments will also provide a good role model for students when they review each other’s work.
End Comments
Instructors should compose an end comment that first identifies one strength in the paper (or a promising moment), and then summarizes the two or three most pressing points of concern in the paper. These comments should be revision oriented; they should aim at providing advice about avoiding the same mistakes in the next paper. It’s especially useful to students if your end comment refers to particular places in the body of the essay. You might, for example, place a large asterisk in the margin at a promising moment in the paper and then refer back to that page and that asterisk when discussing the promising moment in the end comment. You might also use an asterisk and a double-asterisk to contrast strong and weak moments so that students can see where they do things well as well as where they don’t.

The end comment should always be written with the next assignment in mind. If some students had trouble with an idea in an essay you plan to use in the next paper assignment, you could redirect them to helpful passages in that text; or, if you find that a student does not demonstrate in detail how a key idea from one essay applies to another, you may assume that such demonstration will be called for again and help that student develop the ability to articulate that connection. Remember that the ultimate goal of written comments is to help the student to become a more effective writer.
XI. SAKAI

Sakai is an on-line system used to enhance and sustain various university communities (such as classes, interest groups, or research teams). It is organized into “sites,” and instructors, group leaders, and students can create sites in order to communicate and share materials with other members on-line. Writing Program instructors are required to establish and maintain a course site using Sakai. To get started with Sakai, please visit: https://sakai.rutgers.edu.

There are many benefits to using Sakai: when students are unable to attend class, they access their course Sakai site and find their missed work right away; when inclement weather impacts class meetings, instructors use Sakai to maintain class momentum and move learning on-line; when traditional class meetings end, Sakai facilitates asynchronous conversation and learning.

Creating Your Course Site

You will need to log on to sakai.rutgers.edu. Once there, you will be prompted for your user ID, which is your Rutgers Net ID, and your Password, which is the password you use to retrieve your Rutgers e-mail. Once you have provided this information, you can then log in. Please note that it is important to use your Rutgers e-mail account information when using Sakai, otherwise Sakai will think you are a ‘guest’ and you won’t have critical privileges, such as creating your Course Site.

When you have logged in, you will be able to create your Sakai Course Site.

You will see from the tab at the top left of your screen, that you are in ‘My Workspace.’ You will also see a vertical list of options below the ‘My Workspace’ tab, and the one you will need to click on is ‘Worksite Setup.’ Then click on the red button ‘New’ at the top left of your screen. You will be asked to specify which type of worksite you would like to create: a Course or a Project site. Definitely select the ‘Course Site’!

Once this is selected, then select the academic term, Fall 2015, from the dropdown box.

Click Continue.

You will then be able to add your Roster, as you will be taken to a screen displaying course sections. Check the box that corresponds to your course section number. If you are teaching two sections of Expository Writing and only want one Sakai site, you can check both section numbers, and the rosters from both sections will be imported into your Sakai site. However, most teachers find it easiest to create a Sakai site for each section they teach.

Once you have selected the section numbers that you want, click Continue.

You are now ready to customize your Course Site, and will be taken to a screen that will do just that. The Title of your Course Site will be your section number. You will then see a
response box in which you are asked to enter a **Description** of your course, so you could add your Course Description here. This will be displayed on your Course Site’s Homepage. There will also be a window for a short description, but this should be left blank.

Add your full name into the **Site Contact Name** box and your e-mail address in the **Site Contact Email** box if it is not already there.

Click **Continue**.

You are now ready to specify what **Tools** you would like to be incorporated into your Course Site. Each tool has a short description of its functionality next to its title. Select each tool that you would like to use in your Course Site by clicking the check box next to its title. We recommend that you select the following Tools:

- **Home**: For viewing recent announcements and online discussion.
- **Announcements**: For posting current, time-critical information. (Each announcement, once created, can also be sent as an e-mail to all your students.)
- **Assignments**: For posting assignments online. (Optional as you could post assignments in the Announcement area.)
- **Chat Room**: For real-time conversations in written form. (Optional, but students might like this.)
- **Discussion and Private Messages**: For an online Discussion Forum. (Optional.)
- **Syllabus**: For posting the Course Description and Goals, Readings, Course Requirements, Grading and Policies. (The Syllabus, once created, can also be sent as an e-mail to all your students.)

Once you have selected these Tools, click on **Continue**.

Click the check box next to **Publish Site** to make your Course Site available to your participants. As soon as you publish your worksite, it will be live and any participants will be able to see it. If you are still selecting tools and customizing your Course Site, do not yet check the ‘Publish’ box.

Do not check the box for Global Access, as your Course is only for those with authorised access in the Rutgers Writing Program; namely your students.

Click on **Continue**.
You will be shown a screen with a synopsis of your Course Site details. Review the details to make sure that everything is correct. Click Back to make changes, or Create Site to finalize your course worksite. Please be patient as it might take a few minutes to complete the operation.

After your Course Site is complete, it will have a tab in the site navigation bar. To enter your site, click on its tab in the site navigation bar. Click on Site Information, which is close to the top of the vertical menu on the left of your screen, and you will see, once there, that your roster has been imported. There is even a photo roster, so you can see the faces of all your students!

Students log into your Course Site by logging on to sakai.rutgers.edu, using their Rutgers Net ID and the password they use to retrieve their Rutgers e-mail as their User ID and Password in Sakai. Once they have logged on, they will see your Course Site, when it is published, as a tab in the site navigation bar at the top of their screen. Please note that students must be told to check their Rutgers e-mail so as to see any e-mail notifications that you send from your Course Site.

**Customizing Your Course Site**

To create an Announcement in your Course Site, click on the word 'Announcement' to the left of your screen. Then click on the red button, 'Add' at the top of the screen and you will be taken to a screen in which you type in the title of your announcement, and then add the text of your announcement in the response box below. When it is complete, you have the option of notifying your students by e-mail of this announcement, so click on the down arrow alongside the words 'E-Mail Notification' and then click on 'High-All Participants'. Then click on 'Add Announcement', and your announcement will be added to your Course Site, appearing on the Home Page, and will also be e-mailed.

To add your Syllabus, click on the word 'Syllabus' to the left of your screen, and then click on the red button at the top of your screen that says, 'Add'. Follow the same procedure as noted above, including choosing whether to notify your students by e-mail, and when you are complete, click on 'Post'. Your Syllabus will be visible to students in your Course Site when they click on the word 'Syllabus' at the left of their screen, and by e-mail if you choose to notify them this way.

Assignments can also be created in the same manner, by clicking on the word 'Assignment' on the left of your screen, and then on the red button 'Add'. When you have typed in the name and content of the assignment, click on 'Post', and it will be visible in your Course Site. There is no E-Mail Notification for assignments. Students will see the assignment when they click on the word 'Assignment' on the left of their screen.

Discussion Forums already exist in your Sakai site, and you can start to use one by clicking on Discussion and Private Messages to the left of your screen, and then you will
see these Forums. You can start to use one by simply clicking on the name of the Forum, and then on the button that says ‘New Topic’. You will be taken to a screen in which you name the topic, and then have a response box into which you compose your message. When you are finished, simply click on ‘Submit’, and your students will be able to read your topic and start responding.
We require each English 101 student to make three brief oral presentations in class. The Public Speaking exercises used by most teachers can be arranged in four categories: Grammar, Reading, Writing, and Context. Any of these kinds of Public Speaking exercises can be presented by a single student within a small group, by a single student before the whole class, or by a group of students before the whole class. Teachers typically vary the format and the type of presentation so as to give students the opportunity to find the ones that work best for them, as well as to expose students to the range of ways that public speaking might function.

In every case, although public speaking exercises always involve monologue—the single speaker making a sustained point before his or her peers—they should also, often, lead to dialogue of some sort. That is, we want students to treat speaking in public not just as the presentation of finished thought, but also as thinking in public: making one’s thought public, and so inviting (and expecting) response from others. Here are some suggestions for class presentations:

**Grammar Presentations**
Students must do at least one oral presentation on a grammatical issue, based on the handbook and examples they come up with themselves. As an instructor, you can help students identify grammatical errors in their writing, and to understand and apply grammatical rules during revision. Asking students to give presentations about the errors they are currently making in their own work shifts responsibility from the commenting teacher to the proactive student. Here some common topics for grammar presentations: “MLA Citation Guidelines,” “Plagiarism and Boundaries: Your Words and the Writer’s,” “Sentence Integrity When Using a Quote,” “Subject-Verb Agreement,” “Verb Tense Shift,” “Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement,” “Vague Pronoun Reference,” “Sentence Fragments,” “Run-on or Fused Sentences,” “Comma Splices,” “Other Comma Usage,” and “Apostrophe to Show Possession.” It is up to each instructor when these presentations are made and in what order. Grammar presentations are often helpful on peer review or revision days; once a group has presented on a particular topic, students can review their papers for the grammar point and then set about correcting identified errors.

**Reading Presentations**
Reading presentations typically require students to briefly discuss some aspect of the currently assigned reading. Some teachers find it more useful to have students present on a question asked ahead of time, while others require students themselves to pose questions for the class to explore. In either case, the point is to make the students initiate discussion. This works especially well when several students present on the same question or topic; inevitably there are significant and interesting differences in their presentations, and the teacher then needs to do little more than point to these for good discussion to ensue.
Writing Presentations
Writing presentations tend to be less aimed at starting discussion about the assigned reading (though they often do so) than at providing occasions for students to help one another produce better drafts. For instance, some teachers ask small groups of students to identify weak and strong areas in one another’s rough drafts, and then to present these to the class along with suggested revisions that they have arrived at together. On the days when rough or final drafts are due, some teachers have students present their “finished” arguments to the class, and then have chosen respondents evaluate these. When this works, students both make excellent defenses of their work and also discover ways in which their papers might be revised even further.

Context Presentations
Context presentations require students to present the results of research they have undertaken on some aspect of the assigned reading. But in addition to presenting such information simply as a way of explaining something in the text that had been unclear, students are also encouraged to present their research so as to “open up” the assigned reading.

Drafts Presented as Works in Progress
For all five papers, each student can present either a rough or a final draft as a work in progress. While a rough draft offers the most room for revision and intervention, a final draft, especially one in the middle of the semester, offers revision in the subsequent papers of the sequence. Each student has five minutes to present to the class how she has interpreted the assignment, which parts of text she is using, which points she wants to make. Having student presenters prepare a handout for the class and identifying respondents might help to focus these presentations for the audience. In the presentations, students should test out their claims. They should offer a working thesis, a focus that is entirely under construction, and they should point out their interest in it, anticipating objections and articulating some worries. The presentation should include some discussion of the parts of the text they will discuss. Students should offer a focus and then should ask for help with that focus. You can have three students present and then have the class respond, or have all six present and have students prepare questions.

Students Presenting Readings to the Class
Ask students to work in groups to identify key passages and terms or to unpack quotations; have the spokesperson of each group present his group’s findings to the class.

Student Initiated Class Discussion
Group presentations scheduled for the first class meeting after students read a new essay, can serve as a way of starting class discussion. Group members will each be responsible for a five minute talk that addresses any aspect of the new essay which they find interesting and which can relate in some way to one or more of the essays previously read in the course. Examples might include a look at how two authors approach a similar theme differently, or an examination of how two authors use personal anecdote or textual evidence.
XIII. Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is on the rise at Rutgers University, and Expository Writing teachers must be vigilant about detecting violations and teaching ethical writing practices. Several factors contribute to the increased number of cases, but the two most evident causes are the broad availability of papers online (which students easily access and reuse), and the sophisticated programs available to detect cases of academic dishonesty. To better identify violations, the Writing Program requires that all teachers use the “Assignments 2” area on their Sakai sites to collect student submissions through Turnitin. While you do not have to comment on the papers digitally, it is imperative that all drafts of all papers be submitted through Assignments 2, and that all instructors use Turnitin to identify cases of dishonesty. When posting an assignment on Sakai under the Assignments 2 tab, please be sure to click the box that initiates the work of Turnitin (in other words, turn “Turnitin,” on!).

Expository Writing plays a pivotal role in teaching students their responsibilities as college-level writers. Discussing plagiarism in the classroom is critical, because the anxiety and stress associated with the course can lead to ethical violations, and because some students may be unfamiliar with proper citation procedures. Discuss intellectual boundaries in the classroom, and acknowledge the online culture of borrowing, posting, and reposting. Draw distinctions between the casual practice of borrowing online and what must happen in college classrooms. Many of these academic integrity violations can be prevented by discussing the issue in class, and by providing students with a detailed lesson on MLA citation standards. Handouts and activities for the purpose of discussing plagiarism in class can be found on our Expos project site. Visit our “Expos 2015-2016” site and click on Resources to find the “Academic Integrity” folder.

Please review the university’s policy on academic integrity, and ask students to do the same. The policy, along with a description of the types of violations and their attending consequences, can be found on-line: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/policy-on-academic-integrity.

Reading a Turnitin Report Accurately

Turnitin is a powerful platform that can accurately match the text of a given student paper to other previously submitted student papers. It can also match the text of a student paper to online sources, such as published journals and blogs. When Turnitin examines a paper, it generates a similarity percentage. The similarity percentage tells you how much of the newly submitted paper was detected in previously submitted papers or other sources. The similarity percentage is color-coded; lower percentages will appear in green on your Sakai site. Higher percentages will appear in yellow, orange, and red. This is what Sakai will look like once students have submitted their papers and Turnitin and has analyzed their content for similarities:
The numbers on the far right represent the similarity percentages that Turnitin has generated for each student’s paper. Some percentages may seem high regardless of their color. For example, a green 22% similarity indicates that nearly a fifth of the student’s paper has appeared, word-for-word, in other sources. But please do not take this percentage at face value; Turnitin will find similarity in the quoted material your student has selected from the essays assigned in class. The quotations a given student chose from Ethan Watters, for example, will create similarity with a previously submitted student paper that used the same quotations from Watters. The similarity Turnitin has identified resides in the quoted material. If the quotations are marked properly and cited, then no plagiarism exists, regardless of the similarity percentage. It is critical that instructors understand that the similarity index is not an immediate indication that plagiarism has occurred; it is merely an indication that material in the new essay resembles material from a previously submitted source. The instructor must analyze this data to understand the nature of the similarity.

Meanwhile, a similarity of 52% is more pressing, and should be examined carefully. Has the student used another student’s work? Has the student borrowed from an online source? Are all sources properly attributed and cited? Is this an instance of plagiarism, or does more than half of the student’s paper consist of quoted material? In either case, intervention is needed; if the similarity is a reflection of stolen material, then it is plagiarism. If the percentage indicates an alarming amount of quotation, then the student needs to be reminded that the goal of Expos is independent thinking and analysis. In both instances, Turnitin serves a valuable function.
What to Do When You Suspect a Student Has Plagiarized

If you suspect that a student in your class has engaged in plagiarism (willful or inadvertent, mild or severe) do not confront the student before speaking with a Writing Program Director about the potential violation. Contact a Director immediately, and please provide the following materials to the Director with whom you speak in PDF form:

1. The paper you suspect has been completely or partially borrowed, with all of the suspect sections highlighted.
2. The source you believe has been copied or stolen, with all borrowed passages highlighted (Turnitin should have identified the source and made it available to you).
3. The Turnitin report.
4. Your course syllabus.
5. The assignment the potentially plagiarized paper was addressing.
6. An objective, written account of the circumstances surrounding the particular case, and a description of the assignment in question (rough draft, final draft, paper number, etc.).

Writing Program Directors handle all cases of plagiarism, so please do not submit a case to the office of academic integrity on your own.

If Turnitin is indicating that a student’s paper is original, but you have doubts about the origin or authenticity of the work, you might use the following “tests” to measure the likelihood that plagiarism has occurred:

The Transparency Test
When you suspect a student has cheated, place the papers under suspicion next to one another (particularly when the papers in question both belong to students in your class). Given the collaborative design of the class, some overlap of ideas can be expected; student writing will be influenced not only by readings of the assigned essays, but also by class discussion, and work with peers. This overlap should not produce papers that are identically structured, which draw on the same passages in the same order, make the same connections, draw the same conclusions, and use the same vocabulary.

The Attribution Test
Many plagiarism cases involve students who have received outside help from people not affiliated with the course and unaware of its conventions and concerns. This kind of help usually leads to papers that use language the student writer does not understand fully and makes arguments that the student writer may be unable to follow or reproduce on his own.

If you suspect that a student has plagiarized, but you do not have definitive proof, it can be useful to ask the student a series of questions: Can you explain why you chose to cite one passage rather than another? Can you explain why you've structured your argument the way you have? Can you identify the key terms in your argument and define them?
XIV. Folder Review

All teachers must meet with a Writing Program Director twice during the semester, at mid-term and at the end of term. In folder review you will meet individually with one of the Writing Program Directors for one hour to review your teaching work. This is an opportunity to talk about how your class is going, to share pedagogical strategies, and to ensure that course objectives, levels of difficulty, and grading are consistent throughout the Writing Program.

During folder review, teachers should present copies of their assignments and their grade rosters as well as their students' folders in order to discuss individual students and their progress. At mid-semester review, folders for 101 should contain two papers that have gone through the full process of student revision and instructor response, and possibly a third paper at the rough draft or final stage.

During the final meeting, teachers should again bring their students' folders, containing all five rough and final essays and the final exams, and their grade rosters. This meeting usually focuses on those students whose grades present some kind of uncertainty. The Directors often assist in making pass/fail decisions.

Some Practical Guidelines for Folder Review

- **Have copies of all of your assignments.** We like to keep these for orientation purposes. If you have particularly strong assignments, we may want to publish these on our website, too. On a practical note, it's hard for us to understand the papers we're reading when we don't have the assignments. You might also want to bring drafts of your next assignments, or some ideas of what essays you want to use next; we'll be happy to look at these with you.

- **Bring all the folders from your class(es).** Of course, we realize that often the students you most want to discuss are also the students least likely to give you their folders. If a student at particular risk doesn't give you a folder, try to bring in any work you might have from him.

- **Try to collect all student folders.** In order to get as many folders as possible, you should explain to your class that Folder Review helps standardize grading across all sections. Often, students believe their instructors are too severe when assessing student work, so let them know it's in their best interests to give you their folders, since it's the only way the Program can review grades.

- **Bring in your grades and a roster.** We'll want to look at these so we can have a quick sense of how your class is doing overall and, of course, we will want to look at the
grades of particular students you're concerned about. Having a roster with you can help us look up a student in the system.

- **Bring in your attendance records.** We'll want to see how many absences the student has had in case there is a larger problem that needs to be addressed.

Some instructors may be concerned about the progress of their students at midterm. Generally, the class will show significant improvement as a whole by the third paper; however, if you have students who are clearly struggling, midterm is a good time to recommend them to one of the Writing Centers.

Midterm is also a good time to review your students’ absences. You may wish to identify students who are at risk of failing the class because of excessive absences, and you may wish to warn these students about their attendance. Sometimes issuing students a midterm progress report of sorts can head off emerging attendance problems.

You may encounter other problems with student progress or with your class in general. Remember that the Directors of the Writing Program are always more than happy to meet with you to discuss any issues or concerns you have, or to answer any questions. Often, addressing these concerns at midterm can avoid problems at the end of the semester.
In addition to Orientation and Folder Review, the Writing Program offers Expository Writing teachers support in the form of a teaching seminar (required for all new Teaching Assistants and open to new Part-Time Lecturers) and Faculty Development Workshops (voluntary meetings on topics such as crafting paper assignments, writing effective marginal and end comments, helping struggling students succeed, etc.). Teachers are always welcome to visit a director to discuss issues related to their courses. Directors generally have an open door policy, though it may be useful to schedule an appointment.

The teaching seminar is designed to support instructors teaching Expository Writing at Rutgers for the first time. **New Teaching Assistants from all disciplines are required to attend**, while Part-Time Lecturers new to the Writing Program are strongly urged to attend.

Each seminar will meet for about an hour. **The time spent in the seminar will inevitably save time for instructors later; learning to grade efficiently or use classroom time wisely will ease the demands teaching Expos can make on instructors.**

**Fall 2015 Teaching Seminar Schedule**

**Mandatory Meeting One: Week of September 14 – 18**
- Practical Matters: Rosters, Add/Drop, Computer Labs
- Identifying/Supporting Students at Risk
- Course Pedagogy and the Practice of Close Reading
- Techniques for Discussing New Texts
- Crafting Assignments
- Rough Draft Comments

**Mandatory Meeting Two: Week of September 21 – 25**
- Writing Revision Oriented Comments
- The Principles of Peer Review

**Mandatory Meeting Three: Week of September 28 – October 2**
- Grading and Commenting
- Crafting the Midterm and Paper 3 Assignments
- Helping Students Move to the Next Grade Level
- Preparing for Midterm Folder Review
Mandatory Meeting Four: Week of October 19 – 23
• Grading Workshop
• Review Course Policies: Absences, Missing Work, etc.
• Rough Draft Comments and Student Conferences

Mandatory Meeting Five: Week of November 2 – 6
• Helping Students Move to the Next Grade Level
• Grading and Commenting

Mandatory Meeting Six: Week of November 30 – December 4
• Preparing for the Final Exam
• Crafting the Final Exam Question
• Preparing for Final Folder Review
• Determining Final Grades

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If for some reason you cannot attend your regularly scheduled mentoring session, please arrange to attend another section that week. Please alert both Regina Masiello and Lynda Dexheimer, should this be the case.
XVI. Special Concerns

Though students at Rutgers long ago rejected the parental authority and duties of teachers (or in loco parentis) so that they could lay claim to the freedoms of college life, we know that students can use a little guidance from time to time. Often, a little timely intervention on the part of the teacher can prevent students from making costly mistakes or getting into trouble. “An e-mail in time saves nine,” one might say, and both teachers and students find that e-mail is the quickest, least intrusive and most efficient way of exercising some early intervention. E-mail also creates a historical record that may be useful later in addressing student complaints.

**Absent and Disappearing Students**

It’s important to let students know early on that attendance in Expository Writing is required and the course cannot be dropped without a Dean’s permission. After four absences, they risk failing and no student should be passed who has missed six classes. Also, if students are ever two final drafts behind in the course, they have already failed and should be told so immediately to avoid any confusion. When a student is on the precipice of failing the course for missing work, email the student prior to the impending deadline to be sure the student is aware of his or her circumstances.

When students miss even two sessions, it might be useful to send an email to remind them of the attendance policy and to encourage them to return to class. Sometimes student absences can create a pattern of behavior that needs to be addressed. An email should always be sent once a student has missed three classes, when a student has missed his or her fourth class, and when a student has missed six classes and has automatically failed the course.

**Support for Students at the Writing Centers**

The Writing Program in New Brunswick has three Writing Centers. At each Writing Center, students work with tutors on a variety of issues such as reading closely and critically, understanding assignments, revising rough drafts, creating arguments, and identifying and correcting patterns of error. The goal at each center is to reinforce and strengthen the skills that teachers are trying to develop in students’ writing. Please refer all students whose reading and writing skills seem to require more than the help you can offer during office hours.

Tutoring is free to students, although they must commit to attend for at least five weeks. The Writing Centers open in the third week of the semester for scheduling, and in the fourth week of the semester for tutoring. In order to ensure that a student is getting the
best help possible, tutors find it very helpful when teachers write tutoring comments on
students’ papers regarding particular skills or areas they wish the tutor to focus upon.

The three Writing Centers and their directors are:

- The Plangere Writing Center at College Avenue
  Website: plangere.rutgers.edu
  Murray Hall, Room 304
  Phone: 732.932.1149
  Coordinator: Brendon Votipka (848.932.5338)

- Douglass Writing Center
  Website: dcwc.rutgers.edu
  135 George Street, Room 201
  Phone: 732.932.8856
  Coordinator: Jacqueline Loeb (848.932.8042)

- Livingston Writing Center
  Website: lcwc.rutgers.edu
  Lucy Stone Hall, 106A
  Phone: 848.445.4048
  Coordinator: John Holliday (848.445.5659)

As the Writing Centers operate on the same pedagogical principles as writing classes,
teachers are some of our best tutors. If you are interested in tutoring, please contact the
center director on that campus. The Writing Centers always welcome graduate students,
teaching assistants, and part-time lecturers to work as tutors.

Student Athletes

Below are some important guidelines and policies for instructors with student athletes in
their classes.

University Policy for Athletes
Rutgers University leaves the issue of attendance, missed work, and make-ups regarding
student athletes to the discretion of faculty. In practice, this policy often means that
student athletes are able to make up work they have missed due to athletic events when
an instructor knows in advance that the athlete will miss the work.

Writing Program Policy for Athletes
Student athletes in Writing Program courses are held to the same attendance standards as
other students, with the understanding that they may miss some classes because of
games. Expect a student athlete to provide a list of game days early in the term. While
these days generally count as absences in the class, the individual student and instructor
should make arrangements to make up any missed work. These arrangements may involve electronic submission of a paper, an early due date, or a due date that coincides with the class meeting following the athletic event (without penalty).

**Writing Center Tutoring for Athletes**

Student athletes should be encouraged to register for Writing Center tutoring. All tutoring for athletes in Writing Program courses occurs in a Writing Center. This arrangement ensures that the tutoring athletes receive conforms to our "minimalist tutoring" pedagogy. Student athletes whose Close Reading assignment and/or first paper exhibit writing weaknesses more significant than the bulk of the students in the class should be given extra encouragement to attend the Writing Center. Instructors should fill out the tutoring sign-up form for these students, and speak with them individually regarding tutoring. When a student athlete receives tutoring in the Writing Center, the tutor submits a weekly progress report to the Writing Program. This report is forwarded to the student athlete’s academic advisor, providing the Writing Program with important tools to support instructors with student athletes in their classes.

**Problems**

Instructors should contact a Director for guidance if a student athlete (or any student) begins to accumulate absences or missed/late work. A student athlete who has more than two absences, is missing/late work, or is not passing by mid-semester must be discussed in folder review. Close attention to these problems early in the term can often correct them before they prevent a student from passing a course.

Plagiarism is another problem instructors may encounter with a student athlete. Fortunately, such problems are relatively rare. As with any student suspected of plagiarism, do not directly confront the student before speaking with a Director. Writing Program instructors are discouraged from discussing the status of a student athlete with a student’s coach or academic advisor. If a coach or advisor wishes to speak with someone regarding an athlete’s progress, please contact a Director for support.
In “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan,” Ethan Watters discusses the problems that can result from corporate desire for profit in the global health industry. Watters’ argument about the pernicious effects of the globalization of depression is premised on two ideas: that mental illness is in large part a cultural construct with socially normative forms of expression, and that the creation and standardization of disease categories shape the “illness experience” over time (515, 516).

Given the text’s interest in the homogenization of modern theories and treatments of mental illnesses, it is intriguing (and perhaps counterintuitive) that “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan” both opens and concludes by referring to “stories.” The first sentence explains how Watters “went to visit Dr. Laurence Kirmayer in Montreal because he had a particularly good story to tell” (513), while the last asserts that the idea that SSRIs balance brain chemistry “is more of a culturally shared story than a scientific fact…” (529). The types of stories invoked in these two sentences are different, yet their shared presence in the text suggests the importance of narrative to Watters’ argument about transcultural notions of depression.

Using specific quotations, examples, and details from Watters’ text, write an essay that responds to the following question: How and why do narratives influence the “illness experience”? 

Wei  

A Privet Secret: Illness Experience

Different country’s people have different cultures and differences. It is not only from people’s beliefs but also from the illness experience. When a drug company sells a depression medical, they also have differed way to sell to different countries. For some people, they may think that medical company only care about money. On the other hand, some people think that medical company not only cares about sale but also should care more about country’s culture. In the essay, “The Mega- Marketing of Depression in Japan”
writes by Ethan Watters write more about how medical company deal with selling their depression drug in Japan. The GlaxoSmithKline make a new medical, which is for depression. However, the GlaxoSmithKline also find that there is less people buy depression medicine in Japan than in West Country. They company want to know why there have difference, therefore, GlaxoSmithKline invite lots of doctor to do some report of this medicine. Kirmayer, a man who involve in GlaxoSmithKline find that a situations. When Kirmayer goes to the meeting in Japan to report the research of a new depression drug, he finds that it is not a simple meeting. The drug company not only gives those doctors the best hotel but also want them to say something, which is benefit to the new medicine. Moreover, Kirmayer thinks that medical company should care and respect people's culture and beliefs. In a word, (thesis)

When GlaxoSmithKline begin to sell the depression medicine, they do not consider other factors. The company is more focus on how can they sell more about this new medicine. Watters write that: "it was also common knowledge that drug makers use enticement to encourage both researchers and practitioners to attend. a prescribing doctor might be treated to a round of golf or a fancy dinner in exchange for attending an hour-long seminar about the effectiveness of some new drug. These practices are the medical equivalent of what real estate agents do to sell vacation timeshares" (Watters 514). In this quote, Drugs Company fined out that most costumers believed what doctor said about new drug rather than advertisement. Therefore, company prefers to make sure that they provide the best quality life to doctors who involved to the seminar. In the same way, drug company want doctors say the benefit in seminar to exchange better sales in the new medicine. On the other hand, drug company want to use doctor's mouth to get customer's
believe. The way company does can be illness experience. The illness experience should be when Drug Company has a new drug, and invite doctors to report their opinion of drug. However, when company tries to sale them and only for money, they are change the way illness experience should be. On the contrary, when Drug Company goes to Japan to have the seminar, they also finds that people in Japan are not like people in West Country. In the essay, “As best he could tell, these were highly paid private scholars who could hold their own in the most sophisticated discussion of postcolonial theory or the impact of globalization on the human mind”(Watters 515). In this quote, Drug company find that they cannot figure out why different country’s people have so much differences that company cannot use the same illness experience to different country. Therefore, the seminars is not talks about depression drug, it is the place to talk about how different culture shape the illness experience and make the best profit to the company. More important is to use doctors to control human mind. In a word, illness experience not only influenced by different culture, but also is a private secret between doctors and Drug Company.

Culture and belief is not only can shape a country, but also shape the illness experience in a different way. When people in move to a new environment, most of people choice to follow the way local people lives and combine with the new culture. It is also the same way as company sell medicine. In the essay, “ He had found that every culture has a type of experience that is in some ways parallel to the Western conception of depression: a mental state and set of behaviors that relate to a loss of connectedness to others or a decline in social status or personal motivation, but he had also found that cultures have unique expressions, descriptions, and understandings for these states of being”(Watters 517). The doctor Kirmayer finds that people have different understanding with the word
depression. Moreover, every culture have there own experience. Also it is equal to western country. This phenomenon also means that the basic meaning of depression is same in every country, but culture shapes people have different explanations in different countries. Therefore, culture is the most powerful way to control a country and shape it. Most doctors also find that when Japanese describe their feelings, most of them put their not feeling well to sadness. “Although each of these words and phrases had overlaps with the English word ‘depression’, there were also critical differences. The experiences theses words describe do not exist only in the thoughts and emotions but encompass full-body sadness”(Watters 521). Different cultures shapes people different. Therefore, people have different way to describe their illness. Most doctors find that Japanese prefer to describe lots of illness to sadness. Therefore, when company sell depression drug, it has conflict. Most of Japanese may have different idea of the meaning of depression. Therefore, the company cannot sell as much as in Western country. For the drug company, they prefer to find a better way which is easier for Japanese to understand what the depression means and make people to buy it. In a conclusion, most people influenced by their own culture, therefore, when western country’s drug company sells their drug to Asian country, it is different because of people’s culture and beliefs. Although people from different country have different cultures, some people still have different point of view about culture. According to Applbaum’s point, Drug Company cannot sell depression drug as well in other country. It is not because of culture; it is because that every country has a predetermined evolved. “The lucrative U.S market, Applbaum could see, was the standard against which all others were measured. We were the most evolved’ culture and, as one executive said to Applbaum, their job was to ‘speed the evolution along’ that is, to move
other countries along the path to be like us” (Watters 528). In this quote, Applbaum believed that U.S. has the most evolved culture and other culture should imitate U.S culture. Applbaum also believed that the depression drug is also a way that other country’s people should try on. Moreover, there is also have other opinions. “Although that change may sometimes help a depressed patient, the idea that SSRIs restore a natural balance of serotonin is a theory without evidence. Put another way, this idea is more of a culturally shared story than a scientific fact…” (Watters 529). In this quote, SSRIs does not have any evidence of this depression drug can help people. The depression drug is only uses how the scientists tell customs how depression drug helps people, but without any science fact. In a word, there are different ways to talk about this drug and people need to have their own opinion to make a right decision.

In a conclusion, although Drug company want have more profit to their company, the company still cannot use different ways to make people to buy it. For the drug company, the narrative is tried to make Drug Company have the biggest profit to company. As for people, the narrative makes them lost their rights to know the fact of depression drug. In a word, illness experience should be a way that makes people have more benefit for their illness. the experience between company and scientist influenced people harm their own health.
In Watters’ essay, “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan,” Kalman Applbaum describes his “mega-marketing” campaign as a plan to “alter the total environment in which these drugs [antidepressants] are or may be used” (524). Watters argument revolves around the forces such as the market and culture that shape personal experience. While Watters argues that culture, the market, and personal experience are intertwined, he doesn’t explain the dynamic systematically and depicts the Japanese as having little power to counteract these forces. When the pharmaceutical companies transform the conditions of Japanese depression, will the actual experience of the Japanese change? Can the market exacerbate the problem of depression? If the market does control our experiences, does the individual have power to counteract these forces? (These questions are here to help you think about the prompt, but you do not have to answer all of these questions). Using specific quotations, examples, and details from both texts, make an original argument that responds to the following question: To what extent can marketing actually create the conditions it claims to fix?

Anthony

Setting Up a Reality

Since the beginning of time companies have been creating products to fill people’s needs in multiple different ways. A product is meant to have a certain purpose for its consumer. Antidepressant drugs are one of these products that are manufactured to help people who suffer from depression. Ethan Watters, writer of The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan, talks about a time where anti-depressant drugs were not present in Japanese society and how that all changed after a few company’s endeavors. Pharmaceutical companies needed to understand the way Japanese beliefs coincided with symptoms of depression. In most cases depression was viewed as a mental disorder that had the connotation of craziness attached to it. In another
instant, one company tested their antidepressant drugs and blamed a negative outcome of one of the trials on the Japanese's government’s testing practices. The power that these companies had was tremendous. On top of which, drug companies lured medical professionals into prescribing their drugs by lavishing them with valuable prospects. After an uphill battle, prescription antidepressants were sold in Japan. Although, the use of marketing allowed pharmaceutical companies to properly assess their potential clientele by dissecting the people’s cultural and ethical beliefs, they had to target doctors and government officials in order to successfully incorporate their drugs.

Drug companies like GlaxoSmithKline needed to understand the Japanese market before they could get their drug to their clients. Marketing allowed them to understand where it was they were selling the drug and to whom they were selling it. The east and west had different interpretations of how depression was viewed and finding a common ground was the answer. In order to do so, drug companies sought the knowledge of doctor’s to properly research their clientele. “During the meetings eminent scholars and researchers gave insightful presentations on subjects ranging from the history of psychiatry in Japan to the Japanese public’s changing attitudes about mental illness. The prominent Japanese psychiatrists in attendance were particularly helpful in framing the state of the public’s current beliefs about depression and anxiety disorders” (Watters 516-517). Japanese medical professionals were the only viable resource to gain knowledge of how the Japanese people viewed depression and it’s connotation to mental illness. The psychiatrists were able to decipher the structure of the health care system in Japan, allowing the companies to make connections between what was
happening to some of the Japanese people with the drugs they wanted to provide them. Market research allowed them to identify how they were going to sell their drugs. “New and effective treatment options,” he said, “most notably the SSRIs, will contribute to reducing the burden of depression and anxiety disorders in Japanese society” (Watters 517). These events and conferences were the stepping-stones of the drug companies’ marketing campaign. In order to deliver the drugs to their patients, they had to get the Japanese medical community on board first.

Another issue at hand was a lack of connection between how the Japanese viewed depression and how the west did. “When the DSM-III was first translated into Japanese in 1982, the diagnosis of depression, with its two-week threshold for low mood, was widely criticized among Japanese psychiatrists as far to expansive and vague to be of any use. Prominent psychiatrists believed, in short, that the description did not amount to a meaningful mental illness” (Watters 520-521). There was no direct translation from depression in English to Japanese. When selling a product that is already out in a different market, it’s not possible to change the definition of the product in order to suit the companies’ selling needs. America already got its taste of SSRI’s, and in order to sell them in Japan, companies like GlaxoSmithKline needed to find similar attributes in Japanese society that associated with depression in America. Marketing to doctor’s and researcher’s seemed to be an easy task for drug companies. By offering them luxurious incentives, many medical professionals took it upon themselves to research depression in Japanese society to make themselves look more attractive to the drug companies. One such example is of a young Japanese researcher named Junko Tanaka-Matsumi. He “conducted a simple word-association test on a group of
Japanese college students and compared the results to Caucasian American college students. The American students were asked to respond with three words that they connected with ‘depression.’ The Japanese students were asked to do the same with yuutsu” (Watters 521). The drug companies’ marketing campaign was working.

In order for GlaxoSmithKline, or any other drug company for the matter, could move forward with their plan to sell SSRI’s in Japan, they needed to get the consensus of the Japanese psychiatrists. The problem was, they weren’t getting it. The Japanese still saw ‘depression’ as an “incurable and inborn disease of psychotic proportions” (Watters 524). Depression was advertised as something inhumane. Advertisements in newspapers talked about how ‘depression’ was “a cold of the soul” (Watters 524). This was not good for the drug companies. If the people of Japan began to form the connotation of depression as some sort of severe debilitating disease, the drug companies believed that the Japanese people would never buy their products due to the medications’ perceptions. The marketing team had to act quickly in order to not have this idea widespread. “Company marketers quickly reproduced and widely disseminated articles in the newspapers and magazines mentioning the rise of depression, particularly if those pieces touted the benefits of SSRIs. The companies also sponsored the translation of several best-selling books first published in the United States on depression and the use of antidepressants” (Watters 525). Afterwards, these companies advertised their drugs through the Internet in order to circumvent direct-to-consumer advertising regulations. The marketers at these companies were really at the top of their skill levels. They disguised different forms of advertising of their drugs through patient advocacy groups. This online ‘diagnosis’ of depression changed the
public’s view on it. This progressed the drug companies’ plan to sell SSRI’s to its last steps.

Living in a land where mental health issues are viewed as manic depression and severe problems isn’t easy when patients need the proper medication in order to properly function. People who need medication to be able to perform at their best level weren’t gaining any traction with the psychiatric communities. Having the drug companies advocate on patient’s behalves allowed a broader range of drugs to be administered to the Japanese people. Differences between the Japanese people’s and the American’s view on antidepressant drugs was culturally different, but by manipulating the minds of the people who had the power to make change, drug companies successfully merged the two ideologies that persisted in the east and the west on depression. The differences in American and Japanese beliefs of how they pertained to depression could be best noted as this, “The Japanese and Americans weren’t just talking about depression and sadness differently, she believed; they were feeling theses states differently as well…she saw reflected in the language was a difference between how Japanese and Americans conceived of the nature of the self” (Watters 522). The “self” was how people looked upon them and how the outside forces attached or strayed away from people. It’s use in determining the proper connection served as one of the best tools the drug companies had. Although the Americans viewed the word self as an idea of isolated within the individual mind, the Japanese people viewed self as an individuated and more interconnected and dependent on social and environmental factors. There were still problems to come. The Japanese still thought of depression as an incurable and inborn depression of
psychotic proportions. Creating a drug that would treat such a poorly described was essentially useless if no one was going to take the drug. Creating a negative connotation of such proportions almost made the anti-depressant market non-existent in Japan. But through a marketing strategy that is still referred to in the twenty-first century, it seems as if the drug companies were able to pull of such a success. One example would be, “Company marketers quickly reproduced and widely disseminated articles in newspapers and magazines mentioning the rise of depression, particularly if those pieces touted the benefits of SSRI’s” (Watters 525). After much failure, a method of success was lined up.

The way people perceive things is a large reasoning factor to how they would act upon their needs to interact with such things. If there were to be a negative connotation when it came to anti-depressant drugs in Japan, maybe they wouldn’t be as widespread as they are today. Creating such a connection between the east and west pharmaceutical markets was a great success for the drug companies, and especially the marketing teams. The marketing departments literally created a new market for companies selling SSRIs. Obstacles like the preconceived notion of depression and its non-widespread use were difficult tasks to conquer. Although it may not be viewed as the most ethical of ways to get customers, the drug companies succeeded in increasing their revenue stream by marketing to a new clientele successfully.
In your last essay, you considered how marketing a foreign concept of depression to a culture with different concepts of depression might work as a form of cultural imperialism by analyzing Ethan Watters’ “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan.” Susan Faludi’s “The Naked Citadel” is similarly interested in culturally distinct definitions. Observing young cadets at the private military academy the Citadel, Faludi thinks about how definitions of masculinity become cultural norms that shape the student experience at the Citadel. Freshman students, or “knobs,” transform from young men into cadets whose goal, according to the institutional ideal, is to become “Whole Men.” In practice, this process involves a violent version of masculinity, which, according to Faludi, is tied to the institution’s homogeneity and insularity. At one point, however, she also poses the idea that the cadets’ defense of their “inner humanity with outer brutality may say as much about the world outside The Citadel walls as about the world within them.” To some degree, cross-cultural interaction must occur between the university and the world outside of it.

In this essay, I would like you to use Watters’ essay on depression to help you understand the Citadel. Interpreting passages from both essays to support your argument, answer the following question:

How can the marketer-consumer relationship described in Watters’ essay help us understand the cultural norms at the Citadel? What implications does that explanation carry for university culture?

Micaela

Reshaping a Culture

In Ethan Watters’ essay, “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan,” he delves into the Japanese concept of depression and how major pharmaceutical companies are trying to change their views in order to market their antidepressants. In Susan Faludi’s essay, “The Naked Citadel,” she discusses the culture within The Citadel and how masculinity is represented with both aggression and violence. As evident in these two essays, there are numerous ideas of cultures and a lot of them can vary. When different cultures have dissimilar views, their idea of new concepts can be influenced. The marketer-consumer relationship in Watters’ text helps us understand cultural norms at The
Citadel by highlighting the reasons and mindsets behind the physical violence. Both the upperclassmen and the administration at The Citadel reinforce the idea of a culture that has been imposed on them when they were knobs. People tend to take a lot of pride in the traditions of their cultures, but sometimes these cultures are shifted, which can change their many different traditions.

When people behave in a certain manner, it gives us a clue into their mindset and how they were told to act. For many people who are a part of a culture, it is easy to fall into the rules and systems of how these cultures work. The Japanese people in Watters’ essay were easily influenced by their culture and its idea of what depression means. Because of this, the pharmaceutical companies were required to come into Japan and try to change the whole mindset of the culture in order to market their drugs. “Understanding these differences is critical, however, because culturally distinct symptoms hold precious clues about the causes of distress” (Watters 518). This quote is specifically talking about the symptoms of depression that differ between each cultural experience. One culture could believe something about depression, while the others cultures have a completely different view on what it means. It is important for the pharmaceutical companies to be able to understand how the Japanese minds work in order to sell their antidepressants successfully. Without these types of understandings of different mindsets, it would be difficult to reshape the Japanese culture because pharmaceutical companies would not know how to successfully market their drugs. At The Citadel, the cadets are forced into a new way of behaving whether they agree with it or not. For the cadets the experience of being at an all male academy is something that draws them to The Citadel, because it holds long lasting traditions and experiences they won’t get anywhere else. One thing the
men truly enjoy is bathing all together, “The sharing of the stall-less showers and stall-less toilets is ‘at the heart of the Citadel experience’, according to more than one cadet” (Faludi 75). The behaviors at The Citadel are different than most other cultures. The men here have a certain type of bond that not many cultures would agree with or may look at as unusual. When we get an idea of how people behave, it gives us an understanding into their mindset. Just how the pharmaceutical companies had to observe the Japanese culture in order to understand their mindsets and try to change what they believed. The cadets at The Citadel only know how to behave in this manner because they were brought into a culture where they were told to act in a very manly way that is all about brotherhood. Similar to the people of Japan, who are used to how they view depression, it is important for the marketing companies to understand how they view it and how they can change their beliefs. Watters’ essay helps us understand the culture at The Citadel because it reminds us of the mindset and reasoning behind the physical violence. When people are so used to being told what to do, they tend to conform to how that culture has raised them, but people can change their beliefs when they understand their mindsets.

Another way Watters’ essay sheds light on the culture of The Citadel is by identifying the ideals that are important to the cadets. In Japan the pharmaceutical companies were eager to change the entire Japanese mindset of depression, in order to market their antidepressants. For the pharmaceutical companies in Japan, it is important for them to understand that, “cultural conceptions surround illnesses such as depression could be influenced and shifted over time” (Watters 518-519). All cultures are capable of change, and can be changed with time. The pharmaceutical companies are pushing for change in the mindset of the Japanese people in order to sell their antidepressants in
Japan. This type of change is also seen at The Citadel when the cadets are shaped into the “whole man”. The cadets are placed into a fourth class system which is a “nine-month regimen of small and large indignities intended to ‘strip’ each young recruit of his original identity and remold him into the ‘Whole Man,’ a vaguely defined ideal, half Christian soldier, half Dale Carnegie junior executive” (Faludi 75). This is an example of how people and cultures can shift over time. For the cadets going to The Citadel meant that they had to change their entire way of life. Even if some cadets agree with the way The Citadel is ran, they conform to what the school wants them to become. Similar to how the Japanese people allowed their views to change about depression once the pharmaceutical companies changed what they believed depression to be. When people are consistently pressured to change their beliefs or ways of life, they are easily influenced into it.

Cultures can be influenced or changed in many ways. When other cultures influence one another they change what they believed or how they lived life before. “In other words, cultural beliefs about depression and the self are malleable and responsive to messages that can be exported from one culture to another. One culture can reshape how a population in another culture categorizes a given set of symptoms, replace their explanatory model, and redraw the line demarcating normal behaviors and internal states from those considered pathological” (Watters 519). One population will conform to the actions and beliefs of another population because of the constant direct influence of one culture. When people are introduced to something new and are constantly surrounded by it, they tend to start behaving in the way that all other people around them are. Faludi consistently shows how the culture at The Citadel, is shaped by the upperclassmen. It is a part of The Citadel culture for the upperclassmen to shape the knobs into the men that
they want them to be. Jeremy Leckie, and upperclassmen at The Citadel “repeatedly struck them in the chest and stomach and bruised one of them in the face, but denied having kicked them in the groin” (Faludi 81). Leckie reacted in this violent way because; “they viewed one of the occupants as a ‘problem knob’ that ‘needed some extra motivation’” (Faludi 81). It is the upperclassmen's job to shape the younger knobs into what The Citadel see's as the “whole man”. These men are shaped into people that believe that violence is the only way to motivate one another. All the cadets are just passing along what they had to endure when they first attended The Citadel; they are shaping the culture by replicating what they went through as knobs. Just how the pharmaceutical companies Americanize the Japanese culture by introducing them to their antidepressants. When people are constantly influenced by the environment around them, they end up conforming to what they see, eventually passing along the different beliefs that they learned.

To completely change a culture people have to have reinforcement all around, because it will help grab the attention of the people. When cultures don't have authority or some sort of power, it is common for people not to follow what they are representing as their culture. When the pharmaceutical companies first wanted to reshape the Japanese culture they turned to Kalman Applbaum in hopes to understand how to shift the Japanese culture. Applbaum “found wide acknowledgement within the ranks of drug company executives that the best way for companies to create a market was for competing companies to join forces” (Watters 523). Applbaum realized that surrounding a culture is the best way to change it because people will conform to what everyone else is doing around them. Just as the upperclassmen at The Citadel were looked at to completely
transform the young knobs into what the academy viewed as the whole man. Once people and the media were aware of the student-run regiment happening at The Citadel, they automatically turned to the administration as to why these types of actions were taking place. “But when the administration does go on the offensive, its animus is primarily directed not at miscreant cadets but at the ‘unfair’ media, which are ‘victimizing’ the institution by publicizing the bad behaviors of its boy” (Faludi 82). When it is suggested that the violence be looked at, they point the fingers directly back to the media taking away the attention towards the institution. The administration supports what the cadets are doing because this is what they think are the correct way to reshape a young man. Which is an example of how cultures have to surround the people in it, in order to form and carry on the culture that they want.

When reading Watters’ essay it helps us understand the different cultural norms at The Citadel and why the cadets reacted in such a violent way. When people are influenced by the rules or ways of living that surround them, it gives people clues to what the mindset of that culture is. Although cultures usually have very strict beliefs, they can be changed, just as the Japanese people changed their views on depression, and how the cadets conformed into what The Citadel saw as the “whole man”. When other cultures are influencing one another it is easy for one population to reshape how they behave within their culture. Cultures that are completely surrounded by another culture, it can take away from the long lasting traditions and pride that they once had in their culture. Culture is able to change at any given time with the influence from another culture.
In our readings so far, we have been examining issues of identity formation, experience, and interpretation. First, in “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan,” Ethan Watters illustrates how what we might perceive as individual experience is actually shaped by cultural narratives; this idea is in many ways countered by Oliver Sack’s emphasis on the power of the individual to rewrite his/her experience of the world according to his/her own perspectives and desires. Finally, in her *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, Azar Nafisi demonstrates how we can use fiction and imagination to reframe the way we view ourselves when we live in a world that demands us to be someone other than ourselves. In this paper, I want you to address the themes of identity and perspective that we’ve been engaging with all along, while also considering the new theme of crisis and risk that is emerging across these three texts. Using all three sources, please answer the following question: **If we view our experience of reality as a narrative that has been constructed by and imposed upon us by a culture or institution, then is there any way in which the individual can resist the expectations of that narrative and choose to experience life on his or her own terms?**

Justin

**Individuality**

People in our society go against the norms of their cultures all the time. It shows in the essays written by Nafisi, Watters, and Sacks that the individuals went against the normal ways of their cultures that they lived in. In Azar Nafisi’s “Lolita in Tehran” he explains how the women in the story act out against the discrimination they face and turn against the regime’s rule of not meeting together in a private setting. They discuss and act out against the regime strict rule in many different ways and they all the same view of experiencing life in their own way. In relation the essay “What the Blind See” by Oliver Sacks relates to this by the blind people he discusses acting in a different way than the norm and seeing their own image by the use of their imagination. They don’t do what the typical blind person does or what their culture expects and rather accepts their blindness.
and sees what they want to. The last essay that relates is one by Ethan Watters “The Mega Marketing of Depression in Japan” and this essay describes how the Japanese culture changes due to the people accepting the illness of depression and acting out against the normal culture the Japanese have. By resisting cultural narratives, creating a personal narrative through which to experience the world, and being true to one’s individual self, one can reject the constructions of cultures and institutions on life and live on one’s own terms.

When people resist their particular cultural narratives and the influences around them they learn to live life on their own terms. Nafisi describes in her essay how the regime in Tehran controlled the country and especially the rights of women. They didn’t allow the women to get the proper education they needed to be successful and the main character in the novel acts out against the norm of being treated poorly in the educational system by quitting her job and removing herself from it. She chose to make a personal decision to act out against the regime and start conducting meetings with former students and young educated women. “For nearly two years, almost every Thursday morning, rain or shine, they came to my house, and almost every time, I could not get over the shock of seeing them shed their mandatory veils and robes and burst into color” (Nafisi 281). This quote describes how the illegal meeting and gatherings the women had were a way out for them and a way for them to be one’s individual self and show their real personality to everyone. They got to see a side of each other that they never would have seen without having these meeting with one another. It also shows that the group had a lot of farewell photos and didn’t want to leave because they enjoyed being together and being able to experience the world in such a better way than before when the culture of Tehran
controlled everything they did. It describes how the women that came to meet in the home gathered to be themselves and not what their culture expected them to do. They broke many laws such as unveiling their robes, reading stories and novels that were prohibited by the regime of Tehran, and writing individual journals that they kept all their thoughts and reactions to the novels and meetings they had every week. Watters essay also relates to the resisting of a culture they live in by recognizing the illness of depression that had been ignored for centuries. The U.S. pharmaceutical companies came into the country and tried to convince a cultural that hasn’t changed in years and years. They tried to convince a culture to rebel against these views and act out on them. They showed these potentially useful drugs in a series of ways that greatly influenced the Japanese people. “The subtext of the ad is clear…. It prevents depression as “intentionally ambiguous and ill-defined, applicable to the widest possible population and to the widest possible range of discomforts….“ (Watters 525). This quote describes how the U.S. went into Japan knowing their culture wasn’t accepting this disease as something serious and they knew they had to get across to the Japanese that it was. This ad was clear enough to show them all sides of the disease of depression and didn’t force anything onto the Japanese people. The U.S. showed the individuals of Japan that they needed to be themselves and go against their culture and recognize this awful disease. The U.S. knew that the people of Japan might not accept their viewpoint of depression but the ad showed the people that these drugs would help them. The drugs showed them to go against the traditional viewpoints of their culture and to be true individuals with their own viewpoints.

Creating a personal narrative allows one’s self to experience the world in a whole new way that’s independent from cultural expectations. Often culture expectations limit a
individual's potential but there are those who challenge this idea. Sacks for example reports on the experiences of several individuals who were born with sight but became blind. While society may believe all these blind people go through the same stages, it is clear that these people adapt to blindness in many different ways. They rebel against the expectations of the society they live in have. “Magee insists that Milligan, a blind man, cannot have any real knowledge of the visual world. Milligan disagrees and maintains that even though language only describes people and events, it can sometimes stand in for direct experience or acquaintance” (Sacks 344). This describes how this blind man uses his imagination and knowledge of the world to create his own personal images. He didn’t let the expectations of the world effect his blindness and view of the world. He doesn’t fall into the norm of everyone else around him that cannot see the real world, he creates his own vision and uses it to live a fun and healthy life. Watters shows the reader that the Japanese people created their own narratives by accepting the illness of depression by embracing what the American pharmaceutical companies had to say. They didn’t fall into the same cultural expectations that have been there for so many years. They accepted the way the United States advertised and showed them what the illness was and was about. “The best way to reach patients today is not via advertising but the Web” (Watters 525). This quote explains that the United States understood how to market this drug well and get across to the Japanese public that it was serious and needed to be treated. This allowed for them to accept this disease and act in a way that allowed to accept it and not fall into their cultures normal way of dealing with the disease of depression. It allowed the Japanese people to be their own individual self and just like Sacks, experience the world in the way that they want to.
Being true to one’s individual self allows people to experience the world in the way that they want to and not how the culture around them expects them to. Nafisi specifically describes in her essay that the women have to be true to themselves and not fall into the regime’s horrible treatment of them. They couldn’t allow the regime to control their lives forever and they had to have somewhere they could go and just be themselves and experience the world how they wanted to. “There, in that living room, we rediscovered that we were also living, breathing human beings; and no matter how repressive the state became, no matter how intimidated and frightened we were, like Lolita we tried to escape and to create our own little pockets of freedom” (Nafisi 295). This quote describes how the women in the essay were their true self and went against the regime and acted in a way that they knew was right to them. They knew it was against the rules of their culture to be this way but they knew that if they showed their beliefs and acted against the regime’s rules then it would mean more to them and their lives than accepting the disrespectful rules of the regime. Sacks describes how each of the individuals that couldn’t see used imagination to see what they wanted to see. If they didn’t do this then the life they lived would have been a very boring and unimaginable life. These individuals in the story had to use their minds to see things and that’s what made their lives so different than one who just accepts the mindset that every blind person can’t see anything. “…he was advised to rebuild his representation of the world on the basis of hearing and touch, and to forget about sight and visualizing altogether… this was something that Torey could not or would not do” (Sacks 333). This quote explains how this newly blind person wasn’t going to accept the expectations of his culture and do things his own way and be an individual with qualities that go beyond the thoughts of his culture. It’s important for Torey to be this way
so that he could still experience the world in a way that he wanted to. It would have completely controlled his happiness if he would have accepted his culture expectations of not completely throwing his sight away and only focusing on the other senses he possesses. These two authors explain perfectly how individuals have to experience the world in the way they want to and not how the people of their society and culture expect or want them to experience it.

All these stories relate together as one because they all discuss and agree that people have to have individuality first and put the normal ways of the culture that someone lives in behind them. They have to be ones individual self and not just accept something if they don’t truly believe in living that way. Oliver Sacks showed how the blind people in his essay realized that they didn’t have to accept the cultures expectations and to use their imagination and individuality to see and live how they wanted. In Watters essay the U.S. go into Japan and show the people that depression is a real illness and they need to accept it despite the cultures belief in the past about depression. Nafisi shows how the women in the book rebel against the regime in many ways and go out against what their culture expects of them and meet and break many rules. They did this because of what they believe in and of their individuality in how they experience the world.
In your last essay, you considered how marketing a foreign concept of depression to a culture with different concepts of depression might work as a form of cultural imperialism by analyzing Ethan Watters’ “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan.” Susan Faludi’s “The Naked Citadel” is similarly interested in culturally distinct definitions. Observing young cadets at the private military academy the Citadel, Faludi thinks about how definitions of masculinity become cultural norms that shape the student experience at the Citadel. Freshmen students, or “knobs,” transform from young men into cadets whose goal, according to the institutional ideal, is to become “Whole Men.” In practice, this process involves a violent version of masculinity, which, according to Faludi, is tied to the institution’s homogeneity and insularity. At one point, however, she also poses the idea that the cadets’ defense of their “inner humanity with outer brutality may say as much about the world outside The Citadel walls as about the world within them.” To some degree, cross-cultural interaction must occur between the university and the world outside of it.

In this essay, I would like you to use Watters’ essay on depression to help you understand the Citadel. Interpreting passages from both essays to support your argument, answer the following question:

How can the marketer-consumer relationship described in Watters’ essay help us understand the cultural norms at the Citadel? What implications does that explanation carry for university culture?

Nida

The Citadel Culture from the Marketer-Consumer Perspective

In “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan,” Ethan Watters discusses the influence of the marketers on the consumers through various marketing attempts. In Japan, the word depression had a culturally distinct meaning and connotation; however, marketers managed to alter the traditional definition of depression into a softer tone and context. In Susan Faludi’s “The Naked Citadel,” the author discusses traditions such as hazing, ranking, and basic principles that shaped the cultural norms that came to be at the Citadel. The marketer-consumer relationship seen in Watter’s essay reveals similarities in
the upperclassmen and underclassmen relationship and it shows challenge of altering a standard tradition. Both Watters and Faludi discuss the task of challenging traditions to permanently alter cultural norms.

In both readings, tradition creates a society in which the people are raised to act and think a certain way. For example, Watters examines how most of the Japanese people thought of utsubyo as “an incurable and inborn disease” (Watters 524). The Japanese society knew to think of depression as so horrid and hopeless illness due to what the generations before them have said. Eventually, marketers used the media and news articles to alter the meaning of utsubyo into “a cold of the soul” (Watters 524). The connotation of Utsubyo was now transformed into a metaphor that had a ring to it and spoke to the people. A cold is merely a temporary illness that can be easily cured with medicine so by comparing utsubyo to “a cold of the soul,” marketers were implying a softer and less harsh meaning to depression. The traditional thought that lead to become a cultural norm was soon distorted and transformed.

This same idea of previous generations influencing modern thought and others trying to challenge tradition prevails in Faludi’s work. Faludi states, “the ‘knobs,’ as they are called for their nearly hairless doorknob pates, aren’t allowed to step on the lawn of the broad parade ground, which is trimmed close, as if to match their shorn heads. Keeping off the grass is one of many prohibitions that obtain at The Citadel, a public military college on Charleston’s Ashley River. Another is the rule that so many of the cadets say brought them to this Moorish-style, gated campus: Girls keep out” (Faludi 73). The “knobs” were the freshmen cadets and Faludi makes a connection with them and the parade ground. The grass on the ground and their heads matched to show the uniform and the unity of
everyone and everything at the Citadel. Also, the rookie cadets are to keep off the grass and this is one of the many prohibitions. If something so simple as to keep off the lawn is a major rule to follow, then the other restrictions imply that the Citadel is a place where order and discipline is heavily valued. Faludi also mentions how the Citadel is a male only academy but she says so in a way that is, in a way, threatening to females. For generations, the Citadel has been a male dominant, gated academy that is to be protected by females in a sense. These traditional rules formed the strict and orderly atmosphere that became the cultural norm throughout the Citadel.

Traditions withhold for a while but as time goes on, it becomes a challenge to follow or a new tradition replaces it. In Watters essay, the traditional meaning of utsubyo was challenged by the metaphor “kokoro no kaze” which was ultimately giving utsubyo a different connotation. This change in tradition caused for a change in the cultural norm where society now saw depression as a curable “cold” and individuals weren’t ashamed of treatment or medication. As for Faludi’s essay, the author discusses one of the key traditions of “girls keep out” and how a young lady named Shannon Faulkner challenged that tradition. The cadets greatly valued the traditions at the Citadel and after hearing about a woman’s acceptance, “they say her presence in the Corps would absolutely destroy a basic quality of their experience as Citadel men. She would be what one Citadel defender called in his court deposition ‘a toxic kind of virus’” (78). In the eyes of the cadets, a female is seen as a contagious and infectious disease. Her presence will ruin and eradicate all the rules and traditions, basically everything the Citadel stands for.

The marketer-consumer relationship as seen in “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan” resembles the student hierarchy discussed in “The Naked Citadel.” With the
The manipulation of advertisements, marketers got the consumers’ attention and started swaying their opinions and thoughts. Because the marketers had such power to persuade the mind of the society, they could be seen as the head of the hierarchy. Faludi uses this idea by making the senior-freshman relationship mimic that of the marketer-consumer by making the seniors the authoritative figures. Watters shows the hierarchy through Crown Princess Masako and how “she was taking antidepressants as part of her treatment. This was a huge boost for the profile of depression and SSRIs in the country” (526).

Antidepressants and treatments are placed in the same sentence to reveal that the pharmaceuticals are helping to cure people by the use of their medicine. The marketers, being the head of the hierarchy, use a princess as an example to convey a message to the rest of society. A princess is viewed as someone with a high ranking on the pyramid and the rest are placed at the bottom. The message of antidepressants being the cure is passed along the branches to from the top of the chain to the bottom. As for Faludi, she displays this marketer-consumer relationship by stating how “the college gives a handful of older students leave to ‘govern’ the others as they see fit” (82). Although Faludi uses the word “govern,” she puts it in quotation marks to show that govern means to rule and guide while these cadets just control others and abuse their power. This hierarchy status gave way to the hazing tradition that became part of the Citadel experience.

Although the Citadel is unique in its traditional values, hazing is a cultural norm that is shared with many other universities. Jeremy Leckie, an upperclassman at the Citadel, assaulted freshen boys and was accused for his wrongdoings. Leckie claimed, “what he did was common procedure—and no different from the ‘motivational’ treatment he had received as a knob at the hands of a senior who came into his room” (Faludi 81).
abuse and damage he did to the “knobs” was done as a protocol and it was part of the cultural norm at the Citadel. At the Citadel, it is tradition to haze the freshmen cadets and as they get older, they become the hazers; it’s a vicious cycle that keeps continuing from past generations. This hazing culture also prevails at many universities with Greek life. Many students must perform heinous tasks or be mistreated to join a brotherhood or sisterhood. Just like universities, the Citadel incorporates hazing into its culture so the freshmen knobs will be accepted as a cadet.

The challenging task of the marketers to change a traditional thought resembles that of a woman’s action to enter the Citadel, breaking one of the most basic laws at the academy. Watters’ relationship between the marketers and the consumers acts as a frame to Faludi’s essay. Utsubyo was traditionally thought of as a hopeless disease but in due time, the cultural meaning of the word changed as the marketers challenged its meaning. The marketers ultimately changed the cultural norm and created a new one. Likewise, the Citadel’s basic tradition involved a female free academy until Shannon Faulkner was admitted. Additionally, the marketer-consumer relationship paralleled the hierarchy at the Citadel where the upperclassmen have the right to haze underclassmen, following cultural procedure. The marketer’s relationship with the consumers in “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan” revealed the cultural norms set by traditions in “The Naked Citadel.”
In Selections from “Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other,” Sherry Turkle explores how our relationship with technology has shifted over time from one of projection to one of engagement. The result of this, according to Turkle, is that the very technology that we created is now reshaping the way we view our own humanity, and not always for the better. Turkle, an academic psychotherapist, is especially interested in the impact of computers in treating patients. When discussing the development of computer psychotherapy, Turkle says, “Thirty years ago, with psychoanalysis more central to the cultural conversation, most people saw the experience of therapy as a context for coming to see the story of your life in new terms… Today, many see psychotherapy less as an investigation of the meaning of our lives and more as an exercise to achieve behavioral change or work on brain chemistry” (Turkle 460). After noting the initial “romantic reaction” against this new mode of treatment, she goes on to say, “Computers “understand” as little as ever about the human experience… They do, however, perform understanding better than ever, and we are content to play our part” (460).

In “The Mega-Marketing of Depression,” Ethan Watters explores how cultural conceptions of depression can be formed and shifted over time. In discussing various cultural explanatory models of depression, Watters says, “This interplay between the expectations of the culture and the experience of the individual leads to a cycle of symptom amplification… Explanatory models created the culturally expected experience of the disease in the mind of the sufferer” (Watters 518). When discussing the concluding comments of Dr. Laurence Kirmayer’s paper, Watters goes on to say, “Cultural beliefs about depression and the self are malleable and responsive to messages that can be exported from one culture to another” (519).

Considering both Turkle’s and Watters’ text ideas, respond to the following prompt: In what ways are our experiences with technology limiting our potential?

Ernie

The Implications of Understanding

As humans dwindle on the brink of vast technological advancements, they face a new possibility in the evolution of thinking. New scientific revelations and mechanized stimulus a person is subjected to can result in an alteration of their normal train of thought. These factors come to pose a question of when having too much knowledge becomes detrimental. In his text, “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan” Ethan Watters
describes the differences in the way depression is viewed in Japan opposed to the United States. He does this by giving insight to the way GlaxoSmithKline marketed a new perception of depression as a disease in Japan in order to profit off of its new antidepressant. This coincides with the text of Sherry Turkle, where in “Selections from Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other” she breaks down the evolution of technology and expresses her concerns with how humans interact with newly birthed sociable robots. She also stirs up the conversation of what constitutes as “alive” and eludes to the conundrum of robotic consciousness. When one puts these two texts together they can infer that the advancements in technology and thinking can directly change a person’s perception of self.

What a person knows often provides comfort to them, while what someone does not know makes them afraid. Knowledge extends a feeling of understanding and acceptance in someone’s everyday life. However, not everything present in the world is subject to human understanding, and many ideas and conceptions that were thought to be correct can be overturned. In his text, Watters touches on this idea when he writes, “In other words, cultural beliefs about depression and the self are malleable and responsive to messages that can be exported from one culture to another. One culture can reshape how a population in another culture categorizes a given set of symptoms, replace their explanatory model, and redraw the line demarcating normal behaviors and internal states from those considered pathological” (Watters 519). Here he explains how some ideas are temporary and subject to change because of the influence of another culture with a better understanding of that idea. An example of this in current society usually stems from a new scientific breakthrough. When concrete proof is provided, there is no other logical choice
but to adapt to the new idea. Recently, this stemmed in Japan when Westerners extended their ideas of depression to a culture that did not perceive it as a disease. However, there was no concrete proof to back this new way of thinking but just strong theory. This theory of depression as a chemical imbalance was accompanied by medication that altered brain chemistry, which sometimes helps depressed patients but the idea of it restoring serotonin had no evidence. Although after an intense effort of marketing, the theory and medication was adopted by the Japanese. In her text, Turkle explains, “Children make theories when they are confused or anxious. A good theory can reduce anxiety” (Turkle 473). This quote exemplifies the content of understanding. What one believes to be a fact provides the comfort of understanding, and with understanding any problem can be fixed. It also can give insight to the Japanese’s willingness to adopt a new perception of depression because of their desire for a deeper understanding of emotions. This displays the fact that a new scientific study along with influence of another culture changed how Japanese people perceived themselves; By not thinking of sadness as an all-around emotion, but a malfunction or imbalance in a mechanism of the body. However, all of this occurred without anybody knowing the full extent of the relationship between chemical imbalances and emotions, so it could be said that the theory was only accepted for the sake of the comforting feeling of understanding.

Technology has reached a point where it is possible to develop a relationship with a piece of programming that does not possess a conscious mind. These new sociable robots are designed as companions to provide company to humans just as a pet would. However, people’s exposure to these machines have unconscious effects on their mind. As these robots become more and more “alive,” they demand more from their companion. In her
text Turkle explains, “They make demands. They present as having their own needs and inner lives. For decades computers have asked us to think with them; these days, computers and robots, deemed sociable, affective, and relational, ask us to feel for and with them” (Turkle 470). This quote backs the previous sentiment that sociable robots and new technology are beginning to ask more of the people they interact with. Now these robots are programmed to stimulate and stir up certain emotions out of their companions. They often project emotions and phrases such as, “I love you” to satisfy their owner, but they cannot actually feel these emotions. Instead they make human’s display their emotions onto them. In Watters’ text he describes, “Applbaum took to calling this a ‘mega-marketing’ campaign – an effort to shape the very consciousness of the Japanese consumer” (Watters 524). The same way that GlaxoSmithKline was trying to shape the public of the Japanese is the same way that humans shape the “consciousness” or behavior of their mechanized companions. Their interactions with the sociable robot determine how it will act towards them and their behavior as a whole. So by spending time with a sociable machine people project their emotions and ideas onto their companions, who in turn feed these emotions right back to them. In a sense people can learn more about themselves by analyzing how they interact with machines.

Every day advances are made in science and technology, but it is possible there will come a point where these advances will become detrimental to the human race. New groundbreaking discoveries are always perceived as beneficial although they can alter the evolution of the race. Scientists are constantly looking to make the next big thing possible, or provide understanding onto a widely unknown and controversial topic. In his text Watters describes this when he writes, “The reasons these executives were so open
about this endeavor goes back to their shared belief that the evolution in question was toward higher quality science” (Watters 528). This portrays the willingness of businesses to back new research and technology if they think that it is for the good of the people. The problem with this however, is the fact that money earning corporations are the ones deciding the good of the people. If they feel that whatever drug or technology at question can make them enough money, they will not hesitate to put it in the hands of the general public. It also mentions “higher quality science,” and this term in my mind amplifies the fact that there will always be a “higher quality science,” in a sense that people will never be satisfied with the knowledge they have at the time. That being said, it is very possible that eventually the science and technology of the world will reach a height that at this present moment no one is able to come close to understanding. Turkle writes about this aspect in her text where she explains, “No matter if today’s robots are not ready for prime time as receptionists. At the singularity, everything will become technically possible, including robots that love. Indeed, at the singularity, we may merge with robotic and achieve immortality. The singularity is technological rapture” (Turkle 460). Here Turkle explains the fact that the extent of our knowledge could proceed to severely change our evolution. She also eludes to the fact that by continuously trying to upgrade robots, we might in turn create a whole new species that is possible to merge with and share genes. This displays the fact that at some point humans will be in control of their future as a race, and at this point they will cancel out evolution and natural selection all together by being able to determine the genes of their offspring. Ultimately this will not only change the way in which they view themselves in the world but change their existence all together.
Humans are beginning to become subjected to new stimulus that they have never before encountered. Their obsessions with “higher quality science” is resulting in unlocking new fields of science that is changing not only their own consciousness, but the experience of living all together. In socializing with robots, people have found the comfort of viewing them as other conscious beings, although they are not yet, and raises the possibility of mating with them at some point in time. Also, new breakthroughs in science such as genetics has gotten to a point where people have successfully cloned a living goat. With this being done there is a feeling that it will soon be possible to even clone a human, or be able to pick out the genes for your own offspring. At this point not only do these things change people’s perception of thinking, but it calls for a new human responsibility to take caution in the extent of our knowledge.
In your last essay, you considered how marketing a foreign concept of depression to a culture with different concepts of depression might work as a form of cultural imperialism by analyzing Ethan Watters’ “The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan.” Susan Faludi’s “The Naked Citadel” is similarly interested in culturally distinct definitions. Observing young cadets at the private military academy The Citadel, Faludi thinks about how definitions of masculinity become cultural norms that shape the student experience. Freshmen students, or “knobs,” transform from young men into cadets whose goal, according to the institutional ideal, is to become “Whole Men.” In practice, this process involves a violent version of masculinity, which, according to Faludi, is tied to the institution’s homogeneity and insularity. At one point, however, she also poses the idea that the cadets’ defense of their “inner humanity with outer brutality may say as much about the world outside The Citadel walls as about the world within them.” To some degree, cross-cultural interaction must occur between the university and the world outside of it. In this essay, I would like you to use Watters’ essay on depression to help you understand the Citadel. Interpreting passages from both essays to support your argument, answer the following question: How can the marketer-consumer relationship described in Watters’ essay help us understand the cultural norms at the Citadel? What implications does that explanation carry for university culture?

Ibrahima

How the Things We Live Outside Affect Our Inside Self

In “Great to Watch”, Maggie Nelson points out the issues arising from the constant flux of mediated images and how it affects the viewers internally and externally. Nelson says that there is a determined purpose behind “image flow”, which is to create confusion and apathy within the viewers’ minds. While Nelson denotes the conundrums caused by images we constantly watch, Susan Faludi, in The Naked Citadel, explores the conundrums of the concept of gender lived by the students at The Citadel. Faludi details the gender misconception suffered by the students at The Citadel and the unnecessary use of violence as a “common procedure”. Both essays point out the fact that human
behavior, opinion, and ways of thinking can be changed or controlled by an outside factor that sometimes can be things he or she is constantly exposed to, such as things he or she watches or experiences. Although Nelson’s conceptual solutions to image flow are not practically applicable to the students at The Citadel, those solutions can inspire tangible approaches to help the students overcome their confusion about gender misconceptions and to restore their morality.

As technology has evolved, we have become exposed to a larger flux of mediated images, and it has led to the emergence of new behaviors and reactions. Nelson mentions how mediated images became more and more invested in being ubiquitous in the public’s lives as “Beyond prime time, which the digital age may be rendering a quaint outpost, more literal renditions of the Running Man scenario— and ones that offer their viewers slightly more participation than that of armchair schadenfreude— are now available via a few strokes of your computer keyboard” (302). The Running Man refers to a sci-fi novel by Stephen King, in which “The Running Man” is a popular TV game show that engages the spectator into condoning violence. Nelson’s use of words such as “armchair schadenfreude,” “participation,” and “few strokes” communicate a presence of some type of process through which the viewers are undergoing a process that takes away their sensibility to violence and brutality. When brutality is being displayed over and over, so much so that it induces its use for entertainment, then the viewers have lost their sense of empathy and compassion in the process. Alternatively, one’s empathy and sensibility to violence and brutality can also be numbed by circumstances in which one witnesses or even undergoes violent encounters such as hazing or prejudicial treatment. A large flux of violence can act like a large flux of mediated images. That was the case at The Citadel,
where students are brought into this “school” with the purpose to “‘strip’ each young recruit of his original identity and remold him into a ‘Whole Man’”(75). Faludi gets into deeper insight as she exposes the process through which the young recruits go through as a part of becoming a “Whole Man”: “In October 1993, two upperclassmen burst into the room of two freshmen and reportedly kneed them in the genitals, pulled out some hair of their chest hair, and beat them up”(81). Faludi interviewed Adrian Baer, one of the offending upperclassman who admitted bursting into the freshmen’s rooms after coming back from drinking, and beating them up; However, Baer’s next statement says a lot about the alma matter at the Citadel, as he says that “what he did was common procedure –and no different from the ‘motivational treatment he had received as a knob at the hands of a senior who came into his room’”(81). Baer’s statement shows that the circumstances around which he spent his college time at The Citadel, disrupted his inner moral compass and also turned him into a sadist and apathetic individual. The fact that Baer has witnessed and suffered hazing over and over at The Citadel, changed his conception of brutality to the point that he viewed it as positive and acceptable. The violence was a process that shaped his compassion and empathy, much like the images in the “The Running Man” shaped the viewers in Nelson’s essay. Given these points, things that we watch, just as things that we experience, affect us thoroughly because they are a major means of collecting knowledge, and also in the long run, they become a process through which our mentality can be transformed.

In both Faludi’s and Nelson’s essays, there are issues related with the fact that there are two equal and opposite destinies, and that individuals are urged to pick a side and comply with it. Nelson mentions Susan Sontag’s theory declaration that “we live in an
‘age of extremity’ characterized by ‘the continual threat of two equally fearful, but seemingly opposed destinies: unremitting banality and inconceivable terror” (306).
Sontag’s selection of words such as “extremity,” “equally fearful” and “opposed destinies” induce the conception of a binary correlation of the social spectrums “unremitting banality” and “inconceivable terror”. Nelson’s use of Sontag’s declaration in her essay compels the reader to process binary thinking. She then introduces the idea of “engaged withdrawal” as a solution to break out of that bipolar cycle of the “age of extremity”. The concept of “engaged withdrawal” as Nelson defines it, is a strategy that “rather than fixate on revolution… privileges orchestrated acts of exodus”(307). The term “orchestrated acts of exodus” induces the idea of passivity and submission, but the paradox is that the point of the concept is to escape the stress caused by the “age of extremity”. In a more visual illustration, one can picture the concept of engaged withdrawal as when trapped in quicksand, instead of panicking, staying calm and not fighting the sinking of one’s body can be a way to slow down or even stop the process of one’s submersion, which can win the victim more time to come up with a solution. The engaged withdrawal is a strategy that can pull one out of the flux of images or influences and allow him or her to overcome confusion. The same concept can also be adopted in Faludi’s essay in its binary thinking aspect over the conception of gender. At The Citadel, the students’ lived experiences matches the binary thinking about the conception of masculinity and feminism. As an institution that accentuates the concept of manhood, The Citadel draws a solid line between male and female attributes, thus presenting two defined and opposite fields to which both males and females’ roles in society are predetermined. However, there is, as always, a murky middle ground where those who apply the concept of “engaged
withdrawal" break free from that gender conundrum. Faludi mentions a statement from Lownie, a drag queen at the Treehouse, who illustrated the concept of "engaged withdrawal" at as she talked about the similar life in the military environment: “You don’t have to be a bread-winner. You don’t have to be a leader. You can play back seat. It’s a great relief. You can act like a human being and not like have to act like a man” (102). Lownie’s idea might sound like passivity, it’s all about what you do not have to do, but it is a way of escaping social expectations, or in the case of the cadets, a way to escape The Citadel’s regimen and limiting gender binary. Nelson’s engaged withdrawal is already at work in some parts of The Citadel, and has the potential to help cadets regain their sense of morality despite the violence they witness.

Nelson’s idea of the “third term” does not literally match the situation of the students at The Citadel; however, the core concept of it carries potential analogs to the students' situations. Nelson analyses Rancière’s theory of the “third term” by saying: “The emancipatory value of this third thing, as Rancière sees it, lies in the fact that that no one can own it; no one can own its meaning. Its function is to mediate, but not in the sense of imitating or representing a reality from which spectators are barred. Here, ‘the mediate’ relates people to each other, with relation signifying the process of being brought together and given a measure of space from each other at the same time”(308). Nelson’s accentuation on the fact that “no one can own it; no one can own its meaning” shows that this third thing is something that is completely independent to the other two things, and its function matters more than its nature or characteristics. In thinking in terms of visual illustration, in terms of colors, you have black on one side of the spectrum and white on the other and they do not meet. But if you introduce a third color (gray or red) both black and
white now have a meeting place to converse on equal ground. However, this third color (gray or red) is only relevant because of its function as mediator, not because of its aspect (could be blue or green). Consequently, the third term at The Citadel is not a “book or some piece or writing”, but rather a more conceptual entity: it is something that brings both the knobs and the cadets together, but also prevents them from collapsing onto each other. This “mediation” that relates all the students at The Citadel to each other is the will to escape gender rules. At the end of her essay, Faludi expresses her “eureka!” moment as she figured out that “what was generating that void, that yearning, in the cadets’ lives – maybe in the life of many American men. What was going on here was play. A kind of freedom and spontaneity that, in this culture, only women are permitted” (102). Faludi’s use of words such as “void” and “yearning” denotes an ardent feeling of emptiness and longing to be free in a culture that sets infinite obstacles that deprive men to be manly in their way. This banning of carrying androgynous characteristics, pushed men to find different ways to express their “void and yearning” as Faludi notes: “No wonder men found their Citadels, their Treehouses, where the rule of gender could be bent or escaped. For the drag queens of the Treehouse, the distinctions between the sexes are a goof, to be endlessly manipulated with fun-house-mirror glee. For cadets, despite the play set of The Citadel and the dress-up braids and ribbons, the guarding of their treehouse is a deal-serious business” (102). Ultimately, everything converges to the unique reason for all the violence, isolation, and misogyny at The Citadel. The third term discussed by Rancière has here, a whole different facet but it stills hold its same function of bringing all the men at The Citadel together, but at the same time give them “a measure of space” from each other.
The two essays give a full description and evidence of how what we watch, hear, and feel in the outside world affects our inner consciousness and thus it can alter our way of reasoning and interacting with each other. Therefore, we should question the nature and purpose of things such as the media and the scholastic institutions. Our vulnerability to image flow and lived experience, give power to the media and institutions such as universities to control our ways of thinking and even our ways of living.
In “The Ecstasy of Influence: A Plagiarism” Jonathan Lethem argues that rather than being a crime, the act of sharing and appropriating the words and expressions of other individuals provides tremendous value to both the so-called artistic fugitive and society as a whole. Contrary to the idea that an artist is drawn to their respective discipline solely as a result of the urges of their inner creative voice, Lethem argues that for most artists the initial urge to create begins with the admiration of the work of another revered artist. Lethem says, “Most artists are brought to their vocation when their own nascent gifts are awakened by the work of a master. That is to say, most artists are converted to art by art itself” (Lethem 214).

Considering Lethem’s ideas along with Barbara Fredrickson’s biological perspective of love and Andrew Solomon's thoughts on love and identity, respond to the following prompt: to what extent is our connection to art and ideas a form of love?

Alex

A Conversation Between Generations

The story of culture is the story of humanity. Culture is passed down through generations. A thing to be inherited, and a thing that inherits; we are as much the expression of our culture as it is an expression of ourselves. Jonathan Lethem addresses this dual nature of culture in his essay, “The Ecstasy of Influence: A Plagiarism”. It is futile to avoid imitation in culture, Lethem argues, because this process of imitation is the very means by which culture progresses. According to Lethem, the past and present are both factors in how culture is formed. Andrew Solomon’s essay, “Son”, presents an interesting analogue to this. Instead of focusing as Lethem does on how individuals shape culture, Solomon explains how culture can shape the individual. The distinction Solomon makes between the inherited and the adopted is reminiscent of the duality Lethem highlights in
past and present culture. Just as children represent the future of their families, modern culture is a culmination of our cultural history. However, Barbara Fredrickson’s essay, “Love 2.0: How Our Supreme Emotion Affects Everything We Feel, Think, Do, and Become” complicates the relationship between Solomon and Lethem. Fredrickson details the different kinds of neurological chemical reactions that run counterpart to our typical definition of love. Fredrickson argues that this biological approach fosters a better understanding of love than by thinking in terms of relationships. While Solomon’s account contradicts this view, when taken within its proper context Fredrickson’s theory provides an excellent supplement to the portrait both Solomon and Lethem depict. Fredrickson’s analysis shows that there is a biological side to love, but also that the rapport we share over ideas themselves can have physical substance. In this way, the pulse of culture beats through us. With these authors in eventual agreement, it becomes clear that our culture of art and ideas is a conversation across generations; culture is a timeless dimension in which love, inspiration, and ideas can be shared.

This view of culture can be surprising to some. People create culture - isn’t a conversation across culture simply a conversation between people? Yet Lethem and Solomon show that an individual’s identity is an inextricable part of culture. While Lethem’s primary argument is that ideas should be free, the most compelling aspect of his essay is that it itself is (legitimately) plagiarized. It itself is a testament to the power of freely shared ideas. It is also an example of how culture can be brought to argue its own case: Lethem’s role in this composition is that of a reporter; a spectator. Despite that Lethem used his sources to establish his own views, he was ultimately a passenger to the ideas he adopted. Lethem himself would agree with this view, he himself saying, “That is to say,
most artists are converted to art by art itself. Finding one's voice isn't just an emptying and purifying oneself of the words of others but an adopting and embracing of filiations, communities, and discourses.” (Lethem 214) For Lethem, expressing your beliefs is not a matter of shutting out other ways of thinking, but instead to incorporate them into your own. We gain agency over our ideas by understanding where they come from, Lethem explains. With Lethem’s essay in mind, it is easy to think of ideas as developing in a linear fashion, but Solomon complicates this with his concept of horizontal identities. Solomon defines horizontal identities as any trait or belief one does not inherit from their parents. Vertical identities, respectively, refer to the traits and beliefs that we do inherit. Solomon notes how these two identities are in interplay, “To look deep into your child’s eyes and see in him both yourself and something utterly strange, and then to develop a zealous attachment to every aspect of him, is to achieve parenthood's self-regarding, yet unselfish, abandon.”(Solomon 373) As passengers of culture, our children are the expression of how ideas and identities change over time. They inherit the ideas of the previous generation, but they also incorporate the beliefs of their own generation. This theme is not lost on Lethem himself. Lethem says, “Old and new make the warp and woof of every moment. There is no thread that is not a twist of these two strands. … Neurological study has lately shown that memory, imagination, and consciousness itself is stitched, quilted, pastiched. If we cut-and-paste our selves, might we not forgive it of our artworks?”(Lethem 225) While we may be able to individuate ourselves and find our own voice, we nevertheless do this by stitching ourselves from culture, as Lethem says. The result is that we are always a part of culture - culture and the identities of the people change in unison because they are as one.
Just as we are a part of culture, culture is a real, physical part of us. Fredrickson argues that there is a biological counterpart to the ways in which we interact. Fredrickson’s idea of neural coupling is interesting, because it shows how brains can directly interact with each other. Fredrickson argues this, “Neural coupling like this is a biological manifestation of oneness. ...Under the influence of positive emotions, your sense of self actually expands to include others to greater degrees. Your best friend, in these lighthearted moments, simply seems like a bigger part of you.” (Fredrickson 113) Fredrickson’s idea of brain coupling is an excellent supplement to Solomon’s and Lethem’s ideas about culture and identity. In a traditional view of culture, the individual is a necessary axiom - culture can’t progress without the people to create it. But Fredrickson’s theory of brain coupling reduces the interpersonal to the intrapersonal; a dialogue between two minds can be thought of as a monologue within one. Therefore, it is as if the individual as a boundary between ideas has been erased. Ideas can be thought of as occupying their own space, with people as nothing more than an expression of culture. However, Solomon provides a perspective contrary to some of Fredrickson’s views. Instead of the similarity between people being the force that brings them together, Solomon says that, “Difference unites us. While each of these experiences can isolate those who are affected, together they compose an aggregate of millions whose struggles connect them profoundly.” (Solomon 371) The vast number of different groups that Solomon claims exist serve to diminish the impact of Fredrickson’s argument, since her claims are only restricted to those who are in love, whereas Solomon speaks of all social groups. Nevertheless, Fredrickson’s ideas are powerful within their limited context. Although Fredrickson’s idea of brain coupling is only relevant to those with a certain closeness, love according to Fredrickson is
able to spread in “upward spirals”. As Fredrickson says, “All of love’s unseen biological transformations--in your brain rhythms, your blood stream, your vagus nerve, and your cells--in turn ready you to become even more attuned to love, better equipped, biologically, to cultivate moments of positivity resonance with others.”(Fredrickson 121) Positivity therefore spreads in upward spirals, and with positivity comes the uninhibited exchange of ideas. Fredrickson’s narrow thesis is expanded with Solomon’s idea of horizontal identity. Although we inherit part of our identity from our parents, we choose part of our identity ourselves; associating with any subcultures we wish to be a part of. Within these communities, positivity resonance can be an important factor, and the boundaries between people are erased; so that ideas take on a life of their own. While we may have individual identities, our positivity resonance bridges the gaps between us; allowing ideas to transpire uninhibitedly.

While culture can be a space where many can interact, it can also reach across time itself; allowing people from different generations to converse. Lethem completely agrees with this view of culture as being a continuum of ideas from which we draw. Lethem says just this, “The world of art and culture is a vast commons...The closest resemblance is to the commons of a language: altered by every contributor, expanded by even the most passive user. That a language is a commons doesn’t mean that the community owns it; rather it belongs between people, possessed by no one, not even by society as a whole.”(Lethem 222) Lethem sees culture as a commons that everyone takes from. Whereas Lethem focuses on the development of culture as a thing in itself, Solomon’s focuses on the individuals that participate in culture and their groups. Solomon says of the internet, “Modern life is lonely in many ways, but the ability of everyone with access to a
computer to find like-minded people has meant that no one need be excluded from social kinship. If the physical or psychic place to which you were born wants no more of you, an infinitude of locales of the spirit beckons." (Solomon 385) Instead of explaining culture as Lethem does - as a commons - Solomon instead describes it in terms of the communities that comprise it. As a part of culture, we are all able to communicate using ideas; and in some sense we are an expression of these ideas ourselves. Furthermore, Lethem depicts culture as something timeless. While as people we are of our own era, the ideas that we espouse can be traced back many generations before our time - nothing is original, Lethem claims. In the same way that the new generation will adopt the ways of the previous, so too is there a relationship of succession in culture. Lethem says that, "Any text that has infiltrated the common mind to the extent of *Gone With the Wind* or *Lolita* or *Ulysses* inexorably joins the language of culture. A map-turned-to-landscape, it has moved to a place beyond enclosure or control" (Lethem 224). The culture we create, which draws on the culture of the past, will become in turn the new cultural background that future generations will draw from. While for Solomon this depicts a theme of horizontal identities diverging from vertical ones, for Lethem this represents a conversation between generations. Both authors, however, understand the theme of past and present generations being in dialogue. The most pertinent theme in Solomon’s essay was of acceptance: the past generation comes to accept the present; not in spite of their differences but rather because of them. Lethem’s essay as well highlights the importance of culture in this kind of dialogue. Artists must inherit the culture of the past in order to draw the inspiration to express themselves and add their own perspective. For both authors, this is a kind of communication between past and present.
Culture is passed down from generation to generation. Solomon’s concept of vertical and horizontal identities shows that despite some aspects of identity being hereditary, there are still traits we find for ourselves as individuals. Still, Lethem’s portrayal of culture as an all-encompassing mindset is very convincing. Solomon’s multicultural values are also addressed in Lethem’s text when he acknowledges that we are a pastiche of values from culture itself, but it is in addressing this that the true strength of Lethem’s argument is shown; for all of the values that we use to individuate ourselves are part of culture nonetheless. Culture may be created by us, but by taking inspiration from our place in culture, we make ourselves part of it. By knitting ourselves into this cultural tapestry of art and ideas, we are able to converse with individuals who may not even be alive anymore - philosophers criticize one another centuries apart; playwrights take inspiration from tales of dead kings. And the power of culture to reach across boundaries allows us more than ever to accept one another despite our differences. By drawing on our history, we can overcome the problems of the present. This emanation then becomes the new cultural background for future generations to discover. Ultimately, the story passed down through the generations becomes the story of humanity itself.
Citing specific evidence from both Nelson and Lethem, write an essay that presents a coherent argument in response to the following questions: What is the relationship between reimagining culture as a “commons,” and “human freedom”? Does the “violent” nature of contemporary society (as per Nelson) influence this relationship? How?

Zachary

Authorship amidst Mere Anarchy: When the Centers Should Not Hold

Human freedom lies in the ability of an individual to make meaningful choices, those that are made through free will. Though one’s will is certainly influenced by an environment, it is free to the extent that is preserves the centrality of the individual’s role in crafting decisions. This centrality is akin to authorship: an author inhabits and coheres multiple perspectives, but she never becomes limited to the work of another. Jonathan Lethem, in “The Ecstasy of Influence: A Plagiarism,” defends the authorial right of each individual to choose the ideas that they use and develop, without fear of being punished for the reuse of ideas. He valorizes reuse and its accompanying “ecstasy” and “intoxication.” To this end, he proposes that culture should be reconceived as a “commons,” that which “belongs to everyone and no one, and [whose] use is controlled only by common consent” (Lethem 222). Lethem’s definition is a bit restrictive in its specificity. So to be more inclusive, one can generalize the idea of a commons to that of a common space. Operationally, a common space is a social center that gathers together information and ideas, making them available for the use of a group’s members. Thus Lethem’s “commons” is a kind of common space, specifically one without centralized control. But
regardless of whether or not a particular common space is structured around centralized control, it necessarily liberates creative options for people to draw from, ostensibly increasing human freedom through the sheer quantity of choice that it enables. But Maggie Nelson would reject this notion, as she would reject any idealization of the free flow of ideas. In “Great to Watch,” she emphasizes the problematic nature inherent to the unrestricted spread of ideas, especially through images. From Nelson’s perspective, common spaces bring about an availability of ideas that is overwhelming, befuddling, and ultimately coercive. In any case, the world contains a multitude of common spaces from which to construct authorship and freedom. But such freedom does not come from even the most passionately intense engagement in a single common space. Rather, human freedom is achieved through a demanding mindful engagement with multiple common spaces.

Human freedom cannot be understood independently of influence, especially commodification. Nelson describes reality TV contestants as possessing a special kind of masochism, one “of the I'll-do-anything-for-fame-or-money variety, not the I-do-this-because-it-gives-me-pleasure variety: outing one's pleasures, it seems, remains more taboo than outing one's ambition or avarice)” (Nelson 301). These contestants do not sacrifice agency because they take direct pleasure in it. Instead, they do it to gain power in the form of “fame” and “money.” In this instance there is arguably more external influence involved than actual human freedom. The contestants volunteer to suffer tortures such as waterboarding, sleep deprivation, and live burial (Nelson 301). By enduring these privations, allowing their own basic needs to not be met, they relinquish agency completely. How can one be free but unable to choose to breathe? In this case, the
suffering of the contestant is commodified, ascribed value for exchange. Though two parties enter into this deal, it seems as if the network derives a disproportionate profit. The contestant’s choice to be subjugated is both free and rational, but it is unjust. This exemplifies the dangers of commodification. Although there is a very literal difference between gift and commodity exchange, there is also a difference in human meaning. Lethem remarks “The cardinal difference between gift and commodity exchange is that a gift establishes a feeling-bond between two people, whereas the sale of a commodity leaves no necessary connection” (Lethem 221). This assertion has a direct implication here. If television producers dealt with their contestants like members of a community “gifting” their time, the “feeling-bond” established would forestall any thoughts of harm, let alone torture. At the same time there is a counterposing ethic that legitimizes ostensible “vandalism” as “loving use” (Lethem 219). As The Velveteen Rabbit’s skin horse put it “By the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby” (Lethem 219). But this is precisely the distinction needed for human freedom: a human is already “Real” and does not need to endure an ordeal in order to become more “Real.” A person can neither be “vandalized” nor “lovingly used”, because a person is not a means, but an end in itself. It is for this exact reason that a human’s experience should never be commodified.

The world contains many common spaces, each accessible to a group of people. Since a common space is any environment that gathers information and makes it available, it is clear that there exist many of them. As Lethem notes, every spoken language is a “commons,” so they must also each be common spaces (Lethem 222). Further, Lethem notes that celebrity gossip is a commons, and similarly must be
considered as a common space (Lethem 222). However when Lethem writes that “Einstein’s theory of creativity is a commons,” his own definition entails that it “belongs to everyone” (Lethem 222). If the theory of relativity belongs to everyone, then it necessarily “belongs” to students unfamiliar with even the most basic principles of physics. Though Einstein’s theory could be considered available to all, it is only accessible to a small percentage of those who could possibly read about it. But sometimes accessibility is set up in a more concrete way. When the Texas Border Sheriff’s Coalition (TBSC) placed cameras on the Mexican border to monitor illegal entry to the United States, they “invited the home viewer to log on, pick a spot, and start ‘directly monitoring suspicious criminal activity via this virtual fenceSM” (Nelson 302). Though the website is available to all people to visit through their browsers, it is constructed to not be accessible to everyone. Hidden in Nelson’s description is the phrase “log on,” which implies that only those with certain credentials (such as U.S. citizenship) can access this information. Moreover, here there is the further issue of emotional accessibility. Even though most Americans would be allowed to access the camera footage, only the particularly xenophobic and paranoid would volunteer their time to such a system. Hence a common space can only be fully understood when the underlying group of users is specified.

For a common space to be liberating, it must possess an artistic quality, a quality that preserves authorship. Nelson brings up a more troubling example of a common space, the Hub, specifically the Hub’s Witness Project. The Hub bills itself as “the world’s first participatory media site for human rights,” aiming to use “video and online technologies to open the eyes of the world to human rights violations” (Nelson 303). Just from the title and description, it appears that the Hub is a common space. After all, a “hub” is literally a
center of activity. Further, by “opening the eyes of the world” to human rights abuses, the 
Hub spreads information. Having established this, one can begin to examine the Hub’s 
greater purpose of examination, it’s “eye.” Nelson mentions that the Hub tries to “zero in on 
the little window of time between an upsurge of outrage or sympathy and the onset of 
apathy,” encouraging its visitors to participate through advocacy tools “ranging from a 
signing email petitions to writing members of Congress to sending money to a variety of 
organizations to creating ‘offline events’” (Nelson 303). Though this is not quite 
estroturfing, it can only be construed as artful in the worst sense of the word. It is not true 
art, but manipulation. Lethem illustrates this guiding principle of true art well, explaining 
that an ad “can never be any kind of real art: an ad has not status as a gift; i.e., it’s never 
really for the person its directed at” (Lethem 221). This is precisely the artistic quality that 
the Hub fails to sustain through its “zeroing in.” The Hub targets individuals who may be 
sympathetic to a cause in order to steal authorship. In this sense, the message is not for 
the recipient it is directed at, but for the benefit of those captured in the Hub’s images. 
Moreover, the “signing of e-mail petitions,” is a particularly galling example of agency being 
transferred from a person to a common space. A person signing a petition actually signs 
another’s message, endorsing it without authoring it. Though ideally, a person makes a 
rational choice when deciding to endorse such a message, people tend to be moved by 
the pathos of imagery. In this way, the rational agency of the individual is subverted in 
order to take authorship.

Authorship demands awareness and the conscious effort that it entails. To retain 
centrality and agency, a person must be aware of his or her influences. Lethem lamented 
that “The effort of preserving another’s distinctive phrases as I worked on this essay was
sometimes beyond my capacities; this form of plagiarism was oddly hard work” (Lethem 229). When Lethem attempted to be fully cognizant of any and all influences on his essay, he found it to be “beyond [his] capacities, because awareness requires effort. The Hub can be seen as the antithesis of Lethem’s project of weaving works together. Signing prewritten letters and calling congressmen with preplanned agendas trivially preserves the work of another without the “hard work.” It is easy to preserve the work of another while surrendering authorship. But Lethem’s tour de force shows how powerful a message can be when an author leverages his source awareness to weave something resonant. In fact, human freedom dissolves without this awareness. When considering the national dialogue on torture, Nelson demonstrates what happens when this awareness is compromised: “The Bush/Cheney dyad of denial/justification represents two sides of a single coin…the average citizen can then ricochet between these two irreconcilable, collaborative poles until desensitization sets in, and with it, a begrudging (or, for some, an enthusiastic) acceptance of the practice” (Nelson 306). When a person’s awareness of an issue is benumbed by the “ricocheting” between irreconcilable narratives, the individual is forced to take the path of least resistance. Unable to neither undo nor prevent torture, the position is assumed automatically, without being directly chosen. Here, the individual is not central, but limited to the thin liminal space between the sides of the coin. Therefore an active attempt at awareness is vital to the realization of human freedom.

In the end, individual agency and awareness can shake up the structure of common spaces. As psychologists impugn the American Psychological Association (APA) and “redditors” leave their site in droves, it appears that no centralized common spaces exist in a stable state. Common consent is a fickle thing: when a social center makes any change,
it risks alienating its members. But this is also reflective of the disparity between how much common consent is involved in being a member, and the amount involved in decision-making. This disparity is especially troubling for the APA. The members were not represented in a way compatible with common consent. Though something similar happened with Reddit, it seems the latter case did not involve human rights violations. But this is an old story, reflecting the cyclical nature of life. To borrow from Battlestar Galactica, who themselves borrowed from Peter Pan: "All this has happened before, and all of it will happen again."