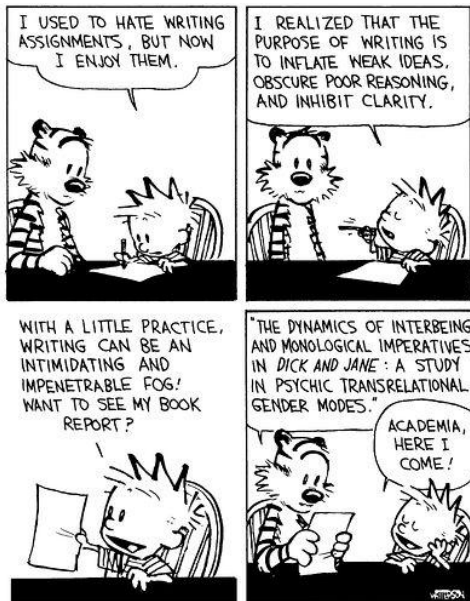


Critical Inquiries Major Paper(s)

engl 466 / sec. A / winter quarter 2013 / chang



The central intellectual, imaginative, and academic activity of this class is reading, thinking, and writing analytically and critically. You will be required to write **up to three** formal papers over the course of the quarter that engage each of the novels and theoretical texts of the class. Papers will be due and collected three times during the quarter, approximately in Week 5, Week 8, and Finals Week. **You must complete a minimum of two papers.** Each paper will be graded and the average of the number completed will constitute 50% of your final grade.

Goals and Outcomes

For this **4- to 6-page** formal, researched paper, you will identify **one** central critical question, lens, or theory to use to close-read, analyze, and explicate the weeks' required novel:

- Major Paper #1: Nella Larsen's *Passing*
- Major Paper #2: James Baldwin's *Another Country*
- Major Paper #3: Octavia Butler's *Adulthood Rites*

Armed with the theoretical concepts from the readings, class discussions, and outside research, **generate your own claim, your own argument** about the weeks' novel. Begin with a critical question. For example, how does Nella Larsen's *Passing* negotiate the intersection of gender and race? What does James Baldwin's *Another Country* reveal about the instabilities in the definitions of homosexual and heterosexual? How does Octavia Butler's *Adulthood Rites* challenge traditional, normative definitions of what it means to be human? The answer(s) to your critical question will be the framework for your claim. Be selective and specific in your claim. Think about the following questions when you sit down to make your claim (pick and choose the best and most relevant questions to use as a way to generate ideas and subclaims).

- What question does the text leave you asking? What difficulty or confusion needs articulation, clarification, or critique? Your claim will be the answer these critical questions.
- How does the text demonstrate or complicate the goals of the class? How might the text push, expand, or focus your understanding of a key concept, definition, theory, practice? How might you use a keyword to analyze the text?
- What connection to other texts can you make? How might you use one of the framing theoretical texts as a way to close read or analyze a critical passage or concern in the novel?
- Finally, for all of the above, why is that important? What is the analytical, rhetorical, or literary stake?

These formal, academic writings serve as close readings, analyses, and articulations of the texts and connections you see, read, and talk about in class. These responses are more than just summaries or personal reactions or rehashing of our discussions and will be graded on clarity, focus, coherence, critique, argument, support, and your ability to formulate a precise claim, close read both novel and theory, and substantively use academic research.

Guidelines and Due Dates

- Format:** Formal, academic paper, 4-6 pages, typed, no title page, 1" margins, doubled-spaced body, proper heading & title
MLA in-text, parenthetical citation & bibliography (which includes at least 3 recent, relevant, academic outside sources)
- Due:** Major Paper #1 due Tuesday, February 5, at the start of class
Major Paper #2 due Tuesday, February 26, at the start of class
Major Paper #3 due Monday, March 18, at _____