

WRITE TO VOTE
ENGL BC 3911



Wednesday 10:10 am-12:00 pm
Fall Term 2017

<https://enlx3911-001-2017-3.wikispaces.columbia.edu>

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“Just as there is implicit in the act of voting the responsibility of helping to govern, there is implicit in the act of writing a responsibility for the quality of the American language – and responsibility for preserving and extending the quality of the literature.”

– Ralph Ellison, 1967

TEXTS

The following texts are available for purchase at Book Culture. Supplementary readings are available on the course wiki.

William Wells Brown	<i>Clotel, or The President's Daughter</i> (Bedford/St. Martin's)	978-0-312-15265-9
Thomas Dixon, Jr.	<i>The Clansman: An Historical Romance of the Ku Klux Klan</i> (UP of Kentucky)	978-0-8131-0126-2
William Faulkner	<i>The Unvanquished</i> (Vintage)	978-0-679-73652-3
Joseph Gibaldi (ed.)	<i>MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th ed.</i> (MLA)	978-0-873-52975-4
Fannie Lou Hamer	<i>Fannie Lou Hamer: To Tell It Like It Is</i> (UP of Mississippi)	978-1-61703-836-5
Alexander Hamilton, et. al.	<i>The Federalist Papers</i> (Dover)	978-0-486-49636-8

Zora Neale Hurston	<i>Their Eyes Were Watching God</i> (McGraw-Hill)	978-0-07-243422-4
Robert Munford	<i>The Plays of Robert Munford</i> , (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform)	978-1-4404-8669-2
Henry David Thoreau	<i>Civil Disobedience and Other Essays</i> (Dover)	978-0-486-27563-5
Walt Whitman	<i>Democratic Vistas</i> (University of Iowa Press)	978-1-58729-870-7

Each unit includes a set of required readings and a section entitled “*Additional readings.*” Additional readings are optional and intended to supplement the required texts for those who want to delve deeper. They may be of use to moderators, condensed essay writers and extended essayists who want to engage the required readings in greater detail. In the course of preparing the wiki and leading class discussion, for example, moderators may use the additional readings to help them formulate questions, prompts and ideas.

WIKI

Many assignments this term will involve a course wiki that will allow us to communicate between class meetings and help us prepare for seminar discussions. The wiki can be found at <https://englx3911-001-2017-3.wikispaces.columbia.edu>.

MODERATING SEMINAR DISCUSSIONS

This semester, you and a team of colleagues will be responsible for **moderating two seminars**. You will sign up for these sessions at our first class meeting. As a seminar moderator, you will be responsible for working as a team to prepare and edit the **class plan** on the wiki. In its bare form, the class plan page includes the required reading assignments and a space for class discussion. As moderator, you are asked to add (1.) questions and issues for consideration, (2.) passages that you’d like your classmates to consider from the assigned texts, and (3.) additional materials that you’ve found interesting, relevant or provocative such as images, links, newspaper articles, blogs, film clips, or relevant works of literature. Posted material should be pointed and specific. Moderators should avoid copying blocks of background material. Instead, when they post a passage from one of the readings, they should use the passage to raise a specific question or issue. Similarly, when adding related material, they should indicate the specific concerns that you want us to consider. If moderators want to include a film clip, for example, tell us what to look for and what to ask ourselves. Feel free to reflect differences of opinion within the moderator team; you need not reach a critical consensus.

Moderators should add to the wiki gradually and over the course of the week prior to our scheduled class. During that week, other seminar participants will use the expanding class plan to guide their reading. **Moderators are expected to have the majority of the class plan completed by Tuesday at 9:00 PM.** In the time remaining, moderators can refine their wiki page based on discussion comments posted by other seminar members.

Because the readings will raise multiple critical possibilities, each week’s moderators must carefully choose the threads that they want to emphasize on the wiki. They must then present these threads in a graphically coherent and intelligible way. Like any website, the wiki is **a visual form**. A grocery list of random questions and images can be confusing and hard to read. You will therefore want to organize and group your materials under clear headings, and lead your peers through your concerns in a logical way.

When our seminar meets on Wednesday morning, the week's moderators will guide class discussion, using a projected image of the wiki as they see fit. In conducting class, moderators can include any of the following at their discretion:

- A **focused free-writing exercise** (5 minutes). "Free writing" simply means putting pen to paper and writing whatever comes into your head. It is a useful process for generating ideas and discovering argumentative possibilities. The key here is to keep writing, even when you are having difficulty thinking of something to say. Try not to lift your pen from paper. If you get stuck, write "what else?" and keep going. To begin this exercise, moderators will first ask a few broad warm-up questions prompts to get the class discussion going. They may want to post these questions in advance on the wiki, or they may want to draw their questions from student discussion posts to the wiki. Your prompt should reflect an open-ended curiosity about the reading. (e.g. "Based on your reading of *The Candidates*, how would you describe the political climate of colonial America?" or "Analyze the following image from *The Federalist*."). Moderators are responsible for keeping track of time. When there is one minute remaining in the focused free-writing exercise, they should announce "one minute." At the end, they should ask peers to finish their thought. Moderators may choose to survey the class about the ideas that emerged from the free-write, or they may want to proceed directly to their class plan: it's up to you.
- A **small group discussion** (8 minutes/section). At some point in our seminar period, divide the class into groups, with each group lead by one moderator. Put each moderator in charge of a question and, while keeping track of time, ask each group to rotate through the different topics. When the class returns back to the main table, moderators report on what ideas were raised in their section.
- **Paired discussions** (5-8 minutes). Divide the class into pairs and ask each pair to discuss a question that connects the week's readings to each other. Keep track of time as before. When the groups return to the main table, ask each group to report back on what they discussed and the main points that emerged from their discussion.

For information on how moderators will be evaluated, see the "**Moderating Rubric**" page on the wiki.

CLASS DISCUSSION AND WIKI PARTICIPATION

The real action in this course takes place in the classroom. You are asked to come to seminar prepared, with your reading assignments completed and your contributions to the wiki posted in a timely fashion. Because learning how to articulate your ideas is a crucial part of the intellectual process, you will be expected to contribute your own unique perspective to class discussion, however preliminary you feel those ideas may be. Keep in mind that there are many ways to participate in class: declarative statements are just one way, but there are many others. You may ask questions, for example, or rephrase what another student has said to enhance your own and others' understanding. You can seek clarification, or supplement a peer's claim by adding another example. Class participation comes in many forms. That said, class attendance and punctuality are mandatory: chronic lateness and/or more than one absence will adversely affect your grade.

Each member of the senior seminar who is not one of the week's moderators should post **one weekly critical reaction** to the **discussion section** of the week's class plan. (The discussion section can be found by clicking on the "discussion" tab at the bottom of each page.) Class members may participate in the discussion throughout the week, but the final deadline for

posting is **by 8 AM** on Wednesday morning. When adding a comment, please include your name at the bottom of the post so that we know who you are. Moderators will incorporate these critical reactions into the class plan and the seminar discussion.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

Each written assignment will take place in two stages: first a draft to be submitted to the Writing Fellow, then a revised version to be submitted to JAK.

CONDENSED ESSAY and FIVE-ITEM ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Your condensed essay serves as a trial run of the argument you hope to make in your extended essay. It should foreground close readings of your chosen text, although it may also (but need not necessarily) begin to draw on the research summarized in your annotated bibliography. As with other critical essays, your condensed essay should be argumentative and organized. Support your claims with specific and carefully analyzed textual evidence. The draft of your condensed essay, due to CourseWorks on Friday, October 20 by 6 PM, will be read by your Writing Fellow (see “Writing Fellows” below). After conferencing and revising, you should upload the final version of your condensed essay to CourseWorks no later than 4:00 PM on Monday, Nov. 20.

Although your topic need not center on a text we are reading in class, it must concern some aspect of voting or electoral politics in a work of American literature. Your annotated bibliography should include at least five sources, not including the required reading. You may, however, include any of the “Additional readings” noted on the syllabus. Each bibliographic entry should be followed by a 2-3 sentence summary of your source – its argument and its anticipated relevance to your project. Your annotations, in other words, should demonstrate that you have read the source. Your annotated bibliography should be double-spaced and follow the form specified in Chapter 4 of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th ed.* (Keep in mind that, because this is a bibliographic assignment, correct bibliographic form is key.)

EXTENDED ESSAY

The semester will culminate in an extended scholarly research essay. You will begin conceptualizing your final paper in your condensed essay and in your annotated bibliography. You may use any or all parts of your condensed essay in your extended essay.

A **draft of your extended essay** will be due by Monday, Nov. 27 by 4:00 PM. You will meet in conference with your Writing Fellow (see below) during the following week. *Your draft must be at least 12 pages.* Your revised **20 pp. extended essay (maximum of 5800 words, excluding the bibliography)** is then due by Monday, Dec 11 by 4 PM. *There are no extensions: a half letter grade will be deducted for every day that a late assignment is past due.* Please plan ahead.

All written assignments should be uploaded to CourseWorks electronically as a Microsoft Word doc or docx in their best form:

- 12-point Times New Roman font
- double-spaced (*including* indented quotations)
- standard margins
- original title
- pages numbered

- documented with parenthetical references and a Works Cited list that follows the form specified in the MLA Handbook, 7th edition
- thoroughly proofread
- as a .doc or .docx file (*not* PDF)
- **NOTE:** You should submit a clean copy of each revised essay. To make sure that your essay no longer has your Writing Fellow's "Track Changes," either (1.) revise a duplicate of the document originally uploaded to your wiki page, or (2.) remove the tracked changes and comments from your Writing Fellow draft. To do the latter, see <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/word-help/remove-tracked-changes-and-comments-from-a-document-HA101822263.aspx?CTT=3>.

HONOR CODE

I take the Barnard Honor Code (1912) very seriously. Please read it, and follow it:

We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by refraining from every form of dishonesty in our academic life. We consider it dishonest to ask for, give, or receive help in examinations or quizzes, to use any papers or books not authorized by the instructor in examinations, or to present oral work or written work which is not entirely our own, unless otherwise approved by the instructor. We consider it dishonest to remove without authorization, alter, or deface library and other academic materials. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake.

The Honor Code puts a premium on intellectual integrity. Plagiarism (the use of someone else's words or ideas without attribution) is a serious violation of scholarly ethics, and will be reported to the Dean of Studies without exception. If you are at all confused about appropriate acknowledgment of sources, please see me for clarification.

WRITING FELLOWS

This course asks you to work with a Barnard Writing Fellow, a trained undergraduate peer tutor who has been competitively selected and rigorously trained in the mechanics and pedagogy of writing. The Writing Fellows are educated readers of your work and operate on the assumption that writing is a process: it happens in stages and drafts.

Two dates are listed for each written assignment. On the first date, you should upload your Writing Fellow draft to CourseWorks. After that, click on the Writing Fellow page on the wiki to sign up for your conference. The Writing Fellow will comment on your draft, post your marked draft to CourseWorks and then meet with you to discuss. You will then have an opportunity to revise the assignment before posting your final version to CourseWorks. You will work with the same Writing Fellow throughout the term. The Head Writing Fellow for this course is Ili Odouard (ico2108@barnard.edu; 415-990-8417). Please contact her if you have questions about the Writing Fellows working with this course. If you have questions about the Writing Program more generally, reach out to Katy Lasell, Coordinator of the Writing and Speaking Programs (klasell@barnard.edu; 212-854-8941).

Keep in mind that the Writing Fellows are a central part of this course. Failure to comply with Writing Fellow deadlines will adversely affect your grade (see "Course requirements" below).

DRAFTS, COMMENTS AND FORMAT

All class assignments are to be submitted electronically. Please upload your drafts and revisions to the specified Assignment page on CourseWorks. The Writing Fellows and I will download your work and mark the essay using the Microsoft Word comments feature (see <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/word-help/about-tracked-changes-and-comments-HP005241634.aspx?CTT=3>). The Writing Fellows and I will then upload the marked drafts and final assignments to CourseWorks. To keep your assignment files organized, please use the following file-naming system:

- last name_assignment_WFdraft_date.doc; or,
- last name_assignment_final_date.docx

For example, the file containing Sasha Obama's Writing Fellow draft of her condensed essay would be called obama_condessay_WFdraft_oct20.doc). The file containing the revision to be graded would be called obama_condessay_final_nov1.doc. Your marked essay will have either your Writing Fellow's initials or my initials added to the file name (ex. obama_extessay_final_dec11_jak.doc). Please note that this labeling system applies only to your file name: *each assignment should have its own original title.*

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) who need classroom accommodations are encouraged to see me at the beginning of term.

CELL PHONES, LAPTOPS, TABLETS AND FOOD

A recent study published in *Psychological Science* showed that students who take notes by hand not only retain more information, but also organize that information more effectively.¹ When possible, I ask that you bring printed copies of the readings to class and that you take notes by hand. Because I realize that this may not always be possible, I ask that those using tablets or laptops shut down all programs other than the wiki and/or the readings. Please turn off your laptop's social media notifications (email, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.). My job is to make this seemingly draconian act worth your while, and your job is to be fully present in class – intellectually, physically, metaphysically. As a rule, I ask that there be no food in the classroom. Drinks are fine.

OFFICE HOURS

You may sign up for an office-hour time slot or schedule an appointment with me at any time during the semester and for whatever reason. As a rule, I don't discuss substantive academic matters over email. To sign up for my office hours (Wednesdays, 2:00-4:00), please visit <http://kassanoff.wikischolars.columbia.edu>. To make an appointment outside of office hours, please e-mail me a complete list of convenient times during which we could meet, *including times before 10:00 a.m.* If you find that you cannot keep a pre-arranged office-hours appointment, please be considerate of others and cancel on the office hours wiki as soon as possible.

¹ Pam A. Mueller and Daniel M. Oppenheimer, "The Pen is Mightier Than The Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking," *Psychological Science* 25 (June 2014): 1159-1168.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Thoughtful, informed seminar participation 12%
- Weekly critical reactions on wiki, 12%
- Writing Fellow drafts and conferences, 5%
- Moderator activities, 16%
- Condensed essay and annotated bibliography (6 pp.), 20%
- Extended essay (20 pp. - maximum 5800 words, excluding the bibliography), 35%

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

- WE 9/6 **Introductions**
- WE 9/13 **The Purity of the Ballot Box**
 Robert Munford, *The Candidates; or, the Humours of a Virginia Election* (1770)
 Federalist X, XV, XXVII, LIV, LVIII, LXVIII (1788)
- Additional readings:*
 Paul Downes, Chapter 5, "Luxury, effeminacy, corruption: Irving and the gender of democracy," in *Democracy, Revolution, and Monarchism in Early American Literature* (Cambridge UP, 2002).
 Monica L. Miller, Chapter 1, "Mungo Macaroni: The Slavish Swell," *Slaves to Fashion: Black Dandyism and the Styling of Black Diasporic Identity* (Durham: Duke UP, 2009).
- WE 9/20 **"Drunken men quarreling and fighting": Gender, Race, Class and the Antebellum Electorate**
Election Day (Philadelphia: American Sunday School Union, 1832).
 Alexis de Tocqueville, selections from *Democracy in America* (New York: G. Dearborn & Co., 1838), 179-182; 230-234; 312-317.
 Harriet Beecher Stowe, Ch. IX from *Uncle Tom's Cabin; or, Life Among the Lowly* (1852; New York: Penguin, 1981), 141-161.
- Additional reading:*
 Patricia Crain. "Potent Papers: Secret Lives the Nineteenth-Century Ballot." *Common-Place: The Interactive Journal of Early American Life* 9 (Oct 2008):
 Kathleen Anne McHugh, *American Domesticity: From How-To Manual to Hollywood Melodrama*. New York: Oxford UP, 1999. 37-41.
- WE 9/27 **"Cast your whole vote": Slavery and the Franchise**
 Henry David Thoreau, *Civil Disobedience* (1849)
 William Wells Brown *Clotel; or, The President's Daughter: A Narrative of Slave Life in the United States* (1853). [Note: you are responsible for pp. 81-227 in the Bedford Cultural Edition]
- Additional reading:*
 Dana D. Nelson, "Voting and the Incredibly Shrinking Citizen." *Bad for Democracy: How the Presidency Undermines the Power of the People* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2008). 69-107l.
 Frederick Douglass, "Our Work is Not Done" (1863). *Frederick Douglass: Selected Speeches and Writings*. Ed. Philip S. Foner (Lawrence Hill Books, Chicago, IL, 1999) 546-553.

- WE 10/4 **Superficial Suffrage: Reconstruction and The Fifteenth Amendment**
 “All men free and equal.” The XVth amendment proclaimed. Message to Congress. Proclamation of the President. New Haven: J. H. Benham & Son, 1870. *Library of Congress*.
 Walt Whitman, *Democratic Vistas* (1871)
- Additional reading:*
 Francis Parkman, “The Failure of Universal Suffrage,” *The North American Review* 127 (July-Aug. 1878): 1-20.
 Peter Coviello, Chapter 4, “Loving Strangers: Intimacy and Nationality in Whitman” in *Intimacy in America: Dreams of Affiliation in Antebellum Literature* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2005).
 Michael Vorenberg, “Imagining a Different Reconstruction Constitution.” *Civil War History* (1 Dec. 2005): 416-426.
- WE 10/11 **Visibility, Invisibility and the Secret Ballot**
 Thomas Dixon, Jr. *The Clansman* (1905)
 Paul Laurence Dunbar, “A Mess of Pottage,” *The Strength of Gideon and Other Stories* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1899), 239-253.
- Additional reading*
 Martha Hodes, “The Sexualization of Reconstruction Politics: White Women and Black Men in the South after the Civil War,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 3 (Jan. 1993): 402-417.
 Mason Stokes, Introduction, *The Color of Sex: Whiteness, Heterosexuality, and the Fictions of White Supremacy* (Durham: Duke UP, 2001), 1-21.
- WE 10/18 **Bridal Veils and Ballot Boxes: Woman Suffrage in the South**
 William Faulkner, *The Unvanquished* (1938)
 Peri LaCoste, “Aunt Hannah Casts Her First Vote” (1920) In *The Competitor: Selected Short Stories, 1920-1921*, comp. by Alexander Street Press. (Alexandria, VA: Alexander Street Press, 2004). 105-106.
- Additional reading*
 Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, Chapter 4, “Southern Suffragists and the ‘the Negro Problem’,” in *New Women of the New South: The Leaders of the Woman Suffrage Movement in the Southern States* (New York: Oxford UP, 1993). 100-132.
 Sarah Wilkerson-Freeman, “The Second Battle for Woman Suffrage: Alabama White Women, the Poll Tax, and V. O. Key’s Master Narrative of Southern Politics.” *Journal of Southern History* 68 (May 2002): 333-374.
- FR 10/20 **DRAFT OF CONDENSED ESSAY DUE TO COURSEWORKS BY 6:00 PM.**
- 10/23-10/30 **WRITING FELLOW CONFERENCES**

- WE 10/25 **“Smug, contented, respectable folk”:** Hurston in the pre-VRA Era
 Walter White, “Election Day in Florida.” *Crisis* 21 (Jan. 1921): 106-109.
 Zora Neale Hurston, “The Ocoee Riot” (1938) reprinted in *Essence*
 (Feb. 1989): 61-62, 130-132.
 ---. *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937)
- Additional reading*
 Langston Hughes, “The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain,”
The Nation 122 (June 23, 1926): 692–694.
 Angela D. Dillard, “Malcolm X and African American Conservatism.” *The
 Cambridge Companion to Malcolm X*, ed. Robert E. Terrill
 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010) 90-100.
- WE 11/1 **NO CLASS: REVISED CONDENSED ESSAY PLUS ANNOTATED
 BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE TO COURSEWORKS BY 10:10 AM.**
- WE 11/8 **“Let us march on ballot boxes”:** Voting as Civil Right
 Junius Edwards, *If We Must Die* (1963)
 James Baldwin, “Going to Meet the Man” (1965)
 Dave Dennis, “Funeral Service for James Chaney” (1964), *Rhetoric,
 Religion, and the Civil Rights Movement, 1954-1965*. Eds. Davis W.
 Houck and David E. Dixon. Waco, TX: Baylor UP, 2006. 774-778.
 Eudora Welty, “Must the Writer Crusade?” (1965)
- Additional reading*
 James Baldwin, “Everybody’s Protest Novel” (1949). *Notes of a Native
 Son*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1957, c1955. 13-23.
 Martin Luther King, Jr. “Civil Right No. 1: The Right to Vote” (1965)
 Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, “Race, Reform, and Retrenchment:
 Transformation and Legitimation in Antidiscrimination Law,” *Harvard
 Law Review* 101 (May 1988): 1331-1387.
- WE 11/15 **“I’m Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired”:** The Activism of Fannie Lou
 Hamer
 Fannie Lou Hamer, *The Speeches of Fannie Lou Hamer*
 Stanley Nelson (dir.), “Freedom Summer,” American Experience (PBS)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rAmPIqMK8KI>
- Additional reading*
 Mississippi Voter Registration Form (1955)
 Malcolm X, “The Ballot or the Bullet” (1965) *Say It Loud: Great
 Speeches on Civil Rights and African American Identity*. Eds.,
 Catherine Ellis and Stephen Smith (New York: The New Press,
 2010) 1-18.
- WE 11/22 **NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING**
- MO 11/27 **DRAFT OF EXTENDED ESSAY DUE TO COURSEWORKS BY 4:00 PM.** Your
 draft should be at least 12 pp. and should include a works cited list that follows
 MLA bibliographic form.

- WE 11/29 **The Rise and Fall of the Voting Rights Act of 1965**
 United States Commission on Civil Rights, *The Voting Rights Act of 1965* (Washington: U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1965)
South Carolina v. Katzenbach (1966)
Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder (2013)
- Additional reading*
 Anthony Paul Farley, "Jackals, Tall Ships and the Endless Forest of Lies: Foreword to Symposium on the Voting Rights Act in the Wake of *Shelby County v. Holder*" *Berkeley Journal of African-American Law & Policy* 17 (2015): 1-10.
 "New Voting Restrictions in Place for 2016 Presidential Election," *The Brennan Center for Justice*. brennancenter.org. 21 Nov. 2016
 "Remarks of President Trump and Vice President Pence at the Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity Meeting," 19 July 2019. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/07/19/remarks-president-trump-and-vice-president-pence-presidential-advisory>
- 11/30-12/5 **WRITING FELLOW CONFERENCES**
- WE 12/6 **IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS** (8 minutes each; PowerPoints welcome).
- MO 12/11 **REVISED EXTENDED ESSAY DUE TO COURSEWORKS BY 4:00 PM.**

SEMINAR MEMBER SCHEDULE

	TOPIC/UNIT	DUE DATE
MODERATOR 1		
MODERATOR 2		