ENGL 235
Long paper assignment

Description: In this paper assignment, you’ll write a 5-7 page analysis of a question of your own choosing. You may treat anything we’ve read so far this semester; I’d recommend you stick to a single text, but if there’s a comparison you’d like to make let me know. This assignment will work in stages: first, you’ll submit possible paper topics to a web bulletin board; we’ll then discuss in class the topics suggested; you’ll turn in a paper proposal (described below); and last, the final version of the paper. This is not a research paper – do not look for outside sources to make your argument.

Due dates:

1. by Wednesday, March 17, 6 PM:
   a) go to http://eres.geneseo.edu/coursepage.asp?cid=505&page=01
   b) click on “discussion board” in right-hand column
   c) click on “general discussion”
   d) click on “post a new message”
   e) post three questions, which treat three different works, which you believe would make good paper topics. To formulate these questions, please read over your notes from discussion, and in particular think about questions which have produced disagreements in class, or perhaps questions you found interesting which we didn’t get to explore at length. Completion of this step will count as a quiz grade: 100 for doing it (on time, of course), 0 for failing to complete it.

2. Tuesday, March 30, in class: paper proposal due. Please note that the proposal stage may in fact be more difficult and time-consuming than the writing of the actual paper. This proposal will not be graded; however, failure to submit the proposal will mean you will not be allowed to write the paper. Your proposal should include:
   • One question-worth-asking, and a list of potential answers to that question. Please explain these answers in detail, using examples from the text to make your ideas as clear and concrete as possible. If you can only imagine one possible answer to your question, you may want to ask yourself whether it merits an essay-length investigation.
   • A draft of your introduction. First, it should present some context in which to understand the question you want to ask. Second, it should identify a problem or question which the text presents. Third, it should explain why this question is important to an interpretation of the text. Why does it matter? And lastly, you should provide an answer to the question you posed, which is what you will argue in the paper.
   • A catalog of evidence. At this stage in the writing process, you should strive for quantity and variety of evidence, so that you can pick the best possible examples as you write. Your catalog should include long quotations, short quotations, as well as your own descriptions of relevant events in the text. Try to find at least twenty pieces of evidence you might use to address your question.
   • several models of good paper proposals will be available on the class website in the “assignments and handouts” area

3. Tuesday, April 6: paper proposals returned

4. Tuesday April 20, in class: final paper due. 5-7 pages, must have a title, must be proof-read, spell-checked, double-spaced, stapled, numbered pages with correct citations