

Critical Review Essay
Writ 1301: University Writing and Critical Reading
R. Madson

Assignment: Write a critical review of one of the following essays/groups of essays:

- ★ “Hooks on the Language of Power”
- ★ “Understanding Cultural Relativism in a Multicultural World” by Caleb Rosado
- ★ “White Privilege and Male Privilege” by Peggy McIntosh
- ★ Chapter 1 from *Queen Bees and Wannabes* by Rosalind Wiseman
- ★ “Embodied Borders: Snowboarding, Status and Style” by Holly Thorpe
- ★ “Prom Dreams and Prom Reality: Girls Negotiating “Perfection” at the High School Prom” by Nichole Zlatunich
- ★ “One Hundred Dollars and a Dead Man: Ethical Decision Making in Ethnographic Fieldwork” by Steven L. Vanderstaay

As you read: Make notes on the essay itself. Pay close attention to the following:

- ★ What are the main points and how do they support them?
- ★ What are points that make clear sense to you?
- ★ What ideas surprise or strike you as strange?
- ★ What arguments do you feel were not supported well enough?
- ★ What points do you feel link to other things you’ve learned or thought about?
- ★ What things do you feel you need to learn more about?

You may need to use the internet or dictionaries to look up words and concepts you are having trouble understanding.

After reading: Write a really fast reaction journal—about a page or so—and get down your initial thoughts. Take some time away, then go back and reverse outline the piece: you can do this in the margins of the essay itself or on a separate piece of paper. After you’ve done these two activities, then begin your rough draft of the critical review.

Writing the paper: Your job here is to inform the audience about the piece and analyze it critically. Read Chapter 8: Making Evaluations in *St. Martin’s*. Follow the structure from the hand-out on Academic Style and Conventions.

Length: 3-4 pages; whatever is needed to complete the task at hand.