

Tell a Ghost Story: Personal Haunting Narrative

Over the course of this first week, we have discussed the myriad forms a haunting can occur and the many ghosts which haunt us. Look back to your class notes to recap all the ways in which the terms “ghost” and “haunting” have been evoked. Drawing from class readings, discussions and most importantly, your own experience, **tell a ghost story** about something that is haunting you. This can be about an actual ghost or you can use the ghost as a metaphor: as a person, thing, responsibility, relationship, or history that is haunting you. Remember, ghosts and ghost stories have a purpose: how can you tell a story about a haunting or a ghost in order to bring your reader’s attention to something they may not be paying attention to?

Following are some important pointers for this assignment:

- The genre of this assignment is a personal narrative: you are telling a story about yourself with ghosts or a haunting in it. While this can be a social critique or phenomenon, you must make it clear how it pertains to you. Do not tell me the story of *The Conjuring* or *Get Out*.
- Begin your narrative with a “hook”: an exciting or interesting question, provocation, cliff-hanger, which will attract your readers attention. Make sure this hook is relevant to the main point of your essay!
- Make sure you change paragraphs (by plot point, or sub-argument) to show progressions. This gives your reader a visual break but also must have a purpose or else it confuses your reader.
- Make sure you **explain** or **describe** what you are calling a ghost/haunting, and why? This can happen at any time in the middle of the story if you’d like. Cite your sources appropriately if you end up using the readings or class notes to support your claim.
- Make sure your story ends purposefully. Good short stories, or good tales of all kinds, leave the reader with something to think about. This is very, very hard to accomplish but good to try anyway!

Some technical guidelines:

- Your story should be **2 – 3 pages** long, with at least 500 words.
- Times New Roman, 12-point font.
- Give your story a title.
- Include a ‘Works Cited’ page if you have citations.
- Turn into canvas by midnight on April 7, 2019. Late submissions will **not receive written feedback**.
- Have fun, make this something important to you! If you have an idea and aren’t sure, come talk to me during office hours or send me an email.

Outcomes Met:

- recognizing how different elements of a rhetorical situation matter for the task at hand and affect the options for composing and distributing texts (*Outcome 1*)
- coordinating, negotiating, and experimenting with various aspects of composing—such as genre, content, conventions, style, language, organization, appeals, media, timing, and design—for diverse rhetorical effects tailored to the given audience, purpose, and situation; and (*Outcome 2*)

- engaging in analysis—the close scrutiny and examination of evidence, claims, and assumptions—to explore and support a line of inquiry (*Outcome 3*)
- understanding and accounting for the stakes and consequences of various arguments for diverse audiences and within ongoing conversations and contexts (*Outcome 3*)

Short Assignment 2: Reading Response Essay

The Task: Write a 2 – 3 page (at least 2 full pages), double-spaced, short essay on *Sing, Unburied, Sing* where you analyze a particular passage or event in the text for the claims it is making and the way in which it makes these claims.

Due Date: April 14, 2019 by Midnight

Explanation: Think back to all our class discussions so far: genre, the ghost story, the use of haunting as analytic, all your observations discussed in small groups, and the questions that have emerged from the text. Now locate a moment you find significantly interesting in the text: a passage, a quote, an action by a character, a memory, or an event (you choose!). Write a 2-3 page response analyzing the significance of this excerpt to the text and to your understanding of the text. It is usually a good idea to locate at least three significant moments, do some preliminary reflection, and then choose the one that seems richest in terms of possible explanations. If something is straightforward and has a direct meaning it will be less interesting to write and read about. To this end, pick a moment that is sufficiently complicated which doesn't reveal its meaning easily.

A few different approaches to take in a response paper (adapted from Dr. Alys Weinbaum's materials):

Writing your response:

Bellow I list several types of responses. The best responses will stick close to the text(s) in hand. They will include a brief summary of major points and will go on to raise specific questions or make specific observations based on your interests or concerns. These questions and concerns should emerge from specific passages that you should either quote directly or paraphrase. Always include page numbers parenthetically. Long quotes should be avoided. Quote the salient bit and assume I know the rest.

Editing your response:

To get the response into the correct format (margins, page length) you will need to write it and then edit it. The key to good editing is organization. Does each paragraph have a topic and focus? Is there extra wordiness that can be eliminated? Are there sentences that are not yet clear? Are there ideas that need to be expanded on with an additional sentence or two? All quotes must be introduced and interpreted. Never assume that anything reads the same to you as to your reader!

As you write your responses over the quarter you should try out the different approaches outlined below. As the course unfolds you should be doing more and more comparative responses-- those that take up one reading in relation to another.

A. Questions about meaning and new ideas

This kind of response focuses on a new and/or perplexing idea. What stood out to you as something you had not thought about prior or were perplexed by? What surprised or perplexed you about this idea and why? First describe this idea fully (citing the text), then explain what

was interesting, important, or consequential about it. If this idea raised a question for you, articulate this question as fully as possible. Is there a conceptual term that is being used in a special way by the author to get at the idea that you are focusing on? If so, define this term and examine its various uses so as to generate a nuanced understanding of it.

B. Questions about argument

If you think you have understood the overall argument (and thus its various parts), give a précis or summary of that argument in a paragraph or two. After you have done this raise a question about the argument or one of its parts. You might consider seeming contradictions in the argument. Are there aspects of the argument that appear counter-intuitive or contradictory? You might also consider the implications of the argument philosophically and/or politically. What do you want to take away from this argument for future use? What is suggestive or illuminating about this argument in relation to other ideas/readings we have been discussing in class?

C. Questions about politics

If you think you have understood the bulk of the argument, give a précis of it in a paragraph or two. What's is this argument's main political purpose? Who is the implied audience? What is at stake in advancing this argument for this audience?

D. Questions about form and style

If you think you have understood the bulk of the argument, give a précis of it in a paragraph or two. Can you discern a relationship between the form in which the argument is made and its meaning? How do form or authorial style contribute to the meaning of this argument and the effectivity of its elaboration?

Format:

- 12-point, times new roman font
- MLA works cited, if necessary
- Double-spaced, 2-3 pages **at least 2 full pages**

A successful paper will:

- Clearly identify the **central inquiry** of the paper: which pattern or question are you tracing?
- Provide **evidence** for analysis: pull out the particular excerpt if you are close reading but do not feel like you have to quote everything, summarize important information but assume I know the background.
- **Personalize** the paper: this paper should not simply report what is in the text, at some point it should be clear that you are asking a question about the text.
- Fulfill the **page requirement**.
- Think about organization and the flow of the argument: **revise!**

**Short Assignment 3: Object Biography through Jesmyn Ward's *Sing Unburied Sing* or
Angela Davis's *Are Prisons Obsolete*
Assignment Due Date: Monday April 22, 2019**

So far, through class discussion and writing assignments, we have:

1. told ghost stories about what haunts us
2. close-read Jesmyn Ward to see how she creates narrative and history around real spaces and objects
3. thought about how these spaces or objects can become host to ghosts that haunt our present
4. tracked how narratives around objects or places can make social critiques

In this assignment, we will bring these critical skills and archives together (**synthesize them**) and apply Ward's method of critical narration to our world. We will read our everyday environment on the basis of Ward's insights in *Sing, Unburied, Sing* or *Davis' Are Prisons Obsolete*. By paying attention to and imitating how Ward develops objects and places from her immediate environment into places with historical and social hauntings in her narrative, we will be able to begin paying attention to these things in our own life and environment. So,

The basic task: Pick an object or a place (must be physical and specific such as a discrete *thing* or a building, plaque, street sign, park notation, street art) which reminds you of a theme or claim from *Sing, Unburied, Sing* or *Are Prisons Obsolete*. Now, **write a biography of this object** (at least 2 pages) which reveals how this object presents a specific (and meaningful) question or problem about the world that we live in. Then, in a **separate section** (about 1 paragraph) write a writer's memo on the inspiration you drew from your reading of *Sing, Unburied, Sing/ Are Prison's Obsolete* (themes, writing style, claims).

Important notes on interpretive process:

- ❖ This should be an object that has relevance to you personally: it can be something you own, something you found in your house or on a walk, something you walk by everyday but didn't notice, something that you use every day but never knew how its made/where it came from.
- ❖ Your narrative about this object should **denaturalize** it from the environment, see how considering the object's history or present location or manufacturing process or change over time or manner/mode of usage reveals a conflict or dissonance about our world.
Remember, questions of power and access, and how these are unevenly distributed depending on gender, race, class, sexuality, physical and mental ability, often inform how objects affect people or vice versa.
- ❖ In order to denaturalize the object, you may have to do some research. The UW library website as well as google will be your friends here. Cite your sources in MLA and refer to Purdue OWL to refresh how to cite your sources.

Assignment Particulars:

- ❖ **12-point font, double spaced, at least 2 full pages.**
- ❖ **Works Cited page**
- ❖ **Must have both Object Biography and Writer's Memo**

Rubric for Assessment

An excellent SA3 will:

- Describe the chosen object or building rather than simply name it. A good description involves information about size, color, location, surroundings, and the relationship of the reader to the object.

- Clarify the relevance of the object to themselves and to its surroundings.
- Demonstrate that they have done some research to engage the history and development of the object.
- Support their claims about the object with said research.
- Make a specific claim about how the object represents a conflict or problem about the world the author lives in when denaturalized.
- Include a writer's memo which talks through how the books we have read concretely shaped the process for this assignment.
- Be well organized, have a good flow to the argument, and not contain spelling or citational errors.

Outcomes Targeted:

- reading, analyzing, and synthesizing a diverse range of texts and understanding the situations in which those texts are participating; (Outcome 2.1)
- using reading and writing strategies to craft research questions that explore and respond to complex ideas and situations; (Outcome 2.2)
- gathering, evaluating, and making purposeful use of primary and secondary materials appropriate for the writing goals, audience, genre, and context; (Outcome 2.3)
- creating a 'conversation'—identifying and engaging with meaningful patterns across ideas, texts, experiences, and situations; and (Outcome 2.4)
- using citation styles appropriate for the genre and context. (Outcome 2.5)

Major Paper 1

In SA2 you developed a research question based on your close reading of the text. In SA3 you used these close-reading skills to read an object in your everyday environment. In Major Paper 1, you will present an argument which follows a line of inquiry in the text in order to make an interpretive claim about the text. In this process, think of all our in-class exercises so far – close reading, developing claims, making the implicit/explicit and tracing the meaning of patterns across the text.

The Task: Write a 5-7-page essay that develops an argument about the text which makes an interpretive claim.

Some reminders:

- An interpretive claim is one where the writer shares a particular way of reading the text which reveals implicit claims being made by the text.
- A good interpretive claim will always have real-life stakes which are clear.
- In order to make a strong interpretive claim, you must present and analyze evidence from the text in order to guide your reader through your process (remember, you cannot assume that people will see what you are seeing in the text!)

Format:

5-7 pages, double-spaced, 1-inch margins.

Any citations must be in MLA format. Include a proper Works Cited page (come talk to me if you still have questions about how to do this but Purdue OWL is a good resource for this)

Due on Canvas: Sunday, April 28. Be aware that we will spend time working on peer review with these papers, so be prepared to share your papers with a peer review group.

Rubric for Assessment

An excellent MP1 will:

- Develop a specific line of inquiry to follow in the text, deepening one's consideration of the text beyond simple plot details into how Ward is composing particular claims and how she is doing so in the text.
- Clarify the stakes of your line of inquiry: why is your reading of the text important? What does it allow the reader to see and why is it important for the reader to see this?
- Demonstrate that you have read the text deeply and honed your topic down to its very specific intervention. For example: a claim that says "In *Sing Unburied Sing*, Ward's description of houses reflects racism" is not specific enough, however the following claim is specific and interpretive and yet could be further specified: "In this paper I show how Jesymn Ward's descriptions of the physical and built environment around Pop and Big Joseph's house in *Sing, Unburied, Sing* reflects how habits of home in the US South are shaped by the histories of slavery and racial segregation."
- Support their claims about the object with said research.
- Integrate quotes smoothly with analysis and care.

- Have a complex, arguable, claim substantiated by evidence. Make a specific claim about how the object represents a conflict or problem about the world the author lives in when denaturalized.
- Be well organized, have a good flow to the argument, and not contain spelling or citational errors.

Outcomes Targeted

- considering, incorporating, and responding to different points of view while developing one's own position; (Outcome 3.1)
- engaging in analysis—the close scrutiny and examination of evidence, claims, and assumptions—to explore and support a line of inquiry; (Outcome 3.2)
- understanding and accounting for the stakes and consequences of various arguments for diverse audiences and within ongoing conversations and contexts; and (Outcome 3.3)
- designing/organizing with respect to the demands of the genre, situation, audience, and purpose. (Outcome 3.4)

Sequence 2: Writing with the Land

Our second assignment sequence, running from Week 5 through Week 8, will focus on building our capacities to learn from and write with the land. Land, as that which grounds all of us, always puts us in particular relations with each other, as well as with non-human others. To this end, we will pursue this project in collaboration, developing and sharing our work with our peers, and working together in meaningful and accountable ways. Writing and learning are relational processes, not private, individual activities; this sequence will unfold in small groups and we will learn how to manage group work and practice equitably sharing labor.

The overall sequence: (due date in parentheses)

Assignment SA4: Writing in Place in-class practice **(May 9)** →

Assignment SA5: Group Proposal including choice of place and logistics **(May 12)** →

Assignment SA6: Group Reading and Research Notes on chosen place **(May 19)** →

Assignment MP2: Final Group Project including Collaboratively Written Group Introduction and Individual Pieces **(May 26)**

Note: there may be some additional materials or assignments due to check in on how group work is progressing. You are encouraged to keep a written record of all group meetings, and to continuously check in with each other as well as with me to ensure that you are pre-empting any labor issues.

Assignment Prompts:

Assignment SA4: Writing in Place

(hard copy due in class Thursday May 9th / Tuesday May 14th)

This means both your Writing in Place worksheet packet as well as a typed, revised version of the narrative writing you produced. Due the class following Writing in Place field trip.

Assignment SA5: Group Proposal

(Sunday May 12th by Midnight on Canvas / hard copy due noon Monday May 13th)

In this assignment, you will share a **detailed** plan for your group project which will include your location of choice, a rationale for why you chose this location, logistics for your group's visits, and internal deadlines that your group has set to manage this process. Think of this, rhetorically, as a grant proposal: you need to demonstrate that you have a plan, a goal, and coordination amongst your group and convince your reader that you can pull this off!

Every proposal must have the following parts:

1. **Location Choice:** Which neighborhood/place/locale did you choose? Your chosen place must be in the greater Seattle area, and it cannot be on campus or the U-District.
2. **Rationale for Choice:** Why did you choose this place? How did the group decide, together, on this place? What interests you about this place or what connections do group members have with this place?
3. **List of participants.**
4. **Logistics:** This section **must** include the following:
 - a. **Plans for visit(s):** How and when will you visit? Will you go together or separately? Either way, provide dates of visit(s). If going separately, each member must provide dates. How will you visit (bus, car, rideshare) and how will you ensure everyone is safe, and that all individual accommodations are met?

- b. **Plans for meeting:** When will you meet to share your writing after your visit? Give a list of all meeting times.
- c. **Internal Deadlines:** In order to co-ordinate work and ensure that labor is divided equitably, please set and share deadlines for each of the following: initial site visit, initial writing on site visit, dates for re-visit, individual written pieces and research, meeting to discuss and share individual pieces and research, draft of co-written introduction to your magazine section which gives history on location and puts your work in conversation with each other, final draft of your section with all components (before you turn it in you must meet to finalize design and layout).

This must be a formal, well-formatted, grant proposal and you must ensure that the same person is not writing the whole narrative: this is a collectively written and collectively edited proposal. Meaningfully and accountably divide labor amongst yourselves.

Assignment SA6: Group Reading and Research Notes

(Sunday May 19th by Midnight on Canvas / hard copy due noon Monday May 20th)

By now, you have likely both chosen a place and visited it. Remember: approach your chosen place as a text. Just as we have been doing with written texts, conduct research on your location both before **and** after your visit. **Read** buildings, signposts, development, use of land, land ordinance, laws and regulations, initial settlement, demographics, changes in demographics over time, topography, histories of gentrification/redlining, histories of public engagement, Indigenous relations, ongoing settlement. Use the library, and special collections, to look at maps, photos, news reports, articles, books, letters, movies, other cultural facts. **Each person must do this individually as per their interests and angle** and then you will collect it all into one document to turn in. **Cite sources** while you take notes so that they can be referred to by other members of your group – include the name of the source, author(s), publication information, source type, and how you accessed it, and any other information so that a source can be independently consulted by another member of your group.

Assignment MP2: Final Group Project

(Sunday May 26th by Midnight on Canvas / Monday May 20th by Noon on Canvas)

This is your finalized, designed, and laid-out section of the magazine. For each group, this will include two sections:

1. **Collaboratively Written Group Introduction:** in this section, you will introduce your audience to your choice of location, share why your group chose it, and then give a narrative (based on your research and writing) of what your section is trying to say. Put all your individual writing and research in conversation to make a **claim**, as a group, about this place, and about your experiences in *and your relations with* it.
Format: 3.5 – 5 pages of written text (12-pt font, 1.5 line spacing, 1 inch margins) excluding any media you would like to integrate (maps, photos, etc.).
2. **Individual Pieces:** develop your individual piece about the place, drawing on the work you and the group have done, and also based on your own additional research. You can play around with genres and styles; you can include art/maps/photos/etc. but it must be well-edited and final.
Format: 3.5 – 5 pages of written text (12-pt font, 1.5 line spacing, 1 inch margins) excluding any media you would like to integrate (maps, photos, etc.).

You will have to meet to put all this together, to make it look compelling, effective, and coherent. Remember, if it is all plain words, it will not be an appealing magazine. Plan to come together to collate your pieces and finalize design and sequence so that it is most impactful.

Turn into Canvas in .pdf or .doc form.