

Assignment #1: Critical Analysis Essay (16%)

This assignment asks you to reflect on materials provided in the first third of the class. It is designed to connect the theoretical readings and primary sources from the textbook, putting them into conversation with one another through your unique perspective. The readings are three distinct interpretations of Black Studies as a discipline of study, each argues for a different approach to understanding the Afro/African American Experience.

Students should introduce and summarize the main arguments of each of the critical essays listed below. Provide supporting evidence from each essay to demonstrate a clear understanding of each argument's thesis and major claims. Compare these three theories to one another, noting similarities and differences.

Select one theory to explore further. Students may argue in favor or against this theory, and need to explain why they have taken this stance. Support your analysis with one of the assigned primary source readings from the textbook, M&M Section 1 (except for Phillis Wheatley). Share several examples from your selection to support your perspective. Be sure to clarify which of the three sociopolitical perspectives outlined in the textbook's introduction are demonstrated in your selection (Manning Marable and Leith Mullings, eds. "Introduction: Resistance, Reform, and Renewal in the Black Experience", 2009, pp. xxi-xxix).

Theoretical Readings

1. Ira Berlin, "Time, Space, and the Evolution of Afro-American Society Afro-American Society on British Mainland North America" *American Historical Review*, vol. 85, no. 1, 1980, pp. 44-78.
2. Michael Gomez, "Of Du Bois and Diaspora: The Challenges of African American Studies," *Journal of Black Studies*, vol. 35, no. 2, 2004, pp. 175-194.
3. Molefi K. Asante, "Afrocentricity: Sustaining Africology: On the Creation and Development of a Discipline." pp. 21-32 in *A Companion to African-American Studies* <http://www.asante.net/articles/1/afrocentricity/>

Students should be able to:

- **Identify the thesis** of each essay **and purpose of each theoretical reading/critical essay.**
- **Summarize the major claims and support with 1-2 quotes** from each critical essay.
- **Evaluate** similarities and differences between these distinct approaches to Black Studies.
- **Select one theory to support or contradict, clarify** the reason behind your selection and stance
- **Support your stance using at least one primary source text from the anthology** as evidence (M&M S1 #2-21 Oluadah Equiano to Negro Spirituals)
 - Clarify how your selection demonstrates your stance
 - **Support with a few examples from this reading** (ie. David Walker's *Appeal*)
 - **Be sure to clarify which of the three main sociopolitical perspectives is at work** in this document/support with evidence
- **Use quotation marks and in-text citations; provide a Works Cited page**

Word Count: 3-4 pages (750-1000 words) no longer than 5 pgs.

Formatting: size 12 font, Times New Roman, double spaced, standard margins, MLA format, DOC or PDF

Due: Friday, October 30th | BB 11:59PM; Hard deadline: Sunday, November 1st at 11:59PM**

**Students will create outline and rough draft 2-3 pages (Critical Response #1) due Friday 10/14 | BB 11:59PM

Late papers (After 11/1/20) will lose one grade letter per 24 hours delayed.