

### Essay Assignment #3

Please choose one of the following assignments.

#### **OPTION ONE:**

A central theme in Angels in America is the concept of “the journey.” In the last scene of Perestroika, Harper, now alone and independent, is suspended in mid-air aboard a flight to San Francisco. She says: “Nothing’s lost forever. In this world, there is a kind of painful progress. Longing for what we’ve left behind, and dreaming ahead. At least I think that’s so.” Focusing on Millennium Approaches, make an argument—based in a reading of two or three key scenes—about the way Kushner problematizes and/or celebrates “progress” in relation to the individual, collective identities, and/or the US as a nation or an imagined collective.

#### **OPTION TWO:**

In the opening scene of Millennium Approaches, Rabbi Chemelwitz, of the Bronx Home for Aged Hebrews, says in his eulogy for Louis’s grandmother, before calling her “the last of the Mohicans,” that “you do not live in America. No such place exists.” In your essay, make an argument—based in analysis of two or three key scenes—about how Kushner complicates the concept of American identity in Millennium Approaches.

#### **OPTION THREE:**

Two characters dominate Nella Larsen’s seminal American novel, Passing. In your essay, please make an argument about how Larsen uses the relationship between Irene Redfield and Clare Kendry to illustrate and problematize life in a racialized nation. You should base your interpretation in analysis of two or three key-moments in the text.

**Advice:** \_\_\_\_\_

- A successful paper will present a strong thesis and support this thesis with an analysis of evidence that sustains a valid interpretation of the text. While it might be helpful to briefly summarize the necessary plot points for your reader—assuming that I am not your only reader—, you should not simply regurgitate the plot of the story.
- A successful paper will spend time on all three levels of analysis: thesis, analysis of evidence, and offer an interpretation of that evidence (the meaning making of literature).
- A successful paper presents a compelling thesis, builds its argument, never loses sight of it, and finishes with a strong conclusion.

**Specifics:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Give the paper a title
- Write your name in the upper left side of the paper
- Indicate which essay questions you are answering.

5-6 pages  
12 point font  
Times New Roman  
1 inch margins

**Style Guide for Works Cited List:**

<http://www.lib.washington.edu/help/guides/44mla.pdf>