

English 111, Section 005: "Displaced Persons"
Take-Home Essay Topic Sheet

Write an essay of approximately 1500 words (5 typed, double spaced pages) on ONE of the following topics. You must establish a clear, critically focused argument at the outset of your essay, and you must support your interpretation of the texts you have chosen with direct analysis of the language and structure of those texts. Please do not substantially repeat material from your previous two papers. This essay is to be submitted in your discussion groups on **Friday, March 29, 2019**.

1. Most of the texts we have studied either include or describe visual media (such as drawings, photographs, laser measurements, social media). Compare and contrast the ways in which image-making – in which seeing or the visual – matters in the work of TWO of the writers on the course syllabus.
2. Investigate the idea of belonging in the work of TWO of the writers on the course syllabus. How do these writers define their attachments to and/or exclusions from different forms of community, family, nation? What, for example, does it mean to be a "citizen"?
3. In a number of works on the course syllabus, the writer returns repeatedly in their work to consider strategies for protecting and maintaining their body, and the bodies of others. Discuss the depiction of corporeality in the work of TWO writers on the course syllabus. How and why do bodies come to matter? What exactly is a (human) body, for them?
4. Discuss the opposition between documentary and artifice (or craft or style) in work by TWO authors on the course syllabus. Can documentary or non-fictional work be beautiful or aesthetically pleasing without betraying its accuracy or factuality? Is a well-made documentary also artful? How and why?
5. Many of the works we have examined yearn for a strong or vital relationship between self and place. With reference to work by TWO authors on the course syllabus, examine the geographical aspects of their work. What role does a sense of place or locale or country play in their work? What about displacement, or a sense of being unable to locate yourself? Does writing depend on some connection with or disconnection from the land? How and why?
6. Investigate the presentation of gender in the work of TWO of the writers on the course syllabus. How is gender identity connected to agency or to empowerment in their texts? How do they understand what constitutes genders (such as masculinity or womanhood)?
7. David Chariandy notes how some of his relatives re-tell tales of their lives and communities. With direct reference to the work of TWO of the writers on the course syllabus, investigate how writing, reading and telling stories enables people to live their lives. Why do stories matter?

Due in your discussion groups on Friday, March 29, 2019.