

21L.701 Literary Interpretation
(Literature and Urban Experience)
Professor Sarah Brouillette

Final Essay Prompts

Choose a prompt and write a concise, persuasive, compelling essay that features a strong thesis statement and evidence of close reading, analytical rigor, and thought about form.

Do not just “answer” the prompt; take a position that arises from careful thought about how best to respond to it.

1. Discuss how itinerant characters and/or itinerancy inform two or more of our texts.
2. Discuss how notions of the city as “fortress” inform two or more of our texts.
3. Discuss how notions of the city as “labyrinth” inform two or more of our texts.
4. Discuss how confluence of cultures in urban space is treated in two or more of our texts.
5. Through detailed interpretation of two or more of our texts, discuss the relationship between postmodernism and urbanization.
6. What does the shift from modernism to postmodernism have to do with urbanization? Answer with reference to two or more of our texts.
7. Compare how two or more of our writers treat the ethics of looking at the strangers who surround us in urban settings.
8. David Harvey contends that “Postmodernism swims, even wallows, in the fragmentary and chaotic currents of change as if that is all there is” (44). Assess this argument through attention to two or more of our texts.
9. Discuss the city as a space of “calculability” (this is Simmel’s word) in two or more of our texts.
10. Through a detailed reading of at least one of our texts, critique any of our suggested readings.

NB

- Your paper must be 10-12 double-spaced pages, in a 12 pt. font.
- The citation system is MLA.
- Late papers lose 1% of the course total per day

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