

Writing 20: Sec. 20, 86  
Fall 2009  
Oral History and the Stories of Medicine  
Prof. Gretchen A. Case

### **Brief Essays (BE)**

**Due:** BE1 on Wednesday 9/2/09 by midnight  
BE2 on Wednesday 9/9/09 by midnight  
BE3 on Friday 9/18/09 by midnight

Submit these BEs through your Group Page under Communications on Blackboard

Revised BE on Wednesday 10/7/09 by midnight  
Submit Revised BE through Assignments on Blackboard

**Length:** 1-2 pages. Please aim for one full page and do not exceed two pages.

**Writing Goal:** This assignment will offer practice in using the writerly moves (coming to terms, forwarding, countering, taking your own approach) described by Harris in *Rewriting: How To Do Things With Texts*. You will use these moves to engage with the arguments presented in our course readings. Recognize that your use of these writerly moves makes up your own argument, as you must clearly describe the author's position, define your terms, and choose examples from the text to support your assertions.

**Topics:** Consider the argument made in the assigned reading. You might focus on a particular passage in the text or explore the author's broader assertions. You will not be able to address all aspects of the reading in such a short essay. In BE 1, you will *come to terms* with Brandt's "Racism and Research...." In BE 2, you will practice *forwarding* and *countering* using DasGupta's "Being John Doe Malkovich...." In BE3, you will practice *taking your own approach*, using Kakar's "Leprosy in India...." Harris' writerly moves build on each other rather than standing alone. **Thus, when you revise one BE for grading, make sure to take your own approach, which will always include coming to terms and some combination of forwarding and countering.**

**The Fine Print:** You must complete all 3 weekly essays, but will choose only 1 of those 3 to revise and submit for a grade. You could consider the first submission of each weekly essay to be a first draft, in need of revision. **However, even a first draft should show your best efforts.**

**Grading:** I will not evaluate the 3 ungraded BEs for content, other than to ensure that you addressed the correct reading using the designated writerly move. However, only BEs that are of proper length and pay careful attention to grammar, spelling, and other mechanical issues will receive full points. Please check the "General Requirements for All Written Assignments" list included in your syllabus.

3 ungraded essays, worth 2% of the overall course grade each, graded on a 0/1/2 scale:

- if complete, worth 2
- if complete, but poorly done, worth 1
- each essay not completed, worth 0

I will evaluate the revised BE you submit for grading by looking at clarity and conciseness, comprehension of the text(s) addressed, proper application of Harris' writerly moves, and originality of your argument/approach.

1 graded essay, worth 10% of the overall course grade, will be assigned a letter grade