

## Harris Arak E110 Assignment

### Extending Spelman

For your second project, I'd like you to write an essay in which you extend, deepen, or complicate the idea of repair as discussed by Elizabeth Spelman. I'll ask you to develop this piece in several stages.

I want you to begin by locating what Spelman calls a “project of repair” (102) that you can *describe* in rich and compelling detail. You might want to think about the kinds of repair projects that go on the field—health, engineering, science, business, education, art, etc.—that you plan to study at UD. The project you write about can involve material objects, persons, relationships, or communities. It can be current or in the past. You can draw on your own experiences with repair or your observations of others involved in such work. You might interview a repair person. Or you might analyze descriptions of repair in books, articles, or films. It's your call. What's crucial, though, is that you find a repair project that interests you and that you can describe fully and accurately. Indeed, your first draft of this essay, which I will expect to run about 1,000 words, should be a thick description of your repair project: what's broken, in what setting, who's trying to fix it, how they go about doing so, and what complications or problems arise. I will also expect you to document the sources—books, articles, videos, observations, interviews—that you consulted about your project as carefully as you can.

Next I want you to *connect* that project to your reading of Spelman. How does the project you've described add to or complicate what she has to say about repair? This doesn't mean that you have to somehow come up with a brand new category of repair, or to refute one of Spelman's points. (I suspect that few of us are capable of either.) But it does mean that you have to try to do more than simply offer another example of an idea that Spelman has already put forward. (“Here's a bricoleur just like Willie’.) You need instead to use the project you're discussing to respond to her ideas about repair, to notice something, however small or subtle, that she hasn't yet pointed out. I'll expect you to do this more conceptual and critical work in another, independent draft of about 1,000 words.

And then I'll ask you to put those two drafts together in an essay on repair of about 2,000 words. This third and final draft of your piece will be your concluding project for this course. It will earn a letter grade that counts toward 40% of your final grade for the semester.

About midway through Chapter 5 of *Repair*, while discussing reparations, Spelman makes this striking if seemingly offhand comment: “Here I begin a line of thought not developed by but encouraged to germinate on the basis of Baldwin's remarks” (91–92). I'm asking you to do something similar here—to

develop a line of thought about repair that doesn't simply follow Spelman but that instead feels your own, even as it is still rooted in, germinated by, your reading of her book.

This is a hard and ambitious assignment. If you can do it well, you'll be ready to take on almost any other writing project you're asked to do here at UD. I look forward to working with you on it!

## **Deadlines**

1. Mon, 10/17, 4:00 pm: Post a tentative plan (p2) for your essay to Google Drive.
2. Mon, 10/24, 4:00 pm : Post draft 1 (e1d1) to Google Drive. This should be a 1,000-word description of your repair project . We will workshop these drafts in class on Tues, 10/25.
3. Mon, 10/31,4:00 pm: Post draft 2 (e1d2) to Google Drive. This should be a 1,000-word piece connecting your repair project to connection to Spelman. We will workshop these drafts in class on Tues, 11/01.
4. Mon, 11/07: Email your revising plan (p3) to your GTA and me.
5. Wed, 11/09 to Fri, 11/11: Discuss your revising plan in conferences with your GTA and me.
6. Tues, 11/15: Bring an all-but-final version of your essay to class.
7. Wed, 11/16: Email your 2,000-word final draft (e2d3) to your GTA and me.