

Bard Early Colleges

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Urban Assembly School of Music and Art

Bard Early College Academy at Urban Assembly

Senior Seminar: Resistance

Fall 2019 - Spring 2020

Room: 806

Instructors: Dr. Kesi Augustine

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Periods 7 & 8 (1:24 - 3:01), Mondays and Tuesdays

Google Classroom Code: exry96x

College Credits: 3

This senior seminar is all about “the system.” What is the system? How does it operate? Who holds the most power, and why? In answering these questions, we will consider the canonical works of modern and postmodern authors of the Bard Sequence. These texts help us to see the ways that people are organized amongst systems, and influenced by systems, of class (political and economic), race, belief, age, gender, and sexuality. We will especially focus on the tools these authors give us for attempting to critique, change, and dismantle these systems as we ask who has the privilege of speaking explicitly about “the system,” especially when doing so makes one a rebel, a threat, and even a social outcast.

As we critique the systems of our world, we will also think more critically about different forms of writing - the manifesto, the critical essay, the personal essay, and the political treatise. We will take up these genres in our work writing, while we continue to include practices from Bard College’s Writing & Thinking framework. Like the junior seminar, senior seminar relies on writing as reflection, self-assessment, and literary criticism, preparing to lead up to next semester’s independent research paper. We have essential questions for each unit, but students’ own questions also guide our discussions. This semester students will also post their discussion questions for the Fishbowl the night before the discussion, to ease entry into the conversation.

To help us think about the concept of resistance, students in this senior seminar will take on additional leadership roles as a crucial part of their class participation grade. Each student will lead at least two full-length class discussions in the fall, and at least one in the spring. Classes that are not student-led will rely on our Fishbowl for the Socratic seminar, in addition to the professor's mediation as necessary. We will conclude the year by writing a 10 to 12 page research paper on a topic of each student's choice.

Course Texts

Plato, *Apology* (399 B.C.)

Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince* (1532)

CLR James, *Toussaint Louverture: The Story of the Only Successful Slave Revolt in History* (1934)

Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848)

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie - *We Should All Be Feminists + Dear Ijeawele, or a Feminist Manifesto in Fifteen Suggestions* (2017)

Franz Kafka, *The Trial* (1925)

Weekly Deliverables

Cornell Notes

Freewrites & Focused Freewrites

Google Classroom posts and Peer Responses

Socratic Seminar Discussions

Peer Feedback

Grading

This college-level syllabus contains the equivalent of your unit outlines for the entire year. Please note that readings are subject to change - they may be excerpted and rearranged as timing dictates throughout the semester, with additions made whenever possible to accommodate student interest. Please check the syllabus routinely to note any changes - the professor will also announce changes in class.

Students will be assessed based on their Proficiency in Interpretation, Analysis, and Communication. Students will be assessed weekly on their Weekly Deliverables and as part of their unit assessments.

Preparation for class means having the reading completed, and having marked passages that are important to you (for any reason - as a main idea, a place where you're confused, excited, etc.).

Attendance:

Attendance in class is crucial. All work and materials for the course are accessible online through Google Classroom. More than 5 unexcused absences will impact your final grade for the course.

Email:

Students are expected to check their emails daily and reply to any teacher emails.

Google Classroom posts must be at least 100 words prior to entering the Fishbowl discussion. Students are expected to maintain an excellent code of conduct while using Google Classroom to prepare for discussion. This means being mature and constructively criticizing one another.

Rubrics: Each writing assignment will be accompanied by the relevant rubric. We will create a class generated rubric for seminars during the first week of regular class.

We will engage with a variety of material during class. In your formal essays, be sure to cite all of your sources. Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be treated lightly. In most college courses, plagiarism can result in your failure of the assignment. If you are ever in doubt about whether or how to cite a source, please ask!

Leading Discussion

At the beginning of MP2 and MP3, the professor will circulate a reading schedule as the sign up sheet for presentations on Google Classroom. Each student will sign up for two dates (collaboration with one other student is also possible). On the date that each student has signed up to lead a discussion, they will be responsible for each of the following:

- *having the reading assignment completed
- *asking the class 3 questions, and
- *focusing the class on at least two passages in the reading that we should analyze more closely. These passages can support a question and a writing exercise.

Seminar students are not necessarily responsible for understanding all of the content in your assigned reading. Rather, use your class lead as an exercise in thinking critically about your text. What should we notice about your section of the reading, and why? How can you help us to break down the important moments in this text? This class discussion is also an opportunity to shape the class so it reflects your personality as a young scholar.

Later in the week, students must briefly conference with the professor about their particular strengths as a class leader, and where they might have shaped things differently.

Reading Schedule

MP1 - 9/5 - 10/11 (21 days): Liberty & “the Crown”



Writing and Thinking at Urban Assembly: For seniors these methods are integrated into the opening week of class.

Bard College Reading List: Audre Lorde, “[Poetry is Not a Luxury](#)” (1985) + Eve Ewing’s poem to Phillis Wheatley via the *1619 Project*.

Phillis Wheatley, “[On Being Brought from Africa to America](#)” (1773) to accompany Eve Ewing’s Work.

*See [here](#) for models for Writing and Thinking that we will be exploring in class this year.

Primary Texts:

- Plato, *Apology* (399 B.C.) + view [Jacques Louis David, *The Death of Socrates*](#) (1787)
- CLR James, *Toussaint Louverture* (1936; 2013).
- Machiavelli, *The Prince* (1532) (chapters 1, 2, 4, 8, 9; 10, 14, 17, 19; 21, 23, 25)

Supplemental texts:

On Presidents and “Democracy”:

- Remember that Haiti is the backdrop for Jefferson’s fears as you read: [The Declaration of Independence](#) + [Thomas Jefferson’s Deleted Passage on](#)

[Slavery](#) + [Listen to the first 20 minutes of “Introducing ‘1619’,” on *The Daily*](#) (podcast).



- Primary Texts: Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848, Intro p. 7-35 and p. 61-119) + view Frida Kahlo, [Marxism Will Give Health to the Sick](#) (1954).

Think especially about how Marx helps you to revisit your understanding of Animal Farm, for those of you who studied with Ms. Kramer last year. And, does communism provide a viable solution for the issues with Jefferson’s democracy? Why or why not?

- Supplemental Texts - Critiques of Capital: 1619 Project, “[Capitalism and the Plantation](#),” 1619 Podcast Episode 2, “[The Economy That Slavery Built](#)” + (Optional) Frank B. Wilderson III, “[The Prison Slave as Hegemony’s \(Silent\)](#)

Scandal.

- Additional resources: [The Hannah Arendt Center for Politics and Humanities at Bard College](#). Roger Berkowitz, “[Why Arendt Matters: The Origins of Totalitarianism](#)” Field trip or readings related to the 2019 conference on racism and antisemitism.

Initial Assessment: Self assessment using Socratic Seminar rubric.

MP2: “The Crown,” cont’d...

- Frances Negron-Muntaner, “[The Emptying Island: Puerto Rican Expulsion in Post-Maria Time](#),” (*Emesferica* 14.1, Spring 2018 - *Expulsion*), NYU Hemispheric Institute + (Optional) [After Maria](#) (Netflix)(2019).

Supplement to Fishbowl: [Hurricane Maria](#) (Wikipedia), The Pulitzer Center’s “[Mapping Vulnerability](#),” (2019) and “[1491: The Western Hemisphere Before the Arrival of Columbus](#)” (The Atlantic, March 2002).

- Review Marianne’s Williamson’s plan for a [U.S. Department of Peace](#). How does this compare to the opening paragraph of your own manifesto? Where does Williamson inspire or fall short with this vision to recover from the failings of capitalism? How is she engaging in conversation with the people and themes we have discussed so far: Thomas Jefferson, democracy, the legacy of slavery, the mistreatment of indigenous populations?

Feminism

- “[Darwin’s Teaching of Women’s Inferiority](#),” with [supplementary notes](#). + Audre Lorde, “[Sexism: An American Disease in Blackface](#),” (1979)
 - *Black-ish*, “[Feminism’t](#),” October 2019.

Supplements: In class, “[NYC Commissions gives green light to statue honoring leaders of women’s suffrage movement](#),” AMNY, October 22, 2019 + Darwin’s *The Descent of Man*: [Secondary Sexual Characters of Man](#) (excerpt from *Descent of Man*)

- **Oct 28**: Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie - [We Should All Be Feminists](#) + *Dear Ijeawele, or a Feminist Manifesto in Fifteen Suggestions* (2017)

Watch: In class - Beyonce, Flawless.

- **Oct 31:** Education Manifestos: Critiques of the Education System

Bell hooks, *Teaching Community*, "[Democratic Education](#)"; Paolo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, [chapter 2](#); Martin Haberman, "[The Pedagogy of Poverty Versus Good Teaching](#)"; Nel Noddings, "[A Morally Defensible Mission for Schools in the 21st Century](#)."

Unit Assessment: Write your own manifesto. Official prompt:

For your MP2 Final Deliverable:

Select a topic: Feminism, Economics, Education, etc...

Rooted in discussion with at least three sources, draft your own manifesto.

Potential outline:

Declaration of the Problem

Root Cause Analysis

Proposed Solution

Prepared Counter to potential challenges

Final Charge to the reader.

Keep the language inspiring, use the most insightful verbs, etc.

Or ignore all the suggestions in this assignment and blow us all away!

MP3 - 11/12 - 12/23 (23 days)

- Student-generated Fishbowls with content from the previous marking period's manifestos:

Nov 18: The Teenage Mindset;

Nov 19: Vaccinations / Anti-Vaccinations;

Nov 25: Poetic Manifestos;

Nov 26: Education & Feminism Manifestos. How do these themes intersect in The New York Times' piece, "[114,000 Students in N.Y.C. Are Homeless](#)"? (Eliza Shapiro, November 19, 2019).

- Over Thanksgiving Break, watch part 1 of Ken Burns' documentary, [College Behind Bars](#) (PBS, November 2019). Dec 2: In class, watch the first 20

minutes of part 1, Fishbowl, then conclusion with the first 20 minutes of part 2, for Dec 3 Fishbowl.

Supporting articles, "[Three Inmates Beat Harvard in a Debate](#)" (October 2019), "[PBS Follows 12 Inmates](#)" (Nov 2019)

December 6: **Field Trip: [Theater of War's King Lear at Raices Senior Center, Brooklyn, New York, with a community talk-back.](#)** Student panelist: Jessica Gonzalez, UAMA class of 2020.

- Franz Kafka, *The Trial*, excerpted - p. 3-19 / p. 35-53, 80-97 / p. 231 - end.

Watch: In class, [The School of Life on Franz Kafka](#). Day 2, watch "What is the Kafkaesque?"

Angela Davis, [Are Prisons Obsolete?](#) Focus on chapter 6. Mariame Kaba, "[Seeing Prisons for What They Are.](#)"

MP4: Final Paper Period: 1/6 - 1/17 [Kafka / Justice project.](#)

Spring 2020

Embodying the Humanities - Reading, Writing, and Thinking about the 21st Century

In the fall semester, we read classic and modern "greats" in intellectual thought and defined constructs like capitalism, racism, and feminism. The spring offers Bard students an expanded curriculum in genre, forms (short stories, poetry, plays), and perspectives. We will destabilize the constructs from the fall semester through a reading list spanning from the 1930s through the present day. We will also critique dominant narratives in a White western world especially with help from the "postmodern," post colonial, indigenous voices, and futurism.

There are three components to our final semester of the Bard Sequence.

1) Critical Writing.

Students have two options: complete a 10-15 page independent research paper by the end of MP4. This paper must use 7 to 9 sources. One of these sources must be a "scholarly source."

Complete two 5 page papers that build on, complicate, or respond to one

another in some way. One to be completed at the end of MP2, and the other by the end of MP3. Each paper must include 4 sources.

2) Service Work at Raíces Senior Centers.

In the United States, we learn capitalist values: to value youth, to fear aging, and to equate our self worth with our ability to physically work. At our worst, we forget about our elderly, despite the experience and wisdom that they hold. Our low income seniors of color suffer the most from these practices.

Urban Assembly's collaboration with the Raices Senior Centers will pilot in Spring 2020. Bard students in both sections of the Sequence will experience selfless giving. Students will also become teachers as they read, write, and perform music in fellowship with our local seniors. *Students are encouraged to add these service hours to their college resumes.*



3) Site study. We will visit local museums and galleries to engage with artwork that speaks directly to the themes of our course. We will support these visits with relevant theory, articles, and a Fishbowl discussion.

Students can expect to have more community seminars throughout our final semester.

MP1 (Jan 28 - March 6, 9 Sessions)

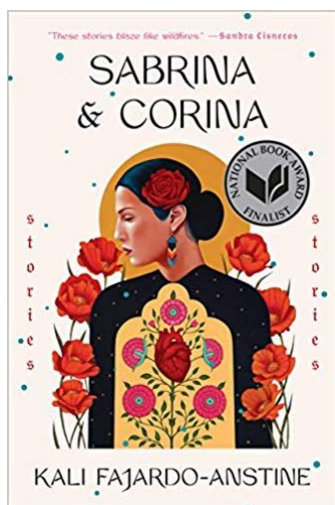
- **January 28:** Russell Means, "[Revolution and American Indians: Marxism is as Alien to My Culture as Capitalism.](#)" *Films for Action*, November 12, 2011. (First day of semester - read in class and respond).

View (in class): first ten minutes, [Russell Means: Welcome to the American Reservation Prison Camp.](#)

"What you read here is not what I've written. It's what I've said and someone else has written down. I will allow this because it seems that the only way to

communicate with the white world is through the dead, dry leaves of a book.”

- **February 3:** Kali Fajardo-Anstine, “Sugar Babies,” from *Sabrina & Corina: Stories* (2019).



View (in class): [Mayor’s Awards for Excellence in Arts and Culture Global Award Winner - Kali Fajardo-Anstine](#). Freewrite in response to the book cover.

Questions to consider: Pay special attention to the ending. What does it mean to you? Did this story teach you anything about indigenous culture (if so, what?) What did the sugar baby represent for you?

- **February 4:** Helena Maria Villamontes “[The Cariboo Cafe](#)” from *The Moths and Other Short Stories* (1985).

Questions to consider: How does the form contribute to the (mis)understanding of immigrant perspectives in this short story? (Why would Villamontes choose this experimental form?) Whose voices does Villamontes allow us to hear from and how are those characters portrayed? What questions still remain for you at the end of the story?

View (in class): ~17:00 - 26:00. [UO Today with Helena Maria Villamontes](#). Villamontes speaks on the power of language, her responsibility as a writer to write about poverty and all systems of power with honesty, while inserting voices back into American narratives.

Supplemental (included in class materials for Fishbowl): [Biography on Helena Maria Villamontes, Open Study Center](#).

- **February 10:** Luis Valdez, “[Los Vendidos](#)” (1967).

View (in class): [This is Us! Luis Valdez](#) + link to [El Teatro Campesino](#).

Questions to consider: How are stereotypes functioning in this play? How is Valdez using humor to make a social critique? What might a drama allow us to see about these issues that a piece of prose might not? Can theatre play a role in social justice movements (what does theater allow us to do, see, or process, especially for the underrepresented and invisible Latinx community?)

Supplemental: [Necessary Theatre: Luis Valdez](#).

- **February 11:** [Brainstorming for Independent Research project + Find one informal article](#) (worksheet #1, to be graded).

Over break - find another informal article that speaks to your proposed research topic in some way ([worksheet #2, "Informal Sources - Continued"](#)). Read it and come prepared to share your findings when we return from break.

Midwinter Break: February 17 - 21

February 24: Shares from informal research assignments completed over break, mini reflection (worksheet #3).

February 25: Formal sources assignment on JSTOR + other databases. Worksheet #4 adapted from "[How to Critique a Journal Article](#)" from The Center for Teaching and Learning at UIS.

March 2: One month check-in + Consolidation of writing (worksheet #5).

March 3: Receive sample inquiry project for in-class reading.

MP2 (March 9 - April 8) - Exploring the Arts + Continuing Independent Research

Supported by a field trip to the Brooklyn Museum's exhibits: [JR: Chronicles](#), [Jacques-Louis David Meets Kehinde Wiley](#), and [Climate in Crisis](#) to revisit and expand on discussions about art, seeing the unseen, Black portraiture, and environmental racism.

Students will use Bard's Writing and Thinking Prompts for Viewing Art during the day of our visit to compile supportive notes for our Fishbowl discussions.

March 9: (visit from David Zimler, Kyle D. Bollar, et. al. from Westbury High School + Bard College - Dumaine Williams) - Research Fishbowl on sample inquiry project from BHSEC Manhattan (2019 graduate): "What role do faculty play in supporting girls of color in Bard High School Early College? Understanding and Analyzing Faculty as a Means of Support for Girls of Color." (Project advisor, Dr. Augustine)

Use the "critiquing a scholarly source" worksheet to help you assess the writing

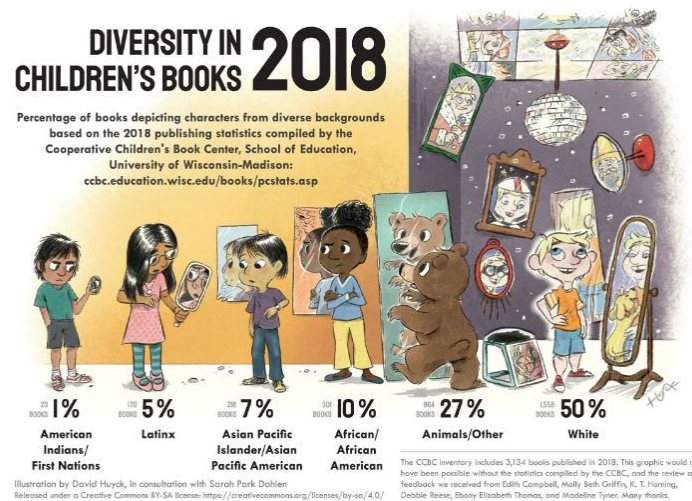
(strengths, expansion, deletion, what types of sources are being used and how), reflect on how the text adds to our discussions on reforming the education system, consider what the manifesto adds to the research conducted in the article, reflect on your own research process thus far.

Supplementary Info: [SMART Scholars at BHSECM](#), [Dr. Steven Mazie on the Bard Seminar Experience](#) (2013, YouTube).

March 10 - In class: read Dr. Augustine's "The Invisible Reader."

REMOTE LEARNING SYLLABUS BEGINS MARCH 23.

Digital resources list: [Poetry workshops at the Brooklyn Public Library with Zetta Elliott](#);



March 23: Freewrite in response to the [Diversity in Children's Books 2018 Infographic](#).

Deliverable: write the opening scene to a story about a character who is underrepresented, misrepresented, or not represented in these statistics (75 words).

March 24: Post an encouraging comment in response to the opening scene written by a classmate yesterday. **Listen:** [Dr. Augustine's lecture on the context of her research](#).

Deliverable: Fishbowl posts on the introduction to Dr. Augustine's dissertation, "[The Invisible Reader and 21st Century African American Children's Literature](#)" (New York University, 2018). Posts of 150 words now use the [new Fishbowl rubric](#).

Exploring the Arts Through the (Brooklyn) Museum

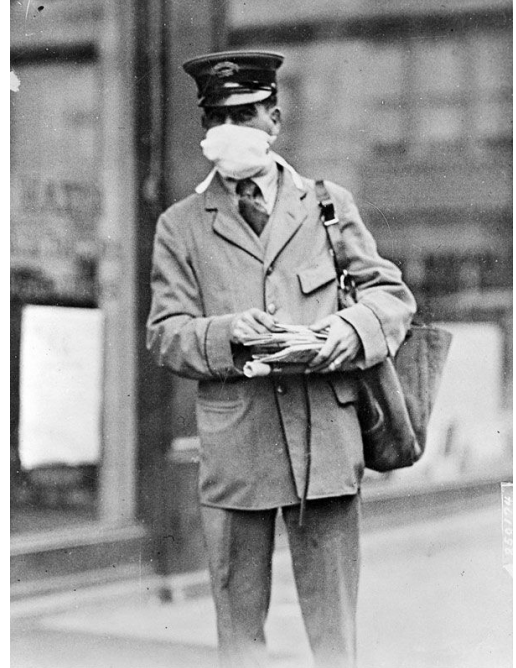
March 30: Community Check In & Open Mic, 2 pm, Zoom. Student-centered shares of any writing in Bard thus far (short stories, fishbowl posts) or bring something new.

March 31: The Spanish Flu Pandemic

View: Archival photos, the National Archives: “Letter carrier in New York wearing mask for protection against influenza.” October 16, 1918 and “Nurse wearing a mask as protection against influenza. September 13, 1918”

Watch: CBS Sunday Morning, “[The Story of the 1918 Flu Pandemic](#).”

Read: *1918 Pandemic, Eyewitness Accounts from the Greatest Medical Holocaust in Modern History*, Catharine Arnold (St. Martin’s Press 2018), [excerpted](#).



Write: FFW in response to one or both photos. Complete a 150 word Fishbowl post by Sunday night in response to whichever text in this suite speaks to you the most. Use these materials to reflect on the significance of this pandemic in the wake of today's coronavirus.

For our Fishbowls moving forward, we will always hold space for celebrations, grief, concerns, student leadership, and will set the intentions for each discussion before we begin.

April 6: Google Meet Fishbowl Seminar on the Spanish Flu Epidemic, 2-3:30 pm.



April 7: Catch up on writing deliverables for the marking period.

Prepare for the fish Fishbowl of MP3 on “Living and Learning Through the Heart” on Monday, April 13 via a freewrite on “the heart” and Fishbowl post.

Listen: Dr. Augustine [poses questions for our seminar on Soundcloud](#).

Read: Pick one primary text:

The Gospel of John, [chapter 16, verses 16-33](#).

Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, Book 8, [excerpted](#).

HeartMath Institute, [Science of the Heart](#).

Kind World podcast, [any episode](#).

Deliverable - 150 word Fishbowl post. You may also share your own texts in any form that make you think about the heart.

MP3 (April 9 - May 29)

April 14: Seminar discussion on Zoom, “Living and Learning Through the Heart.”

April 20: Merged class with Juniors begins.

Week 1 (April 20-24): Research - Identify topic, write a 200-word paragraph in response to a periodical found in the [GALE Research databases for NYC DOE](#) or Google News with MLA Citations.

Week 2 (April 27 - May 1) Seminar - Student Pick: Kayla Hamilton - Assata Shakur & The Black Panther Party. Fold into student generated questions concerning conspiracy theories and the role of youth in government. Sources in consultation with Dr. Nneka Dennie, Washington and Lee.

Freewrites to an image:

“[All Power to the People](#)” - Button of Bobby Seale, in the Schomburg Center for Black Culture, NYC. (If you watch the Black Panther Mixtape, you’ll see children wearing buttons like these.)

*Huey Newton, Black Panther Minister of Defense in the [National Museum of AfAm Hist/Culture](#),

*“[Uniformed Youth in Formation](#)” (1972, [Standord University](#) The Black Panther Party in the Bob Fitch Photo Archive).

Readings:

*“[The 10 Point Plan](#)” *required

*Pair the 10 PP with one of the following: Assata Shakur, “[Women in Prison: How It Is With Us](#),” or Katherine Cleaver, “[Women, Power, and Revolution](#).”

Additional visual source material:

*Federal Bureau of Investigation (Justice Department), “[Black Panther](#)” [newsreel](#) (15 minutes).

*Black Panthers: [Vanguard of the Revolution](#) (2015) (most cohesive but there's no closed captions)

*[The Black Power Mixtape](#) (2011).

Week 3 (May 4-8): Research - [Digital research workshop on Zoom with Amber Certain, NYPL Outreach Librarian](#) (5/7, .mp4 of session attached). The workshop will include SimplyE and key databases for scholarship and periodicals. A video recording will be accessible for students to stream if attendance isn't possible.

NYPL handouts: [Hey! Got Homework?](#)

Students apply for an e-library card, then spend some time in the NYPL via the SimplyE app and or website; or any database available on the NYPL as a whole with help from Ms. Certain's tutorial.

Find a source of any kind related to your research projects, summarize 5-10 pages of it in 200 words, and discuss it in your mini research groups. Record your discussion or take minutes. Group check in on Thursday will be time to complete individual and group work.

Week 4 (May 11 - 15): Seminar: Guest lecture and discussion with Dr. Marcus Shepard, Walden University, "Managing Friendships on Social Media," chapter four in *Midnight Musings: Interpersonal Relationships & Social Media* (2018). Students post their questions for Dr. Shepard as well as a 150 word Fishbowl post on the chapter.

Week 5 (May 18 - 22): Research seminar with Concepción de León of *The New York Times* discusses her research process between "Caught Between Worlds? For Elizabeth Acevedo, It's a Familiar Feeling" (May 4, 2020) and "The Beauties: How a New Generation of Dominican Models Has Come to Define the Runways" (April 13, 2020). Students post their questions for Ms. de León as well as a 150 word Fishbowl post on at least one of the articles.

MP4: May 25 - June 16

Small groups meet once a week with either Augustine or Vural to check in about writing and receive individual support on final 8-10 page papers.

Additional resources: May 26: [Mr. Collado's tutorial](#) for creating a free New York Times Student account, courtesy of the New York Times, with free access for NYC students through July 6, 2020.

