Essay 2: Comparative Analysis

GUIDELINES
For this essay, your second formal assignment, you will write a Comparative Analysis on two texts of your choosing, identifying the differences and similarities between the two and then interpreting their significance.

One text *must* be something we have read thus far in class (see list below), but your second text may be any other narrative "text" of your choice: a movie, a TV series, a song, a music video, an advertisement, a video game, another essay or poem we haven't read in class—literally anything you want. (You may also opt to write on two of our assigned readings).

Once you've selected your texts, you will compose an essay in which you *compare* and *contrast* some key elements in both texts: theme, purpose, genre, style, use of rhetorical and/or literary devices, representation of some experience or identity, etc.

For example, you might compare and contrast how Langston Hughes and Gloria Anzaldua both discuss being marginalized in American society, or how James Baldwin and Teju Cole utilize rhetorical devices in their essays. Or is there a movie that reminds you of Childish Gambino's message in "This Is America"? Or an episode of a TV show that echoes the theme in "Stranger in the Village"? Or song lyrics that use the same literary devices Hughes employs in "Let America Be America Again"? Try to focus on something that both interests you and seems perplexing. You are going to be interpreting and explaining the works, and then developing an argumentative thesis about the similarities and differences.

Remember that the purpose of this paper is *not* to just list the differences and similarities between the texts, but to *interpret* the differences and similarities and then persuade the reader that your interpretation is correct.

<u>Texts to Choose From</u>
"Let America Be America Again"—Langston Hughes
"This is America"—Childish Gambino
"Stranger in the Village"—James Baldwin
"Black Body: Rereading James Baldwin's 'Stranger in the Village'"—Teju Cole
"How To Tame A Wild Tongue"—Gloria Anzaldua
"Mother Tongue"—Amy Tan

EVALUATION
Your essay will be graded on the following:

- *Thesis:* Is there a clear and precise thesis that compares and contrasts two texts (one of which must be an assigned reading), clearly lists the grounds for comparison, and provides an evaluative or explanatory significance?

- *Support:* Does the essay include specific, relevant examples from both texts in order to illustrate the comparisons/contrasts?

- *Analysis:* Does the essay move beyond merely stating differences/similarities and make a deeper claim about their significance?

- *Organization*: In addition to adhering to good essay structure (introduction with a thesis statement; body paragraphs with topic sentence, evidence, and analysis; and a conclusion that restates the main points and thesis), is the essay organized in either a **point-by-point** or **subject-by-subject** pattern?

- *Grammar and Mechanics:* How well have you edited and proofread so that there are no major grammatical or spelling errors?

SPECIFICATIONS

- *Length:* 4-5 double-spaced pages (~1200-1450 words)

- *Formatting:* MLA format

- *Weight:* 20% of course grade

DUE DATES

- **Wednesday, October 28:** Rough Draft due; email to Christina.Quintana@baruch.cuny.edu and your two peer reviewers by 11:59pm

- **Wednesday, November 4:** Final Draft due; email to Christina.Quintana@baruch.cuny.edu by 11:59pm
    - Please send as **.doc** or **.docx** and save as YourLastNameYourFirstName_Essay2