

Essay #2
Dr. C. Sommerfeldt
English 103
March 12, 2019

This paper is due April 3rd at 11:59 p.m. The last day to hand it in is April 8th at 11:59 p.m, the last day of classes. The due date has changed from the original one on the syllabus. Submit your paper on Blackboard. If you have last-minute technical difficulty, use Google Docs, OneDrive, or email.

Late papers will receive a mark breakdown without comments. No paper will be accepted after April 8 at 11:59 p.m.

Write a 1500-word research essay (not including long quotations) on one of the following topics. Essays must be typed, double spaced, and written in at least a 12-point font (preferably Times New Roman). Use MLA style to list your sources on a separate page at the end of the essay. The word count does not include quotations of longer than 3 lines or layout/Works Cited material.

You must use **one** peer-reviewed journal article for your research paper, and this must be in your Works Cited. **The journal article must be a specific interpretation of *Much Ado about Nothing* or *The Raw Shark Texts*. It must also be accessible through MacEwan library. You should know how to find a peer-reviewed article from English 102.**

***The Raw Shark Texts* and *Much Ado* themselves do **not** count as a source, though they must be listed in your Works Cited.** Internet sources and summaries other than scholarly articles should not form the basis of your argument. Don't use informal reviews, popular sources, or blog entries as sources for the main part of your argument.

Your essay will be an interpretation of one of the issues listed below: what is the novel or play saying about this issue? Make sure you have textual evidence for your interpretation of the play or novel in the form of quotations: any essay on a literary topic should contain evidence from the text to support your argument. **You should examine at least four passages from the play or novel in detail and look at the language specifically.** Don't merely refer to events or descriptions in the play or novel. There will be a **substantial** (25%) deduction for lack of textual evidence. Don't merely string together observations from the critics.

I should have some sense of your engagement with the article you choose, either through part disagreement or adding to/commenting on an interpretation in the article. This will be a bit harder with *The Raw Shark Texts*. Make sure you engage with the reading of the works: don't merely list what the critic says about the work without any commentary of your own or make sweeping historical claims.

Breakdown of marks:

65% content (including structure); 15% Scholarly Sources and MLA format; 20% grammar.

Several of the questions refer to representation: note that a representation doesn't just mean *portrayal*; it includes the historical and ideological context for the portrayal.

1. Discuss Shakespeare's representation of men OR women in *Much Ado about Nothing*. What constitutes masculinity or femininity in the play? You may want to consider such issues as agency, gender roles, friendship between men, etc. in your analysis. It's also been argued that characters such as Don John and the play's initial emphasis on singleness can open up a space for non-traditional readings and performances of gender, so alternatively you might analyze places where this potentially happens in the play.
2. Discuss Branagh's OR Whedon's interpretation of the play in the film of *Much Ado about Nothing*. What does the director you choose emphasize in terms of themes? What does he leave out? Use the TEXT as your point of comparison. You should have textual evidence for all your points and scholarly articles to back up your interpretation. Don't use informal reviews, popular sources, or blog entries as sources for your argument.
3. Discuss the character and function of Hero in *Much Ado about Nothing*. You should have textual evidence for your argument about her.
4. Discuss the interpretation of Claudio in *Much Ado about Nothing*. You should have textual evidence for your argument about him.
5. Discuss the metaphor of the virus and/or the network in *The Raw Shark Texts*. There is a specific article about this in the library.
6. Discuss *The Raw Shark Texts* as a novel about the nature of language, reading, and writing. What specific aspects of the novel (imagery, form, etc) draw attention to these aspects and what might the novel as a whole be saying about them?
7. *The Raw Shark Texts* is concerned with various versions of history, both at the level of Eric Sanderson's story and various larger visions of human history (cosmological, evolutionary, etc). What might the novel as a whole be suggesting about history and our relationship with it?

8. Discuss *The Raw Shark Texts* and its use of *Jaws* as an intertext. What aspects of the movie does the novel emphasize and why?
9. Discuss the endings of *The Raw Shark Texts*. What options for interpretation do they represent for Eric's plot/life and what is their significance for the novel's larger themes?