

ENGL 4450: Dual Authors, Moraga and Castillo

Theory in the Flesh Paper

One of the critical lessons you'll learn from this class is that theory doesn't have to originate in philosophical perspectives of the Occident. As an alternative, people like Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa point to a kind of embodied theorizing that draws from one's geographically local and physically embodied knowledges to engage the world critically. Embracing this perspective, you will write a short theoretical essay that uses your body as a starting point. I performed an example of my own in class on March 17.

There isn't really a "right" way to do this paper. As you'll see from reading Moraga and Anzaldúa, this kind of writing can take various forms that might include the integration of poetry, personal narrative, etc., but it still manages to engage scholarly concepts and audiences. As you'll see in my example, I continue to engage scholarly audiences and literatures even while I'm not speaking in a purely "academic" tone. Importantly, though, the starting point for her work and my own is personal, embodied, and locally situated experience, so I expect the same from you.

The paper can be a written transcript of your performance. However, if you wish to do your performance differently, feel free. The paper must be three pages minimum and five pages maximum. The performance should be 6-9 minutes. The paper is worth 5% of your final grade and the actual performance is worth another 5%. Please take this assignment seriously and PRACTICE your performance. I will be timing your presentation and will ask you to stop when you reach the maximum limit.

If you have any questions or want to run something by me, please don't hesitate to ask.

All essays due in class on April 21