

Response Essay #1: On Raymond Williams' *Keywords*

Due Date: February 11th

Requirements:

- Three pages, double-spaced
- 11-12 pt. font (Times New Roman, Calibri, Garamond)
- Three popular sources cited correctly using MLA format
- Uploaded via Lore by 5:00pm of the due date (late papers will not be accepted)

In this response essay, I want you to choose a word that is commonly used in popular culture and analyze its usage in three different popular sources (television shows, newspapers, magazines, films, etc). These sources cannot be dictionaries, though dictionaries may be useful to give general context to the word. The word that you choose must be a broad term (think abstract noun: freedom, democracy, civilization, socialism, etc.) and not a narrow technical term that is not commonly used. While I am not requiring you to use a word from Williams' *Keywords*, you certainly may if you so desire.

Your essay should generally include all of the following:

- 1) General definition and understanding of the word (I suggest using the online *Oxford English Dictionary*, available through GSU's library database). This should not be your own definition or understanding of the word, but the formal, "official" uses of the word. The *OED* is especially useful as it provides examples and contexts for the words as they have been used throughout the centuries (much as Williams' *Keywords* does).
- 2) Examples and analysis of three popular uses of the term. In your analysis, you should give the specific context in which the term was used and the apparent meaning given to it. You should point out the ways in which this use of this term is similar/different from both your general definition and the uses in your other popular sources.
- 3) Conclude your essay with an analysis of the state of the word within popular usage today. Based on your sources, how is the word used today? Is it used differently depending on the type of popular source? If so, why? If not, why not? This section of the paper is where you should draw conclusions or point out contradictory tensions in uses of the word, much as Williams does throughout *Keywords*.

This essay will be graded based upon: 1) meeting all of the requirements of the assignment; 2) addressing each of the three parts of the essay; 3) quality and depth of analysis and conclusions.