

History 346, Spring 2012
Leslie Madsen-Brooks

Reading Reflection Papers

Over the course of the semester, you will be required to write six short responses to the books we read for this class. The writing prompts and due dates for each book's reflection—most books have one, but *Dorothea Lange* has two—are included in the course schedule on the syllabus. (If you lose the print copy of your syllabus, you can access it at <http://womenwest.doinghistory.com/syllabus/>)

Length: If the reflection is supposed to be one page, I expect it to be within two lines of the bottom of the page, and not even one line longer. A two-page paper may be between 1.75 and two pages, but no shorter or longer.

Formatting: single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman, 1-inch margins.

(These requirements may seem a bit strict and traditional, but I have my reasons for putting them in place.)

These assignments have multiple purposes. First and most obviously, they provide you with an opportunity to reflect on the reading. Second, taken collectively, they ask for a good deal of critical and creative thinking. Third, they are a way of practicing short-form, disciplined writing; chances are good that in your careers you will be expected to make observations and arguments in writing via e-mail, memos, or reports similar in length to these pieces.

Because they are short, and because they usually are due after we have had the opportunity to discuss each book during class time, **I expect these pieces to be thoughtful, interesting, and highly polished.**

To receive an A, a reflections paper must:

- thoroughly address the writing prompt printed on the syllabus;
- demonstrate that you have read the book and reflected on its themes;
- exhibit a good deal of clear, creative, and critical thought;
- be written nearly flawlessly—almost no errors in spelling, grammar, mechanics, or usage;
- be of appropriate length.

I encourage you to find at least one trusted writing partner to read and comment on your reflections before you turn them in.

These papers are due **at the beginning of class**. I encourage you to keep a digital copy on your iPad so that you may refer to it during class discussion.