On the Road in New York City

JOUR-UA 301 Advanced Reporting

David Dent

There are several missions of this class. You will go on a series of journeys throughout the city. You will go on the road in New York in search of snippets of ordinary life that say something extraordinary about the city and humanity. Your challenge will be to present those portraits of life you discover with prose that gives the reader a sense of making the same discoveries with you. You will also read five books that employ “road” journalism in different ways. The semester will culminate in your own major project that will require you to journey with a social or cultural world of New York.

In order to write about city life, you must follow the city, this nation and the world. Therefore you must read the front pages of each section of The New York Times everyday. We will have surprise current events tests throughout the semester.

Required Reading:

William Finnegan, Cold New World

Hunter S. Thompson, Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas

Barbara Ehrenreich, Nickel and Dimed

Paul Theroux, To the Ends of the Earth

Tom Wolfe, Hooking Up

Required Assignments

Street Exercises: 10 percent of grade

Book Presentations: 10 percent of grade

Current Events Tests: 10 percent of grade

Houston Articles: 20 percent of grade

Short article: 15 Percent of grade

Final Article: 30 percent of grade

Final Article Presentation: 5 percent of grade
Assignments:

Week 1 —Both Houston Assignments Should Be Complete, Street Exercise Due, Ideas for Short and Long Pieces Due

Week 2- Discussion of Nickel and Dimed, Revision of ideas, Street Exercises Due

Week 3—Query Letter Due, Street Exercises Due

Week 4—Discussion of Thompson; Three sample paragraphs. Ideas Final

Week 5 --Research Plan for Projects Due. Street Exercises Due

Week 6 —Three sample paragraphs Due, Discussion of Cold New World

Week 7—First Draft of short piece due

Week 8—Revision of Short piece, Three sample paragraphs for long piece, Discussion of Paul Theroux.

Week 9—Final Short piece, Three sample paragraphs for long piece

Week 10-First Draft of Long piece

Week 11—Revision of Long piece. Discussion of Wolfe

Week 12-Final Draft of Long piece.