THE LONG-FORM ESSAY
PROFESSOR KATIE ROIPHE
ROOM 716

This is an advanced course in the reading and practice of essay writing, with a rigorous focus on the mechanics of the essay. How does a great essay work? We will examine the elusive elements of precision, originality, and style. Over the course of the semester students will focus on developing and refining their own critical voice. Writers under discussion will include: Virginia Woolf, Joan Didion, Mary McCarthy, William Styron, Jonathan Franzen, David Foster Wallace, Zadie Smith, Alison Bechdel, Ariel Levy and Janet Malcolm.

READING:

Janet Malcolm, *In the Freud Archives*
Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One’s Own and On Being Ill*
Christopher Hitchens, *Mortality*
John Updike, *Self-Consciousness*
William Styron, *Darkness Visible*
Alison Bechdel, *Are You My Mother?, Fun Home*
Mary McCarthy, *The Company She Keeps*

All other readings will be in the course packet, unless otherwise noted.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:
There will be one long paper (3,500 words) due at the end of the semester on a topic of your choosing; no late papers will be accepted. Grades will be based in equal parts on the paper and on class participation.

1/26: Virginia Woolf *A Room of One’s Own*


PROSPECTUS FOR FINAL PAPER DUE

2/23: John Updike, *Self-Consciousness*

3/2: Reading to be announced

3/9: OPENINGS DUE
Opening Workshop

3/23: Janet Malcolm, *In The Freud Archives*
“A Girl of the Zeitgeist.”


4/13: Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home and Are You My Mother?*

4/20: Mary McCarthy, *The Company She Keeps.* And “Settling the Colonel’s Hash.”

4/27: FINAL PAPER DUE
Editing Workshop
5/4: Editing Workshop

5/11: REVISED FINAL PAPER DUE
Closing Thoughts