

## 21L002 Fall '02: Essay 3 (due in Class #23)

You have two options for this essay: 1/ write on one of the topics suggested below (not all the questions have to be answered, but do think about them); 2/ if you've given or will have given a presentation, write your material up into an essay.

If you choose the second option, your essay should do these three general things: give your sources; suggest why you chose this material; relate it to some specific bits of the reading and do some amount of textual analysis. See me or the Class Tutor for specifics, as each essay will be different.

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### Essay Topics

#### **Violence.**

a/ Where and how does violence appear in Stowe's text? Who employs it, and to what end? Does the use of violence produce the desired effects? If and when it fails to do so, what *are* its effects? When characters talk about violence, what are their views? What kinds of alternatives does Stowe suggest – to using force, or to resisting injustice forcibly – and to what extent are they satisfying or convincing?

b/ How does violence appear in Whitman's text, and do his poems and prose handle the subject differently? How does Whitman treat the subject of war as compared to earlier texts – for instance, *The War of Conquest*?

#### **Principles and Practice**

Let's stipulate that for Stowe, or in her novel, it is a principle that slavery is wrong and should be abolished, because there is a universal right to freedom in which all share. (Of course, not all her characters share this belief). How do her characters imagine putting this principle into practice, if they do? What complications do they encounter? Does Stowe manage to envision a world after or beyond slavery? What does it look like? Does it have limitations, and if so, what are they?

#### **Race**

Whitman's Civil War poetry largely does not address the topics of race or of slavery, even these were precisely the issues on which the North and South went to war. Two exceptions are "Ethiopia Saluting the Colours" (from *Drum Taps*) and "I Sing the Body Electric" (from *Leaves of Grass*). Read the poems – what do they say and not say about race, slavery, and war? What else do they say? How do you evaluate them as works of art?

**Length:** ~ 5 pages, double-spaced (block quotes single-spaced).

**NOTE:** Please include in your folder: copies of your two previous essays; a draft of the current essay. If you didn't revise a draft of the second essay, you have two options: 1/ revise the second

essay after reading my comments (I'll return these essays the next day); 2/ go over a draft of the third essay either with the Class Tutor or me, and revise it accordingly.