

**Essay Assignment**  
**ENWR 106: College Writing II**  
**Instructor: Gerrie Logan**

**Topic options (based on Dubus' "Killings," Faulkner's "Barn Burning," and Li's "Persimmons"):**

You have now completed two essays, where you have developed a literary argument. In this third essay you will showcase your analytic and critical thinking skills through an examination of two thought-provoking short stories. The required length of this essay is 3-4 pages in length, and as always, a works cited page is required. You should continue to engage with the text to support your opinions, thoughts and ideas. Do not make claims lightly; ensure that these claims can either be supported by the text or an outside source. If you are using an outside source, you will also be required to attach a copy of the article with your final draft. All other requirements on the organization and submission of your final assignment packet remain the same as the previous essays. The topics are as follows:

1. How does Abner Snopes' motivation for revenge compare with Matt Fowler's in Dubus' "Killings?" How do the victims of each character's revenge differ and thereby help to shape the meaning of each story? Analyze either one of the stories from the lens of a psychological critic. Are there specific disorders that explain the actions of the fathers? How do you think a psychological critic would interpret the father/son relationships in either of the two stories? In selecting this topic, you will be required to support your analysis with a credible and professional source that supports a psychological profile of any of the characters.
2. Examine the idea of justice and how it is served or not served in any of the stories. Examine the role of government in two of the stories and explain the government's role in the outcome of the story. What does this say about society? How much the government should be involved? What are the pros and cons when government is involved?
3. Write an essay examining how at least three movie critics have responded to a particular film about revenge, such as *In the Bedroom* (the movie adaptation of "Killings"), *Kill Bill I or II*, *Mystic River*, *Cape Fear*, *Collateral Damage*, *Being Julia*, *Spiderman*, or *Fatal Attraction*. To learn critics' responses you will have to do some research. A good Web site to consult is the Internet Movie Database at <http://us.imdb.com>. In your essay, point out a key issue that your chosen critics raise, identify their positions on this issue and develop a case for your own position.
4. One of the themes that exist in all four of the readings suggests that man is inherently evil. Do the authors imply hopelessness? In comparing two of the works, address how each author deals with this topic. What message are they sending to society? How has this message stood up over the course of time?