
ALL ABOUT THE BIKE

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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

I am trained as a medievalist, and I regularly teach upper-level courses on Chaucer and the literature of the Middle Ages, as well as the History of the English Language. As part of my contribution to the University's Core Curriculum, I have taught a first-year seminar in almost every year of my 22 years at Butler University. In past years, I have taught first-year seminars on a variety of topics, including George Orwell, Travel Literature, J. R. R. Tolkien and Medieval Literature, and Imagining the Middle Ages. One of the premises of our first first-year seminar program is that students more readily learn to write and to think critically when they pursue a topic which engages their own interests. As a corollary to this, I would also say that instructors teach more effectively when they focus on a topic that interests them. For this reason, I have tried over the years to develop topics that are of mutual interest to both me and my students.

I developed my course on cycling for a number of reasons. First, I am a life-long cyclist. I commute ten miles a day to campus, and I try to do most of my professional travel by bicycle. This means that I travel by bicycle to the annual International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo Michigan, for about 500 miles round-trip, and I also cycle to Louisville each summer to grade AP exams, riding 250 miles there and back. In recent years, I have also taken up randonneuring, which is a non-competitive sport in which cyclists ride a certain distance within a specified time. In 2011, I completed Paris-Brest-Paris, the pre-eminent randonneuring event, which takes place every four years, and which requires cyclists to travel 1200 kilometers in 90 hours. Between my commuting, my daily travel for errands and entertainment, and my randonneuring, I ride about 8,000 miles per year.

I had long wished for a way to combine my passion for cycling and my broader commitment to leading an ecologically responsible life with my academic interests. In the context of Medieval Studies, this is simply not feasible. But recent changes in the University's core curriculum made it more possible for me to think about teaching a cycling course. Broadly speaking, these changes were designed to allow for the development of more interdisciplinary courses in the core curriculum, and to invite faculty members to teach outside of their primary areas of specialization. The first-year seminar was taken out of the English Department, with the aim of bringing faculty from other departments into the program. At the same time, our physical well-being requirement was reduced from two hours to one, with an emphasis on activities, such as tennis, ballroom dancing and t'ai chi. Because this new course was defined in a way that emphasized activity rather than specialized instruction, I might consider teaching it. Finally, a community service requirement was added to the core curriculum, and I could imagine ways of working with advocacy groups and charitable organizations in the city to satisfy this argument. Thus, the curricular structures were in place for me to think about developing a cycling course.

Even more importantly, cultural and social changes made it possible for me to offer my cycling course. If one surveys the history of cycling in the United States, it seems fair to say that we are now going through

our fourth bicycle boom. The first two booms occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and brought us first the High Wheeler, or Penny Farthing bicycle, and then the diamond-shaped safety bike frame, eventually equipped with pneumatic tires and a drive chain (Herlihy 251-82). During this time, the bicycle went from being a specialized and expensive piece of equipment, marketed to men with interests in racing and adventure, to being a more accessible and safe mode of transportation, appealing especially to women. The third boom occurred in the 1970s, when I and all of my friends bought ten-speeds, modelled on French and Italian racing bikes (Herlihy 363-71). We have been in our current boom for five or ten years now; this one has been inspired by concerns about the environment, obesity and other health issues, and the quality of life in urban areas. As Eben Weiss points out in his recent book, *The Enlightened Cyclist*, this boom differs from previous ones in that it emphasizes practical rather than recreational cycling. Because more people are commuting and using bicycles for day-to-day travel, Weiss suggests, the current boom has the potential to make the bicycle an enduring fixture in American life (103-27).

The most visible cycling developments in recent years have taken place on our two coasts and largest cities. Portland has long been celebrated as the most bicycle-friendly city in the country, both for its extensive bicycle infrastructure and for the city's cultivation of businesses and events that support a growing culture surrounding cycling. Despite its many hills and narrow streets, San Francisco has also enjoyed remarkable growth in its cycling culture in recent years, and the city has been ranked at or near the top of the rankings of the cities for cycling in the United States. And, perhaps most noticeably, New York City has vastly expanded its system of bicycle lanes under the Bloomberg administration, and has attracted both praise and controversy in response to the opening of its bicycle share program ("America's Top 50 Bike-Friendly Cities").

But the bicycle boom is also playing out in smaller regional capitals like Indianapolis. Four years ago, we had virtually no bicycle lanes; we now have over 74 miles of lanes, and another 120 planned for the next few years ("Indianapolis Bikeways Plan"). We also have a new facility, the Bike Hub, which provides showers, lockers indoor parking and a bicycle shop for those who commute by bicycle to the downtown area. And in May of 2013, the city attracted national attention for the opening of its Cultural Trail, an eight-mile trail for pedestrians and cyclists which connects the various cultural districts of the city ("Indianapolis Cultural Trail"). The local cycling boom is also evident on the campus of Butler University, which is on the north side of the city. More faculty and staff members now commute by bicycle to work, and many more students have brought bicycles to campus. We have a modest bicycle share program on campus, and the bicycle racks outside our buildings have proliferated and are still frequently full.

In proposing my course, then, I saw the opportunity to take advantage of this growing interest in cycling. I also saw the opportunity to take advantage of a lifetime of reading and thinking about cycling. Thus, when I began planning the course, I knew that I would use David Herlihy's excellent *Bicycle: The History* (Princeton 2006), as well as Barbara Savage's engaging account of her bicycle journey around the world, *Miles from Nowhere* (Mountaineers Books, 1985). But I was also able to discover new books that would fill out the contours of the course, including H. G. Wells's wonderful novel, *The Wheels of Chance: A Bicycling Idyll*, originally published in 1896, which tells the story of a draper's assistant, Hoopdriver, who sets out on a week-long bicycle holiday in the south of England in 1895 (Faber Finds, 2009). When it came time to order books, in April of 2012, I made an educated guess that Bradley Wiggins would win that year's Tour de France, and so I included in the course his autobiography, *In Pursuit of Glory* (Orion, 2010). This turned out to be a fortuitous choice, for Wiggins did win the Tour that year, and his book is well written. Our exploration of cycling was also supported by a series of movies that we watched over the course of the year. Because it is set nearby, *Breaking Away* (1979), about the annual Little 500 bicycle race at

Indiana University, was a natural choice for the class. We also watched Vittorio de Sica's masterpiece, *The Bicycle Thief* (1948), and the classic movie about the Paris-Roubaix race, *A Sunday in Hell* (1976), as well as the more recent *Bicycle Dreams* (2009), about the Race across America, and the fanciful French movie about bicycle racing, *The Triplets of Belleville* (2003). During our unit on touring, we watched *Asiemut* (2006), a small-scale French-Canadian movie that follows a couple's journey through parts of India, China, Tibet and Nepal on heavily loaded mountain bikes. We ended our movie-watching year with *Premium Rush* (2012), which portrays the world of bicycle messengers in New York City.

In this way, then, the course addressed multiple disciplines and multiple media. And our readings, movies and experiences riding bicycles provided fertile ground for discussion, critical thinking and writing throughout the year. At the beginning of the semester, more than half of the students in the class thought, incorrectly, that cyclists should ride on the sidewalk, and never on the streets, and this inspired lively discussions about safety and the behavior of cyclists. Lance Armstrong made his well-publicized confession to Oprah Winfrey in January of 2013, and this provided the occasion for many discussions of doping in cycling. Mike Magnusson's *Heft on Wheels* (Random House, 2005), which recounts the author's efforts to recover from health problems related to over-eating, smoking and drinking through cycling, gave us ways of thinking about the potential health benefits of cycling, and J. Harry Wray's *Pedal Power* (Paradigm Publishers, 2008) introduced into our discussions ways of thinking about cycling as a political movement with the potential to improve the quality of life in our cities. Our reading and our attention to developments in cycling at both the local and national level meant that we were never at a loss to find topics for discussion and writing assignments.

One of the things that I am most proud of in this class is the way in which it integrates physical education into academic work. I am not aware of another example of such integration at my University. As I was preparing the course, I discovered that J. Harry Wray, author of *Pedal Power*, takes students at DePaul University in Chicago on bicycle rides in the community in both an orientation program for incoming students and in an upper-level political science course he teaches. I admire his efforts, and I think that we need more examples in higher education of approaches that integrate physical activity into coursework.

I myself have not always subscribed to the *mens sana in corpore sano* approach to education. When I was a student at Carleton College in the late 1970s, I was required to complete six terms of physical activity, and I devoted myself to subverting this requirement. My college's physical education requirement seemed unrelated to the way I was living and the way I wanted to live, and I just didn't see the point in it. But even as I shunned physical education classes, I rode my bicycle and swam regularly. Over the years, I have come to see the value of regular exercise, and I have also come to accept the Socratic notion that education must engage both the body and the mind. And I have also come to believe that physical education is most meaningful when it is placed in a broader context, as I have tried to do in my course.

I have similar views about community service. For the past twenty years, my University has promoted service learning, experiential learning and other initiatives to get our students out into the community. In theory, I support these initiatives, but, as a specialist in medieval literature, I had never had a good way to incorporate service or experiential learning into my classes. Moreover, some of the examples of ways to incorporate experiential learning into classes seemed to me contrived and artificial. But in my cycling course, I had a natural way to integrate community service into the academic work. My students and I worked with cycling advocacy groups and with organizations that provided bicycles and instruction to children in under-privileged areas of the city. In this way, our community work animated and illuminated the topics we discussed in class.

Our first-year seminar is defined primarily in terms of the reading, critical thinking, speaking and writing skills it is designed to promote. Consequently, I organize the materials for the class, and conduct class meetings with the explicit aim of promoting these skills. The first reading that we do for the course is George Orwell's "Why I Write," and I use this essay to encourage students to make their writing more purposeful and focused. In my experience, the most important thing for students to learn at the beginning of their college careers is how to make arguments. As we take up readings and topics for the course, then, I encourage students to think about the kinds of arguments they might make. What kind of argument, for example, might one make about the social significance of the bicycle in H. G. Wells' *The Wheels of Chance*? What arguments might be made for wearing a helmet, and what problems must we deal with in considering those arguments? I have included in the appendices to my syllabus writing assignments which are designed to encourage students to develop their critical thinking and argumentative skills. For me, one of the real pleasures of the class has been to see very practical sides to these arguments as we engage in the physical activity and community service components of the class. Why should we wear helmets? Let us think about this as we ride. And how could cycling improve our community? Let us think about this as we engage in a community service project that makes bicycles available to inner-city youths.

On the whole, the first iteration of my cycling course was a success. The course received high numerical evaluations, and enthusiastic endorsements from students. As with any new course, there are elements that I will adjust the next time I teach it, in 2014-15. I have a better idea now about how to organize and present the weekend rides that support the physical activity requirement. I will get my students started earlier on their community service projects so that some of them are not scrambling to finish them in the final days of the semester. And I will re-think some of the texts for the course. Like the cycling culture it examines, my course is a work in progress. And, as with cycling culture, I look forward to the further development of my course.

WORKS CITED

- "America's Top 50 Bike-Friendly Cities," <http://www.bicycling.com/news/advocacy/america-s-top-50-bike-friendly-cities>, accessed on September 30, 2013.
- Herlihy, David. *Bicycle: The History*. Yale University Press, 2006.
- "Indianapolis Bikeways Plan," <http://www.indy.gov/eGov/City/DPW/SustainIndy/Bikeways/Pages/BikewaysHome.aspx>, accessed on September 30, 2013.
- "Indianapolis Cultural Trail," <http://indyculturaltrail.org/>, accessed on September 30, 2013.
- Weiss, Eben. *The Enlightened Cyclist*. Chronicle Books, 2012.

COURSE SYLLABUS

FYS101 and FYS102: First Year Seminar

All about the Bike

Class Time: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:25 to 3:40 p.m.
Group Cycling on Saturdays, 10 a.m. to noon

COURSE DESCRIPTION

FYS101-FYS102 is a year-long First Year Seminar, required of all students at Butler University. In this course, a topic will be explored allowing students to reflect on "big questions" about themselves, their community and their world. Students will develop the capacity to read and think critically, and to write clear and persuasive expository essays.

The topic of this particular section of FYS101-FYS102 is "All about the Bike." In this course, we will read and write about cycling, and we will also watch movies that portray cycling and cyclists. The first semester of the course will include units on the history of cycling, touring, competitive cycling, and commuting by bicycle. The second semester will include units on fashion and safety in cycling, the health benefits of cycling, public policy and cycling in the urban environment. Throughout the course, we will consider how technology, social attitudes, and environmental considerations have shaped cycling, and how cycling might develop in the future.

The course will include group rides, and students who complete their cycling plans for the year will fulfill the Physical Well Being requirement of the core curriculum. The course will also include a service learning component in which students will work with local bicycle advocacy groups and thereby satisfy the Indianapolis Community Requirement of the Core Curriculum.

PURPOSES AND GOALS OF THE COURSE

The broad purpose of the First-Year Seminar is to help students to develop the writing, speaking and critical thinking skills appropriate for college-level work. To that end, the first semester of the First-Year Seminar has these particular goals with regard to skills:

1. Compose sound English sentences.
 2. Make lexical choices appropriate to formal academic discourse.
 3. Show mastery of the basics of thesis construction
 - a. Recognize that a thesis must be arguable.
 - b. Recognize that a thesis must be supportable within the scope of an essay or spoken performance.
 4. Structure paragraphs around a focused idea, and show relationships between and among paragraphs.
 5. Support a thesis with evidence
 - a. Discuss and quote a primary text to support the thesis.
 - b. Document this source with appropriate citations.
 6. Organize discussion around a thesis.
 7. Use an organizational pattern appropriate to the topic, audience, occasion, and purpose.
- Students will also develop discussion skills and the ability to communicate ideas in an oral presentation.

The second semester has these goals with regard to skills:

1. Demonstrate the skills attained in FYS101, and show improvement.
2. Show advanced mastery of thesis construction.
 - a. Relate thesis to audience and occasion.
 - b. Anticipate counter arguments.
 - c. Acknowledge the complexities and subtleties of an arguable thesis.

3. Develop a logical structure in support of a thesis.
4. Demonstrate coherence in organizing an essay or spoken performance, and make sound transitions from one paragraph to the next.
5. Conduct research to support an argument.
 - a. Be able to evaluate sources for authority and accuracy.
6. Use multiple sources in an essay or spoken performance, and cite these sources appropriately.

In terms of its cycling content, the course has these goals for the year:

1. To develop an understanding of the history of the bicycle, and of the ways in which this history informs the current state of cycling.
2. To consider the relationship between professional cycling and recreational and utilitarian cycling.
3. To recognize the habits and practices that are most conducive to safe cycling.
4. To develop both a theoretical and a practical understanding of how cycling can contribute to a healthy lifestyle.
5. To experience the ways in which advocacy groups and charitable groups can promote cycling and work towards social improvement.
6. To recognize the ways in which cycling might reduce pollution, congestion and stress in urban settings, and make cities more livable.

TEXTBOOKS

For Semester One

Hacker, Diana. *A Pocket Style Manual*, 6th ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011.

Herlihy, David. *Bicycle: The History*. Yale University Press, 2006.

*Savage, Barbara. *Miles from Nowhere: A Round the World Bicycle Adventure*. Mountaineers Books, 1985.

*Wells, H. G. *The Wheels of Chance*. Book Jungle, 2010.

*Weiss, Eben. *The Enlightened Cyclist*. Chronicle Books, 2012.

*Wiggins, Bradley. *In Pursuit of Glory*. Orion, 2010.

For Semester Two

Dailey, Katie. *Heels on Wheels*. Hardie Grant Books, 2012

*Forester, John. *Effective Cycling*. MIT Press, 2012.

Hacker, Diana. *A Pocket Style Manual*, 6th ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011.

*Magnuson, Mike. *Heft on Wheels*. Three Rivers Press, 2005.

*Walker, Amy, ed. *On Bicycles: 50 Ways the New Bike Culture Can Change Your Life*. New World Library, 2011.

Wray, J. Harry. *Pedal Power: The Quiet Rise of the Bicycle in American Public Life*. Paradigm Publishers, 2008.

*available as electronic books

In addition, students should have a subscription to *Bicycling* magazine for the year.

Electronic versions of this magazine area available through Amazon, iTunes and Zinio.com.

CLASS FORMAT

This course will rely primarily on class discussion. For this reason, it is crucial that students read the works to be discussed each day (see the schedule below) and that they come prepared to discuss those works. A portion of the class grade will be determined by students' performance in class discussion.

The last 15 to 20 minutes of class on Wednesdays will be devoted to a "cycling issue" that comes out of our reading of *Bicycling* magazine.

MOODLE

To the extent possible, this will be a paperless class. I will post documents for the course, including assignments and handouts, on Moodle, and you will submit all of your writing essays electronically. In addition, announcements about group rides and other events related to the class will be made through Moodle, and students will post regular contributions to discussion forums on Moodle. If you have difficulty with your Moodle account, please call the Computer Center's help desk (940-4357).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

FYS Requirements

Semester 1

Students will write three shorter essays, of three to five pages each, and a longer final essay of five to seven pages, which will be preceded by a proposal. Each essay will be preceded by a draft, which will be reviewed by the instructor or writing assistant or in a workshop before the final version is submitted. Students will also make an oral presentation on the topic of their final paper during the last two weeks of the semester. In addition, students will also make a total of ten weekly contributions of at least 150 words to discussion forums. Only one entry can be counted each week, and five entries must be completed by October 8 (see guidelines).

Attendance and participation in class discussion are also required.

Semester 2

Students will write two shorter essays, of four to six pages each, and a longer final essay of six to eight pages, which will be preceded by a proposal. Students will also make a presentation on the topic of their final essay, and they will make a proposal and write a reflection on their Community Service project.

Physical Well Being Requirements

To receive Physical Well Being credit, students are required to ride at least 100 miles each semester, in at least four separate rides each semester. Two rides each semester must be group rides (at least four group rides will be offered each semester). At the beginning of each semester, students will submit a riding plan, and they will record each ride within two weeks of its completion. At the end of the semester, they will submit a report evaluating their riding for the semester in relation to their plan for the semester.

To receive PWB credit, students will sign up for a one-hour course in the Spring semester. PWB activity will be graded on a pass/fail basis

Indianapolis Community Requirement

To complete the Indianapolis Community Requirement, students must spend 20 hours working in the community. This work might involve volunteering with an advocacy group, such as Indycog, or working with a non-profit organization such as Freewheelin' Community Bikes. Students will be introduced to community opportunities in the Fall, and will submit a proposal for their community projects in the Spring of 2013. A portion of the grade for FYS102 will be determined by student's completion of the community requirement. All students who successfully complete FYS102: All about the Bike will receive credit for Butler's Community Service Requirement.

Note Well: To receive credit for the Physical Well Being and Indiana Community Requirement of Butler's Core Curriculum, students must complete both semesters of FYS101-102: All about the Bike.

Grading:

Final grades for each semester of the course will be calculated according to the following formula:

Shorter Essays	50%
Final Essay (with proposal).....	25%
Drafts and Informal Writing	10%
Participation in Class Discussion	10%
Oral Presentation	5%

More than three unexcused absences in a semester will result in a full letter grade reduction in the final grade; more than five absences could result in a failing grade.

Students who complete the requirements for Physical Well-Being and the Indianapolis Community Requirement (see above) will receive a passing grade for these portions of the course.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Fall Semester

Date	Reading	Writing
Week 1	Introduction Unit One: History	
Week 2	Orwell, "Why I Write" (Moodle) Herlihy, <i>Bicycle</i> , Part I: The Pre-History Herlihy, Part 2: The "Boneshaker" Era	Ride Plan
Week 3	Herlihy, Part 3: The "High-Wheel" Era	Draft 1
Week 4	Herlihy, Part 4: The "Safety" Era Mark Twain, "Taming the Bicycle" (Moodle) Wells, <i>The Wheels of Chance</i> , ch. 1-13	
Week 5	Wells, ch. 14-27 Wells, ch. 28-41 Unit Two: Touring	Essay 1
Week 6	Savage, <i>Miles from Nowhere</i> , ch. 1-6 Savage, ch. 7-12	Draft 2
Week 7	Savage, ch. 13-19 Movie: <i>Aseimut</i> Unit Three: Competitive Cycling	Essay 2
Week 8	Herlihy, Part 5: The Twentieth Century Wiggins, <i>In Pursuit of Glory</i> , ch. 1-6	
Week 9	Wiggins, ch. 7-11 Wiggins, ch. 12-16 Movie: <i>A Sunday in Hell</i>	Draft 3
Week 10	Wiggins, ch. 12-21 Julian Barnes, "Brambilla" (Moodle) Vaughters, "How to End Doping" (Moodle) Unit Four: Commuting	Essay 3

Week 11	Weiss, <i>The Enlightened Cyclist</i> , Intro and Book 1 Weiss, Book 2 Movie: <i>The Bicycle Thief</i>	Final Proposal	Paper
Week 12	Weiss, Book 3 Weiss, Book 4 Cohen, "If Kant Were a NY Cyclist" (Moodle)		
Week 13	Oral Presentations	Draft of Final	
Week 14	Oral Presentations Summary and Evaluation	Final Essay	

Spring Semester

Date	Reading	Writing
Week 1	Course Introduction; <i>Breaking Away</i>	Proposal for Community Service Project
	Unit One: Safety	
Week 2	Forester, <i>Effective Cycling</i> , Part I: Read ch. 1 and 2; Skim ch. 3-7	
Week 3	Forester, skim Part II; read Part III Forester, Part IV	
Week 4	Forester Part V "Safe Routes to School" (Walker #44), "Cycling Rights of Way" (Walker #48)	
	Unit Two: Fashion	
Week 5	Dailey, <i>Heels on Wheels</i> , 6-57 Writing Workshop Dailey, 61-109	Draft of First Essay
Week 6	Peruse the Cycle Chic Website http://www.copenhagencyclechic.com ; <i>Triples of Belleville</i> "Bike Style" (Walker 13); <i>Triples of Belleville</i>	First Essay
	Unit Three: Health	
Week 7	Magnuson, <i>Heft on Wheels</i> , ch. 1-6	

	Magnuson, ch. 7-13	
Week 8	Magnuson, ch. 14-19 "Cycling for Health, Wealth and Freedom," "Youth, Sex and Cake," and "The Environmental Good of Switching" (Walker 4-6)	Draft of Second Essay
Unit Four: Public Policy and the Urban Environment		
Week 9	Wray, <i>Pedal Power</i> ch. 1-4 Movie: <i>Bicycle Dreams</i>	Second Essay
Week 10	Wray, ch. 5-9 Writing Workshop	Proposal for Final Essay
Week 11	"Curious Cyclist" and "Cycles and Relocalizing" (Walker 8-9) Walker, ch. 27-32	
Week 12	Walker, 33-43	
Week 13	Walker, 44-49	Reflection on Community
Service	The Indianapolis Cultural Trail (handout) Movie: <i>Premium Rush</i>	
Week 14	Presentations	Final Essay

SAMPLE WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

ESSAY NO. 1

A draft of this essay is due in the third week of the semester, and the final version is due in the fourth week. This essay should be two-to-four double-spaced pages in length.

Your first formal assignment for the semester is a personal essay on the topic of "Why I Ride (or don't)." In this essay you will explore your attitudes and experiences in writing a bicycle. In gathering your thoughts for the essay, you might consider the following factors:

1. When did you first learn to ride a bicycle, and what were your earliest experiences on a bicycle?
2. What were the attitudes and habits of those around you toward bicycle riding?
3. How well suited are the streets you travel for bicycles?
4. What has been the attitude of motorists you have encountered toward cyclists?
5. What changes have you noticed over the years among your friends and in your community toward riding a bicycle?
6. What potential do you find in the bicycle for travel and exercise?
7. What do you hope to accomplish as a cyclist?
8. What conditions would make it possible for you to ride a bicycle frequently?

Once you have gathered your thoughts about your experiences and attitudes towards cycling, shape them into an essay. Organize the around a main idea or thesis, and present them in an orderly way. In this regard, Orwell's "Why I Write" provides a good model for organizing an explanation of one's activities and attitudes around a central idea.

Your essay should be two to four double-spaced pages in length, and it should be delivered in Microsoft Word format. (If you use another word processor, save your file in MS Word format before you send it.) Put your name, the class name and the date of your composition in the upper left-hand corner of the page. Center your title at the top of the page, before your first line of text. Leave a one-inch margin on all four sides of the page.

Submit both your draft and your final version of your essay through Moodle.

ESSAY NO. 2

A draft of this essay is due in the sixth week of the semester, and the final version is due in the seventh week. This essay should be three to five 3-5 double-spaced pages in length.

Your second essay will be on Wells's *The Wheels of Chance*. In working on this essay, keep in mind two particular demands of writing. First, you need to organize your discussion around an arguable thesis. As you write your essay, you should be able to imagine a counter-argument, and you may, in fact, want to bring that counter-argument into your discussion. If the position you are taking in your essay is obviously true, then you don't really have anything to argue in your essay. Secondly, keep in mind the need to provide evidence in support of your thesis. When you are writing about a book, this generally means that you will want to include specific details and quotations from the book in your discussion. For the purpose

of this essay, you need only provide a page or chapter number in parenthesis when you quote from the text.

As you are formulating your thesis, consider the following topics. You are not required, however, to respond to the questions as I have framed them. You should come up with your own thesis for your essay.

1. Hoopdriver begins his cycling tour with a great sense of freedom and excitement. In taking to his bicycle, we are told, "All at once you are Lord of yourself of every hour in the long vacant day; you may go where you please, call none Sir or Madame . . ." (ch. 4). Is the ending of the novel equally optimistic? Does Hoopdriver find the freedom he was expecting through cycling?
2. At the end of the novel, Hoopdriver returns to his life in Putney and his job as a draper's assistant. The narrator tells us that, "Tomorrow, the early rising, the dusting, and the drudgery begin again—but with a difference, with wonderful memories and still more wonderful desires and ambitions replacing those discrepant dreams" (ch. 41). Has Hoopdriver been changed by his experiences on the cycling trip?
3. After letting Jessie believe that he was from South Africa, and had grown up on an ostrich farm and killed a lion, Hoopdriver comes clean about who he really is. Jessie says, "I though . . . you were perfectly honest. And somehow . . . I think so still" (ch. 35). Is Jessie just being polite, or is there a way in which Hoopdriver has been honest?
4. What kind of world does Wells portray for cyclists in *The Wheels of Chance*? Who is riding a bicycle? What kinds of challenges do they face in cycling? What promise does cycling hold for those who pursue it?
5. Soon after Hoopdriver encounters Jessie, he thinks that "[p]robably she was one of these here New Women" (ch. 5). What makes her a "New Woman"? Is that a good or a bad thing to be?
6. Wells portrays characters from a variety of social classes in *The Wheels of Chance*. What does he seem to be saying about class in this novel? Is it possible for people from different classes to have meaningful relationships with one another, or are they confined to a certain class?

FINAL ESSAY FOR FALL SEMESTER

The final project for FYS101: All about the Bike will consist of three steps:

1. A project proposal, due in Week 11
2. A short presentation of 5-8 minutes, to be given in class in Week 13 or 14
3. A final essay of 5 to 8 pages to be submitted by the end of Week 14

You are required to use at least three secondary sources in your final project, and you must document your sources according to MLA Style.

Unlike your first three essays, you are free to choose the topic for your final essay. In your proposal, you should describe your topic for the project, what your preliminary ideas are about this topic, and how you plan to support and develop your ideas for the topic. Your proposal should consist of at least one well developed paragraph, and you should send it to me as an attachment.

You are free to choose the topic of your final project, so long as it has to do with cycling. As you devise a topic for your final essay, you might consider the following ideas:

1. What role did cycling have in the "Good Roads Movement" of the early twentieth century, and how did this movement then aid automobile travel?
2. The safety bicycle of the late 19th century was marketed to women, and helped to make the bicycle popular among them. How did the bicycle contribute to changes in dress, mobility and status for women?
3. Given the recent release of information from the United States Anti-Doping Agency about evidence against Lance Armstrong, what can we say about Armstrong's legacy as a cyclist?
4. Is it possible for professional cycling to cleanse itself of doping? What efforts underway now seem most likely to take doping out of the sport?
5. Should adult cyclists be required to wear helmets? What would be gained, and what might be lost if such a requirement were to be put in place?
6. Examine the development of one technological innovation in cycling—the freewheel, the pneumatic tire, the derailleur, or the safety frame. How did this innovation affect the nature of cycling?
7. Over its history, cycling has gone through a series of booms at different times and in different places. In the U.S., it is possible to talk about booms in the 1860s, 1880s, and in the 1960s and 70s. Are we currently in a cycling boom? What is the evidence, and what are the effects of this boom?
8. Should cyclists be expected to follow all traffic laws? Why or why not?