In “Aria: A Memoir of a Bilingual Childhood,” Richard Rodriguez writes of being caught between two places marked by different languages: his home and his school, Spanish and English, the private and the public. In learning and speaking English at his school, does he gain or lose? I think this is the analytical problem he confronts.

The experience of being caught between two worlds extends to the other essays we’re reading for this unit. They explore not only matters of language and ethnicity, but matters of culture, gender, race, vocation. Ernest Hemingway writes, in “Pamplona in July,” of the famous running of the bulls in Spain, and offers his peculiar perspective on the mysteries of travel in a foreign land. F. Scott Fitzgerald, a “mediocre caretaker of most of the things left in my hands, even of my talent,” in “The Crack-Up,” bounces between dreams of artistic success and throes of despair. Mary McCarthy chats, in “Artists in Uniform,” with someone who might be her opposite. And in “Life with Daughters: Watching the Miss America Pageant,” Gerald Early looks the women in his family and scrutinizes the ideas about women that circulate in culture.

For this essay, you will use Rodriguez’s ideas and keyterms as an analytical framework to examine and evaluate the problems that lie between the different worlds any two (your choice) of these other essayists explore. (If you prefer, you can think of Rodriguez’s text as a lens though which to view the other essays.) Taking ideas from one text to frame those of another will be, like close reading, a mode of academic, analytical writing you will use again.

What does it mean to use one essay as a framework for two others? To use the terms of one essay to frame the other two essays? In this case, Richard Rodriguez has some interesting and challenging ideas about language and what he calls private versus public intimacy. We will take his ideas and keyterms like these and use them to analyze the other essays. Do issues of public and private intimacy come up in Hemingway, for example? Such an analytical question uses Rodriguez to frame Hemingway and leads us to our own thesis.

Online Exercise 2.1 due Monday, 14 July, 5 PM (one page, 300 words or less)
a) Find passages in Richard Rodriguez’s essay in which he defines or describes two (your choice) of these keyterms: public, private, language, intimacy, education, individuality. (More than one term may be described in a single passage.) Paraphrase Rodriguez’s description or definition. Do you agree with it? Why or why not?
b) How does one of these terms from Rodriguez (your choice) help you to think about, describe or analyze what happens in one of the other essays (again, your choice)? For example, how is the tension between McCarthy and the colonel a matter of what Rodriguez calls public and private intimacy? Or education? Or language?

Essay 2
Rough draft due Thursday, 17 July (4 pages minimum, 3 copies)

Conferences Thursday, 17 July- Friday, 18 July

Final draft due Thursday, 24 July (5-7 pages; place in folder with rough draft and all evaluations, including Essay 1 material)

Use Richard Rodriguez’s “Aria” as a framework to examine the tensions that arise in two other essays. You may choose the two other essays from among those by Hemingway, Fitzgerald, McCarthy or Early.
Analytical Questions
You are strongly encouraged to pursue analytical questions you develop yourself. Check them out with me first; the online exercise is a good place to do so. But here are some large questions you can use or adapt: How do Richard Rodriguez’s ideas about culture, family and language help to analyze the tensions that come up in your two other essays? How does Rodriguez describe the problems that he faces? Are these the same problems that the other two essayists face? What sort of specific problems confront individuals who find themselves in unfamiliar or uncomfortable surroundings? With Rodriguez as your framework (or lens), can you develop your own theory about the tensions and problems that arise for individuals trying to negotiate their way through unfamiliar space?

Methods
The questions above ask you to use start your thinking by using Rodriguez’s ideas about language, education and intimacy as a frame through which to view two other essayists’ ideas about the tension they experience between two different worlds. (Again, instead of the metaphor of frame or framework, you might, if you wish, substitute the metaphor of “lens”: what does your second or third essay look like through the lens of Rodriguez?) This means that you will quote Rodriguez, of course, especially his use of the keyterms that interest you, and you will offer your reader a way to think about these keyterms and they way they apply to your other texts, which you will likely also need to quote. Perhaps—and this becomes very interesting—these keyterms will change as you apply them to other texts. Think also about the perspective of each author, the particular problems they face and the solutions they have in mind, if any. Do they share any desires? Any common hopes or fears that might exist despite their differences? This set of questions asks you to think of the possible connections between authors that make their relationship complicated. They aren't writing about precisely the same sort of experiences, after all, and they may or may not think the same way.

Keep in mind that a narrow focus, rather than a broad one, will allow you to develop powerful insights. Choose keyterms and brief passages from the texts to illustrate your argument and lend it specificity. Incorporate a motive and thesis statement and state them early. Offer a daring title and be sensitive to complexity and ambiguity.

Paper Format
The rough draft should be at least four pages, the final draft five to seven pages. Both should be double-spaced with one-inch margins. Use MLA citation style. No title page is necessary, nor is a “Work Cited,” or bibliographic, page (we’ll have a bibliography in Essay 3). A format for heading your paper is suggested at the top of this assignment (be sure to list “Essay 2 Rough Draft” or “Essay 2 Final Draft” as appropriate).

Elements of the Essay at Work in this Assignment
Thesis
Motive
Evidence
Analysis
Keyterms
Structure (especially topic and transition sentences)
Reflecting (especially complication and counter-argument)
Style
Title