

The background is an abstract painting. In the upper left, there is a prominent blue circle. The rest of the painting consists of various brushstrokes in shades of blue, brown, and white. In the lower right, a figure is depicted sitting at a desk, leaning forward as if writing or reading. The overall style is expressive and textured.

# Reading and Writing Widely

This is a reading and writing course. More specifically, this is a course in which we will focus on writing for a wide audience about very complicated social issues. In the past century, writing about many of these issues was usually reserved for the specialist: scholars, political pundits or commentators, social scientists. But in the age of the Internet, everyone is entitled to weigh in. We will read and discuss a host of contemporary writers who are writing essays devoted to discussion of some of the most pressing of social issues, as well as remembering two important writers—James Baldwin and Joan Didion—who paved the way for these later voices. Your voice has every right to join this chorus. My hope, in fact, is that you will leave this course seeing yourself as part of the wider discussion, or at the very least with a greater awareness of the need to cultivate a habit of critical, written expression about the challenges your generation faces.

| Caroline Simpson, PhD | M-Th 2:20-4:30 | CHID 250B | I&S, VLPA | Summer 2018 A Term |