

English 181 -- Writing About Literature
Spring 2003
MWF 11:45-12:35

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Language 103B
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Office Hours: MTWTH 2:30-4:30

Required Texts: *An Introduction to Poetry*, Kennedy and Gioia; *The Laramie Project*, Kaufman; *A History of the World in 10 1/2 Chapters*, Barnes; Custom Published Short Fiction Anthology.

Objectives: This course is designed to introduce you to reading and writing about literature. You will learn terms and concepts that will help you understand and interpret poetry, fiction, and drama, and you will practice using those terms and concepts in formal writing assignments.

Attendance: Attendance in this course is essential for a successful performance. There is no absence policy; however, the daily reading quizzes cannot be made up and will act as an attendance policy. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. How you use your absences is up to your discretion.

Deadlines for Assignments: Papers are due at the beginning of class on the due date. I will accept no late work.

Plagiarism: All work submitted in this course must be your own and be written exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly documented using MLA format. Your name on any assignment submitted in this class indicates that you abide by the Oxford College Honor Code and that you have neither given nor received unauthorized information on the work. It is your responsibility to understand the Honor Code. You can read the Honor Code information in the Oxford College Catalog.

Requirements:

- Close reading of the literature
- Class participation
- Research paper of 6-8 pages
- 8 Rhetorical Analyses of 2-3 pages each
- Daily Reading Quizzes
- Comprehensive Final Exam

Format For Papers: All final essays must be typed either on a typewriter or on a word processor. They must be double-spaced and stapled. I will not accept folded or paper-clipped papers. In the top left-hand corner of the front page, place your name on the first line, my name on the second line, and the date on the third line. All essays must have titles. You will find revision is easier if documents are word processed because you will not have to retype the entire essay. You may use secondary sources on these papers if necessary, but they must be properly cited and acknowledged.

Rhetorical Analyses: These are short 2 page typed papers on the readings. You should treat them like mini essays with a clear argument articulated in a thesis, organized logically, and well-supported with specific references to the texts. You should spend only one to two sentences summarizing the text, one to two sentences explaining what you plan to argue, and the rest of the paper making a short and concise critical analysis of the text. These are designed to make writing the larger papers easier and more familiar.

Quizzes: We will have unannounced daily reading quizzes, so keep up with the reading. You will take the quiz in the first five minutes of class. There will be no make-up quizzes.

Final Grades will be based on the following percentages:

- 30% Research Paper
- 30% 8 Rhetorical Analyses
- 20% Daily Reading Quizzes
- 20% Final Exam

Other things to know:

I do not allow cell phones in class. Make sure your phone is turned off or that you leave it at home. If your phone goes off in class, you will be asked to leave and will be counted absent for the day.

Throw nothing away.

If I am late and there is no notice at the door, you should wait fifteen minutes before leaving. Prepare the next day's assignments for the next meeting.

I reserve the right to amend or modify anything on this statement by means of future hand-outs.

Itinerary

- W 1/15 Introduction
- F 1/17 Poems in class

Itinerary

- W 9/4** Speaker (NIP 59-72); Hughes "I Too" (502); Browning "My Last Duchess" (393); Brooks "We Real Cool" (81); Whitman (83)
F 9/6 Situation and Setting (NIP 85-96); Marvell "To His Coy Mistress" (100); Herrick "To the Virgins" (online); **RA #1**
M 9/9 Language (NIP 123-33); Williams "The Red Wheelbarrow" and "This is Just" (135); Hopkins "Pied Beauty" (138); Jonson "Still to Be Neat" (142); Herrick "Delight in Disorder" (143)
W 9/11 Metaphor (NIP 159-66); Donne "Death Be Not Proud" and "A Valediction" (481-2); Symbol (NIP 174-80)
F 9/13 Sounds of Poetry (NIP 190-200); Words and Music (NIP 208-17); Dylan "The Times They Are A' Changin'" (online); Robinson "Richard Cory" (online); Simon & Garfunkel "Richard Cory" (online)
M 9/16 External Forms (NIP 250-77); Millay "I Being Born" (403) and "What Lips" (18); Shakespeare "That Time of Year" (159)
W 9/18 Whole Text (NIP 279-88); Auden "Musée des Beaux Arts" (284); Frost "Design" (286); **RA #2**
F 9/20 Work As Context (NIP 295-312)
M 9/23 Literary Tradition As Context (NIP 337-71); Cultural and Historical Contexts (373-76); Dickinson "Because I Could Not Stop" (477); Collins "Taking off Emily Dickinson's Clothes" (475)
W 9/25 **Poetry Paper Draft 1 due**
F 9/27 **Poetry paper due**; Review for test
M 9/30 **Poetry Test**
W 10/2 Intro to Fiction (NASF xxiii-xxxiv) / Chopin (NASF 261-63)
F 10/4 Marquez (NASF 661-5)
M 10/7 Gilman (NASF 675-87); **RA #3**
W 10/9 Hawthorne (NASF 735-56)
F 10/11 Lawrence (NASF 976-88)
M 10/14 **Mid-semester Break**
W 10/16 de Maupassant (e-reserve)
F 10/18 O'Connor (NASF 1277-1300)
M 10/21 Walker (NASF 1555-61)
W 10/23 Welty (NASF 1587-94)
F 10/25 Faulkner (NASF 490-502)
M 10/28 Jackson (NASF 781-7)
W 10/30 Poe (NASF 1358-71)
F 11/1 O'Brien (NASF 1263-1276); **RA #4**
M 11/4 Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse Five*
W 11/6 Vonnegut
F 11/8 Vonnegut; **Annotated Bibliography Due**
M 11/11 **Research Paper Draft 1 due**
W 11/13 **Research Paper Due**; Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*
F 11/15 *Taming*
M 11/18 *Taming*
W 11/20 *The Tempest*
F 11/22 *Tempest*
M 11/25 *Tempest*; **RA #5**
M 12/2 *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
W 12/4 *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
F 12/6 *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
M 12/9 **Drama Paper Due**; Review for Final
W 12/11 **Reading Day**
T 12/17 **Final Exam 9:00am-12:00am**

NIP = *The Norton Introduction to Poetry*

NASF = *The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction*

Assignments

Poetry Paper (3-4 pages):

The poem "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost is often misinterpreted in the media and in classrooms. It is NOT about nonconformity. Write a paper explaining what the poem IS about and why it is so misunderstood. You must do a careful reading of the poem and support your argument with specific evidence from the poem itself. Be sure to quote from the poem, and be sure that your reading can be supported by the whole poem. Use the terms we've discussed in class to do your analysis (metaphor, simile, speaker, tone, etc.) **DO NOT use outside sources for this paper.**

Research Paper and Bibliography (7-9 pages):

Choose two of the following stories and discuss the similarities and or differences in the ways these authors deal with the issue of race. Remember that stories make arguments, so to write this paper you will have to discuss the themes of the stories and use ample evidence to back up your reading.

Wright "The Man Who Was Almost A Man" (NASF 1626-36)

Walker "Everyday Use" (NASF 1555-61)

O'Connor "Everything That Rises Must Converge" (NASF 1290-1300)

You will use outside sources, which will be properly documented. Your sources can be about the stories themselves or about race in general. You will turn in a working annotated bibliography a week before the paper is due which will count for 10 points of the final grade on the paper. This bibliography must have at least 8 current sources not including the primary sources. Your annotations will be 2-3 sentences long briefly summarizing the source and explaining why it is useful to you. **Use correct MLA documentation format.** Your final paper must use at least 4 sources other than the primary sources.

Drama Paper (4-5 pages):

Choose one passage from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and explain how that passage best illustrates the theme of the play. To do this, you must first argue what you believe the theme is and support that argument with ample evidence from the text. Then you will go on to argue why the passage you've chosen exemplifies that theme. You may use outside sources for this paper, but they must be properly documented. You can only choose one passage. An entire scene does not count as a passage.

English 181 Poetry Test

Name _____

**Remember that your name on this test indicates that you abide by the Oxford College Honor Code.
Answer on a separate sheet of paper.**

Part I: Terms

Choose ten of the following questions to answer. Answer the questions as completely as possible. I will grade the first ten, so do not answer more than ten. (40 points=4 points each)

1. Name and define the figure of speech used in these lines:

The hand that signed the paper felled a city.

2. Name and define the three categories of poetry.
3. Define verbal irony.
4. Name and define the figure of speech Donne uses in these lines:

Death be not proud though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so.

5. Explain the difference between a Shakespearean and Petrarchan sonnet.
6. What is the difference between denotation and connotation? Use an example to explain.
7. Label the following lines as metaphor, simile, or implied metaphor:

- a. "Hope" is a thing with feathers
- b. We are now as the deer who walk in single file
- c. Rain is when the earth is television
- d. The sun gnaws the night's bone/ down through the meat and gristle

8. Describe what is meant by trochaic trimeter.
9. What is onomatopoeia? Give an example.
10. Name and define the poetic device used in the following line:

So smooth, so sweet, so silv'ry is thy voice

11. What is assonance? Give an example.
12. Define *traditional symbol*, give an example, and explain how that example is used.

**Check your answers carefully, make sure you have answered only ten.
Turn in Part I to receive Part II.**

Part II: Essay

Choose one of the following questions to answer in complete essay form. Be as complete as possible in your answer, using quotations from the poem to support your assertions. (60 points)

1. Read Auden's "The Unknown Citizen" and explain how the poet uses irony to get his meaning across. To answer this question, you first have to explain what the central theme of the poem is and then explain how irony is used. (Note that the dedication is part of the poem)

THE UNKNOWN CITIZEN

(To JS/07/M/378
This Marble Monument
Is Erected by the State)

He was found by the Bureau of Statistics to be
One against whom there was no official complaint,
And all the reports on his conduct agree
That, in the modern sense of an old-fashioned word, he was a saint,
For in everything he did he served the Greater Community.
Except for the war till the day he retired
He worked in a factory and never got fired,
But satisfied his employers, Fudge Motors Inc.
Yet he wasn't a scab or odd in his views,
For his Union reports that he paid his dues,
(Our report on his Union shows it was sound)
And our Social Psychology workers found
That he was popular with his mates and liked a drink.
The Press are convinced that he bought a paper every day
And that his reactions to advertisements were normal in every way.
Policies taken out in his name prove that he was fully insured,
And his Health-card shows he was once in hospital but left it cured.
Both Producers Research and High-Grade Living declare
He was fully sensible to the advantages of the Installment Plan
And had everything necessary to the Modern Man,
A phonograph, a radio, a car and a frigidaire.
Our researchers into Public Opinion are content
That he held the proper opinions for the time of year;
When there was peace, he was for peace; when there was war, he went.
He was married and added five children to the population,
Which our Eugenist says was the right number for a parent of his
generation.
And our teachers report that he never interfered with their education.
Was he free? Was he happy? The questions are absurd:
Had anything been wrong, we should certainly have heard.

2. Read "Ozymandias" by Percy Shelley. This poem is a variation of a sonnet. Explain how the poet uses and varies the sonnet form to convey his theme. Again, in order to answer this question, you must first explain what that theme is and support that argument with quotations.

OZYMANDIAS

I met a traveler from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
"My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

Part I: Short Answer

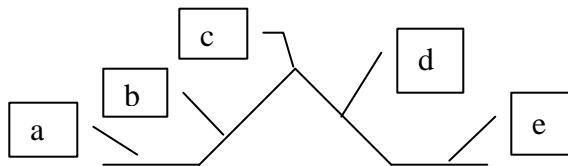
Answer eight of the following ten questions in a few sentences. Be as concise, but also as thorough as possible. I will grade only the first eight. (5 pts each = 40 pts)

1. What two points-of-view are represented by the following lines (be specific):

A. In real life I am a large, big-boned woman with rough, man-working hands. . . . I can kill and clean a hog as mercilessly as a man. My fat keeps me hot in zero weather. I can work outside all day, breaking ice to get water for washing.

B. His mother continued to gaze at him but she did not take advantage of his momentary discomfort. Her eyes retained their battered look. Her face seemed to be unnaturally red, as if her blood pressure had risen. Julian allowed no glimmer of sympathy to show on his face. Having got the advantage he wanted desperately to keep it and carry it through. He would have liked to teach her a lesson that would last a while, but there seemed no way to continue the point.

2. Define antihero and give an example either from what we've read or from popular culture.
3. Explain what is meant by stage business.
4. Name the parts of a typical plot as depicted in the following plot diagram:



5. In *The Tempest*, how did Caliban and Ariel become Prospero's servants? Be specific.
6. What are the three basic conflicts in fiction and drama?
7. Explain the significance of the settings in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
8. Explain the difference between a static character and a flat character.
9. Explain how Kate in *The Taming of the Shrew* is a dynamic character.
10. Choose one short story we read and explain the theme of that story as you remember it.

Name: _____
Papers: _____ Avg. _____ x2 = _____
Research Paper: _____ x2 = _____
RAs: _____ Avg: _____ x2 = _____
Quizzes: _____ Avg: _____ = _____
Poetry Exam: _____ = _____
Final Exam: _____ x2 = _____
Subtotal: _____ Final Avg = _____
10

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Papers: _____ Avg. _____ x2 = _____
Research Paper: _____ x2 = _____
RAs: _____ Avg: _____ x2 = _____
Quizzes: _____ Avg: _____ = _____
Poetry Exam: _____ = _____
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RAs: _____ Avg: _____ x2 = _____
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RAs: _____ Avg: _____ x2 = _____
Quizzes: _____ Avg: _____ = _____
Poetry Exam: _____ = _____
Final Exam: _____ x2 = _____
Subtotal: _____ Final Avg = _____
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