Expo E-25, Section 6 Cynthia Taft

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**Preview of the first essay assignment--Due Monday, February 24th**

Readings to consider:

Henry Beston, “Autumn, Ocean, and Birds, I” (from *The Outermost House*)

Rachel Carson, excerpt from *Silent Spring* (*Am. Earth*, 835-848)

Loren Eiseley, “The Judgment of the Birds”

Aldo Leopold, “Marshland Elegy”

Jack Turner, “The Song of the White Pelican”

Each of these authors draws upon the symbolic resonance of a particular bird or bird species, but the power of each work depends upon carefully observed details. In a coherent essay that develops a unifying argument or thesis, explore the relationship between the observed details and the symbolic associations of a particular bird or bird species in one of these four works. Feel free to follow the distinctive path of your own thoughts, but be sure to root your discussion in the language of the original work.

Questions to consider before you begin organizing your essay:

* Why did the author focus on this particular bird or group of birds?
* Why write at this particular moment in time?
* What can you infer about the audience for whom the author was writing?
* Is there any evidence of tension between the author’s view of this bird and more commonly held views?
* What effect does the author aim for?

**Writing Assignment for February 10th: Pre-Draft 1.2**

Purpose of assignment:

* To focus your attention as you read and think about a particular work.
* To help you distinguish between observed details and the ideas that emerge from those details.
* To ensure that your own ideas are rooted in specific textual evidence.

1. Choose one of the above texts; then, identify and transcribe between fifteen and twenty key passages from the work your have chosen.
2. Divide your collection of quoted phrases between those that provide factual information about the bird or birds (data or direct description) and those that explore the significance of the bird.
   1. Some phrases may combine both features. You may list them in both categories and underline the distinctive terms.

Be sure that you know the precise meaning of every word that you include in your list of quotes.

**\*\*Submit a copy of your pre-draft exercise 1.2 in the drop box for Assignment 1.2 before class.**

**\*\*Print out 3 copies of your pre-draft exercise and bring them to class on Monday, February 10th.**