

Fall 8-15-2009

ENG 2009G-001: Literature and Human Values (Labor, Class, Power)

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English 2009G - 001: Literature and Human Values (Labor, Class, Power)

TR 8:00 – 9:15 am; CH 3170

Fall 2009

Professor Richard Sylvia

Office: Coleman 3775

Office Hours: MTWR 9:30 – 10:30 am; TR 2:00 – 3:00 pm; and by appt.

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Course Description, Design, and Goals: Labor, class, and power are terms born of the modern, industrial world. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, storytelling has been part of the earnest attempt to understand what they mean, how they relate to each other, and how they affect our daily lives. In this course we will read several fiction writers of various backgrounds and view the work of several filmmakers, all of whose stories shed light on the relationship of labor, class, and power. Assigned readings and films have been selected for both their instructive and entertaining character.

All discussions and writing assignments are designed for the non-specialist.

Since English 2009G is a writing intensive course, we will write in response to the assigned readings as well as discuss them in class. Both should help us improve our analytical skills – one of the important goals of the course. Consider this course an opportunity to enjoy some terrific storytelling, to share our responses to these stories in an informal setting, and to learn how labor, class, and power influence the development of the modern human drama.

Texts:

Dickens, *Hard Times*
 Dreiser, *Sister Carrie*
 Kazan, *On the Waterfront*
 Moore, *Capitalism: A Love Story*
 Mosley, *Devil in a Blue Dress*
 Sayles, *Matewan*
 Yezierska, *Bread Givers*
 other readings distributed as handouts

Requirements and Grading:

- 1) completion of two essays (minimum 750 words each) – 30%
- 2) weekly in-class written responses to assigned readings – 30%
- 3) mid-term and final exam – 30%
- 4) participation in class discussions – 10%

(You must complete successfully **all** the work listed above to pass the course.)

Course Policies: I do not accept late papers without a valid excuse. If you have a problem completing an assignment, speak to me before it is due. Sometimes even a brief

conversation can clear up difficulties.

You cannot make up missed in-class writing assignments.

Attendance at all class meetings is expected, but not required. In-class writing assignments are not announced, and cannot be made up. If you miss an in-class writing without excuse, you will receive 0 credit. Missing too many classes will also lower your participation grade.

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

I enforce the English Department Statement on Plagiarism: "Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism – 'The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's own original work' (Random House Dictionary) – has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office."

Tentative Schedule

Aug. 25: introduction to course; in-class writing

Aug. 27: Dickens, *Hard Times* Book the First, chapters 1-7

Sept. 1: *Hard Times* Book the First, chapters 8-16

Sept. 3: *Hard Times* Book the Second, chapters 1- 6

Sept. 8: *Hard Times* Book the Second, chapters 7-12

Sept. 10: *Hard Times* Book the Third, chapters 1-9

Sept. 15: Sayles, *Matewan* (film)

Sept. 17: *Matewan*

Sept. 22: *Matewan*

Sept. 24: Dreiser, *Sister Carrie* 1-10

Sept. 29: *Sister Carrie* 11-22; **paper #1 due**

Oct. 1: *Sister Carrie* 23-35

Oct. 6: *Sister Carrie* 36-47

Oct. 8: *Sister Carrie*

Oct. 13: review

Oct. 15: **mid-term exam**

Oct. 20: Yeziarska, *Bread Winners* Book I, chapters I-V

Oct. 22: *Bread* Book I, chapters VI-IX

Oct. 27: *Bread* Book II, chapters X-XVI

Oct. 29: Kazan, *On the Waterfront* (film)

Nov. 3: *On the Waterfront*

Nov. 5: *On the Waterfront*

Nov. 10: Mosley, *Devil in a Blue Dress*

Nov. 12: *Devil*

Nov. 17: *Devil*; **paper #2 due**

Nov. 19: *Devil*

Nov. 24, 26: Thanksgiving Break

Dec. 1: Moore, *Capitalism: A Love Story* (documentary; if available)

Dec. 3: *Capitalism*

Dec. 8: *Capitalism*

Dec. 10: review

Final Exam: Monday, December 14, 8:00 – 10:00 am.