ENG 2009C-004: Literature and Human Values (Race, Age, Gender)

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English 2009C: Literature and Human Values (Race, Age, Gender)  
fall 1998

Richard Sylvia  
Office: CH 321  
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Texts:  
Six American Poets (Conarroe, ed.)  
King Lear (Shakespeare)  
Othello (Shakespeare)  
Tell Me a Riddle (Olsen)  
Devil in a Blue Dress (Mosley)  
Women of the Century (Barreca, ed.)

Course Objectives: The goals of this course are: 1) to introduce you to a selection of literary responses to the concepts race, age, gender; 2) to deepen your understanding of the relationship of literature and human values; 3) to improve your reading, writing, and analytical skills. I expect all class members to participate in and to help direct discussions of the material assigned, which is a mix of English and American literature from the seventeenth century to the present. Though we will inevitably discuss our experiences of contemporary society and share our thoughts about how and why the concepts race, age, and gender have place in it, please remember that our primary focus in the course is the literature assigned.

Requirements and grading:

careful preparation of the assigned readings  
regular participation in class discussions  
weekly quizzes (30%)  
three brief papers (30%)  
a mid-term exam (20%)  
a final exam (20%)

Course Policies:

Attendance at all class meetings is expected, but not required. (Quizzes are not announced in advance; without a valid excuse, you will not be allowed to make up missed quizzes.)

I do not accept late work without a valid excuse. You will have plenty of time to do the reading, and I will distribute essay assignment sheets at least a week in advance. Please see me if you are having a problem keeping up with assignments.

You must do all the written work for the course to pass the course.
Papers must be typed (double-spaced).

Conferences are recommended; I will be pleased to speak to you about your work during office hours or by appointment. Please feel free to stop by my office.

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.

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 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: course introduction
Aug. 27: Devil in a Blue Dress, chpt. 1-7
Sept. 1: Devil, chpts. 8-15
Sept. 3: Devil, chpts. 16-23
Sept. 8: Devil, chpts. 24-31
Sept. 10: Othello, 1
Sept. 15: Othello, 2 and 3
Sept. 17: Othello, 4
Sept. 22: Othello, 5
Sept. 24: Hughes in Six American Poets, 227-244
Sept. 29: Hughes in Six, 245-257
Oct. 1: Yes (in Tell Me a Riddle collection)
Oct. 6: review discussion; paper due
Oct. 8: Tell Me a Riddle, 66-77
Oct. 13: Tell, 77-116

Oct. 22: mid-term exam

Oct. 27: Lear, 1 and 2

Oct. 29: Lear, 3

Nov. 3: Lear, 4 and 5

Nov. 5: review discussion; paper due

Nov. 10: "An Interest in Life" (Paley in Barreca, 136-150)

Nov. 12: "A Man and Two Women" (Lessing)

Nov. 17: "The Company of Wolves" (Carter)

Nov. 19: "Angel, All Innocence" (Weldon)

Nov. 24, 26: Thanksgiving Recess

Dec. 1: "Teenage Wasteland" (Tyler)

Dec. 3: "Fleur" (Erdrich)

Dec. 8: "True Trash" (Atwood)

Dec. 10: review discussion; paper due

Dec. 14 -18: final exam; date and time to be announced