ENG 2009-003: Literature and Human Values (Love, Hate, Obsession)

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Course Description, Design, and Goals: The novelist Thomas Hardy described love as "the strongest passion known to man." We will read and discuss several writers, in a variety of genres, who agree, including such great storytellers as Charles Dickens, Raymond Carver, and Woody Allen. Hate is more difficult to assess, but just as interesting, the dark twin, so to speak, of love. Either, of course, leads easily, perhaps inevitably, to obsession. All discussions and assignments are designed for the non-specialist who has interest in what we tell ourselves about love and hate.

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 them, and to learn from some of our best writers how love, hate, and obsession influence the development of the individual and define the human drama.

Texts:

Allen, Woody. *Mighty Aphrodite; Crimes and Misdemeanors; Celebrity*

Carver, Raymond. *What We Talk About When We Talk About Love*

Dickens, Charles. *Great Expectations*

Euripides. *Medea*

Weldon, Fay. *The Life and Loves of a She-Devil*

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 of the assigned readings – 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.

This is a writing-intensive course. You may submit an essay from this class for your EWP. For more information, visit the assessment website: http://www.eiu.edu/~assess.

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. 22: introduction to course; in-class writing

Aug. 24: Weldon, *The Life and Loves of a She-Devil*, 1-10

Aug. 29: *She-Devil*, 11-20

Aug. 31: *She-Devil*, 21-25

Sept. 5: *She Devil*, 26-34

Sept. 7: Euripides, *Medea*

Sept. 12: *Medea*


Sept. 19: *Mighty Aphrodite*; **paper #1 due**

Sept. 21: Dickens, *Great Expectations*, 1-7

Sept. 26: *Great*, 8-15

Sept. 28: *Great*, 16-24

Oct. 3: *Great*, 25-29

Oct. 5: *Great*, 30-37
Oct. 10: *Great*, 38-45; **mid-term exam**

Oct. 12: *Great*, 46-52

Oct. 17: *Great*, 53-59


Oct. 24: *Celebrity*


Oct. 31: “Mr. Coffee and Mr. Fixit”; “Gazebo”

Nov. 2: “I Could See the Smallest Things”; “Sacks”

Nov. 7: “The Bath”; “Tell the Women We’re Going”

Nov. 9: “After the Denim”; “So Much Water So Close to Home”

Nov. 14: “The Third Thing that Killed My Father Off”; “A Serious Talk”; **paper #2 due**

Nov. 16: “The Calm”; *Popular Mechanics*

Nov. 21, 23: Thanksgiving Break

Nov. 28: “Everything Stuck to Him”; “What We Talk About …”; “One More Thing”

Nov. 30: Allen, *Crimes and Misdemeanors*

Dec. 5: *Crimes*

Dec. 7: review

**Final Exam:** Tuesday December 12, 2006, 2:45 – 4:45pm