ENG 4950-001: Literary History and Bibliography

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This class is intended to serve as a capstone course for you work as an English major. I look at it as an opportunity for everyone to review and reflect on the literature we study in this program, the effect of that study as you've experienced it, and the direction you think you might go with your interest and love of literary study. As a group, we'll read and discuss together a wide range of works drawn from each period of English literary history, with the aim to reach some general understandings of the representative features of this history overall, and to see what these suggest about the study of literature for us now. There's no way that we can read everything truly necessary for this, so it's critical that people draw on what they've learned in other classes or in their own reading and bring that into class discussion whenever relevant. Everyone already knows a lot, and this class is good occasion to bring that knowledge to bear.

The major written work for this course follows from this. Each of you will put together through the course of the semester what's most easily called the "Personal Bibliography Project," intended to be a comprehensive view of your work here at Eastern and your experience as a reader. The first part of the project, "the List," is a thoroughly developed list of what you have read as an English major, both in class and on your own, specific titles, along with the author's name, birth and death dates, and date of publication for each entry; this list needs to be as comprehensive as possible, as well as organized according to some rational scheme, and will add up, I can promise you, to quite a few pages. It will also take some time to put together, going through anthologies, old course materials, reference works, and the library's catalog; it's perfectly all right with me if people work together on the data collection part of all this, but each person needs to put the completed version of the list on their own. The second part of the assignment, "the Paper" is essentially an autobiography that accounts for your experience as student and reader, with as much specific detail as you can pack in. People have approached both parts of this project in a myriad of different ways, and part of the challenge of this project is to create for yourself an approach that works for you. I can guarantee that you'll find one, and will have overall a pretty interesting time working all this out.

Because this project is huge, it will constitute 50% of the grade for this course. The other 50% will be a performance evaluation—attendance, participation in discussion, thoroughness and preparedness of reading, etc., admittedly a judgement call on my part, but there it is I'll be fair, if you be fair.
Literary History Schedule

9/3  Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One’s Own*; Samuel Johnson, from “Preface to Shakespeare, “Rambler #4”
9/5  general discussion of literary periods, representative genres, major figures

**Poetry**
For these weeks on poetry, I would like each of you to spend time hunting through both volumes of the Norton anthology, looking for good poem’s on each week’s theme; pick a poem that you want to share with the class, ready to read it out loud and help us understand it. For each theme, I’ve suggest some specific authors to look at, as well as what you see for yourself.

9/10 and 9/12  Poetry about Nature
   Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Emily Bronte, Christina Rosetti, Hopkins, Yeats, Auden

9/17 and 9/19  Poetry about Love
   Shakespeare, Donne, Marvell, Pope, Rosetti, Byron, Auden

9/24 and 9/26  Poetry about Religion
   Herbert, Donne, Vaughan, Blake, Rosetti, Eliot

10/1 and 10/3  Poetry about Art
   Milton, Coleridge, Keats