Deborah Lapp English 1B – Reedley College            52816 TTh Spring 2019

**Intersectionality: Understanding the Other through Literature**

in·ter·sec·tion·al·i·ty

/ˌin(t)ərsekSHəˈnalədē/

*noun*

1. the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

"through an awareness of intersectionality, we can better acknowledge and ground the differences among us"

*The wonderful thing about books is that they allow us to****enter imaginatively****into someone else’s life.  And when we do that, we learn to sympathize with other people.  But the real surprise is that we also learn truths about ourselves, about****our own lives****, that somehow we hadn’t been able to see before.*

--Katherine Paterson b.1932

**Important Dates:**

**Every Monday (except holidays): Lapp’s office hours in CCI-212**

**Jan. 21: holiday MLK**

**\*Jan. 29, 7PM Forum Hall: Nikiko Masumoto, storyteller, farmer, activist (req)**

**Feb. 18: holiday, Presidents’**

**\*Mar. 7, 7PM RC cafeteria: Meg Wolitzer, author (required)**

**Mar. 8: Last day to drop a class**

**\*Apr. 4th, 7PM Forum Hall: Helena Maria Viramontes and Manuel Munoz (req)**

**Apr. 15-18: Spring Recess**

**May 21 (Tuesday): final 9-10:50AM**

**\*if there is absolutely no way to attend the required on-campus events, you will prepare an extra written assignment and presentation to the class instead.**

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Office hours: Monday 11AM-12PM, and 12PM-5PM by appointment; that is, I will generally be around all afternoon between my morning class and my evening class. This is the time I have slated to prep and read, but it’s a long stretch, so I may go take a walk, so email first. Email to set it up by 11AM, so I’ll be sure to be there for you. I hope you take advantage of my long Mondays!

The goal of this course is to tap you into the depths of human experience, to reveal the mysteries of the soul, to explore infinite and eternal truths, to empathize with others from different cultures, conditions, and lives; to laugh, to cry, and, of course, to gain you three transferable units. We will read, discuss, and write about literature--an inclusive variety of genres, a multicultural variety of authors, a diverse variety of origins, an eclectic variety of styles.  We will explore various critical responses to the literature. In keeping with the theme for this semester, we will focus on how literature lets us enter imaginatively into others’ lives.

It’s MOST IMPORTANT that you resist the temptation to google the pieces we read.  Believe me, I’ve heard what scholars and amateurs HAVE said about these works; but, if we only repeat what others have said, how will new ideas ever emerge?  When you meet someone for the first time, do you ask other people what they think of this person, or do you trust your own wisdom and authentic response?  This class is about your authentic response to literature.  You may have covered some of these works in other courses.  If so, try to see something new in them.

Keep a notebook for your responses and notes.  The responses serve several purposes:  to prepare you for discussion (I’ll ask you to read from your notebook first thing when you come in), to read around for written responses, to clarify your thinking, and to prepare for more formal writing, especially the argument paper in the 16th week.  Your audience is your peers; impress each other with your insight.

You’ll compose two formal essays (20% each) for evaluation, a poetry midterm (20%), reviews/responses of/to the Literary Arts events (20%), and your final (20% also). Together, these comprise your grade for the course.  Your essays will be typed, double-spaced, proofread, and thorough in MLA style.  Besides an exploration of examples of literary criticism, which I will provide, none of the papers requires research beyond the literature, so your works cited will simply be a list of the literary works you have chosen to discuss.  Please don’t think about plagiarizing a paper; it’s against the law and will result in **disgrace** and a grade of F.  I hope you see that plagiarizing—or even looking up what others have said is counterproductive to this course.

It is so important to be in class, as it is primarily a discussion class.  If you can’t come to class, call or email to get the assignment, but I promise it won’t be nearly as enriching or fun as covering the reading in class. I may drop you if you miss more than 2 classes (2 tardies equal an absence, so don’t be tardy—think about it: the class starts at 9:30AM. Think of it as a 9:15AM class, and you’ll always find parking and never be late.

Always let me know if there’s something serious going on. If you have a verified need for an academic accommodation or materials in alternate media (i.e., Braille, large print, electronic text, etc.) per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please contact me as soon as possible.

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate critical thinking skills and experience with literature through a variety of linked reading, writing, and discussion activities.
2. Demonstrate connections between literary works of the same or different genres.
3. Make connections between the situations of literature and your own experience.

We can look forward to some exciting literary events:  several important authors and artists will be in town, and I arranged our schedule for you to take advantage of the opportunities. The readings are mandatory, so do what you need now to make sure you can make it. If you have a serious and legitimate reason to miss a reading, I’ll arrange for you to prepare an alternative, which you will present to the class.

English 1B Syllabus by Weeks (subject to change and elaboration)

underlined items are graded for 20% each**(200 pts).**

Week 1 (1/15 & 17): Intro, begin journals, poetry, “The Dead”

Week 2 (1/22 & 24): In preparation for Meg Wolitzer’s visit, begin *The Wife*

Homework: Literary survey, pp. 1-25 in *The Wife*

Week 3: (1/29 & 31): TUESDAY MEET AT 7PM in FORUM HALL Nikiko Masumoto; Thursday: discuss speaker, poetry

Homework: Response to Masumoto’s presentation, pp. 25-50 in *The Wife*

Week 4 (2/5 & 7):

Homework: pp. 51-100 in *The Wife*

Week 5 (2/12 & 14):

Homework: pp. 101-150 in *The Wife*

Week 6 (2/19 & 21):

Homework: pp. 151-219 in *The Wife*

Week 7 (2/26 & 28): paper on *The Wife* due 2/28 (no late papers)

Homework: Prep poetry response, pp. 1-40 *Faith Healer of Olive Ave*

Week 8 (3/5 & 7): Tuesday responses; THURSDAY MEET AT 7PM IN RC CAFETERIA

Homework: pp. 41-90 *Faith Healer of Olive Ave*

Week 9 (3/12 & 14): Poetry midterm Tuesday; begin short fiction; “Hills” and “GP”

Homework: pp. 91-140 *Faith Healer of Olive Ave*

Week 10 (3/19 & 21): fiction “Sonny’s Blues”

<http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/wooda/2B-HUM/Readings/Baldwin-Sonnys-Blues.pdf>

Homework: pp. 141-170 *Faith Healer of Olive Ave*

Week 11 (3/26 & 28): fiction

“The Man Who Was Almos’ a Man” Richard Wright (with “Doe Season” and “Old People”)

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~drbr2/wright.htm>

Homework: pp. 171-239 *Faith Healer of Olive Ave*

Week 12 (4/2 & 4): Tuesday fiction; THURSDAY MEET 7PM FORUM HALL

Week 13 (4/9 & 11): Response to Munoz ’s presentation; Criticism: Formalist, Marxist, Multicultural, Feminist, Deconstructionist, Psychoanalytical, Queer Theory—brainstorm thesis questions for Criticism paper

Week 14 (4/16 & 18): **intro to drama, *Fences*** by August Wilson

**The purpose of theater, like magic, like religion . . . is to inspire cleansing awe. What makes good drama? And why does drama matter in an age that is awash in information and entertainment? David Mamet, playwright, believes that the tendency to dramatize is essential to human nature, that we create drama out of everything from today’s weather to next year’s elections. But the highest expression of this drive remains the theater.**

Week 15 (4/30 & 5/2): ***Merchant of Venice***

Homework: Critical Comparison Argument due Tuesday 5/7

**Week 16 (5/7 & 9): Critical Argument essay due**; ***Merchant of Venice***

**Week 17 (5/14 & 16): prepare for final: memorize this passage of Shylock’s:**

Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions; fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, heal'd by the same means, warm'd and cool'd by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, do we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that.

*[The Merchant Of Venice Act 3, scene 1, 58–68](http://www.enotes.com/merchant-text/act-iii-scene-i" \l "mer-3-1-51" \t "_blank)*

**Final: Tues. May 21st 9-11 AM**

Critical response questions about Merchant of Venice.

What type of a reader are you?

What do we learn about ourselves from entering imaginatively into the life of Shylock and the other characters in Merchant of Venice?

Choose one other work from this semester and apply the same question: What do we learn about ourselves from entering imaginatively into the life or lives on the page?