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Chaminade University of Honolulu

Barber's Point

English 256

Instructor--Jane Calfee

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Texts: *Perrine's Sound and Sense*. 9th ed. (referred to hereafter as SS)

Duplication packet (referred to hereafter as DP)

*The Heath Introduction to Drama*. 5th ed. (referred to hereafter as HD)

Purpose of course: To enlarge your understanding and appreciation of poetry and drama and to develop your ability to express that appreciation in precise and original terms in order that, ultimately and hopefully, your experience of your own life and the people who participate in it may be richer. ("A man's reach should exceed his grasp/ Or what's a heaven for?"--*Andrea del Sarto*, Robert Browning)

Course design: We will begin by discussing poetry--what it is, why it is written, how it is written and what to do with it after it has been written. Then, we will move into a study of drama as literature and consider the particular qualities of that genre, including how the poetic intensification of language is particularly suited to it regardless of whether the "shaping spirit of imagination" (*Ode to Dejection*, S.T. Coleridge) which drives the play is essentially tragic, comic, or some post-industrial hybrid of those classical forms.

Requirements: There will be two exams and I will ask you to write two essays. Assignment for essay number one follows the syllabus.

Be advised that I believe the most valuable tests are those which reveal to the parties involved the extent of your familiarity with and understanding of the material covered. Toward that end, the exams will be divided into three parts. The first part will involve identification with questions drawn directly from classroom discussion; the second part will be short answer essay questions, and the final part will be a long answer essay question.

Because of the compression of class periods, it is critical that you attend regularly. Should you be required to miss, make arrangements to get the notes prior to the next meeting from someone who was here.

Advice with regard to reading: Be sure you have a good dictionary nearby. Write notes in the margin of your text. "Talk" to the text you're reading. The beauty of many poetic passages is missed by a silent reading. Read aloud and read slowly. In this activity at least, your effort will be repaid. Promise.

The following is a tentative list of assigned readings, but I reserve the right to make alterations should I decide our collective best interests could be better served by same. (I.e., trust me.)

July 7--Introduction to course, texts, requirements; DP, Hopkins, 1a; SS, Reid, 94; Williams, 15; Housman, 16; Ferlinghetti, 198; MacLeish, 18

14--SS, Chap.'s 1-4; Frost, 255; DP, Frost, 12-13, 9-10

21--SS, Chap.'s 5-7; Donne, 156; Blake 192, 274; Frost, 114; DP, Blake, 1-3; Dickey, 14-17; Coleridge, 5-6

28--SS, Chap.'s 8-10; Yeats, 344-45; DP, 7-8; SS, Eliot, 258

28--SS, Chap.'s 5-7; Donne, 156; Blake 192, 274; Frost, 114; DP, Dickey, 17-19; Coleridge, on handout

Feb. 4--SS, Chap.'s 8-10; Yeats, 344-45; DP, 5-6; SS, Eliot, 258

11--SS, Chap.'s 11-13; DP, Cummings, 12-15; SS, Keats, 307

18--Exam on poetry, first half of class; Introduction to drama; defining tragedy; HD, Sophocles, 25

25--Elizabethan tragedy; HD, Shakespeare, Act I

Mar. 4--Acts II and III, POETRY ESSAY DUE

11--Acts 1V,V; Defining comedy, Aristophanes, 73

18--Hansberry, 841; Miller, 673

25--Exam on drama

Assignment for Essay on Poetry, due March 4

Find a poem that inspires your regard. This poem should not be one that you have read or studied prior to or during this class. Read around. Think about poetry. Talk about poetry.

In this essay, I want you to, as precisely, as thoughtfully, as gracefully, as sensitively and as thoroughly as possible, explain how and why the poem works. Consider the formal elements we will discuss in class such as stanza form, line length, word choice, metrical pattern, rhyming pattern (or its absence) as well as the poem's human dimension. (To what sense, feeling, idea, experience shared by all of us does it appeal?)

The essay should **NOT** read like a mechanical response to an assignment. The introduction should not assume that the paper is written for me, a teacher, but rather for all of us as sensitive, intelligent human beings. Remember those qualities of forceful prose discussed in 101-102. Carefully frame your thesis. Do an outline. Support ALL of what you say with specific examples.

Perhaps it doesn't sound like it, but I really do want you to have some fun with this, not fluffy, easy fun, maybe--but fun anyway. Feel free to discuss the paper with me over the course of the term.