Beth Flynn
HU2520, Cultural Diversity in the Literature of the Americas
Wadsworth Hall, G11W
T, Th 12:35-1:50
Spring, 2004
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Office Hours: T, Th 2:00-3:20 and by appointment

Texts:


Note: Used books will only be available at the bookstore for 60 days so please purchase all of your books soon.

Supplies:

You’ll need a file folder to hold journal entries, drafts, and critique sheets. I’ll bring in some used ones if you’d prefer not to buy a new one. I will be collecting in-class journal entries each class period. I will collect drafts and critique sheets on the day formal essays are due. Please have the file folder by Thursday of week one.

Purpose:

The course is described in the catalog as follows:

Study of short stories, plays, novels, and literary nonfiction by authors of the Americas (e.g., Latin America, South America, Mexico, the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean). Emphasizes works by authors of historically under-represented groups (e.g., Latino, Native American, Latin American, Canadian, African-American, and Caribbean).

Writing Assignments:

Journal:

For each class session in which there are assigned readings, you will be asked to write one or more in-class journal entries. The entries will provide you an opportunity to reflect on the material you have read and to record your reactions in a focused way. These entries are not formal and need not be polished or well organized. The act of writing should stimulate you to make connections you might not previously have made.

E-Mail Message:

Once during the term you should put an observation about course readings, class discussion, or presentations on e-mail. The observation can also be something you read or observed that is pertinent to the course. The list will be set up so that it can go to the entire list if you send it to
2520-I@mtu.edu or to me if you send it to eflynn@mtu.edu. Please note that "I" is the twelfth letter of the alphabet rather than the number one. The message should be at least a screen long.

**Portfolio Analysis**

Please prepare a portfolio analysis (at least a page long) that provides a commentary on journal entries, drafts and critique sheets, and final papers. What are some strengths of your performance on these assignments? What are some limitations?

**Formal Writing:**

Three formal papers will be required.

The first is a four-page essay (approximately 1,000 words) in which you describe your background and explain how it influences your reading of books or your viewing of films. Focus on factors such as race, gender, class, and ethnicity. Describe how these orientations affect what you read or what films you view and how you read or view films. Be sure to mention specific works.

The second is a four-page (approximately 1,000 words) comparison between one or more of the assigned works and another work or film not assigned in class. Focus on similarities or differences between them. If the work you select has been made into a film, feel free to discuss the film based on it as well. You'll have to briefly summarize works not discussed in class.

The third is a four-page (approximately 1,000 words) analysis of one of the essays in the Andersen and Collins book that we have not read. Summarize in detail the essay's argument. How does it relate to one or more of the works we've discussed in class? Do you find it to be convincing? Why or why not?

**Presentations:**

You will have an opportunity to present essays # 1, 2, and 3 in four-minute presentations. The presentation should be based on the paper you have submitted but should be tailored for oral delivery. Please use at least one overhead that provides an outline of your paper and a thesis statement. Please include a paper copy of the outline and thesis statement with your paper. Also, please put a complete heading on the outline including your name, my name, title of the course, date, and the assignment.

**Attendance:**

Attendance is mandatory. Much of the course involves conversation about course readings. If you miss those conversations, you will have missed a good deal of the course content. More than four unexcused absences will affect your grade.

**Late Papers:**

Since the course emphasizes the revision process and since it is important that presentations be based on finished essays, drafts and final essays must be submitted on time. Late papers will affect your grade.

**Grades:**

Your grade will be based on the following:

Journal, e-mail, critiques, portfolio analysis 25 %
Criteria for Evaluation:

A Papers and Presentations:

The author makes an original contribution so that the reader becomes involved and learns from the piece or presentation.

The central point of the essay is clear, and the parts of the essay have been connected effectively. The outline for the presentation is correct in form and effective. Support for the point is appropriate for the intended audience and convincing. The reader's or listener's needs have been taken into consideration. There are few if any errors.

B Papers and Presentations:

The writing or speaking is clear, but the contribution does not seem especially original or new. The central point is clear, but the parts of the essay or talk could be connected more effectively. Support for the point is adequate for the intended audience and fairly convincing. The reader's or listener's needs have been taken into consideration to an extent. There are some errors.

C Papers and Presentations:

Takes some effort on the part of the reader or listener to get through the essay or talk. The paper or talk does not have a strong focus, and it is not always clear how the parts support the thesis. Support for the point is not especially appropriate for the intended audience and not especially convincing. The reader's or listener's needs have not always been taken into consideration. There are a number of errors.

D Papers and Presentations:

The reader or listener cannot figure out what point the writer or speaker is trying to make. The central point is not at all clear, and the parts do not support it. Support for the point is inappropriate for the intended audience and not convincing. The reader's or listener's needs have not been taken into consideration. There are many errors.

F Papers and Presentations:

The paper or talk does not respond to the assignment at all or has not been handed in or presented.

Other:

When papers are returned, most papers will have a letter grade on them. If you receive a grade lower than A, you may revise the essay and submit it no later than two weeks after it is returned. A few papers, though, will have an "R" on them. This means that the paper must be revised within
two weeks of the time the paper was returned, and only the revision will be graded. I will usually suggest that individuals who receive Rs see me before revising. Please include the original paper with the revision.

Remember that formal essays should have titles. Please leave at least an inch margin on the sides and top and bottom of the paper and remember to number the pages on papers. Label all work. Include your name, my name, the course number and time, the date, and the course assignment. Be sure to indicate if the paper is a draft, a formal paper, or a revision.

MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean of Students (7-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department head or chair, or the Affirmative Action Office (3310).

It may be necessary to alter the syllabus as the semester proceeds in order to better meet the instructional needs of the class.

Plagiarism—using the ideas or words of others without acknowledging the source—is unethical and a violation of University policy. Plagiarism cases will be handled by the Dean of Students. Some consequences of plagiarism could be failure of a paper or course. The University has subscribed to an anti-plagiarism service that can detect plagiarized material. If you have questions about the proper way to cite the ideas of someone else, please see me.

Course Schedule:

Week 1 (January 13-15)

T  Introduction
Th Annie John, pp. 3-71.

Week 2 (January 20-22)


Week 3 (January 27-29)

T Draft due. House on Mango Street, pp. 3-61.
Th House on Mango Street, pp. 62-110.

Week 4 (February 3)

T Essay # 1 due. Presentations.

Week 5 (February 10-12)

T Presentations.
Th The Bonesetter's Daughter, pp. 1-84 ("Truth," Part I, Ch. 1-3).

Week 6 (February 17-19)

T The Bonesetter's Daughter, pp. 85-155 (Part I, Ch. 4-7).
Th The Bonesetter's Daughter, pp. 159-235 (Part II, "Heart," "Change," "Ghost").
Week 7 (February 24-26)
Th The Bonesetter's Daughter, pp. 311-368 (Part III, Ch. 1-3, Epilogue).

Week 8 (March 9-11)
T Proposal for essay # 2 due. The Bean Trees, pp. 1-64 (Ch. 1-4).
Th The Bean Trees, pp. 65-140 (Ch. 5-9).

Week 9 (March 16-18)
T Draft of essay # 2 due. The Bean Trees, pp. 141-211 (Ch. 10-15).
Th The Bean Trees, pp. 212-232 (Ch. 16-17).

Week 10 (March 23-25)
T Essay # 2 due. Presentations.
Th Presentations.

Week 11 (March 30-April 1)
T The Color Purple, pp. 11-88.
Th The Color Purple, pp. 89-165.

Week 12 (April 6-8)
T The Color Purple, pp. 166-246.
Th The Color Purple, pp. 247-295.

Week 13 (April 13-15)

Week 14 (April 20-22)

Week 15 (April 27-29)
T Essay # 3 due; presentations.
Th Presentations; portfolio analysis due; portfolio due.