

Prompt: What questions do you have about this week's readings? For your first posting, ask me and/or your classmates a question or questions. For subsequent postings, try to answer others' questions, or pose follow-up questions.

A Different Sort of Question

I wasn't able to come up with a question about our readings that couldn't be answered without a little footwork, so instead I will ask a more general question: how did some of you respond to Thomas Harding's poetry? It is a bit dark and unsettling at times, such as in *The Dead Man Walking*, where he's writing about someone is alive but feels as if he has "changed into the corpse-thing / I am to-day" (2102). He also discusses the loss of his wife in *At Castle Botereel*—where he writes how he "shall traverse old love's domain / Never again" (2106)—and also his sister in *Logs on the Hearth*—which tells a story about using an old apple tree for firewood that the two of them used to climb together in their youth.

I really appreciate authors that figure out how to make these kinds of writings accessible and even enjoyable to others. It's one thing to focus on the negative (anybody can do that), but it's another to write something that is truthful and honest, without attempting to please others, in a way that others will enjoy.

Re: A Different Sort of Question

"accessible and even enjoyable to others", "in a way that others will enjoy": I'm not sure I agree with these characterisations. When everyone is dying around you, sometimes reality [it's a plague, and it'll probably kill you too] is the most powerful palliative medicine. When the earth is shaking under your feet, and the ocean is doing silly things, sometimes knowing what the reality of a 9.0 earthquake is can actually be comforting - the knowledge doesn't change the reality, but at least it allows the reality to make sense... cognitive dissonance can be more upsetting than a painful reality. Just a thought.

Yeah, "enjoy" maybe wasn't the right word to use. I was having a hard time wrapping up my message without going into an additional two or three (or more) paragraphs.

You make a good point though. Perhaps the word "appreciate" is at least a little bit better, or maybe "writings in which one is able to find solace."

Re:

this has proved to be a good/worthwhile/interesting group of people - I think well above that of the average SC student.

u r definitely right about that one!!1

Re: Week 13

The one thing the Victorians wanted to do was to make sure everything seemed real, that is why they called places they made up ----shire, and people Mr S___ so that they looked real with out making up a fake name.

I believe this was done also to not commit the story to any one particular place. If an author were to refer to a Mr. Swanson in Lancashire then it would do two things: 1) tether

the story to a location that readers would know and be familiar with, and 2) possibly tell a false story about a real Mr. Swanson in Lancashire. It requires that the story be more accurate about a particular location, which would impose certain limitations to the locale, while also potentially and accidentally assigning made up events with a real person.

Re: What?

Can someone please explain to me what A Wife and Another is about? It would seem that someone is having an affair. Are two women waiting for the same man to come home? And, I think they might be sisters, or are they? I think both go to meet the guy and the guy is there to see the one he is not married too, who is also pregnant. Am I close?

My interpretation is that the two women did not know each other and both were being played for fools by the same guy, who is nothing more than a strongly inconsiderate, two-timing jerk. Upon discovering that the other woman was pregnant, the main character forgives her "sister"—as in her fellow human being who has made the same mistake—and is letting go of a bad situation, only because she is fortunate enough to be able to do so. The other woman cannot let go because she has the responsibility of a child.

The speaker is acknowledging that she could have just as easily been the one to become trapped in this false relationship with this man. Her response is that she quietly, and perhaps thankfully, "walks away" from it.

Re: Art Reflecting Life, or Vice Versa

It's truly sad that the SC English department doesn't offer more classes of this ilk, and allow such a (very fine) group to form and kick around some non-Eng1A, Eng1B, Eng1C topics. Seems the department has become a 1A, 1B, 1C teaching machine - which has to be no fun to the instructors also.

Anyone else interested in talking to Dr.N in his new role seeking an Eng17 in the near future? Haven't seen the Fall2012 schedule yet, but suspect I'll be disappointed. Eng 13A + B have been delightful eyeopeners to this left-brained mathematician.

I would love to take it, but would never be able to fit it into my schedule. I think ENGR17 is on my list of classes to take, but that's a little bit different than Shakespeare.

The only "extra" English class I might take, if I'm ever able to fit one in, would be 13A. I'm actually a little upset that I didn't take that class first, as I am really enjoying the material we are covering and feel like I would be getting more out of it if I went through the first half of it and in the right sequence. It's like what you were saying in another thread about having an English history class as a prerequisite for this one in order to get more out of the material.

Re: Art Reflecting Life, or Vice Versa

W/re 13A: one thought is - to buy the Longman's off of abebooks - can be had used for \$10-15 - and just start reading. Yes it's 3k pages, and yes some material is not the best, but unlike 13B, I suspect you'll find the proportions of good/bad flipped - I would guess 70,

maybe 80% good. Though not having the group like here to discuss would/will be a failing... but that would be better than nothing.

I think that buying the book and having it readily available on the shelf is the way to go. In fact, I'll do it right now. I am enjoying the Longman textbook and the sequence of material seems to be well done, although I've touched very little outside of our assigned readings. (There is definitely no shortage of things for me to read just in these books.)

the rush to get "done" with school... I think that's a huge mistake. Essentially being in school is a once in a lifetime opportunity, and instead of trying to get out in as few quarters/semesters as possible, in hindsight: one shouldn't call it quits, until there's nothing more to be had.

As for the 13A class, I'm not opposed to taking more school, just opposed to cramming more school into the same apportioned amount of time. I'm guessing it would be offered again next Spring and to enroll and pile it on top of the other classes I *need* to take in order to have a workable and reasonable school schedule would defeat the purpose.

I'm taking 16 units right now and sometimes I wonder if it's tiring me out more than it is actually educating me. But this kind of a load is pretty normal and something that I need to get used to. But I do agree with you: I know that I would enjoy school a lot more if the pace was more reasonable. People get more out of whatever it is they are doing if they have the time to settle in and work at length without interruptions. For school, the quality of work and the amount learning would be better. I gripe and complain about this stuff to myself all the time (very much so when I'm doing my homework).