

QUEENS COLLEGE OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF COMPARATIVE LITERATURE
CL 102W - GREAT BOOKS II
SYLLABUS - SPRING 2008

Instructor: Rosa Amatulli
Ramatu3963@optonline.net

Office hours: Friday, after class, Room ...

Who said that humor and laughter are not serious or that the serious is not a subject for laughter? During the Renaissance laughter was considered to have deep philosophical meaning; in fact it was one of the essential forms of truth. Laughter is another of view of the world, no less valid or profound than "seriousness." In this course we will examine how Renaissance writers use humor, laughter and the ridiculous as ironic devices to expose and correct human vice as well as social corruption. We will read excerpts from a number of theories, which will provide the necessary critical basis for the course. With the help of these theories we will try to define the ridiculous and the different characteristics of the nature of the comic, such as the "carnavalesque," and, or, the "subversive." We will read Aristotle's *Poetic*, Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, Cervantes' *Don Quixote* and Italo Calvino's *The Nonexistent Knight*.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance and class participation are a must. Only one unexcused absence is allowed. Anything more will bring your grade down. You are expected to come to class well prepared in order to actively participate in class discussions and in order to earn a grade for class participation. Class participation will be evaluated on a daily basis. In each class there will be oral presentations during which students will discuss either a humor theory (excerpts will be ended to individual students), or one of the literary terms (which will be posted on Black Board) or a specific comic instance encountered in one of the texts of his or her choice and, finally, a specific theme relevant in one of the texts.

Two 5-page and one 7-page double-spaced typed papers are to be handed in on the scheduled dates (I will NOT accept e-mailed or late papers). In addition, one Mid Term and one Final Exam and a few surprise quizzes are required of you. If you are absent on exam days or on your presentation day, you will get a zero grade and there will be no make-ups for missed WORK (EXAMS, PRESENTATIONS, ETC.), unless there is an unforeseeable situations such as illness, death in the family or religious holidays that prevent you from coming to class. In these cases you are required to provide documentation.

Topics for all papers are to be approved by the instructor. Papers must be typed and double-spaced. The bibliography must follow the guidelines set forth by the MLA. Early on in the semester we will try to meet in the library for instructions on research resources available at Queens College.

PEER REVIEW: Since this is a "W" class, occasionally the class will be divided into small groups so that students will have the opportunity to review and comment upon other students' writing: the name of the student, of course, will remain anonymous. In this exercise students will be asked to focus on style, grammar, organization as well as other writing issues. Participation in this process is mandatory.

A NOTE ON **PLAGIARISM**: Plagiarism means using someone else's words or ideas, published (in the form of a book, magazine or Internet), or unpublished, as your own without giving him or her proper credit. It is extremely easy to tell when someone has plagiarized or bought a paper on Internet, especially now that "Queens College has a pilot license for the use of Turnitin, a system that detects plagiarism by comparing students' essays to a large database of essays and web content." (Queens College Provost Office). Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic standards. **Anyone found to have committed plagiarism or anyone who**

buys a paper from Internet will automatically fail the course, and will get a notation on his or her permanent record, or may get a suspension or expulsion from college.

GRADING SYSTEM:

Mid Term Exam 15%	Final Exam 15 %
2 Short papers 30 %	Long paper 20%
Class participation & surprise quizzes 10 %	Presentation 10%

REQUIRED TEXTS (available in the Queens College book store)

1. Aristotle. *Poetics*. Translated, with an Introduction and Notes, by James Hutton, Norton Publications, (isbn: 0-393-95216-9)
2. Ariosto, Ludovico *Orlando Furioso*, (**Part One & Two**) Translated by Barbara Reynolds, NY: Penguin Books, 1975, ISBN: 0-14-044311-8 / ISBN: 0-14-044310-x
3. Cervantes. *Don Quixote*, Translated by John Rutherford, with an introduction by Roberto Gonzalez Echevarria, Penguin (isbn: 0-14-044804-7)
4. Calvino, Italo. *The Nonexistent Knight and The Cloven Viscount*. Harcourt Brace & Company, Isbn 0-15-665975-1

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Jan. 25	Introduction	
Feb. 1	<i>Poetics</i>	
Feb. 8	<i>Orlando Furioso</i> , Cantos	
Feb. 15	<i>Orlando Furioso</i> , Cantos ...	
Feb. 22	<i>Orlando Furioso</i> , Cantos ...	FIRST PAPER DUE
Feb. 29	<i>Orlando Furioso</i> , Cantos	
March 7	<i>Orlando Furioso</i> , Cantos	
March 14	<i>Don Quixote</i> , Chs...	MIT-TERM EXAM
March 21	NO CLASSES	
March 28	<i>Don Quixote</i> , Chs...	SECOND PAPER DUE
April 4	<i>Don Quixote</i> , Chs...	
April 11	<i>Don Quixote</i> , Chs...	
April 18	<i>Don Quixote</i> , Chs...	
April 25	SPRING BREAK	
May 2	<i>The Nonexistent Knight</i>	FINAL PAPER DUE
May 9	<i>The Nonexistent Knight</i> - LAST CLASS	
May 16 - 25	FINAL EXAMINATION	

READING ASSIGNMENT:

Reading from the *Poetics* – pages 45 to 62 & from 69 to 79.

Reading assignment from *Orlando Furioso*:

It would be helpful to you, if you read the *Introduction* of this book, pages 11 to 113.

From the poem read the following Cantos (or chapters). Each Canto is divided by stanzas (a stanza is a strophe); so, when I indicate, for example, 1 to 5, I mean, stanzas 1 to 5.

Volume I:

Ch. 1; ch. 2; ch. 3; Ch. 4: stanzas 1 to 54;

Ch. 5: stanzas 1 to 25;

Ch. 6: stanzas 1 to 3; 16 to 81;

Ch. 7: stanzas 1 to 80;

Ch. 8: stanzas 1 to 19; 29 to 50; 71 to 91;

Ch. 9: stanzas 1 to 19; 76 to 94;

Ch. 10: stanzas 1 to 9; 35 to 68; 91 to 115; Ruggero tries to have sex with Angelica but she escapes

Ch. 11: stanzas 1 to 39; Angelica's invisible; Ruggero's reproach

Ch. 12: stanzas 1 to 67; Orlando pursues the phantom of Angelica; Atlante's palace of illusion; Orlando & Ferrau' fight

Ch. 14: stanzas ; NO

Ch. 17: stanzas ; NO

Ch. 19: stanzas 1 to 43; True Loyalty; Medoro; Angelica falls in love with Medoro; she helps him; their love, their name inscribed on tree.

Ch. 22: stanzas ; NO

Ch. 23: stanzas 77 - 136. Orlando fights with broken lance; he finds Medoro's writing on tree; jealousy; enters cave; Orlando's anguish; Shepherd tells Orlando the tale of the two lovers; madness.

Volume II:

Ch. 24: stanzas 1 to 15; Warning against love; Orlando's madness; he is attacked.

Ch. 25: stanzas 1 – 7; The benevolent influence of love

Ch. 26: stanzas 1 - ; 1 – 3.

Ch. 28: stanzas 1 to 95; Astolfo and Jocondo

Ch. 29: stanzas 39 to 74; Orlando pursues Angelica; kills Medoro's horse; Angelica vanishes; Orlando seizes her mare;

Ch. 30: stanzas 1 to 19; Orlando slays shepherd; kills everyone; horse drowns; Orlando swims.

Ch. 33: stanzas 96 to 128; Astolfo's journey; Prester John; Astolfo reaches hell.

Ch. 34: stanzas 1 -19; 45 – 92. Astolfo enters hell; he escapes hell; reason for Astolfo's visit to terrestrial Paradise; reason for Orlando's madness; to the moon; things lost on earth; Astolfo and Orlando's wits;

Ch. 35: stanzas 1 – 7; the future of Ferrara

Ch.

From *Don Quixote*, read the following:

Part I, read the author's *Prologue*, and Chapters 1 through 22; 45 through 50.

Part II, read the author's *Prologue*, and Chapters 8 through 13; 34 & 35; 42 through 55 and 64 through 74.

From *The Nonexistent Knight*, read entire text.