English 126

Prof. DiToro

Project #3: The Research Essay

Length: Roughly 6-7 Pages

We have been looking closely at Henrik Ibsen’s *A Doll House*, focusing particularly on how the characters in the play develop and assert their own identities, and how they are influenced and shaped by those around them, as well as by the values and expectations of the society in which they live.

**Your task for this final project, then, is to write a well-thought out, well-developed essay in which you analyze how this search for identity, and how the pressures and expectations of society influence one of the major characters in the play. How are a character’s actions, impulses and desires driven by these factors? How does he respond to these factors? How might he be transformed by them?**

You will note that this topic is much like the topic you wrote about in essay #2. That, of course, is intentional. I want you to employ what you might have learned about utilizing non-literary texts to effectively interpret literary texts to craft a well-thought out, insightful paper.

To support and strengthen your analysis, I am asking that you refer to sources that I have provided. These sources should be used to help you more fully understand the character you have chosen.

**Please use THREE of the following sources in addition to the literary text:**

* “Gender Roles Behaviors and Attitudes,” Holly Devor
* “‘I’ll Explain it to You’: Lecturing and Listening,” Deborah Tannen
* “Sex, Lies, and Conversation,” Deborah Tannen
* Introduction to *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life,* Erving Goffman
* “Individuation: From Fusion to Dialogue,” Mark Karpel

*\*All of these sources have been posted to Blackboard.*

**Your task is to use these sources to help strengthen the argument you make about the search for identity in the literary work. The best essays will substantively engage the outside sources, carefully analyzing how we might apply the ideas presented in these sources to our analysis of the literary text.**

Details

* **Tuesday, April 28**: Read and be prepared to discuss “‘I’ll Explain it to You’: Lecturing and Listening,” Deborah Tannen
* **Thursday, April 30**: Read and be prepared to discuss the introduction to *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life,* Erving Goffman
* **Tuesday, May 5:** Read and be prepared to discuss “Individuation: From Fusion to Dialogue,” Mark Karpel
* **Thursday, May 7:** Draft #1 of Essay #3 Due (3 copies, plus 1 copy emailed to me at [dditoro@york.cuny.edu](mailto:dditoro@york.cuny.edu)). **First drafts must be no less than 4 pages.**
* **Tuesday, May 12:** Conferences
* **Thursday, May 14:** Conferences
* **Tuesday, May 19**: Final Version Due (1 copy, plus 1 copy emailed to me at [dditoro@york.cuny.edu](mailto:dditoro@york.cuny.edu))

**For each day a draft is submitted late, the final grade will be lowered by one full letter.**

*The idea for this project, as well as the sources list, was gleaned from an assignment created by Prof. Catherine Keohane of Montclair State University (*www.montclair.edu/media/.../a-dolls-house.pdf).