ENG104 WEEKLY READING AND WRITING #7

Tuesday

“The Things They Carried” by Tim O’Brien, page 990
“On Tim O’Brien’s The Things They Carried” page 1496
“Alpha Company,” page 1520
our class website interviews online

Thursday

Essay workshop and review

Choose two of the following prompts. For each prompt, develop your response in a focused paragraph. Use details, specifics, examples, and quotes from the story to develop your response. Please word-process, single-space, and follow the general guideline of about ½ page for each response.

The Things They Carried

- **Style Analysis:** Refer to the discussion of style in the chapter on elements as well as the glossary definition of style and voice. Draw from Mason’s essay (“On Tim O’Brien’s The Things They Carried”). Describe and evaluate O’Brien’s style, his unique storytelling technique, especially the listing device.

- **Interpretation:** Tim O’Brien was asked how he might respond to high school students about war: “When I talk to high school kids about Vietnam, I ask them first about their own lives, their own enemies, their own ways of resolving conflict.” In what ways do you think that asking these questions is a useful beginning for a discussion about war and/or the issues raised in “Carried”?  

- **Connections:** “Soldiers are dreamers,” the poet Sassoon wrote during World War 1. Dreams play an important role in this story, not the surrealistic element, but one rooted in reality: “the dream survives as the most vital element in the story.” Write about the power of this dream in the story (look particularly at the passage which begins “They dreamed of freedom birds.”) and/or in your own life.