ENG255
Week #6 Reading/Discussion/Writing

Tuesday
Research the Civil Rights Movement. Imagine trying to explain the Movement and its contribution to literature to someone from the past (e.g. Walt Whitman, Henry David Thoreau, Sherwood Anderson, William Faulkner, Zora Neale Hurston). Come to class with details prepared to share for discussion.

Gwendolyn Brooks (2375 – 2377), Negro Hero (2378) The Last Quatrain of the Ballad of Emmett Till (2383)

Thursday
Research the Black Arts Movement. Imagine trying to explain the Movement and its contribution to literature to someone from the past (e.g. Frederick Douglass, Walt Whitman, Henry David Thoreau, Sherwood Anderson, William Faulkner, Zora Neale Hurston,). Come to class with details prepared to share for discussion.

Robert Hayden (2338 - 2343) and handout: Middle Passage and Frederick Douglass
Michael S. Harper Dear John Dear Coltrane, pages 2584 – 2588
Amiri Baraka handout

Write

- **Brooks**: In 1963, the poet Louis Simpson criticized Brook’s Selected Poems for its racial themes, commenting, “Although a Negro might not be able to write well without revealing her race, the writing’s unimportant if being a Negro is the only subject.” Use any of the poems in this selection as support (and any other Brooks’ poems you’re familiar with) and join that discourse.
- **Brooks**: Brooks won the first Pulitzer Prize ever awarded to an African American in 1950. Study and enjoy her selected poetry here, consider the time period, and explain why you think she was so exemplary. Consider composing your portrait in the form of a poem or prose homage to her.
- **Robert Hayden**: In what ways should we discuss Hayden as a post-modernist? What elements and techniques in his poetry look like traditional / conventional poetry? What elements are new?
- **Michael Harper**: Listen to John Coltrane’s A Love Supreme and make connections (both in terms of style and content) with Harper’s poem.
- **Baraka**: Listen to Baraka’s readings (links on class website). In the 50s, he was known as Le Roi Jones, the Beat poet in Greenwich Village. In the 60s, he reclaimed his black heritage. He went uptown to Harlem. He changed his name to Amiri Baraka. He became one of the leading figures of jazz poetry. Browse his poetry selections (handout and online) and write about the music in his poetry.
- **Movements**: Explain the Civil Rights Movement and/or the Black Arts Movement and its contribution to literature to one writer from the past (identify whom you’re writing to). Give details of particular poets (specific summary / paraphrase /quotations from their works) we’re reading this week in your explanation.