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October 7, 2008

On October 24, 2008 I will be taking two Honors College ENC 1101 classes on an Earth Ethics-Sponsored Immersion to Biscayne Nature Center on Key Biscayne. The experience will present detailed information about our bioregion and will allow students to wade in the shallow waters off the undeveloped part of northern Key Biscayne with a naturalist, to collect specimens and gain significant information about the flora and fauna of the waters and land of the barrier island environment. Immediately following the experience the students will write a “reflection” in their journals, but in order to allow them to gain a deeper and more carefully-considered response—and to present them with an appropriate writing challenge--I will ask them to respond to the assignment given below.

ENC 1101H
Hettich
Assignment in response to
The Biscayne Nature Center Student Immersion

Following our Biscayne Nature Center Immersion on October 24th, I would like you to respond to one of the following three writing activities.

All work is due Friday, October 31.

1. Write a personal essay of 500-750 words attempting a thorough (and personal) definition of “wild”—as a state of being, as a concept, as an approach to creativity and as a way of life. The details and strategic landscape of your essay should be drawn from your experience in this immersion—that is, you should discuss the specific beach we visited, the specific water we waded in, and some of the creatures we encountered. Attempt here to grapple with the ways wild creatures—any wild creatures—must have to think, as compared to the way(s) more domesticated creatures must think. These “thinking” creatures might include beaches and tides as well as birds and swimming creatures. And don’t forget humans as well. Strive to engage and enliven us by your writing as well as with your content.
2. Write five image-centered poems using specific information—names of creatures, depth of water, kinds of clouds, etc—encountered during this excursion. These must be authentic poems—that is, they must say something interesting that resists paraphrase—and they must be grounded in concrete nouns and active verbs. They should also strive to think through metaphor, which is more difficult than it might sound. You should draw your material from notes taken during the immersion.

Your poems will in most cases have to be revised at least once—but perhaps more than once—after the initial due date. They may be written in any form you choose—including, of course, free verse.

3. In a research-based essay of at least 750 words, describe either
 - a. The migratory pattern of any species of bird that visits or lives on Key Biscayne. You may discuss more than one species;
 - b. The life journey taken by any of the species of sea turtles that nests and hatches on Key Biscayne. Again, you may discuss more than one species;
 - c. The primary flora of Key Biscayne and the types of fauna that live here;
 - d. The effects of global warming on the flora, fauna and landscape of Key Biscayne.

--You may combine the topics of this third prompt if you so desire.

--Your research must be rigorous, and it should be drawn from various sources. Your essay must synthesize and analyze research information and should not merely repeat source material. If possible, you should include information learned in the immersion.

--As always, use M.L.A. style.