Unit Three Final Portfolio Assignment
Due on Monday, December 11, 2006 by Noon (must be turned in to my office)

Part I: Write a 3-5 page imitation of a short story by one of the authors we have covered in this unit. As this is a short assignment, the story will not have the arch of some of the longer piece we have read. With that in mind, your aim should be to construct at least one scene that imitates the style and presence of your chosen author. Keep in mind when you do this that there is a difference between imitation and copying. An imitation is aware of why and how it is channeling the work of the original artist. A copy merely tries to sound like someone else’s work, but is missing many of the crucial stylistic and narrative features of the original. Imitating each author will require you to emphasize different aspects of fiction, so listen carefully in class when we discuss what is at the heart of each author’s work. As always, you should bring any specific question to my office hours.

Percentage of total portfolio grade: 30%

Part II: After writing your imitation, you must write a 3-4 page analysis of your own work. Your thesis in this essay should answer the question of what you felt to be the most important aspect of fiction when imitating your author’s work. You should then go through your story and show where and how you achieve this. You should also address how this aspect of fiction works with one or two other aspects of fiction to create your author’s unique style. For example, if you choose to imitate Maxine Hong Kingston, you might focus your imitation and analysis on the interior monologue. In your analysis then, you might address how the form of the interior monologue impacts the writing of dialogue and the presentation of setting. This is one of the myriad ways to talk about the choices you have made as an author-imitator. Please note that the analysis is worth significantly more than the imitation itself. This should impress upon you the importance of knowing why and how you are going about imitating the author of your choice. YOU MUST BE A GREAT ANALYST OF FICTION IN ORDER TO WRITE IT WELL!!!

Percentage of total portfolio grade: 50%

Part III: You will be asked to write a 2 page dialogue over Thanksgiving break. This dialogue should attempt to reconstruct some conversation you overhear during the break, paying special attention to the differentiation of the multiple voices present in the conversation. In other words, make each person sound unique in some way or another, while still keeping the conversation grounded in reality.

Percentage of the total portfolio grade: 10%

Part IV: Turn in your 3 in class exercises and 5 reading quizzes/free writes from this unit.

Percentage of the total portfolio grade: 10%