**Significant Passages Assignment**

Next week will be a **grand round up of themes** from all of the works to prepare for the last in-class writing assignment, the “mini-final” on 5/13. We will be drawing connections and looking at common themes and different depictions of similar conflicts.

To prepare, each of you will pick TWO significant passages—either **quotes**--or a **key moment** in the story that depends on **images or actions** instead of language. Each must come from **different works** that we have discussed—the films and readings. Include the page number if it’s a reading, and some sense of where it is in the story if it’s a film.

Please TYPE them up (I won’t accept handwritten ones for this—sorry.) Include both the quote or scene description and at least a sentence or two of why you think this is significant. Note: You don’t have to link the work you’re discussing here to another one we read. I just did that because it’s how I think—a tendency to look for comparisons and connections.

**Sample from *Ridicule*** (a quote)*:*

There’s a scene fairly early on when Ponceludon, newly arrived at the French Court, is trying to interest the wealthy and influential courtiers in the illness and general hardships faced by the peasants on his swampy, mosquito-infested family estate. One of the nobles complains that the subject is “boring,” unsuitable for such sparkling company. Ponceludon, looking both severe and sardonic, reminds him, **“Peasants feed aristocrats as well as mosquitoes.”**

This seems significant for two reasons. One, Ponceludon manages to turn a serious message about social justice into a witty quip that reverses the courtiers’ usual understanding of who is dependent on whom, and which class is actually the parasites. This also serves as a subtle foreshadowing of the revolution to come, when the hard-bitten peasants finally rise up against what Shaw later calls “members of the Idle Rich Class.”

**Sample from *Ridicule*** (a key scene):

There’s a scene about midway through the film when young Mathilde and her aged fiancé are settling the legal details of their **prenuptial agreement**. The lawyer makes it clear that her husband will claim his right to sex with her on a specified frequency, and she grimaces slightly but agrees. Then she asks about the laboratory her husband had agreed to build her, and the lawyer says it’s in the contract too, but he doesn’t read that part aloud. She is expected to just trust him on that.

This seems significant because it emphasizes how determined Mathilde is to secure the conditions that will allow her to pursue the research she is really passionate about, even if she has to pay with her body—pretty frankly revealing the marriage to be a form of prostitution. She likes to think of herself as coldly pragmatic, a scientist rather than a sentimentalist, and her father (who is part of this bargain) likes to see himself as progressive for allowing this, but everyone in the room—except the prospective husband--looks at least a little ashamed to be participating. The husband looks like the sort of person who is used to reducing everything to a dollars-and-cents value. This reinforces the film’s sardonic undercurrents, which fight with the more idealistic stance represented by Ponceludon. When Mathilde changes her mind and breaks free of the degrading “marriage” contract, she is switching sides, an action she later completes when she elopes with Ponceludon. This resembles the choice Gita makes in Swades, though she was never really in danger of making a bad match.