

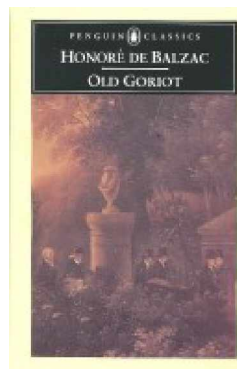
Hofstra University ALUMNI BOOK CLUB

Book Discussion

Sunday, October 19, 2008 ~ 10 a.m.
Libby & Joseph G. Shapiro Alumni House

This month's selection is

Old Goriot by Honoré de Balzac



Old Goriot is a short novel of 1835 written by the prolific Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850); Balzac wanted to portray in his long series "The Human Comedy" French life in all of its many manifestations. In this early work we travel with him to Madame Vacquin's Boarding House, meeting there several fascinating characters. Among them is Vautrin who is an escaped convict gifted with the ability to talk of philosophical matters. Vautrin gives the young law student Eugene de Rastignac advice on how to survive in the jungle of Paris. Eugene is fresh from the country and about to conquer the City of Lights. He becomes romantically entwined with several women. Among these ladies are two thankless daughters of Old Goriot a moribund boarder forced to live in the attic of the boardinghouse. His lonely death and the callous disregard of his feckless, materialistic daughters will bring a tear to all but the most cynical of readers. Rastignac will appear in several others of the novelist's books in the Human Comedy series. His work would later influence such diverse authors as Flaubert, Henry James, Emila Zola and Marcel Proust. This novel is often taught in college courses, providing an excellent introduction to the world of Balzac.

Source: Amazon.com/review

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please contact the Alumni Relations Office at (516) 463-6636.**