

Department of English & Writing Studies
Forever Young: Literature for Adolescents
English 2091F (001)
Fall 2018

Instructor: Dr. Miranda Green-Barteet
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Lawson Hall 3248 or UC 4228

Course Location: Physics & Astronomy Bldg 150

Course Date/Time: Monday 10:30-11:30 am,
Wednesday 10:30-12:30 pm

Western University is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak and Attawandaron peoples, who have longstanding relationships to the land and region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London.

Course Description

In *Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature*, Roberta Seelinger Trites argues that "Young Adult novels are about power" (#). Trites explains that in YA novels "protagonists must learn about the social forces around them. They learn to negotiate the levels of power within which the myriad of social institutions they must function including family; the church; school; the government; social constructions of sexuality, gender race, and class; and social mores surrounding death" (3). As Trites explains, YA novels can help adolescents learn how to negotiate their place in the world. Her assessment, along of that with many scholars studying Children's and YA literature, stands in stark contrast to the popular perception of YA lit as vapid, insignificant, and distinctly not literary. Drawing on a range of historical periods and genres, this course takes for granted that YA literature is aesthetically and critically complex, as we focus on the political and social history of young adults and their lived experiences. We will also consider the place of young adult literature within larger scholarly trends and conversations.

Throughout the semester, we will discuss YA books as literary and aesthetic texts, considering them through a range of critical frameworks. We will consider how young adult and adult readers respond to the texts differently as well as how the representation of adolescence has changed over time. We will conclude the semester with a firm understanding of how to read texts for adolescents. We will consider a variety of topics, including:

- How does YA lit represent the lives of adolescents?
- What socio-cultural, philosophical, and/or artistic purpose does YA lit serve, particularly when such books are written for an implied audience of young people?
- What particular kinds of definitions and/or portrayals of femininity, masculinity, and adolescence does YA lit tend to offer?
- In what ways does YA lit consider, represent, or challenge power structures experienced by actual adolescents?
- Why does the popular perception of YA lit differ so from the perceptions critics of YA lit?

Objectives:

Throughout the semester, in addition to gaining and sharing knowledge through the assigned readings, successful students will have:

- A basic knowledge of the development of young adult literature;
- An understanding of literary genres and periods, specifically of contemporary Young Adult literature;
- A sense of the way literature influences and is influenced by social constructions of age;
- A basic understanding of how to apply theory to literature;
- The developing ability to address the changing forms and expectations of literature across time
- Research, assess, and synthesize information;
- And locate, evaluate, and critique sources using appropriate disciplinary and/or interdisciplinary research skills and tools.

Course Materials

In addition to the following novels, we will also be reading secondary source material, which I will post to OWL. You may purchase the editions I will be using from the UWO bookstore, or you may use whatever edition you prefer, including an electronic version. You will need to bring a version of the text to class as we will often discuss specific passages.

Forever (1975), Judy Blume

The Marrow Thieves (2018), Cherie Dimaline

The Outsiders (1967), S.E. Hinton

Punch Like a Girl (2015), Karen Krossing

Aristotle and Dante Discover the Secrets of the Universe (2012), Benjamin Alire Saenz

This One Summer (2014), Mariko Tamaki and Jillian Tamaki

The Hate U Give (2017), Angie Thomas

The Book Thief (2005), Markus Zusak

Methods of Evaluation

The grade for the course will be arrived at as follows:

Homework and Participation	10%
Class Blog	15%
Short Paper	15%
I-Search Essay	10%
Research Essay	25%
Final Exam	25%

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/Student%20Information.html>.

Additional Information

Participation: In my opinion, the most successful college classrooms have students and instructors equally engaged in a discussion about the readings. I expect that all students will complete assigned course readings and will be prepared to discuss those readings on the appropriate day. I also expect that students will bring copies of course readings to class (hard copy is preferred, but electronic copies are acceptable). Class discussion will comprise a large part of our course, and while I recognize that not all students are comfortable speaking in class, I do expect that all students will be engaged and actively listening. I reserve the right to give reading quizzes should I find that students are not completing readings.

Class Blog: As part of our work together, we will maintain a collaborative course blog called Forever Young. It will be an online forum designed to expand on our readings and discussions. YA lit is a rich and diverse genre. It is impossible for us to address its entirety during a single semester. The blog is a means for you to introduce texts, topics, and critical approaches that may not be included on our syllabus, connecting them to the goals of the course. As blogs are often collaborative, you will have a writing partner; as a pair, your job will be to co-author one 800-1,000-word blog post during the semester. Two to three groups will write a blog post each week (by the end of the term, we will have authored 17+ blog posts). As an individual, your job will be to comment a minimum of 8 times on weekly posts throughout the term; it is your responsibility to keep track of your posts and to ensure you've completed the appropriate number by the end of term. It is my hope that, through the blog, we will engage in a sustained, critical dialogue YA texts. Students will receive a detailed prompt and due dates during the second week of class.

Short Essay: Students will complete a short essay (3 pages) during the term. Prompts will be discussed well in advance of due dates.

Research Assignment: Students will complete a research-based assignment during the term. Prompts will be discussed well in advance of due dates.

*In addition to your co-authored blog post, you will each write a blog post as part of your research assignment.

Paper: Students will write a 6-page research based paper during the term. Prompts will be discussed well in advance of the due date.

Final Exam: Students will complete a Final Exam during the exam period.

Course Policies

Submitting Assignments: All assignments are due in-class on the date stated on the class schedule. You are expected to turn in both a hard copy of the assignment as well as to submit an electronic version to Turnitin.com (see below).

Late assignments will not be accepted under any circumstances. It is your responsibility to turn assignments in on time. Should you need an extension for any reason, please contact me by email at least 48 hours prior to the day an assignment is due to discuss an extension. Extensions may be granted for the writing assignments, but not for the Blog Posts. If you have a medical or personal emergency, notify me as soon as possible to request an extension (see above). In-class assignments cannot be made up unless the absence is excused.

Attendance: The very nature of this course requires that you attend regularly to do well. You are, therefore, expected to attend all scheduled class meetings. Should you have more than five unexcused absences, you may receive up to a 5% deduction off of your final grade.

See also: "**Academic Accommodation Policy**" below.

Electronic Devices: Computers, e-readers, and tablets may be used for the purposes of taking notes and reading course texts so long as usage does not bother other students in class. I expect that electronic devices will be used ONLY for class purposes. At various points in the semester, depending on the nature of the day's discussion and assignments, I may ask you to put away electronic devices. Please refrain from using cell phones in class for any purpose other than reading course texts.

Owl/Sakai: The use of Owl/Sakai is necessary for successful completion of this course. This includes accessing readings as stipulated in the course outline, downloading instructions and guidelines for assignments, and submitting assignments to Turnitin.com. All course information, including assignments, will be posted on the course website.

Communicating with Instructor: Email is the best way to communicate with me. It may take up to 24 hours for me to respond to you during the week and 48 hours on the weekend.

Please include your course number in the subject line of the email. Also, read "How To Email Your Professor Guide Sheet."

Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, and Aegrotat Standing: All requests for Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, or Aegrotat Standing must be made by the student, with supporting documentation, to the Dean of Arts and Humanities Academic Counselling Office. The Dean's office reserves the right not to sign INC and SPC grades without the proper paperwork. Special examinations must be written at the University or an Affiliated College no later than 30 days after the end of the examination period involved.

Tentative Timetable

Blog Posts: Due at various times throughout the term

Short Essay: October 1, 2018

I-Search Essay: October 22, 2018

Research Essay: November 21, 2010

Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western:
<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.