English 108H: Isolation & Alienation
Fall 2005
Tues. & Thurs. 10:00AM – 11:20AM
AL 105

Instructor: Diana Lobb
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Office Hours: Tues. 1-2:30pm, Wed. 10 – 11:30am, or by appointment

Course Description:

Catalogue: “Isolation and Alienation” studies a variety of works centring on the theme of individuals in crisis, the stress being on people at variance with their inner selves, other persons, or their world. The course will discuss the process in which wisdom and maturity are gained as the ultimate products of suffering.

Section: In this course we will look at how ideas of “Isolation and Alienation” are created by and reflected in creative texts. The works we will be reading look at both who is depicted as isolated/alienated from the social mainstream and how the process of isolation/alienation occurs. Looking at literary works written in England, the United States and Canada and drawn from the eighteenth century to the present, our examination of “Isolation and Alienation” will investigate how ideas of isolation and alienation are important to the definition of what is “normal” in a particular society and how the threat of isolation and alienation works to enforce that “normal” ideal. Through close reading of poetry, short stories, novels and film adaptations, we will look at ideas of “isolation” and “alienation” in creative works and how they intersect with ideas of gender, sexuality, race and power to give us insight into different authors’ perceptions of the structures and norms of past and present society.

Texts:

Required: Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*
George Orwell, *1984*
Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels*
Zadie Smith, *White Teeth*
Rohinton Mistry, *Tales From Firoszha Baag*
English 108H Course Reader:
   Lady Mary Chudleigh, “To The Ladies”
   Bronwen Wallace, “The Woman In This Poem”
   Anne Sexton, “Red Riding Hood”
   D. H. Lawrence, “How Beastly The Bourgeois Is”
   e. e. cummings, “anyone lived in a pretty how town”
   A. M. Klein, “Portrait Of The Poet As Landscape”
   W. E. B. Dubois, “A Mild Suggestion”

Recommended: *The Little Brown Compact Handbook*
Schedule:

We will follow this schedule as closely as possible; however, topics may occasionally carry over into the next time slot. Please have all readings done for each class so you will be able to participate in class discussion.

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<th>Date:</th>
<th>Readings:</th>
<th>Important Notes:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 13th</td>
<td>Orientation/Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 27th &amp; 29th, and Oct. 4th</td>
<td>Shelley, <em>Frankenstein</em></td>
<td>Short Essay Due Sept 29th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 6th</td>
<td>Essay Writing Workshop I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 11th, 13th &amp; 18th</td>
<td>Orwell, <em>1984</em></td>
<td>Major essay topics distributed Oct 13th</td>
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<td>Oct. 20th</td>
<td>No readings</td>
<td>Mid-Term Test</td>
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<td>Oct. 25th</td>
<td>Film: <em>George Orwell’s 1984</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 27th &amp; Nov. 1st &amp; 3rd</td>
<td>Swift, <em>Gulliver’s Travels</em></td>
<td>Early draft of major essay must be ready for workshop discussion and distributed to group members by Nov. 8th</td>
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<td>Nov. 8th</td>
<td>Dubois, “A Mild Suggestion”</td>
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<td>Nov. 10th</td>
<td>Essay Writing Workshop II</td>
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<td>Nov. 15th, 17th &amp; 22nd</td>
<td>Smith, <em>White Teeth</em></td>
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Assignments & Evaluation:

15% Short Essay – due Sept. 29th
3-4 pages
Provide a close reading of one of the poems from the course reader in which you analyze how the author constructs a particular understanding of what is considered to be “normal” within the social order described by the poem and the poetic speaker’s attitude toward that normal ideal.

Your essay must have:
- a clear thesis statement
- present your analysis in an organized manner
- provide sufficient evidence from the poem to support your observations

Your essay should demonstrate a close engagement with the text that leads to a coherent assessment of how the “normal” ideal operates in the poem you have chosen to analyze. In your
essay you should follow MLA conventions, which will be discussed in class before the essay is due. Secondary research is not required.

20% Mid-Term Test – Oct. 20th during regularly scheduled class meeting

10% Essay Workshop II participation – Nov. 10th
Students will be assigned workshop groups prior to the Nov. 10th class and will distribute draft copies of their major essay to the members of their assigned group and to me no later than Nov. 8th. In this case, and only in this case, e-mail distribution of drafts to group members and to me will be permitted. In preparation for the workshop, each student will read and make written comments on the drafts that s/he has received which will be brought to the workshop for group discussion. Your participation grade will be based on the workshop process – distributing the rough draft in a timely manner, having a substantial and complete draft to work with, carefully responding to other students’ drafts, and participating in the workshop process.

20% Major Essay – due Dec. 1st
8 – 10 pages
Essay topics will be distributed in class Oct. 13th.

5% Attendance and Participation
You are expected to be in class and on time. The grade is equally weighted between attendance and participation. You should be prepared for class fully and thoughtfully, and participate in an active and engaged way during class. Active participation in this class requires participation in on-going classroom discussion and group work and being respectful of others’ contributions to the ongoing intellectual inquiry taking place during the class. Remember, it is difficult to participate if you do not regularly attend class.

30% Final Exam – scheduled by Registrar’s Office

Class Policies:

Email: Email is an efficient method to contact me to arrange for appointments or to ask simple questions (i.e. questions that require a yes or no answer). Most questions arising from this class, however, will require face-to-face discussion and should be dealt with in class or during my office hours. If you are unable to attend my scheduled office hours please contact me to arrange an alternate meeting time. Essays and assignments submitted by email, or as email attachments, will not be accepted.

Late Essays: Essays are due in hard copy at the beginning of the class noted in the schedule. All late assignments will be penalized 3% per day, including weekends (i.e. Saturday and Sunday = 6%). Late papers must be signed and dated by one of the secretaries in the English department and submitted to the departmental mailbox (Hagey Hall 2nd floor). Please note that essays will not be accepted via e-mail or after the term’s last day of class.

Extensions: Except in extraordinary circumstances, all extensions must be requested by the Friday of the week prior to the essay’s due date. I reserve the right to request appropriate documentation to support the request for extension (e.g. doctor’s note).
Academic Offences: Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offences that carry grave consequences: at the very least an automatic zero on the assignment/exam. However, course failure and serious consequences to your further academic progress may also result from these offences.

Plagiarism is the presentation of another person’s work as your own, whether done intentionally or not. This includes copying or downloading part or all of published essays; copying or downloading part or all of other students’ essays; and purchasing essays on-line. Plagiarism can also result from the misuse of secondary sources: failure to indicate material from other sources by using quotation marks; failure to provide proper in-text documentation of sources (e.g. author and page reference); and failure to provide a works cited page. Be sure to review your papers carefully to ensure that you have used sources fairly and documented those sources appropriately. We will discuss proper use of sources in class. However, if you have additional questions when writing your essays, please consult with me during office hours or via e-mail. **Do not let carelessness lead to a serious academic offence.**

I reserve the right to submit your essays to a plagiarism web site (e.g. Turnitin.com). For more information about penalties for academic offences, please refer to University Policy #71 in the University Calendar on the web at [http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infoucal/UW/policy_71.html](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infoucal/UW/policy_71.html).

“Note on avoidance of academic offences: All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offence, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their academic options. When the commission of an offence is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline) which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (p. 1: 11). If you need help in learning how to avoid offences such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Association Dean.”