English 108M: Youth and Adolescence
Spring 2005
Mon. & Wed. 1:30 - 2:50pm
Douglas Wright Engineering Building Rm. 1502

Instructor: Diana Lobb
PAS Rm. 2224; x 2636
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Office Hours: Tues. 1-2:30pm, Wed. 10 – 11:30am, or by appointment

Course Description:

Catalogue: “Youth and Adolescence” studies the portrayal of young protagonists as they respond to the mores of adult society; their own physical, mental, and psychological developments; and the expectations placed upon them by themselves and by others.

Section: In this course we will look at how ideas of “Youth and Adolescence” in a particular place and time are created by and reflected in literary works. The works we will be reading engage with the moment and figure of youth from the perspective of adult writers. How these writers reflect on the figure of “youth” in their works can tell us something about how “youth” operates as a social role in a particular cultural moment. If “youth” is seen as defining a time of absolute freedom from rules and social obligations, how does this allow the adult writer to comment on the expectations placed upon him/her by his society? If “youth” is seen as a state of absolute innocence and freedom from corruption, does this allow the author to critique the adult society in which s/he operates? If “youth” are seen as objects that need to be disciplined and controlled, what can we determine the writer is suggesting about what it means to be a “person” in his or her moment in time? We will be looking at literary works written in England, the United States and Canada and drawn from the eighteenth century to the present. Through close readings of poetry, short stories, novels and film adaptations we will examine how the role of “youth” intersects with ideas of gender, sexuality, race, and power to give us insights into different authors’ perceptions of the structures of society, both past and present.

Texts:

Required: William Wordsworth “Ode: Intimations of Immortality”
Louis MacNeice “Prayer Before Birth”
William Blake Songs of Innocence and of Experience
Henry James Turn of the Screw
Harper Lee To Kill a Mockingbird
Shyam Selvadurai Funny Boy
Lee Maracle Ravensong
Marilyn Dumont *A Really Good Brown Girl*
Jonathan Swift "A Modest Proposal"
Karen Levine *Hana’s Suitcase*

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 that 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>May 2nd</td>
<td>Orientation/Introduction</td>
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<td>May 4th</td>
<td>Wordsworth, “Ode” and MacNeice, “Prayer Before Birth”</td>
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<td>May 9th &amp; May 11th</td>
<td>Blake, <em>Songs of Innocence and of Experience</em></td>
<td>Essay writing tips discussed May 9th</td>
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<td>May 16th &amp; May 18th</td>
<td>James, <em>Turn of the Screw</em></td>
<td>Short Essay Due May 16th</td>
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<td><em>Victoria Day – No Class</em></td>
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<td>May 25th</td>
<td>Essay Writing Workshop I</td>
<td>Major essay topics distributed</td>
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<td>May 30th</td>
<td>James, <em>Turn of the Screw</em></td>
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<td>June 1st &amp; 6th</td>
<td>Lee, <em>To Kill a Mockingbird</em></td>
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<td>June 8th</td>
<td>No readings</td>
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<td>June 13th &amp; 15th</td>
<td>Film adaptation of Harper Lee’s <em>To Kill a Mockingbird</em></td>
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<td>June 20th &amp; 22nd &amp; 27th</td>
<td>Selvadurai, <em>Funny Boy</em></td>
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<td>June 29th</td>
<td>Maracle, <em>Ravensong</em></td>
<td>Early draft of major essay must be distributed to all members of your assigned group</td>
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<td>July 4th</td>
<td>Essay Writing Workshop II</td>
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<td>July 6th &amp; 11th</td>
<td>Maracle, <em>Ravensong</em></td>
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<td>July 13th &amp; 18th</td>
<td>Dumont, <em>A Really Good Brown Girl</em></td>
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<td>July 20th</td>
<td>Swift, “A Modest Proposal”</td>
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Assignments & Evaluation:

15% Short Essay – due May 16th

3-4 pages

Provide a close reading of Wordsworth’s “Ode: Intimations of Immortality” or
MacNeice’s “Prayer Before Birth” or two of Blake’s poems from the *Songs of Innocence*
and of Experience in which you analyze how the author constructs a particular way of understanding the nature of youth/adolescence and the role that youth/adolescence fulfills within the social order described by the poem. Your essay must have a clear thesis statement, present your analysis in an organized manner and provide sufficient evidence from the poem(s) to support your observations. Your essay should demonstrate a close engagement with the text that leads to a coherent assessment of how the figure of youth/adolescence operates in the poem(s) 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 – June 8th during regularly scheduled class meeting

5%   Essay Workshop II – July 4th
     Students will be assigned workshop groups prior to the July 4th class. You will be required to distribute draft copies of your major essay to the members of your assigned group and to me no later than June 29th. 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 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 July 27th
        4-5 pages

     Essay topics will be distributed in class May 25th. Edited copies of the drafts used in Essay Workshop II must be submitted with your final paper.

10%  Attendance and participation in class discussions
     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. You may also consult: [http://watarts.uwaterloo.ca/~sager/plagiarism.html](http://watarts.uwaterloo.ca/~sager/plagiarism.html). This document, written by Sheila Ager, Associate Dean, Undergraduate studies, outlines examples of plagiarism. **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 and 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.”