English 108M: Youth and Adolescence
Spring 2006
Mon. & Wed. 1:30 - 2:50 pm
Hagey Hall Rm. 150

Instructor: Diana Lobb
PAS Rm. 2224; x 2636
df2lobb@uwaterloo.ca
Office Hours: Tues. 1-2:30 pm, Wed. 10 – 11:30 am, 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 the idea of "Youth and Adolescence" in a particular moment in place and time is 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. By close reading poetry, short stories, novels and documentary adaptations we will examine how the role of "youth" intersects with ideas of gender, sexuality, race, and power to give us insights into different author’s perceptions of the structures of society, both past and present.

Texts:

William Blake Songs of Innocence and Experience
Mary Shelly Frankenstein
Harper Lee To Kill a Mockingbird
Zadie Smith *White Teeth*
Marilyn Dumont *A Really Good Brown Girl*
Jonathan Swift *A Modest Proposal*
(http://www.library.utoronto.ca/utel/nonfiction_u/swiftj_modest/modest_all.html)
Karen Levine *Hana’s Suitcase*

**Recommended:**  *The Little Brown Compact Handbook*

**Schedule:**

We will follow this schedule as closely as possible; however, topic 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>Readings:</th>
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<td>Orientation/Introduction</td>
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<td>May 3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Wordsworth, “Ode” and MacNeice, “Prayer Before Birth”</td>
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<td>May 8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; May 10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Blake, <em>Songs of Innocence and Experience</em></td>
<td>Essay writing tips discussed May 8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>May 15&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; May 17&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td><strong>Short Essay Due May 15&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</strong></td>
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<td>May 24&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Essay Writing Workshop I</td>
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<td>May 29&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>May 31&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; June 5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Lee, <em>To Kill a Mockingbird</em></td>
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<td>June 7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>No readings</td>
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<td>June 12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; 14&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Film: Tredwell-Owen &amp; Kurtzman, <em>The Island</em></td>
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<td>June 19&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Model Parents and Model Children: <em>Frankenstein, To Kill a Mockingbird &amp; The Island</em></td>
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<td>June 21&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;, 26&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; 28&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Smith, <em>White Teeth</em></td>
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<td>July 3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Essay Writing Workshop II</td>
<td>Early draft of major essay <strong>must</strong> be ready for workshop discussion</td>
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<td>July 5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;, 10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; 12&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>July 17&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>July 19&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; &amp; 24&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>July 26&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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Assignments & Evaluation:
15% Short Essay – due May 15th
   3-4 pages
   Provide a close reading of Wordsworth’s “Ode” or MacNeice’s “Prayer” or two of
   Blake’s poems from the Songs that analyzes how the author constructs a particular way of
   understanding the nature of youth/adolescence and role that youth/adolescence is
   depicted as fulfilling 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/childhood operates in the poem(s) you have chosen to analyze. The
   essay is expected to follow MLA conventions. Secondary research is not required.

20% Mid-Term Test – June 7th during regularly scheduled class meeting

10% Essay Workshop II participation – July 3rd
   Students will be assigned workshop groups prior to the July 4th class and will be expected
   to distribute draft copies of their major essay to the members of their 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 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 July 26th
   8-10 pages
   Essay topics will be distributed in class May 24th.

5% Attendance and Participation

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 website (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/insoucal/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.”