English 108M – Youth & Adolescence
Winter Term 2004
T/Th – 10:00 - 11:20

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor: Catherine Scott
Office: PAS 1059
Office Hours- Tuesday 11:30-1:30 or by appointment
E-Mail: catherinescott@sympatico.ca

Calendar Description:

English 108M studies the portrayal of young protagonists as they respond to the mores of adult society; their own physical, mental, and psychological development; and the expectations placed upon them by themselves and by others.

Course Description:

English 108M is a single semester course focusing on youth and adolescence in literature. During the course, we will explore youth and adolescence as constructed categories that are defined differently by various cultures and historical time periods. As we will see, the dividing lines between adolescence and adulthood have often been, and continue to be, blurred because the characteristics that distinguish the young and the adult are continually changing.

We will explore how each writer manifests different stages of adolescence. We will concentrate on the following questions throughout the course: What is the distinction between childhood and adulthood? How is youth represented in different texts? In what ways has youth been idealised and/or demonised in literature? How do the writers attain particular thematic ends in their texts?

By the end of the course, we will hopefully have a better understanding of these works, their authors, and their impact within the current literary and social context.

Required Texts:
Susan Cisneros. The House on Mango Street
Wayne Johnston. The Divine Ryans
Alice Munro. Lives of Girls and Women
Rodman Philbrick. The Mighty
Amy Tan. The Joy Luck Club
CourseWare Book
Also Recommended:
(Royalties from the sale of this book go towards the English Department’s scholarship fund)

*You may alternatively select a writing guide of your choice.

(A) Course Requirements

**Essay 1**: 1000 words (4-5 pages) Due February 12 - 25%
**Essay 2**: 2000 words (8-9 pages) Due March 25 - 35%
**Journal Assignment** – 10%
**Final Exam** – 30%

In addition to required reading of each text, you will be expected to keep a reading journal throughout the term, with the aim of improving your close reading skills.

This course will be heavily discussion based with lectures serving as a guide; thus, you must be prepared before you come to class to discuss the text at hand.

(B) Participation

Class participation is an essential component in my courses. I will take into account attendance, evidence of preparedness, as well as the quality versus the quantity of your remarks. While you will not receive a specific grade for attendance, students who participate generally receive higher grades in their courses. Group work will allow for participation from those who are less likely to speak to the class as a whole.

(C) Completion of Assignments:

You are required to complete all of the assignments and submit them on the above due date. Unexcused late assignments will be penalized by a 2% deduction daily, weekends and holidays included. For example, an assignment that receives an original grade of 80% will instead receive a mark of 78% if submitted one day late. If there are exceptional circumstances which prevent you from handing in an assignment on time, please see me at least 2 days before the assignment is due to make alternative arrangements.

If you must submit a paper late, please submit it to the drop box in the English department – Hagey Hall, 2nd Floor, but you must first have one of the secretaries in the English department sign and date it (therefore, work must be submitted during business hours). Also, please note that I will not accept essays after the term’s last day of classes.

(D) Marking system - See Handout
(E) Presentation of Papers

Please consult the MLA Handbook for proper documentation style and other requirements. Papers should be stapled or paper-clipped and your name should appear in the top-right corner of each page. Papers are required to be typed and double-spaced with one-inch margins on the top, bottom and both sides of the sheet.

Journal Assignments should be handed in at the beginning of the class. Late journal assignments will not be accepted.

(F) Plagiarism

Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence. Essentially, plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student’s own work done expressly for that particular course, when, in fact, it is not. Penalties for plagiarism range from a failing grade on the assignment to expulsion from the University of Waterloo. For more detailed information regarding the University’s policy on plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct, students are referred to the University of Waterloo Calendar.

Plagiarism includes

(a) ‘Forgetting’ to cite a source. Cite your sources!!
(b) Copying someone else’s work and passing it off as your own
(c) Having someone else write your essay for you.
(d) Paraphrasing ideas and/or sections of an author’s work.
(e) Taking ideas/phrases off the Internet – this IS plagiarism! I surf the net like a demon – so don’t try this! Bad things will happen to you.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class One: January 6</th>
<th>Opening Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Two: January 8</td>
<td><em>Hansel and Gretel</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Three: January 13</td>
<td><em>The Goblin Market</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Four: January 15</td>
<td><em>Lives of Girls and Women</em></td>
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<td>Class Five: January 20</td>
<td><em>Lives of Girls and Women</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Six: January 22</td>
<td><em>Lives of Girls and Women</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Seven: January 27</td>
<td><em>Freak the Mighty</em></td>
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<td>Class Eight: January 29</td>
<td><em>Freak the Mighty</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Nine: February 3</td>
<td><em>Freak The Mighty</em></td>
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<td>Class Ten: February 5</td>
<td><em>Writing Workshop</em></td>
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<td>Class Eleven: February 10</td>
<td>Teen Sniper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Twelve: February 12</td>
<td>Satan: Hijacker of a Planet</td>
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<td><strong>READING WEEK</strong></td>
<td>NO CLASSES</td>
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<td>Class Thirteen: February 24</td>
<td><em>The House on Mango Street</em></td>
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<td>Class Fourteen: Feb. 26</td>
<td><em>The House on Mango Street</em></td>
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<td>Class Fifteen: March 2</td>
<td><em>The Divine Ryans</em></td>
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<td>Class Sixteen: March 4</td>
<td><em>The Divine Ryans</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Seventeen: March 9</td>
<td><em>The Divine Ryans</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Eighteen: March 11</td>
<td>Writing Workshop 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Nineteen: March 16</td>
<td><em>The Joy Luck Club</em></td>
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<td>Class Twenty: March 18</td>
<td><em>The Joy Luck Club</em></td>
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<td>Class Twenty-One: Mar 23</td>
<td><em>The Joy Luck Club</em></td>
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<td>Class Twenty-Two: Mar 25</td>
<td><em>The Joy Luck Club</em></td>
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<td>Class Twenty-Three: Mar 30</td>
<td><em>Buffy the Vampire Slayer</em></td>
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<td>Final Class: April 1st</td>
<td>Course Wrap-up</td>
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<td>Journal 4 Due</td>
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<td>Journal 5 Due</td>
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<td>Essay Two Due (35%)</td>
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Reading Journal Assignment

**Purpose:** The journals are designed to help you respond to class readings in a less formal environment. Feel free to be creative, but keep in mind you are to respond to the question.

- For each of the novels we study in class, you will provide a journal entry of 1-2 pages (double-spaced). You will be writing a total of 5 entries.

- The journal helps me to learn more about how the class is responding to the literature we are studying, as well as where your individual interests are centered.

- While forming a basis for class discussion and participation, the journals also encourage you to keep up with the readings each week.

- The journals will also help you develop your close reading skills. You will begin to learn more about reading for theme, tone, character development and symbolism, rather than simply focusing on plot.

**Requirements:**

- Each entry should be typed (unless you have exceptionally neat handwriting). Put your name and the journal number at the top of the assignment. Keep a copy of your journal entries for your own records.

- Journal assignments must be handed in at the beginning of every class. Late assignments will **not** be accepted.

**Marking Criteria**

The journals are marked on completion, thoughtfulness and quality of insight. You will be evaluated on how fully you answered the assigned question, as well as how you bring your own arguments to bear on the text at hand. If you have made a reasonable attempt to respond to the journal question, you will be given credit for your entry.

Upon completion, you will receive a checkmark on the assignment. If the assignment is truly exceptional, you will receive a check plus. If it is sub-par, then you will receive a check-minus.

Numerous Check + or Check – will result in the grade being raised or lowered accordingly (out of 10).
Journal Questions

Journal One – The Lives of Girls and Women

(a) What, if anything, marks this novel as a Canadian story?
(b) Discuss one major change Del undergoes throughout the novel.

Journal Two - Freak the Mighty

(a) Discuss the importance of friendship in the formation of identity.
(b) How do Kevin and Max enact the chivalric code? And why?

Journal Three – House on Mango Street

(a) What significance does Esperanza’s house on Mango Street hold for her?
(b) Choose one of the secondary characters in the novel discuss the characterization.

Journal Four – The Divine Ryans

(a) How does Johnston create an atmosphere of repression in the Ryan household?
(b) Who changes most dramatically over the course of the novel? Argue your case.

Journal Five – The Joy Luck Club

(a) Choose one major symbol in the novel and discuss its importance to the theme.
(b) How does culture affect one character’s sense of self in this novel?