

English 375.1: Literature for Adolescents

Fall 2009, Professor: Jan Susina

Class Meets: Tuesday & Thursday 9:35 a.m.—10:50 a.m.

Meeting Place: STV 348

Office: Stevenson 402, Office Phone: (309) 438-3739

Office Email: <jcsusina@ilstu.edu>

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 12:30—1:30 p.m.

Tentative Syllabus

Aug. 18 Introduction and Review of the Course

Aug. 20 The Historical Development of the Concept of Adolescence &
Growth of Adolescent Literature
“Youth and Adolescence” (handout) & Shannon Hale’s “A Story for Everyone”
(handout)

Aug. 25 G. Stanley Hall and the Discovery of the American Teenage.
Gary Ross’s *Pleasantville* (film)
Kenny Ortega’s *High School Musical* (film)

Aug. 27 J.D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye*

Sept. 1 J.D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye*
Nicholas Ray’s *Rebel Without a Cause* (film)
****Deadline to Sign Up for Teen Film Paper****

Sept. 3 F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*

Sept. 8 F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*

Sept. 10 Henry David Thoreau’s *Walden*

Sept. 15 Henry David Thoreau’s *Walden*

Sept. 17 Teens and Politics: Henry David Thoreau’s “Civil Disobedience”
Teen Film Paper Due*

Sept. 22 Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Sept. 24 Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Sept. 29 Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*
Robert Mulligan’s *To Kill a Mockingbird* (film)

Oct. 1 Rachel Cohen & David Levithan’s *Nick and Nora’s Infinite Playlist*

- Oct. 6 Rachel Cohen & David Levithan's *Nick and Nora's Infinite Playlist*
Pete Sollett's *Nick and Nora's Infinite Playlist* (film)
- Oct. 8 "Smells Like Teen Spirit": Teens & Music: "Art of the Mix" website
Mixed Tape/CD due
- Oct. 13 **Midterm Exam**
- Oct. 15 Sonya Sones's *What My Mother Doesn't Know*
- Oct. 20 William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer's Night Dream*
****Proposal for Research Paper Due****
- Oct. 22 William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer's Night Dream*
- Oct. 27 Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight*
Caitlin Flanagan "What Girls Want: Vampires" (handout)
- Oct. 29 Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight*
- Nov. 3 Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight*
Catherine Hardwicke's *Twilight* (film)
- Nov. 5 Research Day: no class
- Nov. 10 Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*
- Nov. 12 Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*
- Nov. 17 Daniel Clowes's *Ghost World*
Malcolm Gladwell's "The Cool Hunt" (handout)
- Nov. 19 Daniel Clowes's *Ghost World*
Terry Zwigoff's *Ghost World* (film)
****Critical Paper Due****
- Nov. 24: no class -- Thanksgiving Break
Nov. 26: no class -- Thanksgiving Break
- Dec. 1 Gene Luen Yang's *American Born Chinese*
- Dec. 3 Francesca Lia Block's *Weetzie Bat*
Lauren Greenfield's *Fast Forward: Growing Up in the Shadow of Hollywood* (handout)

Dec. 9 (Wednesday) **Final Exam** 10:00 a.m.--noon.

Goals of Course:

This course will emphasize reading and analysis of various forms of literature intended for young adults within the broader context of contemporary youth culture--film, drama, television, video, music, magazines and comics and graphic novels--and the methods that advertisers attempt to reach adolescent consumers and create a teen market. The course will examine some texts that adolescents are often required to read in school as well as some texts that teens may read outside of the classroom. The course will trace the growth of the genre and investigate thematic and stylistic changes and topics in young adult literature.

Required Texts:

J.D. Salinger. *The Catcher in the Rye* (Little Brown)
 Henry David Thoreau. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*, ed. Michael Meyer (Penguin)
 Harper Lee. *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Warner Books)
 Mark Haddon. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in Night-Time* (Vintage)
 Rachel Cohn & David Levithan. *Nick & Norah's Infinite Playlist* (Knopf)
 Sonya Sones. *What My Mother Doesn't Know* (Simon Pulse)
 William Shakespeare. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, ed. Russ McDonald (Penguin)
 F. Scott Fitzgerald. *The Great Gatsby*, Notes & Preface by Matthew J. Bruccoli (Scribner)
 Stephenie Meyer. *Twilight* (Little Brown)
 Gene Luen Yang. *American Born Chinese* (First Second)
 Daniel Clowes. *Ghost World* (Fantagraphics Books)
 Francesca Lia Block. *Weetzie Bat* (HarperTrophy)

Recommended Text:

Joseph Gibaldi. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, Seventh Edition (MLA)

Writing Assignments:

Each undergraduate student will write two critical papers: an examination the presentation of teen characters in an adolescent film (3-5 pages, typed, double spaced paper) and a longer critical analysis (10-12 pages, typed doubled spaced) on an adolescent novel from the course. Graduate students will write on critical paper on an adolescent film (3-5 pages) and a longer critical paper (12-15 pages) on an adolescent novel from the course. Use the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* for appropriate citation in the critical papers. The critical paper on the adolescent novel need a minimum of eight secondary sources. Only half of the secondary sources can be electronic. The paper needs to be original work and written specifically for this course.

Plagiarism/Cheating:

Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses and may be punished by failure on a paper, exam, or project and in some cases may result in failure in the course and/or expulsion from the Illinois State University. Please read the Illinois State University policy in the *Undergraduate Catalog* or the *Graduate Catalog* under "Academic

Integrity.” Also review chapter 2 “Plagiarism and Academic Integrity” in the *MLA Handbook*. All work submitted for grading in this class needs to be your own original work created for this course.

Class Discussion:

Class attendance is important and is intended to be a valuable experience. All students are asked to read the material prior to class and come prepared to discuss the assignments in class. Students are expected to participate in class discussion and a portion of the final grade will be based on class participation. Class participation will be factored into the final grade. Graduate students will be asked to lead a portion of the class discussion on one of the assigned texts.

Class Assignments:

All students will be asked to complete a series of class assignments linked to the readings. A student missing a class in which an in-class quiz or in-class assignment is given or a class when a homework assignment is due will be unable to makeup the missed quiz or turn in late the assignment.

Class Attendance:

Class attendance is an important and valuable aspect of the course. If you aren't in class, you ought to have a good reason for your absence. Since you can't be two places at the same time, avoid scheduling other activities during class time. It is your responsibility to get the information you missed during your absence from other members of the class. Since class participation will be evaluated as part of your responsibilities in this course, missing more than three class sessions will lower your final grade one half a letter grade for each additional class sessions missed. Turn off cell phones and pagers during class. Three or more interruptions during the course will lower a student's final grade.

Exams:

There will be a midterm exam and a final exam given in this course. These will include a series short identifications and analysis as well as essay questions. The final exam will be offered according to the Fall 2009 Final Exam Schedule for Wednesday, Dec. 9, from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Please purchase and bring to class at least one blue book for each exam.

Grading:

Grades on assignment will be assigned according to the following standard. Grades for papers: A+=100, A=95, A-=92; B+=87, B=85, B-=82; C+=78, C=75, C-=72; D+=67, D=65, D-=62; F=50. The final grade in the course will be assigned according to the following scale: A= 90 and above, B= 80 and above, C=70 and above, D=60 and above, F=50 or lower. Illinois State University does not assign plus or minus in terms of final grades.

The course grades will be based on the following assignments, which will be weighted as follows:

Adolescent film paper: 10%

Critical paper: 20%

Midterm exam: 20%
 Final exam: 20%
 Class assignments: 20%
 Class participation: 10%

List of Films for Adolescent Film Paper:

Review the film on the IMDb (Internet Movie Database) website before selecting it for your paper

Nicholas Ray's "Rebel Without a Cause" (1955)
 Henry Levin's "Where the Boys Are" (1960)
 George Lucas's "American Graffiti" (1973)
 Eli Kazan's "Splendor in Grass" (1961)
 Richard Brook's "Blackboard Jungle" (1955)
 James Clavell's "To Sir, With Love" (1967)
 Brian De Palma's "Carrie" (1976)
 John Carpenter's "Halloween" (1978)
 Wes Craven's "Scream" (1996)
 Amy Heckerling's "Fast Time at Ridgemont High" (1982)
 Maria Maggenti's "The Incredibly True Adventures of Two Girls in Love" (1995)
 Mary Ellen Mark's "Streetwise" (1984)
 Michael Lehmann's "Heathers" (1988)
 Julie Harris's "Just Another Girl on the IRT" (1992)
 Steve James Frederick Marx & William Gates's "Hoop Dreams" (1994)
 Amy Heckerling's "Clueless" (1995)
 John Hughes's "Sixteen Candles" (1984)
 John Hughes's "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" (1986)
 Sara Sugarman's "Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen" (2004)
 Richard Linklater's "Dazed and Confused" (1993)
 Baz Luhrmann's "William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet" (1996)
 Gil Junger's "10 Things I Hate About You" (1999)
 Tim Burton's "Edward Scissorhands" (1990)
 Terry Zwigoff's "Ghost World" (2001)
 Brian Robbin's "Varsity Blues" (1999)
 Catherine Harwicke's "Thirteen" (2003)
 Todd Solonz's "Welcome to the Dollhouse" (1995)
 Chris Eyre's "Smoke Signals" (1998)
 Chris and Paul Weitz's "American Pie" (1999)
 Whit Stillman's "Metropolitan" (1990)
 Peter Weir's "Dead Poets' Society" (1989)
 Stacy Perlat's "Dogtown and Z-Boys" (2001)
 Gary Ross's "Pleasantville" (1998)
 Greg Mottola's "Superbad" (2007)
 Gurinder Chadha's "Bend It Like Beckham" (2002)
 Kenny Ortega's "High School Musical" (2006)
 Jason Reitman's "Juno" (2007)
 Naneite Burstein's "American Teen" (2008)

Catherine Hardwicke's "Twilight" (2008)

Tomas Alfredon's "Let the Right One In" (2008)

Andrew Fleming "Hamlet 2" (2008)

Peter Sollett's "Nick and Norh's Infinite Playlist" (2008)