

ENGL 5/4295
Studies in Young Adult Literature
Spring 2020
100% Online
3 Credit Hours

“Listening to the Past”: YA Historical Fiction

“Is it not possible—I often wonder—that things we have felt with great intensity have an experience independent of our minds; are in fact still in existence? And if so, will it not be possible, in time, that some device will be invented by which we can tap them? . . . Instead of remembering here a scene and there a sound, I shall fit a plug into the wall; and listen in to the past.”

--Virginia Woolf, “A Sketch of the Past”

THE PROFESSOR

Contact Information:

- ❖ Dr. Angela S. Insenga, department of English and Philosophy
- ❖ Office: 2248 TLC, department of English and Philosophy, Carrollton campus
- ❖ Office Phone: 678-839-4864
- ❖ Fax: 678-839-4849
- ❖ Email: please send **all** electronic communication via the Course Den email tool. To use this tool, click the “Communication” link in the white bar that remains at the top of the page while you are in our course. Then choose the “E-mail” option in the drop-down menu. Each email you send will be answered within 24 hours. ***Please do not use my UWG email for electronic communication***, unless Course Den is down. I also regularly communicate with you via the Announcements feed on our class’s homepage in Course Den, sharing links, instructional videos, written messages, thoughts about interpretations or your postings, and reminders. Check Announcements daily.
- ❖ Office Hours, Virtual and Face-to-Face:
 - Physical Office Hours on Carrollton’s Campus in TLC 2248: W, 12-2
 - Virtual Office Hours (in Course Den): M and R, 3-5
 - Email Dr. Insenga in Course Den to set up an individual virtual or face-to-face conference outside of office hours.

THE COURSE

Course Description:

The “Great Man” theory of history, put forth by Victorian-era philosopher and historian Thomas Carlyle, contends that the most credible record of events derives from study of any culture’s most celebrated men. Their voices, Carlyle argued, would represent the most heroic accounts thereby lifting all who read them. Stories penned by great men would make and sustain nations. In sum: the winners--economic, religious, or imperialist—write the story. But what of the voices drowned out by the bloviating bellows of “great men”? What about their stories, which contributed to or even countered the “official record”?

This semester, we will disavow Carlyle. Instead, we will study fictive microhistories, which are narratives reflective of the lived experience of the 99%: factory workers, tavern owners, young mothers, the enslaved, peoples of color, the poor. Further, these narratives, each based in detailed historical research, all come from the category of YA, a type of literature that also seeks to honor voices too often silenced: adolescents. To hear these typically subjugated voices, to study these great lives, we will “plug into the wall . . .and listen in to the past” (Woolf) together. Carlyle would not see our wall as the best. And, true enough, it is sometimes a motley affair, pitted and variegated, uneven, and often insurmountable. Nevertheless, it is one well-

worth studying. And the lives we will plug into, situated at various historical junctures, are our own, since history never repeats itself but often rhymes.

Our entirely online course will require study of the literature at the collegiate level, and we will also learn and demonstrate techniques for deploying historical fiction in the English Studies classroom, where teaching these texts aids instructors in their endeavor to reach Reading Informational standards and infuses classes with interdisciplinarity.

Course Objectives:

In this class, you will learn to. . .

- ❖ *Identify* basic adolescent reading processes and major adolescent cognitive and moral development schema and apply them to textual situations in YA.
- ❖ *Read, annotate, review, and critique* YA texts often taught in grades 6-12 and *demonstrate critical acumen* about them in written and verbal work.
- ❖ *Identify, read, and incorporate* scholarship in YA and pedagogy into your academic writing.
- ❖ *Employ* Standard English and the tenets of sound composition in formal written work.
- ❖ *Identify* lower and higher-order skill sets connected to teaching Language Arts.
- ❖ *Create* and/or discuss lesson plan activities and/or unit plans that teach close reading/analytical skills to a particular adolescent audience
- ❖ *Create* verbal/written justifications for teaching YA texts that may be challenged by parents, teachers, or other stakeholders in the field of education.

THE COURSEWORK

Required Primary Texts, in the Module in which they are assigned:

Module I: "Introduction and Foundations"

- ❖ No primary texts
- ❖ Secondary articles (2)*

Module II: "Panic at the Disco: Girls in the 70s, Girls in the 90s"

- ❖ *Burn Baby Burn*, by Meg Medina
- ❖ *Everything Grows*, by Aimee Herman
- ❖ Secondary articles (2)

Module III: "Captivity and the Cessation of Childhood"

- ❖ *Between Shades of Gray*, by Ruta Sepetys
- ❖ *Within these Lines*, by Stephanie Morrill
- ❖ Secondary articles (2)

Module IV: "History in a Different Mode: YA Graphic Novels and Verse"

- ❖ *Sold*, by Patricia McCormick
- ❖ *Queen of the Sea*, by Dylan Meconis
- ❖ Secondary articles (2)

Module V: "Dialectic Diegesis: 'Dualing' Narratives in YA Historical Fiction"

- ❖ *Glow*, by Megan Bryant
- ❖ *All American Boys*, by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely
- ❖ Secondary articles (3)

Module VI: “Paranormal Pathways in YA Historical Fiction”

- ❖ *Cold Bath Street*, by A.J. Hartley
- ❖ *Ghost Boys*, by Jewell Parker Rhodes
- ❖ Secondary articles (2)

Module VII: “Early American Adolescents during America’s Adolescence—Fever, 1793”

- ❖ *Fever, 1793*, by Laurie Halse Anderson
- ❖ Secondary articles (3)

*Secondary readings and other viewing/listening for each Module are provided for students to print out and read or click and view in each of the Module Checklists.

Major Assignments, Percentage Breakdown:

- ❖ 7 Discussion Forums (35%)
- ❖ Podcast (15%)
- ❖ Vlog and Reaction Video (15%)
- ❖ Close Reading Activity (10%)
- ❖ Final Multimodal Project (20%)
- ❖ Class and Community (5%)

Required Existing Skillsets:

Students in ENGL 5/4295 need to have competencies in the following areas:

- ❖ Word processing skills
- ❖ Library research skills (Databases and Interlibrary Loan)
- ❖ Literary analysis skills (proficient level, moving into intermediate)
- ❖ Using a web camera along with other forms of technology, for which I will provide written/verbal direction or links to direction

Required Technology for Success:

Students in ENGL 5/4295 will need:

- ❖ A webcam with microphone for filming themselves
- ❖ A YouTube account where they can upload videos (or other means of doing so).
- ❖ A high-speed internet connection for streaming video, downloading and uploading documents and video, and/or listening to audio.
- ❖ Students *should not* rely solely on a smartphone for this class, as upload times are too long, and coverage is not always reliable.

Students with Special Needs:

If you have a need accompanied by official university paperwork, contact me during the first week of class so that we can meet face-to-face or virtually to discuss accommodations. Students in need of Accessibility links for various technologies used in this class should see the document for Accessibility, which links you to the help you will need as well. Talk with me as well for further assistance. Additionally, take note of the “Resources” link at the top of any page in our course. Clicking on it takes you to *several* options for assistance.

Description of Major Assignments:

While each Major Assignment has more detailed directions and/or an assignment sheet in the Module where you will complete it, below I provide a short description of each.

Student-Led Discussion Forums—Moderating and Responding (35%)

Each content-rich Module (Modules II-VII) will have its own Discussion Forum Thread, and all will be student-led. Once during our semester, you will work with your assigned work group to plan collaboratively before posting the goals for that Module's Discussion Thread (questions, format of delivery, etc.). During the Module, you and your group will moderate the discussion by responding and sustaining conversation. At the end of the Module in which your group moderates, you will work together to submit an executive summary of the responses that the thread produced in the thread's final post. **You will always perform as a responder, even in the Module in which you are part of a moderating team, and responding when moderating can include your own answers to your group's questions or responses to others' ideas.**

Please see the assignment sheet and accompanying rubric for Discussion Forum posting, both hyperlinked in Module II. The assignment sheet expounds further on the general ideas here. I have also created a Discussion Forum for general postings of questions, requests, or conversation. Here, you may create threads to discuss ideas or texts or ask questions. Here, you could also seek a voluntary Peer Review partner or schedule a face-to-face discussion with each other.

Podcast (15%)

Each Work Group will use primary and secondary material from Module II to create a conversational podcast for which they plan and then discuss a central idea or series of connected ideas in a 15-20 minute podcast using technology. Students will then respond individually to at least two others' Podcasts in the designated Discussion Forum Topic.

Vlog and Reaction Video (15%)

Students will work independently to create an 8-10 minute interpretive Vlog for one of the primary texts in Module III. After posting their Vlogs in a designated Discussion Forum Topic, students will watch others' content and create a 7-9 minute Reaction Video that responds substantively to one or two peers' Vlogs.

Close Reading Activity (10%)

Students, working independently or collaboratively in pairs, will use my instruction and one of the primary texts from either Module IV or V to create a classroom activity that could be utilized in a specific classroom setting (grade/level and type of learner) to teach students to become better close readers and burgeoning analysts.

Multimodal Project (20%)

You are quite used to composition as an academic activity, wherein argument and analysis occurs via prose and supporting documentation from primary and secondary texts. But we can—and should—honor and express meaning in ways that go beyond analytical writing, especially in this era of trans- and new media and the democratization of the internet, wherein visual modes, physical gestures, and aural expressions are prevalent. **Multimodal** assignments ask students to create interpretations of texts by choosing a mode of expression which not only makes sense for the text itself but allows students to showcase their strengths as they express ideas about course material. To enhance our ability to discuss and present information effectively while using other modes, we will complete a multimodal project. You will have two options:

- This option has three steps. You may create a standards-based, detailed plan for a 30-40 minute classroom activity on one of the texts we have

read. I suggest crafting a detailed group practice session that introduces multimodality via some activity you design entirely. Second, you will create an individual multimodal assignment appropriate to hand out to the same group of students after they complete your planned activity. Finally, since every teacher needs neat decor for their classroom spaces, you will create a spiffy model that also demonstrates for your hypothetical students a way to complete the multimodal assignment you wrote. This model should show students a way to achieve an “A” on the individual assignment.

- For this option, you will first brainstorm to utilize a mode besides essay writing to present an interpretation of a text or two. Your project should make logical sense; that is, you will want to choose a mode which fits with the text you wish to interpret. You would not want to create a contemporary, technology-based project for a text set in 1977, for instance. Secondly, you will write up a two-three page process memo which first describes the materials you have utilized and the mode you have chosen. You should then explain in writing how and why your chosen mode works well with the subject and text on which you focus.

I will talk much more about this assignment via instructional videos and examples as we near the end of term.

Class and Community (5%)

Your avid participation in class is essential and, in an online course, must be **tangible**. You can show participation via collaboration, helping others, discussing and responding in class, participating in all class activities, conferencing with me, responding to e-mails, logging in each day, taking and passing the syllabus quiz on time, and making every effort to create academic excellence.

Grading Instruments:

Each major assignment is paired with a holistic rubric, wherein students earn grades in several areas. I post each rubric with its assignment in the appropriate Module. Each of the grades earned in each criterion of the rubric is averaged with the others. That average is the grade earned for the assignment.

Please examine each rubric carefully as you acquaint yourself with its companion assignment and always ask questions via e-mail, office hours, or schedule an appointment, face-to-face or virtual.

Finally, in areas where there are duplications of an assignment—as there will be with Discussion Forum Threads—the same rubric is used several times before the grades are averaged together. The average then becomes the grade for the designated portion of the overall course grade.

Required Format:

When formatting and citing in any written portions of your projects, use MLA documentation. If you need a refresher on MLA format, please see the MLA documentation guide I shared in Module I and/or feel free to talk with me during virtual office hours or in a scheduled face-to-face appointment. In the Discussion Forum Threads, focus on MLA in-text

documentation as you cite so others can all reference page and/or scene numbers. You do not need Works Cited materials in threads unless someone requests the title of the article/text.

Late Work/Make-Up Work:**

As a rule, late written work is not accepted except under dire circumstances. However, if you have an extenuating circumstance, contact me via phone, during virtual office hours, or in a face-to-face conference to discuss the problem. At that time, I will determine if an assignment can be turned in late and what deduction, if any, will apply.

I realize that, occasionally, “life happens” and that some problems beyond your control occur. **Never hesitate to discuss problems with assignment deadlines or virtual attendance with me if you feel that your circumstance is dire. With honest and swift communication, many issues can be resolved to your advantage!

Modules and Module Overview:

Modules are units of study utilized in online courses. You will click on the “Content” tab at the top of our class’s page in Course Den to access each Module’s work, and each Module will open on the start date indicated below.

Modules are approximately 3 weeks long with the following trajectory: during the first week, I ask you to work independently, reading the primary, secondary, and supplemental videos/materials. In the second week, each Work Group should post their questions based on the reading. All others will work to discuss the Work Group’s questions **throughout** the second week, while the Work Group moderates and sustains discussion. In the third week of each Module, students will work on or complete and then post and comment on others’ Projects, if the assignment calls for it.

Remember: ***this class is not self-paced, since our work relies on individual reading and deep delving prior to consistent interaction via discussion after reading.***

The first item you will see on each Module’s homepage is a Module Checklist divided into the categories “Read,” “View,” “Discuss,” and “Complete.” Make every effort to read through these Module Checklists **first**, especially since several contain links to full-text secondary and supplementary readings or links to audio/visual files.

When possible, Module assignments are due on the last scheduled day of each, though some will have due dates staggered, so make certain to view assignment sheets and the course calendar carefully, which can be viewed on the homepage of our class in Course Den.

Below, I provide an aerial view of the tasks assigned for each Module. Secondary and supplemental materials are linked in each Module’s Checklist, so, again, make sure to look at each Checklist at the **beginning** of each Module.

Module I (January 4, 12 a.m. - January 10, 11:59 p.m.)

You will:

- ❖ Read the Welcome Letter in the Announcements section on our course’s homepage.
- ❖ Read the Module Checklist.
- ❖ Read the introduction to the Module, which includes specific learning objectives and a short description of the content.
- ❖ Read the syllabus.

- ❖ Reread the syllabus.
- ❖ Read through Resource Links on the main page of Module I.
- ❖ Read two secondary articles, one on YA, the other on YA historical fiction.
- ❖ Tell us about yourself in the Introductory Discussion Forum Thread using a technology *beyond simply typing* (e.g. video/audio/Glogster/a few IG pictures and your hashtags for them/etc.).
- ❖ Take and pass the syllabus quiz.
- ❖ Participate in a pair of Discussion Threads on the assigned secondary readings, communicating with peers and Dr. Insenga, who will moderate.
- ❖ Email Dr. Insenga on Course Den with any questions or concerns or post them to the “Anything Goes” Topic in the Discussion Forum.

Module II (January 11, 12 a.m. - January 31, 11:59 p.m.):

You will:

- ❖ Read the Module Checklist.
- ❖ Read the introduction to the Module, which includes specific learning objectives and a short description of the content.
- ❖ Read assignment sheets and accompanying rubrics.
- ❖ Read *Burn Baby Burn*, by Meg Medina.
- ❖ Read *Everything Grows*, by Aimee Herman.
- ❖ Read/view assigned secondary and supplemental materials.
- ❖ Participate in a Discussion Forum Thread in the moderating and/or responding role.
- ❖ Complete the Podcast with your assigned Work Group; post it in the designated Forum; turn it in in the Assignments dropbox; listen to two other groups’ podcasts; and respond substantively to their ideas.

Module III (February 1, 12 a.m.- February 22, 11:59 p.m.):

You will:

- ❖ Read the Module Checklist.
- ❖ Read the introduction to the Module, which includes specific learning objectives and a short description of the content.
- ❖ Read assignment sheets and accompanying rubrics.
- ❖ Read *Between Shades of Gray*, by Ruta Sepetys.
- ❖ Read *Within these Lines*, by Stephanie Morrill.
- ❖ Read/view assigned secondary and supplemental materials.
- ❖ Participate in a Discussion Forum Thread in the moderating and/or responding role.
- ❖ Complete your Vlog; post it in the designated Forum; view several; create a substantive Reaction Video; and turn in the Vlog *or* Reaction Video for a grade in the Assignments dropbox.

Module IV (February 23, 12 a.m. - March 12, 11:59 p.m.):

You will:

- ❖ Read the Module Checklist.
- ❖ Read the introduction to the Module, which includes specific learning objectives and a short description of the content.
- ❖ Read assignment sheets and accompanying rubrics.
- ❖ Read *Queen of the Sea*, by Dylan Meconis.
- ❖ Read *Sold*, by Patricia McCormick.
- ❖ Read/view assigned secondary and supplemental materials.

- ❖ Participate in a Discussion Forum Thread in the moderating and/or responding role.
- ❖ Begin Close Reading Activity.

Module V (March 13, 12 a.m. - April 1, 11:59 p.m.)

You will:

- ❖ Read the Module Checklist.
- ❖ Read the introduction to the Module, which includes specific learning objectives and a short description of the content.
- ❖ Read assignment sheets and accompanying rubrics.
- ❖ Read *Ghost Boys*, by Jewell Parker Rhodes.
- ❖ Read *Cold Bath Street*, by A.J. Hartley.
- ❖ Read/view assigned secondary and supplemental materials.
- ❖ Participate in a Discussion Forum Thread in the moderating and/or responding role.
- ❖ Finish your Close Reading Activity and upload it to the Assignments dropbox.

Module VI (April 2, 12 a.m. - April 19, 11:59 p.m.)

- ❖ Read the Module Checklist.
- ❖ Read the introduction to the Module, which includes specific learning objectives and a short description of the content.
- ❖ Read assignment sheets and accompanying rubrics.
- ❖ Read *All American Boys*, by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely.
- ❖ Read *Glow*, by Megan Bryant.
- ❖ Read/view assigned secondary and supplemental materials.
- ❖ Participate in a Discussion Forum Thread in the moderating and/or responding role.
- ❖ Begin your Multimodal Project.

Module VII (April 20, 12 a.m. - May 5, 11:59 p.m.):

You will:

- ❖ Read the Module Checklist.
- ❖ Read the introduction to the Module, which includes specific learning objectives and a short description of the content.
- ❖ Read assignment sheets and accompanying rubrics.
- ❖ Read *Fever, 1793*, by Laurie Halse Anderson.
- ❖ Read/view assigned secondary and supplemental materials.
- ❖ Participate in a Discussion Forum Thread in the moderating and/or responding role.
- ❖ Finish your Multimodal Project; post it to the designated Forum; respond to others' work in writing; and upload it to the Assignments dropbox.
- ❖ Complete the electronic course evaluation.

Words on Workload in this Course

All classes present challenges because of our busy lives; work, school, family, field work, internships, and the like consume our time. Online courses provide attractive options for education, as they reduce travel time and expense, allow us to work from virtually any locale, and offer us the opportunity to work during different hours of the day.

But online courses can also provide challenges, since all reading, annotating, viewing, discussing, and composing/creating project content requires you to be a self-starter. This

autodidacticism is difficult for some students who might need a traditional classroom environment. Your commitment to complete focus, responsible engagement, and striving for your own intellectual growth is vital. If you struggle, your commitment to obtaining my help is also an imperative.

Luckily, the bulk of the reading for this class is for adolescents, so you will not struggle to complete these easier, sometimes shorter, works alongside a few scholarly pieces.

This said: we have a great deal of material to read, think about, and discuss together, so staying on track should be your primary goal, as our adolescent students say, “from the get.” In short: woe betide the student who falls behind during our semester’s journey towards YA mastery!

It is next to impossible to catch up once you fall behind, and your inability to sustain discussion or spend time within the classroom and to share specific and clear ideas about our reading will stand out if you do not read or participate. Also, if you have struggled in other online courses, I challenge you to think carefully about taking an upper-division ENGL major class. Reach out to me if you want to ask questions or have concerns you would like me to discuss with you during the first week of class.

THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

University-Wide Policies

Please read the information found at [this link](#), where policies governing all courses are housed. Pay attention to those related to online courses, the honor code, and getting extra help, personal or professional.

Netiquette

Communication in an online environment requires special consideration, or what we call “Netiquette.” Here are some guidelines for productive communication, which I adapt from San Diego Community College’s Distance Learning division:

- ❖ *Show Professionalism and Courtesy.* Exhibit the same professionalism and respect in the online class as you would in the physical classroom and workplace.
- ❖ *Use Correct Spelling and Grammar.* Adhere to correct spelling and grammar convention in your own formal posts. It is good practice to compose your message in a word processing program where you can check your spelling and grammar prior to sending. Avoid typing in all capital letters, as this is shouting (“flaming”). Avoid abbreviations and texting language (e.g. “WTF” “OMG” “LMFAO”) in your formal posts but feel free to use them sparingly in your conversational responses.
- ❖ *Use a Positive Tone.* Before hitting the “Send” or “Submit” button, review your message. The ease and speed of the Internet makes it easy to say something you could regret later. Remember: you are communicating with other human beings who have feelings, sensitivities, and opinions. When composing a message, ask yourself, “Would I say this to the person face-to-face?”
- ❖ *Follow the Course Discussion Board Guidelines.* Make sure that you are posting in the correct topic/thread and read all postings in that thread/topic prior to posting your message to avoid needless repetition. Keep in mind that each of topics has several threads in which you will respond, so, again, keeping this suggestion in mind is a must.

- ❖ *Be Respectful of Others' Time.* Think carefully about who the recipients of your email should be. Avoid sending an e-mail to the entire class, unless you feel that everyone must read it. Please also remember that Dr. Insenga needs 24 hours to respond to an email, so sending multiple emails is not appropriate unless it has been over 24 hours.
- ❖ *Use descriptive subject lines for email messages and discussion board postings.* Title your threads appropriately, always using your first and/or last name so that I—and others—can locate your work with ease. If you post in the “Anything Goes” topic, title your threads specifically so that we can easily assess whether we can contribute productively.
- ❖ When in a Discussion Thread, make sure not to repost the original post or entire posts of your peers’. Instead, copy and paste portions to which you want to respond. That way, threads are more manageable, requiring less scrolling, which can become cumbersome on tablets or smaller laptops. Reposting the previous post(s) can also cause your new material to get lost in a sea of words folks have already read.

Virtual Attendance:

One of the benefits of an online course environment is that you can log in at virtually any time. During our semester, I cannot imagine a scenario in which you do not log in **at least** once per day to check for new discussion posts, to check email, or to read the Announcements. I make use of the statistics tool in Course Den to measure reading and responding activity, especially when grading Discussion Thread posts. Should I note that you are not often logging into our class’s page and/or that online absence correlates with missed or poor work, I will invite you to an online or face-to-face conference to discuss problems you may be having with online learning and attempt to help find resolutions for betterment. Just as in a traditional classroom space, this one will not work without the essential ingredient: **you**. Your ideas, your voice, your questions matter to me.

Office Hours and Discussion

I list my virtual office hours at the top of this document, and ***I avidly welcome face-to-face or phone/Skype appointments as well.***

I do need to say a few words about confidential discussion. The Board of Regents, the governing body for the University System of Georgia, recently passed new rules regarding sexual misconduct and its reporting on our campus. As of July 1, 2016, all faculty and staff must promptly and fully report complaints of or information regarding sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator on campus. Here is the UWG [Title IX website](#).

For you, this means that I cannot guarantee confidentiality if you come to me and tell me about an instance of sexual misconduct. I must report. However, the following locations and/or individuals can offer confidential support, and I strongly encourage you to talk to them. I can help you contact these places, too, and I can accompany you, if you would like. You are still welcomed to talk to me about such issues; but know that, since I am not a trained professional counselor and I am most concerned with your health, I must report and will always encourage you to obtain help to ensure your safety and well-being. Below are various confidential places on campus to go for help. Above all, whether you share with me or self-report, know this: You deserve safety. You deserve wellness. You deserve a positive, professional outlet for *any* sexual misconduct you experience.

<u>UNIVERSITY POLICE</u> 678-839-6000 (9-6000 on campus)	<u>COUNSELING CENTER</u> Location: 123 Row Hall Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8-5 Tel: (678) 839-6428 Call UWG Police after hours Email: counseling@westga.edu
<u>HEALTH SERVICES</u> 678-839-6452	<u>PATIENT /VICTIM ADVOCATES</u> 678-839-0641; 678-839-5338 (after hours 678-839-6000)

All right, let us get to work!