

ENGL 6385
Seminar in Young Adult Literature
Summer Session II, 2019
Online
3 Credit Hours

“Listening to the Past”: Using YA Historical Fiction in Classroom Spaces

“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 INSTRUCTOR

Contact Information

- ❖ Dr. Angela S. Insenga, department of English and Philosophy
- ❖ Office: 2248 TLC, department of English and Philosophy, Carrollton campus
- ❖ Phone Contacts: office—678-839-4864; cell—770-378-2387 from 9-7 or by appointment
- ❖ 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 “Email” 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, videos, written messages, thoughts about interpretation or postings, and reminders. Do check it daily.
- ❖ Summer Office Hours, Virtual and Face-to-Face:
I will be available online M from 1-3 p.m. and W from 5-8 p.m. I am also available for a scheduled face-to-face on the Carrollton campus, Skype, or phone appointment. Students may call, email via Course Den, or use technology to communicate during online office hours. To schedule an appointment outside of office hours, please call or email via Course Den.

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 summer, we will disavow Carlyle. Instead, we will study fictive microhistories, which are narratives reflective of the lived experience of the 99%: the manual laborers, tavern owners, young mothers, the enslaved, the “insane,” people of color, and 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 exclusively online course will require study of the literature at the collegiate level. Seminarians will also learn and have a chance to demonstrate techniques for deploying historical fiction in the English Studies classroom, where teaching these texts aids instructors in their endeavors to reach Reading Informational standards and infuses courses 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 typically 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 they are assigned:

Module I: Introduction

- ❖ No primary texts

Module II: “Panic at the Disco: Coming of Age During the Summer of Sam”

- ❖ *Burn Baby Burn*, by Meg Medina

Module III: “Reigns of Terror: Childhood as an Anachronistic Social Construct in YA”

- ❖ *Between Shades of Gray*, by Ruta Sepetys
- ❖ *Audacity*, by Melanie Crowder

Module IV: “Haunted and Haunting: Paranormal Pathways in YA Historical Fiction”

- ❖ *Ghost Boys*, by Jewell Parker Rhodes
- ❖ *Asylum*, by Madeleine Roux

Module V: “Growing up Liminal: (Dis)Able Youth Goes Questing”

- ❖ *The Book of Boy*, by Catherine Gilbert Murdock

Module VI: “Contagion and Convalescence During America’s Adolescence”

- ❖ *Fever, 1793*, by Laurie Halse Anderson

*Supplemental readings/viewings 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

- ❖ Two colloquies (15 and 20%, respectively)
- ❖ Four Discussion Forums (30%)
- ❖ Final Multimodal Artifact and Written Rationale/Assignment Sheet (30%)
- ❖ Community engagement and collegiality (5%)

Required Existing Competencies

Students in ENGL 6385 need to have competencies in the following areas:

- ❖ Word processing
- ❖ Library research skills (Databases and Interlibrary Loan)
- ❖ Literary analysis for both verbal and written artifacts
- ❖ 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 6385 will need a webcam with microphone for filming themselves, a YouTube account where they can upload videos (or other means of doing so). Students also need a high-speed internet connection for streaming video, downloading and uploading documents and video, or listening to audio. Finally, students *should not* plan on relying 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

Student-Led Discussion Forums, Moderating and Responding

Each content-rich Module will have its own Discussion Forum Thread, and all will be student-led. Once during the semester, you will work with an assigned work group to plan collaboratively before framing the Module’s thread content for discussion. 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 submit an executive summary of the responses that the thread’s framework 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.

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

Colloquies

A colloquy is a formal conversation. Our class will convene for two colloquies in online arenas. There will be assignment sheets and a rubric for each. One asks you to work with your assigned Work Group to conduct a recorded podcast-style conversation that you

then share. In the other, you will work to produce a Vlog, post your content, and react to others' Vlogs via video. Each colloquy's assignment sheet and the corresponding rubric are posted together in the appropriate Module. Colloquy work will be uploaded to and discussed in the appropriate Thread in the Discussion Forum.

Multimodal Project

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've 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.

Grading Instruments

Each major assignment is paired with a holistic rubric, wherein students earn grades in several areas. I post each with its assignment in the appropriate Module. Each of the earned grades in each area is averaged with the others on the rubric. 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 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 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 Multimodal projects or colloquies, 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 and then on the Module title in the left-hand sidebar so that you can view the details any given Module ahead. As aforementioned, each Module will open on the start date indicated below.

This class is *not* a self-paced one, since our work relies on individual reading and deep delving prior to consistent interaction via discussion after reading. The first item in each Module is a checklist divided into the categories “Read,” “View,” “Discuss,” and “Complete.” Make every effort to read through these checklists **first**, especially since several contain links to full-text supplementary readings or links to audio/visual files.

When possible, assignments in Modules are due on the last day of them, though some will have due dates staggered to ensure that you stay on track, so make certain to view them. I include all of these on the course calendar as well. We will complete six Modules this summer: one Introduction Module and five content-rich Modules.

Below, I provide an aerial view of the tasks assigned for each content-rich Module. Videos, supplemental readings, and instructional videos are linked in each Module’s checklist, so, again, make sure to look at each at the **beginning** of each Module.

Module I (June 3, midnight - June 5, 11:59 p.m.)

You will:

- ❖ Read the Welcome Letter in the Announcements section on our course’s homepage.

- ❖ Read the syllabus twice, the second time while watching the accompanying video from me.
- ❖ 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.)
- ❖ Email Dr. Insenga with any questions or concerns or post them to the “Anything Goes” Topic in the Discussion Forum.

Module II (June 3, midnight - June 15, 11:59 p.m.—I open this one early, note):

You will:

- ❖ Read the Module Checklist
- ❖ Read assignment sheets and accompanying rubrics
- ❖ Read *Burn Baby Burn*, by Meg Medina
- ❖ Read/view assigned supplemental materials
- ❖ Participate in a Discussion Forum Thread one in the moderating and/or responding role
- ❖ Complete Colloquy One

Module III (June 16, midnight - June 26, 11:59 p.m.):

You will:

- ❖ Read the Module Checklist
- ❖ Read assignment sheets and accompanying rubrics
- ❖ Read *Between Shades of Gray*, by Ruta Sepetys and *Audacity*, by Melanie Crowder
- ❖ Read/view assigned supplemental materials
- ❖ Participate in Discussion Forum Thread two in the moderating and/or responding role

Module IV (June 27, midnight - July 8, 11:59 p.m.):

You will:

- ❖ Read the Module Checklist
- ❖ Read assignment sheets and accompanying rubrics
- ❖ Read *Asylum*, by Madeleine Roux, and *Ghost Boys*, by Jewell Parker Rhodes
- ❖ Read/view assigned supplemental materials
- ❖ Participate in Discussion Forum Thread three in the moderating and/or responding role
- ❖ Watch instructional videos pertaining to the reading and Colloquy Two
- ❖ Complete Colloquy Two

Module V (July 9, midnight - July 17, 11:59 p.m.)

You will:

- ❖ Read the Module Checklist
- ❖ Read assignment sheets and accompanying rubrics
- ❖ Read *The Book of Boy*, by Catherine Gilbert Murdock
- ❖ Read/view assigned supplemental materials
- ❖ Participate in Discussion Forum Thread four in the moderating and/or responding role
- ❖ Begin your Multimodal Project

Module VI (July 18, midnight - July 25, 11:59 p.m.):

You will:

- ❖ Read the Module Checklist
- ❖ Read assignment sheets and accompanying rubrics
- ❖ Read *Fever, 1793*, by Laurie Halse Anderson
- ❖ Read/view assigned supplemental materials
- ❖ Participate in Discussion Forum Thread five in the moderating and/or responding role
- ❖ Finish your Multimodal Project and respond to others' work

Words on Workload in this Course

All summer classes present challenges because of time constraints. Eight-week summer graduate seminars must cover the same amount of work as is typically completed during a fifteen-week semester. Thus, summer online graduate classes can offer us more challenges to overcome creatively, since the bulk of your work—reading, annotating, discussing, and composing—requires you to be a self-starter. 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.

We have a great deal of material to read and discuss together, so staying on track should be a primary goal, as our adolescent students say, “from the get.” In short: woe betide the student who falls behind during our eight-week slog towards YA dominance!

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 considered to be 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 or not we can contribute productively.
- ❖ When in a forum thread, make sure not to repost the original post or entire long 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 eight-week 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. 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.

Office Hours and Discussion

I list my virtual office hours at the top of this document, and I 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's get to work!