

Department of English & Writing Studies

**Forever Young: Literature for Adolescents
English 2091F (001)**

Fall 2018

Instructor: Dr. Miranda Green-Barteet
mgreenb6@uwo.ca | x84661
Lawson Hall 3248 or UC 4228

Course Location: Physics & Astronomy Bldg 150

Course Date/Time: Monday 10:30-11:30 am,
Wednesday 10:30-12:30 pm

Western University is situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak and Attawandaron peoples, who have longstanding relationships to the land and region of southwestern Ontario and the City of London.

Course Description

In *Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature*, Roberta Seelinger Trites argues that "Young Adult novels are about power" (#). Trites explains that in YA novels "protagonists must learn about the social forces around them. They learn to negotiate the levels of power within which the myriad of social institutions they must function including family; the church; school; the government; social constructions of sexuality, gender race, and class; and social mores surrounding death" (3). As Trites explains, YA novels can help adolescents learn how to negotiate their place in the world. Her assessment, along of that with many scholars studying Children's and YA literature, stands in stark contrast to the popular perception of YA lit as vapid, insignificant, and distinctly not literary. Drawing on a range of historical periods and genres, this course takes for granted that YA literature is aesthetically and critically complex, as we focus on the political and social history of young adults and their lived experiences. We will also consider the place of young adult literature within larger scholarly trends and conversations.

Throughout the semester, we will discuss YA books as literary and aesthetic texts, considering them through a range of critical frameworks. We will consider how young adult and adult readers respond to the texts differently as well as how the representation of adolescence has changed over time. We will conclude the semester with a firm understanding of how to read texts for adolescents. We will consider a variety of topics, including:

How does YA lit represent the lives of adolescents?

What socio-cultural, philosophical, and/or artistic purpose does YA lit serve, particularly when such books are written for an implied audience of young people?

What particular kinds of definitions and/or portrayals of femininity, masculinity, and adolescence does YA lit tend to offer?

In what ways does YA lit consider, represent, or challenge power structures experienced by actual adolescents?

Why does the popular perception of YA lit differ so from the perceptions critics of YA lit?

Owl/Sakai: The use of Owl/Sakai is necessary for successful completion of this course. This includes accessing readings as stipulated in the course outline, downloading instructions and guidelines for assignments, and submitting assignments to Turnitin.com. All course information, including assignments, will be posted on the course website.

Communicating with Instructor: Email is the best way to communicate with me. It may take up to 24 hours for me to respond to you during the week and 48 hours on the weekend.

Please include your course number in the subject line of the email. Also, read "How To Email Your Professor Guide Sheet."

Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, and Aegrotat Standing: All requests for Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, or Aegrotat Standing must be made by the student, with supporting documentation, to the Dean of Arts and Humanities Academic Counselling

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

All instances of plagiarism will be reported to the Chair of Undergraduate Studies. Proven cases of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. Subsequent offences will result in failure for the course.