

Dr. Kenneth Kidd  
LIT 4333  
TUR 2328 MWF 5  
Spring 2019

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Office: TUR 4370  
Hours: MWF 8  
& by appointment

## *Literature for the Adolescent*

Our syllabus is also posted here: [kbkidd.org](http://kbkidd.org) and in our Canvas site.

### **Texts**

Laurie Halse Anderson, *Speak: The Graphic Novel* (2018) (1999)  
M.T. Anderson, *Feed* (2002)  
Cris Beam, *I Am J* (2011)  
Kristen Cashore, *Jane, Unlimited* (2017)  
Maureen Daly, *Seventeenth Summer* (1942)  
S. E. Hinton, *The Outsiders* (1967)  
Jandy Nelson, *I'll Give You the Sun* (2014)  
Nnedi Okorafor, *Akata Witch* (2011)  
Erika Sanchez, *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* (2017)  
Adam Silvera, *They Both Die at the End* (2017)  
Angie Thomas, *The Hate U Give* (2017)  
Gene Luen Yang, *American Born Chinese* (2006)

Books are listed on the UF textbook adoption site. You may purchase them anywhere.

There are also readings on UF e-reserves. Go to <https://ares.uflib.ufl.edu/ares/> and follow the prompts. Have these readings accessible on the day we're discussing them or be able to recall in detail.

We will use Canvas for assignment submission and return: <http://elearning.ufl.edu/>

### **Overview**

This course examines literature primarily for but sometimes about adolescents, across a range of genres and with attention to the political and social history of adolescence as a concept and a lived experience. We'll concentrate on what's now called "young adult" literature from the 1960s forward, but we will read and discuss that material in light of earlier narrative traditions. The modern adolescent is of course intimately connected to material culture in particular ways. We will concentrate on contemporary literature in the hopes of assessing what's happening now in young adult publishing and media culture. The course will be conducted as a seminar and participation is crucial. We will read one YA book per week, plus some criticism and theory.

Although I sometimes lecture, generally we will conduct class as a seminar, so participation is vital. Please come to class every day on time having read the assigned material. Be ready to share your responses. On occasion I may ask you to work in small groups.

Unless otherwise specified, please complete the full reading by the first day it's listed on the reading schedule.

## **Attendance Policy**

Your participation is vital, and attendance is mandatory. You may miss three class sessions without explanation. For each subsequent missed class without a doctor's note I reserve the right to reduce your final course grade one-half of a letter grade. If you are not here when I take attendance -- usually at the beginning of class, but sometimes at the end -- you will be counted absent. If late, you will be marked absent.

## **Academic Honesty**

All students are required to abide by the Academic Honesty Guidelines which have been accepted by the University. The academic community of students and faculty at the University of Florida strives to develop, sustain and protect an environment of honesty, trust and respect. Students are expected to pursue knowledge with integrity. Exhibiting honesty in academic pursuits and reporting violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines will encourage others to act with integrity. Violations of the Academic Honesty Guidelines shall result in judicial action and a student being subject to the sanctions in paragraph XIV of the Student Conduct Code. The conduct set forth hereinafter constitutes a violation of the Academic Honesty Guidelines (University of Florida Rule 6C1\_4.017). For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and collusion, see:  
<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.php>.

## **Students with Disabilities**

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in the classroom. Staff at the Disability Resource Center will assist any student who registers as having a disability. Official documentation of a disability is required to determine eligibility for appropriate classroom accommodations. For more information about Student Disability Services, see:  
<http://www.ufl.edu/disability/>

## **Electronic Media**

You may bring a laptop, ebook reader, or tablet to class for the purpose of note-taking and reviewing assigned articles. Please do not surf the web, check email & social media, etc. Please put your phones on silent. No texting please.

## **Assignments and Grading**

No late work accepted.

Memos. You will write 8 reading responses of 1-2 single-spaced pages each, 12 pt font. The memo is simply a short meditation on the assigned reading. Your memo should offer a response to the book as a whole; don't turn in a memo if you haven't finished the book. You may address a number of issues or focus more in-depth on one or two; just be as specific as you can, and support your responses with examples and details from the text.

I do not expect you to have a thorough interpretation, but your memo should offer some kind of evaluation. In other words, it should be more than random or unconnected thoughts about the work. Consider the text as a text, or author's writing or plot strategies – in other words, get beyond your response to characters in the text. If you like, you may make use of outside readings (biographical sketches, scholarly articles, websites, etc.). This assignment is designed to stimulate class discussion, and to help you remember the texts and generate paper ideas.

We have 12 novels; you need to submit 8 memos. No more than one memo per novel, except you may write 2 about *Jane Unlimited* if you so choose. You may choose which texts to write about, but you must submit your memo by midnight ahead of the first day we discuss the novel about which you are writing – usually Monday. For *Jane Unlimited*, you must write about the section we are assigned for the day, at least. If there is also an article assigned that day or week, you may address it as well, preferably in connection with the literary text. Addressing the article is optional.

If you like, you may also create up to three alternative memos, in the form of a meme-o or short work of fanfiction. If a meme-o: create a meme that captures/reflects the text in question, perhaps a central relationship or theme or dynamic. The meme should feature the image, adapted as necessary, along with an appropriate caption. You must also include at least one paragraph of explanation or analysis. If fanfiction: rewrite a key scene, or write a new short chapter to be included in the work. Don't forget the appropriate classification tags (genre, pairings, etc.)! A paragraph of explanation should accompany the creative work.

Memos will be submitted electronically to Canvas and (again) are due by midnight (ahead) of the class day in question. I will grade each memo and average the grades with any quizzes that might be given.

Quizzes. There may be a few unannounced quizzes which you may not make up unless you can provide documentation of illness. These quizzes will usually consist of 3-4 short questions about the reading that you can answer in several sentences or less.

Essay 1. Write a short analysis of any work of adolescent/YA literature. You may develop the essay any way you like, as long as you have an argument and draw from supporting evidence. Part of the challenge is to identify a suitable subject and approach. No biographical criticism, although you may use some biographical data. I'd be happy to discuss possibilities. One option might be to select one of the many book awards for adolescent literature, and do an analysis of how a particular title does or does not meet the award criteria. But the topic is open.

\*\*You may write on one of the books we're reading in class. If you do, you must expand on what we discussed or take a different line of interpretation than the ones we followed in class.

Minimum 5 double-spaced pages, 12 point font.

Please submit to Canvas as a Word Document.

Essay 2 or Creative Project. Write a longer analysis of a young adult genre or topic or text, using at least one literary text that we have NOT read in class, and at least two secondary, scholarly sources (these may be taken from critical essays or chapters we've read for class). Please ask if you're unsure if your source is scholarly. If you like, you may use a particular critical methodology to illuminate and connect two texts. You may also revisit the topic of your short essay, provided you develop it considerably and get my approval beforehand. Whatever you choose to do, advance specific argument and support your claims. Some biographical information may be appropriate, but this paper should not be a biographical essay.

7-10 double-spaced pages, 12 point font.

or

In lieu of the critical essay, you may plan and begin work on a young adult writing project of some kind, probably a novel but perhaps a work of poetry or nonfiction, even a play. If you would like to work on such a project, you must let me know of your plans by mid-February even though the piece will continue to evolve as you work on it. I will evaluate your project according to both its quality and the energy you put into it, with the understanding that a good faith effort with relatively few writing errors can earn you an "A." In other words, I do not expect literary genius -- though that would be nice

-- but I do expect you to put in some real time and effort. Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to produce at least the following:

1. A chapter-by-chapter outline, or possibly a detailed section outline;
2. A complete first chapter;
3. Another fairly complete chapter or section, preferably a later one, which might include important scenes and dialogue; and
4. A short explanation of how you got your ideas and how they changed (if they changed) in the process of brainstorming, writing, and revising.

If you model your work on other writings, you might want to mention or even share them. Probably it would be best to assemble a portfolio or folder so that these individual items don't get separated.

Note: this is the fun option, but also the more difficult one in terms of time and energy commitment.

You may give this to me personally by the due date, OR you may submit it to Canvas as a Word Document. If the latter I will use track changes to make comments and return to you. Either method of submission is fine. PDF is also ok if that's necessary.

Active Participation. You will receive a grade for active participation, which means coming to class regularly and on time, paying attention, asking questions, and contributing to in-class discussion. You must do all of these things in order to receive an A for participation. If you are habitually late, you will not receive an A for participation. Same if you pay more attention to your laptop or cellphone than to class discussion.

Essay 1	25%
Essay 2/Project	40%
Memos and quizzes	25%
Active participation	10%

Grade Scale. I give A's to essays using an original and spirited argument to illuminate complexities of language and theme. I give B's to well-organized, well-developed, relatively error-free essays with sparks of originality or daring, and B-'s to competent essays needing more complex development and/or clearer focus. Lower grades mean greater problems with development, structure, and grammar. Recurrent grammatical errors lower the grade; occasional spelling errors and typos don't. Proof your essays. The best essays sustain complex and or audacious arguments; a good B essay capably summarizes and compares themes.

For information on UF grading equivalences and policies, which I follow, see  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

## Schedule

*January*

9 Neubauer, "Ch. 5. Literary Adolescence: An Overview"; Baxter, "Introduction" to  
*The Modern Age*; Kristeva, "The Adolescent Novel"; Hunt, "Young Adult Literature  
 Evades the Theorists" (all e-reserves). (Griffin is optional, if you are craving more.)  
 11 continued. Yampbell, "Judging a Book by Its Cover" (e-reserves); Trites, "Ch. 1. Do  
 I Dare Disturb the Universe?" (e-reserves).

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 14 *Seventeenth Summer*.  
 16 *Seventeenth Summer*.  
 18 *Seventeenth Summer*. Allen, "Dear Miss Daly" (e-reserves).

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 21 MLK holiday; no class.  
 23 *The Outsiders*.  
 25 *The Outsiders*. Tribunella, "Institutionalizing *The Outsiders*" (e-reserves).

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 28 *Speak*.  
 30 *Speak*.

### *February*

1 *Speak*. Miskec & McGee, "My Scars Tell a Story" (e-reserves); Cadden, "The Irony  
 of Narration" (e-reserves).

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 4 *Feed*.  
 6 *Feed*.  
 8 *Feed*. Conners and Trites, "Legend, Exceptionalism, and Genocidal Logic: A  
 Framework for Reading Neoliberalism in YA Dystopias" (e-reserves).

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 11 *American Born Chinese*.  
 13 *American Born Chinese*.  
 15 *American Born Chinese*. Chiu, "The Cultural Production of Asian American Young  
 Adults in the Novels of Marie G. Lee, An Na, and Doris Jones Yang" (e-reserves).

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 18 *Akata Witch*.  
 20 *Akata Witch*.  
 22 *Akata Witch*.

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 25 *I Am J*.  
 27 *I Am J*.

### *March*

1 *I Am J*. Sedgwick, "How to Bring Your Kids Up Gay" (e-reserves). **Essay 1 due.**

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 4-8 Spring Break.

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 11 *I'll Give You the Sun*.  
 13 *I'll Give You the Sun*.  
 15 *I'll Give You the Sun*.

18       *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter.*  
 20       *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter.*  
 22       *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter.*

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 25       *They Both Die at the End.*  
 27       *They Both Die at the End.*  
 29       *They Both Die at the End.*

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**April**

- 1       *The Hate U Give.*  
 3       *The Hate U Give.*  
 5       *The Hate U Give.* Marah Gubar, “Empathy is Not Enough.”  
<http://www.publicbooks.org/empathy-is-not-enough/>  
 Hibdon and Mirk, “America’s Shameful History of Housing Discrimination,”  
[https://thenib.com/america-s-shameful-history-of-housing-discrimination?utm\\_campaign=newsletter-links&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=newsletter](https://thenib.com/america-s-shameful-history-of-housing-discrimination?utm_campaign=newsletter-links&utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter)
- 8       Tosenberger, “Homosexuality at the Online Hogwarts” (e-reserves).  
 10      Online fanfiction, details TBA.  
 12      Martens, selections from *Publishers, Readers, and Digital Engagement* (e-reserves).  
*Optional:* Alexander, “Kids in the Aftermath: The Politics of Hurricane Katrina in Young Adult Fiction” (e-reserves).
- 15      *Jane, Unlimited*, “Tu Reviens” and “The Missing Masterpiece.”  
 17      *Jane, Unlimited*, “Lies Without Borders.”  
 19      *Jane, Unlimited*, “In Which Someone Loses a Soul and Charlotte Finds One.”
- 22      *Jane, Unlimited*, “Jane, Unlimited” and “The Strayhound, the Girl, and the Painting.”  
 24      *Jane Unlimited*; course conclusions.

Essay 2/Projects due **Monday, April 29**. No exceptions.