

WRRH 322: Adolescent Literature

Spring 2011

Section 01 / 3860 • 8:35-10:00 am • W, F • 206B Gulick

Instructor: Michele Polak **Email:** polak@hws.edu
Office/Hours: 205A Smith Hall **Office Phone:** 781-3181
Wednesdays and Fridays 10:30 am - Noon and by appointment

Writing Colleagues: Grace Hennigan: grace.hennigan@hws.edu
Amaury Ramirez: amaury.ramirez@hws.edu

Required Materials

Texts:

- *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, Sherman Alexie
- *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, Stephen Chbosky
- *The House On Mango Street*, Sandra Cisneros
- *The Hunger Games*, Suzanne Collins
- *Annie on My Mind*, Nancy Garden
- *Wintergirls*, Laurie Halse Anderson
- *Crank*, Ellen Hopkins
- *Monster*, Walter Dean Myers
- *Luna*, Julie Anne Peters
- *Mexican WhiteBoy*, Mat de la Pena
- *The Burn Journals*, Brent Runyon
- *Push: A Novel*, Sapphire
- *Rainbow Boys*, Alex Sanchez
- *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*, Marjane Satrapi
- *Stargirl*, Jerry Spinelli

Other:

- Assignments accessed through:
 - Course Website (WEB): <http://www.michelepolak.com/322spring11/Syllabus.html>
 - Student Center (SC): http://www.michelepolak.com/Michele_Polak/Student_Center.html
- Course blog: <http://wrrh322spring11.wordpress.com/>
- digital back-up source: USB key / jump drive

Course Goals, Description and Expectations

From the Course Catalogue: “This course, run as a workshop and compliment to EDUC 320 Children’s Literature, considers contemporary works that represent the main forms of literature for early and late adolescence: science fiction, fantasy, realistic and ‘problems’ novels, and historical novels. Students write young adult fiction, as well as read and discuss young adult novels—their rhetoric, style, and issues. Participants form reading partnerships with local middle and high school students to discuss the books they are reading and the stories they are writing.”

As a 300-level writing course, WRRH322 has been designed to build on the principles of the writing process to study a specific genre of writing and to apply critical analysis to that genre, developing creative ideas about form and content through a rhetorical lens. This course will be complex and challenging, both through our reading and our writing, yet it will strengthen what you know about *what texts do*. We will address a multitude of rhetorical features found in contemporary adolescent fiction including perspective, character development, dialogue, setting and plot, all integrated within a relation to rhetorical action. We will also address who makes up the adolescent literature audience and where authorship among contemporary adolescent fiction can be found. In addition, we will consider what adolescence means in contemporary American culture. This course should be particularly relevant for anyone interested in developing their writing skills, but also be of special interest to anyone planning to work with young adults in middle school or high school settings.

Course Requirements

Critical thinking is the framework in which you should consider placing your writing.

Grading Policy. All projects will be assigned a letter grade based upon the following percentages:

Text Response:	15%	A	100-94%	C+	79-77%
Audience Analysis:	20%	A-	93-90%	C	76-74%
Author Analysis:	20%	B+	89-87%	C-	73-70%
Digital Response:	20%	B	86-84%	D+	69-67%
Final Rhetorical Analysis:	25%	B-	83-80%	D	66-64%

For each project, I will provide the criteria by which your writing will be graded. If at any time you have a question about your grade in this class, please do not hesitate to come see me so we can discuss the issue.

Writing Colleague Meetings. We will have Writing Colleagues in this class to help you with your writing; they are both trained in composition theory and are strong college writers. In addition, they have both taken this course in the past. They will be here to explain things to you, give you advice on papers, communicate with me about things the class is not quite getting, and even to further our in-class discussions. Discussion is the key part of working with your Writing Colleague; they will expect you to not only come to the meetings and listen to their comments, but also to participate in order to better your understanding of what you have written.

You are required to meet with a Writing Colleague for either your Audience or Author Analysis. You should also plan to meet with a Writing Colleague at some point in the semester to discuss at least three of the fifteen Text Responses before posting them to the course blog so that they may offer advice on strengthening your move toward critical thinking. Finally, you should plan to meet with a Writing Colleague to discuss your Final Rhetorical Analysis. Failure to meet with a Writing Colleague for these required meetings, or should you miss any scheduled meetings will count as an absence. Both Writing Colleagues will be meeting with me on a regular basis so they will be your best connection in assuring that you are staying on track to fulfill the requirements of this course.

Keep in mind that our Writing Colleagues are also students with their own course schedules so you should make sure to schedule meetings with them well in advance of assignments due dates. Both of our Writing Colleagues will be attending all of our classes so you may either catch them after class or reach them through their HWS emails listed above.

Participation and Preparation. Not only is it important for you to be present in class, it is also crucial that you have a voice in discussions, group work, and in-class writing. Active, engaged participation is therefore required on your part. You should come to class prepared to participate every day. This means completing all reading and writing assignments, as well as being prepared to discuss what you've learned, observed, loved, and even hated. Know that I have a tendency to call on people at random to get a sense of what is on everyone's mind. I don't do this to make anyone feel awkward or uncomfortable—I do it because some people tend to talk more in class, some less. I do not think that being quiet in class necessarily means you are unprepared. By calling on people, I want to create a space in which we can all engage with one another equally and openly; I want to hear what you have to say, and so will your classmates. This classroom is a safe haven for all ideas. This means that we will respect each other as equal participants in our learning.

Course Policies

Drafts. You are welcome to bring any assignment at any stage of progress to my office for me to look at; there are no limitations on how many drafts I will read. I will be glad to comment and help you make revisions. Taking advantage of this opportunity will assure you the grade you desire for this course. *Please note that I will only be able to help you properly revise if you meet with me in person. I will accept no assignments by email.*

I encourage you to also take advantage of the great writing assistance resources that we have on campus. Hobart and William Smith Colleges encourage students to seek the academic collaboration and resources that will enable them to demonstrate their best work. Students who would like to enhance their study skills, writing skills, or have other academic inquiries should contact the CTL. You can visit the CTL web site to learn more about the services and programs that are available: <http://www.hws.edu/academics/ctl/index.aspx>

Late Work. All assignments are due at the beginning of the class on the assigned due date. If you are absent the day that something is due, you are still required to email your assignments to me by the beginning of class time. Late assignments are *NOT ACCEPTED* except under extraordinary circumstances and only after prearranged negotiations with me.

Attendance. We cannot form a community of voices if the members of the community do not show up. Attendance for this course is mandatory. You will be allowed **three absences** over the course of the semester (no distinctions will be made between excused and unexcused absences, so use these three days wisely). Each subsequent absence will drop your final grade by a full letter grade. If you are absent, you are responsible for what you missed. Get to know your classmates early in the semester so that you have a contact to turn to.

Plagiarism. Plagiarism is an extremely serious offense that could result in an F for your course grade. You have to do your own work and appropriately identify work that is collaborative, borrowed, or copied from other sources. Obviously, when you use words, citations, or even ideas from other sources, you are under the legal and ethical obligation to identify these sources according to citation norms. I take plagiarism very seriously. If you have any questions at any time about what or what may not constitute plagiarism, please do not hesitate to ask me. Your best bet is to just not do it. I'm serious. Don't even try it.

Keep in contact with me. I am always available to meet with you. If you cannot meet with me during office hours, I will be glad to arrange another time that is convenient. If you are having problems meeting the course requirements, please come talk with me ASAP. Keep in mind that should you come to me during Week 12 to discuss how to improve your grade, it will most likely be too late. Keeping an "open line of communication" will help ease any fears or frustrations you may have about this course.

Disability Accommodations. I am very willing to make accommodations to those with disabilities. If you are a student with a disability for which you may need accommodations, you should self-identify and register for services with the Coordinator of Disability Services at the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), and provide documentation of your disability. Disability related accommodations and services generally will not be provided until the registration and documentation process is complete. The guidelines for documenting disabilities can be found at the HWS Disabilities Services website: http://www.hws.edu/studentlife/stuaffairs_disabilities.aspx

The Digital Classroom

Technology. In this section of WRRH322, we will be paperless, utilizing the digital technologies that are available to us on our campus. I advise you to save all your work and back up your files often on whatever digital back up source you have purchased for this class (see Required Materials listed in this syllabus). As technology is not always 100% reliable, having a copy of a completed assignment will save you the risk of receiving an F on an assignment that is not handed in on time due to technological errors. I will not change my Late Policy if you have problems with lost files on your computer—this will get you into the habit of backing up your electronic work! For this class, you should frequently check your HWS email account, as I will notify you of any important class changes through your HWS email address.

Course Website. All of the assignments for this course can be found on the course website. Criteria for each assignment is listed in the website with a link to the .pdf file, downloadable for printing or archiving on your own computer. You can also find links to both the Course Blog and the Student Center in the navigation bar, which contains links to general writing documents and other general course information.

Course Blackboard Site. While the course website will be where you will find most of the information for this course, I will activate our course Blackboard site so that we may access group class emails and the chat function. You have been automatically added to Blackboard. I will be using Blackboard to update the class on any assignment changes or late-breaking news; if you have not activated your HWS email, please do so as it is the only email account that can be used through Blackboard.

Handing in Work

- All assignments are *DUE* at the start of class, emailed directly to me, unless otherwise indicated.
- All writing is to be formatted in MLA style with 1" margins all around, double-spaced, and using an academic or professional font such as Times or Times New Roman, 12pt. unless otherwise specified. (Make sure you check this info in whatever word processing program you use as Microsoft Word and WordPerfect often defaults to 1.5" margins.)
- A page of text must fill at least 3/4 of the page to be considered a full page.

Weekly Schedule, Spring 2011

(Subject to Change)

All projects **DUE**, emailed to me at the start of class unless otherwise indicated.

Text titles and authors names in bold can be found on the course website for download

WEEK 1	READ FOR TODAY	IN CLASS TODAY/DUE
Wed, 1/19		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Intro to course syllabus and website
Fri, 1/21	Crowe , "Young Adult Literature: What Is Young Adult Literature?" Crowe , "Young Adult Literature: YA Boundary Breakers and Makers" Paul , "The Kids' Books Are All Right" Text Response: (WEB > Assignments) Digital Response (WEB > Assignments)	DUE: questions about course syllabus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • defining adolescent literature • authorship
WEEK 2	READ FOR TODAY	IN CLASS TODAY/DUE
Wed, 1/26	Spinelli: Stargirl Analyzing Fiction (SC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • narrative structures • discussion: Stargirl
Fri, 1/28	Audience Analysis (WEB > Assignments) The Rhetorical Appeals (SC) Reading Rhetorically (SC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rhetorical structures • discussion: Stargirl (cont)
WEEK 3	READ FOR TODAY	IN CLASS TODAY/DUE
Wed, 2/2	Chbosky: The Perks of Being A Wallflower Jones , "Reading Boys" McFann , "Boys and Books" Watson , Kehler and Martino, "The Problem of Boys' Literacy Underachievement: Raising Some Questions"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gender and reading • boys and adolescent literature • discussion: Wallflower
Fri, 2/4		NOTE: class meets in 9 Rosenberg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion: Wallflower (cont)
WEEK 4	READ FOR TODAY	IN CLASS TODAY/DUE
Wed, 2/9	Myers: Monster Gillis , "Multiple Voices, Multiple Genres: Fiction for Young Adults"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion: Monster
Fri, 2/11		DUE: Audience Analysis VIRTUAL CLASS DAY online chat text discussion: class meets online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion: Monster (cont)

WEEK 5	READ FOR TODAY	IN CLASS TODAY/DUE
Wed, 2/16	Sapphire: Push: A Novel Lamb and Brown, "Reading Between the Lines: What Girls Read" (up to p.189)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • girls and adolescent literature • discussion: Push
Fri, 2/18		VIRTUAL CLASS DAY online chat text discussion: class meets online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion: Push (cont)

WEEK 6	READ FOR TODAY	IN CLASS TODAY/DUE
Wed, 2/23	Garden: Annie On My Mind Sutton , "A Second Look: Annie On My Mind" Author Analysis (WEB > Assignments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • genre: LGBTQ literature • discussion: Annie
Fri, 2/25		VIRTUAL CLASS DAY online chat text discussion: class meets online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion: Annie (cont)

WEEK 7	READ FOR TODAY	IN CLASS TODAY/DUE
Wed, 3/2	Sanchez: Rainbow Boys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion: Rainbow Boys
Fri, 3/4		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transgenderism • discussion: Rainbow Boys (cont)

WEEK 8	READ FOR TODAY	IN CLASS TODAY/DUE
Wed, 3/9	Peters: Luna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion: Luna
Fri, 3/11		DUE: Author Analysis VIRTUAL CLASS DAY online chat text discussion: class meets online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion: Luna (cont)

WEEK 9	READ FOR TODAY	IN CLASS TODAY/DUE
3/13-3/19	Spring Break —Class does not meet	

WEEK 10	READ FOR TODAY	IN CLASS TODAY/DUE
Wed, 3/23	Collins: The Hunger Games Blasingame and Collins, "An Interview with Suzanne Collins" Final Project (WEB > Assignments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • genre: dystopian novels • discussion: Hunger Games
Fri, 3/25		VIRTUAL CLASS DAY online chat text discussion: class meets online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion: Hunger Games (cont)

WEEK 11	READ FOR TODAY	IN CLASS TODAY/DUE
Wed, 3/30	Satrap: Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood Wood, "Scenes from the Axis of Evil" Iranian History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • genre: graphic novels • discussion: Persepolis
Fri, 4/1	Alexie: The Absolutely True Diary of A Part-Time Indian	VIRTUAL CLASS DAY online chat text discussion: class meets online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion: Part-Time Indian

WEEK 12	READ FOR TODAY	IN CLASS TODAY/DUE
Wed, 4/6	de la Pena: Mexican WhiteBoy Landt, "Multicultural Literature and Young Adolescents: A Kaleidoscope of Opportunity"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion: Mexican WhiteBoy
Fri, 4/8	Cisneros: The House on Mango Street O'Malley, "A Ride Down Mango Street"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion: House on Mango Street

WEEK 13	READ FOR TODAY	IN CLASS TODAY/DUE
Wed, 4/13	Younger, "Pleasure, Pain, and the Power of Being Thin: Female Sexuality in Young Adult Literature"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • genre: teen angst novels
Fri, 4/15	Anderson: Wintergirls	VIRTUAL CLASS DAY online chat text discussion: class meets online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion: Wintergirls

WEEK 14	READ FOR TODAY	IN CLASS TODAY/DUE
Wed, 4/20		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review: rhetorics of adolescent literature • discussion: Wintergirls (cont)
Fri, 4/22	Runyon: The Burn Journals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion: Burn Journals

WEEK 15	READ FOR TODAY	IN CLASS TODAY/DUE
Wed, 4/27	Hopkins: Crank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • course evaluations • discussion: Crank
Fri, 4/29		<p>VIRTUAL CLASS DAY online chat text discussion: class meets online</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discussion: Crank (cont)

Finals Week—class does not meet		
Tues, 5/10	DUE: Final Project, emailed by 3p	