

Carleton University
Fall 2015
Department of English

ENGL 2109A: Gender, Sexuality and Literature

Precludes additional credit for ENGL 2902 [1.0] (no longer offered)
Prerequisite(s): 1.0 credit in ENGL at the 10000 level or permission of the department

Time: Tuesday & Thursday 10:05 – 11:25 am
Location: 403 Southam Hall – Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Instructor: Professor J. Medd
E-mail: jodie.medd@carleton.ca
Office: 1804 Dunton Tower
Phone: 520-2600, ext. 2329

Office Hours: Tu.11:40-1:00 & Wed to 2:40-4:00 & by appointment

ENGL 2109A. Gender, Sexuality, and Literature: Transgressive Fictions

A century of perverts, pederasts, adulterers, queers, and gender & sexual failures of all kinds!

This course focuses on texts that represent transgressions of normative sexuality and gender—including same-sex desire, pederasty, adultery, incest, inter-racial sexuality, and cross-gender identification—with attention to how gender and sexuality are categorized and conceptualized in particular historical and cultural contexts, including their intersection with race, class, nation, colonialism, place, and family. We will explore how select literary texts from England, the United States, and Canada from the 1890s to the present engage with, reflect, resist, and even transform cultural discourses about sexuality and gender through the stories that they tell. We will consider how the work and lives of particular authors have influenced and been affected by popular notions of sexuality and gender. To provide helpful context and theoretical tools, the course will include readings and lectures on critical theories of sexuality and gender and on the history of sexuality. Throughout the course, we will keep an open debate about the ways in which particular labels, categories, identities, and concepts help or hinder, produce and proscribe understandings and interpretations of gender, sexuality, desire, and identity: “The Love that dare not speak its name”? “Unspeakable secrets”? Homoerotic? Heteronormative? Masculine? Feminine? Pervert? Queer? Butch/Femme? Dandy? Straight/Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual? Transgender?

Required Texts (primary texts)

Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw* (Dover)
Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Broadview)
James Baldwin, *Giovanni's Room* (Vintage)
Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home* (Mariner, Houghton Mifflin)
Shani Mootoo, *Cereus Blooms at Night* (Emblem)
Ivan Coyote and Rae Spoon, *Gender Failure* (Arsenal Pulp Press)

**Books are available at Octopus Books (116 Third Avenue, at the corner of Bank Street in the Glebe). Please buy editions indicated (if you are buying new books). Additional readings are available at the reserve desk and/or electronically through ARES, indicated as [ARES] in the reading schedule.

Course Objectives for Student Learning: What will this course give you the opportunity to do?

Reflect on and challenge your ideas and assumptions (or those of the broader culture) about gender and sexuality over history: understand and apply concepts from select key thinkers.

Pay attention to a literary text through close reading: read carefully, critically, and observantly to develop a deeper understanding of literary texts and shape your own ideas and interpretations.

Write better: practice, revise, and get feedback on your writing. Seek extra help if you need it.

Make connections, debate, compare, and relate: make connections within a text, across texts, between small textual details and big ideas, between your ideas and others', between the texts and your life...

Enjoy reading, discussing, debating, thinking about, and writing about a diverse range of literary texts, to come to a deeper understanding of them and the ideas, desires, and identities they explore.

Course Requirements:

How will student learning be assessed?

Students who choose this course will engage in a variety of class activities and assignments. These activities support the course's learning goals by helping you develop your own skills and critical voice in reading, writing, analysis, and discussion. Expectations and evaluation criteria will be distributed with each assignment.

Please keep an electronic copy of all of the out-of-class writing you submit to this course.

Attendance, Participation & Preparation (10%)

Taking this class means a commitment to attend all of the classes, complete assignments on time, and participate in class discussions and activities. Attendance and participation are assessed in the following ways:

1) The class format will rely on discussion (both full-class, and small group) and I will take regular attendance. If you take this class, you are committing to coming to class on time, prepared to ask and answer questions and to participate in discussion. Multiple absences will seriously affect your final grade. **Students are allowed up to 4 unexplained absences per term. After this, you risk receiving zero for your participation mark. In the case of extreme unexplained absenteeism you will lose marks from your final paper. If you miss more than one-third of the classes (up to 8 classes) you may not be allowed to write the exam and thus cannot pass the course. If outstanding circumstances cause you to miss multiple classes, please contact me immediately. Documentation for illness or emergency will be accepted.**

2) To receive credit for your work in **small group discussions**, you may be asked to document (take notes of) your discussions, report back to the class, and either submit the notes to me or post them on cuLearn. Include the full names of all active group participants, so that everyone can receive credit for their work.

3) Periodically, we may do **informal in-class writing** based on the reading. You will respond to a particular passage, idea, or question, (or pose your own question) to prepare for class discussion. Collected in-class writing will receive some feedback; depending on the assignment, you may simply receive credit for doing the writing (which requires having done the reading), or you may receive a mark. In-class writing will not be announced ahead of time and cannot be made up.

Quizzes (5%)

Expect regular very short in-class quizzes, based on the day's reading that will not be announced ahead of time. These are to give you credit for keeping up with the reading and to introduce content for discussion; missed quizzes cannot be made up.

First Essay: Chapter Analysis (10% to 15%)

This short essay will be an analysis and interpretation of a specific chapter from *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, which argues for the significance of that chapter to the novel as a whole. It is due at the beginning of class on October 6. Assignment details, evaluation criteria, and "Paper Format Requirements" will be distributed in class. **This is a mandatory requirement; if you do not complete this essay, you may not pass the course.**

Two Brief Critical Reflections/Close Readings (10% to 15%)

You will write two brief critical reflections (500-750 words each) to practice your skills in close reading and critical thinking about literature. One reflection will in-class on *Giovanni's Room* on October 15, when you will be given a choice of passages to analyze and interpret from the day's assigned reading, and connect its specifics to the wider issues of the novel. The other will be on your choice of either *Fun Home* or *Cereus Blooms at Night* (submitted on any of the classes when we are discussing the reading that is the basis of your reflection). Reflections will be assessed on the clarity of writing as well as the depth of thought and analysis, and making connections but they are not formal essays and do not require an essay structure. More details provided in class. Each reflection will be assessed separately, but together will receive one collective mark. **These are mandatory requirements. If you do not complete these reflections, you may not pass the course.**

The first essay and combined critical reflections will be weighted to most benefit your final mark: 15% for the assignment that receives the higher mark and 10% for the other assignment.

Final Essay (30%)

You will write a final formal essay of about 7-8 pages (2500 to 3000 words). We will have a peer revision session on December 3 and the final paper is due December 7. Please follow the "Paper Format Requirements" for the class. Expectations for the essay will be provided in writing and discussed in class; suggested topics and evaluation criteria will be distributed later in the course. As the final essay is due at the end of the term, there is no space to grant extensions—schedule your time accordingly. If you have an emergency situation, you will need to apply to the registrar for a deferral of your term work (see *Undergraduate Calendar*). **This is a mandatory requirement; if you do not complete the final essay, you will not pass the course.**

Course Requirements and Assessments at a Glance

Requirement	Description/Purpose	Length	Value	Due Date
Close Reading warm-up	close reading	500-750 words	Included in participation	September 17
First Essay	chapter analysis: close reading, writing, make connections	1400-2100 words	10 - 15%	October 6
Two Close Readings	close reading, writing, make connections, reflect	500-750 words (each)	10 - 15% (total for both)	#1: <i>Giovanni's Room</i> (in class, October 15) #2: <i>Fun Home</i> or <i>Cereus Blooms at Night</i> (November 3-24)
Final Essay	comparison/contrast : close reading, make, connections, writing, reflect	2500-3200 words	30%	Draft to peer edit: December 3 Final draft: December 7 (submit to English Department office, Dunton Tower 1812)
Exam	short answer & essay	3 hrs	30%	December, see exam schedule
Quizzes	5 simple questions per quiz	5-10 minutes in class	5%	All term, unannounced
Attendance & Participation	Attendance, discussion, informal writing: close reading, reflect, make connections	varies	10%	All term, every class

Classroom Policies

If you cannot attend class because of illness, contact a member of the class to find out about work you missed, and check cuLearn for announcements, handouts, and assignments. Please seek out notes from a classmate *before* you come to me or the T.A. with questions. **Please turn off cell phones during class and use laptops**

only for taking notes. Being present in class means being as fully present as you can be. Messaging, internet surfing, and other non-class computer activities are distracting and disrespectful to everyone in the course. If you want to use your electronics for purposes other than taking notes, please stay home so you do not distract other class members. I will speak to you directly if there is a problem.

Assignment Submission Policies

Unless otherwise noted, assignments and essays are due as hard copies at the beginning of class on the due date. Late assignments will lose up to 3% for each day late (not class, but day: a paper due on Tuesday but submitted on Thursday may lose up to 6%). Late assignments may also receive minimal written feedback. If you expect to be absent, submit your work by the due date to my mailbox in the English Department Office, 1812 Dunton Tower. There is a drop-box at the office for after-hours submission of student work.

Please keep an electronic copy of all work that you submit.

Note on Final Grades

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Contacting Me: see top of page 1 for office hours & contact information

I am always available during my office hours to discuss any aspect of the course. You can visit or call me during office hours. If my office hours conflict with your schedule, I am happy to schedule an appointment. You can also send me a message by e-mail or to my office voice mail, any time of day or night and I will respond in good time. E-mail is the most reliable means of contacting me; however, use common sense when e-mailing. Do not expect me to respond to major issues with an assignment the night before it is due! You can also e-mail and/or see the course T.A. during their office hours or set up an alternative time to meet.

Intellectual Property

Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s). In other words: you may not post or distribute course materials outside of the course.

Please note: I may reproduce brief, anonymous examples from student writing to support student learning (e.g. to provide examples of great analysis or common writing issues). These are only for use within our class. For longer extracts (e.g. posting an example of an “A” assignment), I will request permission from the author.

Academic Integrity & Plagiarism

Carleton University has a clear policy on academic integrity, including procedures to address academic misconduct. See the Undergraduate Calendar under “Academic Regulations of the University” Section E14: <http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/acadregsuniv14/>

It is particularly important in this class that students understand and meet academic integrity standards, and are sure they do not violate these standards through plagiarism. The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;

- using another's data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course. For more information please go to: <http://www2.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity>

Your short paper assignments are focused on the primary reading and your own ideas—do not go to other sources. If you choose to incorporate research into your final paper (details to be discussed), you must cite your sources appropriately. If you have any questions about when and how to cite reference sources, please ask me or the T.A. For helpful information on avoiding plagiarism and citing sources, see the Student Academic Success Center page: <http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/advisingcentre/academic-integrity/>

Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the Student Guide <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/academic/students/>

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the Student Guide above.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Helpful Student Services

Academic Writing Centre and Writing Tutorial Service (<http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service/>) provides free one-on-one tutoring to help even the strongest writers improve their work. Book appointments online well before essay due dates. 4th floor MacOdrum Library (Learning Support Services Desk)

NOTE: I suggest you request a writing tutor who is an English graduate student. Ask me for suggestions!

Student Academic Success Centre (SASC) (<http://www2.carleton.ca/sasc/>) offers academic advising for students, including educational planning, registering changes in your program or major, transfer credits, and scholarships and international exchange programs. 302 Tory Building

Learning Support Services (LSS) (<http://carleton.ca/lss/>) offers many free programs and services to support student learning, including academic skills development workshops and info sessions, peer helpers, drop-in sessions on study skills, study rooms, etc. Learning Commons, 4th Floor MacOdrum Library

International Student Services Office (<http://www1.carleton.ca/isso/>) 128 University Centre

Carleton Health and Counselling Services (<http://www.carleton.ca/health/>) offers comprehensive health care, including counselling of personal problems and emotional distress. 2600 Carleton Technology & Training Centre.

For more information on Carleton's Student Support Services: <http://students.carleton.ca/student-support-101/>

ENGL 2109A: Reading & Assignment Schedule

- September 3 Introductions & Expectations
- September 8 Discourse & Sexuality: Michel Foucault, from *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1* [ARES]
 September 10 Henry James, *The Turn of the Screw* (Chapter I-XII)
- September 15 James, *The Turn of the Screw* (finish the book)
 September 17 James, *The Turn of the Screw* * **in-class close reading warm-up** *
- September 22 Gender Performativity: Judith Butler “Imitation and Gender Insubordination,” *Inside/Out*
 Butler, “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution,” *Theatre Journal* [ARES]
 September 24 Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Chapters 1-3, to p. 83)
- September 29 Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (to end of Chapter 10, p. 160)
 October 1 Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (finish the novel)
- October 6 Lecture: The Trials and Legacies of Oscar Wilde * **First Essay Due** *
 October 8 James Baldwin, *Giovanni’s Room* (Part 1, to p. 71)
 Michael S. Kimmel, “Masculinity as Homophobia” [ARES]
- October 13 Baldwin, *Giovanni’s Room* (Part 1, discussion continued)
 October 15 Baldwin, *Giovanni’s Room* (Part II, Chapters 1-3, p. 75-118)
 * **in-class close reading/critical reflection** *
- October 20 Baldwin, *Giovanni’s Room* (finish the novel)
 October 22 Documentary, *After Stonewall*
- October 27 & 29: **Fall Break**
- November 3 Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home*, Chapters 1-3
 November 5 Bechdel, *Fun Home*, Chapters 4-5
- November 10 Bechdel, *Fun Home*, Chapters 6-7 (finish the book)
 last class for close reading/critical reflection on *Fun Home* option
 November 12 Shani Mootoo, *Cereus Blooms at Night* (first half of Part I: to p. 52)
- November 17 Mootoo, *Cereus Blooms at Night* (finish Part I)
 November 19 Mootoo, *Cereus Blooms at Night* (Part II)
- November 24 Mootoo, *Cereus Blooms at Night* (Parts III to V)
 last class for close reading/critical reflection on *Cereus Blooms at Night* option
 November 26 Ivan Coyote and Rae Spoon, *Gender Failure*
- December 1 Ivan Coyote and Rae Spoon, *Gender Failure*
 December 3 **Peer editing: Draft of Final Paper Due**
 (-5% from final paper mark if you do not attend with full draft)
- December 7: **FINAL PAPER DUE** (submit hard copy to English Department Office, DT 1812)