

**Carleton University
Winter 2020
Department of English**

ENGL 2109a: *Gender, Sexuality and Literature*

**Precludes additional credit for ENGL 2902 (no longer offered).
Prerequisite(s): second-year standing or permission of the department.**

Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:05-2:25 pm

Location: ME 4494

Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Instructor: Dr. Esther Post

Office: Dunton Tower 1914

Office hours: Thursdays 11:45 am-12:45 pm or by appointment

email: EstherPost@cunet.carleton.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will examine the construction and representation of gender and sexuality in twentieth-century fiction and drama. Drawing upon a wide range of critical discourses on gender, sex, and sexuality, we will explore issues of gender identity, sexual identity, sexual relations and experiences, desire, the body, and the intersections between. We will investigate the various cultural, religious, political, and historical forces that have shaped gender and sexual norms, and will consider the ways in which literature of the last century reproduces and/or resists such norms.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Thomas Mann, *Death in Venice* (novella)

Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita* (novel)

Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomedy* (graphic novel)

Philip Roth, *Portnoy's Complaint* (novel)

Waawaate Fobister, *Agokwe* (play) [ARES]

Jeanette Winterson, "The Poetics of Sex" (short story) [ARES]

Ivan Coyote (short story TBD) [ARES]

Paris is Burning, dir. Jennie Livingstone (documentary film; available on Netflix, to be screened in class)

(Available at Octopus Books, 116 Third Ave., just west of Bank St., by first week of classes)

*short stories and all other readings, will be available through ARES on our course page at CULearn

EVALUATION:

Reading Reflections: (one page, double spaced, for any three texts; 3 X 10%= 30%)

Passage Analysis: (due Thursday, Jan. 30) 15%

Annotated Bibliography: (due Thursday, March 19) 5%

Final Essay: (due Tuesday, April 7) 25%

Final Exam: (April, date to be scheduled by the university) 25%

***Note:** 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.

Note: If one of your assignments is lost, misplaced, or not received by the instructor, you are responsible for having a backup copy that can be submitted immediately upon request.

COURSE POLICIES:

Essay style and format:

- All essays must be double spaced, formatted in Times New Roman font 12, and must conform to MLA style and documentation guidelines.

Submissions:

- ALL assignments MUST be submitted as hard copies in class or through the assignment drop box at the English Department (1812 Dunton Tower) AND as digital copies, emailed as attachments in a word document to estherpost@cunet.carleton.ca.
 - **Essays will not be marked until both a hard copy and digital copy is received.**
- Assignments are NOT to be slipped under my office door.
- If one of your assignments is lost, misplaced, or not received by the instructor, you are responsible for having a backup copy that can be submitted immediately upon request.

Late Policies:

- Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day, including weekends, beginning at 8:30 am the day after the due date; HOWEVER, assignments due on Fridays MUST be submitted in class or at the English Department assignment drop box by 4:30pm or else they will be penalized 5% per day.
 - For example, if an assignment is due on a Friday and is submitted at the drop box at 5 pm that day, it will be penalized 5%. If it is submitted to the drop box the next day, on Saturday, it will be penalized 10%.
- assignments submitted 5 days after the due date will be given a grade, but no comments will be given.
- Extensions *may* be granted in extenuating circumstances, supported by proper documentation (medical etc.), but extensions that are requested on or after the due date will NOT be considered. If you are in a situation that may warrant an extension, please

Speak to me as early as possible, either in person or through email.

Plagiarism: There will be a policy of ZERO TOLERANCE for 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. It is the responsibility of all students to familiarize themselves with the University’s Academic Integrity policy online at <https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy.pdf>

COURSE EXPECTATIONS, CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE, and NETIQUETTE

- Students are expected to attend classes regularly, having read the assigned material before class, and to be prepared to share your thoughts on the readings. Critical reading and analytic skills cannot be learned simply by reading a text, and asking questions, responding to my prompts, and contributing to class discussions will hone your critical thinking skills.
- **Classroom etiquette:** We will have a discussion on the first day of class about these policies, but these are some of the most important principles:
 - While students will be encouraged to share their opinions about our readings, there will be no toleration of sexist, misogynist, racist, homophobic, or transphobic language. I expect all students to show respect for their fellow classmates and the instructor, even if there are significant differences of opinion.
 - Private conversations between students, especially while other students or the instructor is speaking, are disrespectful to everyone else in the room and will be discouraged, particularly given the nature of our course subject.
 - Likewise, using phones or laptops to do anything that is not course-related is also extremely disrespectful, not to mention highly distracting for both the professor and other students. You will be asked to turn your phones to silent at the beginning of each class, and gentle reminders will be given to students using their phones for the first few classes, after which point, not-so-gentle reminders will be

- given.
- Laptops should be used only for note-taking purposes, and students who use their computers for any other reason will be asked to turn their computers off. If this is a consistent issue, only students with PMC-approved laptops will be allowed to use them in class.
 - Please do not wear headphones or earbuds during class, as your full attention is needed for the duration of the class.
 - **Netiquette:**
 - The best way to get in contact with me is by email (EstherPost@cunet.carleton.ca). I check email at least once a day, and will respond to emails within 48 hours, though it could take longer on weekends.
 - When emailing, please be professional. Do not use text speak, do not begin your email with an informal greeting such as “hey!”, and identify yourself by your full name as well as the course code.
 - Emails should be reserved for clear, precise questions; they should not be used to ask questions such as, “what should I read for next week?” or anything else that simply requires you to read the syllabus.
 - **CULearn:**
 - You will be required to use CULearn on a regular basis, as all relevant documents related to our course, including the syllabus, assignment instructions, etc. will be uploaded to this page. Most importantly, treat this syllabus as your bible for this course, as it provides all necessary information in terms of reading and assignment schedules, submission policies, etc.
 - Should I need to cancel a class due to illness, family emergency, etc., I will post an announcement to CULearn before class begins and will also email the entire course.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS:

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

Pregnancy obligation

Please contact your instructor 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, visit the Equity Services website: <https://carleton.ca/equity/contact/form-pregnancy-accommodation/>

Religious obligation

Please contact your instructor 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, visit the Equity Services website: <https://carleton.ca/equity/focus/discrimination-harassment/religious-spiritual-observances/>

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the

PMC 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 your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. For more details, visit the Paul Menton Centre Website: carleton.ca/pmc

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/focus/sexual-violence-prevention-survivor-support/>

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor 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. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

READING AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE (subject to revision)

Week 1:

Tues. Jan. 7: intro to course and overview of syllabus

Thurs. Jan. 9: Michel Foucault, excerpts from *The History of Sexuality Vol. One* (“We Other Victorians”) [ARES]

Week 2:

Tues. Jan. 14: Foucault, “The Incitement to Discourse” [ARES]

*Thurs. Jan. 16: Thomas Mann, *Death in Venice*

Week 3:

Tues. Jan. 21: *Death in Venice* (cont’d)

*Thurs. Jan 23: Vladimir Nabokov, *Lolita*

Week 4:

Tues. Jan. 28: *Lolita* (cont’d)

Thurs. Jan. 30: *Lolita* (cont’d) ***PASSAGE ANALYSIS DUE***

Week 5:

*Tues. Feb. 4: Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomedy*

Thurs. Feb. 6: *Fun Home* (cont’d)

Week 6:

Tues. Feb. 11: Sigmund Freud, “The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex” [ARES]

*Thurs. Feb. 13: Philip Roth, *Portnoy’s Complaint*

Tues. Feb. 18: READING WEEK – NO CLASSES

Thurs. Feb. 20: READING WEEK – NO CLASSES

Week 7:

Tues. Feb. 25: *Portnoy* (cont’d)

Thurs. Feb. 27: *Portnoy* (cont’d)

Week 8:

*Tues. Mar. 3: Waawaate Fobister, *Agokwe* [ARES]

Thurs. Mar. 5: *Agokwe* (cont’d)

Week 9:

Tues. Mar. 10: Adrienne Rich, “Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence” and Audre Lorde, “Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power” [ARES]

*Thurs. Mar. 12: Winterson “The Poetics of Sex” [ARES]

Week 10:

Tues. Mar. 17: Winterson (cont’d)

*Thurs. Mar. 19: Ivan Coyote (short story; TBD) [ARES] ***ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE***

Week 11:

Tues. Mar. 24: Coyote (cont’d)

Thurs. Mar. 26: Essay writing lecture

Week 12:

Tues. Mar. 31: Judith Butler, “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution” [ARES]; begin *Paris is Burning* (screening in class; available on Netflix)

Thurs. Apr. 2: *Paris is Burning* (cont’d)

Tues. Apr. 7: Review and exam prep ***FINAL CLASS* *FINAL ESSAY DUE***