

English 506: Problems in Adolescent Literature
The Badlands: Adolescent and YA Apocalyptic and Dystopian
Literature, Fall, 2013

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Office Hours: Face-to-face: Tuesday, 8:30-10:30, 3:00-4:30, Thursday, 9:00-10:30; e-mail, and by appointment.

Required Texts

Please note that sometimes the bookstore does not carry the books; it is nevertheless your responsibility to find the books. All except *Z for Zachariah* (and the MLA Handbook) are available electronically

* When the Tripods Came Author: CHRISTOPHER ISBN: 9780689857621	* The Parable of the Sower Author: BUTLER ISBN: 9780446675505
* The White Mountains Author: CHRISTOPHER ISBN: 9780689856723	* Eva Author: DICKINSON ISBN: 9780440207665
Z for Zachariah Author: O'BRIEN ISBN: 9781416939214	* Unwind Author: SHUSTERMAN ISBN: 9781416912057
* The Dead and the Gone Author: PFEFFER ISBN: 9780547258553	* Feed Author: ANDERSON ISBN: 9780763622596
* This Is Not a Test Author: SUMMERS ISBN: 9780312656744	* 1984 Author: ORWELL ISBN: 9780451524935
* Little Brother Author: DOCTOROW ISBN: 9780765323118 Also available for free download: http://craphound.com/littlebrother/download/ or http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/30142	* The Giver Author: LOWRY ISBN: 9780440237686
MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th ed. Author: GIBALDI ISBN: 9781603290241	*Also available on Kindle

Catalog Description: An overview of the various problems associated with adolescent literature including the “problem novel” and “new realism,” how adolescent literature is defined, issues associated with censorship, and the problems adolescents experience in the texts.

Course Description: An exploration of apocalyptic/dystopian fiction written for adolescent/young adult readers, for the protagonists of these novels could have no larger problems, right? The end of the world. Being unwound. Being tortured. Attacked by zombies. Oh. My. Balaka Basu, Katherine R. Broad, and Carrie Hintz in *Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young Adults: Brave New Teenagers* (New York: Routledge, 2013) note that teen readers “are diving deeper into the dystopian well, finding a sense of pleasure in texts that display an increasingly gloomy vision of the world they are to inherit” and point to the genre’s “overwhelming attraction for young audiences” (2). Not to be left behind, scholars have engaged in more earnest and plentiful discussions of the why’s and how’s of adolescent and YA dystopian fiction. We will join them. You will read a wide range of novels roughly divided into three areas: apocalyptic, dystopian, and what I characterize as “dystopia becoming.” As you will discover, the distinctions quite frequently become blurred. Additionally, you will become familiar with some of the existing scholarship on the topic.

Course Objectives:

- Become conversant in the history and themes associated with adolescent/YA apocalyptic/dystopian literature.
- Become conversant in the political, cultural, and ideological influences regarding the production of texts
- Become conversant in some aspect of the scholarship regarding adolescent/YA apocalyptic/dystopian literature.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students will produce a text that reflects the treatment of some aspect adolescent/YA apocalyptic/dystopian literature. The text should:

- Demonstrate a broad understanding of the scholarship and theories concerning (post)apocalyptic and dystopian literature in general and more specifically adolescent/YA (post)apocalyptic and dystopian literature:
 - Reflect an understanding of what constitutes rigorous scholarship
 - Demonstrate evidence of a close and careful reading and understanding of the chosen scholarship (including marginal notes, annotations, and “conversations” with the texts)
 - Be written in a sophisticated style appropriate to graduate-level writing
 - Include meticulous documentation.

Assignments, Evaluation, and Grading:

Assignments

Article presentation	20%
Introduction/Edited Collection (portfolio style)	40%

Final Project	40%
Grading	
90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
50-59%	F

#1

Article Presentation: Students will identify and lead discussion of a scholarly, rigorous, well-written, applicable article or book chapter dealing with dystopian or apocalyptic literature, the text we're reading that week, or a text we have previously read. Students should send out the title/location (or a scanned copy if not available electronically) no later than the Monday of the previous week of presentation. In other words, if you're presenting on Tuesday, Sept. 10, you should provide the information on Monday, Sept. 2.

All students should read the article and be prepared to discuss it.

Presentation should:

- Be logically organized
- Identify the main argument
- Be on topic and of general interest to the class (reading a powerpoint is not going to be interesting)
- Include commentary regarding disagreement, gaps, problems, or examples of application
- Also, students should be professional and appear knowledgeable in their presentation

You, your peers, and I will evaluate the presentation

#2

Introduction/Edited Collection: Students will compile 10 published scholarly articles or book chapters on adolescent/YA dystopian literature AND write a 2000-word introduction that identifies the relationships among the chosen texts and demonstrates an overall understanding of dystopian and (post)apocalyptic literature as well as a more specific understanding of adolescent/YA (post)apocalyptic and dystopian literature.

Completed assignment should:

- Include an introduction that demonstrates a broad understanding of the scholarship and theories concerning (post)apocalyptic and dystopian literature in general and more specifically adolescent/YA (post)apocalyptic and dystopian literature
- Reflect an understanding of what constitutes rigorous scholarship
- Demonstrate evidence of a close and careful reading and understanding of the chosen scholarship (including marginal notes, annotations, and "conversations" with the texts)
- Consist of a cohesive collection (can be divided in two parts, however)
- Be written in a sophisticated style similar to other published collections
- Include meticulous documentation.

Other:

- Place the introduction and the articles (articles should have your notations) in a three-ring notebook.
- **Also turn in the introduction through eCollege dropbox. You do not need to turn in the articles through eCollege.**
- Note that you should choose no more than two articles from any one journal (but not the same issue) and only one chapter from any one book. For instance, you can include two articles from *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, but the articles must be from different issues.
- Do not use book reviews
- Please do not include articles on pedagogy

#3

Final Project—Scholarly Treatment of Text (see rubric at the end of syllabus for expectations)

Option 1: Students will write a 350- to 500-word proposal regarding the scholarly treatment of a text. Once I approve the proposal, students will write an annotated bibliography consisting of 15 scholarly texts (entries should be 300 words each, not including the bibliographic information) dealing with the topic, and a 3,000-word conference paper.

Option 2: Students will write a 350- to 500-word proposal regarding the scholarly treatment of a text. Once I have approved the proposal, students will write an article-length paper (6,000 words) offering insights regarding some facet of adolescent/YA apocalyptic/dystopian literature, suitable for publication in a scholarly journal or edited collection. Additionally, write a 500-word abstract explaining the article (this will be the first part of the article).

Students will give a 15-minute presentation regarding their final project on 12/3.

Please note that you are responsible for taking notes about assignments. I don't include everything in my course policies. If you are not in class, you should ask multiple students in the class so that you have a good sense of what we discussed in the class you missed, including any special instructions regarding assignments.

Course Policies

Late Papers: I seldom accept late papers, and if I do, it is at my discretion. Additionally, expect no better than a C on a paper that is turned in late. A late paper cannot be revised.

Attendance: I know how very complicated life can be. Still, as graduate students, you have greater responsibilities than undergraduate students in terms of attendance and discussion in that you are demonstrating your professionalism through the classes you take and how you conduct yourself in those classes. If you miss classes, I will assume one of two things: you have other priorities or you're not taking the course seriously. You DON'T want me to think that, for I won't make you a priority and it will be difficult to take your work seriously. The classes I teach are my priority; I expect the same from you. If you miss more than two class periods, expect your

grade to reflect as much. If you miss more than three class periods, I reserve the right to drop you.

Revision Policy: Revisions are at my discretion, but I generally encourage students to revise. Some circumstances that preclude revision:

1. The assignment has been turned in late
2. You have made an A or B on the assignment
3. I perceive that the mistakes are careless or a result of not spending sufficient time on the assignment
4. The assignment does not meet the basic requirements (incomplete, doesn't meet word count, etc.) I have established
5. The paper has been recycled or was not written by you. A recycled paper is one written for another class and handed in under the pretense that it was written for this class. Students are welcome to use material written for other classes, but they must first clear it with me, and I will explain what needs to be done in order for it to be acceptable.

Incomplete Grades: The circumstances must be very serious before I will grant an incomplete for the course, and then it depends on the Dean as to whether or not the incomplete will be permitted. You will have to supply documentation in order to obtain an incomplete. That doesn't come from me. It comes from the dean.

Academic Honesty Policy: Texas A&M University-Commerce does not tolerate **plagiarism** and other forms of academic **dishonesty**. Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), recycling papers written for other classes, cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material. See the following helpful resources regarding plagiarism:

1. your *MLA Handbook*
2. <http://www.plagiarism.org/>
3. <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html>
<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>

Ultimately, you are responsible for indicating when you have used specific words, sentences, or paragraphs, which belong to other writers. These words, sentences, or paragraphs should be designated via quotation marks and in-text citations. Additionally, identify when you use ideas from other sources. If you use the exact wording of something you've read or if you paraphrase it, provide a specific citation indicating where you found your information. If in question, cite it, and indicate that you've cited it by using quotation marks and in-text citations. Think of it in these terms: knowledge is a commodity, especially in the academic community. If you had a brilliant idea, or a wonderful way with words, would you like it if someone used your idea or words without acknowledging you? In short, I will fail papers that are copied or that do not acknowledge sources. If you have questions, ask me, and I will help you. If I discover a paper has been plagiarized, I will fail the paper, which will likely result in an F for the class. Further, according to the Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b[1,2,3],

penalties for students guilty of academic dishonesty include disciplinary probation, suspension, and expulsion.

Egregious plagiarism such as recycling a paper, turning in a paper that you did not write, copying/pasting text without citation, or similar actions will result in one or more of the following: a 0 for the assignment, an F for the class, disciplinary action administered by the university.

Technology Requirements, Access, & Navigation:

The following information has been provided to assist you in preparing to use technology successfully in this course. You will need access to the following technologies:

1. Access to eCollege. All written assignments will be uploaded to the eCollege dropboxes.
2. Internet access/connection – high speed recommended
3. Word Processor: MS Word [doc or docx]. If you do not have MS word, you can save your texts as rtf (rich text format) or txt (plain text). Be aware that saving documents in rtf or txt will possibly cause problems with formatting, and formatting is important in this class. If saving your document in txt or rtf, contact me, and I will help you identify a solution.

Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you use a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (8.0).

Your courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better. Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, eCollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.

I strongly recommend that you perform a “Browser Test” prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login in to eCollege, click on the “myCourses” tab, and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamu-commerce.edu.]

Communication and Support and Primary Communication Tools

I rely mainly on e-mail, class time, and face-to-face appointments. I also encourage you to visit me in person (if you’re on campus) during office hours: **Face-to-face**, Tues/Thurs: 1:30-4:00, or by appointment; I will generally respond to e-mails within 24 hours of receiving them Monday-Thursday. If I receive your e-mail early enough on Friday, I’ll try to respond that day.

While I reply to individual e-mails with non-campus e-mail addresses, if I send out a mass e-mail, it will go to your campus e-mail address. Please check your campus e-mail daily.

eCollege Student Technical Support:

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of eCollege. The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Chat Support: Click on “Live Support” on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.

Phone: 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

Email: helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with eCollege Technical Support Representative.

Help: Click on the “Help” button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e. How to submit to dropbox, How to post to discussions etc...)

University Student Technical Support

The writing center located in the Hall of Languages is a great resource. They work with graduate students all of the time. Take advantage of their expertise.

University Procedures/Policies

Drop a Course: Students may drop a course by logging into their myLEO account and clicking on the hyperlink labeled “Drop a class” from among the choices found under the myLEO section of the Web page.

Administrative Withdrawal: I reserve the right to administratively drop students for excessive (more than 3) absences.

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library, Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Final Project Rubric (Dr. Roggenkamp has generously let me copy her rubric I have revised it to reflect the nature of this class)		
FOCUS/THESIS		
	Excellent: Exceeds expectations	Offers significant argumentative insight with complex ideas Fully addresses assignment requirements Consistently focused throughout paper Very clearly stated
	Darned good: Meets nearly all expectations	Offers argument insight, but not as compelling as “A” level Addresses assignment requirements Consistently focused throughout paper (but not as strong as “A”) Clearly stated
	Generally good: Meets most expectations	Stated thesis, but may not be cohesive or concise or clear Thesis may be too obvious, not complex compared to A, B level Not fully supported or drawn out throughout paper Doesn’t respond fully to assignment
	Not so good: Meets few expectations	Thesis not clearly stated at all (or isn’t present) Doesn’t respond to assignment Offers little or no argumentative insight Thesis, if present, not supported throughout paper (paper “strays”)
SCHOLARSHIP/RESEARCH		
	Excellent: Exceeds expectations	Incorporates scholarship in a way that advances a unique argument in a nuanced way Demonstrates an excellent understanding of the foundational scholarship and theories concerning (post)apocalyptic and dystopian literature in general and more specifically adolescent/YA (post)apocalyptic and dystopian literature Exhibits an excellent understanding of what constitutes rigorous scholarship Evidence of a close and careful reading and understanding of scholarship If discussing individual novels that have scholarship, will include productive and nuanced discussions of that scholarship that demonstrate a close and careful reading The inclusion of all of the above is seamless. Works cited and in-text documentation are meticulous (MLA). Everything is documented.
	Darned good: Meets nearly all expectations	Incorporates scholarship in a way that advances an interesting argument in a nuanced way, but not as strong as an “A” Demonstrates a good understanding of the foundational scholarship and theories concerning (post)apocalyptic and dystopian literature in general and more specifically adolescent/YA (post)apocalyptic and dystopian literature Exhibits a good understanding of what constitutes rigorous scholarship

		<p>Evidence of a close reading and solid understanding of scholarship, though not as strong as an “A”</p> <p>If discussing individual novels that have scholarship, will include accurate discussions of that scholarship</p> <p>The inclusion of all of the above is generally seamless.</p> <p>Works cited and in-text documentation are nearly meticulous (MLA). Everything is documented.</p>
Generally good: Meets most expectations		<p>Incorporates scholarship in a way that advances an argument, though the argument might be somewhat predictable.</p> <p>Demonstrates a passing understanding of the foundational scholarship and theories concerning (post)apocalyptic and dystopian literature in general and more specifically adolescent/YA (post)apocalyptic and dystopian literature</p> <p>Exhibits a passing understanding of what constitutes rigorous scholarship</p> <p>Evidence of an understanding of the available and scholarship, but might be treated in a cursory manner</p> <p>If discussing individual novels that have scholarship, will include cursory discussions of that scholarship</p> <p>May demonstrate some difficulty with the inclusion of the above.</p> <p>Experiences some challenges with the works cited and in-text documentation (MLA). Everything is documented.</p>
Not so good: Meets few expectations		<p>Incorporates scholarship in a way that does little to advance an argument</p> <p>Demonstrates very little understanding of the foundational scholarship and theories concerning (post)apocalyptic and dystopian literature in general and more specifically adolescent/YA (post)apocalyptic and dystopian literature</p> <p>Exhibits very little understanding of what constitutes rigorous scholarship</p> <p>Very little evidence of an understanding of the available and scholarship, but might be treated in a cursory manner</p> <p>If discussing individual novels that have scholarship, might neglect that scholarship</p> <p>Misinterprets or misunderstands the scholarship</p> <p>Demonstrates difficulty with the inclusion of scholarship in general.</p> <p>Experiences several challenges with the works cited and in-text documentation (MLA). Items might not be documented; page numbers might be included.</p>
DEVELOPMENT		
Excellent: Exceeds expectations		<p>Excellent awareness of audience</p> <p>Addresses rhetorical aim with sophisticated writing and ideas</p> <p>Convincing, creative supporting analysis and argument</p> <p>Insightful analysis relating to thesis</p>

		Concrete examples, which are well used in making argument Drawing from appropriate sources (the texts we used in class, for instance), thoroughly and insightfully explains the method used (feminism, Marxism, race theory, etc.) and seamlessly applies that methodology.
Darned good: Meets nearly all expectations		Solid awareness of audience Addresses rhetorical aim with clarity Convincing supporting examples, but not used with as much sophistication or not explained as fully as in A paper Some good analysis relating to thesis Drawing from appropriate sources (the texts we used in class, for instance), demonstrates a solid knowledge of the methodology (feminism, Marxism, race theory, etc.) used and applies the methodology (but not as seamless as in the A paper)
Generally good: Meets most expectations		Sufficient audience awareness Uses some supporting information, but doesn't explain thoroughly Or, does not use supporting details/examples from text Has some analysis, but is not as developed as in A or B paper Argumentation and development stray from thesis Demonstrates some sense of the methodology as garnered from class discussions
Not so good: Meets few expectations		Lack of or insufficient audience awareness Unconvincing or incomplete argumentation Argumentation and development stray from thesis significantly Does not use supporting details/examples from text May use some supporting details, but without explaining them Demonstrates little or no understanding of the methodology
ORGANIZATION		
Excellent: Exceeds expectations		Cohesively and clearly organized, with sophisticated structure Logical progression of argument, with clear, creative transitions Well-developed, well-structured paragraphs
Darned good: Meets nearly all expectations		Effectively organized Logical progression of thought, with generally clear transitions Well-developed paragraphs, though could take argument further
Generally good: Meets most expectations		Somewhat confusingly organized Generally logical progression of thought, with adequate transitions But may have some jumping from one idea to another Paragraphs/ideas/arguments need to be drawn out further
Not so good: Meets few expectations		Not clearly organized at all Illogical development of ideas, with abrupt or unclear transitions Undeveloped and unstructured paragraphs
STYLE		
Excellent: Exceeds		Varied, sophisticated sentence structure Precise, creative, and powerful word choice

	expectations	Creative use of tone and voice Sophisticated, engaging introduction and conclusion
	Darned good: Meets nearly all expectations	Varied sentence structure—not as smooth, sophisticated as A paper Adequate word choices Appropriate tone and voice Introduction is interesting and sheds insight into the content of the essay; Conclusion is interesting and offers some new insights
	Generally good: Meets most expectations	Some variation in sentence structure Average word choice Appropriate tone and voice Introduction is somewhat perfunctory in that it might simply establish what will be discussed; conclusion is perfunctory in that it might simply restate the content of the essay
	Not so good: Meets few expectations	Unvaried sentence structure Poor word choice Inappropriate tone and voice Lacks an introduction; introduction seems unrelated to the remainder of the essay; introduction is difficult to follow because ideas aren't clear, possibly as a result of structural issues. Lacks a conclusion; conclusion is unrelated to the essay
WRITING CONVENTIONS		
	Excellent: Exceeds expectations	Perfect or near perfect use of Standard English Free of mechanical, grammatical, typographical errors Presented in appropriate citation format (MLA style)
	Darned good: Meets nearly all expectations	Generally strong use of Standard English Relatively free of mechanical, grammatical, typographical errors Presented in appropriate citation format (MLA style)
	Generally good: Meets most expectations	Weaker use of Standard English Quite a few mechanical, grammatical, typographical errors Not presented in appropriate citation format (MLA style)
	Not so good: Meets few expectations	Not written in Standard English Consistent and varied mechanical, grammatical, typographical errors Inappropriate format

Course Schedule

Please note this schedule is subject to revision
I will give students plenty of notice if anything is revised

Week/Date	Assignment
1 8/27	Introductions
2 9/3	1984 "On Dystopia" (eCollege doc sharing)
3 9/10	<i>Little Brother</i> Article presentation
4 9/17	<i>The Giver</i> Article presentation
5 9/24	From <i>Better off Dead</i> (eCollege doc sharing) Sambell, Kay. "Carnivalizing the Future: A New Approach to Theorizing Childhood and Adulthood in Science Fiction for Young Readers." (Find on your own) "Introduction": (eCollege doc sharing)
6 10/1	<i>White Mountains</i> Article presentation
7 10/8	<i>When the Tripods Came</i> Article presentation
8 10/15	<i>Z for Zachariah</i> Article presentation
9 10/22	<i>This is Not a Test</i> Article presentation Edited Collection Due (Friday)
10 10/29	<i>Unwind</i> Article presentation
11 11/5	<i>Feed</i> Article presentation
12 11/12	<i>The Dead and the Gone</i> Article presentation Submit your proposal for final project (Friday)
13 11/19	<i>Parable of the Sower</i> Article presentation
14 11/26	<i>Eva</i> Article presentation
15 12/3	Presentations regarding final project Final Project Due Friday (conference paper/annotated bib/formal proposal or proposal and article-length paper)
Finals week	12/8-13