

## ENG 206.03 Popular Genres: LGBTQ YA Lit, #TrumanQueerYA

Monday & Wednesday, 3:30-4:50, Violette Hall 1430

Instructor: Summer Pennell. You can call me Summer or Dr. Pennell (no Miss, Mrs., or Ms. please).

Contact: email, [spennell@truman.edu](mailto:spennell@truman.edu); Twitter, @summerpennell

Office hours: McClain 326, Monday 9:30-12, Wednesday 1:00- 3:00, and by appointment.

### Course Description:

From catalogue: An exploration and evaluation of a popular genre in a single semester, with appropriate background readings and criticism. Students read and write about a variety of works in the selected genre. Potential topics include but are not limited to, science fiction, fantasy, mystery, horror, and the graphic novel. May be repeated under different topics.

Young adult novels tackle all kinds of identities and issues that affect young people. Recently, the choices for lesbian-gay-bi-transgender-queer (LGBTQ) young adult novels have grown tremendously. More than stories of coming out and bullying, these novels show the spectrum of LGBTQ youth experiences. In this course, we will read from a variety of genres, talk about the strengths inherent to queer youth experiences, and briefly review relevant work in queer theory.

### Course Goals:

Through this course, I hope that you will:

- Examine the intersections and complexity of LGBTQ identities
- Question and critique the social construction of adolescence and LGBTQ+ youth
- Improve your skills as critical readers and writers
- Learn to communicate effectively with your classmates and a global twitter audience
- Practice applying (queer) theory to text

### Required Course Materials:

#### Required texts:

- *Afterworlds*, Scott Westerfeld
- *Carry On*, Rainbow Rowell
- *Huntress*, Malinda Lo
- *Openly Straight*, Bill Konigsberg
- *The Art of Being Normal*, Lisa Williamson
- *We Are the Ants*, Shaun Hutchinson
- Other texts will be available on Blackboard

#### Twitter requirements for #TrumanQueerYA:

- Public twitter account to tweet your classmates, me, and the authors we read
- You must follow these accounts: your classmates (we'll post these on Blackboard) @summerpennell (yours truly), and the YA authors we're reading: @ScottWesterfeld, @rainbowrowell, @malindalo, @billkonigsberg, @lisa\_letters, & @ShaunieDarko
- Suggested accounts to follow (not required): @thegayYA, @LGBTQReads, @QueerYA, @DisabilityInLit
- If you find more accounts we should be following, please let me/the class know!

### **Recommended websites/blogs for finding more YA and LGBTQ books:**

- Assembly on Literature for Adolescents (ALAN) <http://www.alan-ya.org/>, they have an annual conference and a journal, *The ALAN Review*
- The Midnight Garden: YA for Adults, <http://www.themidnightgarden.net/>, has YA book reviews. We will be talking with one of their reviewers, Layla Aldousany
- Young Adult Library Services (YALSA): <http://www.ala.org/yalsa/>
- Stonewall Book Awards, annual awards for LGBTQ books from the American Library Association (ALA) <http://www.ala.org/glbtrt/award/honored>
- Lambda Literary Awards, another LGBTQ book award, <http://www.lambdaliterary.org/awards/>

**Attendance Policy:** The success of this class depends on your participation and attendance. Everyone is allowed two “free” absences; any more will affect your grade. You do not need to bring any doctor’s notes for these. You do, however, still need to abide by assignment deadlines. If you have an emergency where this is not possible, talk to me. If you do have an illness or other emergency that requires you to miss more than two classes, please bring me a doctor’s note or other appropriate documentation. When you miss class it is your responsibility to get notes from your classmates and to keep up with assignments as posted in the syllabus.

**Participation:** This is a discussion-based class. As such, everyone is expected to participate. To be fully prepared, you should complete assigned readings before class and come with questions and comments. You should be on time for class. I expect everyone to actively participate by listening carefully and respectfully, offering comments and questions, and working collegially with each other. We will also participate via Twitter, using our class hashtag: #TrumanQueerYA. Students who are uncomfortable speaking in class may make comments on Twitter instead.

**Technology:** Laptops may be used for note-taking, posting to Twitter, and during activities, but I ask you to be respectful of the class and not check your email or non-class related social media during class. Cell phones may be kept on silent and used to participate on Twitter. Please be respectful and refrain from texting or other non-class-related activities on your cell phone during class.

### **Grading Policy:**

- Low-stakes writing assignments will be graded as v+, v, or v-
- Tweets are evaluated using a rubric posted on Blackboard.
- Formal written assignments (term paper and part two of queer cultural capital assignment) will be graded using the departmental critical thinking rubric. This is posted on Blackboard- I strongly suggest you consult this carefully before beginning your assignments.

### **Academic Integrity:**

- All students are expected to follow the Student Code of Conduct (<http://www.truman.edu/conduct/>) which includes avoiding plagiarism.
- The student handbook defines plagiarism as: “Intentional representation of the words or ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise. The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, (a) the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work or sections of a work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement; (b) the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling

of term papers or other academic materials, including material taken from or ordered through the Internet; and/or (c) the unacknowledged use of original work/material that has been produced.”

- See the conduct code for more information: <http://www.truman.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/CHAPTER-8-REVISED-August-1-2015.pdf>.
- All **written assignments** should use either MLA or APA standards (use whatever your major uses; ask me or your academic advisor if you aren't sure). Always, always cite sources even if you're just using a sentence, or an idea. As a former journal editor, I am a stickler for properly cited sources and I'll help you when you're unsure. Purdue OWL is a great source for all things writing and citation.

### **Writing Center**

I encourage you to use the university's Writing Center for your writing projects. It is not a proofreading service. The writing consultants will read your work and give you feedback, letting you know what is working well (and why) and what might not be working so well (and why). They can help you understand and better your writing craft. They can also do brainstorming if you're having a hard time beginning. And they have an online scheduler, so making an appointment is easy. Go here: <http://writingcenter.truman.edu>.

### **ADA Accommodations and Student Health:**

- The university is committed to making every possible effort to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both me and the Disability Services office (x. 4478) as soon as possible.
- More and more college students are experiencing symptoms of severe depression. If you are struggling emotionally, please let me know. I urge you to set up an appointment at the Counseling Center, 660-785-4014, or [ucs@truman.edu](mailto:ucs@truman.edu). The after-hours crisis hotline is 660-665-5621; ask the public safety representative who answers to connect you with a Truman counselor.

### **Title IX and Student Sexual Misconduct**

Truman State University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and fostering an environment that is free from bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g., sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member is a “mandated reporter” and must notify Truman State University's Title IX Coordinator, Jamie Ball (McClain Hall, 101, [jball@truman.edu](mailto:jball@truman.edu), 785-4354) and share the basic fact of your experience with her.

The Title IX Coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all your options and in connecting you with resources both on and off campus. If you would prefer to have a confidential conversation about an experience, the counselors at University Counseling Services are NOT mandated reporters and they can be reached at 660-785-4014. For after-hours crisis counseling, call 660-665-5621.

For more information regarding Truman's policies and procedures relating to any form of gender discrimination, please see <http://eoaa.truman.edu/university-nondiscrimination-policy/> and <http://eoaa.truman.edu/complaint-reporting-resolutionprocedure/>.

**Major Assignments:** Detailed descriptions are on Blackboard

Assignment	Brief Description	Percentage of Final Grade	Due Date(s)
Tweets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tweet twice a week using our class hashtag #TrumanQueerYA. [see handout on tweeting/questioning]. These tweets can be in response to a classmate’s tweet, or an original thought, and can be posted in class.</li> <li>• Tweet a question to an author (by including their handle in your tweet) at least 3 times over the semester. If they answer, continue the conversation. Remember to use the hashtag.</li> </ul>	10	Ongoing
Response Papers	<p>There will be 5 low-stakes (meaning I don’t care much about grammar, spelling, or form) writing assignments throughout the semester so you can practice responding to and engaging with the texts. These can be jumping off points for your term paper. Due dates are indicated in the syllabus and details are on Blackboard.</p>	15	Varies; see syllabus
Group discussion leading	<p>With a group, you will lead discussion for one class period (plan for 45-60 minutes) on one of our novels. Be as creative as you like as you lead us through a discussion of what makes you intrigued, frustrated, fascinated, bored, or want to read more about the characters. Sign-ups occur Week 2.</p>	20	Varies
Queer Cultural Capital Investigation	<p>Practice applying queer theory to a novel. We will do some in class, then you will choose one form of capital to write a 2-3 page paper on.</p>	25	
Term paper & presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose a novel (or theme amongst several novels) to write a 5-7 page term paper. YOUR TOPIC MUST BE APPROVED BY ME. (30 points)</li> <li>• 5 minute presentation on your topic (5 points)</li> </ul>	30	Final exam period- 12/12/16, 3:30-5:20

Course Calendar (subject to change) \*\*Assignments are due the date listed on calendar, at the start of class.\*\*

Week	Date	Topics/ Activities/ Genres	Readings Due	Assignments Due
1	M 8/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• LGBTQ vocabulary</li> <li>• Gender triangle activity</li> </ul>	Suggested reading for vocab: <a href="http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/LGBTQIA-resources/2.0">http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/LGBTQIA-resources/2.0</a>	
1	W 8/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Short history of Queer YA</a></li> <li>• Twitter overview</li> <li>• <b>Contemporary fiction</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excerpt from <i>Out of the closet and all grown up: problematizing normative narratives of coming-out and coming-of-age in young adult literature</i>, Amanda Haertling</li> <li>• <i>The Art of Being Normal</i>, start- p. 81</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a public twitter account</li> <li>• Post account name on Blackboard</li> </ul>
2	M 8/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Contemporary fiction</b></li> <li>• Sign up for group presentations</li> </ul>	<i>The Art of Being Normal</i> , p. 82- 176	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow twitter accounts specified on p. 1 of syllabus</li> </ul>
2	W 8/31	<b>Contemporary fiction</b>	<i>The Art of Being Normal</i> , p. 177- 256	Response paper 1
3	9/5	<b>Labor Day Holiday</b>		
3	W 9/7	<b>Contemporary fiction</b>	<i>The Art of Being Normal</i> , p. 257- 344	Group 1 presentation
4	M 9/12	<b>Fantasy/ Fan Fiction</b> Guest lecture by Layla Aldousany	<i>Carry On</i> , start- p. 109 (Ch. 1-17)	
4	W 9/14	<b>Fantasy/ Fan Fiction</b>	<i>Carry On</i> , p. 110- 195 (Ch. 18-36)	
5	M 9/19	<b>Fantasy/ Fan Fiction</b>	<i>Carry On</i> , p. 196- 305 (Ch. 37- 55)	
5	W 9/21	<b>Fantasy/ Fan Fiction</b>	<i>Carry On</i> , p. 306- 404 (Ch. 56- 69)	
6	M 9/26	<b>Fantasy/ Fan Fiction</b>	<i>Carry On</i> , p. 409- 517 (Ch. 70- end)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response paper 2</li> <li>• Group 2 presentation</li> </ul>
6	W 9/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fantasy</b></li> <li>• <a href="#">On Avoiding the Exotic in Huntress</a>, Malinda Lo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Huntress</i>, start- p. 60 (Ch. 1-8)</li> <li>• Excerpts from <i>At the intersections of identity: race and sexuality in LGBTQ young adult literature</i>, Sybil Durand</li> </ul>	

Week	Date	Topics/ Activities/ Genres	Readings Due	Assignments Due
7	M 10/3	<b>Fantasy</b>	<i>Huntress</i> p. 61- 143 (Ch. 9- 16)	
7	W 10/5	<b>Fantasy</b>	<i>Huntress</i> , p. 145- 212 (Ch. 17- 24)	
8	M 10/10	<b>Fantasy</b>	<i>Huntress</i> , p. 213- 306 (Ch. 25-34)	
8	W 10/12	<b>Fantasy</b>	<i>Huntress</i> , p. 307- 371 (Ch. 35- end)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response paper 3</li> <li>• Group 3 presentation</li> </ul>
9	M 10/17	<b>Contemporary/ Paranormal</b>	<i>Afterworlds</i> , start- p. 109 (Ch. 1- 10)	
9	W 10/19	<b>Contemporary/ Paranormal</b>	<i>Afterworlds</i> , p. 110- 193 (Ch. 11- 16)	
10	M 10/24	<b>Contemporary/ Paranormal</b>	<i>Afterworlds</i> , p. 194- 321 (Ch. 17- 24)	
10	W 10/26	<b>Contemporary/ Paranormal</b>	<i>Afterworlds</i> , p. 322- 411 (Ch. 25- 30)	
11	M 10/31	<b>Contemporary/ Paranormal</b>	<i>Afterworlds</i> , p. 412- 507 (Ch. 31- 36)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major brownie points for coming in a costume inspired by one of our books!</li> </ul>
11	W 11/2	<b>Contemporary/ Paranormal</b>	<i>Afterworlds</i> , p. 508- 599 (Ch. 37- end)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response paper 4</li> <li>• Group 4 presentation</li> </ul>
12	M 11/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Contemporary</b></li> <li>• Queer Cultural Capital</li> </ul>	<i>Openly Straight</i> , start- p. 107 (Ch. 1-11)	
12	W 11/9	<b>Contemporary</b>	<i>Openly Straight</i> , p. 108- 171 (Ch. 12-17)	
13	M 11/14	<b>Contemporary</b> Guest lecture- Dr. Nicole Seiben	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Openly Straight</i>, p. 172- 251 (Ch. 18-26)</li> <li>• <i>Openly straight: A look at teaching LGBTQq young adult sports literature through a queer theory youth lens</i>, Nicole Sieben</li> </ul>	Queer Cultural Capital part 1 (chart)
13	W 11/16	<b>Contemporary</b> Guest lecture- Dr. Nicole Seiben	<i>Openly Straight</i> , p. 252- 320 (Ch. 17- end)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response paper 5</li> <li>• Group 5 presentation</li> </ul>

Week	Date	Topics/ Activities/ Genres	Readings Due	Assignments Due
<b>Nov. 21-15 Thanksgiving Break</b>				
14	M 11/28	<b>Contemporary/ Sci-fi</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We Are the Ants</i>, start- 119. (start- Nanobots)</li> <li>• Excerpt from <i>After homonormativity: Hope for a (More) Queer Canon of Gay YA Literature</i>, by Banks &amp; Alexander</li> </ul>	Email me term paper topic for approval (see blackboard)
14	W 11/30	<b>Contemporary/ Sci-fi</b>	<i>We Are the Ants</i> , p. 120- 231 (20 Oct. 2015- 24 Nov. 2015)	Queer Cultural Capital part 2 (paper)
15	M 12/5	<b>Contemporary/ Sci-fi</b>	<i>We Are the Ants</i> , p. 232-353 (26 Nov. 2015- 24 Dec. 2015)	
15	W 12/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Contemporary/ Sci-fi</b></li> <li>• Course evaluations</li> </ul>	<i>We Are the Ants</i> p. 354- 451 (Bees- end)	Group 6 presentation
FINAL	M 12/12 3:30- 5:20		Final presentations and reflections	Term paper