

IDS 121. 19 TEXTS AND CONTEXT- LITERARY STUDIES: ADAPTATION IN CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT CULTURE

Class: STV 0347 B, Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9:00am-9:50am

Instructor: Meghann Meeusen

Contact Information:

mfmeeus@ilstu.edu 586-651-0289

I prefer email as the method to contact me with inquiries regarding class, and check for messages regularly. Please only use my private phone for dire emergencies, and keep in mind I am not always available to answer.

Office Hours: MWF 11am-12pm in Stevenson 422 G

I am also available outside of these times by appointment.

TEXT REQUIREMENTS

Please bring a paper or digital copy of all books to class during the week they are assigned. This is an important part of actively participating in class discussion, and thus failing to have a copy of the text will be reflected in participation grades.

Required Book/Film Combinations Read/Watched By All Students

- ***The Tale of Despereaux*** by Kate DiCamillo + film directed by Fell & Stevenhagen
- ***How to Train Your Dragon*** by Cressida Cowell + film directed by Sanders & DeBlois
- ***The Hunger Games*** by Suzanne Collins + film directed by Gary Ross
- ***Alice's Adventures in Wonderland OR Through the Looking Glass*** by Lewis Carroll (read one or the other) + Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland*
- ***Wonderland*** by Tommy Kovak, full graphic novel (160 pg), ISBN 978-1423104513
- ***Stardust*** by Neil Gaiman + film directed by Matthew Vaughn

Required Readings When Students Have a Choice from Several Texts

- **Choose One Fairy Tale Grouping of Four Texts**
 - Early Variant of "Cinderella", "Snow White", "Rapunzel", "Sleeping Beauty", "The Little Mermaid" OR "Beauty and the Beast" (available to read at www.surlalunefairytales.com)
 - Film Version of the same tale (sign up from list provided)
 - Novel Retelling of the same tale (sign up from list provided)
 - Picture Book or Short Story Version of the same tale (self-selected)

- **Choose One Reading Group Novel with a Corresponding Graphic Novel and Film:** *Percy Jackson #1- The Lightning Thief, Coraline, The Wizard of Oz, Nancy Drew, or Twilight*
- **Choose One Novel made into a Live Action Film:** possible options include *Charlotte's Web, Bridge to Terabithia, Anne of Green Gables, City of Ember, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Diary of a Wimpy Kid, Freaky Friday, Beezus and Ramona, Series of Unfortunate Events, Golden Compass, Inkheart, Indian in the Cupboard, Little Women, Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants, The Spiderwick Chronicles, Tuck Everlasting, Because of Winn Dixie, Holes, Eragon, I Am Number Four* (other options ok with approval- no more than two students may sign up for any one novel/film)
- **Choose One Picture Book + Film or Television Combination:** possible options include *Cat in the Hat, Horton Hears a Who, The Grinch, Zanthura, Polar Express, Jumunji, Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs, Eloise, Curious George, Madeline, Clifford, Magic School Bus, Arthur* (other options ok with approval- no more than two students may sign up for any one book/film)

As of January 5th, all of the required films were available to stream through Amazon.com for \$2.99 or less, except the *Hunger Games*, which can be rented at Redbox for \$1.20. For the choice films, renting options vary. Many are available to stream through Amazon for \$2.99, while others can be rented at local Blockbuster and Family Video stores, where children's rentals are offered at very low prices.

In all cases, any edition/version of a text is acceptable, including digital texts. Listening to books via audio is also encouraged, although a hard copy is necessary for class. Finally, printing is required for the submission of all assignments, so please make sure you consistently have the means by which to do so.

COURSE CONTENT

COURSE OVERVIEW

In order to consider the nature of texts and their contexts, this section of IDS 121.19 will look at fiction through the lens of adaptation, with a particular emphasis on children's and young adult fiction. Students will interrogate texts as they exist in multiple genres, examining short stories (including picture books) and novels as well as other fiction manifestations in visual media (film, illustration, graphic novels, etc). By examining how a single fiction changes when it moves from one genre to another or is adapted from one medium to another, students can gain a richer understanding of not only the nature of literary texts, but their cultural context and societal influences.

Additionally, because it is so common for children's and young adult texts to be adapted, there are particular considerations that are unique to children's literature adaptation, which will also be a focus of the semester. This course does not, however, give a foundational overview of children's or adolescent literature, but rather simply uses these texts as the bases of a more general literary study. Major projects and papers, however, may utilize any adapted works, including texts intended for adults.

Finally, in addition to considering texts and their context through the lens of adaptation, one of the primary goals of this course is to interrogate the ways that scholars and readers approach literature and textual productions in a uniquely analytical way. This includes both an attention to the literary meaning, form and value of texts, but also the approach taken by scholars and teachers who study it. Thus, assignments and coursework will ask students to examine the particular ways of thinking demonstrated in those written and spoken genres produced both in and out of the classroom. Students will seek to understand and articulate this unique way that scholars think about texts, as well as how this way of thinking critically can transfer to other settings as well. This course asks students to interrogate the nature of this way of thinking about literature and attempt to identify, describe and articulate it in clear, thoughtful and reflective ways.

OBJECTIVES

Cultural Historic Activity Theoretical Basing

- Students will interrogate the ways that scholars and teachers think, write and speak about literary texts, producing examples of this unique literary approach and articulating the defining characteristics of such literary discourse in its various forms.
- Students will investigate the common and conflicting trends in how scholars and teachers think about texts, with particular attention to analysis and interpretation.
- Students will demonstrate and reflect on their own use of purposeful writing techniques and rhetorical strategies as fitting with literary conventions.
- Students will prepare for future studies in literature by building foundational skills in literary analysis, criticism and technique.
- Students will explore and articulate explicit and implicit ideologies of texts, studying texts in terms of their social context, with special attention to intertextuality, historical basing and position within contemporary culture.

Inquiry into Adaptation Studies in Children's and YA Texts

- Students will consider how adaptation has changed the face of children's literature studies and how terms like media/genre/mode are made more complicated in a cultural studies approach to texts.
- Students will question how authors may be influenced by the potential for media movement and how texts reflect such influence.
- Students will problematize perceptions of adaptation and retelling as changing in a culture of adaptation increasingly impacted by commercialism and new technologies.
- Students will theorize the problematics of adaptation, and specifically film and graphic novel adaptation, considering how genre and media affect understanding of especially children's texts.
- Students will pay particular attention to the ways that adaptation, genre and multiple mediums affect textual production, reception and consumption.

ASSIGNMENTS & STUDENT WORK

ASSIGNMENT CONTENT

Portfolio- 35%: Literary scholars think, speak and write about literature in very specific ways. The purpose of the portfolio and report is to interrogate these practices, methods

and approaches to literature, so that students might replicate this kind of thinking and transfer this critical consciousness to new situations. To do so, students will produce a variety of written/spoken genres and comment on these texts, attempting to articulate what are the similarities and differences in the ways that literary scholars think about literature.

The portfolio includes the following elements, collected in an organized folder/binder:

- all **daily responses** assigned for specific readings – see schedule for specific due dates and check the website for assignment instructions (22%)
- preparation of a brief **critical handout and report** summarizing an article or chapter from a scholarly text (3%—sign up for specific reading)—please keep all handouts from your colleagues in one section of the binder
- **critical thinking log**, which briefly describes the work students do as critical thinking and/or describes what they've learned about this kind of analytical approach. This log will be checked periodically to make sure students are staying current, with a grade deduction if the log is ever more than one week behind (5%)
- **post-it note commentary** about how various parts of the portfolio engage in critical thinking, typically utilizing 40-50 post-it notes (5%)

Binders should have at least four sections: daily responses, critical handouts, critical thinking log and class notes.

Individual Writing Project- 35%: Scholars and teachers who study literature write in a variety of ways, utilizing numerous approaches and multiple genres. This project asks students to choose their own approach to writing about literature by purposefully and thoughtfully selecting or creating (and defining) a genre that will demonstrate their understanding of the unique ways that scholars and teachers think about literary texts. **This project includes several components: a proposal, an annotated bibliography, an observations/conclusion sheet, the project itself and a reflection.** Students will also be encouraged to attend a conference outside of class with the instructor regarding their topics.

Final Exam- 20%: The final exam will include a brief section asking students to recall major themes and ideas from the semester and a longer essay-style section requiring students to interrogate their own critical thinking activities and the ways that scholars think and write about literature. More information about the exam will be provided throughout the semester, and students may use their portfolio during the exam.

Participation- 10%: Students are expected to actively participate in the course, sharing their ideas and contributing to the classroom community in thoughtful, prepared ways. This participation should include: vocal contributions to large and small group

discussions, preparation for class including completing all readings and bringing assigned book to class, the taking of careful notes regarding class ideas, and active listening during all activities and lecture. In addition, full participation requires signing up for **one or more “discussion observation” days**, where students will be asked to pay particular attention to the nature of classroom discussion and/or activity and notate what they observe. These notes/observations should be emailed to the instructor within 24 hours of class ending, and will be posted on the website.

GRADING BREAKDOWN

90%-100% A	exceptional, outstanding work
80%-89% B	strong, thoughtful work
70%-79% C	average, complete work
60%-69% D	problematic, sloppy work
59% F	incomplete, careless work

Portfolio entries will be scored on a check scale with the following expectations. Check Plus work is exceptional, the equivalent of a 3/3. Check / Check Plus work is thoughtful and complete, the equivalent of a mid B (2.5/3). Work marked with a Check fulfils minimal requirements or misses only minor elements, the equivalent of 2/3. A Check Minus is infrequently given, but denotes failure to meet minimum requirements (1/3).

OUTSIDE OF CLASS GROUP FILM VIEWING

As children’s and YA film will be an important part of coursework, students will have the opportunity to attend group viewings outside of class. These will be held in Stevenson 133 and are offered for all films required for the entire group (aka, *The Tale of Despereaux*, *How to Train Your Dragon*, *The Hunger Games*, Tim Burton’s *Alice in Wonderland* and *Stardust*.) Dates and times for these films will be announced during the first week of class. Attendance at these film viewings is optional, as students may also rent all required films online for independent viewing. As an incentive to attend these group film viewings, doing so at least once can substitute one absence.

ATTENDANCE AND LATE WORK

As active participants in an academic community, students must attend class every day. Furthermore, regular attendance is necessary for successful completion of all major assignments. Thus, exceptional attendance will be rewarded by extra credit added final grade (3% for perfect attendance, 2% for only one missed day and 1% for two missed days). Attendance will be completed via a sign in sheet, and it is students’ responsibility to sign in each day to receive extra credit. Because attendance can only earn a student

extra credit, there is no system of excused versus unexcused absences. All absences, regardless of reason, count as an absence, as does failure to sign in.

Students who are absent the equivalent of 3 weeks or more (9+ absences) will automatically fail the course. The rationale for this policy is that after missing more than three weeks of class, you have missed too much content to be able to say honestly that you have “taken” the course. If students miss more than 3 weeks, it is usually because they have encountered a serious family or personal emergency. I recommend that if you are an undergraduate facing an emergency, you should call the Dean of Students, who can help in a number of ways, including setting up appointments with a counselor, contacting your professors, and/or providing you with academic advice. You can contact the Dean of Students office at (309) 438-2008.

If a student must be absent, he/she is responsible for all missed content, including turning in assignments on their given due date. Please demonstrate professionalism by arriving to class on time. Additionally, it is a personal pet peeve of mine when students pack up their belongings before I have dismissed them, as it is extraordinarily distracting during a time when I typically announce important summary points or assignment requirements for the next class. Please do not begin preparations to leave the classroom until class can officially ended. Finally, any health conditions that prevent students from regular attendance should be discussed with me at the beginning of the semester.

I do not accept late work. Although I reserve the right to make exceptions to this policy, this is both rare and unlikely, and is only possible after a meeting with me. If you foresee a problem completing an assignment on time, please speak to me at least 48 hours in advance, at which time I am far more open to making arrangements.

OTHER PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

Student Conduct: As adults in the academic community, a respectful and appropriate behavior code is expected at all times. However, should this behavior code be broken by a disruptive or disrespectful student, he/she may be asked to remove him/herself from class for the day. For information on specific behavior expectations, please see the ISU Student Conduct Code.

Furthermore, I expect professional behavior that shows respect to our classroom community. Please arrive to class on time and remain attentive for the entirety of our time together, respecting our shared academic goals with your active participation.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism: Students are responsible for making themselves aware of and understanding the policies and procedures found in the Student Code of Conduct, including those policies regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism. Although plagiarism comes in many forms, students are expected above all to produce their own work in an ethical and honest way. Additionally, issues of correct citation and use of resources are crucial to both work as a student and development as a writer, and students are expected to consider carefully these tenets in the production of all class texts. Students should consult with the instructor if they are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment.

Students engaging in any level of academic dishonesty or plagiarism will have to meet with the instructor outside of class to discuss academic penalty based on the severity of the offense, which can include a failing grade on the assignment or a failing grade in the entire course.

Accommodations and Students Services: Any student needing to arrange an accommodation for a documented disability should contact Disability Concerns at 350 Fell Hall, 438-5853 (voice), 438-8620 (TTY). I also strive to create a productive classroom environment flexible to all students and individual situations. If you find that there are ways that the class could be better molded to your particular needs, please speak to me, and I would be happy to help navigate a way to work with you. Life at college can get very complicated. Students sometimes feel overwhelmed, lost, experience anxiety or depression, struggle with relationship difficulties or diminished self-esteem. However, many of these issues can be effectively addressed with a little help. Student Counseling Services (SCS) helps students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. Student Counseling Services is staffed by experienced, professional psychologists and counselors, who are attuned to the needs of college students. The services are FREE and completely confidential. Find out more at Counseling.IllinoisState.edu or by calling (309) 438-3655.

Computers in the Classroom: Although I encourage students to use personal computers in the classroom, once class begins, every student should be actively engaged in class content. Electronic readers may be used for class texts when available as long as the format remains reasonably similar AND students bring a hard copy of the text, a laptop computer or an electronic reader to class.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Week	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Jan 14-18		Fairy Tale Variant- sign up <i>Response Due</i>	Fairy Tale Film- sign up <i>Response Due</i>
Jan 23-25	MLK no class	Fairy Tale Novel- sign up <i>Response Due</i>	
Jan 28-Feb 1	Fairy Tale Picture Book – choice, <i>Response Due</i>	Alice in Wonderland or Through the Looking Glass <i>Response Due</i>	
Feb 4-8	Wonderland Graphic Novel <i>Response Due</i>		Tim Burton's Alice in Wonderland, <i>Response Due</i>
Feb 11-15	The Tale of Despereaux (novel), <i>Response Due</i>	Tale of Despereaux Film <i>Response Due</i>	
Feb 18-22	How to Train Your Dragon Film, <i>Response Due</i>	How to Train Your Dragon (novel), <i>Response Due</i>	
Feb 25-Mar 1	Novel with Live Action Film- choice, <i>Response Due</i>	Live Action Film- choice, <i>Response Due</i>	
March 4-8	Stardust (novel) <i>Response Due</i>	Stardust Film <i>Response Due</i>	Project Topic Due
March 9-17 Spring Break			
March 18-22	Hunger Games (novel) <i>Response Due</i>	Hunger Games Film <i>Response Due</i>	
March 25-29	Reading Group Novel- sign up, <i>Response Due</i>		No Class (Conferences March 18-April 22)
April 1-5	Reading Group Graphic Novel, <i>Response Due</i>		Observe/Conclusion Sheet Due
April 8-12	Reading Group Film- sign up, <i>Response Due</i>		Annotated Bibliography & Proposal Due
April 15-19	Picture Book Film (watch in class), no response		
April 22-26	Picture Book Film (watch in class), no response	Project & Reflection Due	
April 29-May 3	Picture Book Film- choice <i>Response Due</i>	Final Portfolio Check	