

Special Study Advisor: Professor Phillip Serrato
Student: Andrea Kade
Semester: Fall 2017

ENGL 798: Special Study
The Gothic and Horror in Children's Literature

Overview

In this graduate special study, the workings and implications of a sampling of gothic and horror texts for children and young adults will be examined. The overarching objective will be to arrive at more nuanced, more rigorous understandings of these texts. This study will borrow and apply theoretical and critical methodologies developed for the study of "adult" Gothic and horror texts partly for the sake of integrating children's texts into extant Gothic and horror scholarship and traditions, but mostly for the sake of enabling the readings of the children's texts at hand. Additional children's literature scholarship will also be applied. Some adult-centered texts will be applied in dialogue with some children's texts in an effort to test out the particular (or not-so-particular) features of children's texts.

Objectives

- Develop critical awareness of and deep engagement with contemporary issues related to diversity in children's literature and culture.
- Strengthen analytical and critical thinking skills.
- Nurture your ongoing scholarly professionalization (regardless of individual academic or professional goals).
- Develop scholarly competencies in the fields of children's literature and culture, and Gothic/Horror literature and popular culture
- Practice multi-modal engagement with diverse literary genres and other forms of artistic/cultural/critical/theoretical production

Required Books

Grimm's Fairytales selections

Jane Yolen, *Grumbles from the Forest: Fairytale Voices with a Twist* (2013)

Neil Gaimen, *The Dangerous Alphabet* (2008)

Edward Gorey, *The Gashleycrumb Tinies* (1963)

Heinrich Hoffman, *Der Struwwelpeter* (1845)

Elizabeth George Speare, *The Witch of Blackbird Pond* (1958)

Roald Dahl, *The Witches* (1983)

Annette Curtis Klause, *The Silver Kiss* (1992)

Jonathan Auxier, *The Night Gardener* (2014)

Neil Gaiman, *The Graveyard Book* (2008)

Mary Downing Hahn, *Wait Till Helen Comes* (1986)

Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*

Helen Oyeyemi, *The Icarus Girl* (2005)

Ransom Riggs, *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* (2011)

Short stories: Washington Irving, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow;" Edgar Allen Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher" and/or "The Tell Tale Heart;" Rudyard Kipling, "The Phantom Rickshaw"

Films: ParaNorman (2012); Pan's Labyrinth (2006); The Babadook (2014)

Course Grade

- 13x four-page essays each week, due the following Tuesday
- Research paper (12-15 pages in length)

Weekly Informal Essays

Complete 13 four-page essays in MLA format during the course of this independent study. This informal essay will take the place of a class discussion and be employed as a measure to ensure readings are completed along with garnering additional insights from the texts and scholarship provided. Each essay will be due the following Tuesday to Professor Serrato (hard copy preferred). In the event an informal essay is not turned in due to extenuating circumstances, Week 15 and 16 are slotted for two makeup essays for the weeks missed.

Research paper: This paper is expected to be 12-15 pages in length on a topic of choice. This paper is a crucial exercise in ongoing development/professionalization as a literary scholar. It will be able to demonstrate a solid ability to formulate an insightful thesis, perform close textual analysis, and situate one's work in relation to extant scholarship, all with clear prose and appropriate organizational strategies.

DUE: Wednesday, December 20th at noon

Schedule for ENGL 798: Special Study for Fall 2017

NOTE: Below is a tentative schedule for this syllabus, some of the weeks maybe swapped and the companion articles might be changed at the discretion of the student or at the advice of the supervising professor.

Week 1: Thursday, August 31st

Selection of *Grimm's Fairytales*: "The Girl Without Hands" "The Willful Child" "Hansel and Gretel" "Mother Trudy" "Snow White" "Little Red Riding Hood"

Yolen, *Grumbles from the Forest: Fairytale Voices with a Twist* (2013)

Jackson, McGillis, and Coates, Introduction to *The Gothic in Children's Literature: Haunting the Borders*

Gieni, "Punishing the Abject Child"

Week 2: Thursday, September 7th

Gaimen, *The Dangerous Alphabet* (2008)

Gorey, *The Gashleycrumb Tinies* (1963)

Hoffman, *Der Struwwelpeter* (1845)

Brown, "From Aggressive Wolf to Heteronormative Zombie: Performing Monstrosity and Masculinity in the Narrative Picturebook"

Week 3: Thursday, September 14th

Speare, *The Witch of Blackbird Pond* (1958)

Toth, "The Plight of the Gothic Heroine: Female Development and Relationships in Eighteenth Century Female Gothic Fiction"

AND/OR

Rich, "Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence"

Week 4: Thursday, September 21st

Film: *Paranorman* (2012)

Dahl, *The Witches* (1983)

Prince, "Dread, Taboo, and *The Thing*: Toward a Social Theory of the Horror Film"

Coates, "Between Horror, Humour, and Hope: Neil Gaiman and the Psychic Work of the Gothic"

Week 5: Thursday, September 28th

Klause, *The Silver Kiss* (1992)

Haggerty, "Gothic Fiction and the Erotics of Loss" from *Queer Gothic*

Week 6: Thursday, October 5th

Short story: Irving, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"

Short Story: Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher" AND/OR "The Tell Tale Heart"

Short Story: Kipling, "The Phantom Rickshaw"

do Rozario, "Fantastic Books: The Gothic Architecture of Children's Books" in *The Gothic in Children's Literature: Haunting the Borders*

Cantor and Oliver, "Developmental Differences in Responses to Horror"

Week 7: Thursday, October 12th

Auxier, *The Night Gardener* (2014)

McGillis, "The Night Side of Nature: Gothic Spaces, Fearful Times"

Week 8: Thursday, October 19th

Movie: *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006)

Haggerty, "The Horrors of Catholicism: Religion and Sexuality in Gothic Fiction" in *Queer Gothic*

Kunze, "Didactic Monstrosity and Postmodern Revisionism in Contemporary Children's Films"

Week 9: Thursday, October 26th

Gaiman, *The Graveyard Book* (2008)

Wallace, "Uncanny Stories: The Ghost Story as Female Gothic" (in reader)

Rodabaugh, "Teaching Gothic Literature in the Junior High Classroom"

Week 10: Thursday, November 2nd

Hahn, *Wait Till Helen Comes* (1986)

Jackson, "Uncanny Hauntings, Canny Children" in *The Gothic in Children's Literature: Haunting the Borders*

AND/OR

Smith, "The Scary Tale Looks for a Family: Gary Crew's *Gothic Hospital* and Sonya Hartnett's *The Devil Latch*"

Week 11: Thursday, November 9th

Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland* (1865)

Cummins, "Laura and the 'Lunatic Fringe': Gothic Encoding in Wilder's *These Happy Golden Years*" (in reader)

Halberstam, "Parasites and Perverts: An Introduction to Gothic Monstrosity" (in reader)
Film: *The Babadook* (2014)

Week 12: Thursday, November 16th

Oyeyemi, *The Icarus Girl* (2005)

Lagerway and Subramanian, "Teen Terrors: Race, Gender and Horrifying Girlhood in Vampire Diaries"

Week 13: Thursday, November 23rd

THANKSGIVING WEEK

Week 14: Thursday, November 30th

Riggs, *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* (2011)

Yanni, "Introduction" to *Architecture of Madness: Insane Asylums in the United States*

AND/OR

Kahane, "The Gothic Mirror"

Week 15 & 16: Thursday, December 7th & 14th

Make up week for 4-page essays

Work on 12-15 page Research Essay

DUE: Wednesday, December 20th at noon