

Summer 6-15-2018

## ENG 4905-001: Studies in Youth Literature

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and by appointment

English 4905: Diverse Books for Children and Young Adults

TR 1:00 – 4:30 in Coleman Hall 3691

**BOOKS**

**Textbooks**

- 2007 *Free Within Ourselves: The Development of African American Children's Literature* by Rudine Sims Bishop  
2010 *From Cover to Cover: Evaluating & Reviewing Children's Books* by Kathleen Horning

**Anthology**

- 1996 *The Best of The Brownies' Book*, editor Dianne Johnson-Feelings

**Picture Books**

- 1962 *The Snowy Day* (realism) by Ezra Jack Keats  
1969 *Stevie* (realism) by John Steptoe  
1991 *Amazing Grace* (realism) by Mary Hoffman; illus. Caroline Binch  
1997 *Nappy Hair* (realism) by Carolivia Herron; illus. Joe Cepeda  
2009 *The Lion and the Mouse* (fable); illus. Jerry Pinkney  
2010 *My People* (poem) by Langston Hughes; illus. Charles R. Smith, Jr.

**Chapter Books: Memoirs + Novels + Graphic Narratives**

- 1968 *The Soul Brothers and Sister Lou* (realism) by Kristin Hunter [Lattany]  
1976 *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* (historical fiction) by Mildred Taylor  
1995 *From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun* (realism) by Jacqueline Woodson  
1999 *Monster* (realism) by Walter Dean Myers  
2001 *Bad Boy* (memoir) by Walter Dean Myers  
2003 *Locomotion* (novel in poems) by Jacqueline Woodson  
2010 *One Crazy Summer* (historical fiction) by Rita Williams-Garcia  
*Yummy* (graphic narrative) by G. Negri; illus. Randy DuBurke  
2014 *Brown Girl Dreaming* (verse memoir) by Jacqueline Woodson

## Course Description

In 2014, the twitter hashtag “We Need Diverse Books!” brought attention – once more – to the scarcity of books for children and young adults that reflect their diverse experiences and perspectives. In this class, we will discuss the causes and effects of that inequity while exploring the rich variety of books designed to address it.

We will start with a hands-on survey of books by and about African Americans—from *The Brownies’ Book* (1920) to *The Snowy Day* (1965) to recent award winners. This will provide a basis for collaborative exploration of award-winning books from other under-represented perspectives and an individual project. Whenever possible, reading selections will be tailored to your academic interests or professional focus.

## Goals

- to improve our ability to appreciate and evaluate diverse books
- to identify issues that recur in discussions of diverse books, and to articulate and consider our own positions on these issues in relation to that discussion
- to become better informed about the literary-historical contexts in which diverse books are produced, and to use that information to analyze the choices made by writers and artists working within these complex rhetorical situations
- to compare the purposes and goals of the producers of diverse books for young readers, the varied audiences their books are designed to address, and the strategies used by authors, illustrators and publishers to achieve those goals
- to appreciate the craftsmanship and creativity that contribute to the literary and artistic quality and appeal of specific books for children and young adults
- To make use of information and ideas developed or discovered over the course of this class to contribute to our growth as students, professionals, and citizens

## Assignments & Grades

Posts (25%)

Presentations (25%)

Participation (10%)

Project (40%): Annotated Bibliography (10%) , Class Presentation (10%), Product (20%)

**PART I The History & Development of African American Youth Literature**

**Week 1 African American Youth Literature: 1920 – 1960**

T 6.12 *The Brownies' Book*

R 6.14 Self-selected Books + *Horn Book Magazine*

**Week 2 African American Youth Literature 1960 - 1999**

T 6.19 Essays on the "All-White World of Children's Books"  
Picture Books: *The Snowy Day* + *Stevie*; Self-selected Book

R 6.21 Essays: "Black Experience...." (Myers) + "Slippery Slopes" (Aronson)  
Picture Books: *Amazing Grace* + *Nappy Hair*; Novel: *From the Notebooks of Melanin Sun*

**Week 3 21<sup>st</sup> century African American Youth Literature**

T 6.26 Picture Books: *The Lion & the Mouse* + *My People*  
Novel: *Yummy, Locomotion, or Brown Girl Dreaming*  
Self-selected Coretta Scott King-winning Picture Book

R 6.28 Readings: Diversity Stats, Awards, Activism  
Self-selected Coretta Scott King-winning Novels/Chapter Books

**PART II Individual Projects**

**Week 4 Topics & Texts ~ Meet in Booth Library e-classroom**

T 7.3 Mid-term Synthesis + Topic Proposal DUE  
**Individual Conferences in class+ Begin Research**  
**\*Grade for D2L Posts (30%)**

R 7.5 Draft of at least Two Entries for Annotated Bibliography DUE  
Informal Presentation of Projects (10-15 minutes) with Q & A  
**\*Credit for Informal Presentations (15%)**

**Week 5 Annotated Bibliography**

T 7.10 Full Draft of Annotated Bibliography DUE+ Progress Report  
**Individual Conference Appointments; No Class Meeting**

R 7.12 **Annotated Bibliography DUE (15%); No Class Meeting**

**Week 6 Big Finish**

T 7.17 Outline/Draft of Project DUE for Peer Response  
**Individual Conferences in class**

R 7.19 **Project Presentations (10%)**  
**\*Participation Grade (10%)**

→ Friday 7.20 **Projects DUE (20%)**