

Department of English & Writing Studies

Children's Literature and Advertising Culture
English 3900G (001)
Winter 2017

Instructor: Dr. Gabrielle Ceraldi
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Location: Arts & Humanities Building 1B08

Date/Time: Tuesday 12:30pm-1:30pm;
Thursday 12:30pm-2:30pm

Office Hours: T/Th. 2:30pm-3:30pm or by appt

Prerequisites: At least 60% in 1.0 of English 1020E or 1022E or 1024E or 1035E or 1036E or both English 1027F/G and 1028F/G, or permission of the Department.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Description

Advertising is a central institution in our consumeristic culture, and children are an important but problematic target for the advertising industry: children wield power as potential consumers of toys, foods, and television programs, but lawmakers also seek to protect children from advertising that might compromise their health or values. Children's literature is situated uneasily within this cultural minefield. The stories we tell children are themselves products (sold in stores like Chapters or online on Amazon.com), and they are implicated in a merchandizing industry that peddles Anne of Green Gables dolls, Winnie the Pooh plush toys, and Disney princess lunch boxes. Many novels for children foreground these problems by examining the roles played by consumption, advertising, and branding in the formation of identity. In a society where we are increasingly defined by the products we purchase – and are expected to package *ourselves* as products we can peddle to clients, customers, and employers – children's literature offers a critical perspective on the distinction between person and product.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the course, the successful student will be able to:

- Understand how the historical development of advertising has been reflected in works of literature produced for children;
- Consider the ways in which consumerism constructs children as purchasers, influences on adult purchasing, producers of goods, and products to be marketed;
- Examine the ways in which authorship can be (or has been) understood as a form of personal branding;
- Communicate ideas effectively through public speaking, both in formal presentations and in class discussions;
- Write an essay about a work of literature containing an effective thesis supported by adequate evidence from the original text as well as relevant secondary research;
- Offer independent insights, beyond those outlined in class;
- Organize and present ideas clearly and effectively;
- Document essays using MLA format.

Course Materials

Required Texts:

James Twitchell, *20 Ads that Shook the World*, Crown
L.M. Montgomery, *Anne of the Island*, Seal
L. Frank Baum, *The Wizard of Oz*, Puffin
Roald Dahl, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, Puffin
E. Nesbit, *The Story of the Treasure Seekers*, Puffin
E.B. White, *Charlotte's Web*, Harper Trophy
Dr. Seuss, *Green Eggs and Ham*, Random House
Annie Barrows and Sophie Blackall, *Ivy + Bean: No News is Good News*, Chronicle
Suzanne Collins, *Catching Fire*, Scholastic
Rainbow Rowell, *Fangirl*, St. Martin's Griffin

Methods of Evaluation

Critical Response (500 words – due Feb. 9)	15%
Essay (2000 words – due March 23)	30%
Participation	10%
Seminar Presentation (500 words)	10%
Final Examination	35%

A student must receive a passing grade for both term work and the final examination in order to receive a passing grade for the course. This applies to all courses in all programs offered by the department. Students whose term and final exam grades average 50% or above, even though one of the two is a failure, shall receive a default grade of 48%. Please note: The department of English & Writing Studies does not release final grades. All undergraduate grade reports will be available online from the Office of the Registrar.

Students are fully responsible for looking at and being familiar with the information posted on the department website at <http://www.uwo.ca/english/undergraduate/info%20for%20students.html#grade>.

Timetable:

Jan. 5 Introduction; Peanuts Christmas special

A World Before Advertising

Jan. 10 -12 Twitchell, Introduction
Joel Spring, "Liberation with Jell-O and Wonder Bread" from *Educating The Consumer-Citizen* (on reserve)
L.M. Montgomery, chapters from *Anne of Green Gables*, *Anne of Avonlea*
Jan. 17-19 L.M. Montgomery, *Anne of the Island*
Twitchell, Ch. 3 Pears Soap
Jan. 24-26 Christina Rossetti, "Goblin Market" (on OWL)

The Advertising Wizard: Adults as Advertisers

Jan 31-Feb 2 L. Frank Baum, *The Wizard of Oz*
Twitchell, Ch. 1 J.P. Barnum
Show and Tell
Feb. 7-9 Roald Dahl, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*
Producing and Consuming: The Child Entrepreneur
Feb. 14-16 E. Nesbit, *The Story of the Treasure Seekers*
Feb. 21-23 READING WEEK (no class)
Feb 28-Mar 2 E.B. White, *Charlotte's Web*

Mar. 7 Dr. Seuss, *Green Eggs and Ham*
Mar. 9 Annie Barrows + Sophie Blackall, *Ivy + Bean: No News is Good News*
Twitchell, Ch. 20 Nike and Michael Jordan

Personal Branding: The Child as Product

Mar. 14 David Buckingham, *The Material Child*, Chapter 2 (on reserve)
Mar. 16, 21 Suzanne Collins, *Catching Fire*

But Is It Art?: The Boundary between Art and Advertising

Mar. 23 Stephen Brown, "Who Moved My Muggle?: Harry Potter and the
Marketing Imaginarium" (on OWL)
Twitchell, Ch. 18 & 19 Apple's *1984* and The Rise and Fall of the
Infomercial
Mar. 28-30 Rainbow Rowell, *Fangirl*
Apr. 4-6 review

General Information:

1. Regular attendance in class is essential. Absenteeism can result in debarment from writing the final examination, which results in failure of the course.
2. All essays should be double-spaced and printed in a standard font such as 12-pt Times Roman. Please follow MLA format (for guidelines see the MLA guide at the OWL Purdue website). Essays should be submitted on paper and can be handed in during class or dropped off in the Department of English Essay Drop-Off Boxes (across from AHB 2G02). Do not leave essays under office doors. Two percent per day (including weekends) will be deducted from late essays. Extensions will be approved only with a recommendation for accommodation from an academic counsellor. No paper will be accepted after the last day of classes (Apr. 4).
3. The Participation Grade will reflect not only your presence in class but also your active engagement in class discussions and activities.

Accommodation

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence.

Plagiarism Checking:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.

Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Grading Rubric:

Thesis	Excellent	Forceful, fresh and challenging
	Good	Clear development of a specific thesis
	Satisfactory	Reasonably clear thesis
	Poor Inadequate	Unclear, overgeneral
Argument (ideas)	Excellent	Original, analytical, persuasive, depth of insight
	Good	Analytical, persuasive, with some originality and depth
	Satisfactory	More descriptive than analytical, not fully persuasive
	Poor Inadequate	Plot summary or lengthy paraphrase, general observations
Organization	Excellent	Paragraphs focus on clearly articulated, meaningful topics
	Good	Paragraphs support thesis adequately
	Satisfactory	Most paragraphs support thesis; some problems with coherent paragraphing
	Poor Inadequate	Significant problems with paragraphing
Use of Sources (quotations)	Excellent	Detailed engagement with text, seamless integration, proper documentation
	Good	Adequately detailed reference to text, proper documentation
	Satisfactory	Effort to support points with reference to text and proper documentation
	Poor Inadequate	Overgeneralization with inadequate support, little effort at documentation
Style	Excellent	Graceful, rhetorically impressive, few if any errors
	Good	Clear writing style, errors relatively few and minor
	Satisfactory	Some problems with clarity, grammar, punctuation, or wordiness
	Poor Inadequate	Errors serious enough to interfere with understanding

A+ Outstanding 90+
 A Excellent 80-89
 B Good 70-79

C Satisfactory 60-69
 D Poor 50-59
 F Inadequate across several areas