

Instructor: Dr. Annie Pfeifer
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Office Hours: Thursdays 1 - 2pm

Literary Orphans
Mini-Course
01-470-244
Fall Semester 2015
MW 3:20-4:40 Busch



Course Description

Why do so many young literary protagonists have absent or deceased parents? From early myths to the nineteenth-century novel, the orphan is a prominent, almost clichéd figure throughout literature. In pop culture, Superman, Batman, James Bond, and Harry Potter are all portrayed as orphans who developed their magical or superhuman abilities partly through the absence or loss of their parents. In this course, we will examine not only the literary representation of orphans, but also the way the orphan as a cultural symbol has changed over time. In nineteenth-century Europe, the orphan was frequently deployed as a symbol for the abandoned individual who had to confront an industrializing, increasingly atomized society. In the twentieth century, the orphan reemerges as a symbol of innocence in the face of human catastrophes such as war, genocide, and AIDS. Drawing on literature, sociology, cultural studies, and psychology, this interdisciplinary course concludes with Harry Potter to examine whether the abandoned child is still a relevant figure in contemporary culture. **Taught in English.**

PREREQUISITES: None.

FINAL GRADE

Class participation	10%
Response Paper	10%
Presentation	30%
Final Paper	50%

During the semester, each student will be expected to provide one 1-2 page response paper to the reading. These response papers will be circulated to the class 24 hours prior to our class meeting and provide the basis for our discussion. Students will sign up for response papers during the second week of classes.

Grade distribution

A=90-100%; B+=85-89; B=80-84; C+=75-79; C=70-74; D=65-69; F=64 and below

Required texts, available at Rutgers Bookstore:

Johanna Spyri, *Heidi*, (Oxford Children's Classics, 2010), ISBN-10: 0192728148

Patrick Süskind, *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* (Penguin; Re-issue edition): ASIN: B00DO8JBLE

JK Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, Scholastic (September 1998): ISBN-10: 0439708184

*All other materials on the syllabus are available on Sakai. You must print out course materials from Sakai and have a copy of them with you in class.

Departmental policies

- Attendance

All students must attend regularly and arrive prepared; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. Those who miss more than two class sessions without a compelling excuse should expect a one-step reduction in the course grade (i.e. an A becomes a B+, a B+ becomes a B). Every additional three absences may entail a further one-step grade-reduction. Three late arrivals count as one absence. Note: It is the responsibility of students who have been absent (for any reason) to find out what they have missed and obtain materials that may have been handed out.

- Cell Phones

Cell phones and all other technological devices (beepers, iPods, MP3players...) must be turned off during class out of respect for the instructor and fellow students. Please schedule all important phone communications outside of class time.

- Disability Support Services

Students who may be requesting accommodations due to disabilities are encouraged to familiarize themselves with procedures and policies regarding disability support services at the following website: <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>. It is recommended that students seeking accommodations begin filing paperwork as soon as possible as the documentation review process may take up to 30 business days. Students are encouraged to speak with teachers about these issues at the beginning of the term. All such conversations will be kept strictly confidential.

- Academic Integrity

Violations of academic integrity are an extremely serious matter, and can lead to a student's failing the course and being referred to the University's Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action. When referring to ideas other than your own, always acknowledge your sources clearly and completely, whether you are quoting or paraphrasing. Note also that use of online translation services is not permitted as a tool for generating work that you submit for course credit. Please see the University's policies on academic integrity at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>, and discuss with your instructor any questions you may have about this and related issues.

Syllabus

(The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus)

Number	Date	Topic	Texts / Assignment
1.	Mon. 10/19	Introduction: an Orphan State of Mind	Jay-Z and Orphan Annie https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0bOH8ABpco https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zxtn6-XQupM
2.	Wed. 10/21	Religious Orphans: Moses and Mohammad	Moses Story Mohammad Story
3.	Mon. 10/26	Orphan Legends	Romulus and Remus, Priamus, Native American Stories: http://umaine.edu/folklife/publications/northeast-folklore-2/passamaquoddy-tales/ http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/tale-of-evening-star-and-orphan-star.htm http://www.nativeamericanembassy.net/www.lenni-lenape.com/www/html/LenapeArchives/LenapeSet-01/dogboy.html
4.	Wed. 10/28	Fairy Tale Orphans	Brothers Grimm, "Snow White," "Cinderella," "Hänsel and Gretel," "Mary's Child" Bruno Bettelheim, <i>The Uses of Enchantment</i> (excerpts)
5.	Mon. 11/2	CLASS CANCELLED	
6.	Wed. 11/4	Orphans and the Problem of Evil	Kleist, <i>The Foundling</i>
7.	Mon. 11/9	<i>Perfume</i> and the Origins of the Orphanage	Süskind, <i>Perfume</i> (part 1)
8.	Wed. 11/11	<i>Perfume</i> and Ethics	Süskind, <i>Perfume</i> (part 2)
9.	Mon. 11/16	<i>Perfume</i> (conclusion)	Süskind, <i>Perfume</i> (part 3)
10.	Wed. 11/18	<i>Heidi</i>	Spyri, <i>Heidi</i> (excerpts)
11.	Mon. 11/23	<i>Heidi</i> : the Global Phenomenon	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J6IRaNsWDQ (German, with no subtitles)

			https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2ocUVJ7tKs (Japanese, with English subtitles)
12.	Wed. 11/25	NO CLASS – FRIDAY CLASSES MEET	
13.	Mon. 11/30	Superhero Orphans	Superman comic series (excerpts) Film clips
14.	Wed. 12/2	Contemporary Orphans: AIDS Orphans and Disabled Orphans	“What Will Become of Africa's AIDS Orphans?” http://www.nytimes.com/2002/12/22/magazine/what-will-become-of-africa-s-aids-orphans.html “In a Chinese Orphanage” http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1996/04/in-a-chinese-orphanage/376563/
15.	Mon. 12/7	<i>Harry Potter</i>	Rowling, <i>Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone</i> (excerpts)
16.	Wed. 12/9	Term Paper Workshop	

Term Paper Deadline TBA