

# U.S. Empire & Childhood

AML 3041: American Literature 2 (Sect. 4D76) Course Syllabus



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Summer B 2013  
Phone: 352-392-6650  
Time: M-F (4<sup>th</sup> Period)  
Place: TUR 1315

## Course Description

In *Dependent States: The Child's Part in Nineteenth-Century American Culture* (2005), Karen Sánchez-Eppler reveals the unsettling similarities between the parent-child relationship and the colonial exploits of the United States. Empires, she writes, are raised just like children. Sánchez-Eppler is joined by a host of other scholars in areas as diverse as children's literature, postcolonial studies, and American studies. Frantz Fanon, for example, declares that "A white man addressing a Negro behaves exactly like an adult with a child and starts smirking, whispering, patronizing, cozening." Perry Nodelman, a premier scholar in children's literature, likens children to the colonized subject as he/she is articulated in Edward Said's landmark study, *Orientalism* (1978). He writes, "As I read through Said's powerful descriptions of the history and structure of Orientalism, I was continually astonished by how often they suggested to me parallel insights into our most common assumptions about childhood and children's literature." While arguments such as Nodelman's are not without their fair share of criticism, we will take arguments such as his seriously nonetheless. In what ways are children like colonized subjects? What is problematic about such a comparison? This course will therefore begin from the

assumption that there is indeed an important and disturbing relationship between the way children are raised and the way colonized subjects are treated. In order to pursue this line of inquiry, we will begin with key essays by scholars in the above-mentioned fields, followed by an examination of novels published from 1945-present.

## Required Texts

*Lolita* by Vladimir Nabokov

*Rule of the Bone* by Russell Banks

*Octavian Nothing, Volume 1* by M.T. Anderson

*Solar Storms* by Linda Hogan

*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie

**Note: All books will be available at the UF Bookstore. You are also welcome to purchase your books from online vendors or use a copy that you already own. My only stipulation is that you ensure that your edition contains the full text (i.e., unabridged version).**

## Grades

A: 94-100 (4.0)

C: 74-76 (2.0)

A-: 90-93 (3.67)

C-: 70-73 (1.67)

B+: 87-89 (3.33)

D+: 67-69 (1.33)

B: 84-86 (3.0)

D: 64-66 (1.0)

B-: 80-83 (2.67)

D-: 60-63 (.67)

C+: 77-79 (2.33)

E: 0-59 (0)

Reading Responses: 25%

Participation-15%

Quizzes-10%

Midterm Exam: 25%

Research Paper 1-25%

## Assignments

Reading Responses (2 pages double spaced): You will be required to write five reading responses as a way of developing possible arguments for the final research paper. Responses are my way of evaluating your writing and comprehension of course texts, as well as a method to help you manage the workload for the summer term.

Midterm Exam-This will be a comprehensive, in-class exam. The exam will likely include a combination of multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank, and free response questions.

Research Paper 1 (8-10 pages): You will write one research paper that works with some of the major issues and themes discussed in this course. You must limit your papers to a discussion of authors and works discussed in class. The only exception is if you compare one of the assigned texts to another book not discussed in class. This paper requires a minimum of four outside sources (not including primary texts). We will discuss possible ways of approaching these papers in class. You should also keep in mind that you can and should think of your reading responses as possible topics for these papers, and can work on developing an idea through a set of responses.

## Reading Schedule (Subject to Change)

### Week 1 (July 1-5)

July 1 -Course Introduction

July 2-Read Article (*TBA*)

July 3-Read Article (*TBA*)

July 4-Independence Day; NO CLASS

July 5-Read Article (*TBA*)

### Week 2 (July 8-12)

July 8 -Read *Lolita*

July 9 -Read *Lolita*

July 10 -Read *Lolita*

July 11 -Read *Lolita*

July 12 -Read *Lolita*; Reading Response 1 Due

### **Week 3 (July 15-19)**

**July 15**-Read *Rule of the Bone*

**July 16**-Read *Rule of the Bone*

**July 17**-Read *Rule of the Bone*

**July 18** Read *Rule of the Bone*

**July 19**-Read *Rule of the Bone*; **Reading Response 2 Due**

### **Week 4 (July 22-26)**

**July 22**-Read *Octavian Nothing*; **Midterm Exam**

**July 23** Read *Octavian Nothing*

**July 24**-Read *Octavian Nothing*

**July 25** Read *Octavian Nothing*

**July 26**-Read *Octavian Nothing*; **Reading Response 3 Due**

### **Week 5 (July 29-Aug. 2)**

**July 29**-Read *Solar Storms*

**July 30**-Read *Solar Storms*

**July 31**-Read *Solar Storms*

**Aug. 1**-Read *Solar Storms*

**Aug. 2**-Read *Solar Storms*; **Reading Response 4 Due**

### **Week 6 (Aug. 5-9)**

**Aug. 5**-Read *Part-Time Indian*

**Aug. 6**-Read *Part-Time Indian*

**Aug. 7**-Read *Part-Time Indian*; **Reading Response 5 Due**

**Aug. 8**-Read *Part-Time Indian*

**Aug. 9**-Read *Part-Time Indian*; **Final Research Paper Due**

## Course Policies

### *Text and Workshop Requirements*

- All assignments should be computer generated and professional in appearance.
- Bring two copies of drafts on all peer review days.
- Drafts should be complete and polished, not "rough."
- Submit all assignments at the beginning of class on the due date. Because deadlines are part of workplace writing, we will stick to them: *no late assignments*.

### *Attendance*

- Be present, on time, and prepared. If you arrive after I take attendance (as soon as class starts), I will count you as tardy. Every three tardies you receive will count as an absence.
- One letter grade will be deducted from your final course grade for each additional unexcused absence you receive over the allotted 3 unexcused absences (e.g., -10% if you have 4 unexcused absences, -20% if you have 5). You cannot pass the course if you receive 6 unexcused absences.
- When you miss class, you are responsible for getting any assignments in on time (i.e., by the beginning of class) and making up any work. You may turn assignments in electronically on days that you are absent (if electronic submission isn't already required).
- If you ever have an emergency (e.g. family issue or extended illness), please contact me and let me know what's going on. Ninety percent of the time it is possible to work out some kind of arrangement to complete an assignment or the course in a way that is satisfactory to both me and you.

### *Grade Appeals*

If you have questions regarding your final grade, see me first. After we meet, if you want to appeal your final grade, see or call Carla Blount in the Department of English. The English Department will consider appeals for final semester grades, not individual assignment grades.

### *Grade Point Equivalences*

Visit <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html> in order to review the new UF policy (i.e., addition of minus grades).

## University Policies

### *Disability Services*

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in the classroom. For more information, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

### *Academic Honesty*

All students are required to abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

### *Harassment*

UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php#s4041>