

School of Information Sciences
University of Tennessee

**SIS 592 - Valuing Diversity: International Picture Books, Fiction and Memoir for
Children and Young Adults.**

International House, UT Campus
June 3-4, June 10-11, June 24-25
Fridays, 1-6 pm; Saturdays 8-6 pm
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Course Description

For many years, schools and libraries have focused on becoming familiar with “multicultural” literature as a way of understanding the pluralism of our country. In this course, we will read texts and picture books that reflect the contemporary settings and lives of young people in countries from all over the world. Reading books that are in print and available in the US, we will become familiar with authors and illustrators of many countries to learn how their protagonists are both the same and different from American literary characters. In valuing diversity, we will pay attention to the scholarship of international literature to determine how to recognize stereotypes; how to understand publishing worlds; and how to recognize universal themes that transcend nation-hood.

Course Objectives

- A. Read a selection of texts that represents post-World War II modern realism in order:
 - a. To appreciate a taste and flavor of growing up outside of the USA;
 - b. To gain empathy for little studied and/or ‘sensitive’ histories;
 - c. To understand the concept of books, libraries and publishing in the world;
 - d. To become familiar with the work and publications of the International Board of Books for Young People (IBBY);
 - e. To recognize internationally known authors and illustrators;
 - f. To appreciate the power of memoir.

- B. View and critique international films
 - a. To appreciate a taste and flavor of growing up outside of the USA;
 - b. To gain empathy for little studied and/or ‘sensitive’ histories;

- C. Be apprised of international events concerning children and young adults from reading national and international newspapers & journals and listening to NPR, CBC, and BBC.

- D. Learn and employ techniques for engaging in rich discussion of international literature.

- E. Read and write reflectively on readings

- G. Present book talks

- H. Create a file of annotated booklists, films, and news clippings for future use with youth.

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Texts

JiJi Jiang, *Red Scarf Girl* (due first weekend)
Mathabane, Mark. *Miriam's Song* (due first weekend)
Staples, Suzanne Fisher. *Shiva's Fire* (due second weekend)
Ellis, Deborah. *Parvana's Journey* (due second weekend)
Holtwijk, Ineke. *Asphalt Angels* (due third weekend)

Henderson, Darwin and May, Jill. *Exploring culturally Diverse Literature for Children and Adolescents: Learning to Listen in New Ways* (optional purchase; I will be trying this book out as a text and will make chapters available to read.)

Journal articles will be available online

Digitized interviews will be available online

Film will be available for viewing

Annotated bibliography of fiction, memoir and picture books will be available for reading and critiquing.

Assignments

I have created a contract system for this course. Some of you will show much more commitment than others to the level of work and attention a course can demand. You will email the contract to me before June 12, after you have had a week to 'put your toe in the water' with the course expectations and your own shaping of a personal focus. The contract is private – between you and me -- and no one needs to know what we've agreed. The following formula will let both student and lecturer know what will be expected:

To be considered for an A*

Read and discuss 5 assigned (course texts) books; read and report on 6 journal articles, using good power point skills; view 3 films and critique; present 6 book talks; read and reflect on 10 chapter books and 5 picture books (or 8 chapter books and 20 picture books); compile and share a minimum of 15 news stories and 5 websites for our focus; show leadership in the class, especially with discussions on international news and/or history debriefings. 100% attendance

*If the work is B quality, then the final grade will be B or B+

To be considered for a B**

Read and discuss 5 assigned (course texts) books; read and report on 3 journal articles; view 2 films and critique; present 3 book talks; read and reflect on 8 chapter books and 5 picture books (or 4 chapter books and 16 picture books); compile and share a minimum of 8 news stories and 3 websites; show a high level of participation in class, especially with international news and/or history debriefings. 90% attendance

**If the work is C quality, then the final grade will be C or C+

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[For those interested in pursuing writing a publishable paper as a future independent study, you may want to do this summer's work considering the following:

Suggested Rubric for a Publishable Paper

1. Explore the literature
2. Read the journal articles; view the films
3. Wonder about that which fascinates you:
 - a. A country? A continent? A geographic region?
 - b. Coming of age themes across regions?
 - c. Cultural issues across geography?
 - d. The work of one author?
 - e. The political history of one country?
 - f. Industrialization issues and development issues?
 - g. Children growing up in war?
 - h. Working children?
 - i. Homeless children?
 - j.
4. Read about the context/history/conditions of your topic in newspapers, etc.
5. Create your question for writing
6. Examine the journal(s) or conferences you would like to see publish your work
7. Draft your paper (#1)
8. Edit for passive voice, for tense mixing, for topic sentences and for citations
9. Share your paper with me, with other students to critique
10. Re-write the paper (#2) – typically, this means amplify with more evidence for your ideas
11. Share your paper with me, with other students to critique
12. Polish the paper and send off to journal or to conference solicitation]

Schedule

Fri. June 3 – 1-6 pm. Introduction to the Course and to Class Members

Preparing the journal

Lecture: International Literature

Reading the Annotated Bibliography; sources available

Discussion of *Miriam's Song* by M. Mathabane

Learning about South Africa; guest from Ethiopia (Eyasu Gutta)

Sat. June 4 – 8-6 pm. Mini-Lecture: What is Culture and how is it revealed in literature?

Mini-Lecture: Reading Literary Memoir of Sensitive Histories

Student Learning Styles and Discussion

Learning about International Film (guest lecturer, Nancy Carden)

Peiling Wang, guest lecturer

Discussion of *Red Scarf Girl*

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Fri. June 11 – 1-6 pm Learning about the Middle East and India (guest lecturer)
Mini-Lecture: International Publishing and its effect on literacy
Discussion of *Parvana's Journey*
Book talks, journal sharing

Sat. June 12 – 8-6 pm Discussion of *Shiva's Fire*
Bharat Mehra, guest lecturer
Book talks, journal sharing

Fri. June 24, 1- 6 pm Mini-Lecture: The roles of victim, perpetrator, resistor, and
bystander
Book talks, journal sharing
Discussion of *Asphalt Angels*
Mini-lecture: Latin America

Sat. June 25, 8-6 pm Sharing expertise in our IS 592 learning community
Guest lecturer from Guatemala
International Folk Dancing with Bob Grimac
Potluck lunch