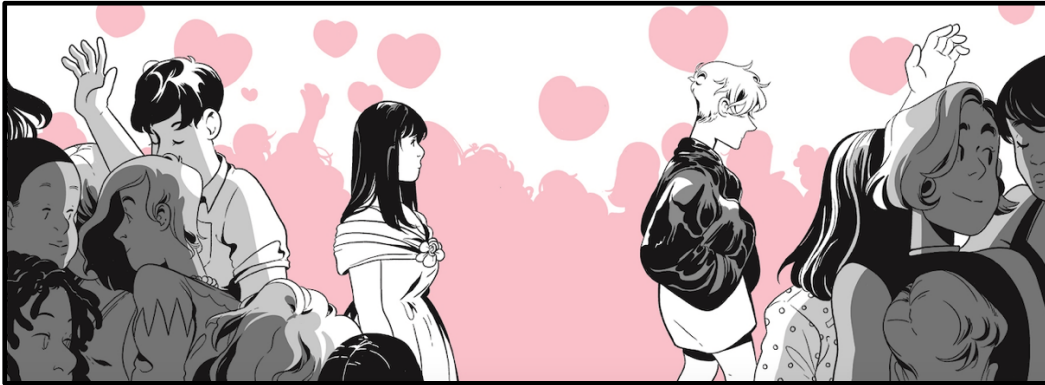


Queer Young Adult Literature

Senior Seminar // 02.499.2 // Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:00-3:15pm

Dr. Kate Slater



Adolescence is a sociocultural formation that has the potential to resist our definitions of normality. In this seminar, we'll discuss the various ways young adult (YA) literature in the late twentieth- and early twenty-first century United States participates in constructing categories of identity, particularly around gender and sexuality. Our reading list focuses on texts that depict LGBTQ+ identities, bodies, and desire between teenagers. By looking closely at these books, exploring their social contexts, and applying works of queer theory, students in this course will discover that literary representations of gender, sexuality, and adolescence both reflect and shape sociocultural perceptions and performances of these categories.

Some questions we'll address include the following: How has adolescence been historically defined over the past century, and what inherent relationship(s) does it have to queerness? What is "queer," and what does it mean to use it as a verb? What are the roots of queer YA literature, and how has queer YA shifted over the last fifty years? What do depictions of queer teens in YA tell us about adult anxieties or concerns? How have race, class, region, and disability intersected with YA depictions of queerness?

Assigned texts may include:

Kacen Callender (they/he), *Felix Ever After* (2020)

John Donovan (he/him), *I'll Get There. It Better Be Worth the Trip.* (1969)

Akwaeke Emezi (they/them), *Pet* (2019)

Adam Silvera (he/him), *More Happy Than Not* (2015)

Mariko Tamaki (she/her) & Rosemary Valero-O'Connell (she/her), *Laura Dean Keeps Breaking Up With Me* (2019)

Jacqueline Woodson (she/her), *The House You Pass on the Way* (1997)