

Questioning Authority: Literature, Film, and Subversion

UHON 222-006 | T | 3:30-6:00 | SHC 16 | 34321

Fulfills A&S Group V: Humanities

Kathryn Collison

How have film and literature changed our morals and ethics? How have they informed us of the human condition or of our approach to society, including our mores and values? In this class, we will look at texts and films that hold at their center a certain questioning of authority—or maybe even a warning of what may come of our current social structures and policies. We will seek to address what it means to be subversive (both today and throughout history, as well as in varying cultures), and how literature and even film has impacted our relationship with each other and to society. We will explore and consider philosophy, civil right literature, plays, poems, dystopias, sci-fi, social humor, exiled writings, and drama. From *Gattaca* to *V for Vendetta* to *1984* and *The Lysistrata*, the films and texts in this class will seek to question our assumptions about gender, science, culture, psychology, and everything in between. Students will write analytical and reflective papers, work in groups to choose three additional texts from different cultures and time periods for the class to read, and take part in a final project where they will express how they personally question authority (several options will be available, including creative, community-based, or historical perspectives).

Readings

Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*

Christopher Marlowe, *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*

Kate Chopin, *The Awakening*

George Orwell, *1984*

Three additional texts selected by student groups

Films:

The Breakfast Club

Gattaca

Fight Club

V for Vendetta

Milk

Requirements

Regular attendance, active class participation, on-line participation, group and individual presentations, analytical and reflective papers, and a final personal questioning authority project.

About the Instructor

Kathryn Collison received an M.F.A. in creative writing from Eastern Washington University and a B.A. in English from UNM. She has taught in the UHP since 2007 and was the Scribendi 2007-2008 Faculty Advisor. She has taught poetry in prison, high school, and community college. Her poetry has been published in *The Furnace Review*, *New Works Review*, and *The Pedestal Magazine*.