

Stephanie Wells
OLLI Fall Term 2024
Wednesdays 10-12
Golden Bear Center 365

Sexual Identity and the Self in Literature

In this course, we will explore works of literature that grapple with a variety of sexual orientations and identities articulated within the confines of a heteronormative society, and we will examine how sexual self-knowledge is woven into one's understanding of identity (in particular, gender identity and the links between sexuality and perceived gender roles, but also national identity and social status).

Our course meetings will take the form of structured discussions; I will lead with some background material and provide guided frameworks for our always lively conversations. You'll need to acquire copies of all the longer works; PDFs of the shorter works will be posted in your course dashboard. We may opt to adjust the following reading list to be either longer or shorter, depending on the desires and time limitations of course members. Please allow yourself ample time to do the course reading, which is quite extensive! You'll enjoy and engage with the texts much more fully if you reserve plenty of time to read them more slowly and in increments. We will be discussing the sections below on the day they are listed, so it's best to come to class having already read that far on that day.

Week 1

Jeannette Winterson, *Oranges are Not the Only Fruit*
Alice Munro, "Boys and Girls"

Week 2

E.M. Forster, *Maurice*

Week 3

Edmund White, ch. 6 of *A Boy's Own Story*
David Leavitt, "Dedicated"
E. Annie Proulx, *Brokeback Mountain*

Week 4

James Baldwin, *Giovanni's Room*

Week 5

Adrienne Rich, "21 Love Poems"
Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home*

Week 6

Ernest Hemingway, *The Garden of Eden*
Anthony Veasna So, "Human Development"

