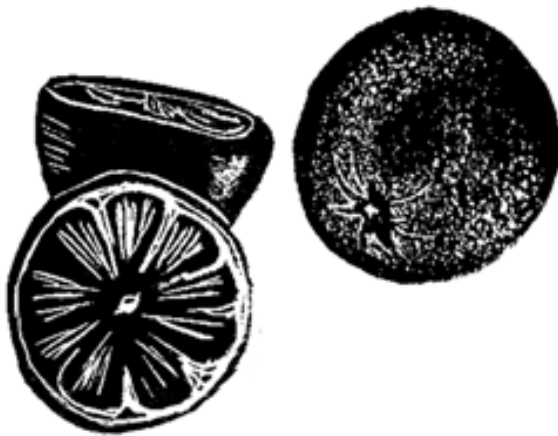


Introduction to Queer Studies

ESSAY ONE ASSIGNMENT

Due Tuesday, February 22, by the beginning of class as a Microsoft Word attachment. This essay should reach approximately five pages in length. Double-space everything. Use a standard-sized font and regular margins. If you wish to include critical sources, you will need to append a bibliography; otherwise, it is not necessary.



I comforted myself as best I could by always rearranging their version of the facts. —Winterson, 49

Assignment Description & Task:

This assignment asks you to examine a particular passage from *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*, using your close reading of that passage to make a statement about its significance to the novel as a whole.

The likely format for a successful response will begin with an introductory paragraph, including a thesis statement. The thesis will advance a specific and arguable claim about the passage's importance to the narrative. After the introduction, the essay will introduce and quote all or part of the passage, carefully reading and contextualizing it. Then, the essay will connect the passage to the rest of the book, by paraphrasing and/or briefly citing other parts of the novel. The conclusion will add complexity to the thesis statement, perhaps raising further questions, or perhaps elaborating corollary insights that develop from the interpretation. I should add that it is quite possible to write an excellent response without following this standard formatting procedure. Don't forget to create an original and interesting title for your essay.

Your task is *not* to provide a complete and all-embracing interpretation of *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*, but to make a limited argument about the relevance of a key passage to the novel.

There are four passages on the other side of this page from which to choose. If you'd like to choose your own, you may.

Passages:

On the way home I crunched at the *Maureen 4 Ken's*. I was confused. Everyone always said you found the right man.

My mother said it, which was confusing.

My auntie said it, which was even more confusing.

The man in the post office sold it on sweets. (72)

'Ridden they were.' His eyes roamed the hushed congregation. 'Yes, ridden, and do you know why?' He took a step back. We didn't make a sound. 'Unnatural Passions.'

A tremour shook the gathering. Not all of us were sure what he meant, but all of us knew it was dreadful. I glanced across at Melanie; she looked like she was going to be sick.

'Must be the Spirit,' I thought, and gave her hand a little squeeze. She jumped, and stared at me. Yes, definitely the Spirit. (85)

She asked me what I was doing.

'Doing for what?'

She blushed. I had no intention of telling her or anyone else what happened between Katy and me. Not by nature discreet or guilty I had enough memory to know where that particular revelation would lead. She left the day after, to stay with *him* and his parents. Just as they were driving off on his horrible Iron Curtain motor bike, he patted my arm, told me he knew, and forgave us both. There was only one thing I could do; mustering all my spit, I did it. (124)

She said those sorts of things were dead, the feelings she once had for me. There is a certain seductiveness about dead things. You can ill treat, alter and recolour what's dead. It won't complain. Then she laughed and said we probably saw what had happened very differently anyway . . . She laughed again, and said that the way I saw it would make a good story, her vision was just the history, the nothing-at-all facts. (171, *ellipsis hers*)