

English Major Plan

During my time at Williams, I have taken three English classes, two of which focused on literature and its correspondence with the visual arts. Psychology is my second major, and I am focusing on cognitive science, particularly the way our brains respond and process language and images. As a student also interested in film, this fusion of language and visuals in *Reading Films* and *Graphic Storytelling* has been extremely beneficial because it pushed me to translate from words to pictures and vice versa. However, there is more to film than creating this visual-verbal bridge, and it comes from pursuing a breadth of literature.

To build this knowledge base, I've explored a class at Williams that delved into medieval literature, called *Gender and Desire: Literature from 1200-1600*. Not only did it introduce me to medieval literature and the knights' tales, but it also explored the question of gender and sexual identity, an extremely important and relevant topic in today's world. This English class instigated my desire to explore different genres and histories of literature that I had not been exposed to. Growing up, I read mostly Victorian literature, and am very well-versed in the novels from that time period. However, it is rather limited, and while I'm at the Oxford program next year, I plan to take a whole class on Joseph Conrad, not only because he is one of the greatest authors of the 20th century, but also because the way in which he uses the English language differs from other authors, due to English being his third language. I'm interested in this difference and its effects on how readers approach his work and analyze his work. In addition, he has inspired many other authors as well as filmmakers, *Apocalypse Now* being the most famous example. As a psychology major, I'm interested in the anti-heroic portrayals in his books, the moral judgment he passes, and the rampant themes of self-doubt and depression. The second tutorial that I plan to take at Oxford is about Lord Byron. Poetry, too, is a field that I would love to explore, and given Byron's passionate life, I would love to study him, his context in history, and the effect and inspiration for his poetry.

Upon returning to Williams in my senior year, I would like to continue the critical and analytic instruction that I gained from Oxford, moving away from the literary histories and focusing more on criticism. I will take a criticism course that is a bit more psychologically based, one called *Sublime Confusion*. Much of the literature and films that I find engaging are very psychologically based, and this criticism course would fit very well with my passions. As an additional supplement, I would love to take a literature and psychoanalysis course. My third English class for senior year would probably be one that broadened my reading, such as *Nabokov and Pynchon* or *American Modernist Fiction*.

Therefore, in an effort to tie my love for psychology, English, and film together, I've started upon a syllabus that gives me a taste for different authors and genres. It will also focus in the psychology of the individual, studying human passion, grief, and the brooding individual. Though some of the individual courses that I've laid out in this plan may be subject to change, my overall goal to bring my interests together will remain constant, and I'll pursue courses that work towards this goal.