

EN 3230 6.0: MODERN CANADIAN FICTION

TERM: Fall-Winter 2019-2020

WEBSITE: www.allanweiss.com

COURSE INSTRUCTOR: Allan Weiss

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OFFICE HOURS: T 3:30-4:30
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And by appointment

TIME AND LOCATION:

Seminar R 2:30-5:30 FC 105

EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces students to works of English- and French-Canadian fiction from the 1940s to the present day, exploring a broad range of short stories and novels published during the period after World War II. As we read the course texts, we will pay attention not only to their thematic and formal elements but also to their historical and social contexts. While social realism has dominated Canadian fiction since its earliest days, non-realist texts have also been an important part of our literary heritage, and recent authors have raised challenges to the realist mode in postmodernist and fantastic texts. In addition, authors from a growing diversity of backgrounds and marginalized communities have added new dimensions to the country's fiction. Thus, we will look at texts that illustrate the variety of modes and voices that have characterized recent Canadian fiction. Francophone texts will be studied in translation.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COURSE:

We will meet for one three-hour seminar each week. There will be a lecture during the first part of the seminar lecture that will set the broader context for understanding that week's reading(s) and themes. After the lecture, we will have a class discussion of the week's material, focusing directly on the text or texts. All students will be expected to come to class having completed the assigned reading so that they are prepared to discuss it.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:*1. Brief Statement of Purpose*

The course deals with the development of modern Canadian fiction from the 1940s on, at all times placing that development in its historical and cultural contexts. Students will be introduced to some of the major literary movements, modes, and trends in Canadian fiction during the period, including but not limited to modernism, postmodernism, magic realism, surrealism, fantastic literature, and French-Canadian fiction. Novels will be supplemented by short stories to ensure as broad a coverage as possible of the range of styles, techniques, and authors.

2. Specific Learning Objectives:

It is hoped that students will gain an understanding of the key modes and movements in modern and contemporary Canadian fiction, and become familiar with a number of major figures in the field. One of the objectives of the course is to introduce students to authors they might not have read or even heard of before, so as to broaden their understanding of the various types of fiction that comprise recent work in the genre. Students will be expected to explore and make some use of secondary material, both theoretical and critical, on Canadian fiction, particularly in their major written work.

COURSE TEXTS:

Sinclair Ross, *As for Me and My House* (New Canadian Library)
Mordecai Richler, *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* (Penguin)
Sheila Watson, *The Double Hook* (New Canadian Library)
Gabrielle Roy, *The Tin Flute* (New Canadian Library)
Timothy Findley, *The Wars* (Penguin)
Alice Munro, *Who Do You Think You Are?* (Penguin)
Michael Ondaatje, *In the Skin of a Lion* (Vintage)
Joy Kogawa, *Obasan* (Penguin)
Eden Robinson, *Monkey Beach* (Vintage)
Shyam Selvadurai, *Funny Boy* (Emblem)
David Chariandy, *Brother* (McClelland and Stewart)
Kim Thuy, *Ru* (Vintage)

In addition, there is a course kit containing short stories

EVALUATION:

Short essay (1000 words), due Oct. 24	10%
First term paper (1500 words), due Nov. 28	20%
Second term paper (2000 words), due Mar. 26	35%
Class participation	15%
Final exam	20%

Essays should conform to proper MLA style. Written assignments **MUST** be handed in on time. No papers will be accepted after the final exam. **ANY USE OF ANOTHER PERSON'S WORK, WHETHER IT IS IN PRINT OR ELECTRONIC FORM, WITHOUT PROPER CITATION CONSTITUTES PLAGIARISM AND WILL LEAD TO CHARGES OF A BREACH OF ACADEMIC HONESTY.** Please see the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty at:
<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation/senate/acadhone.htm>

Grading, Assignment Submission, Lateness Penalties, and Missed Tests

Grading: The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests will bear a letter grade designation and a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.).

(For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar - http://calendars.registrar.yorku.ca/pdfs/ug2004cal/calug04_5_acadinfo.pdf)

Students may take a limited number of courses for degree credit on an ungraded (pass/fail) basis. For full information on this option see Alternative Grading Option in the Faculty of Arts section of the Undergraduate Calendar.

Assignment Submission: Proper academic performance depends on students doing their work not only well, but on time. Accordingly, assignments for this course must be received on the due date specified for the assignment.

Lateness Penalty: Assignments received later than the due date will be penalized one-half letter grade per week or portion thereof that it is late. Exceptions to the lateness penalty for valid reasons such as illness or compassionate grounds may be entertained by the instructor but will require supporting documentation (e.g., a doctor's letter).

Missed Tests: Students with a documented reason for missing a course test, such as illness or compassionate grounds, which is confirmed by supporting documentation (e.g., doctor's letter), may request accommodation from the instructor. Further extensions or accommodation will require students to submit a formal petition to the Faculty. Be sure to consult the Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies guidelines on Deferred Standing Agreements, petitions, etc.

IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS:

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information, available on the Senate Committee on Curriculum & Academic Standards webpage (see Reports, Initiatives, Documents): http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/senate_cte_main_pages/ccas.htm

- York's Academic Honesty Policy and Procedures/Academic Integrity Website
- Ethics Review Process for research involving human participants
- Course requirement accommodation for students with disabilities, including physical, medical, systemic, learning and psychiatric disabilities
- Student Conduct Standards
- Religious Observance Accommodation

Note:

The last date to add the course without permission of the course director is **Sept. 17, 2019**

The last date to add the course with permission of course director is **Oct. 1, 2019**

The last date to drop the course without receiving a grade is **Feb. 3, 2020**

LECTURE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Sept. 5 Introduction: Modern and “Modern” Canadian Fiction

2. Sept. 12 Realism, Modernism, and the Short Story

Reading: Ethel Wilson, “Mrs. Golightly and the First Convention”
Mavis Gallant, “Acceptance of Their Ways”

3. Sept. 19 Realism, Regionalism, Modernism, and the Novel

Reading: Sinclair Ross, *As for Me and My House*

4. Sept. 26 English-Canadian Modernism: The Montreal Storytellers

Reading: Hugh Hood, “Flying a Red Kite”
John Metcalf, “Early Morning Rabbits”

5. Oct. 3 The Canadian Short Story: The Immigrant Experience

Reading: Margaret Laurence, “A Bird in the House”
Clark Blaise, “How I Became a Jew”

6. Oct. 10 French-Canadian Modernism

Reading: Gabrielle Roy, *The Tin Flute*

7. Oct. 17 Reading Week: No Classes

8. Oct. 24 Realism and Satire

Reading: Mordecai Richler, *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*
First essay due

9. Oct. 31 The Canadian Short Story: The Immigrant Experience

Reading: Austin C. Clarke, “Doing Right”
Olive Senior, “The Pain Tree”

10. Nov. 7 Historiographic Metafiction

Reading: Timothy Findley, *The Wars*

11. Nov. 14 Mythopoeic Fiction

Reading: Sheila Watson, *The Double Hook*

12. Nov. 21 English-Canadian Magic Realism and Surrealism

Reading: Michael Bullock, "Roditi"
J. Michael Yates, "The Passage of Sono Nis"
Andreas Schroeder, "The Roller Rink"
Lesley Choyce, "Buddha at the Laundromat"
Eric McCormack, "Inspecting the Vaults"

13. Nov. 28 The Short Story Cycle

Reading: Alice Munro, *Who Do You Think You Are?*
Second essay due

1. Jan. 9 The Immigrant Experience and the City

Reading: Michael Ondaatje, *In the Skin of a Lion*

2. Jan. 16 Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy

Reading: Phyllis Gotlieb, "The Military Hospital"
Charles de Lint, "The Pennymen"

3. Jan. 23 The Immigrant Experience: Old World and New World

Reading: Joy Kogawa, *Obasan*

4. Jan. 30 Canadian Postmodernist Short Fiction

Reading: Margaret Atwood, "Death by Landscape"
Leon Rooke, "Want to Play House?"

5. Feb. 6 The Immigrant Experience: Ethnicity and Gender

Reading: Shyam Selvadurai, *Funny Boy*

6. Feb. 13 The Immigrant Experience: Feminist and Diverse Voices

Reading: Madeleine Thien, "Simple Recipes"
David Bezmozgis, "Tapka"

7. Feb. 20 Reading Week: No Classes

8. Feb. 27 Native Voices I

Reading: Eden Robinson, *Monkey Beach*

9. Mar. 5 The Canadian Short Story: Regional Voices

Reading: Alistair MacLeod, "The Boat"
Lynn Coady, "Hellgoing"

10. Mar. 12 Canadian Historical Fiction

Reading: Kim Thuy, *Ru*

11. Mar. 19 The Newfoundland Renaissance

Reading: Lisa Moore, "If You're There"
Michael Crummey, "Roots"

12. Mar. 26 The Suburban Experience

Reading: David Chariandy, *Brother*
Third essay due

13. Apr. 2 Native Voices II / Reflections of/on the Spectrum

Reading: Drew Hayden Taylor, "Take Us to Your Chief"
Thomas King, "Borders"

The Rules

1. ***Live cell phones are NOT permitted in the lecture or tutorial.*** If your phone goes off during class, you will be asked to leave and may not return for the duration of that class.
2. ***If you bring a laptop to class, you will be expected to use it for class-related purposes.*** If you use it for non-class-related purposes, such as using social media or playing games, you must sit at the back of the lecture hall or seminar room. If your use of your computer becomes disruptive or distracting for other students or the instructor, you will be asked to leave and may not return for the duration of that class.
3. ***Plagiarism is a serious offense!*** You may not present other people's words or ideas—whether word-for-word, in paraphrase, or in summary—as if they are your own. Cite all sources in both written work and oral presentations. Failure to do so will lead to severe penalties; please read your material on academic honesty!
4. ***You are responsible for knowing*** sessional dates, including drop dates. If you wish to drop the course, you must do so by the drop date and do so through the registrar's office; you cannot simply stop coming to class.