

**Carleton University
Late Summer 2014
Department of English**

**ENGLISH 4709/5611S
Studies in American Culture**

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Priscilla L. Walton
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OUTLINE:

Topic: Bestsellers: Their Markets, Their Readers

This course will study the phenomenon of the American "bestseller," from Grace Metalious's *Peyton Place* through Leon Uris, Jacqueline Susann, and Mario Puzo (among others) to Dan Brown. It will also include discussions of the importance of book clubs, and the rise of marketing in the publishing industry.

Texts:

Gelder, Ken. *Popular Fiction: The Logics and Practices of a Literary Field*

Metalious, Grace. *Peyton Place*

Susann, Jacqueline, *Valley of the Dolls*

Uris, Leon. *Exodus*

Puzo, Mario. *The Godfather*

King, Stephen. *Carrie*

Rowling, R.K. *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple*

North Patterson, Richard. *Exile*

Brown, Dan. *The Da Vinci Code*

Note: These texts are available at Octopus Books, 116 Third Ave. (Bank St. & Third)

REQUIREMENTS:

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|------------------|------------|
| One Essay - | 50% |
| Seminar - | 25% |
| Participation) - | <u>25%</u> |
| | 100% |

ENGLISH 5611/S
PROPOSED SYLLABUS

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|-----------|--|
| July 3 | Introduction |
| July 8 | Gelder |
| July 10 | Metalious |
| July 15 | Susann |
| July 17 | Uris |
| July 22 | Puzo |
| July 24 | King |
| July 30 | Rowling |
| August 5 | Walker (Essays Due in Class) |
| August 7 | North Patterson |
| August 12 | Brown |
| August 14 | Review |

SEMINARS:

Class presentations will focus on an aspect of the text under study that week. Presentations will address questions raised by the narrative, explore problems in relation to it, and/or assess its social and cultural movements.

ESSAY TOPIC

Due Date: August 5, 2014

Length: 4th-Year Students: 3500-4000 words (14-16 pp.)

M.A. Students: 4000-4500 words (16-18 pp.)

Students will submit a critical assessment of one of the questions, figures, or issues that has arisen from the course material. Essays will comprise well-researched and scholarly analyses of the topic under study.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated for this course. For an explanation, see the statement on Instructional Offences in the Undergraduate Calendar.

For Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations are required to contact a coordinator at the Paul Menton Centre to complete the necessary *letters of accommodation*. The student must then make an appointment to discuss their needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first class or CUTV test. This is to ensure sufficient time is available to make the necessary accommodation arrangements.

For Religious Observance:

Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious observance should make a formal, written request to their instructors for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student.

Students or instructors who have questions or want to confirm accommodation eligibility of a religious event or practice may refer to the Equity Services website for a list of holy days and Carleton's Academic Accommodation policies, or may contact an Equity Services Advisor in the Equity Services Department for assistance.

For Pregnancy:

Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.