

Carleton University

Department of English Language and Literature

Fall 2014

ENGL 4806A ~ Studies in Canadian Studies: The Giller Effect

(Pre-requisite – fourth year standing in Honours English)

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Course Description:

The interplay between reader and writer has a long tradition of discourse. Margaret Atwood has argued that "...the act of reading is just as singular –always – as the act of writing." (2002) However, when such discourses extend to juried assessments, rankings, and prize winnings, the original topics may cross thresholds into new vistas of criticism as well as social, historical, political, and economic arenas. In this digital age, what are the impacts, if any, of winning a national award for authors and their work? Does being nominated for a prestigious literary prize which is often determined by the nature, sponsorship, and high profile marketing of same, affect readership, the author, and the future of the literary and public scenes?

This seminar, a Canadian first, will undertake to examine these and related topics. The primary focus is the prose which has been nominated and won the Canadian literary award known as the Giller Prize. Established in 1994 by Jack Rabinovitch to honour his wife, Doris Giller (1931-1993), "the Giller" as it has been colloquially coined, is now Canada's most lucrative annual prize for Canadian prose writers. As described on the Scotiabank Giller Prize web site, it was "... in 2005 that the Giller Prize teamed up with Scotiabank to create the Scotiabank Giller Prize. It is the first-ever co-sponsorship for Canada's richest literary award for fiction. The purse increased from \$25,000 to \$50,000 and grew again in 2008 to \$70,000. ..."

(<http://www.scotiabank.com/gillerprize>)

Among the Prize's winners and finalists are Nobel laureate, Alice Munro and Booker Prize winners, Margaret Atwood and Michael Ondaatje. Munro, like many other winners has also served on the jury at least once if not several times. The current prize of \$75,000 is now frequently seen as furthering the careers of writers like Joseph Boyden, Vincent Lam, and Lynn Coady who join the ranks of Michael Ondaatje, M.G. Vassanji, Esi Edugyan, Elizabeth Hay, and many other stellar literary voices.

Each Fall, the literary and public communities await the jury's announcement of that year's list of Giller nominees which is followed by the following month's list of finalists. Then, the finalists are honoured and an award winner is announced at a Toronto gala which is nationally broadcasted in November.

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Thus, it is in this dynamic context that this seminar will examine not only this phenomenon which is known as “the Giller effect” but also what that term might mean? What might it include and is it different in 2014 than in 1994 or even 2004? Does a Giller nomination affect Canadian writers, publishers and culture, locally? Nationally? Internationally?

Students who select to follow this course must be prepared to attend and contribute to each weekly session. They must complete the core reading and writing tasks. These details will be clarified during our first session. Please be aware of the following dates for the upcoming Giller Prize:

September 16th, 2014 – the announcement of the long list of nominees;
 October 6, 2014 – the announcement of the short list of finalists;
 November 3, 2014 – Koerner Hall finalists’ readings and
 November 10, 2014 – Gala to celebrate the finalists and announce
 the winner.

As announced on February, 19, 2014, the jury for this year is made up of Canadian author, Shauna Singh Baldwin, British novelist, Justin Cartwright, and American writer and critic, Francine Prose.

Please note this seminar’s evolving agenda especially the Thursday, October 23, 2014 class which will be the English Department’s annual Munro Beattie Lecture. Lynn Coady, a Carleton graduate and last year’s Giller winner will give this year’ lecture.

Dr. Hoey acknowledges with gratitude the support of Ms. Elana Rabinovitch, the Executive Director of the Giller Foundation for this seminar.

Course Objectives:

- ~ To know the primary history of the Giller Prize in the context of Canadian literary history;
- ~ To know the broad range of the Giller prize winners and finalists;
- ~ To examine the various complexities of social, historical, and political contexts as represented by the winners, finalists, and juries’ comments;
- ~ To express one’s assessment of selected Giller winners in oral and written formats;
- ~ To explore the on-going applicability of literary and critical theories;
- ~ To enhance one’s personal awareness and appreciation of Canadian literature particularly in its contemporary realities of individualism, publicity, marketplace, and promotion.

Required Texts: Available from Octopus Books, 116 Third Ave., Ottawa.(613)233-2589
 www.octopusbooks.ca

In order of Class reference:

- S-1: Vassanji, M.G. *The Book of Secrets*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart,
 1994. Print. ISBN 97807710-87219
- S-2: Wright, Richard B. *Clara Callan*. Toronto: Harper Flamingo,
 2001. Print. ISBN 9781554684809
- S-3: Hay, Elizabeth. *Late Nights on Air*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart,
 2007. Print. ISBN 9780771040191
- S-4: Coady, Lynn. *Hellgoing*. Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 2013. Print.
 ISBN 9781770893085
- S-5: student to select one of the other winners QR make a choice from the
 titles announced on September 16 or October 6, 2014.
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Evaluation:

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| 1. On-going contributions and attendance ** (8 & 7) | 15% |
| 2. Brief written analyses of course materials (min. of 2)..... | 30% |
| 3. Seminar presentation - S-5 (Details given separately/class).... | 25% |
| 4. Research Paper on Seminar Choice (Due by Dec. 4) | 30% |

Please Note:

- ~ to be eligible to pass, students must complete all of the term work;
- ~ please submit print copies of written work and keep electronic copies for possible further consultation;
- ~ all assignments should be submitted in class on the due dates. Never slide any work under an office door; if needed, please use the English Department's drop box (DT1812);
- ~ IF academic accommodation(s) is/are needed, please give the professor notice as soon as possible to address necessary policies for such accommodation(s). Collaborative resolutions need appropriate timing.
- ~ "Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean." (FASS Teaching Regulations)
- ~ **like other 4th and 5th year courses, absence from TWO or more classes will result in an attendance grade of 0, without appropriate accommodation/documentation. Please arrive on time and participate in the discussions and questions for seminars.

Accommodations:***For Students with Disabilities:***

Students who require academic accommodation(s) in this course are directed to contact the Paul Menton Centre (ext. 6608). The student must meet with a co-ordinator to complete a letter of accommodation and then discuss the situation(s) with the professor at least two weeks prior to any evaluation situation such as a test, a deadline for submitting an assignment, or an examination. Please note the deadlines of Nov. 7, 2014 and March 6, 2015. (pmc@carleton.ca)

For Religious Observance:

Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of Religious observance should make a formal, written request to their Instructor for alternate dates and/or means for satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks class or as soon as possible after the need for the 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 accommodation(s) in a way that avoids academic disadvantages for the student. Any questions and confirmations about a religious event or practice can be checked on the Equity Services web site or by contacting the Equity Services Office. (<http://www2.carletonca/equity/>).

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(s) at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated that the accommodation will be required. (<http://www2.carletonca/equity/>).

Plagiarism: (Please see Carleton's Academic Integrity Policy which can be found at [http://www1.carleton.ca/studentsaffairs/ccms/wp-content/ccms-files/academic integrity policy.pdf](http://www1.carleton.ca/studentsaffairs/ccms/wp-content/ccms-files/academic%20integrity%20policy.pdf))

"Plagiarism is presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own." Plagiarism includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source. ..." Please note the Site's range of examples.

Schedule: Fall 2014 TBC
ENGL 4806A: Studies in Canadian Literature: 'The Giller Effect'

#	Date:	Topic(s)/Focus/Highlight(s)
1.	Thurs. Sept. 4	Beginnings...details for written and oral tasks, resources... ***
2.	Thurs. Sept. 11	Historical Perspectives – Seminar Selection ...S-1
3.	Thurs. Sept. 18	Historical Trends and Speculations-1; ... S-2 ...S-1...
4.	Thurs. Sept. 25	Historical Trends and Speculations – 2; S-2 and S 3
5.	Thurs. Oct. 2	S-3 – Guest: Elizabeth Hay
6.	Thurs. Oct. 9	Intro. + Sem. 1..... Sem. 2..... Sem. 3 Synth.
7.	Thurs. Oct. 16	Intro. + Sem. 4 Sem. 5 Sem. 6 Synth.
8.	Thurs. Oct. 23	Munro Beattie Lecture: Lynn Coady (S-4)
9.	Thurs. Oct. 30	Fall Reading Week --- October 27 -31, 2014 <u>no classes.</u>
10.	Thurs. Nov. 6	Intro. + Sem. 7 Sem. 8 Sem. 9Sem. 10
11.	Thurs. Nov. 13	Intro. + Sem. 11 Sem. 12 Sem. 13..... Sem. 14.....
12.	Thurs. Nov. 20	Intro. + Sem. 15 Sem. 16 Sem. 17 Synth.
13.	Thurs. Nov. 27	Intro. + Sem. 18 Sem. 19 Sem. 20 Synth.
14.	Thurs. Dec. 4	Possible venue change to the National Gallery “Looking Back and Scanning Horizons”

*** Details for short writing tasks, Seminar, and Research paper will be distributed and discussed. (Shared with the Giller Foundation for posting on August 13, 2014)