

Carleton University  
Fall 2013  
Department of English

**ENGL 4806A: *Studies in Canadian Lit. I***  
***Women Writing Modernity in Canada, 1900-1940***

**Tuesday / 2:35-5:25pm**

**Location:**  
*Please confirm location on Carleton Central*

**Instructor: Professor Jody Mason**

**Email: [jody.mason@carleton.ca](mailto:jody.mason@carleton.ca)**

**Office: 1903 Dunton Tower**

**Phone: 613.520.2600 x8907**

**Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1-2pm and by appointment**

## **I. Course Description**

The first half of the twentieth century was a period of intense social change in Canada and around the western world: the interrelated phenomena of the Second Industrial Revolution, urbanization, secularization, immigration and the settlement of the West, the First World War, the decline of the British Empire and the entanglement of imperialism and nationalism, the extension of the vote to women (except in Quebec and to Aboriginal women) and the declaration of women as persons, the Great Depression, labour unrest, and movements for social reform signify the kinds of transformations and conflicts that characterized the period. This seminar will explore a diversity of women's experiences of early twentieth-century modernity from various locations in Canada. Recognizing that women were often discursively positioned as modernity's opposite—as sentimental rather than impersonal or as traditional rather than experimental, for example—we will read a wide variety of texts by women that both participate in and contest these binaries. Novels, short stories, poetry, and polemical essays will dominate our list of primary texts, and a collection of critical and theoretical essays on the intersections of gender and modernity will guide our reading.

## **II. Required Texts**

Texts and the course reader are available for purchase at Octopus Books (116 Third Ave.; tel. 613-233-2589; <[www.octopusbooks.ca](http://www.octopusbooks.ca)>). You may purchase older editions of the novels, but the pagination will likely be different. Texts marked in the syllabus with an asterisk appear in the course reader. Readings available through databases or as e-books on the library's website are listed in the syllabus; you can access these through the Ares section of CU Learn. All readings available as e-books are also on 2-hour course reserve at MacOdrum Library.

Course Reader, ENGL 4806A

Irene Baird, *Waste Heritage* (1939) (U of Ottawa P; ISBN 9780776606491)

Lucy Maud Montgomery, *Rilla of Ingleside* (1920) (Seal Books; ISBN 0770421857)

Martha Ostenso, *Wild Geese* (1925) (M&S; ISBN 0771093942)

### **III. Course Requirements and Assignments**

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.

30-minute Seminar Facilitation (plus notes) (25%)

Response Papers (2 @ 15% each)

Participation (10%)

Final Research Essay (35%)

#### **1. 30-minute Seminar Facilitation (25%)**

On the first day of classes, students will sign up for seminar presentation topics. Each student will facilitate a class discussion for 30 minutes. This will be a new skill for most of you. I expect you to read the assigned material for the week, to conduct some secondary research (at least two secondary sources), and to formulate an argument and discussion points based on the topic you have chosen. Choosing passages for close reading / analysis is often a useful way to approach discussion. Do not simply read a prepared paper; you must ask questions of your fellow students. Each presenter is responsible for handing in his or her typed seminar notes and a Works Cited to me at the end of the class. You will build a research essay from this seminar (see assignment four).

#### **2. Two-Page Response Papers (2 @ 15% each)**

At least twice during the term, you must write a two-page response in MLA format. This response is meant to be an active reflection on the assigned reading for the week, but it is not a polished argument with a thesis: How do(es) the primary text(s) define modernity and / or how does it represent gendered experience? What are the major themes or aesthetic features of this week's primary text(s)? What is the main argument of the week's secondary source (if there is one)? How does the secondary source (if there is one) relate to the primary reading? No secondary research is required for this assignment. Responses are due at the beginning of class, and you should be prepared to discuss your response informally in class. One response must be handed in during the first five weeks of class (by Tues., Oct. 15th), and the other response must be submitted by Tues., Dec. 3rd. You may submit additional responses and keep your highest two grades.

#### **3. Participation (10%)**

This is a discussion-based seminar; accordingly, you must be present and active. Students who have more than two undocumented absences will receive a grade of 0 for participation. In order to contribute meaningfully to the seminar discussion, you must be prepared to share your response papers with the class, to pose questions for the seminar facilitators, and to otherwise actively contribute to classroom discussion. Students who are consistently silent will not receive a passing grade for participation.

#### **4. Final Research Essay (35%)**

This essay must be ten pages in MLA format. This essay should be an extension of your seminar presentation, and is due in class three weeks after you present your seminar. This research paper should have a clear and original thesis, should demonstrate a range and

breadth of secondary research (minimum five secondary sources), and should provide evidence of independent critical thinking. It should conform to academic conventions: i.e., it must follow MLA format and have correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

#### **IV. Expectations**

**Email and Office Hours:** Please use class time and office hours for questions relating to lectures, readings, and assignments. You may also communicate with me through the email, but these communications should be brief.

**Assignments and Late Policy:** (NB-Seminar notes and response papers may not be submitted late.) Assignments must be submitted in class the day they are due. Late assignments may be handed in up to five days late with a penalty of 1% per weekday (this includes the day they are due if they are submitted after class) and a grace period over the weekend; the maximum penalty is 5%. Essays will not be accepted after this period unless proper medical or other documentation is provided. You must hand in a printed copy of your work. Late assignments must be left in the essay drop-box at the English Department, Dunton Tower, 18th floor: they will be stamped with the date and deposited in my mailbox. Please keep a backup copy of all your assignments.

**Plagiarism** means passing off someone else's words or ideas as your own or submitting the same work in two different academic contexts (self-plagiarism). The consequences of plagiarism are severe and are issued by the Dean and the University Senate. In order to avoid plagiarism, you must correctly attribute the sources of the ideas you pick up from books, the internet, and other people. For additional information, consult <http://www2.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity>.

#### **V. Academic Accommodations**

*You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.*

*Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but are not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that your Instructor receives your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by Nov. 9, 2012 for the Fall term and March 8, 2013 for the Winter term.*

*You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>.*

## **VI. Tentative Syllabus**

### **1. Tues, Sept. 10: Introduction to the course; sign up for seminars**

*Canada: A People's History*, Vol 7 (disc 2, "Great Transformation")

### **2. Tues., Sept. 17: The Indian Maiden**

\*Johnson, "A Strong Race Opinion: On the Indian Girl in Modern Fiction," "A Red Girl's Reasoning," "As It Was In the Beginning," "Mothers of a Great Red Race"

### **3. Tues., Sept. 24: Discourses of Race**

\*Far, "Mrs. Spring Fragrance," "The Wisdom of the New," and "A Plea for the Chinaman: A Correspondent's Argument"

### **4. Tues., Oct. 1: Realism and Empire**

Duncan, (from) *The Pool in the Desert* ("A Mother in India," pp. 55-93; Ares)

### **5. Tues., Oct. 8: Sentimental Modernisms**

\*Pickthall, "The Sleep-Seekers," "The Bird in the Room," "Made in His Image"

\*Brown, "Dante's Beatrice," "Candles in the Glass," "To Chopin," "The Reed"

\*Scott, "The Canadian Authors Meet"

\*Clark, (from) *Sentimental Modernism* (Introduction)

### **6. Tues., Oct. 15: Urban Realism and the New Woman**

**First response due no later than today**

\*Sime, (from) *Sister Woman* ("Prologue," "Munitions!," "An Irregular Union," "A Woman of Business," "The Bachelor Girl," "Epilogue")

Dean, (from) *Practising Femininity: Domestic Realism and the Performance of Gender in Early Canadian Fiction* ("Explain Yourself: New Woman Fiction in Canada," pp. 57–76; Ares)

### **7. Tues., Oct. 22: Maternal Feminism and Social Protest**

McClung, (from) *In Times Like These* ("What Do Women Think of War?" pp. 21–27 ; Ares)

\*McClung, (from) *Purple Springs* ("The Play")

### **Fall Break (No Classes): Oct. 28-Nov. 1**

### **8. Tues., Nov. 5: Modernity and the Romance**

Montgomery, *Rilla of Ingleside*

### **9. Tues., Nov. 12: The Patriarchal Pioneer Narrative**

Ostenso, *Wild Geese*

Willmott, (from) *Unreal Country: Modernity in the Canadian Novel in English* ("Gender: The Feminization of History," pp. 102–43; Ares)

### **10. Tues., Nov. 19: The Poetries of Modernism**

\*Bowman, "Sea Sand," "The Old Fruit Garden"

\*Clark McLaren, "Frozen Fire"

\*Livesay, "Green Rain," "Day and Night," "Testament"

\*Marriott, "The Wind Our Enemy"

\*Brandt, (from) *Wider Boundaries of Daring: The Modernist Impulse in Canadian Women's Poetry* ("A New Genealogy of Canadian Literary Modernism")

**11. Tues., Nov. 26: Urban Realism and Social Protest**

Baird, *Waste Heritage*

**12. Tues., Dec. 3: Urban Realism and Social Protest**

**Second Response Due Today**

Baird, *Waste Heritage*

\*Rifkind, (from) *Comrades and Critics: Women, Literature, and the Left in 1930s Canada* (Chapter Four)