

Department of English, Carleton University
ENGL5804W: Studies in Canadian Literature
Making Settler Colonial Modernity

Winter 2015
Fridays 10-1
Classroom: 234 Patterson

Professor Jennifer Henderson
Office Hours: Fridays 1:30 – 3:30, 1911 Dunton Tower
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DESCRIPTION

In this course we will read 19th-century prose that participates in the process of constituting the spaces, subjectivities, social and economic logics, and strategies of governance associated with ideas of modernity in the settler-colonial context. Our focus is on Canada but a Canada conceived as a trans-Atlantic and continental space of discourse within which ideas of liberal progress, civility, proper gender and sexuality, and religious and racial difference circulate. Our settler literary texts include the genres of captivity narrative, gothic narrative, and sensation fiction. We will also read Indigenous historiography and short stories. Our last few weeks will introduce contemporary writing reflecting on the inheritances of the 19th century in the present: an experimental novel by the Montreal writer, Gail Scott, and songs and stories by the Nishnaabeg writer and theorist, Leanne Simpson. Literary texts will be supplemented each week by theory readings, including work by Wolf, Veracini, Laurence, Coleman, Henderson, Rifkin, Goeman, Emberley, and Povinelli.

INTELLECTUAL GOALS:

- A central concern of the course will be to make connections between two levels of analysis: biopolitics and geopolitics, or subjectivities and sexualities, on the one hand, and questions of territorial and political sovereignty, on the other.
- We will be guided by recent postcolonial and Indigenous studies scholarship emphasizing the way that colonial reshapings of Indigenous family and household formation were crucial means of building ‘modern’ Canada.
- The course is structured around the idea that settler colonialism in Canada is a particular version of liberal thought and practice. Hence, we’ll be thinking about the relations between 19th century liberal ideas and the settler project.
- We’ll try to be attentive to questions of genre, thinking wherever possible about relationships between aesthetic or formal conventions and social ones.
- We’ll try to be self-reflexive about what it means to continue reading the literature of settlement in the context of a commitment to decolonization. What approaches does this require of us? Particular readings will get us thinking about the politics of epistemology or what has been called ‘cognitive imperialism.’

LITERARY TEXTS

Please purchase the *texts marked with an asterix* at Octopus Books, 116 Third Ave. 613-233-2589. They will also be put on reserve for short-term loan. During our first class you'll receive instructions on how to access the other readings.

John Galt, *Bogle Corbet* (1831)

*Anna Jameson, *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada* (1838)

Maria Monk, *The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk* (1836)

*Catharine Maria Sedgwick, *Hope Leslie* (1827)

*Theresa Gowanlock & Theresa Delaney, *Two Months in the Camp of Big Bear* (1885)

*Isabella Valancy Crawford, *Winona* (1873)

*George Copway, *The Traditional History and Characteristic Sketches of the Ojibway Nation* (1850)

*Gail Scott, *The Obituary* (2010)

*Leanne Simpson, *Islands of Decolonial Love* (2013)

EVALUATION

Attendance & participation	10%
2 Reading responses	30%
1 Seminar presentation	25%
1 essay (12 pages)	35%

Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: 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. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Religious obligation: 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. For more details see the [Student Guide](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation.

If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable).

After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the [PMC website](#) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Plagiarism: 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 and fairly attribute the sources of the ideas you pick up from books, the internet, and other people. For additional information, consult the section on Instructional Offenses in the *Undergraduate Calendar*.