

**Carleton University
Department of English
Winter 2010
January – April Session**

ENGL 5802

**Schedule: Mondays 1 – 4pm
Location: Dunton 1816**

**Instructor: Jennifer Henderson
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Tel: 613-520-2600 x2367
Office Hours: Wednesdays 1 – 4 pm**

**Reconciling Canada:
Critical Perspectives on the Contemporary Culture of Apology and Redress**

This course asks how the global trend of state apologies and reconciliation initiatives in response to specific historical injuries--and to collectivities whose identities are to some extent constituted around those injuries--has been played in out in Canada. Proceeding with a view of reconciliation as a relatively new national project and a new model of social and historical understanding, the course asks what makes this model possible and what differences it makes. Our sampling of the culture of apology and redress in Canada will include fiction, criticism, statements of apology, government programmes, reports, internet texts, visual and performance art. These texts will be read for the terms in which they imagine community, harm, history, futurity, justice, and change. Secondary readings will include philosophical work on apology and forgiveness, as well as work from a number of disciplines that sketches the contours of this space of cultural production as shaped not only by the global phenomena of state apologies and truth and reconciliation commissions, but also by Canada's self-concept as a multicultural beacon, popular neoliberal consensus, and struggles for decolonization. Our weekly readings and discussions will be organized around some of the following topics: settler "guilt" and national catharsis; history as "injury," "heritage," and ghostly trace; "trauma" as discourse, epistemology, and politics; testimony and the politics of national affect; sovereign power and the space of the camp; redress as performance.

Required texts:

The texts listed below (with the exception of the Duliani) are available at Mother tongue Books at Bank and Sunnyside (613-730-2346). The other required texts will be available online or in a course folder in the English Department copy room.

Robert Alexie, *Porcupines and China Dolls*
Mario Duliani, *City Without Women*
Tomson Highway, *Kiss of the Fur Queen*
Gail Jones, *Sorry*
Joy Kogawa, *Obasan*
Kerri Sakamoto, *The Electrical Field*
Marsha Skrypuch, *Prisoners in the Promised Land*
John Steffler, *The Afterlife of George Cartwright*

Course requirements:

- **Six group presentations (40%):** short oral presentations on selected pieces of reading material, as part of a group that will be “up to bat” every two weeks. I will ask you to hand in your notes. Every presentation you make should have a thesis. This 40% is a group grade.
- **Participation (15%):** This grade will consist mainly in your own oral responses to the other group’s formal presentations, on the weeks when your group is not “up to bat.” (15%)
- **Research paper** (approx. 16 pages, due date TBA) On a topic of your choosing, addressing themes within the parameters of this course, approved by me. **(45%)**

Further information on assignments and means of evaluation:

Group presentations: (40%)

The class will be divided into Group “A” and “B.” Every second week, your group will be responsible for covering the required reading material, dividing it up among the members of your group as you see fit. (I will give you 20 minutes at the end of every class to meet as a group, confer, and plan your division of labour. As a group you will need to ensure, at a minimum, that all of the required readings are addressed, and that your presentations together will not take longer than 45 minutes, and a minimum of 35.)

Since the nature of our reading materials varies from novels to websites to essays to statements of apology, the kind of work you should do with your presentation cannot be prescribed too closely. But think of yourself as speaking to a group that has read the material, without having thought about it as carefully and with the extended consideration you have given it. While I don’t expect the presentations by individual members of a group to fit together systematically, for each reading, you should bring us the insights of the time you have spent analyzing and thinking critically. Make these insights cohere in your presentation of them. Introduce the text: what is it, what context does it come out of? What does the text do? How does it do it? (Here you can attend to questions of form, rhetoric, modes of address, etc.) What is the significance of this text? What can we draw from it? What might be problematic about it? What perspective does it bring to our set of concerns in the course?

Take us to interesting and perplexing details or passages. Raise questions that can be taken up by respondents, or in a more general discussion. Part of your job as a group is to set a discussion in motion, with the particular frame, angle, questions, passages you have focused on in your presentation.

Each week I will collect the notes from your presentations. These do not need to be extensive or very formal—the purpose of collecting them is to see your thinking again when I am assigning the group grade for the week.

Participation: (15%)

Every second week, you become a respondent. Although your group is not in the “hot seat,” as an individual, you are still expected to make a contribution to the class discussion. This is where you distinguish yourself as someone who can think on his or her feet, responding to presentations with comments, questions, and connections drawn to other material we have explored. Having read all (or most!) of the week’s materials, but not as closely as those in the presenting group, you should come with some ideas, and be prepared to respond to presenters with questions arising from what they have said. The success of our seminar will depend upon your commitment and your willingness to share ideas, listen carefully but critically, and respond to others with interest and respect.

Research paper: (45%)

Essays of approximately 16 pages that indicate your familiarity with the relevant critical literature, identify your interest or question clearly in relation to that existing work, and demonstrate some conceptual reflexivity and sophistication. I would like to see you work with some primary material(s), whether that is literary, archival, visual, digital etc. Please deliver your essay to the drop-box at the English Department office and have it stamped. (Please do not email me the essay.)

As soon as you start zeroing in on a topic, please come to discuss it with me.

All essays must be in MLA format, as laid out in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.

University regulations:

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism or unacknowledgement borrowing of another person’s scholarship is a serious offence. It is defined as “us[ing] and pass[ing] off as one’s own idea or product work of another without expressly giving credit to another” (*Carleton Undergraduate Calendar* 2004/2005, 52). This includes material from the web. If you have any questions about when and how to cite reference sources, do not hesitate to ask me. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence.

Academic accommodations

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations should contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities to complete the necessary letters of accommodation. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet and discuss your needs with me at least two weeks prior to the first relevant assignment or test.

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.

READING SCHEDULE

Readings marked (C) are in a red folder in the photocopy room. Many of our readings are also available on WEBCT or online, and this is indicated where it applies. Readings marked "supplementary" are not required, but are suggested for those with an interest in pursuing that week's issues more intensively.

January

4 Introduction: official multiculturalism and critiques

- Texts distributed and discussed in class: text of the Multiculturalism Act (1988) (hand-out); Jin-Me Yoon, *A Group of Sixty-Seven* (1996) (visual art)

Background readings (critiques of official multiculturalism):
Himani Bannerji, “On the Dark Side of the Nation”; Eva Mackey, excerpts from *The House of Difference* ; Marjery Fee, “What Use Is Ethnicity to Aboriginal Peoples in Canada?” (C)

11 “Culture” and “history” under neoliberalism and globalization

- Christina Gabriel and Yasmeen Abul-Laban, “Multiculturalism and Nation-Building” and “Selling (out) Diversity in an Age of Globalization” (chapters 4 and 6 of *Selling Diversity*) (C)
- Matt James, “Do campaigns for historical redress erode the Canadian welfare state?” in *Multiculturalism and the Welfare State*, eds. Keith Banting and Will Kymlicka (C) and online
- Please look at the following website:
http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/multi-chrp-guide/section-01.asp#s1_1. Community Historic Recognition Program, Multiculturalism branch, Citizenship and Immigration Canada
- Pauline Wakeham, “The Cunning of Reconciliation: Reinventing White Civility in Canada’s Culture of Redress” (C)

supplementary reading: Jennifer Henderson and Pauline Wakeham, “Introduction” to *Reconciling Canada* (C)

18 Apology

- Rajeswari Sunder Rajan, “Righting Wrongs, Rewriting History?” *Interventions* 2.2 (2000) (C) and WEBCT
- Michel-Rolph Trouillot, “Abortive Rituals: Historical Apologies in the Global Era,” *Interventions* 2.2 (2000) (C) and WEBCT
- Official Hansard, June 11, 2008: Please read apology by Stephen Harper and responses by Phil Fontaine, Patrick Brazeau, Mary Simon, Beverley Jacobs (C) and WEBCT
- Matthew Dorrell, “The Apologetic Nation: Reading ‘What We Now Recognize’ in the Residential Schools Apology” (C) and WEBCT

25 The trope of haunting

- John Steffler, *The Afterlife of George Cartwright*

- Cynthia Sugars, “The Impossible Afterlife of George Cartwright: Settler Melancholy and Postcolonial Desire,” *University of Toronto Quarterly (UTQ)* 75.2 (2006) 693-717. Available online.

Supplementary reading: Marlene Goldman and Joanne Saul, “Talking With Ghosts: Haunting in Canadian Cultural Production,” *UTQ* 75.2 (2006) 645-655. Available online.

February

1

Uncanny nationhood

- **Joy Kogawa, *Obasan***
- Government apology, 1988 (“Prime Brian Mulroney in the House of Commons”) (C)
- Gerry Turcotte, “ ‘Horror Written on Their Skin’: Joy Kogawa’s Gothic Uncanny” in *Unsettled Remains*, eds. Cynthia Sugars and Gerry Turcotte (C)

supplementary reading: David Lloyd, “Colonial Trauma/Postcolonial Recovery? *Interventions* 2.2 (2000) 212-28 (C) and WEBCT

8

Redressed subjects and the afterlife of settlement

- **Kerri Sakamoto, *The Electrical Field***
- Excerpts from Roy Miki, *Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Justice* (C)

supplementary reading: Roy Miki, “Unclassified Subjects,” in *Broken Entries* (C)

15

February break

22

Internment: Theorizing the space of the camp

- Giorgio Agamben, excerpts from *States of Exception*
- Mona Oikawa, “Cartographies of Violence: Women, Memory, and the Subject(s) of Internment” in *Race, Space and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society*, ed. Sherene Razack (C)

- Gabrielle Scardellato, “Images of Internment” in *Enemies Within: Italian and other Internees in Canada and Abroad*, eds. Franca Iacovetta, Roberto Perin, and Angelo Principe (C) and online
- Jennifer Henderson, “The Camp, the School and the Child: Discursive Exchanges and (Neo)liberal Axioms in the Culture of Redress” (C) and WEBCT

supplementary reading: Bohdan Kordan and Craig Mahovsky, “Internment in Canada: A Perspective” and “The Nature of the Historical Wrong” (chapters 1 and 2 of *A Bare and Impolitic Right: Internment and Ukrainian-Canadian Redress*) (C)

March

1 **Internment: Representing the camp**

- **Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch**, *Prisoners in the Promised Land*
- **Mario Duliani**, *City Without Women*
- “Address by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney to the National Congress for the Italian Canadians and the Canadian Italian Business Professional Association, November 4, 1990” (C) and WEBCT
- The *Internment of Persons of Ukrainian Origin Recognition Act*, 2005 (C) and WEBCT

Supplementary readings: Frances Swyripa, “The Politics of Redress: The Contemporary Ukrainian-Canadian Campaign” and Franca Iacovetta and Robert Ventresca, “Redress, Collective Memory, and the Politics of History,” both in *Enemies Within: Italian and Other Internees Abroad*, eds. Franca Iacovetta, Roberto Perin, and Angelo Principe (C) and online

8 **Australia**

- **Gail Jones**, *Sorry*
- Jones, “Sorry-in-the-Sky: Empathetic Unsettling, Mourning, and the Stolen Generations,” in *Imagining Australia*, eds. Judith Ryan and Chris Wallace-Crabbe (C)
- See visual art: Cathy Busby, “Sorry” at www.coandco.ca/client/cb/sorry_hamilton.php and “We Are Sorry” at www.coandco.ca/client/cb/wearesorry_melbourne.php Artist’s statements (C) and WEBCT

supplementary readings: Haydie Gooder and Jane M. Jacobs, “‘On the Border of the UnSayable’: The Apology in Postcolonizing Australia,” *Interventions* 2.2 (2000) 229-47 (C) and WEBCT; Tony Birch, “‘The First White Man Born’: Contesting the ‘Stolen Generations’ narrative in Australia,” in *Imagining Australia*, eds. Judith Ryan and Chris Wallace-Crabbe (C); “The Ethics of Apology: A Set of Commentaries” *Critique of Anthropology* 29.3 (2009) 345-66 (C)

15

Testimony, Reconciliation, Forgiveness

- Jennifer Henderson and Pauline Wakeham, “Colonial Reckoning, National Reconciliation: First Peoples and the Culture of Redress in Canada,” Introduction to forthcoming issue of *ESC* on Aboriginal Redress in Canada (C) and WEBCT
- Please have a look at the website of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement http://www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca/english_index.html and the website of Truth and Reconciliation Canada <http://www.trc-cvr.ca/overview.html>, paying special attention to the mandate of TRC
- Dian Million, “Trauma, Power, and the Therapeutic: Speaking Psychotherapeutic Narratives in an Era of Indigenous Human Rights” (C) and WEBCT
- Roger Simon, “Toward a Hopeful Practice of Worrying: The Problematics of Listening and the Educative Responsibilities of the IRSTRC” (C) and WEBCT
- Jacques Derrida, from “On Forgiveness” (C) and online

Supplementary reading: Julia Kristeva, “Forgiveness: An Interview,” *PMLA* 117.2 (C) and WEBCT and also available online

22

Resisting the teleology of redress, reconciliation, and recovery

- **Robert Alexie, *Porcupines and China Dolls***
- Keavy Martin, “Truth, Reconciliation, and Amnesia: *Porcupines and China Dolls* and the Canadian Conscience” (C) and WEBCT

Representation/performance

(representation)

- Sherry Farrell Racette, “Haunted: First Nations Children in Residential Schools Photography” (C)

Website exhibits: (links also on WEBCT)

- Legacy of Hope Foundation, “Where Are the Children?” at <http://www.wherethechildren.ca/en> (see especially “School”)
- Assembly of First Nations Indian Residential Schools Unit, “History of Indian Residential Schools” at <http://www.afn.ca/residentialschools/history.html#>
- The Shingwauk Project at <http://www.shingwauk.auc.ca> (see “Welcome Page,” “Main Index,” and “Research Centre”)
- CBC, “A Lost Heritage: Canada’s Residential Schools” at <http://archives.cbc.ca/society/education/topics/692/>
- *National Post* photos gallery, “Canada’s Residential Schools” <http://www.nationalpost.com/multimedia/photos/gallery/index.html?id=549695> and first article in “Rethinking the Reserve” series, “Real Warriors Hold Jobs” at <http://www.nationalpost.com/news/canada/rethinkingthereserve/index.html>

(performance)

- Len Findlay, “Redress Rehearsals: Legal Warrior, COSMOSQUAW, and the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards” (C) and WEBCT

April

5

Redress and the performative

- **Tompson Highway, *Kiss of the Fur Queen***
- Rebecca Belmore, excerpts from catalogue *Rising to the Occasion* (performance art archived and discussed by various critics) (C)

Supplementary readings: “Rebecca Belmore: Firecely Political/Politically Fierce,” Interview by Shannon Bell, *Canadian Dimension* (2009) (C) and WEBCT or at <http://proquest.umi.com.proxy.library.carleton.ca/pqdlink?index=0&did=1643594851&SrchMode=1&sid=2&Fmt=6&VInst=PROD>

[&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1260659780&cli
entId=13709](#); Jennifer Henderson, “ ‘Something Not Unlike
Enjoyment’: Gothicism, Catholicism, and Sexuality in Tomson
Highway’s *Kiss of the Fur Queen*” (C)