

Department of English, Carleton University

ENGL 5900

Fall 2012

*** Preliminary Course Outline / Subject to Change

Selected Topic in English Studies- Economies of Contemporary Literature

Instructor: Professor Sarah Brouillette

Office: 1904 Dunton Tower

Email: sarah_brouillette@carleton.ca

Course description:

This course will survey some of the most important recent studies of the material foundations of contemporary literary production. We will consider the claims of the authors, of course, but we will also query the methods they use to arrive at their research conclusions. We will read research on the proliferation of lucrative high-profile literary prizes, on the incorporation of publishing houses into transnational media corporations, on the appearance of the celebrity literary writer, on the eclipse of the role of the editor by that of the marketer, and on mega bookstore chains rising alongside digital innovations in distribution and audience formation. At the close of the course we will use our readings to reconsider a handful of recent theories on the vexed relationship between economics and aesthetics. We will lay out the competing ways that theorists have understood this art-commerce dialectic and its historical mutations, and we will ask how these theories might require revision in response to the contemporary moment.

Assigned texts will be on e-reserve, and will be excerpts from the following monographs plus a few additional articles:

- Graham Huggan, *The Postcolonial Exotic: Marketing the Margins*
- Claire Squires, *Marketing Literature*
- James English, *The Economy of Prestige: Prizes, Awards and the Circulation of Cultural Value*
- Jim Collins, *Bring on the Books for Everybody: How Literary Culture Became Popular Culture*
- Rashmi Sadana, *English Heart, Hindi Heartland: The Political Life of Literature in India*
- Gillian Whitlock, *Soft Weapons: Autobiography in Transit*
- Lorraine York, *Literary Celebrity in Canada*
- Gillian Roberts, *Prizing Literature: the Celebration and Circulation of National Culture*
- Ted Striphas, *The Late Age of Print: Everyday Book Culture from Consumerism to Control*

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Value	Assignment	Due
30%	Three 500-word responses to one or more of a given week's readings. These responses will be presented in seminar and handed in.	in seminar
70%	An article length essay that draws on methods exhibited in course readings. Topics should be discussed with me in advance of writing.	TBA