

Department of English, Carleton University

ENGL 6000T  
Winter 2013

\*\*\* Preliminary Course Outline / Subject to Change

**Doctoral Seminar- The Production of Literature**

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**Course description:**

As the core course of The Production of Literature PhD, ENGL 6000 orients students to the program's key issues, surveying some of the last several decades' most significant studies of the history of the book and cultural theory. Broadly speaking, the course addresses the material (legal, technological, economic) conditions and systems of cultural value and distinction which shape the interrelated activities of literary production, circulation, and reception. In so doing, it reflects general shifts in literary study which go beyond previous assumptions about the stability of literary meaning and the very category of "literature" itself to investigate literature's historical embeddedness and continually contested status. We will discuss the blind spots as well as the successes of such attempts to transform the study of literature, critically engaging with our readings and the issues and questions they provoke. ENGL 6000 is organized according to several broad topics: attempts to articulate "the history of the book" as a discipline; the institutional construction of "the literary" and literary value; the concept of authorship; the relationship between material form and meaning, including the impact of new media; and theories and histories of reading and audiences. We will consider the interrelatedness of all these topics, and certain questions will inevitably recur: How do the categories of the "literary" and the "non-literary" emerge? How is the relationship between physical form and content understood, and how has this changed? How do we understand authorship, and what is the relationship between authors and their texts?