

Carleton University
Winter 2023
Department of English
**ENG 4115A: Culture and the Text
Literature of the Self**

Prerequisites: fourth-year standing or permission of the department.
Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:35-12:55pm. In-person, please confirm location on Carleton Central.

Instructor: Professor Collett Tracey
Email: Colletttracey@CUNet.carleton.ca
Office: 1910 Dunton Tower
Phone: 613-520-2600 x2328
Office Hours: To be determined.

Important note:

For information on deadlines for withdrawal from courses, please consult the Academic Year section of the Undergraduate Calendar (<https://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/>).

Overview:

Literature is a reflection of life and, as such, offers a means by which complex psychological and emotional issues can be explored, not only by the writer, but by readers. From a therapeutic point of view, this has enormous power, given that it offers us the ability to know that we are not alone in a particular situation or problem, and that there are others battling similar issues and pursuing different methods of overcoming them. Rather than deal with a trauma that is, perhaps, too difficult to confront, literature offers a parallel space in which we can revisit it in a safe space. These are the ideas we will explore in this class through a close analysis of two novels, several short stories and a variety of poems.

Required Texts:

(Novels and the book of poetry are available at the University bookstore; short stories are available in a variety of anthologies and online)

Novels: *All My Puny Sorrows*, by Miriam Toews,
Fight Club, by Chuck Palahniuk

Poetry: Endre Farkas, *I Will Tell You One More Thing*
Other poems available in class

Short Stories: Alice Munro, "Who Do You Think You Are?"
John Updike, "The Happiest I've Been"
Kafka, "The Metamorphosis"

Ian McEwan “First Love, Last Rites”
Norman Levine, “We All Begin in a Little Magazine”
John Steinbeck, “The Chrysanthemums”
Ann Beattie, “Shifting”
S. Jackson, “The Lottery”
James Joyce, “The Boarding House”/The Rocking Horse Winner
Charlotte Perkins, “The Yellow Wallpaper”

Grading:

Class Participation and Seminars 40%

Short Reflection Piece 20%

Essay: 40%

Seminars:

You will be divided into small groups to facilitate more in-depth discussions about a particular short story that you choose. You will then be required to do an in-class seminar in which you share, as a group, your collective understanding and research of a theme or issue related to the course context. This can be done from a creative or academic point of view. With the understanding that some students are more extroverted or introverted than others, you will be able to participate in a way that is comfortable for you. However, whether or not you are actually presenting on the day of the seminar, you will be required to attend class and respond to questions from other class members. Each member of the seminar group will be asked to grade their peers on their contributions to the seminar, and themselves. The final grade, assigned by me, will take these evaluations into account.

Short Reflection Piece:

Within the first month of term, you will be required to choose a poem or short story and write a short (1 – 2 pages) reflective piece about it describing why you chose the text and how you, personally, relate to it, or what you think about it, in the context of the course parameters.

The Essay:

As a student, you will be encouraged to devise your own essay topic in consultation with me. It should reflect ideas and material relevant to the issues that we will be discussing over the semester. You can base your essay on the works of a particular writer, which might be an in-depth study of a single text or a thematic exploration across more than one text (including, if you wish, texts we haven't studied as long as I agree with them). Alternatively, you can write a thematic essay which takes an idea, topic, or theme and explores it through texts by more than one writer (although writing about more than two primary texts is usually a bad idea). The usual essay rules apply: you are expected to demonstrate a level of engagement and research that goes beyond the content covered in seminars, and the essay must be presented in correct MLA scholarly format (with a consistently used and accurate referencing system and a full, properly

formatted bibliography). The essay must be word-processed and paginated, and accompanied by a completed cover sheet.

Grading System:

Grades for term work will be based on insightfulness, originality, focus, organization of ideas, clarity of expression, scholarly rigor, correct use of MLA style, spelling, and grammar.

General Expectations, Course Policies and Classroom Etiquette:

Students are expected to attend all classes, showing up on time and staying for the duration of the class. You are also expected to bring the text assigned for that day's class, having read it and being prepared for discussion. If you do have to miss a class it is your responsibility to get the notes you miss from another student. *I strongly prefer that, unless they are absolutely necessary for note-taking, both cellphones and laptops should be turned off during class.* Students must be prepared to discuss the texts in a thoughtful manner.

Critical reading, writing and analytical skills cannot be learned from books alone. Asking questions about the readings and contributing to class discussions will help you better understand the material, hone your critical and interpretive skills and prepare you well for upper-year classes where participation will account for part of your final grade. -

Attendance will be taken on a random basis, and absences will be noted. *Students who miss 4 or more classes per term will not be able to pass the course, as all course requirements must be fulfilled for successful completion of the course.*

Contact:

The best way to get in contact with me is by email at collett.tracey@carleton.ca. I will respond to emails in a timely fashion (usually within 24 hours, though it could be longer on weekends) and especially to those that ask clear, precise and specific questions. - I am also available to meet with students to discuss any aspect of the course during my office hours, and if you are unable to make it to my office hours, we can reschedule a time to meet that is convenient to both of us.

Suggestions:

It is strongly recommended that you take notes on the lectures and discussions and keep a record of the passages we discuss in class. Writing in the margins of your books and marking off key passages as you read is also a good idea.

Handing In Assignments:

Assignments are due in class on the dates indicated. *Please do not slip the assignment under my office door. Emailed or faxed assignments are not acceptable and will not be marked.* Keep a back-up copy of every assignment you hand in as an insurance policy in the unlikely event that your essay is misplaced.

Extensions:

Requests for extension may be granted in some instances, but only for compelling reasons. Any such request must be made in writing or in person no later than 48 hours prior to the due date of the assignment. Requests for “retroactive” extensions (i.e. requests made on or after the due date of the essay) will not be considered.

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 attribute the sources of the ideas you pick up from books, the internet, and other people. See the statement on Instructional Offences in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Student Mental Health:

As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

Emergency Resources (on and off campus): <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

Carleton Resources:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources:

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

Pandemic Measures:

It is important to remember that COVID is still present in Ottawa. The situation can change at any time and the risks of new variants and outbreaks are very real. There are [a number of actions you can take](#) to lower your risk and the risk you pose to those around you including being vaccinated, wearing a mask, staying home when you’re sick, washing your hands and maintaining proper respiratory and cough etiquette.

Feeling sick? Remaining vigilant and not attending work or school when sick or with symptoms is critically important. If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms do not come to class or campus. If you feel ill or exhibit symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately. In all situations, you should follow Carleton's [symptom reporting protocols](#).

Masks: Masks are no longer mandatory in university buildings and facilities. However, we continue to recommend masking when indoors, particularly if physical distancing cannot be maintained. We are aware that personal preferences regarding optional mask use will vary greatly, and we ask that we all show consideration and care for each other during this transition.

Vaccines: While proof of vaccination is no longer required to access campus or participate in in-person Carleton activities, it may become necessary for the University to bring back proof of vaccination requirements on short notice if the situation and public health advice changes. Students are strongly encouraged to get a full course of vaccination, including booster doses as soon as they are eligible and submit their booster dose information in [cuScreen](#) as soon as possible. Please note that Carleton cannot guarantee that it will be able to offer virtual or hybrid learning options for those who are unable to attend the campus.

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow requirements and guidelines regarding health and safety which may change from time to time. For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and health and safety requirements please see the [University's COVID-19 website](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact covidinfo@carleton.ca.

Request for 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: 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 accommodation regarding a formally scheduled final exam, you must complete the Pregnancy Accommodation Form ([click here](#)).

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 [click here](#).

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).

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. 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. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

Note:

If one of your assignments is lost, misplaced, or not received by the instructor, you are responsible for having a backup copy that can be submitted immediately upon request

Course Calendar:

January:

Introduction to the course material and expectations

Poetry: Pound, "In a Station of the Metro," "Tract," Wallace, B. "The Woman in this Poem," Webb, "To Friends Who Have Also Considered Suicide," Frost, "Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening," Birney, "David," Roethke, "Papa's Waltz"

Short Stories: Alice Munro, "Who Do You Think You Are?"
John Updike, "The Happiest I've Been"
Kafka, "The Metamorphosis"
Ian McEwan "First Love, Last Rites"

February:

Novel: *Fight Club*

Poetry: Layton, "The Bull Calf", "Keine Lazarovitch", Plath, "Lady Lazarus, "Two Views of a Cadaver Room", Ondaatje, "Time Around Scars", "The Cinnamon Peeler's Wife", Atwood, "Death of a Young Son By Drowning", "This is a Photograph of Me"

Short Stories: Norman Levine, "We All Begin in a Little Magazine"
John Steinbeck, "The Chrysanthemums"

Ann Beattie, "Shifting"
S. Jackson, "The Lottery"
James Joyce, "The Boarding House"/The Rocking Horse Winner
Charlotte Perkins, "The Yellow Wallpaper"

March:

Novel: *All My Puny Sorrows*
Poetry: Heaney, "Digging", "Mid-Term Break", Farkas
Short Stories: Wiebe, "Where is the Voice Coming From?"
Laurence, "The Horse Dealer's Daughter"
Ross, "One's a Heifer"
Roy, "Hoodoo Valley"
Laurence, "The Mask of the Bear"
Oates, "Dying"

April:

Essay Writing Classes
Conclusion and Review *Final papers due on the last day of class*