

**Carleton University
Winter 2018
Department of English**

**ENGL 2906B: Culture and Society
I Got Plenty o' Nuttin': The Have-Nots in Literature
Prerequisite: second-year standing or permission of the department
Classes: Monday 11:35 a.m. – 2:25 p.m.
Loc: Paterson Hall 133
(please confirm on Carleton Central)**

**Instructor: Dr. P. Whiting
Office: 1810 Dunton Tower
Office Hours: Tuesday 9:30 – 10:30, or by appointment
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Phone : 613-520-2600 ext. 6702**

Recent events such as the Occupy Wall Street movement, anti-globalization protests around the world, and continual media references to “the 1%” have had the effect of bringing to light the growing disparity between rich and poor. However, although the poor may currently feature more prominently than usual in the news, poverty’s brutal narrative of hardship and deprivation on the page, on the screen, and in real life has not only been unremitting, but it has also co-existed alongside a less obvious but persistent myth that the poor are in some ways lucky because poverty saves people from the crushing anxiety and ambition that come with money.

Using fiction, memoirs, film, and music, this class will consider texts about people who are born poor, people who are made poor, and people who choose to be poor. We will examine the causes of poverty, but mostly we’ll examine its effects on those whose lives are shaped by it, with a view toward determining what representations of poverty in literature can contribute not only to our understanding of literature but also to our understanding of poverty in the real world. Students will also complete a number of short writing assignments designed to sharpen their skills in this area.

Required texts:

- Gaskell, Elizabeth. *North and South* (Oxford)
- Kogawa, Joy. *Obasan* (Penguin)
- Orwell, George. *Down and Out in Paris and London* (Mariner)
- Petry, Ann. *The Street* (Mariner)
- Sinclair, Upton. *The Jungle* (Penguin)
- Steinbeck, John. *Cannery Row* (Penguin)

These books will be available at Octopus Books, 116 Third Avenue.

Evaluation:

Attendance and participation	10%
In-class quizzes (best 5 of 6)	15%
Journal entries (x 6)	30%
Introduction	10%
Discussion groups	10%
Final exam	25%

Please read this carefully:

1. **Attendance Policy:** Class attendance is mandatory, and attendance will be taken. Excused absences must be medically documented. Absences for work reasons will not be excused. Students who attend only part of a class will be counted as absent from that class. Everyone has two “free” unexcused absences. The third unexcused absence will result in 2 points being deducted from the attendance mark; the fourth unexcused absence will result in 3 additional points being deducted from the attendance mark; the fifth unexcused absence will result in the loss of the whole attendance mark. Participation in class discussions will factor into the overall attendance/participation mark.
2. **Critical Journal:** A course as narrowly focused as this one allows students to follow literary and social trends and to track changes and continuities with some degree of accuracy despite the relatively small number of texts consulted. Students will complete a critical journal comprised of entries on each of the six texts on the syllabus. A sample entry will be distributed.

Each entry must be double-spaced and 300-400 words in length, and all entries must focus on the **same single topic** taken from one of these four topics :

Food
Shelter
Clothing
Work (paid or unpaid domestic)

At the end of the term, you will hand in all of your marked entries and an Introduction of 300-400 words that summarizes your findings on the topic you've chosen and states or at least suggests a plausible thesis for your journal. Going over or under the word count by more than 15 words will result in a reduction in grade for that entry. Please include the word count at the end of each entry. Additional guidelines will be provided.

The entries and the Introduction are to be submitted before the beginning of class on the days designated on the syllabus. Entries may also be submitted in the Drop Box in the English Secretariat on the 18th floor of Dunton Tower. In order to be accepted, papers must be date-stamped with the due date, which means they have to be in the drop box by 8:30 a.m. on the morning after the due date. **IF YOU USE THE DROP BOX, YOU MUST PUT MY NAME ON THE FRONT SHEET. OTHERWISE, THE ESSAY MAY GO ASTRAY. PAPERS THAT GO ASTRAY FOR THIS REASON WILL BE COUNTED AS LATE PAPERS.**

These papers need not be “academic” in terms of a formal essay, but they may **not** refer to the reader....ever!...nor may they be opinion-based. Rather, they should be thoughtful, focused, and well-written, demonstrating substantive knowledge of the text being addressed (in other words, you must demonstrate that you have finished and thought about the text). Each entry is worth 5 points toward the final grade, and the Introduction is worth 10 points.

STUDENTS MUST HAND IN ALL FIVE ENTRIES AND THE INTRODUCTION TO BE ELIGIBLE TO WRITE THE FINAL EXAM.

NB: No secondary sources are required for the journal.

- 3. Early Feedback Assignment:** The first journal entry on *North and South* is due on January 22 and is intended to be used as a guide to your written work in the course.
- 4. Discussion group:** Small groups of students will lead 20-30-minute class discussions on each of the novels. Each member of the group will be marked anonymously by the rest of the group, and the average will comprise 5% of the discussion mark. The remaining 5% will be determined by me.

4. **Late papers** must be accompanied by valid medical documentation in order not to be penalized. Late papers will receive a penalty of 2% per day. Papers more than a week late will receive a grade of 0. Rewrites of papers are not an option. Essays must conform to the stated word count requirement, must answer the essay question, and must discuss only texts read in this course.

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 e-mailed immediately upon request.

5. **Extensions:** Extensions on papers may involve a penalty. All extensions must be arranged by e-mail at least 24 hours in advance of the due date. **No exceptions will be made to this arrangement.**

7. **E-Mail Protocol:** You are encouraged to work with me on your journal entries and to send me the thesis of your finished journal. Please identify the course in the subject line; otherwise, your e-mail may be deleted without being read. Please do not send attachments.

I DO NOT ACCEPT PAPERS BY E-MAIL. YOU MAY E-MAIL AN ESSAY TO ME ONLY UNDER ALL THE FOLLOWING CIRCUMSTANCES AND CONDITIONS:

1. If you have printer problems at the last minute
2. If you e-mail me the finished essay by the beginning of the class on the day it is due.
3. If you come to that class and inform me of the problem.
4. If you bring a hard copy of the essay to my office within 24 hours of the due date.

8. In-class assignments and examinations: In-class assignments and examinations must be written on the date indicated on the syllabus and may not be made up unless a student has a valid doctor's certificate.

The Winter term exam period is April 14-26 (including Saturdays and Sundays). The Registrar's Office generally releases the April exam schedule in February. Do not make travel plans until the exam schedule has been released. Exams will not be rescheduled for students who take on other commitments during the exam period.

9. **Quizzes:** The quizzes will take place on the days specified on the syllabus and will concern the reading assigned for that day. Quizzes may take place at any point in the class and will last 15 minutes.

10. **Collaboration:** Although you are encouraged to talk with each other about assignments and to review each other's work, all assignments written for evaluation are to be the original work of individual students.

11. **Plagiarism:** See statement on Academic Integrity in the Undergraduate Calendar at

<http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/academicintegrity/>

Plagiarism is a serious matter and can be grounds for expulsion from the University. Plagiarism often occurs because a student is not sure where to draw the line between common knowledge, paraphrase, and direct quotation -- and indeed, the distinctions are sometimes hard to make. The rule of thumb is this: All direct quotations have to be contained by quotation marks and their sources cited in proper MLA documentation style; all paraphrases have to be clearly indicated as such, and their sources also cited. When in doubt about whether a point that you are making is common, shared knowledge in the public domain or the "intellectual property" of another author, either contact me for clarification or err in the direction of documentation.

Please note that I hand over ALL cases of suspected plagiarism to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences for investigation.

12. 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 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 at <https://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/academic/students/>.

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 at <https://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/academic/students/>.

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 <https://carleton.ca/pmc/> 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).

Syllabus

January 8 – Introduction

*January 15 – North and South

January 22 – North and South (entry due)

*January 29 – The Jungle

February 5 – The Jungle (entry due)

*February 12 – Down and Out in Paris and London

February 19-23 – READING WEEK

February 26 –Down and Out in Paris and London (entry due)

*March 5 – The Street

March 12 – The Street (entry due)

*March 19 – Obasan

March 26 – Obasan (entry due)

*April 2 – Cannery Row

April 9 – Cannery Row; exam review (entry and Introduction due)

Final exam to be announced

Asterisks indicate that there will be reading quizzes on these days.