Carleton University*
May-June 2018
Department of English

ENGL5806S/4961A: Studies in Canlit II/Indigenous Literatures II
Topic: ReStorying Resurgence in Indigenous Popular Genres

Precludes additional credit for ENGL 4808 and ENGL 4809 (no longer offered)
Prerequisite(s): fourth-year standing in Honours English

M,W: 2:30-5:30
1816 Dunton Tower

Instructor: Brenda Vellino
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Office Hours: TBA

*On the unceded traditional territories of the Algonquin Anishnaabe Peoples

Course Description: Contemporary Indigenous artists from Turtle Island (the territory also known as Canada) have increasingly taken up popular forms such as genre fiction (sci-fi, fantasy), graphic novels, documentary and feature films, stop motion animation film shorts, and spoken word poetry. These new media and popular genres claim Indigenous spaces to decolonize cultural forms, represent complex contemporary social realities, stake political claims, and assert Indigenous cultural sovereignty and resurgence. Whenever possible, our discussion will be informed by Indigenous literary/cultural critics such as Niigaanwewidem James Sinclair, Daniel Heath Justice, Margaret Kovach, Grace Dillon, and Kateri Akwenzi-Damm, as well as selected settler ally critics. This course will enable us to consider the politics and ethics of cultural production and reception within the intersecting conditions of settler colonialism and decolonisation. Our work will be highly context specific, situated by careful attention to specific Indigenous, Inuit, and Metis cultural contexts, social realities, and priorities. Topics may include contemporary Rez life, contemporary urban realities, Indigenous cultural sovereignty, Indigenous relational ethics, Indigenous rebalancing, revitalization and resurgence movements, and the politics of embodiment and Indigenous self-representation, particularly in texts informed by questions of gender and sexuality.
Lightfinder
Aaron Paquette
Course Texts: Texts available at Haven Books*

*Pick up Course Reader before first class!

- Course Reader (CR)

Course Assignments

- Attendance/Participation: 10%
- 5 Short Text-Theory Response Papers/Creative Format Welcome (5 Marks each): 25%
- 1 Experiential Learning Response Paper (5 Marks): Due May 30: 5%
- 1 Indigenous Theory Discussion Paper & Short Presentation (graduate students only): 10%
- Seminar (30 mins. with 10 mins discussion): 25% (20% for graduate students)
- Project Proposal: Due June 4: 5%
- Final Project: Due June 22: 30% (25% for grad students)

Course Calendar

Class 1: May 7: Grounding Concepts: Locating Ourselves in the Work: Readings & Assignment Due in Class!

Critical Response Entry #1 Due in first Class in response to readings from Course Reader and online.

Essay Readings Due for first class:

- David Garneau. “Imaginary Spaces of Reconciliation.” *West Coast Line* (Summer 2012) 46.2: (Google this for the PDF)
• **Interdisciplinary framework:** United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007):


  http://offscreen.com/view/horror-indigenous-cinema
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action: booklet handout


Monday: May 21: Campus closed: Holiday


Mon. May 28: Class 6: meet at the Carleton Art Gallery for experiential learning guided tour of “In Dialogue,” an 11 person Indigenous artists exhibit: “The exhibition invites viewers into intimate discussions that work through new ways of understanding, and being Indigenous in contemporary contexts. Moving from spaces of contemplation and reception, to moments of excitement and animation, the artists blur borders drawn with invented notions of authenticity and guide us through negotiations between the specificity of personhood and its abstraction into larger groups of belonging. This gathering of work embraces the wildly individualistic tumble of connections and contradictions that constitute contemporary Indigenous identities, in open dialogue—between artists, audiences and the interconnected mesh-works woven between all our relations.”

Experiential Learning Response Paper due to Prof. by email by 4 p.m. Wed. May 30.

Wed. May 30: Class Cancelled, Prof. away at Indigenous Literary Studies conference

Class 7: Makeup class 1: Friday: June 1: Indigenous Graphic Novel 2: MMIW & Graphic Novels

- David Alexander Robertson (Cree-Métis) and Scott B. Henderson. *Betty: The Helen Betty Osborne Story*. (2015).**

**Trigger Warning**: One woman’s story from among 1,200+ Indigenous Women who are Dissapeared & Murdered


Class 8: June 4: Multi-media “Honouring Projects” for Indigenous Women:

- Walking With Our Sisters: [http://walkingwithoursisters.ca/](http://walkingwithoursisters.ca/)
- Link to text of poem: [https://taraborinwrites.com/2017/03/21/a-poem-for-world-poetry-day/](https://taraborinwrites.com/2017/03/21/a-poem-for-world-poetry-day/)
- Takqralik Partridge (Inuk): “Don’t Read it if You Can Help It” (Poem for Loretta Saunders): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rRmxEhN9Vk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rRmxEhN9Vk)
- Iskwe (Cree/Dene/Irish): “Nobody Knows”: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-XgisoFtmKI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-XgisoFtmKI)

Research Project Proposal: Due In Class.


- Kateri Akwenzie-Damm. poems (CR)
- Leanne Simpson (Anishnaabe). “She Told Him 10,000 Years of Everything,” from Islands of Decolonial Love (2013). (CR)
Class 10: June 11: Two-Spirited Decolonial Love and Re-Embodiment:

- Billy-Rae Belcourt (Cree), “The Cree Word for a Body Like Mine is Weesageechak,” “Sacred,” and “Colonialism: A Love Story” (click on left-hand icon): [https://nakinisowin.wordpress.com/2016/07/02/the-cree-word-for-a-body-like-mine-is-weesageechak/](https://nakinisowin.wordpress.com/2016/07/02/the-cree-word-for-a-body-like-mine-is-weesageechak/)

Class 11: June 13: Indigenous New Media: Stop Motion Animation Shorts:

- Miranda Brady and John Kelly. "ImagineNATIVE as Industry Intervention: Supporting and Growing Indigenous Media Makers.” *We Interrupt This Program: Indigenous Media Tactics in Canadian Culture* (2107): chapter available as e-book download from CARL library

Amanda Strong (Michif), Spotted Fawn Productions:

- Four Faces of the Moon: [https://www.spottedfawnproductions.com/four-faces-of-the-moon](https://www.spottedfawnproductions.com/four-faces-of-the-moon)
- “Flood”: [https://www.spottedfawnproductions.com/flood](https://www.spottedfawnproductions.com/flood)
Class 12: June 18: Final Class: Indigenous Spoken Word Poetry: Land, Resistance and Resurgence

- “Under Your Always Light” video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0yLR5g9gUB4
- Rebecca Thomas (Mi’kmaq) – “What Am I Supposed to Think?”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BX0xCn8Hgw
- Taqralik Partridge (Inuk), “I picked Berries”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8fm6zyrwV4c
- Moe Clark (Metis): “Namoya”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-TO5ZfO YY
- Tribe Called Red, “Indian City Fort Black Bear”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t-4XIYv-gbs

Final Research Project Due June 22 at midnight in English Dept. drop box (Contact Prof. to arrange for extensions as needed).

Short Reading Response Papers

In this seminar, intensive engagement and participation will be the norm. Your critical reflective writing will be a record of your reading, thoughtful participation, and active learning. The assignment invites you to pay attention to connections between theory, creative texts, prior learning, prior assumptions, and life experience.

There will be a number of “texts” to consider, including critical articles, creative works, and extracurricular Indigenous education or cultural events. Each student should write a minimum of five text responses and one extra-curricular response to an experience of participating outside of class in Indigenous cultural.

Your reading and event response should not be like formal essays, but should be thoughtfully written in response to several aspects of the material of the given week, and should reflect a critical awareness of the learning process. For instance, a good response statement might outline three elements of a critical article or creative text that provided insight for the student in the context of the course, mapping how these elements are important for your learning process.
“Your critical reflection journal entries should address not just what you have learned but how you’ve learned it. Consider: What were the key moments and turning points in your understanding of the subject area? A learning journal asks you to think about your learning process AS you write, so that you’re drawing a map of your thought process in the midst of the process itself.” (Adapted from Andrew Stubbs at the Student Academic Success Writing Centre, University of Regina).

**Format:** 500 words typed and double-spaced; reflections should be in the “I” voice as you take responsibility for your ideas, questions, assumptions, and values.

*Creative forms of response are welcome* (poems, video, art) with a 1-2 paragraph reflection on the connection to the readings or experience.

**Prompts for Critical Reflection:**

- Describe or summarize based on detailed observation of a several key passages/elements/moments/issues/themes that were important for you
- Offer details of who, what, when, where, using specific names, references, and specific quotations when relevant.
- Consider how theoretical questions relate to the creative texts and to life learning
- Identify your reactions/questions/feeling responses.
- Consider elements that are surprising or puzzling, as well as the unanswered questions and limits of your present knowledge.
- Examine why certain examples, themes, questions were important for you and why you had the responses you did.
- Consider connections to new or prior learning.
- Consider whether and how the cultural texts challenged any taken for granted or “common sense” personal or cultural assumptions and values.
- Ask “why”? Ask “so what”? Ask “what now”?

http://www.uefap.com/writing/genre/reflect.htm

*Also see “Learning Journals I” from the Academic Success Writing Centre at the University of Regina: [http://www.uregina.ca/student/ssc/writing-support/writing-reflections/learning-journals1.html](http://www.uregina.ca/student/ssc/writing-support/writing-reflections/learning-journals1.html)*

**Seminar Guidelines**

- **Introduce the artist** in terms of the First Nation, Territory or urban community he, she, or they identify with by consulting contextual materials such as interviews and biographies.
- Consider **relevant historical, social, or cultural contexts**, doing research to support this.
- Identify, define, and explain the significance of **Indigenous words, concepts, knowledge, and cultural practices** in the texts under discussion.
- Consider matters of **form, genre, and aesthetic choices** where relevant.
• Demonstrate understanding of the genre you are working with such as science fiction, fantasy, graphic novel, film etc., using appropriate critical vocabulary.
• Make meaningful connections between the assigned critical essay and the creative text.
• Choose three key focus passages or moments from the literary or visual text that signal a key questions, issues, or themes.
• Annotated passages: All students are required to undertake detailed annotations of your focus passages (if literary) or detailed notes if visual and use these to generate your insights into the creative and/or critical texts. Please annotate in pencil only! Please submit photocopies of these annotations with your speaking notes. With respect to video, please choose three segments and write up notes on each key scene.
• Reading Aloud: Invite seminar mates to take turns reading aloud from your selected focus passages.
• Focusing Questions: Provoke insightful discussion about the poem through two thoughtful focusing questions. You may intersperse these throughout your seminar. Invite dialogue, discussion, and participation from your seminar-mates.
• Presentation Style: I discourage simply reading a seminar paper, but I do require well-developed seminar notes that reflect that you have done thoughtful, detailed preparation work.
• I also discourage Power Point Presentations because they typically take away valuable time from reading and thinking and also render the classroom experience passive and screen-centric. You may use electronic media to show a video clip of the artist or other relevant material.
• Proper oral crediting of sources in seminars: References to research sources in seminars should be indicated orally with such markers as “I Quote from critic x” to begin and “End Quote” to end or “these ideas are developed from critic x in his/her study titled x.”

Final Research Project Options

• This project may be developed as a standard literature/cultural studies research and analysis essay (10 – 12 pages)
• It may be conceived as a collaboratively devised project with a classmate.
• It may be devised as a creative or educational project such as a website, video production, zine, graphic narrative on a topic/theme related to course material with a 1000 word explanatory introduction and Works Cited.
• The project should involve research in whatever way you want to creatively apply this category, i.e. more conventionally through library research or through alternative formats such as interviews (these may need research ethics clearance). I am happy to consult on alternative research pathways.
• If you do a collaborative project, you must submit a one-page self-evaluation of the division of labour and your contribution to the project.
Final Research Project Proposal:

- This proposal should include a working thesis or project preview and a plan of development that sets forth your argument and identifies primary and secondary resources.
- You should also include an **Annotated Works Cited** with at least 3 out of 5 sources annotated (Each annotation should provide a one paragraph summary of the main pts. and the usefulness for your working thesis).
- Your works cited should include a diverse kinds of sources such as one article, one book, one essay or interview where available. You are allowed only 1 Internet source unless cleared with me; Sources from the electronic library-based databases are not considered Internet!

**Final Research Project Due:** June 22 at midnight in English Dept. drop box (Contact Prof. to arrange for extensions as needed).

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Attendance and Participation:** Class works when you do. Active participation is essential. I define class participation as both physical and mental presence in class, evidenced by preparedness, engagement, and willingness to take risks. Students are required to bring print versions of the readings to class and come prepared to contribute to class discussion. **You may have two grace absences for sickness, emergencies or appointments.** Budget them well. Extend me the courtesy of letting me know when you will need to be absent. Life is unpredictable, so if you do have a difficulty of any kind this term, please keep me in the loop and let me know how I may be of help. Students sometimes make the mistake of not talking to Profs. when issues come up.

**Device Free Classroom:** No laptops, Cell phones, Tablets, or e-readers: In this class, we will give ourselves the gift of being distraction free so we can focus on the readings and discussion. I know this will be an adjustment for many of you, but the word on the street tells me that most of what goes on on screens in the classroom is not related to coursework (you all know what I’m talking about). This means that all devices will stay in your school bags and off your desktops.

**Exceptions:** The only students allowed to use laptops will be those with special permission from me for note-taking purposes.

**Late Assignment Policy:** In order to pass this course, you must complete ALL assignments and hand them in on time. Extensions must be arranged in person with me (for illness or other difficult circumstances only) in advance of the due date. Assignments handed in late without prior arrangement will be docked two points per day with a weekend counting as one day. Essays handed in more than one week late without prior notification may not be accepted.
Plagiarism: Academic honesty is considered the ground rule of any university level course. Plagiarism is defined in the “Academic Regulations of the University: Instructional Offences” section of the Carleton Undergraduate Calendar as “using and passing off as one’s own ideas the work of someone else without expressly giving credit to another.” If you find yourself tempted to use someone else’s work because of stress, illness, anxiety about your own ability, personal crisis, time crisis, or any other issues, I urge you to let me know about these circumstances, so that we can work together to create the space and means for you to do work of the highest integrity.

Please ensure that all sources (including biographical and internet) used in reading responses, seminars, and final papers are properly credited. If I suspect that any portion of your writing has been plagiarized, I am required to submit the writing to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. The penalties for plagiarism are very severe, ranging from failure in the course to expulsion from the university. See “How Not to Plagiarize: www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

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). Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website (www.carleton.ca/pmc) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

For Religious Observance: Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious observance should contact their instructors for alternate dates. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student.
**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.

**STUDENT SERVICES**

**Writing Services:** If you know your writing needs improvement, do consider free tutoring with this service. [https://carleton.ca/csas/writingservices/](https://carleton.ca/csas/writingservices/)

**Carleton Health and Counselling Services** offers confidential consultations with medical doctors, lab testing, and emotional support for difficult times from Monday to Friday, 8:30-4:30. They are located in the Carleton Technology Building on the east side of campus. Check out their website at [http://carleton.ca/health/](http://carleton.ca/health/)

*Also check out the Student Alliance for Mental Health: [http://www.samhcarleton.com/](http://www.samhcarleton.com/)*