

**ENGL5804/CDNS 5003 Making Settler Colonial Modernity**  
Fall 2017

Fridays, 2:30 to 5:30

Location: 1816 Dunton Tower

Professor Jennifer Henderson  
1911 Dunton Tower  
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**DESCRIPTION**

In this course we will read 19<sup>th</sup>-century prose that participates in the process of constituting the spaces, subjectivities, social and economic logics, and strategies of governance associated with the enterprise of liberal modernity in the settler-colonial context. Our focus is on Canada conceived as a trans-Atlantic and continental space of discourse within which ideas of liberal progress, political economy, civility, proper gender and sexuality, and religious and racial difference circulate, not without contradiction and resistance. Our literary texts include the genres of emigrant's tale, travel literature, captivity narrative, and sensation fiction. We also read 19<sup>th</sup> century Indigenous auto-ethnography and short stories. Our last few weeks will introduce current writing reflecting on the inheritances of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the present: an experimental novel by the Montreal writer, Gail Scott, and songs and stories by the Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg writer and theorist, Leanne Simpson. Literary texts will be supplemented each week by theory and criticism.

**GOALS:**

- A central concern of the course will be to make connections between two levels of analysis: biopolitics and geopolitics, or subjectivities and sexualities, on the one hand, and questions of territorial and political sovereignty, on the other.
- We will be guided by recent work in settler-colonial studies and Indigenous studies emphasizing the way that colonial reshaping of Indigenous family and home formation were crucial means of dispossession.
- The course is structured around the idea that settler colonialism in Canada is a particular version of liberal thought and practice. Hence, we'll be thinking about the relations between liberalism and the settler project.
- We'll try to be attentive to questions of literary genre, thinking wherever possible about relationships between aesthetic or formal conventions and social ones.
- We'll try to be self-reflexive about what it means to continue reading the literature of settlement in the context of a commitment to decolonization. What approaches does this require of us? Particular readings will get us thinking about the politics of epistemology or what has been called 'cognitive imperialism.'
- The [thisnativeland.org](http://thisnativeland.org) site is a great resource to use for locating yourself, and the territories our texts figure, within Indigenous geography, language group, and treaty history.

## LITERARY TEXTS

Books are available at Octopus Books, 116 Third Avenue, 613-233-2589.

John Galt, *Bogle Corbet* (1831)

Vol.2: read last two chapters <https://archive.org/details/boglecorbetoremi02galt>

Vol. 3 read all <https://archive.org/details/boglecorbetoremi03galt>

Anna Jameson, *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada* (1838) McClelland & Stewart, 2008: ISBN 9780771017056

Catharine Maria Sedgwick, *Hope Leslie* (1827) Penguin Classics, 1998: ISBN 9780140436761

George Copway, *The Traditional History and Characteristic Sketches of the Ojibway Nation* (1850) Wilfrid Laurier Universit Press, 2014: ISBN 978155458976

Theresa Gowanlock & Theresa Delaney, *Two Months in the Camp of Big Bear* (1885) University of Regina Press, 1999: ISBN 9780889771079

Isabella Valancy Crawford, *Winona* (1873) Broadview, 2006: ISBN 9781551117096

Gail Scott, *The Obituary* (2010) Coach House, 2010: ISBN 9781552452332

Leanne Simpson, *Islands of Decolonial Love* (2013) ARP, 2013: 9781894037884

Leanne Simpson, *Dancing On Our Turtle's Back* (2011) ARP, 2011: ISBN 9781894037501

## EVALUATION

attendance & participation	15%
2 responses to a critical article	20%
1 seminar presentation	30 %
1 essay	35%