

Carleton University, Winter 2020  
 Department of English Language and Literature  
 Institute of Women's and Gender Studies  
 ENGL 4003A (Studies in the Novel)/5610G: (Studies in Contemporary Literature) Phone: x.2329  
 WGST 4812W/ WGST 5901A Office Hours: Wed 11:30-12:30, Thu 11:35-1:00 & by appt  
 Time & Location: Wednesday 8:35 to 11:25, Dunton Tower 1816

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## Queer Historical Fiction & Temporal Re/Imaginings

This course explores how queer novels engage with historical fiction, historiographic metafiction (\*definitions below), and related genres to reflect critically and creatively on questions of history, historiography, memory, and time. We will consider how and why queer novels of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries return to, rework, (re)imagine, revise, and complicate what we know, think, and feel about the past, "history," and temporality (including the future!). In this context, we will ask how queerness intersects with key historical events and personages; historical processes of colonialism, slavery, racialization, capitalism, and the biopolitical production, categorization, and regulation of bodies; historical periodization; literary history; historiography; time; geography and place; biography and memoir; and the discursive production, regulation, and proliferation of nonnormative sexualities and genders, "then," "now," and yet to come. Theoretical frames will include debates and definitions of literary genre as well as queer theory considerations of time, history, and historiography. Ultimately, we might ask: how does contemporary queer literature interact with not only *histories of gender and sexuality*, but also the sexuality and gender *of history*, and maybe even of time itself?

\*Queer literature: literature that addresses non-normative sexualities and genders, and/or critically engages with issues of gender and sexuality. In this course, we'll focus on homoerotic desire and/or cross-gender or transgender identifications and their intersection with the racialization, nationalization, and colonization of gender and sexuality.

\*Historical fiction: fiction set in the past that often relies on established ideas about a particular moment of history and the types of human subjects in that period.

\*Historiographic meta-fiction: fiction that invokes the historical past, while self-consciously questioning how history is written and represented (historiography), and how we "know," access, and interpret the past.

### Required Texts (in the order we will be reading them)

Virginia Woolf, *Orlando* (Oxford: 9780199650736)

Jordy Rosenberg, *Confessions of the Fox* (Random House: 9780399592287)

Sara Collins, *The Confessions of Frannie Langton* (Harper Collins: 9781443456189)

Jewelle Gomez, *The Gilda Stories* (City Lights: 9780872866744)

Sarah Waters, *Tipping the Velvet* (Little, Brown and Company: 9781860495243)

Jamie O'Neill, *At Swim, Two Boys* (Simon & Schuster: 9780743239356)

Monique Truong, *The Book of Salt* (Mariner: 9780618446889)

Additional theory readings will be available through ARES and/or at the Library Reserves Desk. Select secondary material will be on reserve to support your research but is NOT exhaustive.

Books will be available at Haven Books 43 Seneca Street (on the corner of Sunnyside) <http://havenbooks.ca/>. If you already have your own copy of a text, you do not need to buy another. If you are buying texts, when possible please buy the editions indicated.

## Course Requirements and Evaluation

See additional handouts for full details of expectations and assessment criteria for each requirement.

*You must complete all of these requirements in order to receive a grade in this course.*

*Please submit written work to cuLearn. Please keep electronic copies of all your work.*

### Three written reflections/close readings: 30%

**750-1000** words each, submitted to cuLearn Coursework E-Submissions the evening before we discuss the reading (by 5:00pm? we will confirm timing with the class). Two reflections will be posted just to me, and you will be invited to share your thoughts with the class informally, as part of class discussion. One reflection will also be posted to the whole seminar (Class Discussion Board), presented, and discussed in class (your reflection should prompt discussion). You choose the text, but you may not write a reflection on the same text related to your research seminar. See “Critical Reflections & Critical Questions Guidelines” for more details.

### One research seminar presentation and write-up: 25%

A 15 to 20-minute presentation, based on your research and critical thinking, that addresses specific historical, theoretical, and/or scholarly contexts related to queer and/or literary histories, literary genre, and/or queer theory approaches relevant to the literary or theory reading for that week. It should include at least four secondary sources (4000 level) or at least six (5000 level), with an annotated bibliography (some research variation may be expected for theory-focused seminars). You will facilitate discussion after your presentation and submit a presentation write-up by the following class. See “Research Seminar Guidelines” for more details.

### One final research paper: 35% (includes proposal, annotated bibliography, and workshop participation)

**3250 to 5000** words, with six to eight secondary sources or more (sources may include theory and/or history as well as literary critical sources). You choose your topic, text(s) (starting with texts from our course), and focus. Our final class will be a workshop/symposium of essays-in-progress in which members present and workshop their papers. We will agree on expectations for the workshop together. The final paper is due to cuLearn the following Wednesday at 9 am (April 8<sup>th</sup>).

NOTE: The final paper **may** focus on the same text as one of your reflections (and can grow out of a reflection). It **should not** mirror the seminar presentation: i.e. different text, context, issues. (Check with me about options.)

### Participation: 10% (includes one set of critical questions)

I assume all members of an upper-level seminar will be actively engaged and participating. This participation includes posting a set of two critical questions on the required reading for at least one class discussion (on a day when you are not presenting a seminar or completing a written reflection: see “Critical Reflections and Critical Questions Guidelines”). The balance of the mark acknowledges your preparation and activity in engaging with primary readings in class discussion, sharing the ideas of your written reflections in class, engaging in discussion with peers following presentations, responding to your peers’ works-in-progress in our final class, etc. Needless to say, attendance is critical. If you must miss a class, please let me know as soon as possible; you should also write an extra critical reflection for that day and post it to the Class Discussion Board.

If you are very quiet in class discussion and are concerned about your participation activity, you may opt to write an additional critical reflection/close reading and post it to the cuLearn Class Discussion Board.

### 4000/5000; ENGL/WGST: Expectations

The main coursework requirements are largely the same regardless of a student’s program/year. I do expect 5000-level students to engage more directly and substantively with theoretical material relevant to the course, whether in choice of seminar and/or final paper research. I invite you to bring ideas, concepts, interests and terms from your disciplinary training to our discussions and your written coursework, while being aware that not everyone in class shares that background: be ready to define and explain terms, concepts, and contexts. ENGL and WGST students might approach the reflections/close readings differently: that’s fine! Just be sure to ground larger claims or broader issues in reference to specific details from the primary text, and be aware of the novels as *literary texts* while recognizing that novelists *theorize* in their work as much as any other “theorist”!

### Statement on reading list:

There are many other novels I wanted to include on this course. My final decisions were influenced by the practicalities of limited time and book availability (what Haven Books can source); conceptual coherence to allow for conversations across texts; variety of genres, geographies, perspectives, and contexts; and a desire to share with you both “classic” novels and some of the most recent and exciting novels.

### If you enjoy the novels in our class and/or are looking for some other great reading, here are some other novels that I considered for our course, but could not include in the final list:

Jackie Kay, *Trumpet*: A first choice for this course, but currently unavailable for Canadian bookstore distribution: available through the public library or Amazon.

\* Nalo Hopkinson, *The Salt Roads*: A top choice for the course, but not in print right now: try library or Kindle.

\* Ann-Marie MacDonald, *Fall on Your Knees* (so good! But another very long novel, lots already on the course)

\* Emma Donoghue: lots of options: *Frog Music*, *The Sealed Letter*, *Life Mask*, *Slammerkin*

Alison Bechdel, *Fun Home* (Love it! But you may have already read it, and technically it is not a novel)

Almost anything by Alan Hollinghurst: My top pick for this course would have been *The Stranger's Child*, but see also *The Swimming Pool Library*, *The Line of Beauty*, *The Sparsholt Affair*.

Rebecca Mikkai, *The Great Believers*: Such. A. Good. Read.

Colm Toibin, *The Master*. Wonderful contemporary Irish author takes on Henry James. Sigh.

Anything else by Sarah Waters: *Affinity*, *Fingersmith*, *The Night Watch* would be top choices, but also consider *The Paying Guests*: compulsively readable novels!

\* = Canadian! Either Canadian-born or moved to Canada.

## University Policies

### Final Grades

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

### Academic Integrity & Plagiarism

If you have any questions about when and how to cite reference sources, do not hesitate to ask me. If I suspect that a student's work involves plagiarism, I am required to submit the work to the Associate Dean, who will conduct a thorough investigation into the case and administer penalties. Carleton University has a clear policy on academic integrity, including procedures to address academic misconduct. For Carleton's Policy on Academic Integrity, please see *The Graduate Calendar*, General Regulations, section 18:

<http://calendar.carleton.ca/grad/gradregulations/administrationoftheregulations/#18>

See also Carleton's most up to date Academic Integrity Policy here:

<https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy.pdf>

**It is important that students understand and meet academic integrity standards, and are sure they do not violate these standards through plagiarism.** The following definition of plagiarism is from Carleton's Academic Integrity Policy, Part VI. Terms important to this course have been highlighted:

**Plagiarism is presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own.**

**Plagiarism includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source.** Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: **books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases**, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations

and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, and **material on the internet.**

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- **submitting a takehome examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;**
- **using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;**
- **using another's data or research findings;**
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own;
- **failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks.**

Note also the policy on “**Unauthorized Resubmission of Work**”:

A student shall not submit substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs. Minor modifications and amendments, such as phraseology in an essay or paper do not constitute significant and acceptable reworking of an assignment.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course’s instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

### **Intellectual Property**

My lectures and course materials, including presentations, posted notes, assignments, exams, and feedback comments remain my intellectual property and are protected by copyright. They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without my prior written consent. This is also true for student work. Occasionally I may use brief anonymous student examples to address writing issues. I will seek consent to use a longer sample. No video or audio recording of in class lectures or discussions is allowed.

### **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**

Please contact 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. Please submit an [accommodation form](#) to Equity Services and find more info [here](#).

#### **Religious obligation**

Please 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](mailto: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 must 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>

## ENGL4003A/5610G and WGST 4812W/5901A: Reading and Presentation Schedule

ARES: Carleton Library's Electronic Reserves Service (login through library home page or link on cuLearn)

RD: Carleton Library's Reserves Desk (main floor): print material on reserve

### Week 1, January 8: Course Introduction *and* Generic Orientations: Historical Fiction? Historiographic Metafiction?

Jerome de Groot, "Chapter 5: Postmodernism and the Historical Novel," *The Historical Novel* [ARES]

Linda Hutcheon, "Historicizing the Postmodern" and "Historiographic Metafiction," *A Poetics of Postmodernism*, 87-123 [available as downloadable e-book through the library: <https://www-taylorfrancis-com.proxy.library.carleton.ca/books/9780203358856>]

#### Further Reading

Jerome de Groot, "Chapter 1: Introduction and "Chapter 2: Origins," *The Historical Novel* [RD]

Georg Lukács, *The Historical Novel* [RD]

Hayden White, "The Fictions of Factual Representation," and "The Historical Text as Literary Artifact," *Tropics of Discourse* [RD]

Dominick LaCapra, "Preface," and "Rhetoric and History," *History and Criticism* [RD]

Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," *Language, Counter-memory, Practice* [ARES]

Alun Munslow, selections from *Deconstructing History* (includes overview on "Deconstructive" history, Foucault, and White) [RD]

### Week 2, January 15: Queer Time? Queer (Un)Historicism?

Carolyn Dinshaw et al., "Theorizing Queer Temporalities: A Roundtable Discussion," *GLQ* 13: 2-3 (2007): 177-195 [ARES]

Heather Love, "Chapter 1: Emotional Rescue: The Demands of Queer History," *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History*, 31-52 [ARES]

Valerie Traub, "The New Unhistoricism in Queer Studies," *PMLA* 128.1 (January 2013): 21-39 [ARES]

#### Further Reading

Carla Freccero, Madhavi Menon, and Valerie Traub, "Historicism and Unhistoricism in Queer Studies" (responses to Traub's article), *PMLA* 128.3 (May 2013): 781-786. [ARES]

More from the texts by participants in "Theorizing Queer Temporalities" [RD]:

Carolyn Dinshaw, *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Postmodern*

Dinshaw, *How Soon is Now?: Medieval Texts, Amateur Readers, and the Queerness of Time*

Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* [available as e-book in library]

Roderick Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique* (see also week 4)

Elizabeth Freeman, *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (see also week 3)

Jack Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place*

Annamarie Jagose, *Inconsequence: Lesbian Representation and the Logic of Sexual Sequence*

Christopher Nealon, *Foundlings: Lesbian and Gay Historical Emotion before Stonewall*

Laura Doan, "Introduction" and "Part 1: The Practice of Sexual History," *Disturbing Practices: History, Sexuality, and Women's Experience of Modern War* [see also week 8]

### Week 3, January 22: Virginia Woolf, *Orlando*

Elizabeth Freeman, "Time Binds, or, Erotohistory," *Time Binds* [ARES]

- Woolf/*Orlando* and...Lesbian/gender/queer/trans/ studies?
- *Orlando* and queer/auto/biography/genre and/or iconic couples [Vita + Virginia!]
- Woolf/*Orlando* and queer time/history

#### Further Reading

[recommended to make you smile]: Merrill Turner, "[The Collected Sexts of Virginia Woolf and Vita Sackville-West](#)", *The New Yorker* (November 17, 2015)



**Week 4, January 29: Race, Empire, and Queer Sexualities in History: Three Foundational Thinkers**

Siobhan B. Somerville, "Introduction" and "Chapter 1: Scientific Racism and the Invention of the Homosexual Body," *Queering the Color Line* [ARES/RD]

Ann Laura Stoler, "Chapter 1: Colonial Studies and *The History of Sexuality*," *Race and the Education of Desire* [ARES/RD: note Chapter 2 Recommended in Further Reading below]

Roderick A. Ferguson, "Introduction," *Aberrations in Black: Toward a Queer of Color Critique* [ARES/RD]

- Queer Studies Meets Critical Race Theory: unpack the significance/contribution of one of these scholars

Further Reading

\*\*strongly recommended: Stoler, "Chapter 2: Placing Race in *The History of Sexuality*," *Race and the Education of Desire* [RD]

More from:

Somerville, *Queering the Color Line* [RD]

Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black* [RD]

**Week 5, February 5: Jordy Rosenberg, *Confessions of the Fox***

- For the (Queer) Theory Enthusiast (or Curious): Queering History, Temporality, and Speculative Futures
- For the Eighteenth-Century Enthusiast (or Curious): What can you find out about the "historical" Jack Sheppard? What does the novel do with the "facts" and fictions of Sheppard's life and literary legacy?
- For the Queer History/Trans Studies Enthusiastic (or Curious): The "Female Husband" and/or Trans/Cross Dressing Histories related to Eighteen-Century England

Further Reading

José Esteban Muñoz, "Introduction," *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* [ARES & available as e-book: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.library.carleton.ca/lib/oculcarleton-ebooks/detail.action?docID=865693> ]

**Week 6, February 12: Sara Collins, *The Confessions of Frannie Langton***

- Race Science in Britain and/or England and the Legacies of the Slave Trade
- Genre (your choice): Queer Gothic? The Neo-Slave Narrative?

February 19: Reading Break: No classes or regularly scheduled office hours

**Week 7, February 26, Jewelle Gomez, *The Gilda Stories***

- Genre (your choice): Southern/Queer/Black/Gothic/Afrofuturist Lesbian Vampires!

**Week 8, March 4: Sarah Waters, *Tipping the Velvet***

- (White) Lesbian History, Historiography, and Historical Fictions
- Scandalous Sexualities & Genders in Fin-de-Siècle England

Further Reading (strongly suggested for seminar on lesbian historiography)

Valerie Traub, "Chapter 4: The Present Future of Lesbian Historiography," *Thinking Sex with the Early Moderns* [available as e-book through library: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.proxy.library.carleton.ca/lib/oculcarleton-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3442587> and ARES]

Sarah Waters and Laura Doan, "Making Up Lost Time: Contemporary Lesbian Writing and the Invention of History," *Territories of Desire in Queer Culture: Refiguring Contemporary Boundaries*, ed. Linda Anderson and David Alderson [ARES]

Laura Doan, "Introduction" and "Part 1: The Practice of Sexual History," *Disturbing Practices: History, Sexuality, and Women's Experience of Modern War*

**Week 9, March 11: Jamie O'Neill, *At Swim, Two Boys* (first half of text)**

Note: this will be a shorter, informal class with general discussion of novel so far; some discussion of Irish History, and one or two reflection presentations

- Scandalous Male Homosexuality: Legal Histories and Trials
- The History of Irish Nationalism and Anti-Colonial Resistance at the Turn-of-the-Century

**Week 10, March 18: Jamie O'Neill, *At Swim, Two Boys* (finish the novel)**

- For Joyce Enthusiasts: *At Swim* as Joycean text?
- Male Friendship and Queer Studies
- Queer Nation? Post-colonial national discourse and queer studies?
- Queer Pride/Queer Shame

**Week 11, March 25: Monique Truong, *The Book of Salt***

- Stein & Toklas: Queer Paris and Ex-Patriate Sapphic Modernism?
- Queer Diaspora and (Re)writing the Past

Further Reading (recommended)

David Eng, "The End(s) of Race," *PMLA* 123.5 (October 2008): 1479-1493. [ARES]

**Week 12, April 1: Final Research Paper Workshop, details to be discussed!**

- Work in Progress Due, including annotated bibliography