

Carleton University  
**Winter 2027 Preliminary Course Outline**  
Department of English

**ENGL 3605A: Modern and Contemporary Literary Theory  
Theories of Authorship**

Precludes Additional Credit for ENGL 3002 (no longer offered)  
Prerequisite(s): third-year standing or permission of the Department  
Lecture 3 hours / week

**Day/Time:** tbd

**Location:** tbd

**Format:** in-person section (not suitable for online students)

**Instructor:** Professor Jody Mason

**Email:** jody.mason@carleton.ca

**\*\*\* This is a preliminary syllabus only—texts and assignments are subject to change.  
A complete version will be available closer to the start of the term. \*\*\***

### **I. Course Description**

This is an introduction to contemporary approaches to literary texts, such as formalist, structuralist, deconstructive, psychoanalytic, Marxist, historicist, and feminist.

In this section of Modern and Contemporary Literary Theory, we'll be considering theories of literary authorship and methods for studying authorship from the late eighteenth century to the present. The literary author is both omnipresent and invisible in literary studies: adored as a celebrity, celebrated as a semi-spiritual figure of genius, and isolated from the material conditions that make literature happen, the literary author is at once hypervisible and not really seen. This course will combine lecture with seminar-style discussion and workshop activities. Attendance is mandatory.

### **II. Learning Outcomes**

Students in this course will learn to interpret and evaluate theories of literary authorship that have been dominant in the western world since the end of the eighteenth century. They will learn to construct arguments about cultural texts using these theories.

### **III. Texts**

The course theory readings will be available on Ares. Additionally, you'll be asked to purchase two novels: J.M. Coetzee's *Foe* (1986) and R.F. Kuang's *Yellowface* (2023).

### **IV. Evaluation**

Reading Review (in-class writing assignment, 10% x 3=30%)  
Collective Theory Discussions (in-class activities, 5% x 4=20%)  
Applying Theory (20%)  
Final Exam (30%)