

THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

ENGL-3709.3-001

Topics in Canadian Literature:
Canadian Comic Books

Term: Fall 2012

Time: Tues and Thurs 2:30-3:45pm

Room: 3M71

Email: c.rifkind@uwinnipeg.ca

Office Hours: Tues. and Thurs. 1:00-2:00pm or by appointment

Professor: Dr. Candida Rifkind

Teaching Assistant: Devon Kerslake
(MA Program in Cultural Studies)

Office: 2A38

Phone: 204-786-9198

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Since the early 1990s, Canadian cartoonists have been at the forefront of the alternative comics movement (as opposed to superhero or mainstream comics) that continues to gain critical, academic, and popular attention. This course introduces students to an array of Canadian comic books that tell a diversity of stories, across the spectrum from fiction to non-fiction. Since many of these works fall under the category of life writing, we will pay attention to how and why the hybrid visual-verbal medium of comics invites cartoonists to redraw such genres as auto/biography, confession, and travel writing. As well, the readings invite discussion of such topics as historical fiction, peace and conflict, memory and nostalgia, bodies and sexualities, race and ethnicity, place and identity, self and other. In addition to the comic books, students should be prepared to read critical and theoretical material.

REQUIRED TEXT(S)

The following books have been ordered for the course through Mondragon (91 Albert Street in the Exchange District). Where possible, they have also been placed on 4hr reserve in the UW Library. They are listed in order of reading. Other required readings are available through the UW Library e-reserves or on-line (see attached reading schedule).

Brown, Chester. *Louis Riel: A Comic-Strip biography*. Montreal: Drawn & Quarterly, 2006. Print.

Walker, George A. *The Mysterious Death of Tom Thomson*. Erin, ON: Porcupine's Quill, 2012. Print.

Chantler, Scott. *Two Generals*. Toronto: Emblem, 2011. Print.

Seth. *George Sprott (1894-1975)*. Montreal: Drawn & Quarterly, 2009. Print.

Doucet, Julie. *My Most Secret Desire*. Montreal: Drawn & Quarterly, 2006. Print.

Tamiki, Mariko and Jillian Tamaki. *Skim*. Toronto: Groundwood/House of Anansi, 2006. Print.

Lemire, Jeff. *The Complete Essex County*. Toronto: Top Shelf, 2009. Print.

Delisle, Guy. *Shenzhen*. Montreal: Drawn & Quarterly, 2007. Print.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Ellis, Allan. "Comic Art in Scholarly Writing: A Citation Guide." *University of Florida Comics Studies*. 15 Feb. 1999. Web. 1 Aug. 2011. Web.
<http://www.english.ufl.edu/comics/scholars/guide.html>

Students also need to consult the MLA guidelines for research papers and familiarize themselves with the new rules for citing comics and electronic sources available in:

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 7th Ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2009. Print.

There are many websites dedicated to writing and research skills but not all of them are appropriate for academic writing. The following provide excellent information and help:

1. The University of Toronto Advice on Academic Writing website (especially good for getting started, understanding essay requirements, planning and writing the first draft):
<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice>
2. Purdue University has one of the largest websites dedicated to writing skills (good for specific information about grammar and style – use this to understand the comments you get back on your papers and to correct writing errors). <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/sitemap.html>
3. On using the MLA style to cite and document sources in a research paper:
<http://library.concordia.ca/help/howto/mla.php>

ASSIGNMENTS (more information will be provided in class)

Sequence Analysis (1000 words) 15%
Due September 27th.

Research Essay

1. **Proposal (250-300 words) and Annotated Bibliography (min. 5 sources) 10%**
Due October 25th.
2. **Essay (2500-3000 words) 30%**
Due November 22nd.

Take-Home Exam (2500 words) 30%
Distributed on November 27th and due on December 4th in 2A38 between 2:30 and 3:30pm.

Participation (10%) and tutorial workshops (2 x 2.5 %) 15%

There are two tutorial workshops scheduled on September 13th and October 4th. During these workshops, the class will be divided into two groups (one led by the Instructor and one by the Teaching Assistant) and students will be required to participate in a roundtable discussion. Further information will be provided well in advance. Students who miss the workshop without a medical note will not be able to make up the marks.

The remaining 10% of the participation mark is based on active participation and productive contributions to class discussions, which starts with regular attendance and basic courteous behaviour (no side conversations, texting, etc). Please note that speaking a lot is not the same as making productive contributions to the discussion: listening to each other, synthesizing and building on prior comments, and keeping the discussion on track by focusing on course material and topics are all productive ways to participate.

GRADING SCALE

A+	90 - 100%	GPA 4.50	C+	65 - 69%	GPA 2.5
A	85 - 89%	GPA 4.25	C	60 - 64%	GPA 2.0
A-	80 - 84%	GPA 4.0	D	50 - 59%	GPA 1.0
B+	75 - 79%	GPA 3.5	F	Below 50%	GPA 0
B	70 - 74%	GPA 3.0			

NOTES

1. This course outline should be considered a guideline only. Time constraints and other unforeseen factors may require that some of the above topics be omitted or covered in less detail than indicated.
2. Work submitted for evaluation must be either typed or text processed.
3. Cellular phones and other electronic devices MUST be turned off during classes.

4. It is the student's responsibility to retain a photocopy or digitized copy of **ALL** assignments submitted for grading; in the event of loss or theft, a duplicate copy is required.
5. Students are advised to read the pertinent pages of the current course calendar for the rules regarding Registration, Voluntary Withdrawals, Academic Misconduct including plagiarism, and Appeals. **Concerning plagiarism, please note** that as a general rule, an F in the course will be the penalty recommended by the English Departmental Review Committee to the Senate Committee on Academic Misconduct for plagiarism on major assignments in English Department courses.
6. Accessibility Services:
Students with documented disabilities, temporary or chronic medical conditions, requiring academic accommodations for tests/exams (e.g., private space) or during lectures/laboratories (e.g., access to volunteer note-takers) are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services (AS) at 786-9771 or email accessibilityservices@uwinnipeg.ca to discuss appropriate options. Specific information about AS is available on-line at <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/accessibility>. All information about a student's disability or medical condition remains confidential.
7. The University of Winnipeg promotes a scent-free environment. Please be respectful of the needs of fellow classmates and the instructor by avoiding the use of scented products while attending lectures. Exposures to perfumes and other scented products (such as lotion) can trigger serious health reactions in persons with asthma, allergies, migraines or chemical sensitivities.
8. Please note that registering in this course commits you to the date and time of the course final examination. If you are aware of possible conflicts with that date, please see me immediately during the first week of the course, in case you need to register in another course to accommodate the conflict. For appeals for deferred exams, please see the Calendar.
9. **Thursday, October 25th, 2012** is the final date to withdraw without academic penalty from courses that begin in September 2012 and end in November 2012 in the 2012 Fall term.
10. Late Assignment Penalties I encourage you to speak with me (in person, not over email) in advance if you anticipate handing an assignment in late due to extenuating circumstances, such as illness or a personal/family emergency. **Note that having a lot of work to do for your other courses is not a reasonable excuse for a late assignment in this course.** Unless prior arrangements have been made or you present a medical/legal note explaining why your assignment has been handed in late, the penalty for a late assignment is: 10% off immediately when it is not submitted on the due date and 2% off each extra weekday it is late. No unexplained late assignments will be accepted after they are 7 weekdays late. Late assignments will not receive written comments.
11. The English Department wishes to ensure your right to privacy regarding handing in and getting back assignments is protected. Most assignments will be handed in and handed back in class or at the Instructor's office. If assignments are to be handled in another way and you are concerned about others having access to your work, you should attach to your assignment a self-addressed envelope that can be sealed. If this is not done, it is assumed that you have waived your concerns in this area.
12. Students will not be asked for identification when writing a test or examination.
13. Students are advised that the UW Bookstore may run out of textbooks early in the term. Also, the bookstore always ships textbooks back to the publisher if they are not purchased within the first few weeks of term. Students are responsible for communicating directly with the bookstore if they need to order texts or ask for texts to be held for them.

14. No unauthorized material or equipment may be brought with you to the final exam.
15. For more information regarding the English Department, please refer to our website at <http://english.uwinnipeg.ca>
16. **IMPORTANT NOTE ON EMAIL:** I only respond to students' emails during regular work hours (M-F 9am-5pm) and I may take up to 24 hours to respond. Due to the high volume of junk mail I receive, I can only respond to emails sent from UW student accounts (iam.uwinnipeg). Do not email me from hotmail, yahoo, gmail, or other non-UW accounts. Please observe professional email etiquette and do not add me to any mailing lists.
17. **IMPORTANT NOTE ON MOBILE DEVICES AND LAPTOPS:** Absolutely no texting in class. Bag texting is still texting. All mobile devices must be turned off once class begins and remain off until it is over. **Laptop use requires the instructor's permission.** You may not record lectures without my prior permission.
18. Please do not eat during class.

Reading Schedule (subject to changes announced in class)

Date	Reading	Other Information
Sep. 6	Introductions	
Sep.11&13	How to read comics e-reserves for Sep. 11: 1. Wolk, "Pictures, Words, and the Space Between Them" from <i>Reading Comics</i> 2. McCloud, Ch. 3, "Blood in the Gutter," from <i>Understanding Comics</i> 3. Hatfield, "An Art of Tensions" from <i>A Comics Studies Reader</i>	Sep. 13 = tutorial workshop #1
Sep. 18&20	Brown, <i>Louis Riel</i> e-reserve for Sep. 20: Brown, "My Mom Was a Schizophrenic"	
Sep. 25&27	Walker, <i>Tom Thomson</i> Background reading (required): 1. Cohen, Martin S. "The Novel in Woodcuts: A Handbook." <i>Journal of Modern Literature</i> 6.2 (1977): 171-95. JStor. 2. Learn about Tom Thomson and view his paintings at the <i>Tom Thomson Art Gallery</i> : http://www.tomthomson.org/	Sep. 27 = Sequence Analysis due
Oct. 2&4	Chantler, <i>Two Generals</i> Reading for Oct. 4: Chantler's research notes at: <i>The Two Generals Research Blog</i> http://www.two-generals.com/	Oct. 4 = tutorial workshop #2
Oct. 9&11	Seth, <i>George Sprott</i> Reading for Oct. 11: Miller, Bryan. "An Interview with Seth." <i>Bookslut</i> June 2004. Web.	
Oct.16&18	Seth, <i>George Sprott</i> e-reserve for Oct. 18: Seth, "Dominion City"	Oct. 16 = Guest lecture in Eckhardt-Gramatté
Oct.23&25	Doucet, <i>My Most Secret Desire</i>	Oct. 25 = Proposal and Annotated Bibliography Due
Oct.30-Nov.1	Tamaki, <i>Skim</i>	
Nov.6&8	Lemire, <i>Essex County</i> Reading for Nov. 8 th : Hughes-Fuller, Patricia. "Am I Canadian?": Hockey as "National" Culture." <i>Culture and the State</i> . Web. http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/cms/v_thr.htm	
Nov.13&15	Lemire, <i>Essex County</i> Reading for Nov. 13: Woodward, Kathleen. "Telling Stories." <i>Townsend Center for the Humanities</i> . Web. http://townsendcenter.berkeley.edu/publications/telling-stories	
Nov. 20 & 22	Delisle, <i>Shenzhen</i>	Nov. 22 = Research Essay Due
Nov. 27	Wrap-up	Nov. 27 = Take-home distributed. Due on December 4th between 2:30-3:30 in 2A38.