

ENGLISH MINORITY CULTURES

Year IV, Fall Semester 2008
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MEETING TIMES AND THE VENUE

Our weekly meetings will be held on Thursdays in room 2.1
 Lecture: 12:05 -12:50
 Class: 13:00-14:30

OFFICE HOURS

Thursdays: 14:40:00 -16:00 or by appointment
 Should need be, you can contact me via email: esojka2000@yahoo.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Theme: **Minority cultural and literary discourses.**
Constructing/ deconstructing Canadianness

The course examines literary and cultural texts (film and other visual arts) of several minority groups in Canada with reference to the problem of de/constructing Canadianness. It focuses on the poetics of minority discourses and on complex relationships between dominant and minority cultures. It explores concepts of nationhood, citizenship, identity, diaspora, multiculturalism, transculturality, ethnicization and racialization and various strategies used by both the visible and invisible minority writers and artists in Canada.

EVALUATION	NUMBER OF POINTS
Activities (4 x 55 pt)	220 pt
Group presentation	100 pt
Class Participation	80 pt
TOTAL	400 pt
GRADING SCHEME	FINAL GRADE
240 – 280 pt	dst (3)
281 - 319 pt	+ dst (+3)

320 – 340 pt	db (4)
341 – 370 pt	+ db (+4)
371 - 400 pt	bdb (5)

PRESENTATION (GROUP WORK) – (no more than 30 minutes) - it will be based on a selected text / texts from a list of obligatory texts. Please submit in writing (one text for the whole group) a summary of the presentation : general introduction to the topic, major points and problems discussed, conclusions). All students assigned a particular reading receive the same mark. It is your responsibility to make sure that every member of the group does his / her fair share of preparation . Groups of students take responsibility for the particular primary readings; they report, analyze their findings for the class, and initiate discussion.

Inviting participation is vital. To ensure that the class enters into a dialogue with the presenter/s the following strategies can be used:

- handouts
- diagrams or illustrations
- a list of key terms
- an overhead outlining key points or key phrases / or powerpoint presentation
- questions for participants
- a writing exercise for participants

ACTIVITIES

You are expected to complete "hands-on" activities for which you will be asked to complete an exercise and turn in a brief, 2-3 page printed report (500 -750 words) which should be related to the ideas discussed in class You will be graded on the quality of your work.

ACTIVITY 1 : CANADIAN MINORITY GROUPS IN A TV AND RADIO SERIES ON CANADIAN HERITAGE (also in cyberspace)

Deadline: October 30, 2008

Heritage minutes

<http://www.histori.ca/minutes/section.do?className=ca.histori.minutes.entity.ClassicMinute>Radio minutes and Historica Minutes

Analyze the construction of Canadianness on the basis of this multimedia project. Focus on the representation and the role of minority cultures in the series. You are expected to critique the project/ to evaluate the representation of the selected event/s

within a bigger framework of constructing nationhood (think of biases, problems, etc.). Notice what kind of events / heroes/ minority groups, etc. were selected to represent Canadian heritage; what do you think determined the choice and why? what kind of events /people were omitted in this representation of Canadianness? This critique will naturally lead to a broader / more comprehensive image of Canadianness.

Select two categories from the list below and write a 300-400 word commentary on the topic of constructing Canadianness as represented in the project. Use some of the knowledge from critical texts suggested for this course (e.g. Katarzyna Rukszto, “Up for Sale: The Commodification of Canadian Culture “, *(De)Constructing Canadianness Myth of the Nation and Its Discontents*. Ed. Eugenia Sojka. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Śląsk, 2007.

Categories:

- The Arts •
- Building Democracy •
- Canada and the World •
- Canadian Symbols •
- Commerce •
- Exploration •
- First Nations •
- Heroes •
- Innovators •
- Military •
- Settling Canada •
- Sports •
- Women •

ACTIVITY 2: CANADIAN MINORITY GROUPS IN LITERATURE

Select a text/ texts (if poetry or short story) by a representative of one minority group.

In your analysis show how the selected text/s inscribe/s themselves into various models of Canadianness or how they challenge such models.

Write a brief essay/ commentary (500 – 750 words).

Deadline: January 8, 2009

ACTIVITY 3: CANADIAN MINORITY GROUPS IN CANADIAN FILM

Select and watch one film about one minority group, e.g. Canadian Native peoples, Chinese Canadians, etc. [Deepa Mehta, Mina Shum, Zacharias Kunuk, Alanis Obomsawin]. See a list of films available for viewing. You can also rent a film from local video stores. Write your report about your response to these questions:

- What is the basic production information? (company/distributor, producer, director, main cast, length, awards, etc.)
- Do minority people have roles in the film? Who? What roles? Are they lead characters?
- Do minority people have a role in creation, production or financing of the film?
- What are the major problems / issues dramatized in the film?
- How are the minority people represented in the films?
- What images or stereotypes of minority people are apparent in the story?
- If the story involves minority and dominant culture interaction, how is the interaction portrayed? One-sided? Negative? Positive? Reconciled by the end?
- If the story portrays an historical event or character, is it historically accurate?

Write a brief essay / commentary (500-750 words).

Deadline: January 15, 2009

ACTIVITY 4: CANADIAN MINORITY GROUPS and CANADIAN VISUAL ARTS

Review websites (e.g. Canadian native arts, Asian (Jin me-Yoon), African Canadian, Arabic Canadian (Jamelie Hassan) Eastern Europeans (Canadian Artists of Eastern European Origin:

<http://art-history.concordia.ca/eea/index.htm>) [Vera Frenkel, Kinga Araya, Natalka Husar, Jana Sterbak etc.) and show how their work differs from the traditional narratives of Canadian national artistic discourses (e.g. Group of Seven). What are the major themes and techniques of their art? Select two artists for your analysis.

Write a brief essay / commentary (500-750 words).

Deadline: any time (before January 15, 2009)

TERM PAPER - an option for students who wish to improve their final grade.

You will write a paper on the problem of constructing and /or (de)constructing of the concept of Canadianness with reference to selected literary or visual discourses. You will also be expected to consult critical /theoretical texts from the Canadian Studies Reader (also in the Reading Room).

Suggested length of term paper: 7-8 pages (1750-2000 words; 30 lines to a page)

Double space your work in 12 point type (Times New Roman) and include a bibliography (MLA style sheet). Students should retain a copy of all submitted assignments (in case of loss).

Grading will be based on the following elements:

1. research
2. thoroughness of approach
3. depth of thought and insight
4. originality,
5. organization

ATTENDANCE

It is **imperative** that students come to class with the readings done. Since the class meets once a week, **missing more than two classes**, even with a doctor's note provided, will entail consequences : the student will be required to write a paper on a topic related to the missed classes.

PLAGIARISM AND COLLUSION

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. You must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and ideas where they appear in your text. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. Plagiarism is a very serious offence that can involve penalties from failing the paper to failing the course. Any other form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated: using online essay writing services, resubmitting your own previous work for another assignment (self-plagiarism), or collusion:

- **“if a student gets someone else to compose the whole or part of any piece of work**
- **If a student copies the whole or part of someone else's piece of work with the knowledge and consent of the latter**
- **If a student allows another student to copy material, knowing that it will subsequently be presented as that student's own work “**

Unfortunately, we live in a culture that promotes a cheating mentality. Please do note, however, that cheating is not a survival tactic in our increasingly competitive world. It is a serious offence! Ultimately, you cheat yourself! It is a question of personal integrity and ethics!

DETAILED SCHEDULE OF CLASSES / LECTURES

Date	Theme of the meeting	Texts to read	Issues to focus on	Lecture topic
9.10. 2008	Introduction to Canada: majority and minority cultures	1. Francis, Daniel. "Your Majesty's Realm. The Myth of the Master Race." [in] National Dreams. Myth, Memory, and Canadian History. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1997. 52-87.	Canada First Movement Construction of Canadian Mythologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Myth of the Master Race • The Myth of Wilderness • The Myth of the North • The Myth of the CPR • The Myth of the RCMP • Survival (la Survivance) / Victimhood 	Construction of Canadianness
16.10 2008	Construction of Canadianness in film	Screening: Dreamland: A History of Early Canadian Movies, 1895-1939 NFB & Great Canadian Motion Picture Co. 1974 dir. Donald Brittain 85m. Reading: Gary Evans "Finding a Niche For Canadian Film In The 20th Century: To Agitate, Educate Or Entertain?" Christopher Gittings. "Imagining Canada: The Singing Mountie and Other Commodifications of Nation." Canadian Journal of Communication 23 (1998):507-522.	Vision of Canadianness in early documentary and feature films Mmisconstruction of Canadian identity by Americans: the Americanization of Canadian national image – Hollywood construction of Canada -nature, wilderness, landscape, progress, stereotypical images of the French, Mounties and Indigenous peoples -romanticization -exotification the Mountie, a sign of racist nation building and a national icon	Construction of Canadianness in cinematic discourse
23.10. 2008	Construction of Canadianness in film and media Heritage Discourse	Katarzyna Rukszto, "Up for Sale: The Commodification of Canadian Culture " (De)Constructing Canadianness, Ed. Eugenia Sojka (2007) Optional: Selected fragments from: Katherine Monk. <i>Weird Sex & Snow Shoes and Other Canadian film phenomena</i> . Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 2001.	Early Canadian feature filmmaking -constructing of Canadianness in film -mythologization of Canada in media	Construction of Canadianness in feature film Documentary realist tradition of the National Filmboard –Goin' Down the Road (1970) (Donald Shebib) -combining social commentary, the travel narrative and documentary realism

30.10. 2008	Construction of Canada in painting	<p>Ann Davis. "Image as Identity: Aspects of Twentieth-Century Canadian Art." A Passion for Identity. An Introduction to Canadian Studies. Second Edition. Eds. David Taras and Beverly Rasporich, Toronto: ITP Nelson, 1996. 225-241.</p> <p>Sandra Paikowsky. "Canadian Painting." Profiles of Canada. Third Edition. eds. Kenneth G. Pryke and Walter C. Soderlund. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2003. 487-519.</p> <p>(both texts can be found in the <i>Canadian Studies Reader</i>, in the Reading room)</p>	<p>Construction of nationhood in landscape painting</p> <p>Group of Seven</p> <p>Representation of minority cultures (African Canadians and Indigenous peoples)</p>	Construction of Canadianness in painting
6.11. 2008	Construction of Canadianness in literature	<p>Selected fragments from:</p> <p>2. Susanna Moodie. <i>Roughing it in the Bush</i>. Read chapters: I A Visit to Grosse Isle XI. The Charivari</p> <p>http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/4389</p> <p>Confederation Poetry</p> <p>Ralph Connor, <i>The Foreigner</i> <i>A Tale of Saskatchewan</i> http://www.gutenberg.org/files/3466/3466.txt</p>	<p>Whiteness Racialization / ethnicization Northernness, wilderness, From Atwood's <i>Survival: Nature the Monster, Animal Victims, The Reluctant Immigrant (Failed Sacrifices, Futile Heroes, Unconvincing Martyrs and Other Bad Ends, The Paralyzed Artist, Ice Women vs Earth Mothers, Quebec-Burning Mansions (7-8)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadian losers • Garrison mentality • Victim mentality • Fragmented landscape • Search for identity • Selfhood vs otherness <p>Assimilationist rhetoric Celebration of imperial connection</p> <p>.Eva Mackey. "Death by Landscape: Race, Nature, and Gender in Canadian Nationalist Mythology." <i>Canadian Woman's Studies</i>. 20.1 (Summer 2000): 125-130.</p>	Construction of Canadianness in literature

				<p><i>Wacousta Syndrome: Exploration in the Canadian Langscape</i> (1985)</p> <p>W. H. New A <i>History of Canadian Literature</i> (2003)</p> <p>E.D. Blodgett. <i>Five Part Invention. A History of Literary History of Canada</i> (2003)</p> <p>Stephen Leacock : <i>Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town</i> (1912)</p> <p>N.Frye. "Conclusions to a Literary History of Canada."</p> <p>Frank Watt. "Nationalism in Canadian Literature."</p>
13.11. 2008	Poetics of minority cultures	<p>Deleuze Gilles and Felix Guattari. "What is Minor Literature?" <i>Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature</i>. Minneapolis and Oxford: University of Minnesota Press, 1986. 16-28.</p> <p>Godard, Barbara. "The Discourse of the Other: Canadian Literature and the Question of Ethnicity." <i>The Massachusetts Review</i> xxx1. 1&2 (Spring/Summer 1990): 153-183.)</p> <p>Fred Wah. " A Poetics of Ethnicity." <i>Faking It. Poetics and Hybridity. Critical Writing 1984-1999</i>. Fred Wah. General Editor: Smaro Kamboureli. Edmonton: NeWest Press, 2000.</p>	<p>POETICS OF MINORITY CULTURES</p> <p>identity (national, language, ethnic, racial, gender, class), Otherness, hybridity, nomadism, multiculturalism, transculturalism, diasporic imagination, carnivalization, dialogism, verbal and visual rhetoric</p>	Minority Poetics
20.11. 2008	Minority Voices in literary discourses -various strategies	Fred Wah, <i>The Diamond Grill</i> (1996), See podcast:	Minority writing strategies (aesthetics and politics of literary discourses)	Minority Voices in literary discourses: Polish Canadian

		<p>http://www.uwindsor.ca/units/english/english.nsf/SuCategoryFlyOut/3C048E18C1CB845685257328006FD341</p> <p>Read also texts (poetry) to be discussed in lecture – Smaro Kamboureli, ed. <i>Making Difference. Canadian Multicultural Literature</i> (1996) :</p> <p>Cyril Dabydeen (b. 1945, Berbice, Guyana) : “Lady Icarus” (248-9) “Multiculturalism” (249-250)</p> <p>Claire Harris (b. 1937, Port of Spain, Trinidad): “Black Sisyphus” (141-143); From Drawing Down a Daughter (144-147)</p> <p>Jamila Ismail (b.1940, Honk Kong)” From Scared Texts (172-176)</p> <p>Himani Bannerji (b.1942, Bangladesh): “Paki Go Home” (183-184); “Apart-Hate” (187-)</p> <p>Marlene Nourbese Philip (b.1947, Moriah, Tobago): Discourse on the Logic of Language” (273, 276-279)</p> <p>Corinne Allyson Lee (b.1950, Calgary, Alberta): “Recipe” (339-342)</p>		<p>diaspora : Kojder, Apolonja Maria and Barbara Glogowska. <i>Marynia, Don't Cry. Memoirs of Two Polish-Canadian Families.</i> (1995)</p> <p>Other voices: (Cyril Dabydeen, Claire Harris, Jamila Ismail, Himani Bannerji, Marlene Nourbese Philip)</p>
27.11.2008	Transcultural filmmaking – Chinese Canadian diaspora	<p>Mina Shum Double Happiness (1995) d. Mina Shum</p> <p>Ty, Eleanor. “Rescripting Hollywood: Performativity and Ethnic Identity in Mina Shum’s Double Happiness.” <i>The Politics of the Visible in Asian North American Narratives.</i> Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004. 69-81.</p>	Transcultural strategies in filmmaking Chinese Canadian diaspora	<p>Transcultural filmmaking</p> <p>Accented cinema / minority filmmaking / transcultural cinematic discourse</p> <p><i>Fire</i> (1997) d. Deepa Mehta</p> <p><i>Atanarjuat. The Fast Runner</i> (2001) d. Zacharias Kunuk</p>

4.12. 2008	African Canadian diaspora	George Elliott Clarke <i>Quebecite. A Jazz Fantasia in Three Cantos (2003)</i>	Multiculturalism / Transculturalism and Quebec	African Canadian diaspora: George Elliott Clarke and Lorena Gale
11.12. 2008	Carnivalization. Deconstructing early vision of Canadianness in cinematic discourses	Accented cinema of Atom Egoyan Screening : "Exotica" (1994) d. Atom Egoyan Ty, Eleanor. "Spectacular Pleasures. Labyrinthine Mirrors in Atom Egoyan's Exotica." <i>Pop Can. Popular Culture in Canada</i> . Eds. Lynne Vab Luven and Priscilla L. Walton. Scarborough, ON: Prentice Hall Allyn and Bacon Canada, 1999.	Multicultural vision of Canadianness / deconstruction of early Canadian film aesthetics	Accented cinema: Deepa Mehta, Guy Maddin
18.12. 2008	First Nations poetics and politics.	Indigenous identity Monique Mojica : <i>Princess Pocahontas and Blue Spots (1991)</i> Drew Hayden Taylor: <i>Alternatives (2000)</i> Read also poems: to be discussed in lecture, from Daniel David Moses and Terry Goldie, eds., <i>An Anthology of Canadian Native Literature in English (1998)</i> : <i>Rita Joe, b. 1932;</i> <i>(Micmac): "I Lost My Talk" (113-114);</i> <i>"Micmacs Hieroglyphics" (114)</i> <i>Annharte b.1942 (Anishnabe):</i> <i>"Raced Out to Write This Up" (189-190)</i> <i>"One Way to Keep Track of Who is Talking" (190-191)</i> <i>"Coyote Columbus Café" (191-196)</i> <i>Harold Cardinal , b.1945</i>	First Nations literary discourses - strategies and techniques	First Nations literary discourses Drama: Tomson Highway: <i>The Rez Sisters</i> Poetry :Chrystos,. Fiction: Lee Maracle: <i>Ravensong</i>

		<p>(Cree): <i>"A Canadian What the Hell It's All About."</i> (211-217)</p> <p>Jeannette C. Armstrong b. 1948 (Okanagan): <i>"History Lesson"</i> (226-228) <i>"The Disempowerment of First North American Native Peoples and Empowerment Through Their Writing."</i> (239-242)</p> <p>Lenore Keeshig –Tobias b. 1949 (Anishnabe): <i>"After Oka – How Has Canada Changed?"</i> (254-255)</p> <p>Meryl Dumont b. 1955 (Cree /Metis): <i>"Letter to Sir John A. Macdonald"</i> (390-391) <i>"The Devil's Language"</i> (391-392)</p> <p>Connie Fife b. 1961 (Cree):<i>"Communications Class"</i> (431)</p>		
	HOLIDAYS – CHRISTMAS			
8.01. 2009	Minority discourses in arts	<p>Native arts: Work by Bill Reid, Rebecca Belmore, and Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun.</p> <p>Selected fragments from: Allan Ryan, <i>The Trickster Shift Humour and Irony in Contemporary Native Art</i>. Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1999.</p>	Strategies and techniques in indigenous arts	<p>Minority discourses in arts (including multimedia)</p> <p>Work of Dana Claxton and Shelley Niro</p> <p>Life discourse and multimedia arts Yin-me Yoon and Kinga Araya</p>

15.01. 2009	First Nations filmmaking	<p>First Nations filmmaking Alanis Obomsawin</p> <p>Monk, Katherine. "First Takes. Our Home and Native Land." In <i>Weird Sex & Snow Shoes and Other Canadian Phenomena</i>. Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 2001. 45-59.</p> <p>Silverman, Jason. "Uncommon Vision. The Films of Loretta Todd." In <i>North of Everything. English-Canadian Cinema Since 1980</i>. Ed. William Beard and Jerry White. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2002. 376-389.</p>	Strategies and techniques in First Nations filmmaking	First Nations filmmaking
22.01. 2009	Signifiers of Canadian identity again.			Transcultural vision of Canadian culture/s

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- Roy Miki. "Asiancy: Making Space for Asian Canadian Writing." *Broken Entries. Race Subjectivity Writing. Essays*. Toronto: The Mercury Press, 1998. 101-124.
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- Tomson Highway. *The Rez Sisters*. Saskatoon : Fifth House, 1988.
- Drew Hayden. *Alternatives*. Burnaby, B.C. : Talonbooks, 2000.
- Monique Mojica. *Princess Pocahontas and the Blue Spots*. Toronto : Women's Press, 1991.
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