

Instructor: Ella Soper-Jones

Course number: ENG215H5F

Course title: The Canadian Short Story

Course Description: This course offers a chronological survey of the English-Canadian short story from the mid-nineteenth century to the present, with consideration also given to the form of the novella and to the study of a cinematic adaptation. Our exploration of the genre will be oriented around the formalist concerns of short story writers and theorists alike—the temporal distillations, inherent ambiguities, epiphanies, and “devouring muddles” that await characters and, frequently, readers. We will trace as well the shifting thematic preoccupations of Canadian short story writers, studying in turn early-Canadian autobiographical “sketches”; wild animal stories; early twentieth-century realism; modernist and postmodernist experimentalism; First Nations orature; and contemporary representations of sexual and cultural “difference.” The authors to be considered include Catharine Parr Traill, Susanna Moodie, Charles G.D. Roberts, Ernest Thompson Seton, Fred Bodsworth, Ethel Wilson, Harry Robinson, Sinclair Ross, Alice Munro, Alistair MacLeod, Jack Hodgins, Margaret Atwood, Thomas King, Barbara Gowdy, Maria Campbell, Rohinton Mistry, Shyam Selvadurai, Eden Robinson, and Ivan E. Coyote.

Required Reading: Coursepack (available through the UTM Duplicating Centre); Robert Lecker, ed. *Open Country: Canadian Short Stories in English* (Thomson-Nelson); Fred Bodsworth, *Last of the Curlews* (McClelland & Stewart); Alice Munro, *Open Secrets* (Penguin)

Film: Sarah Polley, *Away From Her*

First Three Texts/Authors to be Studied: selections from *Open Country*.

Method of Instruction: Lecture / discussion

Method of Evaluation: Test (25%); comparative essay (30%); final exam (35%); participation (10%).