

FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
COURSE OUTLINE

ENGLISH 509, Lec 02, Studies in Canadian Literature
T 12:30-5:15 SS 1015

Fall 2016

Investigating Place and Field Notes in the Writing of Robert Kroetsch

Instructor: A. van Herk

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Office hours: Tuesdays, 15:00 – 16:00

Wednesdays, 16:00 – 17:00

Thursdays, 15:00 – 16:00

Homepage/course website: <http://english.ucalgary.ca/profiles/aritha-van-herk>

Course description:

In his life, Robert Kroetsch authored thirteen collections of poetry, nine novels, dozens of essays, several book-length interviews, and multiple theoretical excursions so influential that they have been quoted more than virtually any other in Canada. His body of work alone declares his importance, but his presence within Canadian Literature is peripheral, although he is a writer much quoted and frequently discussed. Kroetsch models the writer as intellectual presence within 20th century Canadian literature, but asks questions that continue to resonate for our cultural present, especially in 20th century Alberta.

This course will study the work of this author through the lens of place and its resonance, origins as key to Robert Kroetsch's process and literary production. Kroetsch articulates a fundamental homesickness that raises questions for literature as well as western Canadian literature: "How does one write from a vanishing west?" "How do we practice a uniquely Canadian creativity?" "How do we live our fiction?" "How far is it to the world?" This course will seek to develop an innovative readerly map that charts place and space in relation to his completed works. While we will not in a semester-long course be able to study ALL his publications, students are encouraged to read Kroetsch's *oeuvre* before the class begins. Our critical analysis will focus on the collected poems, the literary essays, and six of the novels. As well, the class will be introduced to Kroetsch's archival materials, which are held in Special Collections in the TFDL.

Key research questions for this course include: historical writing within Canada and its regional declension; creative explorations into aspects of a national or local "character"; the complications of gendered reading; spatial and historical peregrinations; creative and critical cross-fertilization; the friction between the rural tradition and the urban present; the nature of western Canadian writing; the writer's papers as archival site; writing's engagement with multiple genres; the challenges of evaluating a writer's "completed" work.

Projected Outcomes for Students

Historical context of 20th Century Canadian Literature

Expertise in Regional Literature in Canada

Expertise in Western Canadian literary issues

Expertise in postmodern theory

Texts and readings:

Novels

**The Words of My Roaring* (1966)

**The Studhorse Man* (1969)

**Badlands* (1975)

**What the Crow Said* (1978)

**Alibi* (1983)

**The Man from the Creeks* (1998)

Poetry

**Completed Field Notes: The Long Poems of Robert Kroetsch* (1989)

**The Hornbooks of Rita K* (2001)

**Too Bad: Sketches Toward a Self-Portrait* (2010)

Non-Fiction and Criticism

**The Lovely Treachery of Words: Essays Selected and New* (1989)

**A Likely Story: The Writing Life* (1995)

Assignments and Evaluation:

In-Class Presentation: 20%

This presentation must, coherently and eloquently, explicate a distinctive or characteristic (to Kroetsch) linguistic, historical or regional aspect within one of his works. The student must refine the presentation for written submission.

Short Paper (1000 words) discussion paper: 20%

This short discussion paper must apprehend and discuss the deployment of place in any one of Kroetsch's works. This assignment will ensure that students receive graded feedback early in the term.

Long (2000 words) research paper: 40%

This research paper will examine in detail one of the threads traced throughout and within Kroetsch's *oeuvre*. The student will identify and limit her/his topic in consultation with Professor van Herk. Students may choose to undertake archival research in their long/research paper.

Class participation (discussion and preparedness): 10%

Class participation is measured on the basis of germane contribution to discussion of every work, and on each student's preparedness and engagement, as well as ability to speak eloquently. Attendance and discussion questions will frame how this part of the grade is calculated.

Weekly contributions to Critical Bibliography: 10%

Every week, each student is expected to post one bibliographical entry (with brief explication), which might be a useful paper on Kroetsch or other critical, historical, or theoretical references relevant to his writing.

There is no exam in this class. All assignments must be complete for students to pass this course.

Please make every effort to give assignments directly to the instructor. If it is not possible to do so, take your assignment to SS 1152 and put it in the dropbox. Your assignment will be date-stamped and placed in the instructor's mailbox. It is your responsibility to keep a copy of all assignments in case of loss by any cause. Assignments cannot be returned by staff in the Department office.

Grading system:

The University of Calgary's four-point Grading System, as described in the Calendar; (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-2.html>) will be used in this course.

A+/A (4.0); A- (3.7); B+ (3.3); B (3.0); B- (2.7); C+ (2.3); C (2.0); C- (1.7); D+ (1.3); D (1.0); F (0) Please note that, according to the University Calendar (F.1), instructors may use their discretion when rounding upwards or downwards when the average of term work and exams is between two letter grades.

Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the four-point system, the course instructor will employ this mark to distinguish superlative work that exceeds expectations in style, correctness, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality.

Academic conduct: Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offence and is considered plagiarism. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university.

FURTHER EXPECTATIONS:

1. Class attendance is required. You will have difficulty passing this course if you do not attend, and if you do not keep up with the reading. Organize your time to get the most out of this course.
2. Submit your essays in hard copy, double-spaced and in a clear font that can be read easily. The pages MUST be numbered.
3. Class participation (discussion) is a requirement, part of the graded component of this course.
4. Work is to be discussed in class with intelligence, using literary terminology.
5. If you are having difficulties of any kind, or if you have questions, please feel free to meet with me. If you cannot make an appointment during my regular office hours, I am happy to arrange to meet at another time. Do not hesitate to inform me of potential difficulties because I may be able to help you solve them.
6. We will be in a wireless-access classroom. You may take notes and work on a laptop in class. If the context is relevant, we may use the Internet to research particular information together. You are to use your laptop or tablet as a tool to accompany the context of what we are reading and discussing relevant to the work of Robert Kroetsch. However, you are not to surf the net, text message your friends, or do assignments for a different class.
7. Cell phones are to be turned off in class. Portable media players, like iPods, are not to be used in class.
8. I check and answer e-mail regularly, but do not expect me to reply to a query within minutes. I usually answer e-mail messages within 48 hours.

Plagiarism:

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the following information and make sure you are familiar with the statement below on plagiarism.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

Scribe and Muse Club for English Students:

The Scribe and Muse Reading and Writing Club (SMRWC) fosters and champions reading and writing through community service, leadership, and engagement. We strive to enhance the academic and social experience of undergraduate students by promoting academic excellence and interaction between students, faculty, and the community, through social, cultural, and academic events

<http://english.ucalgary.ca/scribe-and-muse-english-club>.

Our email address is smecuofc@gmail.com.

English Department Website:

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please go to our website at <http://english.ucalgary.ca>. Please note that the course outlines posted on the English Department website constitute the official course outline for purposes of appeals. Students should verify any hard copies against this posted version. For courses which employ numerical grades, the official departmental percentage to letter grade conversion scale is also posted on the department website.

Writing support:

The Student Success Centre offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

Guidelines on e-mail Etiquette:

<http://www.enough.utoronto.ca/computeruse/eetiquette.htm>

Library and Research Support:

Christie Hurrell, Interim Librarian for English, offers research support to students, including strategies for finding articles, books, and other library materials. Contact: christie.hurrell@ucalgary.ca.

Find The English Pages research guide here: <http://libguides.ucalgary.ca/english>

Follow the Department of English on Facebook & Twitter:**Academic regulations and schedules:**

Consult the Calendar for course information, university and faculty regulations, dates, deadlines and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities. The homepage for the University Calendar is

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/index.htm>

Grade appeals:

Consult the following University Calendar link and request advice from the English Department office, SS 1152. Please note that “mere dissatisfaction with a decision is not sufficient grounds for the appeal of a grade or other academic decision.”

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

Deferral of term work and final examinations:

Should you require an extension for completion of term papers or assignments beyond the deadline of five days after the end of lectures, an Application of Deferment of Term Work form must be completed. The University also has regulations governing the deferral of final examinations. See Calendar:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>,

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>.

Student Accommodations:

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available

at http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf .

Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>;

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/>

“Safewalk” Program:

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night: call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/>

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:

Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Arts Students’ Centre (ASC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at

ascarts@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at

<http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.

For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them in their new space on the 3rd Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

Contact for Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts:

arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca

Contact for Students Ombudsman's Office: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI):

"At the University of Calgary, feedback provided by students through the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) survey provides valuable information to help with evaluating instruction, enhancing learning and teaching, and selecting courses (www.ucalgary.ca/usri). Your responses make a difference - please participate in USRI Surveys."

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. Please read the following information carefully. The penalty routinely recommended by the English Department for documented plagiarism is failure of the course in which the offence occurred; academic probation is also routinely applied at the Faculty level. Suspension or expulsion can result from severe or repeated plagiarism.

The University Calendar states:

1. Plagiarism - Essentially plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:

- (a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),
- (b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
- (c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,
- (d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism occurs when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, or when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. Citing your sources in a bibliography is not enough, because a bibliography does not establish which parts of a student's work are taken from other sources. MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose. Advice on adequate documentation can be found at the following web sites:

<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT

According to the University Calendar, (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/j.html>)

“The University of Calgary community has undertaken to be guided by the following statements of purpose and values: to promote free inquiry and debate, to act as a community of scholars, . . . , to respect, appreciate, and encourage diversity, [and] to display care and concern for community”. The Department of English, like the university as a whole, is committed to a “positive and productive learning and working environment.”

This environment is characterized by appreciation and encouragement of diversity and respect for the dignity of all persons: students, support staff, and faculty. The department will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour, such as threatening gestures, threatening or abusive verbal or written communication (including e-mails), or any conduct that “seriously disrupts the lawful education and related activities of students and/or university staff”. Any cases of such misconduct should be reported immediately to the department Head, who, depending on the nature and severity of the incident, may then take further appropriate action.