

FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

ENGLISH 603 L02 Topic 18

Fall 2012

COURSE TITLE: Writing Women Writing War

Instructor: Dr. Donna Coates

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Office hours: Monday 1:00-2:00

Course description: In the past several decades, Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand women writers have produced an “explosion” of fiction about their nation’s participation in the First and Second World Wars and the Vietnam War. These contemporary writers may have been drawn to these wars as a result of what Marianne Hirsch terms “postmemory,” which she defines as a “powerful form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through an imaginative investment and creation. Postmemory characterizes the experience of those who grow up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are displaced by the stories of the previous generation, shaped by traumatic events that can neither be fully understood nor recreated.” If, as Hirsch asserts, “the desire to know the world as it looked and felt before our birth” is central to the fictional imagination, then returning to the world wars is a predictable endeavor for many Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand women writers.

The texts studied in this course will examine works by writers who have imaginatively reconstructed the wars from a temporal distance. This revisionist fiction will inevitably raise important concerns about the cultural, racial, class, and colonial biases of the version of history that has been provided in the past. Numerous texts examine the ways in which gender and sexual identities are profoundly disrupted by the experience of war. Because the bulk of these fictions were at the time produced by the dominant “white” stream of Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand writers, it is now vital to include contemporary works by indigenous and multicultural writers who have been, until recently, systematically excluded by poverty and discrimination from making public their (mostly losing) side of the war story. These new works, which often revise or reshape traditional war narratives, may uncover secrets or unearth scandals hidden in the past, or reveal the kinds of power relations which have formed the complex histories of colonization in each country. Most of these writers are attempting to interpret and measure the events of the war and their far-reaching effects on their country, communities, and families.

Texts and readings:

CANADA

Jane Urquhart, [The Stone Carvers](#)

Esi Edugyan, [Half-Blood Blues](#)

Joanna Skibsrud, [The Sentimentalist](#)

Kim Thuy, [Ru](#)

NEW ZEALAND

Sara Knox, The Orphan Gunner

Patricia Grace, Tu

AUSTRALIA

Brenda Walker, The Wing of Night

Joan London, Gilgamesh

Simone Lazaroo, The Australian Fiance

Gail Jones, Sorry

Elvie Wylde, After the Fire, A Still Small Voice

Mandy Sayer, Love in the Years of Lunacy

Assignments and Evaluation:

Presentation on one novel	25%
Presentation on teaching one novel	15%
Major paper for MA students (12-15 pages on two texts, due Dec. 12, 2012)	40%
Major paper for PhD students (20-25 pages on three texts, due Dec. 12, 2012)	40%
Official respondent questions	10%
General response questions	10%

Please note that you **MUST** submit all assignments for a passing grade. There is no final examination in this course.

I will penalize late work by one full letter grade for every day late. As well, I will grade, but not mark, late papers.

*Please make every effort to take 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 following grading system is used in this course:

University of Calgary's official grading system

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 it is up to the instructor to round up or down for final grades. I reserve the right to exercise this privilege. Please note that the A+ grade, which carries no more weight than an A, will only be awarded only for outstanding work. The interpretation of the university system can be found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-2.html>

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>

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/graduate>.

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>

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

Consult the Department of English's graduate website for courses, departmental deadlines, and other related program information at <http://english.ucalgary.ca/node/245>. Consult the Faculty of Graduate Studies Calendar for university and faculty regulations, dates, deadline, fees, and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities. The homepage for the Faculty of Graduate Studies Calendar is <http://grad.ucalgary.ca>.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Barbara Howe at 403 220 5484 or visit her in Social Sciences Tower 1148 in the first instance.

For program planning and advice, contact Barbara Howe at howe@ucalgary.ca to make an appointment with Dr. Jacqueline Jenkins, Graduate Program Director.

Guidelines on e-mail Etiquette:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/it/help/articles/email/etiquette>

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>.

Academic accommodation:

It is a student's responsibility to request academic accommodation. If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation and if you have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Your academic accommodation letters should be provided to your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the commencement of this course. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/drc/>

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/>

Contact for the Graduate Student Association: <http://gsa.ucalgary.ca/>

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

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.