

FACULTY OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

COURSE OUTLINE

ENGLISH 607.78-S05

WINTER 2017

COURSE TITLE: From Books to Dust: The Practice of Collecting
T 10:00-12:45 SS1015

Instructor: Dr. S. Forlini

Office: SS 1002

Phone: (403) 220-5483

E-mail: sforlini@ucalgary.ca

Office hours: Thursdays 10am-12pm

Course description: The figure of the collector amongst his or her accumulated things invites speculation about the drive to collect, the peculiar relationships between people and things, and the ways in which things come to circulate in (and out) of systems of signification and exchange. It is perhaps not surprising that the figure of the collector emerges as an identifiable character in fiction from the mid- to late-nineteenth century as what Elaine Freedgood calls “thing culture” gives way to commodity culture, but how can we understand the collector and the practice of collecting? Is the collector related to Baudelaire’s notion of the artist as an archivist of modernity or to the popular figure of the detective that emerges at the end of the century? This course will examine the figure of the collector and the practice of collecting both in fiction and in fact, focusing primarily (though not exclusively) on this key moment in the transition from thing to commodity culture. We will also examine a number of key theoretical approaches to material culture as we explore possible understandings of the relationships between language, people, and things.

Students will bring their new knowledge of collectors, collecting and material culture to bear on one of the University of Calgary’s most impressive collections—Bob Gibson’s Collection of Speculative Fiction, which contains material from the late eighteenth to the late twentieth century. This collection, one of the largest of its kind in North America, includes over 35, 000 books, periodicals, and personal “anthologies” compiled and illustrated by a life-long bibliophile.

Texts and Readings:

- Honoree de Balzac *Cousin Pons* (1847)
- Joris-Karl Huysmans *Against Nature* (1884)
- Oscar Wilde *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891)
- Vernon Lee “A Worldly Woman” (1892, online)
- Arthur Machen *The Three Impostors* (1895)
- L.T. Meade *The Sorceress of the Strand* (1898)
- Virginia Woolf “Solid Objects” (1920, online)
- Mark Z. Danielewski *House of Leaves* (2000)
- Critical readings (available on D2L and online sources)

Assignments and Evaluation:

Participation	10%
Oral Presentation (oral and written components)	20%

Gibson Collection Proposal	20%
Gibson Collection Object-Oriented Investigation	20%
Final essay	30%

Participation: Because this is a seminar-style course attendance and participation are essential. Participation grades will be based on attendance and the quality of a student's contributions to class discussions, but will also include performing the role of discussant for at least one student presentation and the role of discussion instigator for one or more classes. Please note that if a student misses more than 3 classes and fails to provide appropriate documentation explaining the absences, he/she will receive a grade of zero in this component.

Presentation: Students will prepare a 15-minute presentation on specific pairings of primary and secondary readings. Presentations should be analytical in nature, constituting a short essay (5-7 pages long). Students will be evaluated based on the quality of the presentation and the student's ability to respond to discussion questions. On the day of their presentation, students are required to submit a written version of their presentation.

Gibson Collection Proposal: Following a class visit to Special Collections, students will be asked to prepare a brief research proposal (4-6 pages) on one specific aspect of this collection and/or its collector. Sample topics will be discussed in class.

Gibson Collection Object-Oriented Investigation: Students will engage with one or more items in the Gibson Collection and investigate its material properties in a brief (4-6 pages) critical reflection informed by one or more object-oriented theories we will study in this course.

Final essay: Students will prepare a final essay (15-18 pages long) on a topic of their choice based on course readings. Topics must be approved by the instructor. Final essays may build upon previous assignments for this course but must be sufficiently different to be approved.

There is no Registrar-scheduled exam for this course.

Additional Regulations:

→ Students are expected to come to class having done all required readings and to be prepared to participate actively in class discussion.

→ There are no extra-credit assignments in this course.

→ In order to receive a passing grade in this course, students must receive a passing grade in all assignments and course components (including participation and attendance).

→ All assignments must adhere to MLA style guidelines (8th edition).

→ All assignments must be submitted at the beginning of class on the day that they are due.

Assignments submitted after the deadline will be penalized with the loss of 5% for each day [including weekends] that the assignment is overdue. No assignments will be accepted one week past the assignment deadline without the prior consent of the instructor.

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:

Grades are calculated according to the 4 point scale used in the *Graduate Calendar*.

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/grad/current/gs-g-1.html>

Grade	Grade Point Value	Graduate Description
A+	4.00	Outstanding
A	4.00	Excellent-superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.70	Very good performance
B+	3.30	Good performance
B	3.00	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	Minimum pass for students in Faculty of Graduate Studies
C+	2.30	All grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted towards Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements.
C	2.00	
C-	1.70	
D+	1.30	
D	1.00	
F	0.00	

All grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements. A student who receives a grade of F will normally be required to withdraw unless the program recommends otherwise.

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.

In the case of Instructors using numerical marks in the grading of term work, the departmental conversion chart applies.

90 + %	A+	4.0
85 – 89 %	A	4.0
80 – 84 %	A–	3.7
77 – 79 %	B+	3.3
74 – 76 %	B	3.0
70 – 73 %	B–	2.7

67 – 69 %	C+	2.3
64 – 66 %	C	2.0
60 – 63 %	C–	1.7
55 – 59 %	D+	1.3
50 – 54 %	D	1.0
0 – 49 %	F	0

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>. 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>

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 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 the Graduate Office at 403 220 5484 or visit us in Social Sciences Tower 1148 in the first instance.

For program planning and advice, contact the Graduate Program Administrator at enggrad@ucalgary.ca to make an appointment with Dr. Aruna Srivastava, Graduate Program Director.

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/>

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