**30.364 Canadian Literature since 1990**

Winter 2024

A group of people laughing and holding a trophy

Description automatically generated

**Instructor:** Dr. Reinhold Kramer

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**Course Description:**

This course examines recent Canadian novels, short stories, and poetry. Fiction could include stories by Atwood, Redhill, and Bezmozgis, as well as novels by Robinson (*Monkey Beach*), Shields (*The Stone Diaries*), Kavanagh (*Gaff* *Topsails*), and Coles (*The Fearsome Particles*). Poetry will consist of one or two books of poetry, possibly Coles’s *Kurgan*,Lynes’s *Left Fields*, or Di Cicco’s *The Honeymoon Wilderness*. Titles may change with little notice.

**André Alexis wins the Giller Prize**

**Assignments:**

1. Reading tests (on *entire* novels)  **Jan. 11, 25; Feb. 29; Mar. 12, 21** 10%

2. Class Participation 10%

3. In-class Essay/Test  **Feb. 8**  20%

4. Term Paper (10-12 pages)  **Apr. 2**  20%

5. Final Exam  **Apr. 17, 2-4 p.m.** 40%

There may be penalties for late essays, depending upon circumstances. Reading tests cannot be postponed and missed tests cannot be rewritten without a doctor’s note or other documentation. Note that there are 2 reading tests for *Gaff Topsails*: Feb. 29 (questions on pp. 1-96, 150-320) and Mar. 12 (questions on pp. 321-456). In first week and a half of the *Gaff* lectures, I will emphasize the first 320 pages, but I will occasionally bring in some later material, so do read ahead if you can.

Cite all sources for ideas and quotations. Avoid AI and Grammarly-type programs. Assignments containing plagiarism will be graded “0” and will result in disciplinary action. Please read BU UndergraduateCalendar 3.14 “Academic Integrity” and William Messenger p. 420-8.

No cell phones during class.

For the very shy: in place of “class participation,” you may hand in, up to 5 times during the course, short (1-page, double-spaced, typed) analyses, not plot summaries, of a portion of the work under discussion that day. These analyses must be handed in *before* the work is discussed in class and are worth 2% each. No analyses will be accepted after class discussions for *any* reason.

Students who require disability accommodations should register with the Accessibility Services Coordinator, 204-727-9759, [magnussonm@brandonu.ca](mailto:magnussonm@brandonu.ca). Student Services also offers personal counselling (contact 204-727-9737). If students find controversial readings and/or discussions troubling, please contact the instructor immediately about alternatives.

**Grading: Letter/Number/Grade Point**

Outstanding Good Satisfactory Weak Inadequate

A+ 90 & up 4.3 B+ 77-79 3.3 C+ 67-69 2.3 D 50-59 1.0 F 0-49 0

A 85-89 4.0 B 73-76 3.0 C 63-66 2.0

A- 80-84 3.7 B- 70-72 2.7 C- 60-62 1.7

**Texts:**   
Alexis, André. *Fifteen Dogs*. Coach House.

Coles, Don. *Kurgan*. Porcupine’s Quill.

Kavanagh, Patrick. *Gaff Topsails*. Cormorant.

McNeil, Jean. *The Dhow House*. ECW Press

Messenger, William, et. al. *Writing English: The Canadian Handbook*, Oxford UP (optional under 30.145)

Shields, Carol. *The Stone Diaries*. Random House.

Urquhart, Jane, ed. *The Penguin Book of Canadian Short Stories*. Penguin Random House.

**Tentative Schedule:**

Jan. 4 Introduction to Canadian culture and the novel

9 Atwood, “The Art of Cooking and Serving” (2006)

Shields, “A Scarf” (2000)

11-23 Shields, *The Stone Diaries* (1993)

Jan. 25 - Feb. 6 Alexis, André. *Fifteen Dogs* (2015)

Feb. 8 **Mid-term Test**

13 Coles, “On a Caspar David Friedrich Painting,”

“Kurgan No. 10,” “Gone Out Is Part of Sanity,” “Tolstoy Poems” (3)

15 “These Photos of the Children,” “Nurseryschoolers” “Lonelyhearts,”

19 -23 No classes (Reading Week)

27 Coles, “Knights of the Round Table,” “Romance”

Boyden, “Abitibi Canyon” (2001)

Feb. 29 - Mar. 19 Kavanagh, *Gaff Topsails* (1996)

Mar. 12 **2nd reading test on *Gaff***

Mar. 21 - Apr. 2 McNeil, *The Dhow House* (2017)

Apr. 2 **Term Paper Due**

4 Vassanji, “Last Rites” (2005)

Review

**Apr. 17 Final Exam, Wednesday, 2-4 p.m.**