

English 451:
Contemporary Canadian Fiction
Fall 2022

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Course Description:

Since its “coming of age” in the 1970s and 1980s, Canadian fiction has thrived both within the borders of Canada and without. In recent years Canadian novelists and short story writers have received a number of major international prizes, while producing works that reflect the vitality and diversity of contemporary Canada.

In this course we will five recent works of Canadian fiction with an eye on how these texts explore issues of significance in 21st century Canada. As part of this study, we will place the works (to a certain degree) in relevant literary, social, and historical contexts. We will use a combination of scholarly and creative methods to deepen our understanding. We will have fun (hopefully!). And, throughout the term, we will return from a number of different points of view to the larger question of why story-telling remains such a vital aspect of contemporary culture.



Proposed Assignments:

10% Informal assignment (500 words)

25% Shorter essay (1,000 words)

30% Take home exam (written over two weeks)

35% Research essay (2,000 words)

Proposed Texts:

- Margaret Atwood, *Moral Disorder*
- Lawrence Hill, *The Book of Negroes*
- Wayne Johnston, *The Divine Ryans*
- Richard Wagamese, *Medicine Walk*
- Miriam Toews, *All My Puny Sorrows*