

English 450: Modern Canadian Novel

The modern era in Canada saw the rise of women's rights, the development of technologies for communication and transportation, and new theories of psychology and sexuality. Canadians wrote with a new emphasis on urban life, and on Canada's place on the world stage, while at the same time celebrating their attachment to place and their love of the natural world. It was a time of rapid change, characterized by massive industrial development as well as worry about the growing strength of international capitalism.

What effects did these changes have on Canadian writing? A new emphasis on language and form, as well as rousing debate about the relevance of international modernism to Canadian art. In this course we will read a selection of Canadian novels from the period 1930-1970 in order to ask the question, is there is there a specific form of the modernist novel in Canada? How did Canadians respond to the concerns of international modernism, and lay the groundwork for contemporary Canadian authors?

Tentative texts:

Watch that Ends the Night, Hugh MacLennan

Waste Heritage, Irene Baird

The Double Hook, Sheila Watson

Swamp Angel, Ethel Wilson

As for Me and My House, Sinclair Ross

The Stone Angel, Margaret Laurence

