

ENGL 498 Northern BC Literature

Fall 2007

Instructor: Robert Budde
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Office Hours: Wednesday 11:00 – 1:00

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Course Description

A sense of place is partially created through the literature of a place. In this course we will be studying poetry, short stories, creative non-fiction, and novels that are written by writers from Northern BC and about Northern BC. Northern BC here is defined as a region that includes Prince Rupert/Kitimat, Smithers, Terrace, Prince George, Dawson Creek, Fort St. John and all points north. Part of the challenge of the course will be to determine whether a “Northern BC Literature” actually exists; is there a commonality between the texts that we study that would distinguish Northern BC Lit from other regional literatures? I have attempted to provide a wide range of writing in terms of: locality, genre, style, gender, & race. Questions we will be asking might be:

- What aspects of Northern BC are present in the text?
- What is missing?
- Is there a Northern BC style of writing?
- Are there opposing views? What social lines are established?
- What political/power issues predominate?
- What role does “place” have in writing?

We will be entering the class discussions and assignments under the assumption that students have read and know the texts.

Texts

Barry McKinnon, *The Centre: Poems 1970-2000* (Talonbooks, 2004)

*note: there is an older book, *The Centre*
from Caitlin Press that is a different text

Wigmore, Gillian. *Soft geography* (Caitlin)

George Stanley, *Gentle Northern Summer* (New Star)

Eden Robinson, *Monkey Beach* (Vintage)

Brian Fawcett, *Virtual Clearcut* (Thomas Allen)

Jacqueline Baldwin, *A Northern Woman* (Caitlin)

Don Precosky (ed), *Four Realities* (Caitlin)

Ken Belford, *Ecologue* (Harbour)

Assignments/Evaluation

Response Papers(x2)-----	20%
Short Paper-----	20
Group Presentation-----	20%
Final paper-----	40%
No Exam	

The response papers (2-3 pp) will not be research based but will require skills in literary analysis. These papers have no fixed due date and can be written on any smaller portion (poem, chapter, aspect, etc.) of one of the course texts.

The short paper is not research based and will synthesize an issue or theme across 2 or more of the texts we are studying. It should be 7-8 pages and in MLA format. An alternative assignment to this paper could be an extensive interview with a Northern BC author. The interview will be evaluated on the effectiveness and preparation behind the interview questions.

The “group presentation” will ask a group of 3 or 4 to either a) present a close reading of a text or texts to the class, b) provide an overview of a specific author’s work beyond course texts, or c) present a theoretical position regarding “place” as it relates to a text or texts from the course. Evaluation will be based on the strength of the engagement with the writing, quality of research, and the effectiveness of the presentation. Presentations should be around 20 minutes long.

The “final paper” should also be written in MLA format and be approximately 15 pages or 3750 words. This paper should be research intensive and present an original analysis of a Northern BC text or texts. This is a Special Topics class but keep in mind that it is a 4th year course and performance in the class will be evaluated accordingly.

If there are students in this course who, because of a disability, may have a need for special academic accommodations, please come and discuss this with me, or contact Disability Services located in room 7-103.

Strict enforcement of plagiarism policies applies to this course. See the UNBC calendar or speak to me if you are unsure as to what plagiarism entails.

498 Course Outline

Oct.	2, 4	Belford, <i>Ecologue</i>
	9, 11	Stanley, <i>Gentle Northern Summer</i>
	16, 18	Fawcett, <i>Virtual Clearcut</i>
	23, 25	Fawcett, <i>Virtual Clearcut</i>
Oct. 30, Nov.1		Wigmore, <i>Soft Geography</i>
	6, 8	Baldwin, <i>A Northern Woman</i>
	13, 15	Robinson, <i>Monkey Beach</i>
	20, 22	First Nations oral storytelling
	27, 29	New local authors (handouts, readings) Conclusions **final paper due