



Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures. Russian Studies

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Prof. Lyudmila Parts

lyudmila.parts@mcgill.ca / SH 332

Office hours: Thursday 1:00 -2:00 or by appt.

Anton Chekhov and the 20th-century Short Story.

Major topics:

- The genre of the short story. Form and content. Relationship to realist, modernist, and postmodernist aesthetics.
- Chekhov's short story.
- Chekhov's influence in Russia and abroad.

Authors:

Anton Chekhov, Ivan Bunin, Katherine Mansfield, Sherwood Anderson, Ernest Hemingway, Raymond Carver, Joyce Carol Oates, Vyacheslav P'etsukh, Lyudmila Petrushevskaya, Alice Munro, William Boyd.

Reading assignments: primary texts and some critical sources **for every class**. The stories are in the book *Anton Chekhov. Selected Stories* and in the course pack; articles – on MyCourses and in *Selected Stories*. There is a bibliography for additional critical sources. Read full week assignment by Tuesday.

Attendance and participation. This is a discussion-format seminar, therefore regular attendance and active participation is expected from all students. Unexcused absence will result in reduction of the attendance and participation part of the grade. Additionally, if you miss 10 or more classes you receive a failing grade (F). No makeup assignments. Note that emailing me about a missed class does not constitute excused absence.

Use of Laptops. Given the type of participation that is expected, and out of respect for your fellow students, laptops, iPads, and other mobile computing and communication devices will not be permitted. If you have special circumstances requiring you to use one of these devices, you must speak to me about it during my office hours.

MyCourses postings: you will submit 3 (three) short (1-1.5 pages) postings. Your postings will be a focused application of a theoretical point to a story by Chekhov. You can also demonstrate Chekhov's influence on other short story writers using specific examples. Authors and stories not included in the course are welcome. Postings are not papers and do not require formal structure or critical sources.

Papers:

1st paper: (3-4 pages).

2nd paper/short story: (4-5 pages).

1. Detailed analysis of a story or a comparative analysis of two stories from the point of view of genre, influence, literary school, etc. I will assign the topics. Papers require use of critical sources.
2. Final paper. Topics will be provided. As an **alternative** to a regular final paper, you have the option of **writing your own short story** and explaining your choice of character, themes, and detail. Your submission would be the same size as a paper – 4-5 pages, divided roughly in half between the text of the story and your own analysis of it.

Grade:

attendance/participation – 15%
 MyCourses postings – 30%
 1st paper – 25%
 2nd paper/short story – 30%

Stories:

Chekhov:

“A Gentleman Friend” *	Rothschild’s Fiddle
An Upheaval (Commotion)*	The Student
Vanka	Ward No. 6
Grisha	The House with Mezzanine
Let me Sleep	In the Ravine
The Death of a Government Clerk	The Man in a Case
Small Fry	Gooseberry
In Exile	About Love
The Black Monk*	The Darling
The Name-Day Party	The Lady with the Little Dog
The Teacher of Literature	The Bride
Grief	

* Indicates stories in the course pack

Others (in the course pack):

Ivan Bunin, “Sunstroke;”
 Sherwood Anderson, “The Philosopher;”
 Raymond Carver, “Errand,” “A Small Good Thing;”
 Joyce Carol Oates, “The Lady with the Pet Dog;”
 William Boyd, “The Woman on the Beach with a Dog,” “The Pigeon;”
 Katherine Mansfield, “The Child-Who-Was-Tired” “The Garden Party,” “Life of Ma Parker;”
 Ernest Hemingway, “Indian Camp,” “Hills Like White Elephants;”
 Viacheslav P’etsukh, from “Dear Anton Pavlovich.”
 Lyudmila Petrushevskaya, “The Lady with the Dogs.”
 Alice Munro, “Dimensions.”

Readings:

Anton Chekhov. *Selected Stories*. Norton Critical Edition. Edited by Cathy Popkin. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014

Course pack

Critical materials on MyCourses

Selected Bibliography

Biography:

Hingley, Ronald, *A New Life of Anton Chekhov*, Knopf, 1976.

Rayfield, Donald, *Anton Chekhov. A Life*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 2000.

Karlinsky, Simon, "The Gentle Subversive," introduction to *Anton Chekhov's Life and Thought: Selected Letters and Commentary*, translation by Michael Henry Heim, Evanston: Northwestern UP, 1999.

Collections of articles on Chekhov's stories.

Clyman, Toby W., ed., *A Chekhov Companion*, Greenwood Press, 1985.

Debreczeny, Paul and Eekman, Thomas, ed. *Chekhov's Art of Writing: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Columbus, 1977.

Eekman, Thomas, ed. *Critical Essays on Anton Chekhov*. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1989.

Hulanicki, Leo and Savignac, David, ed. *Anton Chekhov as a Master of Short-Story Writing: Essays in Modern Soviet Literary Criticism*. The Hague, 1976.

Jackson, Robert Louis, editor, *Chekhov: A Collection of Critical Essays*, Prentice-Hall, 1967.

Jackson, Robert Louis, editor, *Reading Chekhov's Text*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1993.

Kataev, Vladimir. *If We Could Only Know! An Interpretation of Chekhov*. Chicago: Ivan. R Dee, 2002.

Popkin, Cathy. *The Pragmatics of Insignificance*. Stanford UP, 1993; Chekhov chapter.

Senderovich, Savely and Munir Sendich, eds. *Anton Chekhov Rediscovered: A Collection of New Studies With a Comprehensive Bibliography*. East Lansing (Michigan): Russian Language Journal, 1987.

On Influence:

Chekhov and Our Age. Responses to Chekhov by American Writers and Scholars, ed. James McConkey (Ithaca, New York: Cornell UP, 1984)

Andrew, Joe (ed. and preface); Reid, Robert (ed. and preface). *Chekhov 2004: Chekhov Special Issues in Two Volumes, Vol. II: Chekhov and Others*. Keele, England: Keele University Students Union, 2006.

Clayton, J. Douglas (ed.). *Chekhov Then and Now: The Reception of Chekhov in World Culture*. New York, NY: Peter Lang, 1997.

Chekhov the Immigrant: Translating a Cultural Icon, ed. Michael C. Finke and Julie de Sherbinin. Bloomington, IN: Slavica Publishers, 2007.

On Short Story:

Short Story Theories, ed. Charles E May (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1976)

The New Short Story Theories, ed. Charles E. May (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1994)

Short Story. Theory at a Crossroads, ed. Susan Lohafer and Jo Ellyn Clarey (Baton Rouge/London: Louisiana State University Press, 1989)

Students with any grades including grades of D, F or J do NOT have the option of doing additional work to upgrade their final standing.

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).