

Cans 310 Canadian Cultures: Issues and Contexts (Winter 2021)

Instructor: Dr. Shelley Ruth Butler, Lecturer, McGill Institute for the Study of Canada

Class Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 4:05-5:25 pm ET Montreal. Weekly zoom sessions will be held during the Monday class time. A few sessions will also take place on Wednesdays (details below).

Format and delivery: This class features weekly pre-recorded presentations by the professor that will be posted on MyCourses and weekly online discussions and collective viewing of media. Class will meet on zoom on Mondays 4:05-5:25 pm. Short, pre-recorded presentations will be posted on MyCourses every Wednesday by 4:05 pm (if ever this is not possible, I will alert you). There will also be occasional zoom sessions during our class time on Wednesdays 4:05-5:25 pm, for viewing media together and for workshopping and presenting paper proposals with peers. (Students can also view media independently, if they prefer. All links and details will be posted in Mycourses.) On Wednesdays with scheduled activities, short presentations by the professor will still be posted.

The goal of this format is to create an engaging, participatory learning environment that is flexible and not too zoom heavy. If you cannot regularly attend zoom meetings because of your time zone or other factors, please contact the instructor as soon as possible to arrange alternative modes of participation.

Office Hours: Mondays 2:00-3:00 pm ET on zoom, or by appointment

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This course explores “Canadian cultures” from a critical perspective which considers “culture” in relation to power. Culture has various meanings, and we will work with it in the following ways:

- cultural nationalism and desires for shared national symbols and histories
- culture as lived experience: ideas, practices, values, symbols, histories, that shape personal and collective identities (whether these are local, regional, national, transnational, or not particularly place-based (e.g. queer identities).
- cultural productions (e.g. monuments, film, advertisements, graphic novels, visual arts, theatre) and their relationships to cultural nationalism(s) and cultural identities.

Because power is central to our approach, our methodology will involve exploring questions such as who controls cultural productions and cultural narratives and who is marginalized from this process. Also, what are the material consequences of these processes? We will stress how culture is not static, tracing broad historical and emerging developments in Canadian culture.

Key issues to be addressed include settler colonialism, memory and forgetting, systemic racism, multiculturalism, stereotypes, cultural appropriation, assimilation, decolonization, ethics and responsibility in cultural production and consumption.

This is not a survey course, nor is it strictly chronological. Rather, we zero in on specific cultural productions and periods and use comparative, interdisciplinary, and intersectional analysis to better understand cultural dynamics, including contestation. Theoretically, we will make connections between issues that are often analyzed in separate domains. For example, we will bring indigenous and multicultural issues into conversation with each other. Considering academic work and artistic productions by “non-dominant” citizens is another key methodology in this course to access new points of view and contribute to decolonizing and democratizing Canadian studies

Course Goals:

- To deepen understanding of specific periods in Canadian culture: nineteenth-century nation-building and Empire; Quebec nationalism in the mid-twentieth century; World War II and its impact on Indigenous and Japanese Canadians; contemporary cultural productions that democratize and critique the public sphere, including identifying erasures of black and Indigenous presence and gender and sexual discrimination in religious communities.
- To analyze how different genres of cultural productions enhance, diminish, or challenge our understandings of the past and present. What is the impact of different artistic styles including humour, irony, anger, testimony, empathy, cross-cultural representation, paternalism, and mass entertainment and/or education?
- To contribute to decolonizing and democratizing Canadian studies by engaging with those whose voices and cultural productions have been historically marginalized.
- To gain meta skills (discourse analysis, visual culture analysis, clear writing, use of secondary sources) for producing original research on a topic directly related to our course.

Required Texts:

Clements, Marie *Burning Vision*. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 2003 (also available on-line at McGill)

Kluckner, Michael *Toshiko: A Graphic Novel*. Vancouver: Midtown Press, 2020. (The 2015 edition is acceptable as I have PDFs of new pages.)

Vowel, Chelsea *Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Métis & Inuit Issues in Canada*, Portage and Main Press, 2016 (also available on-line at McGill)

These are all available at [Paragraphe](#) bookstore: curbside pick-up (1-2 pm daily) or delivery (free in QC with purchases over \$50). Links and PDFs to all other materials will be posted in order of appearance in Mycourses under the Content tab.

Assignments and Evaluation:

Participation 10% Contribute to zoom discussions (orally, or judicious use of chat), attend office hours, volunteer for note-taking, attentive listening and active engagement with materials. You will submit a brief self-evaluation at the end of class, so I suggest that you track/ record your participation.

Forum 15% Once a week (occasionally twice), I will post a Forum Query. I will typically ask you to respond briefly and directly to a particular issue we are considering. Sometimes, I will post a contemporary news article or visual material (eg. an advertisement) for you to respond to by making use of our materials. I expect you to contribute to a minimum of 10 Forums. (I will track this.) You are welcome to respond to commentaries by your peers and these will count toward your 10 Forums as long as they are substantial. I will do my best to respond briefly to each contribution. Please space your contributions out throughout term! The Forum is meant to become an extension of our class time together. Your mark will be based on completion of the task, as well as the quality of your posts (clarity, originality, ability to synthesize materials). I expect that each contribution will be about 100-200 words (1-2 paragraphs).

Short assignment 10% : Short answers to questions to demonstrate your engagement with the course and get early feedback on your writing. Hand out: Thurs. Jan.28th noon. Due: Mon. Feb 1 noon. Expect this to take about 1 to 1.5 hours.

Research project peer support and presentations: 10%: You will be assigned to a group of about 5 students to help each other hone your research topics and share resources. I will give you step by step guidance on developing your projects. As a group, you will present your projects in a succinct and compelling fashion to the class. These short presentations will take place on Wednesdays, during scheduled class time, from Feb 22-Mar 31, with two groups per class. Expect class to be max. 40 minutes in total. These presentations may be recorded. If anyone cannot attend a Wed session with their group, they must see the instructor to make suitable, alternative arrangements.

Take-home exam: 25%: Short answers to questions to demonstrate your synthesis of course materials. Will be released 72 hours before it is due. Due during exam period, TBA. Expect exam to take about 2 hours. Research paper: 30% 8 pages, not including bibliography. Due Wed Apr 7th midnight.

Schedule:

Week 1: M. Jan 11 (zoom) and W. Jan 13th (pre-recorded lecture)

Intro to course. Nineteenth-century nation-building. Read: Mackey "Settling Differences" 25 pgs

Week 2: M. Jan 18 (zoom) and W. Jan 20 (pre-recorded lecture)

Symbolizing Selves and Others. Read: Osborne and Osborne "Heroic Landscapes" 12 pgs, Vowel chapters 1 and 2 20 pgs

Week 3: M. Jan 25 (zoom) and W. Jan 27 (Film and recorded lecture)

Other settlement stories. Read: Norquay "Remembering" 13 pgs, Walker "Jim Crow" 17 pgs, Watch: *Speakers for the Dead* (50 min)

Week 4: M. Feb 1 (zoom) and W. Feb 3 (Film excerpts and recorded lecture)

French Identity and Memory. Read: Fyson "The Canadiens and Conquest" 15 pgs, Bouchard "French in Quebec" 15 pgs, Green "Postcolonial QC" 10 pgs

Watch: excerpts, *Mon Oncle Antoine* (details, tba)

Week 5: M. Feb 8 (zoom) and W. Feb 10 (Film excerpts and recorded lecture)

Language, Identity, and Resistance. Read: Lalonde *Speak White*, Micone *Speak What*, Ruschensky *Revisiting Speak White*, 23 pgs

Watch: [Speak White \(Michele Lalonde 1970\)](#) [Speak White \(Falardeau and Poulin 1980\)](#)

Week 6: M. Feb 15 (zoom) and W. Feb 17 (pre-recorded lecture)

Competing Nationalisms. Read: Papillon Indigenous and QC (15 pgs), Vowel pgs 223-232, 243-259 (30 pgs), Edwardson "English Canadian "New Nationalism" (20 pgs) Kroller Expo' 67 (15 pgs)

Watch: excerpts, [Power: One River, Two Nations](#) (details tba)

Week 7: M. Feb 22 (zoom) and W. Feb. 24 (pre-recorded lecture & 2 group presentations)

From Cultural Appropriation to Self-Representation. Read: Vowel pgs 36-114 80 pgs

View: KC Adams [Perception Series](#)

MARCH BREAK

Week 8: M. Mar 8 (zoom) and W. Mar 10th (pre-recorded lecture & 2 group presentations)

Crisis, Xenophobia, Cross-cultural empathy. Read: Kluckner, *Toshiko* (graphic novel)

Week 9: M. Mar 15 and W. Mar 17th (pre-recorded lecture & 2 group presentations)

Confinement. Read: Oikawa "Cartographies" 30 pgs

*Q and A with Michael Kluckner (date to be confirmed)

Week 10: M. Mar 22 and W. Mar 24 (pre-recorded lecture & 2 group presentations)

Relationships and Ethics. Read: Clements *Burning Vision* (play) View: excerpts [Village of Widows](#)

Week 11: M. Mar 29 and W. Mar 31 (pre-recorded lecture & 2 group presentations)

Relationships and Ethics cont. Read: finish Clements *Burning Vision* (play)

Week 12: W. Apr 7 (zoom lecture and watch film)

From State Violence to Paternalism. Watch: *Between Two Worlds* (1 hr). Read: Vowel 169-205, 35 pgs

Week 13: 3 classes: M. Apr 12, W. Apr 14 and Th. Apr 15

Gender and Sexuality Stereotypes and Nationhood. Read: "Zine "Muslim Cultural Politics," 20 pgs Howlett: "Homonormativity" (15 pgs)

Watch: excerpts, *Me and the Mosque* (details tba)

*Guest: Lucas Rochelle, *Queering the Map* (date to be confirmed)

Course Policies:

A. Copyright

All slides, video recordings, lecture notes, etc. remain the instructor's intellectual property. As such, you may use these only for your own learning (and research, with proper referencing/citation) ends. You are not permitted to disseminate or share these materials; doing so may violate the instructor's intellectual property rights and could be cause for disciplinary action.

B. Extraordinary Circumstances

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

C. Guest Speakers

There may be minor schedule changes in order to accommodate guest speakers.

D. Netiquette

The University recognizes the importance of maintaining teaching spaces that are respectful and inclusive for all involved. To this end, offensive, violent, or harmful language arising in contexts such as the following may be cause for disciplinary action:

1. Username (use only your legal or preferred name)
2. Visual backgrounds
3. "Chat" boxes

To maintain a clear and uninterrupted learning space for all, keep your microphone muted throughout your class, unless the instructors says otherwise. Follow instructors' directions about the use of the "chat" function on remote learning platforms.

E. Zoom Session Recording

By enrolling in a remote course, you accept that some sessions may be recorded. You must consent to being recorded if you are attending a lecture or participating in a component of a course that is being recorded. You will be notified through a "pop-up" box in Zoom if a lecture or portion of a class is being recorded. *(Zoom discussions will not typically be recorded, but mini presentations by the instructor during zoom sessions will be.)*

For pedagogical reasons and for the enrichment of the experience of all students, please keep your camera on during zoom sessions. If you do not have the necessary resources (e.g., adequate Internet bandwidth or equipment) to do so, inform your instructor at the beginning of term so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

In addition to the recording of your image and voice, your name (or preferred name) may be displayed on screen, and your instructor may call your name during the lecture. As such, this personal information will be disclosed to classmates, whether during the lecture or in viewing the recording. By remaining in classes that are being recorded, you accept that personal information of this kind may be disclosed to others, whether during the lecture or in viewing the recording.

F. Sensitive Content

Please be aware that some of the course content may be disturbing for some students. It has been included in the course because it directly relates to learning outcomes. Please contact the instructor if you have specific concerns about this.

We will be dealing with sensitive issues that do not have clear-cut solutions and may be controversial. Please present your opinions with care and listen respectfully to others. This class should be a space for deep engagement with texts, images, ideas, and each other. If you feel discomforted by a discussion in class, please do not let it fester. Rather, contact the instructor who can act as a mediator and/or facilitator to address concerns.

G. Language of Submission

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. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives. (Approved by Senate on 21 January 2009)

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue).

H. Academic Integrity

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). *L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site <http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity>).*

I. Late Penalties

Please respect deadlines. Marks are deducted at a rate of 3% per day, including weekends. Late work will be accepted without penalty only when the student has medical or compassionate grounds for an extension.

J. Student Support

For mental health support, please see: <https://www.mcgill.ca/wellness-hub/>.

If you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#) and the Instructor to design solutions.

For support for survivors of sexual violence, please see:

<https://www.mcgill.ca/deanofstudents/students/support-survivors-sexual-violence>.