LITERATURE
Modern Canadian Literature
Sarah Anthony MA
4 weeks 22, 29 March; 5, 12 April
Fridays 10.30am – 12.30pm
Course code: 18TON375  Course fee: £60

This course looks at texts by four well-known modern Canadian authors and explores the themes of identity, history and legacy in their work. Authors studied will be Alice Munro, Margaret Atwood, Michael Ondaatje and Carol Shields.

Questions of identity, history and legacy are common themes in the literature of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, and the rise in cultural nationalism in Canada from the 1970s has contributed to a vibrant and diverse literary output engaging with these discourses. This course will look at texts by four well-known Canadian writers whose works look at some of these ideas in a way that could be described as ‘postmodern’.

We will begin by looking at Margaret Atwood, one of Canada's most prominent writers. Her novel Alias Grace, first published in 1996, won the Canadian Giller Prize and was shortlisted for the Booker Prize. A novel of historical fiction, it engages with questions relating to identity and women’s history, using the metaphor of quilt-making as a motif to examine the multiplicity of stories which need to be examined in order to arrive at a form of truth. Michael Ondaatje is a Sri Lankan-born Canadian author, whose novel The English Patient similarly looks at the ways in which histories are constructed and engages with the idea of national identity which is so prominent in late 20th century Canadian writing. The Stone Diaries by American-born Canadian Carol Shields is a fictional autobiography which won the 1993 Governor General’s Award for Literature. Through this text we will interrogate the idea of autobiography and consider the ways in which postmodern writers explore the overlap between fiction and biography. The course ends with a selection of short stories by Nobel prizewinner Alice Munro, whose work has been described as having revolutionized the architecture of short stories, especially in its tendency to move forward and backward in time.

Required reading
Week 1: Margaret Atwood, Alias Grace
Week 3: Carol Shields, The Stone Diaries
Week 4: Alice Munro, selected short stories (handout)
Additional information

- This course is suitable for beginners, intermediates or advanced students.
- This course allows you to spend time exploring a subject for interest, among like-minded people, without formal assessment.

Intended learning outcomes

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- understand the concept of the ‘postmodern’ in literature and ways in which this is expressed in selected texts.
- engage with the various socio-political and national concerns which go towards the creation of a ‘Canadian’ literature.
- interpret literary texts in a critical way, illustrating arguments with carefully chosen examples.
- demonstrate knowledge through the construction of critical arguments and present and defend those arguments.

About the tutor

Sarah Anthony studied for her Masters degree with the Open University specialising in postcolonial nineteenth century literature. For the last 12 years she has taught undergraduate students and adult learners in courses ranging from Shakespeare to the postmodern. She currently teaches for the University of Kent and the WEA.
Short Course Programme
General information, terms & conditions

How to book a place
These courses are usually very popular so you are advised to apply as soon as possible. Places cannot be held without payment of the course fee.
- Online Booking is preferred. Please visit www.kent.ac.uk/tonbridge
- By post to us at the address below, using the application form in the programme booklet. Please note that you will not receive an acknowledgment of your paper application; your payment will usually be processed when the course becomes financially viable, otherwise we will notify you of cancellation approximately seven days prior to the course. A paper application affirms acceptance of our terms & conditions.

Course cancellation
As these short courses are self-financing, each course can only proceed if there are sufficient enrolments. Therefore, if a course is cancelled due to insufficient enrolments we aim to notify applicants approximately one week before the course start date; if there is no suitable alternative course, we will refund the appropriate course fee in full. The University of Kent reserves the right to cancel a course for this or any other reason in which case the relevant course fee will be refunded in full. We advise that you do not buy books or other course materials until that particular course has been confirmed as taking place: please contact us if you are unsure.

If you find it necessary to cancel your place on a course, please let us know as soon as possible. Refund requests, including the reason, should be made by email or in writing to us at the address below. We reserve the right to retain all or part of the course fee if you request a refund after 14 days of your online booking being made or paper application being received. Discretionary, partial refunds may be made, after the deduction of an administrative handling fee as follows:
- a course fee of up to and including £42 will incur an administrative handling fee of £10.00
- a course fee of £43 and over will incur an administrative handling fee of £12.50.

The University reserves the right to:
- exclude any student if the student’s presence is making it difficult for the class to function properly
- cancel or amend the length of any course if the circumstances so warrant.

Neither the University of Kent, nor its staff, can be held responsible for any damage, loss or injury, however sustained, suffered by participants attending courses. Insurance is the student’s responsibility.

University Centre Tonbridge
For details of our other courses, news, events and location visit www.kent.ac.uk/tonbridge.
- Parking. There is plenty of public pay and display car parking locally, but please note that only selected car parks permit parking in excess of four hours; detailed information is available from www.tmbc.gov.uk. No parking is available here on site.
- Refreshments are not provided; food and drink can be purchased from any of the nearby café outlets - we are closely situated to the High Street and town centre. A hot drink vending machine is usually available on the ground floor of this building.

Mailing List and data protection
Those attending our courses are automatically added to our database and kept informed about new courses. This information is not released to outside organisations. Please write to us if you do not wish your details to be kept on our database.

Please contact us if you have any queries or would like to register your email address to receive our course information updates. We look forward to welcoming you here soon.

University of Kent Tonbridge Centre
Avebury Avenue
Tonbridge  TN9 1TG