



Canadian Literature

A QUARTERLY OF CRITICISM AND REVIEW

CanLit Guides Chapter Workshop

Spring 2016

Call for Statements of Interest: July 15, 2015

What does it mean to teach “Canadian literature” in higher education today? How do we, for example, design a complete introductory course on the literatures of Canada and Quebec? The field is vast and in flux. If our research specializes on contemporary fiction, how do we select and teach poetry from the nineteenth century? If our expertise lies in Atlantic-Canadian literatures, how do we choose texts by West-Coast writers? How do we learn to teach research methods that we do not use ourselves? How do we teach literatures that arise from cultural contexts outside those that we know? If we teach outside Canada, how do we cover the literatures of a nation in one course (or section of a course)? How do we bring material from outside our areas of expertise into the classroom responsibly? Over fifty years into the field’s institutionalization and hundreds of years into its creation, no one can know everything about Canadian writing and criticism. Yet we are still often asked to be both specialists in research and generalists in teaching the literatures of Canada.

As teachers of Canadian literature, we tend to approach these challenges with various strategies: designing courses primarily around what we already know; attending conferences and reading scholarship to expand what we can teach; taking pedagogy workshops to rethink how we teach; selecting anthologies and special editions that offer us context; and seeking out colleagues to ask for their experience on how to teach areas that are new to us. At *Canadian Literature*, we want to propose an additional strategy: crowdsourcing. This workshop seeks to draw upon our collective expertise—our shared knowledge—to produce teaching materials for our students and one another. We want to work together to add to the bank of teaching material that we have begun with *CanLit Guides* and we invite you to join us to do so. We each spend dozens of hours a year on our own trying to be both broad and focused. Now we want to bring some of that individual work together.

CanLit Guides (canlitguides.ca) is an online, open educational resource created to supplement classroom learning. There are currently guides on nationalism, gender/sexuality, Indigenous literatures, visual poetics, and production/evaluation, as well as chapters on individual creative works, writers, historical-cultural contexts, and critical trends. In our initial years of development, these chapters were written in-house and then peer-reviewed out of house. We are shifting to a new model of chapters written by and credited to area specialists. This workshop is designed to support this new model, calling

upon those who teach Canadian literature to write chapters on writers, texts, time periods, research methods, etc. of their choice.

Participants will arrive at the workshop with a draft chapter to share with peers. Each chapter will contain background context on the topic, approaches to teaching it, some link to *Canadian Literature* (for context, articles, book reviews, poems, debates sparked, or theories introduced), questions for discussion, and at least one sample assignment. Together, we will workshop these chapters to produce revised versions that will then be refined by the authors and submitted to *CanLit Guides* to be expedited through our blind peer-review process. We want to work across generations and skill sets to benefit from our varied experiences in the classroom so that we can produce materials of value to students and our fellow educators. We intend for the workshop to include people from all levels of academic teaching (from graduate students to senior faculty) and for us to work together beyond hierarchies. Through this workshop, our goal is to bolster the community of Canadian literature specialists who welcome the opportunity to talk about teaching, share what we know, learn from one another, and consider ways to best support our students' learning.

This is a call for statements of interest.

Please send us a message indicating that you are interested in participating in the workshop in Spring 2016, which will be held either in Vancouver at UBC or in Calgary immediately preceding Congress. Please include a 100-word general synopsis of what your chapter contribution might be along with a 50-word biographical note. The number of people who can participate in such a workshop is by necessity limited so we need some indication of interest now at the planning stage.

Workshop Organizers: Kathryn Grafton and Laura Moss

Deadline for Statement of Interest: July 15, 2015

Send to: canlit.guides@ubc.ca



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