English 201 • The Short Story

Instructor: Jamie Roberts
Office Hours in PAS 1064: Monday, 3:30-5:00 P.M. and Thursday, 1-3 P.M. or by appointment
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Course Overview & Objectives:
The short story is an ancient literary form, one with roots in poetry and world-wide folklore, as well as in the Western literary traditions of the renaissance. Although never completely cut off from these disparate literary roots, the modern short story of the 19th and 20th centuries presents its own ways of communicating varying ideas. Many recognizable formal structures of narrative have had their birth in the short story, while the length of short fiction has made it a form well suited both to established literary vehicles like magazines or books, as well as to small, more experimental publications. Further, from an author’s point of view, the short story today provides a unique arena for various kinds of expressions in prose.

In investigating these fictive expressions, we will explore the formal elements of short stories and, by extension, narrative itself. We will also examine ways of reading these fictions that extend beyond the merely formal. In this course we will read many works by many different authors, some of which will probably be familiar to you, while others will, with any luck, surprise and delight. In the hope of introducing you to some of the creative work being accomplished here in Canada, we will conclude the course by examining the work of two Canadian short story writers: Eric McCormack and Barbara Gowdy.

Requirements & Grading:
For this course, there will be two in-class tests (the first is optional), as well as a final essay of 10-12 pages in length, due at the end of the course. In addition, you will be required to bring written questions for discussion to class on the stories we will cover. Grades will be determined in the following manner:

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Required Texts:


# English 201 • Spring '94 • Reading Schedule

**May 9** (Introduction)  
*Norton Anthology of Short Fiction:*
  - "A Passion in the Desert" (51)
  - "Young Goodman Brown" (698)
  - "The Fall of the House of Usher" & "The Purloined Letter" (1390; 1406)

**May 16 (Plot)**  
*Norton:*
  - "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" (99)
  - "The Necklace" (1131)
  - "The Rocking Horse Winner" (961)
  - "A Rose for Emily" (494)
  - "The Story of an Hour" (277)

**May 23**  
*no class*

**May 30 (Character)**  
*Norton:*
  - "Bartelby the Scrivener" (1139)
  - "Paul’s Case" (193)
  - "Parker’s Back" (1293)
  - "The Man Who Was Almost a Man" (1694)
  - "The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World" (678)

**May 30 (Setting)**  
*Norton:*
  - "Hills Like White Elephants" (724)
  - "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omeelas" (975)
  - "The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County" (286)
  - "The Garden Party" (1104)
  - "Theft" (1422)

**June 6 (Point of View)**  
*Norton:*
  - "The Jolly Corner" (759)
  - "Where I’m Calling From" (158)
  - "The Use of Force" (1672)
  - "Everyday Use" (1651)
  - "Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote" (108)

**June 13 (Language & Imagery)**  
*Norton:*
  - "Kew Gardens" (1687)
  - "A&P" (1624)
  - "The Dead" (805)
  - "Signs and Symbols" (1217)
  - "Patriotism" (1171)

**June 20 (Experiment)**  
*Norton:*
  - "The Metamorphosis" (842)
  - "The Babysitter" (372)
  - "The Distance of the Moon" (146)
  - (Test # 1)

(continued on back)
June 27
   Barbara Gowdy • from *We So Seldom Look On Love*

July 04
   *in-class* Film: "The Dead" / Essay Instruction

July 11
   Barbara Gowdy • from *We So Seldom Look On Love*
   Eric McCormack • from *Inspecting the Vaults*

July 18
   Eric McCormack • from *Inspecting the Vaults*

July 25
   • Eric McCormack (visit)
   • (Test #2)