

Summer School 2010

April 22, 2010

ETH512: Canadian Narratives and Moral Wisdom
Rev. Dr. Marilyn Legge
July 5-9, 2010. 9 am- 12 noon

Course Description

Students will explore a range of Canadian “multicultural” narratives in dialogue with their own backgrounds and interests alongside theological and ethical work. They will develop knowledge for becoming intercultural moral agents whose virtue, values, responsibility and vision are moved by a moral imagination of justice and love. With astute regard to narratives in context, this course aims to deepen moral wisdom by linking personal, ecclesial and diverse community narratives and practices.

Basic Expectations of all students:

- Full class attendance and preparation of all required reading and assignments before class.
- Participation in class discussions. Evaluative criteria: comments and questions show a familiarity with assigned readings, clear and complete preparation of assignments, and a readiness to apply knowledge to interpretive questions and insights as well as following R-E-S-P-E-C-T* guidelines: Responsibility for what you say and feel without blaming; empathic listening; be sensitive to difference, including communication styles; ponder what you hear and feel before you speak; examine your own assumptions and perceptions; keep confidentiality; tolerate, even trust, ambiguity. (*Eric Law, www.ladiocese.org/, adapted)

Competence Objectives: By participating fully students will

- Apply reading strategies to engage a range of Canadian “multicultural” narratives as resources of moral wisdom whose characters are complexly located and socially positioned moral agents.
- Develop various intercultural criteria that attend to knowledge/power relations which constitute all thinking (e.g., to understand cultures as produced through interaction and are often heterogenous; to trace diverse lived effects of colonization, immigration, and official Canadian multiculturalism on different groups and persons, including one’s own).
- Demonstrate knowledge of how justice and love, as theological and ethical criteria, are treated and imagined in narratives as elements of moral wisdom becoming to intercultural moral agents and communities.
- Use oral and written skills to articulate one’s own theological-ethical approach, especially with respect and reference to similarities and differences.

REMINDER: Students please make your own arrangements for acquisition of the summer school required texts through your **local bookstores**. Online bookstores such as Indigo.ca or Amazon.ca might have competitive prices with fast shipping to your neighbourhood. VST will NOT be pre-ordering titles.

Course Requirements, Assignments and Evaluation

Required reading: *Required books and readings, as available, will be on reserve in the Library'*

- Before the course:
 - 1) Canadian Ecumenical Anti-Racist Network *Mamow Be-Mo-Tay-Tah Let Us Walk Together* (Toronto: Canadian Council of Churches, 2009). Order from CCC: 1-800-822-7645.
 - 2) **The Course Reader is available on reserve in the VST Library.**
Do the readings for the first session.
- During the course: All assigned readings are in the Course Reader.

Recommended reading (for research not necessary to purchase)

Thomas King, *The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative*

Wenh-In Ng, ed. *That All May Be One: A Resource for Education Toward Racial Justice*

Laura Moss, ed. *Is Canada Postcolonial? Unsettling Canadian Literature*

Letty Russell, *Just Hospitality: God's Welcome in a World of Difference*

Robert Schreiter, *The New Catholicity: Theology Between the Global and Local*.

Expected of ALL course registrants, in addition to basic expectations above:

❖ **Full attendance and informed participation in class**

❖ **“Getting Started: Initial Questions and Narrative Connections”**

2000 - 2500 words (8 - 10 pages) DUE as MS Word file on Tues. 29 June 2010 to m.legge@utoronto.ca

Part One

To orient you to the work of this course and to introduce and situate yourself:

- 1.1. How would you describe your cultural roots (racial-ethnic, gender, class, religious etc.)?
- 1.2. What are some values you uphold and/or have had to struggle with from your context of origin?
- 1.3. At what point in your life did you perceive yourself as Canadian?
- 1.4. How would you describe yourself as a person living in Canada now?
- 1.5. Are you participating in intercultural relations today?
- 1.6. How have you been influenced and or guided by your church or community in relating to these questions?

Part Two

Read Mamow Be-Mo-Tay-Tah: Let Us Walk Together. Then,

- 2.1. Re-read Jose Zarate in the Emotional Quadrant section (pp. 57-59) and then respond to the reflection questions on page 60.
- 2.2. Select three more voices in *Mamow Be-Mo-Tay-Tah*, one each from the Spiritual, Physical, and Intellectual Quadrants. Identify each voice and respond to all or some of the questions that follow.
- 2.3. Conclude with any question(s), hopes and/or challenges raised by this assignment as you begin this course.

Expected of students registered for MATS / M.Div academic credit [1.5 credit hours]

❖ **Final Project: “Canadian Narratives and Moral Wisdom”**

10 – 12(max 3000 words) double-spaced pages, due as MS Word file, no later than August 15, 2010 to m.legge@utoronto.ca

Select one story from the narrative voices we have read in class – one that intrigues, interests and/or challenges you.

- i) Consider the elements of the narrative: How does the story begin? Where? Who are the characters? How is their moral agency (character and conduct) depicted? Who is in charge? At risk? What dynamics are constructed between the characters? What happens? What moral elements can you identify -- e.g., conflict, despair, revenge, suffering and their sources? Are any sources of hope depicted, and for whom? Is there a theme or situation that is changed, for better or worse, and what role if any do imagination and moral agency play? The point is not to replay the story but to trace the main contours and interpret what's key going on, for whom, and why.
- ii) Research and present the ethno-cultural history and present-day context of your selected author.
- iii) How does the story intersect your life at this moment? Is there a word, a phrase or an image that speaks to you and why? What have you learned from the narrative that carries theological implications? What moral wisdom and understanding of your self as a moral agent will you imagine taking with you from this course & integrative project?

Criteria for Evaluation of Oral and Written Work

- ✓ Overall clarity of your thinking and expression, including how completely you have reflected on and how well you have presented your response to the assignment.
- ✓ Critical engagement with texts and other resources, including demonstration of your understanding of an author's point of view, your ability to evaluate it fairly and accurately, and to deal with difference constructively.
- ✓ Ability to give reasons for your positions, find adequate support for your own stance in dialogue with others. Include complete documentation (either footnotes or endnotes) for all sources you use, whether you

summarize, paraphrase, or directly quote those sources. Consistently follow a standard manual of style.
✓ Observe all academic regulations of the Vancouver School of Theology.

Class Schedule ∞ Canadian Narratives and Moral Wisdom ∞

❖ Day I Monday **Necessary Considerations: Introduction of Ourselves and the Course**

Required Reading:

- Mamow Be-Mo-Tay-Tah: *Let Us Walk Together* (purchased)
- Eric H. Law, "Fear: Stumbling Blocks for Ministry in Multicultural Settings," *Crossing Borders*, 20-24
- Carl James, "Constructing Cultural Identities," *Seeing Ourselves As Others See Us*, 25-52

Contending with "Multicultural" Narratives in Constructions of Canadian History

- Thomas King, "Bad Men Who Love Jesus," *A Short History of Indians in Canada* 90-93
- Jeanette Armstrong, "History Lesson," "Indian Woman," *Other Solitudes*, 280 – 285
- Paula Butler, "Complicity and Resistance: Canadian Churches and Racism in Canada" in *Making Waves* (4:2): 18 – 24
- Linda Hutcheon, "Introduction" *Other Solitudes*, 1- 16
- John Ralston Saul with Michael Valpy, "This Native Land: Our debt to the First Nations" (1 page)
- M. Nourbese Phillip, "Why Multiculturalism Can't End Racism" 180-186
- Eric Law, "Tending the Burning Bush on Level Ground: Maintaining Ethno-Relativism," *The Bush was Blazing but Not Consumed*, 61-73

❖ Day II Tuesday **Engaging Narratives: Difference, Appropriation and Ethical Cultural Connections**

Required Reading:

- Michele Lansberg, "Unpacking a lifetime of white privilege," *Toronto Star* (1 page)
- Joy Connelly, "The (other) invisible knapsack" <http://abiggercircle.wordpress.com/> (a page)
- Himmani Bannerji, "The Other Family," *Other Solitudes* and interview, 141 – 152
- Thomas King, "Where the Borg Are" in *A Short History of Indians in Canada*, 127- 147
- Jim Wong-Chu, "Equal Opportunity," *Other Solitudes* and interview, 315 - 318
- Dionne Brand, "Blossom" *Other Solitudes* and interview, 263 – 277
- Paul Yee, "Prairie Widow" *Other Solitudes* and interview, 334- 347
- Joanna Kadi, "Moving from Cultural Appropriation toward Ethical Cultural Connections," in *Thinking Class: Sketched From a Cultural Worker*, 115-127
- Wenh-In Ng, "Diversity and Difference in the Work of Gender Justice" in *Making Waves*, Vol. 7:3 (2008), 10 -13
- Nancy Cocks, "The Wisdom of Doing Justice," *Coalitions for Justice*, 332 -351
- Marilyn J. Legge, "Wild Geese and Solidarity: Conjunctural Praxis for a Spirit-Filled Ethics" *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, 53, nos. 3-4 (1999): 165-185

Recommended:

- Kristjana Gunnars, "Transcultural Appropriation: Problems and Perspectives" *Stranger at the Door: Writers and the Act of Writing*, 43-53
- M. Shawn Copeland, "The Power of Difference Understanding, Appreciating, Critiquing Difference", *The Ecumenist*, Vol. 43. No. 2, (Spring 2006): 1 - 11
- Mary Hobgood, "Dismantling Whiteness" in *Dismantling Privilege: An Ethics of Accountability*, 36 – 62
- Marilyn J. Legge, "Bricoleurs-in-Community: Reframing Theologies of Culture," 3-22
- Sharon Welch, "Learning to See Simultaneously yet Differently: the Challenge of Multicultural Education" in *Sweet Dreams in America*, 53-82

❖ Day III **Engaging Narratives: Storytelling and “Multicultural” Interpretive Communities**
Wednesday

Required Reading:

- Wanda Deifelt, “Intercultural Ethics: Sameness and Otherness Revisited” in *Dialog: A Journal of Theology* (vol 46, No 2 (Summer 2007): 112-119
- Thomas King, *The Truth About Stories- A Native Narrative*, 1-29
- Beth Brant, “Recovery and Transformation: The Blue Heron,” *Bridges of Power*, ed. Rose Brewer and Lisa Albrecht (Gabriola, B.C: New Society Publishing, 1990), 118-121
- Dionne Brand, “Notes for Writing Thru Race” 173-180
- Sherene Razack, “The Gaze From the Other Side: Storytelling for Social Change” in *Looking White People in the Eye*, 36-55
- Marilyn J. Legge, “Colourful Differences: ‘Otherness’ and Image of God for Canadian Feminist Theologies,” *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses*, 21/1 (1992): 67–80

❖ Day IV **Engaging Narratives with Moral Wisdom**
Thursday

Required Reading:

- Mayra Rivera, “God at the Crossroads: A Postcolonial Reading of Sophia” in *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire* eds. Keller et al, 186-203.
- Lillian Allen, “Nothing but a Hero,” “With Criminal Intent” in Kamboureli, ed. 364 – 366
- Adrienne Shadd, “Why Are Black People So Angry: The Question of Black Rage” in Carl James and Adrienne Shadd, eds. *Talking About Identity*, 291 – 30
- Sky Lee, *Disappearing Moon Café*, “The Writer” 179-185; 208 - 21; “Letter Hermia”, 214- 216
- Wayson Choy, from the *The Jade Peony*, 222-238
- Nourbese Phillip, “Echoes in a Stranger Land” in *Frontiers*, 9-25
- Gordon Pon, “Beamers, Cells, Malls and Cantopop: Learning Through the Geographies of Chineseness” in Carl James, ed. *Experiencing Difference*, 222 – 234

❖ Day V **Moral Imagination and Taking Courage**
Friday

Required Reading::

- Laurent A. Parks, et al, “Courage: A Responsible Imagination” in *Common Fire: Lives of Commitment in a Complex World*, 125-152
- Wenh-In Ng, “Salmon and Carp, Bannock and Rice: Solidarity between Asian Canadian Women and Aboriginal Women,” *Off the Menu: Asian and Asian North American Women’s Religion and Theology*, eds. Rita Nakashima Brock et al., 197-216
- Lois Wilson, “Rockers of the Cradle, Rockers of the Boat: Feminist Utopias” 77-86
- Sharon Welch, “The Art of Ambiguity” in *Sweet Dreams in America*, 83-117

Working Bibliography –Hand out in Class

Rev. Dr. Marilyn Legge is Associate Professor of Christian Ethics at Emmanuel College, University of Toronto and former June Callwood Professor in Social Justice at Victoria University.