

## Reading Fiction

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**Sigle du cours :** ANG-1002

**Titre du cours :** Reading Fiction

**Trimestre :** Hiver 2025

**Titulaire du cours :** Camille Houle-Eichel

**Coordonnées :** camille.houle-eichel@umontreal.ca

### 1. Objectifs et contenu du cours :

Walter R. Fisher explains that root metaphors have been put forth to explain human nature. Among the central that have been claimed (Homo Faber, Homo Economicus, Homo Politicus and Homo Sociologicus), Fisher includes a fifth, Homo Narrans—the human as storyteller. He states that this idea “holds that symbols are created and communicated ultimately as stories meant to give order to human experience and to induce others to dwell in them in order to establish ways of living in common.” (6) In our current climate crisis, the questions that resound are *How does one narrate collapse? In what ways do writers envision hopeful futures? How do the legacies of previous writers inspire contemporary ones to address questions of environmental collapse and the voices of the nonhuman?* In this course, students will learn the fundamentals of fiction through the lens of cli-fi (climate fiction), sci-fi, and nonhuman narration. Students will be able to identify elements of narration, character development, atmosphere and think critically about the narrative representations of various social and political questions through a reparative lens.

### 2. Liste (provisoire) des textes à l'étude :

Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid's Tale*, McClelland & Stewart, 1985.

Rice, Waubgeshig. *Moon of the Crusted Snow*, EWC Press, 2018.

Shelly, Mary. *Frankenstein*, 1818. W.W. Norton, 2021.

Tadjo, Véronique. *In the Company of Men*, Other Press, 2021.

Bacigalupi, Paolo. “The Tamarisk Hunter.” *I'm with the Bears*, 2011.

Le Guin, Ursula K. “Newton's Sleep.” 1991.

Lodge, David. *The Art of Fiction*, Vintage, 1992. (Selections)

Wood, James. *How Fiction Works*, Picador, 2008. (Selections)

### 3. Organisation du cours (facultatif) :

#### **Class Schedule (All Critical readings are not mandatory)**

Week 1: January 13

Introduction to the course

**Theory:** Wood, James. “Narrating.” *How Fiction Works*

Week 2: January 20

**Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein***

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**Theory:** David Lodge, “Narrative Structure”, “The Epistolary Novel”, “Intertextuality”

**Critical Reading:** Timothy Morton, “*Frankenstein* and Ecocriticism” and Veronica Hollinger, “Women in Science Fiction and Other Hopeful Monsters”

Week 3: January 27

**Mary Shelly, *Frankenstein***

**Theory:** David Lodge, “Coincidence”, “The Uncanny”

Week 4: February 3

**Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid’s Tale***

**Theory:** David Lodge “Allegory”, “Point of View”, James Wood “Sympathy and Complexity”, “Language”

**Critical Reading:** Deborah Hooker, “(F)orality, Gender, and the Environmental Ethos of Atwood’s ‘The Handmaid’s Tale’”

Week 5: February 10

**Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid’s Tale***

**Theory:** David Lodge “Names”, James Wood “Form”

Week 6: February 17

**Paolo Bacigalupi, “The Tamarisk Hunter”**

**Theory:** David Lodge “Beginning”, “Introducing a Character”, “Showing an Telling”

**Critical Reading:** Raymond Malewitz “Climate-Change Infrastructure and the Volatilizing of American Regionalism”

Week 7: February 24

**Midterm in-class exam**

## STUDY BREAK

Week 8: March 10

**Waubgeshig Rice, *Moon of the Crusted Snow***

**Theory:** David Lodge, “Weather”, “Magic Realism”, “Imagining the Future”, “The Title”

**Critical Reading:** Jaqueline Dutton, “Slicing Up the Utopian Pie”

**1 hour workshop for annotated bibliography & abstract**

Week 9: March 17

**Waubgeshig Rice, *Moon of the Crusted Snow***

**Theory:** David Lodge, “Ending”, Patty Krawec, “Introduction”

**Annotated Bibliography & Abstract due at 8:30am**

Week 10: March 24

**Véronique Tadjo, *In the Company of Men***

**Theory:** David Lodge, “Interior Monologue”, “Repetition”, “The Experimental Novel”

**Critical Reading:** Sreya M. Datta, “Narrativizing Community, Surviving Contagion”

**Comments and grades for Annotated Bibliography & Abstract**

Week 11: March 31

**Véronique Tadjo, *In the Company of Men***

**Theory:** David Lodge “Telling in Different Voices”, “A Sense of the Past”, “Symbolism”

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Week 12: April 7

**Ursula K. Le Guin, “Newton’s Sleep”**

**Theory:** David Lodge, “Aporia”

**Critical Reading:** Janet Fiskio, “Apocalypse and Ecotopia: Narratives in Global Climate Change Discourse”

Week 13: April 14:

Workshop class

April 28: **Term Paper Due by 4pm**

<b>4. Modalités d’évaluation prévues :</b>
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Midterm in-class assignment (February 24):	25%
Annotated bibliography (2 pages; March 17):	25%
Term paper (6-8 pages; due April 28):	40%
Participation:	10%