

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH  
ÉTUDES FRANÇAISES/SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES  
Winter 2021

**FREN\*6021 Topics in Québec and French-Canadian Literature (0.5cr)**  
**“Gossip and Rumour in Contemporary Québécois and Franco-Canadian Drama”**

*\*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.*

**Instructor:** Prof. Stéphanie Nutting

**Email:** [snutting@uoguelph.ca](mailto:snutting@uoguelph.ca)

**Office hours:** by appointment

**Class meetings:** Tuesdays 7pm-9:30pm with a break at 7:45

Individual 30 min. meetings with the professor every two weeks.

**Description:**

This course explores the uses of gossip and rumour in contemporary Québécois and Franco-Canadian drama. By tackling this topic from different theoretical vantage points, students will explore the ways in which these seemingly trivial dramatic devices open up much deeper conceptual questions tied to ethics, identity, affect (including “frisson” and shame), and technology. Subtopics include: storytelling and clan-building; chorus and affect; medias and celebrity gossip; crisis and contagion.

Moreover, these conceptual questions will be accompanied by observations and comparisons of on-going transformations occurring in Québec and Franco-Ontarian cultures. How does rumour serve as a barometer of social mores and change? How does gossip serve as a subversive element both in families and in societies at large?

Students will give oral presentations and lead discussions on assigned topics. Thanks to the generous support of the School of Languages and Literatures, students will also be invited to a special on-line event organized exclusively for this class, in coordination with the **Théâtre français de Toronto (TFT)**. More details to follow.

**Learning Outcomes:**

It is expected that by the end of the course, students will:

- have acquired a solid theoretical foundation in the philosophy of language, with an emphasis on pragmatics
- have acquired and applied knowledge in the area of gossip and rumour theory
- have furthered their knowledge of Québécois and Franco-Canadian social history and theatre reception through the study of secondary texts
- have crafted original, complex, arguments pertaining to one or more of the above subtopics.
- be able to discriminate between the workings of everyday language and conversational language in dramatic texts
- Hone their meta-cognition through a reflective piece on theatre out-reach (via a book club activity)

**Primary Texts (required):**

Beauchemin, Esther. *Quand la mer...* Sudbury: Prise de parole, 2013.  
Corbeil, Guillaume. *Nous voir nous (Cinq visages pour Camille Brunelle)*. Montréal: Leméac, 2013.  
Dalpé, Jean Marc. *Il n'y a que l'amour*. Sudbury: Prise de parole, 1999.  
Fréchette, Carole. *Small talk*. Montréal et Arles: Leméac et Actes Sud, 2014.  
Ouellette, Michel. *Le testament du couturier*. Sudbury : Prise de parole, 2008.  
Tremblay, Michel. *Les belles-soeurs*. Montréal: Leméac, 1972.

**Recommended:****Theory:**

Pruner, Michel. *L'analyse du texte de théâtre*. Second edition. Paris: Armand Colin, 2008.

There will also be assigned readings from various, other, critical texts.

**Evaluation:**

Oral presentation	25%
Mid-term paper (10-12 pages, double-spaced)	25%
Reflective piece on the TFT event (3 pages)	10%
Final paper (15-18 pages, double-spaced)	40%

The oral presentations will pertain to assigned readings.

The mid-term paper and the final paper may not be on the same topic or on the same plays.

Late assignments are subject to a penalty of 2% per day, including weekends.

November 9, 2020