Department of Central, Eastern and Northern European Studies

Velkommen to the Scandinavian Program!

SCAN 334: Contemporary Scandinavian Fiction (in English)

Acknowledgement

UBC’s Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam) people. The land upon which it is situated has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed on their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

Danish
UBCs Point Grey Campus er placeret på Musqueam-folkets nedarvede, traditionsrige og ikke retsmæssigt afståede territorie. Området, hvorpå det er placeret, har altid fungeret som et rum for læring for Musqueam-folket, som i årtusinder har videregivet deres historie, kultur og traditioner fra én generation til den næste på dette sted.

Swedish
UBC Vancouver ligger på xwməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam)-folkets traditionella, nedärvda och icke överlåtna territorium. Det landområde campus är placerat på, har alltid varit en plats för lärande för Musqueam-folket, som i årtusenden har fört vidare sin kultur, historia och traditioner från en generation till nästa på denna mark.

COURSE INFORMATION

Title: Scandinavian Studies  Code: SCAN 334  Section: 001  Credit Value: 3

Meeting Times: M W F, 9-10 am

UBC Schedule: http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?page=deadlines

Meeting Locations: Buchanan D316

CONTACTS

Instructor: Ann-Kathrine Havemose

Contact: Make sure to check Announcements on Canvas regularly. This will be our main tool to communicate but you can also email me at
Office hours: Mondays 3:15-3:45 pm and Wednesday 1:00-1:30 pm in Buchanan Tower 905 or by appointment

Fika (the Swedish word for having coffee/tea together):

Drop-in every second Wednesday (sept. 14 and 28, Oct. 12 and 26, and November 16 and 30) 4-5 pm in the Cenes Lounge (910), 9th floor, Buchanan tower. https://cenes.ubc.ca/events/event/fika-2/

DISCLAIMER

The material in this course includes content that might be offensive and upsetting to some readers, such as strong language, reference to and consumption of alcohol and drugs, violence, graphic and sexual imagery. Some also deal with sensitive issues, such as suicide, death, racism, and sexual abuse.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND ACTIVITIES

In this course we will explore selected works of contemporary Nordic fiction, i.e. Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Icelandic and/or Finnish, through different literary and cultural scopes. The aim of this course is, in part, to give you an idea of contemporary Nordic culture and society through literature, as well as an understanding of Nordic literature in relation to themes, genres and ideas that is prevalent in most Western culture already, and thus build on or create a deeper understanding of the world around you.

Each work of literature will figure as the centrepiece in one of four modules, specifically Nordic Humour, Nature in Nordic Literature, Death and Minimalism and Nordic Fantasy. Depending on the module, we will approach each work using different methods and theories used in literary and cultural studies.

Student presentations
Each module will feature one or more student presentations on a topic given to you (instructions will be on canvas → people → group announcements). The presentations (and preparation) will be done in groups.

Assignments
There will be two assignments during the semester (dates TBA). Information about each assignment can be found on Canvas.

- The first assignment will be a short, individual 1-2.5 pages assignment on a topic provided by me.
- The second assignment will be 6-8 pages written in groups. You will be given time to do this in class (Monday week 10).
Exam
The exam will be a final term paper that you write at home either individually or in groups. Each person, whether in a group or alone, must produce 6-8 pages literary analysis based on a topic of your choosing (though with explicit relation to the course). DEADLINE December 19.
Further information will be available on Canvas.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course (i.e. with active attendance and participation, completion of reading and writing assignments, and exams) students will be individually and cooperatively able to:

- **Describe** cultural tendencies in Nordic literature and culture from the 21st century, and **asses** their impact on cultural and intellectual life.
- **Define** important concepts and ideas currently present in the Nordic cultures and **identify** their relevance in context to Western culture as a whole.
- **Recognize** aspects of belonging and ‘otherness’, social standing and Scandinavian social politics in the periods and cultural products discussed.
- **Analyse** texts in context (i.e. to genre, topic, media etc.) and **compare** their content and cultural contexts with other cultural products.
- **Respond** to thematic questions in clear and concise form.

ASSESSMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class presentations</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>30% (15% each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LEARNING MATERIALS

**Texts (required, available at UBC Bookstore):**


**Texts (recommended, available at UBC Bookstore):**

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND CLASSES (subject to change)

There will always be secondary reading, but this will be posted directly on Canvas rather than written into this syllabus, so remember to check canvas before every lesson.

Week 1: Introduction

Wednesday 09.07: Syllabus, course structure, exams
Friday 09.09: The Nordic countries today

Module 1: Nature in Nordic literature

Week 2: The natural heritage

Monday 09.12: Reading nature

Wednesday 09.14: Nature in Norse Mythology

Friday 09.16: Romantic and modernistic nature
Reading: Nyberg, Julia (1828). Vårvindar Friska

Week 3: Andrea Lundgren: Nordic Fauna

Monday 09.19: Introduction to the author and genre
Reading: Lundgren, Andrea (2021). Nordic Fauna, Peirene Press (selected short stories will be available on canvas)

Wednesday 09.21:
**Reading:** Lundgren, Andrea (2021). *Nordic Fauna*, Peirene Press (selected short stories will be available on canvas)

**Friday 09.23:**
**Reading:** Lundgren, Andrea (2021). *Nordic Fauna*, Peirene Press (selected short stories will be available on canvas)

**Week 4:** **Eco-criticism, excerpts from End of the Ocean**

**Monday 09.26:** What is eco-criticism?

**Reading:** Garrard, Greg and John Dradakis (2011). “Beginnings” in *Ecocriticism*, Routledge (LOCR)


**Wednesday 09.28:** Norwegian Cli-fi

**Reading:** Lunde, Maja (2020). *The End of the Ocean*, trans. Diane Oatley, HarperVia (excerpts)


**Friday 09.30:** Class discussion: uses of nature in Scandinavian literature

**Presentation:** Group 1

**Module 2: Nordic Humour / Fredrik Backman Anxious people**

**Week 5:** **New Nordic Fiction**

**Monday 10.03:** Introduction to the module, author and genre

**Reading:** Backman, Fredrik (2019). *Anxious People*, Atria Books

**Wednesday 10.05:** Narrative structure and narrator

**Reading:** Backman, Fredrik (2019). *Anxious People*, Atria Books


Friday 10.07: Awfully lovely characters


**Week 6: Humour in Nordic literature**

Monday 10.10: THANKSGIVING, NO CLASS

Wednesday 10.12: Humour in literature


Friday 10.14: Media modalities and types

*Reading:* Backman, Fredrik (2019). *Anxious People*, narrated by Marin Ireland, Simon and Schuster Audio


**Week 7: Adaptations and translations**

Monday 10.17: Audiobooks and storytelling

*Reading:* Backman, Fredrik (2019). *Anxious People*, narrated by Marin Ireland, Simon and Schuster Audio


Wednesday 10.19: Adapting Scandinavia (Netflix)


Friday 10.21: Class discussion: The effects of humour and media

Presentation: Group 2

Module 3: Death in Nordic literature /When Death Takes Something From You Give it Back

Week 8: Multimedia and genre breaks

Monday 10.24 Introduction to the author, theme and genre(s)


Wednesday 10.26 Autobiography or memoir: why write about death?


Friday 10.28 Affective readings: why read about death?


Week 9: Death in Nordic literature

Monday 10.31 Singing about death


Wednesday 11.02 Death in children’s literature


Friday 11.04 Discussion: how can we use literature to cope with death?

Presentation: Group 3

Week 10: Work on assignment 2
Monday 11.07  Group work on assignment two (a.k.a. question session)
Wednesday 11.09: MIDTERM BREAK
Friday 11.11: MIDTERM BREAK

Module 4: Lene Kaaberbøl The Shamer’s Daughter

Week 11: Nordic Fantasy
Monday 11.14  Fantasy as a genre
   Reading: Kaaberbøl, Lene (2019). The Shamer’s Daughter, Pushkin Children’s
Wednesday 11.16  World-building
   Reading: Kaaberbøl, Lene (2019). The Shamer’s Daughter, Pushkin Children’s
Friday 11.18  Comparing worlds (Eragon and The Shamer’s Daughter)
   Reading: Kaaberbøl, Lene (2019). The Shamer’s Daughter, Pushkin Children’s
                     Paolini, Christopher (2003). Eragon (excerpts available on Canvas)

Week 12: Lene Kaaberbøl The Shamer’s Daughter
Monday 11.21  Introduction to the author and series
   Reading: Kaaberbøl, Lene (2019). The Shamer’s Daughter, Pushkin Children’s
Wednesday 11.23  TBA
   Reading: Kaaberbøl, Lene (2019). The Shamer’s Daughter, Pushkin Children’s
Friday 11.25  Comparing heroes: Harry Potter, (Eragon) and Dina
   Reading: Kaaberbøl, Lene (2019). The Shamer’s Daughter, Pushkin Children’s
                     Paolini, Christopher (2003). Eragon (excerpts available on Canvas)
                     Rowling, J.K. Harry Potter (TBA)

Week 13: Strong female leads
Monday 11.28  Case-study: Dina and her mother
   Reading: Kaaberbøl, Lene (2019). The Shamer’s Daughter, Pushkin Children’s
Wednesday 11.30  Case-study: Ronja The Robber’s Daughter

Friday 12.02
Case-study: Siri


Week 14

Monday 12.05
Class discussion: Nordic fantasy outside of Scandinavia

Presentation: Group 4

Wednesday 12.07: Question session - exam

EXAM PERIOD START December 11
EXAM PERIOD ENDS December 22