



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 xwməθkwəyəm (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 xwməθkwəyəm (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

annkathrine.havemose@mail.ubc.ca (disclaimer: I will not be answering mails on weekends)

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

Participation	20%
In-class presentations	20%
Assignments	30 % (15% each)
Term paper	30%

LEARNING MATERIALS

Texts (required, available at UBC Bookstore):

Aidt, Naja Marie (2019). *When Death Takes Something From You Give it Back*, Coffee House Press

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

Kaaberbøl, Lene (2019). *The Shamer's Daughter*, Pushkin Children's

Texts (recommended, available at UBC Bookstore):

Kjældgaard, L.H., Møller, L., & Ringgaard, D.Simonsen, P. (2017). *Literature: An Introduction to Theory and Analysis*. London: Bloomsbury Academic. (also available through UBC library and LOCR)

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

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

Reading: Hennig, Reinhard et al. (2018). "Introduction" in *Nordic Narratives of Nature and Environment: Ecocritical approaches to Northern European Literatures and Cultures*, Lexington Books, p. 1-9

Hansen, Inger Elisabeth (2003). "A wanderer wanders here" from *Trask, forflytninger i tidas skitne fylde*, trans. May-Brit Akerholt (2012), Poetry International

Wednesday 09.14: Nature in Norse Mythology

Reading: Larrington, Carolyn. (2014). "The Seeress' Prophecy" *The Poetic Edda*, Oxford University Press (available on canvas)

Friday 09.16: Romantic and modernistic nature

Reading: Nyberg, Julia (1828). *Vårvindar Friska*

Edith Södergran (1984). *Complete Poems*, trans. David McDuff, Bloodaxe Books (selected poems, available on Canvas)

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)

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

Wednesday 09.28: Norwegian Cli-fi

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

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

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

Iversen, Stefan (2017). "Narrative" in Kjældgaard et al. *Literature: an introduction to theory and analysis*, Bloomsbury Academic (LOCR)

Alber, Jan (2017). "Narrator" in Kjældgaard et al. *Literature: an introduction to theory and analysis*, Bloomsbury Academic (LOCR)

Friday 10.07: Awfully lovely characters

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

Møller, Lis (2017). "Character" in Kjældgaard et al. *Literature: an introduction to theory and analysis*, Bloomsbury Academic (LOCR)

Week 6: Humour in Nordic literature

Monday 10.10: THANKSGIVING, NO CLASS

Wednesday 10.12: Humour in literature

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

Friday 10.14: Media modalities and types

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

Elleström, Lars, red. (2021). *Beyond Media Borders*, Vol. 1, Palgrave Macmillan

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

Have, Iben and Birgitte Stougaard Pedersen (2021). "Reading Audiobooks" in *Beyond Media Borders*, Vol. 1, Palgrave Macmillan, p.198-216

Wednesday 10.19: Adapting Scandinavia (Netflix)

Reading: Herngren, Felix (2021). "Episode 3" *Anxious People*, Netflix (watch on Netflix)

Recommended: Herngren, Felix (2021). "Episode 4" *Anxious People*, Netflix (watch on 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)

Reading: Aidt, Naja Marie (2019). *When Death Takes Something From You Give it Back*, Coffee House Press

Wednesday 10.26 Autobiography or memoir: why write about death?

Reading: Aidt, Naja Marie (2019). *When Death Takes Something From You Give it Back*, Coffee House Press

Friday 10.28 Affective readings: why read about death?

Reading: Aidt, Naja Marie (2019). *When Death Takes Something From You Give it Back*, Coffee House Press

Week 9: Death in Nordic literature

Monday 10.31 Singing about death

Reading: Aidt, Naja Marie (2008). "163: Har døden taget noget fra dig, så giv det tilbage" in *Højskolesangbogens* 19th edition, mel. Janne Mark (2018)
Skov, Kira (2019). "Sorgen Sover" on *I Nat Blir Vi Gamle*, Stunt Records

Wednesday 11.02 Death in children's literature

Reading: Jansson, Tove (1992). *Moominland Midwinter*, trans. Thomas Warburton, Farrar, Straus & Giroux (excerpt)

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 11.33 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

Reading: Lindgren, Astrid (1981/2018). *Ronja the Robber's Daughter*, Oxford University Press (excerpt, available on Canvas)

Friday 12.02 Case-study: Siri

Reading: Nilsson, Frida (2017). *The Ice Sea Pirates*, Gecko Press (excerpt, available on Canvas)

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