This workshop will begin by examining works that explore two major topics in Newfoundland literature: the extinction of the Beothuk, the Native people of the island of Newfoundland, in the early 19th century, and the sealing disaster of 1914. The third day will be devoted to a play about the life, story-telling, and music of French Newfoundlander and folk musician Emile Benoit. The central questions we will ask of these texts are: How and why do artists make use of history? How do narratives become meaningful in shaping the identities of places and peoples? Do stories communicated through an oral tradition serve different functions than written (literary) texts?

Required texts:

Selected secondary sources are also required.

Required viewing:
Robert Chafe, *Emile’s Dream* (video-recording, 2010)

It is recommended that students also attend the screening of the film *The Viking* (1931).

Outline:
Day 1
Narrative and identity: why do stories matter? (Ricoeur)
Introduction to Newfoundland history and culture
Representing the seal hunt
Setting the scene: *White Thunder* (5-minute clip)
Discussion: *Death on the Ice*

Day 2
Aboriginal presence in Newfoundland and Labrador
Representing the Beothuk in Newfoundland literature
Discussion: *River Thieves*

Day 3
Newfoundland renaissance
French-Newfoundland music and storytelling traditions
Contemporary theatre
Discussion: *Emile’s Dream*
Bibliography


Thomas, Gerald. The Two Traditions: The Art of Storytelling Amongst French Newfoundlanders. St John’s: Breakwater Books, 1993 (pp. 11-20; 89-131).