

Carleton University
Winter 2015
Department of English

ENGL 3601A: Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Poetry
Wednesday, 11:35 am - 2:25 pm

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Office Hours: Tues., Thurs. 3-4:00; by appointment

Course Description

For the poetry lover, the poetry shy, and the poetry hater. This course takes on W.H. Auden's famous and misunderstood pronouncement that "poetry makes nothing happen." Poets of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have been on the front lines of literary and social revolution and renovation. These include the British and American WWI poets who challenged "the old lie" of patriotic military nationalism; the London, Paris and American "free versifiers" who did away with the "tick tock" of metered poetry; New Women gender reformers; race equality advocates of the Harlem Renaissance; Beat Bohemians and nonconformist Confessionals of the 50s and 60s; Postcolonial and Indigenous dissenters from the Caribbean, Ireland, Canada; Post-Pastoral Poets, and finally contemporary artists who take their words to the stage and streets with hiphop, spoken word, and slam poetry. Come participate in the debates about whether poetry has indeed made things happen.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Poetry Worksheet:	10%
Two Reading Responses: Due alternating weeks (5 marks each)	10%
Two Working Group Assignments: 10% each	20%
Essay: 1500-2000 words	40%
Alternative Final Exam: Due in exam period:	20%

Course Text: Available at Haven Books

Geddes, Gary, ed. *Twentieth-Century Poetry and Poetics*. 5th ed. Toronto: Oxford, 2006.

**If you buy this second-hand, you must get the 5th edition. Earlier editions will be missing some of the poems we will study.

COURSE READING SCHEDULE

Wed. Jan. 7: Introduction: How Do We Know a Poem When We See One?

MODERNISMS

Jan. 14: World War One Poets: Wilfred Owen: pp. 106-110; ee. cummings: "my sweet old etcetera," "i sing of olaf" p. 128, 132,133; **Poetics Essay:** cummings, "Three Statements," p. 966.

- **Poetry Worksheet and Annotations due in class:** focus on "Dulce et Decorum Est" or "I sing of olaf." See full instructions later in the course outline.

Jan. 21: Imagism, Gender, and Modernism I: Ezra Pound: “Portrait,” “Commission,” “In a Station,” “Alba,” “L’ Art,” “The Tea Shop”; **William Carlos Williams:** “Aux Imagistes,” “Spring and All,” “The Red Wheelbarrow”; “Portrait of a Lady” online: <http://www.writing.upenn.edu/~afilreis/88v/wcw-portrait.html> **T.S. Eliot:** “Love Song of J. Alfred”; **Marianne Moore:** “Poetry”; **Poetics:** Pound, “A Retrospect” (p. 881); Williams, “A New Measure” (p. 925); Eliot, “Tradition and the Individual Talent,” “From Hamlet and his Problems” (p. 809, p. 981)

- **Reader Response 1 Due for Group A**

Jan. 28: Gender & Modernism II: Yeats, p. 5, 13 “Leda and the Swan”; H.D., pp. 76-88; Edna St. Vincent Millay (handout); Amy Lowell (handout); Philip Larkin, “Lines on a Young Ladies Photograph Album,” “If My Darling,” p. 241, 242, 248

- **Working Group Assignment 1 Due: Group 1:** Yeats, “Leda and the Swan”; **Group 2:** H.D., “Fragment 113”; **Group 3:** Amy Lowell, “The Weathercock Points South (HO)”; **Group 4:** Larkin “If My Darling”

Poetry Recitathon Fundraiser for PEN Canada: Thurs. Jan. 29: 7-9 p.m.: FASS Lounge/2017 DT: 2 pts. Extra credit for participating!! Cheat Sheets Allowed!

Thurs. Feb. 4: The Harlem Renaissance : Langston Hughes & others (Handout)

- **Reading Response 1 Due for Group B**

POSTMODERNISM

Thurs. Feb. 11: Beat Poets: Lawrence Ferlinghetti: pp. 363-374; Allen Ginsberg: 375-385; Leonard Cohen, pp. 456-466; **Poetics:** Ginsberg, p. 986; Ferlinghetti, p. 372.

- **Reading Response 2 Due for Group A**

Reading Week: Feb. 16-20

Feb. 25: The Confessionals & Post-Confessionals: Robert Lowell, “Skunk Hour,” p. 226, 236; Sylvia Plath: 440-455; Eavan Boland: pp. 483-495; Robert Hass, 683-689; Adrienne Rich, Bio, p. 331, “Frame,” p. 345; “North American Time,” p. 347; **Poetics:** Plath Interview: p. 1036; Boland: p. 960; Rich, 1058

- **Working Group Assignment 2: Group 1:** Plath, “Lady Lazarus”; **Group 2:** Rich, “Frame”; **Group 3:** Hass: “A Story About the Body”; **Group 4:** Boland, “Anorexic”

March 4: “Open Field Composition,” L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Poetry, & The Long Poem: bp nichol: p. 609-634; Daphne Marlatt; pp. 635-647; **Poetics:** Olson p. 1027; Nichol, p. 1024; Marlatt, p. 1019.

- **Reading Response 2 Due for Group B**

March 11: The Women’s Long Poem: Anne Carson, *The Glass Essay*: 857-892

March 18: Ecopoetry: Robert Frost: “Mending Wall,” “Birches,” “Stopping,” “Design”; Gary Snyder: pp. 406: “Riprap,” “Piute Creek,” “Front Lines”; Don Mckay: “Adagio,” “Camber,” “Song for the Song of the Wood Thrush”; Tim Lilburn: “In the Hills, Watching,” “Learning a Deeper Courtesy of the Eye”; P.K. Page, “Planet Earth”; Mary Oliver (Handout); **Poetics:** Frost p. 983; Snyder p. 1065, 1068; McKay, p. 1018.

March 25: Postcolonial Poetry: Derek Walcott, p. 506-524; Seamus Heaney: 580-591; **Poetics:** p. 988.

April 1/Last Class: Spoken Word, Slam, Hip-hop: TBD based on your nominations from favourite artists.

Essay Due Date: Wed. April 8 by 12 p.m. @ the English Dept. drop box. Do not slide essays under my door. Always keep a backup copy of your essay.

Poetry Worksheet

This assignment is designed to give you "hands on" practice at close analysis of poetry and at using the relevant terminology from your "literary toolbox." Part of training your eyes and ears to be sensitive to how poems work will involve learning how to use the vocabulary of poetry. The first step will be to annotate your poem. This will require that you read them two, three, and four times over with a pencil in hand, underscoring and commenting on all the important details you find. The result will be a kind of literary journaling or graffiti in the margins of your poem. The second step will be to read the "Close Encounters with Poetry" instructions and based on your annotations and these guiding points, you will fill in the poetry worksheet. **I will post "Close Encounters with Poetry" and the Worksheet Template on Cu-Learn. Your worksheet comments should be typed. You will submit both your poetry annotation and your worksheet in the second class. See also "How to Read a Poem" from The Academy of American Poets: <http://www.poets.org/poetsorg/text/how-read-poem-0>**

Reading Responses

The aim of this assignment is to provide you with an informal space to respond to the poets or topics of the week. Your responses may engage questions, issues, problems, personal interests in or disagreement with the weekly readings. In other words, speak your mind, give your gut response, but do it thoughtfully. Strong responses will go into depth with specific poems or make comparative connections between poets, poems, and poetics. Engage. React. Challenge. Creative commentaries are invited. Please offer your poems, music, collages, and other visual responses! Responses should be 1 -2 pages double-spaced and typed. I will assign you to Group A and Group B response weeks.

Working Group Assignment

This small group work requires out of class preparation and allows students to develop their close reading and analysis skills while benefiting from the insights of their peers. Early in the term, I will divide students into four working groups. If I assign you to Group 1, you will be working on the "Group 1" assigned poem for each working group week. I will post your working groups on Cu-Learn.

Step-1: For each of the two working group classes, your group will be assigned a specific poem to analyse. You will prepare, in advance, two questions that you believe are central to understanding the poem's themes, issues, imagery, diction, or form. Questions could link some aspect of the poet's biography or poetics with the poem to be discussed. If you use material from secondary sources, these must be cited. For each of your questions, you should prepare two - three paragraph answers. These answers should be in short essay form with a topic sentence and detailed discussion of specific lines of the poem (using direct quotation). **The average length of this assignment should be 2-3 pages, double-spaced, typed.**

Step-2: Your question/answer papers will be the basis of your group work in class on the assigned day. Each member of the group should ask one of his or her questions, getting feedback from the group and taking notes on new ideas from group members. He or she should also share his own answer when everyone has had a turn. When the discussion winds down, move onto the next person and their question. Make sure everyone in the group has a chance to present at least one question. The discussion should be as free and creative as possible, allowing room for tangents and respectful differences of opinion. One person will be a note-taker for the group and be prepared to report your insights to the larger class if time permits. Please hand in your working group papers with your class notes at the end of class

Term Research Essay: Due 8 April: 6-8 pages, 1500-2000 words

1. For your final essay, choose a cluster of two to three related poems by one poet from the course-reading list (You may go outside the anthology or course list, if you consult with me.) You will

- need to consider more poems than those available in our course anthology. This means consulting at least a Selected or Collected Poems by the author.
2. **Close encounters with the poetry:** This essay requires that you demonstrate an ability to do close and careful work with poetic analysis.
 3. **Required detailed Annotation of focus poems (to be submitted with essay):** Do careful annotations of your focus poems to ensure that you are working closely with relevant literary elements of language, image and image patterning, sound patterning, word choice, stanza breaks, white space, voice, and tone which contribute to the poem's meaning. In all cases, it should be clear that these are essays not just about the ideas in the poems, but about the literary shape the poems give to ideas. Consider the artful choice of words, use of metaphors and similes etc. when appropriate. In other words, what is the relationship between poetic form and poetic content and themes?
 4. **Poetry in Context/Contextualized Close Reading:** This essay also requires that you consider relevant contextual possibilities, which contribute to understanding your poet's participation in the conversations and debates surrounding your chosen theme. Relevant contexts include the following;
 - General understanding of poetry terms and genre terms like pastoral, elegy, sonnet, long poem. See the *New Princeton Encyclopaedia of Poetry and Poetics* in library ref.
 - Historical, social, political, cultural contexts to which the poet may be responding or which in some way influence his or her writing (interdisciplinary research may be required here).
 - Other poets, geographical, historical, and political contexts referenced in epigraphs, allusions, and intertexts
 - Statements on poetics by the poet (to be found in interviews, essays, public lectures etc. which the poets have given)
 - Understanding of literary groups or movements that the poet is affiliated with such as Imagists, Harlem Renaissance, Confessionals, Beat Poets, Eco-poets
 - Biographical connections to the poetry: See biographical essays in the Literature Resource Centre database on-line in the library; See also the Modern American Poetry Site (MAPS) on-line.
 - Literary criticism (use Lit. Resource Centre, LION, MLA, Humanities Full Text, Project Muse, CPI-Q or CBCA (for Canadian sources) databases)
 - Theoretical and philosophical terms and categories that may be relevant such as post colonialism, postmodernism, ecocriticism, gender, sexuality, and racialization. See The John's Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism, available online from library catalogue.

ESSAY GUIDELINES

- **Format:** Essays should be typed and double-spaced, with one-inch margins at top, bottom, and sides. **No title pages or plastic binders please.**
- Use current **MLA (Modern Language Association) format** for the first page heading, title, and Parenthetical Citation with Works Cited. **No Endnotes or Footnotes please!** For MLA format, see the On-line Writing Lab at Purdue University. (OWL)
- **Writing Process/Rough Drafts:** Your essay should be enclosed in folder with pre-writing notes and rough drafts. This is to ensure that you take the writing through the stages of the writing process. **This is a mandatory component of essay submission.**
- **Essay Submission:** Never hand an essay in by sliding it under my office door. Always keep a backup copy of any work you submit. **I reserve the right to interview you on the content of your essays and to make your final mark contingent on that interview.**
- **Essay Package: Include final copy, poetry annotations, pre-writing notes and one edited draft. Please indicate whether you would like email comments or to have your marked essay**

mailed (please provide stamps) or picked up.

Alternative Final Exam

What makes this exam scenario “alternative”? You will write a short take-home exam paper (1000 words) linking one or two important themes from among the poets we read this term. You will then prepare talking points on cue cards to bring on the exam date (TBA) to share with your classmates. This should be seen as a culminating or capstone event in which the members of the class come together as a community to offer some final reflections on what you are taking away from this course.

What to bring:

- **Your short paper to hand in.**
- **One page of selected summary notes/talking points that you would like to share with the class in a conversational manner.**

Instructions:

- You can consider this assignment as a take home essay exam in which you write the question and prepare your answer based on what you are taking away from this course. This assignment asks you to create your own narrative of the course, by identifying one or two key patterns, themes, and connections between readings from the term that have stood out for you in the course readings, lectures, and discussions. You might also consider themes, issues or questions that the course lectures and discussion did not cover, but that you noticed in several of the poets on the course. Please note: these are just suggestions and your paper should not attempt to do all of them.
- Refer to at least **six specific texts** for your **specific examples** representing **six different weeks** of the term to support your points. **The more specific you can be in a concise way, the stronger your paper will be.** You may pursue several different topics or themes using two or three texts for illustration of your points and then turn to a second cluster of texts to illustrate a second topic or theme. Or you may find a theme that connects all six of the texts that you wish to discuss.
- Your last page could offer your overall response to the course, including what worked, what didn't, what topics/themes you would like to see more or less of, and what you are taking away. You may wish to speak to favourite or least favourite writers and issues (always substantiating with specific quotes, reasons, and examples). **This is only a suggestion, not a requirement for the paper.**
- As always if you consult a secondary source, including lecture notes, you must indicate your sources in both parenthetical citation and works cited.
- Proofread your writing for spelling, grammar, punctuation, missing words, awkward sentences, typos etc.!! Writing and presentation counts.

Course Policies

Attendance and Participation: class works when you do. Active participation is essential. I define class participation as both physical and mental presence in class, evidenced by preparedness, engagement, and willingness to take risks. Please **bring your poetry anthology to class** and come prepared to speak not just with me, but also your fellow students about the reading for each day. **You may have two grace absences for sickness, emergencies or appointments.** Budget them well. Extend me the courtesy of letting me know when you will need to be absent. Multiple absences beyond six without sufficient documentation will result in failure of the class. Life is unpredictable, so if you do have a difficulty of any kind this term, please keep me in the loop and let me know how I may be of help.

Late Assignment Policy: In order to pass this course, you must complete ALL assignments and hand them in on time. Extensions must be arranged with me for (difficult circumstances only) in advance of the due date. Assignments handed in late without prior arrangement will be docked two points per day with a weekend counting as one day. Essays handed in more than one week late without prior notification may not be accepted.

Plagiarism: Academic honesty is considered the ground rule of any university level course. Plagiarism is defined in the Academic Regulations of the University: Instructional Offences” section of the *Carleton Undergraduate Calendar* as “using and passing off as one’s own ideas the work of someone else without expressly giving credit to another.” If you find yourself tempted to use someone else’s work because of stress, illness, anxiety about your own ability, personal crisis, time crisis, or any other issues, I urge you to let me know about these circumstances, so that we can work together to create the space and means for you to do work of the highest integrity.

Please ensure that all sources (including biographical and internet) used in worksheets, reading responses and working group assignments are properly credited. Grey areas of plagiarism sometimes arise from confusion about what counts as putting things in your own words or paraphrase. If you change a word or two in a critic’s sentence, this is *not* paraphrase. Put altered words in brackets and put the whole sentence in quotes. If I suspect that an essay or portion of an essay has been plagiarized, I am required to submit the essay to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. The penalties for plagiarism are very severe, ranging from failure in the course to expulsion from the university. See “**How Not to Plagiarize**”:
www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

For Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must contact a co-ordinator at the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities to complete the necessary *Letters of Accommodation*. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet and discuss your needs with me in order to make the necessary arrangements as early in the term as possible.
www.carleton.ca/pmc

For Religious Observance: Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious observance should make a formal request to their instructors. Such requests should be made no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student.

For Pregnancy: Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. The student must then make an appointment to discuss her needs with the instructor.

Writing Tutorial Service: If you know your writing needs improvement, do consider free tutoring with this service. <http://carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service/>

Carleton Health and Counselling Services offers confidential consultations with medical doctors, lab testing, and emotional support for difficult times from Monday to Friday, 8:00- 4:00. They are located in the Carleton Technology Building on the east side of campus. <http://carleton.ca/health/>