

Prof. Powell
O'Dowd Hall 320
3:30 pm - 5:17 pm MW
South Foundation Hall 176

Office: O'Dowd Hall 320
Office hours: 10 - 12 a.m. MW

PEER EMAIL: _____

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ENG 3715 / Contemporary Poetry
Fall 2018

REQUIRED TEXTS

Rita Dove, ed. *The Penguin Anthology of Contemporary Poetry*
Additional required texts available on Moodle

Grading

Quizzes (3): 30%

Three times a semester you will be given a quiz that covers readings from over the past few weeks; it may take the form of essay, short answer, or multiple choice. Each requires you to demonstrate your engagement with concepts discussed in class and the readings themselves. If you are absent on the day of a quiz, you may come to my office hours to make it up, so long as you do so within one week of your absence.

Final Exam: 25%

Your final exam will likely include a combination of multiple choice and short answer questions about readings throughout the semester, and an essay question in which you must demonstrate a synthesis of course concepts. I will briefly review exam preparation strategies beforehand, but there will be no comprehensive review of the material. It covers material from the entire course, but focuses on the second half. The best strategy to succeed on the exams is to attend class, take good notes, and keep up with readings.

Midterm Exam: 20%

Your midterm will likely include a combination of multiple choice and short answer questions about readings from the beginning of the course until the date of the exam. I will briefly review exam preparation strategies beforehand, but there will be no comprehensive review. The best strategy to succeed on the exams is to attend class, take good notes, and keep up with readings.

Participation: 15%

Students should attend classes on time, prepare adequately for every class session and contribute to discussion actively. Those who do not contribute to discussion will attain no higher than a C (average) for this portion of their grade. All students must acquire the assigned texts and bring them to class daily, as you will often be asked to refer to them during in-class group activities.

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This class will often include group work. That work may require students to answer questions and present findings back to the class; the written document you create, and your participation in the presentation of that work will be factored into this grade as well.

Presentation: 10%

For your presentation you are to choose one poem we are reading that day; choose a poem you respond to in some significant way. You will use the Kresge Library database to locate a critical article which deals in some way with that poem, or that author, and read the article. You'll provide an annotated bibliography to me of that article, and will present the main ideas to the class, along with the poem itself (you'll need to bring copies for everyone). You will then lead class discussion in that poem, attempting to relate it back to course concepts or other reading from that week. You should come prepared with 3 - 5 questions for class discussion which you believe will be interesting and focused enough to generate lively conversation. Have those questions on the same sheet as the annotated bibliography. The presentation should be roughly 15 minutes, including the discussion.

SCHEDULE

The following schedule is subject to change. I reserve the right to add, delete, or substitute readings as necessary. Any changes will be announced in class. If you miss a class, you are still responsible for keeping apprized of revisions made to the schedule.

Week 1 INTRODUCTIONS

W 9/ 5 Introductions, syllabus overview

F 9/7 Introduction to "Why Poetry" and "Three Beginnings and the Machine of Poetry" by Matthew Zapruder, p. xi - 14; from Dove Anthology: Billy Collins, "Introduction to Poetry," p. 381; John Ashbery, "What Is Poetry," p. 266

Week 2 A LITTLE BIT OF MODERNISM

M 9/10 Frost, "Mending Wall" and "Directive" (p. 17, 21); T.S. Eliot, "Preludes," p. 80; Carl Sandburg, "Grass" and "Cahoots" (p. 29 - 30)

W 9/12 Wallace Stevens, "Disillusionment at Ten O'Clock," "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird," "Of Mere Being," (p. 31 - 37); William Carlos Williams, "Tract," "Danse Russe," (p. 39 - 41)

Week 3 IMAGISM & THE HARLEM RENAISSANCE

M 9/17 Marianne Moore, "The Fish"; Amy Lowell, "Patterns" (23 - 25); William Carlos Williams, "The Red Wheelbarrow," p.41; from Dove Introduction: "It is human nature to stand" to "good ole times behind" (xxxix - xl)

Presentation 1: _____

W 9/19 Claude McKay, "The Harlem Dancer" (p. 93 - 94); Langston Hughes, "Harlem," (p. 129); Jean Toomer, "November Cotton Flower," p. 102
Robert Hayden, "Those Winter Sundays," p. 155 - 156; from Introduction: "The American Mind" (p. xl - xli)

Presentation 2: _____

Week 4 FIRST CONTEMPORARIES

M 9/24 Gertrude Stein, "A Box," from *Tender Buttons* (p. 26 - 27); e.e. cummings, "Buffalo Bill's" and "r-p-o-p-h-e-s-s-a-g-r" (p. 99, 101); from Dove Introduction: from "The image is more than an idea" to "lurk the practitioners of L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E poetry" (p. xxxvi - xxxix)

Presentation 3: _____

W 9/26 Gwendolyn Brooks, "The Mother," "A Song in the Front Yard," "The Bean Eaters," p. 181-182; Melvin B. Tolson, from Psi, "White Boy, / when I hear the word Negro defined" (p. 117 - end); from Dove Introduction: "Calling all black people, come in, black people, come on in" to "drawn as a Hopper painting" (p. xlvi - xlviii)

Quiz 1

Week 5 FIRST CONTEMPORARIES

M 10/1 Hart Crane, "From II. Powhatan's Daughter" p. 121 - 125 ; W.S. Merwin, "Yesterday," p. 274; Elizabeth Bishop, "The Fish," "Sestina," "First Death in Nova Scotia," p. 147, 149, 150

Presentation 4: _____

W 10/3 Black Mountain School: Charles Olson, "Projective Verse" (1950) (Moodle), Robert Creeley (all poems); from Dove Introduction: "Tomorrow's gone—we'll have tonight!" to "a later movement known as the language school" (p. xli - xlii)

Presentation 5: _____

Week 6 DIALOGUE AND WAR

M 10/8 Delmore Schwartz, "The Heavy Bear Who Goes with Me" (p. 165 - 166) John Berryman, from *The Dream Songs*, all (p. 167 - 169); W.H. Auden, "Musee des Beaux Arts," "Epitaph on a Tyrant" (p. 136-137)

Presentation 6: _____

W 10/10 Randall Jarrell, "Next Day," "The Woman at the Washington Zoo," p. 171 - 173; Muriel Rukeyser, "Effort at Speech Between Two People," "The Poem as Mask," p. 162-164; ; James Dickey, "The Sheep Child," p. 211

Presentation 7: _____

Week 7 THE BEATS / MIDTERM REVIEW

M 10/15 Moodle: John Clellon Holmes, "This Is The Beat Generation" (article); Allen Ginsberg, excerpt, "America," Allen Ginsberg, "Supermarket in California"

Dove Anthology: Lawrence Ferlinghetti, "Populist Manifesto," p. 197 - 200; Amiri Baraka, "The New World"; Toi Derricotte, "Allen Ginsberg," p. 383; from Introduction: "America how can I write a holy litany in your silly mood?" to "bid them drink" (p. xlv -top of xlvii)

Midterm Exam Review

W 10/17 ** MIDTERM EXAM**

Week 8 CONTEMPORARY POLITICS

M 10/22 Helen Vendler, "Are These the Poems to Remember?" (essay, Moodle); Rita Dove, "Defending an Anthology," (essay, Moodle); from Dove Introduction, "The Introduction's Epilogue," p. l- lii

W 10/24 Anthony Hecht, "More Light! More Light!," p. 215-216; Gerald Stern, "Behaving Like a Jew," p. 234; Yusef Komunyakaa, "Facing It," p. 441; William Stafford, "At the Bomb Testing Site," p. 177; Hayden Carruth, "August 1945," p. 205

Presentation 8: _____

Week 9 ON POETRY AND ITS PURPOSE

M 10 / 29 Howard Nemerov, "Because You Asked about the Line between Prose and Poetry," p. 203; Marianne Moore, "Poetry," "Poetry," p. 73 - 75; Heather McHugh, "What He Thought," p.455

Presentation 9: _____

W 10/31 Richard Wilbur, "The Writer," p. 208 - 210; Kenneth Koch, "Permanently" p. 231; John Ashbery, "What Is Poetry," p. 266-267; Audre Lorde, "Power," p. 322; "Does Poetry Matter?" (NYTimes) (Moodle)
Quiz 2

Week 10 CONFSSIONALISM AND ITS LEGACY

M 11/5 Robert Lowell, "Skunk Hour," p. 188 -190; Stanley Kunitz, "The Portrait," "Touch Me," p. 134 - 135; Gregory Corso, "Marriage," p. 298; Maxine Kumin, "How It Is," p. 233; Richard Wilbur, "Cottage Street, 1953"

Presentation 10: _____

W 11/7 Larry Levis, "Childhood Ideogram" and Winter Stars," p. 424 - 426; Marie Howe, "What the Living Do," p. 470; Alan Dugan, "I and Thou" (p. 213-214); Gerald Stern, "Another Insane Devotion," p. 235-236

Week 11 AMERICA

M 11/12 Louis Simpson, "American Poetry," p. 221; Philip Levine, "The Simple Truth," p. 285 and "You Can Have It," p. 284 Heather McHugh, "Language Lesson, 1976" p. 454

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W 11/14 A.R. Ammons, "The City Limits," p. 237; Frank O'Hara, "Poem," p. 251-252; James Wright, all poems; Marilyn Chin, "How I Got That Name," p. 534 - 536

Presentation 11: _____

Week 12 GENDER & L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E

M 11/ 19 Moodle: Carolyn Forche, excerpt, Introduction to *Against Forgetting: The Poetry of Witness*, "The Colonel"

Dove: Anne Sexton, "In Celebration of My Uterus," p. 290-291; Lucille Clifton, "to my last period," p. 336; Carolyn Forche, "Taking Off My Clothes," p.467; Brenda Shaughnessy, "PostFeminism"; from Dove Introduction: "show me someone not full of herself" (p. xlviii - end of that page)

Presentation 12: _____

W 11/21 Dove: Joanna Klink, "Spare," p. 562; Brenda Shaughnessy, "Your One Good Dress," p. 564; Brigit Pegeen Kelly, "Song," p. 480; Naomi Shihab Nye, "Wedding Cake," p. 500 - 501; Adrienne Rich, "A Valediction Forbidding Mourning," p.296

Quiz 3

Week 13 THE END OF GENRE

M 11/26 Moodle: Maggie Nelson, from *Bluets* (Moodle)
Dove: Lyn Hejinian, from *My Life*, p. 394-95;

W 11/28 Moodle: Claudia Rankine, from *Citizen* (Moodle)
Eula Biss, from *The Balloonists* (Moodle)

Week 13

12/3 TBD: Poems from major literary journals published during the last three months (Moodle)

12/5 FINAL EXAM REVIEW / LAST DAY OF CLASSES