

ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI
SCHOOL OF ENGLISH

G-LSUD3 EnLit 6-368: Contemporary British Poetry

Instructor: Dr. Kanarakis Yannis

Class: Thursdays 16:00 – 18:30 (Room: 01 New Building)

Office: Wednesdays 12:30- 14:30 (Room: 310 E)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course aims to introduce students to contemporary English-language poetry in Great Britain and Ireland by tracing the most important developments, poets, texts and movements from the post-war period to the present day. After a brief overview of the contemporary poets' most influential forebears, students will be given the opportunity to be introduced to the politically committed poetry of the 30s, the surrealist and New Romantic trends of the 40s, the "Movement" of the 50s, the "British Poetry Revival" of the 60s and the 70s, and we will conclude by considering some of the most engaging and original poetry written in Britain and Ireland the last three decades as expressed through some contemporary movements like the "Martians," the "Poeclectics," the "Poetry Slam," the "New Poetry," and the "New Generation" movement, minority poetry, performance poetry, new media, digital, experimental and twitter poetry. The emphasis of the course will be on reading and engaging with poetry first hand. The organizing principle throughout the course will, nevertheless, be the connection between poetry and innovation, form, gender, multiculturalism, minorities, politics, nationality, performativity, spatiality, subjectivity (especially the lyric subject) and electronic writing.

COURSE ASSESSMENT/REQUIREMENTS

- Students can choose either to take the end-of-semester exam which will cover the entire semester OR write an MLA-styled research paper of about 4.000 words (40%) and answer only one question in the final exam (60%). Students who opt for the essay should have some experience in the writing of research papers. The topic will be chosen individually by each student after consultation with the instructor. Papers should be handed in at appointed dates during the semester. The intention of the essay scheme is to provide the opportunity for the exercise of research and critical skills to those students who are seriously interested in pursuing this line of academic occupation. For further details, as well as advice on methodological assistance, please contact the instructor.
- Even though there will be no specific percentage of your grade attached to participation and attendance, contributing regularly to class discussions will help your grade significantly. To this purpose, you will be expected to study the assigned material before coming to class.

WORKING SCHEDULE

1. Forebears

W. H. Auden, Louis MacNeice

O' Neil, Michael. «The 1930s Poetry of W. H. Auden,» in Neil Corcoran (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century English Poetry*.

2. Philip Larkin, Ted Hughes, Geoffrey Hill.

Day, Gary. «Never Such Innocence Again»: The Poetry of Philip Larkin, in Day, Gary, *British Poetry from the 1950s to the 1990s: Politics and Art*.

Regan, Stephan. «Philip Larkin: A Late Modern Poet,» in Neil Corcoran (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century English Poetry*.

Burt, Stephen. «The Movement and the Mainstream,» in Alderman Nigel and Blanton C. D. (eds), *A Concise Companion to Postwar British and Irish Poetry*.

3. Northern Ireland and Poetry

Seamus Heaney, Paul Muldoon, Derek Mahon, Michael Longley, Tom Paulin.

Davies, Alistair. «Seamus Heaney: From Revivalism to Postmodernism,» in Day, Gary, *British Poetry from the 1950s to the 1990s: Politics and Art*.

Andrews Elmer. «Some Sweet Disorder» - The Poetry of Subversion: Paul Muldoon, Tom Paulin, Medbh McGuckian, in Day Gary, *British Poetry from the 1950s to the 1990s: Politics and Art*.

Broom, Sarah. «A Fusillade of Question marks»: Poetry and the Troubles of Northern Ireland: Seamus Heaney, Michael Longley, Ciaran Carson in *Contemporary British and Irish Poetry: An Introduction*.

Quinn, Justin. *The Cambridge Introduction to Modern Irish Poetry, 1800-2000*.

Campbell, Matthew (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to Contemporary Irish Poetry*.

Waters, John. «Form and Identity in Northern Irish Poetry,» in Alderman Nigel and Blanton C. D. (eds), *A Concise Companion to Postwar British and Irish Poetry*.

4. Poetry and Class

Tony Harrison, Donald Davie, Ian McMillan, Sean O'Brien, Geoff Hatterlsey, Idris Davies, Ken Smith, Peter Reading, Don Paterson

Roberts, Neil. «Poetic Subjects: Tony Harrison and Peter Reading,» in Day, Gary, *British Poetry from the 1950s to the 1990s: Politics and Art*.

Broom, Sarah. «Wanna You Scruff»: Class and Language: Tony Harrison, Tom Leonard, Don Paterson» in *Contemporary British and Irish Poetry*:

An Introduction.

Roberts, Neil. «Poetry and Class: Tony Harrison, Peter Reading, Ken Smith, Sean O’ Brien,» in Neil Corcoran (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century English Poetry*.

5. Women Poets

Stevie Smith, Sylvia Plath, Fleur Adcock, Gillian Clarke, Carol Rumens, carol Ann Duffy, Jackie Kay

Couzyn, Jeni (ed). *The Bloodaxe Book of Contemporary Women Poets: Eleven British Writers*.

Dowson, Jane. «Anthologies of Women’s Poetry: Canon-Breakers; Canon-Makers,» in Day Gary, *British Poetry from the 1950s to the 1990s: Politics and Art*.

Pykett, Lyn. «Women Poets and ‘Women’s Poetry’: Fleur Adcock, Gillian Clarke and Carol Rumens,» in Day Gary, *British Poetry from the 1950s to the 1990s: Politics and Art*.

Kidd, Helen. «The Paper City: Women, Writing, and Experience,» in Hampson, Robert & Peter Barry (eds), *New British Poetries: The Scope of the Possible*.

Broom, Sarah. «gender, Sex and Embodiment: Simon Armitage, Carol Ann Duffy, Grace Nichols» in *Contemporary British and Irish Poetry: An Introduction*.

Anderson, Linda. «Gender, Feminism, Poetry: Stevie Smith, Sylvia Plath, Jo Shapcott,» in Neil Corcoran (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century English Poetry*.

6. Black Poetry and Ethnicity

Linton Kwesi Johnson, Grace Nichols, Jackie Kay, Sujata Bhatt, R. S. Thomas, Moniza Alvi, Benjamin Zephaniah.

Broom, Sarah. «My Tongue is Full of Old Ideas»: Race and Ethnicity: Benjamin Zephaniah, Jackie Kay, Moniza Alvi in *Contemporary British and Irish Poetry: An Introduction*.

Williams, Nerys. «Dialects, Idiolects and Multilingual Poetries,» in *Contemporary Poetry*.

Ramazani, Jahan. «Poetry and Decolonization,» in Alderman Nigel and Blanton C. D. (eds), *A Concise Companion to Postwar British and Irish Poetry*.

D’ Aguiar. «Have you Been Here Long?: Black Poetry in Britain, » in Hampson, Robert & Peter Barry (eds), *New British Poetries: The Scope of the Possible*.

Ramazani, Jahan. «Black British Poetry and the Translocal,» in Neil Corcoran (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century English Poetry*.

7. The Scottish Renaissance

Douglas Dunn, Edwin Morgan, Tom Leonard, Iain Crichton-Smith, Don Paterson, Liz Lochhead, Kathleen Jamie, Robin Robertson

8. The Modern Lyric Subject

James Fenton, Craig Raine, Christopher Reid, Simon Armitage, Andrew Motion.

Redmond, John. «Lyric Adaptations: James Fenton, Craig Raine, Christopher Reid, Simon Armitage, Carol Ann Duffy,» in Neil Corcoran (ed), *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century English Poetry*.

Williams, Nerys. «Lyric Subjects» in *Contemporary Poetry*.

Kinnahan, Linda. «Contemporary British Women Poets and the Lyric Subject,» in Alderman Nigel and Blanton C. D. (eds), *A Concise Companion to Postwar British and Irish Poetry*.

9. Performance Poetry

John Cooper Clarke, Attila the Stockbroker, John Hegley, Don Paterson

10. Younger Contemporary British and Irish Poets & Digital Poetry

Williams, Nerys. «Electronic Writing,» in *Contemporary Poetry*.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hampson, R. B. *New British Poetries: The Scope of the Possible*.

Day, Gary. *British Poetry, 1900-50: Aspects of Tradition*.

Thwaite Anthony. *Poetry Today: A Critical Guide to British Poetry, 1960-1984*.

Lucie-Smith Edward. *British Poetry since 1945*.

Morrison Balke and Motion Andrew. *The Penguin Book of Contemporary British Poetry*.

Day Gary. *British Poetry from the 1950s to the 1990s: Politics and Art*.

Untermeyer Louis. *50 Modern American and British Poets, 1920-1970*.

Corcoran Neil. *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century English Poetry*.

Higgins Michael. *The Cambridge Companion to Modern British Culture*.

George Kadja. *Write Black, Write British: From Post Colonial to Black British Literature*.

Couzyn Jeni. *The Bloodaxe Book of Contemporary Women Poets: Eleven British Writers*.

Robinson, Peter. *The Oxford handbook of british and Irish War Poetry*.
Stanford Donald. *British Poets, 1914-1945*.
Ellmann Richard. *The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry*.
Beach Christopher. *Artifice & Indeterminacy: An Anthology of New Poetics*.
Crotty Patrick. *Modern Irish Poetry: An Anthology*.
MacBeth George and Ted Hughes. *Poetry: 1900 to 1965: An Anthology*.
Cook, Jon. *Poetry in Theory: An Anthology, 1900-2000*.
Kerrigan Catherine. *An Anthology of Scottish Women Poets*.
Kac Eduardo. *Media Poetry: An International Anthology*.
Messerli Douglas. *Language Poetics: An Anthology*.
Huk Romana. *Assembling Alternatives: Reading Postmodern Poetries Transnationally*.
Bernstein Charles. *Close Reading: Poetry and the Performed Word*.
Glazier Loss Pequeno. *Digital Poetics: The Making of E-Poetics*.

Anthologies

Caddel, R. & P. Quartermain *Other: British and Irish Poetry since 1970* (Wesleyan UP, 1999).
Conquest, R. *New Lines* (1956).
Alvarez, A. *The New Poetry* (Penguin 1966).
Paterson, D. & Ch, Simic. *New British Poetry*. (Graywolf Press 2004).
Allnutt, G. et al. *The New British Poetry* (Paladin 1988).
Edna Longley. *The Bloodaxe Book of 20th Century Poetry from Britain and Ireland* (Bloodaxe, 2000).
Neil, A. *New Blood* (Bloodaxe 1999).
Paterson, D. & Brown. *Don't Ask Me What I Mean: Modern Poets in Their Own Words* (Picador 2003).
Muldoon, P. *Faber Book of Contemporary Irish Poetry* (Faber 1986).
O'Brien, S. *The Firefox: Poetry in Britain and Ireland After 1945* (Picador 1998).
Crawford & Armitage. *Penguin Book of Poetry from Britain and Ireland Since 1945* (Penguin 1998).
Shapcott & Sweeney. *Emergency Kit: Poems for Strange Times* (Faber 1996).
Keegan, P. *The New Penguin Book of English Verse* (Penguin 2001).
Herbert, W. N. & M. Hollis. *Strong Words: Modern Poets on Modern Poetry* (Bloodaxe 2000).
Crawford, I. *New Penguin Book of English Verse* (Penguin 2000).
Roberts, A. & J. Allison. *Poetry and Contemporary Culture* (Edinburgh UP 2002).

General Criticism and Poetic Theory

Corcoran, N. *English Poetry Since 1940* (Longman 1993).
Thwaite, A. *Poetry Today: British Poetry 1960-84* (Longman 1984).
Hollander, J. *Rhyme's Reason* (Yale UP 1981).
New Princeton Handbook of Poetic Terms, ed. T.V.F Brogan (Princeton 1994).
Poetic Meter and Poetic Form, P. Fussell (Random House 1979).
An Introduction to English Poetry, J. Fenton (Viking/Penguin 2002).

- M. Strand, E. Boland *The Making of a Poem: A Norton Anthology of Poetic Forms* (Norton 2000).
- Quinn, A. *Figures of Speech: 60 Ways to Turn a Phrase* (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates 1995).
- John Cook, *Poetry in Theory: An Anthology 1900-2000* (Blackwell 2004).
- Attridge, D. *Meter and Meaning: Introduction to Rhythm in Poetry* (Routledge 2003).
- Allen Duncan, T. *Don't Start me Talking: Interviews with Contemporary Poets* (Salt 2008).
- O'Brien, S. *The Deregulated Muse: Essays on Contemporary British and Irish Poetry* (Bloodaxe 1997).
- Fenton, J. *The Strength of Poetry* (Oxford 2001).
- Riley, D. *Poets on Writing: Britain 1970-91* (Palgrave 1992).
- Larrisssey, A. *Reading Twentieth-Century Poetry: The Language of Gender and Objects* (Blackwell 1990).
- D. Rees-Jones, D. *Modern Women Poets* (Liverpool UP 2000).
- Reeve, N. H. & R. Kerridge *Nearly Too Much: Poetry of J. H. Prynne* (Liverpool UP 1996).
- Corcoran, N. *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century English Poetry* (Cambridge 2007).
- Roberts, N. *A Companion to Twentieth-Century Poetry*, (Blackwell 2003).
- Lennard, J. *The Poetry Handbook* (OUP 2005).
- Acheson, J. & R Hunk. *Contemporary British Poetry: Essays in Theory and Criticism* (State UP 1996).
- Armand, L. *Contemporary Poetics* (Northwestern Up 2006).
- Betram, V. *Gendering Poetry: Contemporary Poetry and Sexual Politics*, (Rivers Oram Press 2005).
- Brington, I. *Contemporary Poetry: Poets and Poetry since 1990* (Cambridge UP 2009).
- Caplan, D. *Questions of Possibility: Contemporary Poetry and Poetic Form*, (Oxford Up 2006).
- Dworkin, C. *The Consequence of Innovation: 21st Century Poetics* (Roof Books 2008).
- Glazier, L. *Digital Poetics: The Making of E-Poetries* (University of Alabama Press 2001).
- Jeffries, L. *Contemporary Poems: Some Critical Approaches* (Doorstop Books 2001).
- Morrison, B. *The Movement*, (Oxford UP 1980).
- Berry, J. *The Language of Black Experience*, (Blackwell 1986).
- Corcoran N. *The Chosen Ground: Essays on the Contemporary Poetry of Northern Ireland* (Seren 1992).
- Day G. & Brian Docherty. *British Poetry from the 1950s to the 1990s: Politics and Art* (Macmillan 1997).

Online Resources

A brief overview of British poetry after Modernism: <http://www.Peterfinch.co.uk/enc.htm>

The Poetry Archive of audio recordings: <http://www.poetryarchive.org>

The British Library's Modern Poetry Links Page:

<http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelpsubject/literature/poetry/modbritevents/modbritevents.html>

www.poetryfoundation.org

www.poetrysociety.org.uk

[Archive of the Now](#)

[British Electronic Poetry Centre](#)

[Electronic Poetry Center](#)

[Oxford Brookes Poetry Centre](#)

[The Poetry Archive](#)

[The Poetry Kit](#)

[Poetry magazines](#)

[Ubu web](#)

Slam Poetry

Place/Space

Mahon and Longley (des Cambridge Companion to Contemporary Irish Poetry)

Geoffrey Hill

Roy Fisher Ciaran Carson.

Postmodern Poetry

Des Cambridge Companion to Twentieth

Attridge Derek. Poetic Rhythm: An Introduction

Eagleton, Terry.