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


2. Philip Larkin, Ted Hughes, Geoffrey Hill.


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.

4. Poetry and Class

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

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

5. Women Poets

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

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

6. Black Poetry and Ethnicity

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

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’ Aguilar. «Have you Been Here Long?: Black Poetry in Britain, » in Hampson, Robert & Peter Barry (eds), New British Poeties: The Scope of the Possible.
7. The Scottish Renaissance

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

8. The Modern Lyric Subject

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


Williams, Nerys. «Lyric Subjects» in Contemporary 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.


Couzyn Jeni. The Bloodaxe Book of Contemporary Women Poets: Eleven British Writers.
Beach Christopher. *Artifice & Indeterminacy: An Anthology of New Poetics.*
Kerrigan Catherine. *An Anthology of Scottish Women Poets.*
Huk Romana. *Assembling Alternatives: Reading Postmodern Poetries Transnationally.*

**Anthologies**

Muldoon, P. *Faber Book of Contemporary Irish Poetry* (Faber 1986).

**General Criticism and Poetic Theory**

*Poetic Meter and Poetic Form*, P. Fussel (Random House 1979).
Quinn, A. *Figures of Speech: 60 Ways to Turn a Phrase* (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates 1995).
Allen Duncan, T. *Don’t Start me Talking: Interviews with Contemporary Poets* (Salt 2008).
Berry, J. *The Language of Black Experience,* (Blackwell 1986).

**Online Resources**
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.