

Oral/Aural Poetics - Spring 2004

Topics in Am Lit Since 1870

ENGL 762 - 001 CRN: 22557

M 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Leonard Hall 211

Dr. Kenneth Sherwood

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Office: Leonard 201F; Hours: M 12-1, 3:15-

4:45, 9-9:30; W 12-1; F 12-1

Course Description [Revised]

Beginning with Whitman's privileging of the spoken vernacular in his 1856 celebration of "an American rude tongue," ~~the important~~ **[innovative (i.e. avant-garde, otherstream, marginal, and minority)]** movements in American poetry have ~~invariably~~ involved the articulation of a poetics in relation to: vernacular speech, orality, music, performance, phonography, or the ~~expressive~~ materiality of language. Growing recognition of the ~~centrality~~ **[pertinence]** of oral/aural issues to 20th-century poetics has inspired a number of recent critical collections that will inform this course, including: *Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies*, Morris; *Close Listening: Poetry and the Performed Word*, Bernstein; *Ghostlier Demarcations: Modern Poetry and the Material Word*, Davidson; and *Reading Voices: Literature and the Phonotext*, Stewart. This course will introduce students to the theory and practice surrounding sound in modern and postmodern American poetics. Guided by recent theory and criticism, we will explore a range of poets, sampling their poetry (on the page and through available recordings) and their own aesthetic statements. Students may be exposed to writers such as [....] The course will incorporate a web-ct discussion and class presentations; the critical essay will ask students to more deeply explore the work of one of the poets, engaging in research and producing an analysis that draws upon an audio recording or performance document.

Concepts, Themes, and Theoretical Issues

- + Founding American Poetics & Vernacular Voices
- + Vers Libre - Aesthetics, Sound, Poetics
- + European Avant-Garde Influences
- + Modernist Technology
- + Bodies, Physicality and Sound
- + Presence, Subjectivity, "Voice"
- + Sounding Ideology, Gender, and Race
- + The Poetry Reading and Performance
- + SilentSounding: The Phonotext
- + Radical Translation: Semantics v. Sound

Texts

American Poetry: The Twentieth Century Vols. 1 & 2

Bernstein, Charles, ed. Close Listening: Poetry and the Performed Word.

Morris, Adalaide, ed. Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technology.

Resources

IUP Course Audio CD, Electronic Reserve, Course Homepage:
www.chss.iup.edu/sherwood

Other Web Sites

www.audibleword.org
www.ubu.com
epc.buffalo.edu/sound
www.english.upenn.edu/~afilreis/88/home.html
www.factoryschool.rog/content/sounds/havanaglen.html

Possible Visitors

Martin Spinelli, on contemporary poetics of digital editing.
John Taggart, reading poetry and discussing Zukofsky et al.

Book-keeping

Participation: 15%

Discussion - While I will typically prepare a number of "interventions" for a given class meeting, I prefer to run graduate courses as seminars. So I hope you will engage the reading fully and arrive on Monday evenings prepared enthusiastically for questioning, critique, extension or application of the assigned texts.

Responses - As an adjunct to the oral in-class discussion, I will ask that you post a 200-word response to WebCT each monday by noon (and bring several printed copies to class). The response may be formal and scholarly, or you may chose to adopt an open-ended, reflective, or exploratory mode. I'll only be concerned to find the tracks of your active engagement with the issues.

Peer-review - Late in the semester, you will exchange work with two peers, getting and giving critical feedback.

Presentations: 10%

So as to help us all "share the floor," I'll ask that you choose one poet and one critical article to present during the semester. Plan to speak for 10-minutes, raising questions or providing a commentary that leads to whole-class discussion. It will also be useful if you provide your classmates with a hand-out.

Critical Essay (Topic Proposal, Draft) 75%

You will produce a 16-20 page critical essay as your major work for this course. It should grow from the discussion and readings of the semester, engaging with the work of one poet in a way that reflects a sense of the writer's work and a serious engagement with the theoretical and methodological issues pertaining to aurality/orality.

The emphasis will be on the analytical work you accomplish, so I will encourage you to incorporate some close-reading and perhaps work with a tangible performance document. You should also make use of the supplementary bibliography attached and incorporate some independently identified secondary sources.

One-page abstract with working bibliography due 3/15; typed 12+page draft 4/5; final, revised essay due 4/19.

Cheating, Plagiarism, and Collusion

Scholastic Dishonesty is a serious matter. I am savvy and vigilant in detecting students who use unattributed web sources or utilize other "clever" methods to enhance their grades. Take the grade you honestly earn on an assignment. A plagiarized assignment will earn you a zero for the assignment.

Spring 2004 Calendar [Draft 01]

Poetry		
1/12		
1/19	<i>Approaching the Modern:</i> Parker McKay cummings	
	Quartermain, Peter. "Sound Readings." <u>Close Listening</u> . 217-232. [Status of Recitation, shifts, and meaning] Bernstein, Charles. "Introduction." <u>Close Listening</u> . 3-28. [Overview] Morris, Adalaide. "Introduction: Sound States." <u>Sound States</u> . 1-16. [History, Theory, Criticism]	
1/26	<i>Modernist I:</i> Pound Eliot Tolson	
	Eliot, T. S. "The Music of Poetry" Easthope, Antony. "Iambic Pentameter" and "The Modernism of Eliot and Pound." <u>Poetry as Discourse</u> . [Theory, ideology, and form.] Perloff, Marjorie. "After Free Verse: The New Non-linear Poetries." <u>Close Listening</u> . 86-110. [Poetics, Modernism to Lanuage] Rasula, Jed. "Understanding the Sound of Not Understanding." <u>Close Listening</u> . 233-261. [Recitation: Tennyson, Pound, et al]	
2/2	<i>Modernist II:</i> Stein	
	Quartermain, Peter. "'A Narrative of Undermine': Gertrude Stein's Multiplicity." <u>Disjunctive Poetics</u> . 21-43. [Introduction to Stein] "Sound" in Preminger, Alex and T. V. F. Brogan, eds. <u>The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics</u> . Princeton, Princeton UP, 1993. Piombino, Nick. "The Aural Ellipsis and the Nature of Listening in Contemporary Poetry." <u>Close Listening</u> . 53-72. [Theory, Listening to Found Language, Mac Low et al] Williams, William Carlos [and Louis Zukofsky]. "The Work of Gertrude Stein."	
2/9	<i>Modernist III:</i> H.D. Loy Gillespie Loringhoven	

2/16	Morris, Adalaide. "Sound Technologies and the Modernist Epic: H.D. on Air." <u>Sound States</u> . 32-55. [Poetics and early radio, H.D.] Conner, James. "Radio Free Joyce: <i>Wake</i> Language and the Experience of Radio." <u>Sound States</u> . 17-31. [Listening: Conditioned by early radio, Joyce]	
	<i>Objectivist:</i> Zukofsky Niedecker	
	Rasula, Jed. "Poetry's Voice-Over." <u>Sound States</u> . 274-316. [Theory: Voice, Subjectivity (Frost, Zukofsky)] "Sound Effects in Poetry" in Preminger, Alex and T. V. F. Brogan, eds. <u>The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics</u> . Princeton, Princeton UP, 1993. Taggart, John. From <u>Song of Degrees</u> .	
2/23	<i>Vernacular I:</i> Williams Frost Blues and Song (Selections)	
	Frost. "Sentence Sounds." <u>Modern Poetics</u> . James Scully, ed. 51-54. Williams. "A New Measure." <u>Modern Poetics</u> . James Scully, ed. 71-72. Quartermain, Peter. "Introduction." <u>Disjunctive Poetics</u> . 1-20. [Poetics and linguistic/cultural issues] Stewart, Susan. "Letter on Sound." <u>Close Listening</u> . 29-52. [Theory and Lyric] Middleton, Peter. "The Contemporary Poetry Reading." <u>Close Listening</u> . 262-299. [Readings: History, Social, Theory, Williams et al]	
3/1	<i>Open Field:</i> Olson Creeley x Duncan Baraka x	
	Davidson, Michael. "'By Ear He Sd: Audio Tapes and Contemporary Criticism.'" <u>Credences</u> . Vol 1:1, 105-120. Silliman, Ron. "Afterword: Who Speaks: Ventriloquism and the Self in the Poetry Reading." <u>Close Listening</u> . 360-378. [Theory, Voice, Indeterminacy] Olson, Charles. "Projective Verse" Baraka, Amiri. "Expressive Language"	
3/15	Spring Break	
	<i>Vernacular II:</i> Hughes Johnson Brown Sandberg Lindsay	
	Wesling, Donald and Tadeusz Slavek. "Vachel Lindsay and the American Bardic." <u>Literary Voice</u> . 144-147. [Theory, History: Lindsay through Beats] Schultz, Susan. "Local Vocals: Hawai'i's Pidgin Literature, Performance, and Postcoloniality." <u>Close Listening</u> . 343-359. [Performance, Dialect, Politics, and Social] Cusic, Don. "Vachel Lindsay" <u>The Poet as Performer</u> . [History] Cusic, Don. "Carl Sandburg" <u>The Poet as Performer</u> . [History]	

3/22	<i>Beat:</i> Ginsberg x Burroughs x McLure x Waldman x Kerouac x	
	Davidson, Michael. "Orality and the Tapevoice of Contemporary Poetics." <u>Sound States</u> . 97-128. [Tape and aesthetics: Olson, Ginsberg, Antin, Benson, Anderson] Corman, Cid. "Speech: As it Falls: Is Poetry" Halyes, N. Katherine. "Voices Out of Bodies: AudioTape and The Production of Subjectivity." <u>Sound States</u> . 74-96. [Technology, Burroughs]	
3/29	<i>Performance</i> Antin x Cage Rothenberg x	
	Perloff, Marjorie. "The Music of Verbal Space: John Cage's 'What You Say.'" <u>Sound States</u> . 129-149. [Cage, Language v Music] Rothenberg, Jerome. "The Poetics of Performance" Perelman, Bob. "Speech Effects: Talk as Genre." <u>Close Listening</u> . 200-216.[Talk, Antin et al] "Performance" <u>Critical Terms for Literary Study</u> .	
4/5	<i>Radical Modernist Extensions</i> Howe x Taggart x Bernstein x Mackey x	
	Perloff, Marjorie. "The Changing Face of Common Intercourse." [Sound, form, natural speech and popular culture] Mackey, Nathaniel. "Cante Moro." <u>Sound States</u> . 194-212. [Lorca, cross-cultural music influencing 1950s- US poetry] Howe, Susan. "Ether Either." <u>Close Listening</u> . 111-130.	
4/14*	No Monday Classes Peer Revision - Exchange and Commenting on Drafts	
4/19		

Supplementary Bibliography

- Alpert, Barry. "Post-Modern Oral Poetry: Buckminster Fuller, John Cage, and David Antin." Boundary 2: The Oral Impulse in Contemporary Poetry. Vol. 3:3, Spring 1975. 665-81
- Andrews, Bruce. "Praxis: A Political Economy of Noise and Information." Close Listening. 73-85. [Theory, Ideology]
- Antin, David. "A Correspondence with the Editors William V. Spanos and Robert Kroetsch." Boundary 2: The Oral Impulse in Contemporary Poetry. Vol. 3:3, Spring 1975. 595-650.
- Barthes, Roland. "Listening." The Responsibility of Forms.
- Collins, Loretta. "Rude Bwoys, Riddim, Rub-a Dub, and Rastas: Systems of Political Dissonance in Caribbean Performative Sounds." Sound States. 169-93. [Postcolonial context of sound trade, 1950s-]
- Corman, Cid. "Communication: Poetry for Radio." English 88. Al Filreis, ed.
<http://www.english.upenn.edu/~afilreis/88/corman-on-radio.html>
- Corman, Cid. "Speech: As it Falls: Is Poetry"
- Damon, Maria. "Was that 'Different,' 'Dissident' or 'Dissonant'? Poetry (n) the Public Spear: Slams, Open Readings, and Dissident Traditions." Close Listening. 324-342. [Readings: Community]

- Dardess, George. "The Logic of Spontaneity: A Reconsideration of Kerouac's 'Spontaneous Prose Method.'" Boundary 2[: The Oral Impulse in Contemporary Poetry]. Vol. 3:3, Spring 1975.
- Davidson, Michael. Ghostlier Demarcations: Modern Poetry and the Material Word.
- Drucker, Johanna. "Visual Performance of the Poetic Text." Close Listening. 131-161. [Visual as Itself Performative, aside from scoring]
- Dyson, Frances. "The Ear that Would Hear Sounds in Themselves: John Cage 1935-1965." The Wireless Imagination. 373-407 [Cage /Performance]
- Economou, George. "Some Notes Towards Finding a View of the New Oral Poetry." Boundary 2[: The Oral Impulse in Contemporary Poetry]. Vol. 3:3, Spring 1975. 653-63. [History and Poetics: New York Scene, 1950s-, Jazz, Paul Blackburn, Rothenberg, Antin].
- Hinton, Nichols, and Ohala. "Introduction: Sound-Symbolic Processes" Sound Symbolism. 1-12
- Kahn, Douglas. "Cruelty and the Beast: Antonin Artaud and Michael McClure." Noise, Water, Meat: A History of Sound in the Arts. 322-358.
- Kahn, Douglas. "Introduction: Histories of Sound Once Removed." The Wireless Imagination: Sound, Radio, and the Avant-Garde.
- Kahn, Douglas. "John Cage: Silence and Silencing." Noise, Water, Meat: A History of Sound in the Arts. 160-99.
- Kahn, Douglas. "Two Sounds of the Virus: William Burroughs's Pure Meat Method." Noise, Water, Meat: A History of Sound in the Arts. 290-321.
- Lydenberg, Robin. "Sound Identity Fading Out: William Burroughs' Tape Experiments." The Wireless Imagination. 409-437. [Burroughs/Beat]
- McCaffery, Steve. "From Phonic to Sonic: The Emergence of the Audio-Poem." Sound States. 149-169. [European Avant-garde, history and poetics]
- McCaffery, Steve. "Voice in Extremis." Close Listening. 162-177. [Theories Voice, Body, Sign]
- Morris, Adalaide. "Introduction: H.D.'s Ongoingness." How to Live/What to Do: H.D.'s Cultural Poetics. 1-15.
- Morris, Adalaide. "Winged Words: H.D.'s Phonotexts and the Configurations of Meaning." How to Live/What to Do: H.D.'s Cultural Poetics. 19-55.
- Moten, Fred. "Sound in Florescence: Cecil Taylor *Floating Garden*." Sound States. 213-236. [Improvisation, music v language]
- Oliver, Douglas. "Musical Form and Poetic Stress." Poetry and Narrative in Performance. 6-19
- Powers, Kevin. "Poland/1931: Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag & Smile, Smile, Smile, From Diaspora to Galut." Boundary 2[: The Oral Impulse in Contemporary Poetry]. Vol. 3:3, Spring 1975. 683-705. [Jerome Rothenberg]
- Rothenberg, Jerome. "A Dialogue on Oral Poetry with William Spanos." Boundary 2[: The Oral Impulse in Contemporary Poetry]. Vol. 3:3, Spring 1975. 509-548.
- Sterne, Jonathan. The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction. [Theory: Effects of technological change on "hearing"]
- Stewart, Garret. Reading Voices
- Tedlock, Dennis. "Toward a Poetics of Polyphony and Translatability." Close Listening. 178-200. [Mayan, Bakhtin, cf. Olson or Zukofsky]
- Thomas, Lorenzo. "Neon Griot: The Functional Role of Poetry Readings in the Black Arts Movement." Close Listening. 300-323. [Readings: History, Social, Dunbar to Baraka]
- Tsur, Reuven. What Makes Sound Patterns Expressive.
- Vincent, Stephen. "Poetry Readings/Reading Poetry: San Francisco Bay Area 1958-1980." [History]
- Welsh, Andrew. "Charm." Roots of the Lyric. 133-161.
- Wesling, Donald and Tadeusz Slavek. "Reading the De-toned Text." Literary Voice. 177-208. [Critique: indeterminacy]
- Winters, Yvor. "The Audible Reading of Poetry." The Function of Criticism: Problems and Exercises. Denver: Alan Swallow, 1957. 81-100.