

Postmodern Poetry and Poetics

(Topics in Poetry)

ENGL6353- Spring 2002

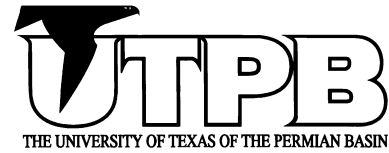
Weds. 5:40-8:20

Dr. Sherwood

Office: MB 419

sherwood_k@utpb.edu

www.utpb.edu/courses/sherwood/courses.htm



Primary Reading

Paul Naylor, Poetic Investigations: Singing the Holes in History

Susan Howe, Singularities

Nathaniel Mackey, School of Udhru

Cecilia Vicuña, Unravelling Words

Lyn Hejinian, My Life

Kamau Brathwaite, Middle Passages

Charles Bernstein, My Way

Reserve Texts

Beach, Artifice and Indeterminacy (essays)

Bernstein, A Poetics & Contents Dream

Bernstein and Andrews, The Language Book (essays)

Brathwaite, History of the Voice

Hejinian, The Language of Inquiry

Hoover, Postmodern American Poetry (Anthology: poems, essays)

Howe, My Emily Dickinson

Mackey, Discrepant Engagement

Perloff, Radical Artifice

Silliman, The New Sentence

Vicuña, Precarious: The Art and Poetry of Cecilia Vicuña

*Additional texts on order.

Other Resources

Class webpage and discussion list: www.utpb.edu/courses/sherwood/courses.htm

EPC – Electronic Poetry Center: epc.buffalo.edu (Author Pages, LINEbreak, How2, Lagniappe, Jacket)

Callaloo 23.2 (Mackey Issue; through UTPB databases)

DLB – Dictionary of Literary Biography (UTPB Library Ref. & Galenet database)

Sulfur (UTPB-held literary journal, includes poetry, reviews, and essays by and on the six authors)

Overview

This course will focus on the work of a handful of postmodern poets whose work and poetics exhibit a range of responses to the cultural and political dominants of contemporary life. Their stylistic and socio-cultural range will give us the opportunity to consider how language and poetic form intersect with, reflect, resist, and refigure one's experience of the world and of reading itself. Each of the authors variously engages with ideology, cultural memory, and identity in creative and sometimes, challenging ways. Conducted in a seminar format, the course will require students to do some independent research and to participate in the 'teaching' of the class. A final seminar paper will culminate a sequence of presentations, research, and informal-writing assignments.

Office Hours

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
9-9:50	ENGL3341		ENGL3341		ENGL3341
10-11	Office		Office		Office
12:30-1:30	Office				
2-2:50	ENGL3372		ENGL3372		ENGL3372
5-5:30			Office		
5:40-8:20			ENGL6353		
8:30-9			Office (Classroom)		

Expectations and Workload

At the graduate level, students are expected to be able to handle a moderately heavy reading load; they should read for mastery, coming to class with a provisional understanding of material, ready to share their ideas and offer questions. In this particular course—poetry, criticism, and theory are quite integrated. This combination is in part necessitated by the nature of postmodern poetics; but it also reflects my sense of the levels at which a graduate education ought to challenge students. You should be prepared to read some secondary criticism to deepen your understanding of the poetry between our meetings; you should be ready to engage in the reexamination of the literary paradigms you may have long accepted and with which you might be quite comfortable; and you should be prepared to exert the intellectual labor required by the theoretical elements of the course.

Each semester credit hour at UT Permian Basin represents a commitment on an average of three hours of 'out of class' preparation and one hour of class attendance (or its equivalent) per week. For example, enrolling in a three semester credit hour class commits the student to a total of twelve hours of work per week. Students who are employed or who have family responsibilities are especially encouraged to bear this commitment in mind and to seek guidance from their academic advisors in determining a suitable academic schedule (UTPB Undergraduate Catalog 2001-2003; 57).

Assignments

□ Responses

You will write a 250-500 word response on four of the six authors. Submit it before a class dedicated to that author. Adopt a traditional (argumentative, interpretive, analytical) tact or explore alternate prose forms. Please post before class and bring sufficient copies for the class. This will be graded P/F but must be timely. Consider it an extension of class discussion and brainstorming for your final essay.

□ Presentations

You will give two presentations (on two different authors, one each on a first and second week) discussing the intersection of an assigned reading (for that week) with the work of the given poet. The presentation should advance an argument, take 10 minutes of class time, and be accompanied by a 250-500 word handout for the class.

❑ Annotated Bibliography

Once you have determined the subject of your research essay, you should begin tracking down various kinds of resources (reviews, critical articles, poetics essays, author statements, interviews, literary history) from the web, library holdings, databases and through Inter-library Loan. You will create an MLA style bibliography but append paragraph-annotations summarizing the source and evaluating its usefulness. (These will be posted on the web. Models will be provided.)

❑ Research Essay

An argumentative 12-20 page essay, it will take up a major issue relevant to one of the six poets. It will include significant, original close-reading of poems; will demonstrate knowledge of the career and movement context; will demonstrate familiarity with and incorporate (as support or for refutation) relevant criticism.

❑ Attendance

Required. You will sign an attendance sheet each class. Be sure your schedule will allow you to attend or be prepared to accept the loss of credit. See grading scheme below.

❑ Grade Distribution

Please keep track of your grades. I encourage you to meet with me for extra help or to discuss ways to enhance your learning. I prefer substantive conversation about your growth, strengths, and weaknesses to talk of your GPA or generation of 'progress reports,' neither of which is an efficient use of our time.

20%	- Bi-weekly Response: P/F, timeliness required
20%	- (2) Presentations: oral effectiveness and written handout
20%	- Annotated Bibliography: appropriate sources, variety and depth, effectiveness of annotation
30%	- Research: assignment description forthcoming
10%	- Participation: in a seminar-format graduate class, active questioning, argument, reflection, listening, and reading are assumed. Demonstrate your engagement with the material orally and/or through written posts to the discussion group. *
Attendance	Attendance is assumed. Beyond one absence, the student's final average will be reduced 5% points per absence. A student who misses more than three classes, will receive no higher than a "C" for the semester; a student who misses more than five classes will automatically fail the course.

* In the unlikely circumstance that I felt the need to give a quiz or check for marginal notation, these would fall under participation. At this level, I will assume that students will arrive for class having completed all the reading and ready to discuss it.

Miscellaneous Policies

❑ Make-up work

Successful mastery of course material requires students to complete assignments in a timely fashion. Make-up work does not serve the learning process and so will not be permitted, except for major assignments missed because of family emergency or severe illness; under these special circumstances, students will have one week to make up the work and will receive a penalty of one-letter grade. Should you unavoidably miss a class, be sure to convey any assignment to me: leave it in my HFA-office mailbox; use a classmate as courier; email it (sherwood_k@utpb.edu); or fax 552-3280.

❑ Computer breakdown and other exigencies

Make paper and back-up copies of work done on computers. Begin work in advance of deadlines, so that you have time to troubleshoot disk errors, virus alerts, printer problems, etc. I know intimately how unreliable technology can be, but you are responsible for submitting work despite the gremlins and Murphy's Law.

❑ Cheating, Plagiarism, and Collusion (See UTPB Policy below)

Scholastic Dishonesty is a serious matter. I am savvy and vigilant in detecting students who use unattributed web sources, "collaborate" with fellow students, or utilize other "clever" methods to enhance their grades. Take the grade you honestly earn on an assignment. Should a classmate attempt to use your work, refuse; I make no distinction between cheaters and those who aid them.

UTPB Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Students are expected to be above reproach in all scholastic activities. Students who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and dismissal from the university. 'Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.' Regents' Rules and Regulations, Part One, Chapter VI, Section 3, Subsection 3.2, Subdivision 3.22. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the university, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced--Student Discipline for Scholastic Dishonesty: A Guide for Administrators, Faculty, and Hearing Officers (28).

See also: www.utpb.edu/UTPB_Student/Students/StudentLife/StudentService_Other/StudentGuide/main_student_guide.htm

❑ Cell Phones

Please silence cell phones and beepers during class time.

Bi-Weekly Plan

	Reading	Student Presentations
Week 1: Introduction	Primary poetry Initial criticism (Naylor & DLB)	a. DLB b. Naylor
Week 2: Depth	Primary poetry (cont.) lit. crit./poetics article theory	a. lit crit/poetics b. theory

Semester Calendar

Wk 1	1/16	Six poems; Young (x); Bernstein, "Artifice"; Jakobson (x);
Wk 2	1/24	Six poems (cont.) Naylor, Introduction McHale, "Making (non)sense" x
Wk 3	1/30	Susan Howe , <u>Singularities</u> DLB & Naylor
Wk 4	2/6	Howe Marjorie Perloff, "The Changing Face of Common Intercourse," x Howe, [Selection from <u>My Emily Dickinson</u>]
Wk 5	2/13	Nathaniel Mackey , <u>School of Udhru</u> DLB & Naylor
Wk 6	2/20	Mackey "Ideology," <u>Critical Terms for Literary Study</u> x Mackey, "Sound and Sentiment" x
Wk 7	2/27	Cecilia Vicuña , <u>Unravelling Words</u> [Selections, <u>Precarious</u> and <u>Cloud Net</u>] x "Performance," <u>Critical Terms for Literary Study</u> x
Wk 8	3/6	Vicuña [Selections on Ethnopoetics] x Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" x, TH
	break	New baby?!
Wk 9	3/20	Kamau Brathwaite , <u>Middle Passages</u> DLB & Naylor
Wk 10	3/27	Brathwaite Kamau Brathwaite, "Nation Language" x Glissant, "Free and Forced Poetics" x Mackey, [On Brathwaite] x Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History" x, TH
Wk 11	4/3	Lyn Hejinian , <u>My Life</u> DLB & Naylor
Wk 12	4/10 *	Hejinian Hejinian, "Against Closure" x Samuels, "8 Justifications for ... My Life" MLS Wittgenstein, [from <u>Philosophical Investigations</u>] x, TH Annotated Bibliography Due
Wk 13	4/17	Charles Bernstein , <u>My Way</u> DLB Schultz, "On Time and Bernstein's Lines" Jacket
Wk 14	4/24	Bernstein Marjorie Perloff, "Language Poetry," <u>Dance of the Intellect</u> x DeCerteau, [from <u>The Practice of Everyday Life</u>] x, TH
Wk 15	4/31 *	Conclusion Ross, "The New Sentence and Commodity..." x Essay Due