

ENGL 3852 Topics in Poetics: 'After' Objectivism

Fall Quarter, 2012
CRN 4243
T & Th 10:00-11:50
SH 380

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SH 387-E

This course concerns the poetry of William Carlos Williams, Lorine Niedecker, George Oppen, William Bronk, and Susan Howe, which we will study within and against the Objectivist tradition. How and why have these poets engaged with and departed from such an artistic movement? What were they after, and (perhaps more importantly) what else has come & gone 'after' *Objectivism*? How and why does the Objectivist tradition continue to influence postmodern American poetics? We will celebrate the poetry of Williams, Niedecker, Oppen, Bronk, and Howe from *readerly* and *writerly* perspectives, following their works into artistic, cultural, and philosophical / theoretical contexts.

Required Books:

- William Bronk. *Life Supports: New and Collected Poems*. Jersey City: Talisman, 1997.
ISBN: 1-883689-59-7.
- Dana Gioia, ed. *Twentieth-Century American Poetics*. Boston: McGraw Hill, 2004.
ISBN: 978-0-07-241472-1.
- Susan Howe. *That This*. New York: New Directions, 2010.
ISBN: 978-0-8112-1918-1.
- Susan Howe. *Souls of the Labadie Tract*. New York: New Directions, 2007.
ISBN: 978-0-8112-1718-7.
- Lorine Niedecker. *Collected Works*. Ed. Jenny Penberthy. Berkeley: University of California, 2002.
ISBN: 978-0-520-22434-6.
- George Oppen. *New Collected Poems*. Ed. Michael Davidson. New York: New Directions, 2008.
ISBN: 978-0-8112-1805-4.
- William Carlos Williams. *Paterson*. Ed. Christopher MacGowan. New York: New Directions, 1992.
ISBN: 978-0-8112-1298-4.

Optional Books:

- Eric Haralson, ed. *Reading the Middle Generation Anew*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2006.
ISBN: 087745-956-8.
- Elisabeth Joyce. *The Small Space of a Pause*. Cranbury: Bucknell University Press, 2010.
ISBN: 978-0-8387-5762-8.
- Henry Weinfield. *The Music of Thought in the Poetry of George Oppen and William Bronk*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2009. ISBN: 978-1-58729-781-6.

Assignments:

- Eight Écrits (2-3 pp. each) @ 50%
One Group Presentation @ 10%
One Research Project @ 40%

Note on attendance: For each unexcused absence, your grade in the course will be diminished by -0.5.

Note on assignments: Unless otherwise specified, all assignments are due at the beginning of class, as noted on the calendar, in hard copy form: typed, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, citations included (either Chicago or MLA format) and pages stapled. Works that do not conform to these guidelines will be considered late. Late submissions will receive a deduction of -0.5 per day.

Note on plagiarism: Students are expected to submit original work for all assignments. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in an automatic F in the course.

Notes on grading:

1. *The Check System.* I'll be grading your Écrits with a check system that will follow these guidelines. A check plus on all your Écrits will translate into a grade of 4.0 / A for that percentage of your overall grade in the course. Each check will reduce your grade for that component of your overall grade in the course by -0.5. Each check minus, by -1.0; each missing Écrit, by -2.0. If you ever receive less than a check plus, you will have the option to revise and resubmit the Écrit for a higher grade. Those revisions (attached to the first draft) will be due by the beginning of the next class meeting.
2. *The Point & Letter System.* I'll be grading your research project with a point & letter system that corresponds to the following grade ranges: A (4.0-3.9); A- (3.8-3.5); B+ (3.4-3.2); B (3.1-2.9); B- (2.8-2.5); C+ (2.4-2.2); C (2.1-1.9); C- (1.8-1.5); D+ (1.4-1.2); D (1.1-0.9); D- (0.8-0.5); F (0.4-0).

Calendar (subject to changes):**Week One: 'After' Objectivism: Introductions & Afterwords**

T 9/11
Th 9/13

Week Two: Williams and Howe

T 9/18 Écrit #1 Due
Th 9/20

Week Three: Williams and Howe

T 9/25 Écrit #2 Due
Th 9/27

Week Four: Howe and Niedecker

T 10/2 Écrit #3 Due
Th 10/4

Week Five: Howe and Niedecker

T 10/9 Écrit #4 Due
Th 10/11 Presentations

Week Six: Niedecker and Williams

T 10/16 Écrit #5 Due
Th 10/18 Presentations

Week Seven: Niedecker and Oppen

T 10/23 Écrit #6 Due
Th 10/25 Presentations

Week Eight: Oppen and Bronk

T 10/30 Écrit #7 Due
Th 11/1 Presentations

Week Nine: Oppen and Bronk

T 11/6 Écrit #8 Due
Th 11/8 Presentations

Week Ten: Oppen and Bronk

T 11/13 Presentations
Th 11/15 Research Projects Due