

ENGL 4650: Poetics & Historiography
Postmodern & Modern
Spring Quarter, 2010
4.0 Credits; SH 491
T & Th: 12:00-1:50

W. Scott Howard
SH 387-E
303-871-2887
showard@du.edu
<http://www.du.edu/~showard/>

COURSE DESCRIPTION: From Eliot's "historical sense" to Howe's "collision or collusion with history," this course examines the many ways in which twentieth- and twenty-first-century American poets have written within and against the grain of history. While some of our concerns will address questions of theory and methodology—that is, poetics from Mallarmé to Perloff, and historiography from Nietzsche to de Certeau—the primary matter for this class will be poetry. Major works will include: H.D.'s *Helen in Egypt*, Williams's *Paterson*, Hayden's *Words in the Mourning Time*, Johnson's *Ark*, Swensen's *Such Rich Hour*, and Howe's *Souls of the Labadie Tract*. Alongside those primary works, we will also consider selected poems by a variety of writers, including: Wylie, Crane, Olson, Pound, Moore, Lowell, Bishop, Rukeyser, Clampitt, and Hejinian.

While this postmodern & modern course is designed to resonate with the other *Poetics & Historiography* class (classical thru early modern), there is no pre-requisite for this course, which follows a distinctive path.

We will begin with the present moment—or at least, with a fairly recent manifestation of the present—and will then meander into various moments & contexts in the twentieth and nineteenth centuries. The trope of mapping (patterns, visualizations, lines of flight, horizons of expectation, hypertexts, palimpsests, etc.) will shape our inquiry and process. Students will be encouraged to design projects that will be most interesting and useful for their professional development.

BOOKS:

Required:

Doolittle, Hilda. *Helen in Egypt*. New Directions, 1961. ISBN: 0811205444.
Gioia, Dana, et al, eds. *Twentieth-Century American Poetics: Poets on the Art of Poetry*. McGraw Hill, 2004. ISBN: 0072414723.
Hayden, Robert. *Collected Poems*. Liveright, 1985. ISBN: 0871406519.
Howe, Susan. *Souls of the Labadie Tract*. New Directions, 2007. ISBN: 0811217183.
---. *The Nonconformist's Memorial*. New Directions, 1993. ISBN: 0811212297.
Jenkins, Keith, ed. *The Postmodern History Reader*. Routledge, 1998. ISBN: 0415139031.
Swensen, Cole. *The Glass Age*. Alice James Books, 2007. ISBN: 1882295609.
---. *Such Rich Hour*. University of Iowa, 2001. ISBN: 0877457751.
Tran, Truong. *Within the Margin*. Apogee, 2004. ISBN: 0974468754.
Williams, William Carlos. *Paterson*. New Directions, 1995. ISBN: 081121298X.
Yasusada, Araki. [Kent Johnson, Javier Alvarez, & Tosa Motokiyu]. *Doubled Flowering: From the Notebooks of Araki Yasusada*. Roof Books, 1997. ISBN: 9780937804711.

Optional:

Haralson, Eric, ed. *Reading the Middle Generation Anew: Culture, Community, and Form in Twentieth-Century American Poetry*. University of Iowa, 2006. ISBN: 0877459568.
Johnson, Ronald. *Ark*. Living Batch, 1996. ISBN: 0945953070.
Kwasny, Melissa, ed. *Toward the Open Field: Poets on the Art of Poetry, 1800-1950*. Wesleyan, 2004. ISBN: 0819566071.

ENGL 4650: Poetics & Historiography***Postmodern & Modern***

Spring Quarter, 2010

4.0 Credits; SH 491

T & Th: 12:00-1:50

W. Scott Howard

SH 387-E

303-871-2887

showard@du.edu<http://www.du.edu/~showard/>

Process / Play / Production: Achieving a balance among these three motives will be one of our primary objectives: *discussing, visualizing, reading, creating / writing, researching, theorizing, discovering*. Students will make their own choices about what sorts of works to produce within these general guidelines: ten works, each in reply to our study of the major texts noted below on the calendar. Options for these works may include, among other possibilities: lists of questions / observations; fictions & other imaginary documents; brief (2-page) response essays; visualizations & maps; critiques & protests; dialogues; collages; digital artifacts; book reviews. On the days when these works are due (since this will be a small class) we will discuss what you have created / contributed. 10 Works = 100% of your grade for the class.

Note on grading: The Check System. I'll be grading your works with a check system that will follow these guidelines: A check plus on all your works 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 by -0.5. Each check minus, by -1.0; each missing work, by -2.0. If you receive less than a check plus on any of the works, you'll have the option to revise and resubmit for a higher grade by the beginning of the next class meeting.

CALENDAR (subject to changes):**Week One**

3/23: Kelly Writers House, interactive webcast w/ Susan Howe: <http://writing.upenn.edu/wh/multimedia/tv/>
& *The Nonconformist's Memorial*

3/25: *The Nonconformist's Memorial* & (works due)

Week Two

3/30: *Souls of the Labadie Tract* & <http://reconstruction.eserver.org/063/howard.shtml>

4/1: *Souls of the Labadie Tract* & (works due)

Week Three

4/6: AWP / Denver: <http://www.awpwriter.org/conference/2010sched.php>

4/8 RSA / Venice: <http://www.rsa.org/meetings/annualmeeting.php>

Week Four

4/13: *Within the Margin* & <http://www.wordforword.info/vol11/howard.htm> & (works due)

4/15: *Twentieth-Century American Poetics: Poets on the Art of Poetry* (selections, TBA) & (works due)

Week Five

4/20: *Such Rich Hour & The Glass Age* & <http://www.wordforword.info/vol14/Howard.htm>

4/22: *Such Rich Hour & The Glass Age* & (works due)

Week Six

4/27: *Doubled Flowering: From the Notebooks of Araki Yasusada* &

<http://reconfigurations.blogspot.com/2007/11/mario-hibert-with-kent-johnson.html>

4/29: *Doubled Flowering: From the Notebooks of Araki Yasusada* & (works due)

Week Seven

5/4: *The Postmodern History Reader* (selections, TBA) & (works due)

5/6: *Hayden: Collected Poems* (selections, TBA)

ENGL 4650: Poetics & Historiography***Postmodern & Modern***

Spring Quarter, 2010

4.0 Credits; SH 491

T & Th: 12:00-1:50

W. Scott Howard

SH 387-E

303-871-2887

showard@du.edu<http://www.du.edu/~showard/>**Week Eight**5/11: *Hayden: Collected Poems* (selections, TBA) & (works due)5/13: *Paterson***Week Nine**5/18: *Paterson*5/20: *Paterson* & (works due)**Week Ten**5/25: *Helen in Egypt*5/27: *Helen in Egypt* & (works due)**Week Eleven**

6/1 – 6/3: DU Exam Days

6/4: DU Graduation / Graduate

6/5: DU Graduation / Undergraduate