

English 705
Prof. Claudia Keelan
M-4: 645
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Office: RLL250, (702) 895-3333
Office Hours: Friday, 10-1:00

Booklist in Order of Reading:

Blake's Poetry and Design (Norton Critical Edition)
Walt Whitman, *Complete Poetry and Prose* (The Library of America)
H.D. *Trilogy* (New Directions)
Manifestos (On Webcampus)
George Oppen, *New Collected Poems* (University of California Press)
Claudia Keelan, *Utopic* (Alice James Books)
Brenda Hillman, *Practical Water* (Wesleyan Press)
Claudia Rankine, *Citizen* (Graywolf)

"The personal is political.—Adrienne Rich

"Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world." Shelley

"If more politicians knew poetry, and more poets knew politics, I am convinced the world would be a little better place in which to live."

--John F. Kennedy

"There is poetry as soon as we accept we possess nothing."—John Cage

RATIONALE

This semester we'll sample poetry of political protest with the intent to encourage students to develop working definitions of the political in regard to their own work. Politics, from the Greek "polis" is at base "of, or, relating to citizens..." and politics are also "the theory and practice of influencing other people." And poetry is...what is poetry? A "literary work in which special intensity is given to the expression of feelings and ideas by the use of distinctive style and rhythm? Is it "a quality of beauty and intensity of emotion" which is regarded as characteristic of poems?" Perhaps and no.

We *can* begin by saying that both politics and poetry employ language, written and spoken, to stir people's thought and feeling. We can begin by considering the intersection of politics and the "personal," in the poetry we read and write, and the ways in which the truest expression expands our understanding of what it means to be a "citizen" as well as ideas of the "beautiful" and the "true."

CLASS STRUCTURE

Improvisations
Discussion of Reading
Discussion of student poems

Each week we'll begin by writing for 25 or so minutes. The Creative Writing workshop historically has relied too much upon what feels like autopsy: students write poems, turn them in, and the class examines the body. To shake that model up, let's begin each week with what I'm calling "improvisations," i.e. writing prompts given by your teacher that you take in directions of your own inclination. The writing prompts will be focused on the intersection of politics and poetry

For the first half of the semester, we'll follow our improvisational playtime with discussion of the reading list for the semester, followed by discussion of student poems. If at all possible, please use the edition of the texts I ordered from the bookstore. In the second half of the semester, we'll follow the improvisations with discussion of student poems and end with discussion of the reading list. Each of you will have poems up 4 times. Feel free to put poems up that came out of exercises in the class.

Please don't come to class without the reading material and classmates' poems up for discussion in a given week.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

AUGUST

24: Introduction

31 Blake, "All Religions Are One" and "There is No Natural Religion."

September

7 LABOR DAY

14, Blake, "Songs of Innocence" and "Songs of Experience." Hanna, Shannon and Christine. "The Declaration of Independence" and "The Rights of Men"

21 Whitman, "Song of Myself," (1855 edition) sec. 1-24, "Democratic Vistas" 929-994 (in Library of America edition). Ethan, Kaz and Rene.

28 Whitman, "Song of Myself," sec. 25-52, "The Death of Abraham Lincoln," pp. 1036-1047. Shin, Autumn, Gaby,

October

5 *MANIFESTOS (on web campus)* Shannon, Christine and Hanna.

12 H.D. *Trilogy*. Kaz, Rene and Ethan.

19 H.D. *Trilogy*. Autumn, Gaby and Shin.

26 Oppen, from *The Materials* (1962) "Image of the Engine," "Return," "Myself I Sing," "Workman" and from *This in Which* (1965) "Philai Te Kou Philai," "The City of Keansburg," "Five Poems About Poetry," "Guest Room" "A Language of New York," "The People, The People, "A Narrative" and "World, World—"Hanna, Kaz and Shannon.

November

2 Oppen, "Of Being Numerous" Christine, Ethan and Shin

9 Hillman, *Practical Water*. Shin and Gaby

16 Keelan, *Utopic*, "Erasing Names, Multiplying Alliances," (on web campus) Autumn, Ethan

23 Rankine, *Citizen*. Hannah, Kaz, Christine

Learning outcomes for this course:

- Students will develop working definitions of the relation of politics and poetry
 - Students will learn to write with a time constraint of 15 minutes
 - Students will write four additional poems outside of class which will become part of the course material
 - Students will read poetry from the 19th century to the present, tracing the evolution of the political as it moves from England to America
 - Students will develop critical reading and writing skills
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Academic Misconduct—Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility, and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling at UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's function as an educational institution. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the *Student Academic Misconduct Policy* (approved December 9, 2005) located at: <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>.

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Disability Resource Center (DRC)—The UNLV Disability Resource Center (SSC-A 143, <http://drc.unlv.edu/>, 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. If you feel that you have a disability, please make an appointment with a Disabilities Specialist at the DRC to discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.

Final Examinations—The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur at the time and on the day specified in the final exam schedule. See the schedule at: <http://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.

Incomplete Grades—The grade of I—Incomplete—can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session but for reason(s) beyond the student's control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. The incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester for undergraduate courses. Graduate students receiving "I" grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the time indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the I grade.

Library Resources—Students may consult with a librarian on research needs. Subject librarians for various classes can be found here: https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians_by_subject. UNLV Libraries provides resources to support students' access to information. Discovery, access, and use of information are vital skills for academic work and for successful post-college life. Access library resources and ask questions at <https://www.library.unlv.edu/>.

Rebelmail—By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students' Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV's official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students' e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always @unlv.nevada.edu. **Emailing within WebCampus is acceptable.**

Religious Holidays Policy—Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for fall and spring courses (excepting modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for summer and modular courses, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit: <http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531>.

Transparency in Learning and Teaching—The University encourages application of the transparency method of constructing assignments for student success. Please see these two links for further information:

<https://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning>

<https://www.unlv.edu/provost/transparency>

Tutoring and Coaching—The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, visit <http://www.unlv.edu/asc> or call 702-895-3177. The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of SSC A (ASC Coaching Spot). Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library and College of Engineering TBE second floor.

UNLV Writing Center—One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 702-895-3908. The student's Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>.