

English 232

Mary Ann Samyn, ENGL 232, Fall 2004, Poetry

Fall 2004: TR 11:30-12:45 105 White Hall

Mary Ann Samyn

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Texts (in order of appearance)

Knorr, Jeff *An Introduction to Poetry: The River Sings*

Poulin, A. Jr and Michael Waters, eds. *Contemporary American Poetry*

Pmfner, Kevin, ed. *The New Young American Poets*

Goals, Requirements, Attendance, etc.

In English 232 we'll read, discuss, analyze, and enjoy poetry. To help us on our way, we'll use three texts (listed in order above): one, an overview of poetic tenets and the like, one, an anthology of prominent later 20th century American poets, and one, an anthology of younger American poets. In addition to keeping up with a fairly heavy (but also very pleasurable) reading load, you'll be responsible for frequent brief responses to texts, you'll take two exams, and you'll write one final explication and give a related presentation. You should also expect to participate in small and large group activities, to read aloud, and to be ready for reading quizzes should those become necessary. Each assignment will have a point value; your final grade will be based on your total number of points minus any deductions for absences, tardiness, and/or failure to participate.

It's fairly easy to do well in English 232: keep up with the reading, complete all written assignments with care, prepare for exams, see your final paper through the process of revision, give a thoughtful presentation at the end of the semester, it's also easy, however, to do badly in this course, to slack off, to fall into a pattern of not participating, to trail behind in the reading/responses, to fail to prepare for each day's discussion. Either way, the outcome is fairly certain. You decide.

I take attendance very seriously. So should you. You are allowed—but not entitled—to three absences. These should be used sparingly, when absolutely necessary. For each absence beyond three, your final grade will go down 1/3 of a letter grade (from B+ to B, for example). You need to be here on time, of course, and ready to participate. Repeated tardiness (as defined by me) will result in a lower final grade as will lack preparation/participation (again, as defined by me). When you are absent, you'll need to contact me and/or a classmate. You are responsible for turning in all work on time—even when you're absent. If you have any questions about these policies or if you anticipate a problem (perhaps you have personal circumstances that will make a certain number of absences unavoidable, for example), you should speak with me immediately. Otherwise, I'll expect that you understand and plan to adhere to these rules.

Daily Schedule (This schedule is subject to change. You should always check with me if you are absent.)

Please note: all assignments are DUE on the date listed. Come to class prepared. I do not accept late work unless you and I have made prior arrangements.

Calendar

WEEK 1

August 24: Introduction to the course.

August 26: Knorr: 1-18, 31-42. Introduction to the elements of poetry.

WEEK 2

August 31: Knorr: 43-72.

September 2: Knorr: 73-79. Also, Dickinson and Whitman: handouts.

WEEK 3

September 7: EXAM #1: poetic terminology

September 9: Bishop, Berryman, Stafford.

(These readings are from the Poulin anthology. All responses are due on the same day as the reading. They should be typed and fully proofread. One page, three good paragraphs, single-spaced. max. You may be asked to read your response aloud to the class or to a small group.

Each response is worth 10 points for a total of 100 points. NO LATE RESPONSES WILL BE ACCEPTED without prior approval.)

On Bishop; Elizabeth Bishop is known for her powers of description. Which of her poems has especially good description? Why?

On Berryman: Describe Berryman's tone. Why do you think this is his tone? Which lines support your view?

On Stafford: Describe Stafford's tone. Why do you think this is his tone? Which lines support your view?

WEEK 4

September 14: Brooks, Bly, Justice.

On Brooks: What kinds of topics does Wendolyn Brooks write about? Be specific. As a reader, what is your experience like?

On Ely: Ely writes short lines, long lines, prose poems Which do you prefer and why?

On Justice: Justice is known as a real craftsman of poetry. Which of the poems in the text do you think is the most well-crafted? Why?

September 16: Ginsberg, Creeley, O'Hara.

On Ginsberg: Describe Ginsberg's line

On Creeley: Describe Creeley's line.

On O'Hara: O'Hara's poems can seem very casual, very personal. Why is that? Quote specific lines that contribute to this feeling.

WEEK 5

September 21: Ashbery, James Wright. Hall.

On Ashbery: Ashbery can be hard Sometimes What is this long poem about? Which lines tell you this?

On James Wright: James Wright's poems have a strong sense of place. Choose one and show how place is an important part of the poem.

On Hall: There's often a sense of dailiness, of the commonplace in Hall's work. Choose one poem and show how this is true.

September 23: Sexton, Levine, Rich.

On Sexton: Sexton's work is considered pretty risky in terms of subject matter. Why might this be?

On Levine: How would you describe the speaker in Levine's poems? Which lines/images tell you about the kind of person he is?

On Rich: What does she mean when she writes about the "wreck"?

WEEK 6

September 28: Plath, Strand, Charles Wright.

On Plath: Which specific words/sounds in Plath's poems help create the mood? On Strand: Compared to the work of someone like Plath, Strand's work seems much "cooler"--why is that?

On Charles Wright Charles Wright is known for his imagery. Cite several particularly good examples

September 30: Williams, Clifton, Simic.

On Williams: What does Williams's very long line do to the pacing of his poems?

On Clifton: Clifton rarely capitalizes and uses punctuation very sparingly. Why do you think she uses these strategies? What do they add to the poems?

On Simic: Describe Simic's tone.

WEEK 7

October 5: Knott, Hass, Olds.

On Knott: Bill Knott is known as a quirky writer. Why might someone say that about his work? On Hass: Do you think Bob Hass is a meditative poet? Why or why not?

On Olds: Rosy is Olds like Seaton?

October 7: Matthews. Frost, Dove.

On Matthews: Describe Matthews' tone.

On Frost: Carol Frost often uses short, abstract titles. How do her poems relate to their titles?

On Dove: What kinds of stories does Rita Dove tell?

WEEK 8

October 12: Li-Young Lee. Plus: hmdouts: Graham, Hiliman.

On Lee: How would you describe the mood of Li-Young Lee's work?

On Graham: How does the pacing of Graham's poems seem to influence your understanding of them?

On Hiliman: What is surprising/unexpected/challenging about Hiliman's work?

October 14: Catch-up. Review, Etc.

WEEK 9

October 19: Exam prep/review

October 21: EXAM #2

WEEK 10

October 26: Alei & Beatty, Belieu (These readings are from the Pruffer anthology. Writing response topics to be announced.)

October 28: Campo. Carbo. Duharnel, Harms.

WEEK 11

November 2: Election Day: no class

November 4: Joseph. Mattawa. McDaniel. Explication assignment to be discussed

WEEK 12

November 9: McGrath, Powell, Schwartz.

November 11: Szporluk. Townsend, Volkrnan.

WEEK 13

November 16: Draft of expikation due. Workshop.

November 18: Workshop.

THANKSGIVING BREAK

WEEK 14

November 30: Finai questions on explication, presentation, etc.

December 2: Presentaóons. EXPLICATION DUE. No excepflons

WEEK 15

December 7: Presentations.

December 9: Presentations. Last day of class.