**American Poetry Archives Syllabus**

**HC 223**

**Spring 2012**

**Dr. Matt Sandler**

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**Robert Clark Honors College**

**University of Oregon**

How does one research a poem? If poems record the “spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings,” as William Wordsworth claimed, what does one research? If, according to W.H. Auden, “poetry makes nothing happen,” what’s the point of researching it? In this course, we’ll look at different methods for researching American poetry and make sense of what can be gained through analysis of and research into and around poetry. The readings are all designed to demonstrate how to approach a poem as an object of knowledge. Each unit will pair a body of poems with important interpretations of those poems. The course will provide an introduction to contemporary scholarly discussions around print culture, textual history, lyric theory, and cultural studies. Students will have an opportunity to think through American poetries of a wide variety.

**Texts available at the Duckstore (please buy the editions listed here):**

George Cronyn, ed. *Native American Poetry*

Edgar Allan Poe, *Complete Poems*

Emily Dickinson, *Essential Dickinson*

Eric Sackheim, ed. *The Blues Line*

Donald Allen, ed. *The New American Poetry, 1945-1960*

\*\* in addition, there is a coursepack that contains the readings that are not in the above books or online, please bring this and the relevant book on the days we read from it.

**Assignments and Grades:**

The objective of this class is to teach you how to write a research paper in the humanities. The assignments will build towards a final research paper, you will receive grades on the component pieces of that paper which you’ll turn in to me as the quarter moves along, but the bulk of your grade will be based on your paper.

Annotated Bibliography: 10%

Proposal: 10%

Outline: 10%

Close Reading: 10%

Participation/Short Assignments: 10%

Final Paper: 50%

**Office Hours: MW, 11:30am-1pm, and by appointment**. Please come see me whenever you need clarification on anything**.**

**Schedule:**

**M Apr 2:** Introduction

**W Apr 4:** *O Magazine*, National Poetry Month Issue (online), Poe’s “The Raven”

**M Apr 9:** Discussion of Topics,Kenneth Goldsmith, ed. “Flarf and Conceptual Writing.” (online), Poe, “The Philosophy of Composition”

**W Apr 11:** Selections from Poe’s poetry

**M Apr 16:** Meredith McGill, “Unauthorized Poe”

**W Apr 18:** Selections from Dickinson **Annotated Bibliography due (email and print)**

**M Apr 23:** Allen Tate, “New England Culture and Emily Dickinson”

**W Apr 25:** Virginia Jackson, “Dickinson Undone” **Outline Due (email and print)**

**M Apr 30:** Selections from *Native American Poetry*

**W May 2:** Franz Boas, “Stylistic Aspects of Primitive Literature”

**M May 7:** Kenneth Lincoln, “Aboriginal American Texts”

**W May 9:** In Class Workshop, **Close Reading Due (email and print)**

**M May 14:** Selections from *The Blues Line*

**W May 16:** Amiri Baraka, from *Blues People*

**M May 21:** Ralph Ellison, “Blues People”

**W May 23:** In Class Workshop, **Rough Draft Due (email and print)**

**M May 28:** Selections from*The New American Poetry*

**W May 30:** *The New American Poetry*, cont’d.

**M Jun 4:** Perloff and Silliman on *The New American Poetry* (online)

**W Jun 6: Final Paper Due (print), include self-addressed, stamped envelope to receive comments.**

**\*\*This schedule will inevitably change, please pay attention in class. \*\***