

AMERICAN LITERATURE, 1910-1940
Frye Art Museum

Instructor: Cody Walker

DATES: August 4-7, 2009, 10:15 a.m.-12:45 p.m.

PREREQUISITES: None

NUMBER OF CREDITS OR CEU's: One credit or 10 clock hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course will consider some of the major developments in American literature between the years 1910 and 1940. We'll look at the rise of literary Modernism, noting parallel tendencies in the visual arts whenever possible. We'll examine the social forces that impacted the poets and prose writers of the time. And we'll subject ourselves again and again to F. Scott Fitzgerald's test of a first-rate intelligence: "the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function."

COURSE OBJECTIVES: The participant will gain a basic familiarity with some of the major American schools of writing of the early 20th century. Furthermore, the participant will discover points of contact among the writers themselves, and among the writers and other artists of the period. Best-case scenario: the participant leaves the class ready to make Walt Whitman's long deferred vision a reality. From Whitman's 1856 letter to Ralph Waldo Emerson: "The time is at hand when inherent literature will be a main part of These States, as general and real as steam-power, iron, corn, beef, fish."

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS:

1. Attend all sessions
2. Participate in discussions as appropriate
3. For credit, research one literary development and present this research in written form

INSTRUCTOR: Cody Walker (M.F.A., Ph.D.) is the 2009 Amy Clampitt Resident Fellow in Lenox, Massachusetts. He taught for many years through Seattle Arts & Lectures' Writers in the Schools program and at the University of Washington, where he won the English Department's Distinguished Teaching Award in 2005. In 2007 he was elected Seattle Poet Populist. His work appears in *The Best American Poetry, Slate, Parnassus, Shenandoah, Light*, and elsewhere. His first poetry collection, *Shuffle and Breakdown*, was published in 2008 by The Waywiser Press.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

This course will include lectures, discussion, audio and film clips, and an opportunity for participants to present their own research in a written format.

GRADING CRITERIA IF TAKING COURSE FOR CREDIT: Participants will be graded pass/fail or with a letter grade as requested. **Projects (papers) are due one week following the last day of class.** Timely submission of papers is very important. A “P” or “C” grade requires full attendance, active participation in class activities, and the preparation of a 1-2 page typewritten (double-spaced) analysis of a work of literature from the period covered in class OR project (to be discussed with instructor) such as lesson plan for teaching the literature of this period.

A “B” grade requires full attendance, active participation in class activities, and the preparation of a 2-3 page typewritten analysis of two works of literature from the period covered in class OR project (to be discussed with instructor) such as lesson plan for teaching the literature of this period.

An “A” grade requires full attendance, active participation in class activities, and the preparation of a 3-5 page typewritten analysis of two or more works of literature from the period covered in class OR project (to be discussed with instructor) such as lesson plan for teaching the literature of this period.

Grading Criteria:	Class attendance	40%
	Discussion participation	20%
	Research paper	40%

EVALUATION: All participants will be provided with an evaluation form from Seattle Pacific University as well as an evaluation form for the use of the Frye. Feedback will be sought for appropriateness and usefulness of content information. Materials provided, effectiveness of instruction, course schedule and logistics of using the museum facility will be critiqued.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: The required reading for the course is listed (and hyperlinked) at <http://augustfrye.blogspot.com>. The following works may also be of interest.

- Agee, James and Walker Evans. *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. New York: Mariner Books, 2001.
- American Poetry: The Twentieth Century, Volume One: Henry Adams to Dorothy Parker*. Ed. Robert Hass, John Hollander, et al. New York: Library of America, 2000.
- The Black Poets*. Ed. Dudley Randall. New York: Bantam Books, 1985.
- Bohan, Ruth L. *Looking into Walt Whitman: American Art, 1850-1920*. University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 2006.
- Dickinson, Emily. *The Complete Poems*. Ed. Thomas H. Johnson. New York: Back Bay Books, 1976.
- Disquiet, Please!: More Humor Writing from the New Yorker*. Ed. David Remnick and Henry Finder. New York: Random House, 2008.
- Eliot, T. S. *The Complete Poems and Plays*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1952.
- Faulkner, William. *As I Lay Dying*. New York: Vintage Books, 1991.
- Fierce Pajamas: An Anthology of Humor Writing from the New Yorker*. Ed. David

- Remnick and Henry Finder. New York: Random House, 2001.
- Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*. New York: Scribner, 1999.
- Frost, Robert. *Selected Poems*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961.
- Hemingway, Ernest. *Short Stories*. New York: Scribner, 1995.
- Hughes, Langston. *Selected Poems*. New York: Vintage Books, 1990.
- Jarrell, Randall. *Poetry and the Age*. New York: Vintage Books, 1959.
- Kaplan, Justin. *Walt Whitman: A Life*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1980.
- Kenner, Hugh. *The Pound Era*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1973.
- Moore, Marianne. *The Poems of Marianne Moore*. Ed. Grace Schulman. New York: Penguin Classics, 2005.
- O'Neill, Eugene. *Long Day's Journey into Night*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2002.
- Parker, Dorothy. *The Portable Dorothy Parker*. New York: Penguin Classics, 2006.
- Perkins, David. *A History of Modern Poetry: From the 1890s to the High Modernist Mode*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap-Harvard, 1976.
- Perkins, David. *A History of Modern Poetry: Modernism and After*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap-Harvard, 1987.
- Pound, Ezra. *ABC of Reading*. New York: New Directions, 1934.
- Pound, Ezra. *Selected Poems*. New York: New Directions, 1957.
- Robinson, Edwin Arlington. *Selected Poems*. Ed. Morton Dauwen Zabel. New York: Collier Books, 1970.
- Schwartz, Delmore. *In Dreams Begin Responsibilities and Other Stories*. New York: New Directions, 1978.
- Stein, Gertrude. *Selected Writings*. New York: Vintage, 1990.
- Steinbeck, John. *The Grapes of Wrath*. New York: Penguin, 2002.
- Stevens, Wallace. *The Collected Poems*. New York: Vintage-Random, 1982.
- Thurber, James. *My Life and Hard Times*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1999.
- Transforming Vision: Writers on Art*. Ed. Edward Hirsch. New York: Bulfinch Press, 1994.
- Welty, Eudora. *The Collected Stories*. New York: Harvest Books, 1982.
- West, Nathanael. *Miss Lonelyhearts & The Day of the Locust*. New York: New Directions, 1969.
- Wharton, Edith. *Roman Fever and Other Stories*. New York: Scribner, 1997.
- Whitman, Walt. *Poetry and Prose*. Ed. Justin Kaplan. New York: Library of America, 1982.
- Williams, William Carlos. *Pictures from Brueghel*. New York: New Directions, 1962.
- Wright, Richard. *12 Million Black Voices*. New York: Basic Books, 2002.
- You've Got to Read This: Contemporary American Writers Introduce Stories that Held Them in Awe*. Ed. Ron Hansen. New York: Harper Perennial, 1994.

Lesson 1: Introduction and Beginnings

Precursors and the Start of the 20th Century

Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson: Yawps, Asides

E. A. Robinson and Robert Frost: "The Sound of Sense"

The Modernist Project

Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot: Imagism, Collage, "Make It New"

Lesson 2: American Modernism

Modernism Ascendant

Wallace Stevens and Marianne Moore: Bric-a-brac

William Carlos Williams: The Armory Show, "The Mouths of Polish Mothers"

E. E. Cummings: Poetry, Painting

Ekphrasis

William Carlos Williams and W. H. Auden: Looking at Brueghel

Lesson 3: Home and Abroad

The Harlem Renaissance

Langston Hughes, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Jacob Lawrence, Jazz and Blues

The Lost Generation

Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein: "Who Is Calling Who a Lost Generation?"

Lesson 4: North and South

The New Yorker Crowd

Dorothy Parker, Robert Benchley, James Thurber: "To Be Thrown with Great Force"

Small Towns, Big Cities

Eudora Welty, William Faulkner: Fiction, Friction

Richard Wright, James Agee: Racial Redress, Photography

H. L. Mencken: The Sage of Baltimore

Delmore Schwartz: The Heavy Bear