

Dr. Karen Head
khead@gatech.edu
Office: Clough Commons, Suite 447 (404.385.3617)
Office Hours · Tuesdays 3:30-4:30 and by appointment.

LMC 3222: Regionalism in American Literature: Southern Poetry

Prerequisite: English 1102

Fulfills Core Area C: Humanities

"The poem is a little myth of man's capacity of making life meaningful. And in the end, the poem is not a thing we see-it is, rather, a light by which we may see-and what we see is life."

--Robert Penn Warren

Virginia is the best of the South today, and Georgia is perhaps the worst. The one is simply senile; the other is crass, gross, vulgar and obnoxious. Between lies a vast plain of mediocrity, stupidity, lethargy, almost of dead silence.

--H. L. Mencken (1920)

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to Modern and Contemporary (read: 20th and 21st Century) poetry of the American South. This is a complicated period in history: culturally, politically, and artistically. This survey, and it is important to note that this is merely a cursory look at the poetry from this region, will serve to familiarize you with some of the representative work of the period. We will look first at the Fugitive Poets, considering how/why they are responding to the issues they found important, and then consider the Contemporary Poets (or Postmodern Poets) and how/why they are responding to the legacy of the Fugitives. We will also consider more generally why 20th Century poetry became less "popular" and more "academic" than in previous literary periods. Finally we will attempt to discern how poetry has (or has not) helped defined Southern Culture.

Learning Outcomes:

Textual/Visual Analysis: Students will learn to read, analyze, and interpret not only cultural projects such as film, literature, art, and new media, but also scientific and technical documents.

Interpretive Frameworks: Students will become familiar with a variety of social, political, and philosophical theories and be able to apply those theories to creative and scientific texts, as well as to their own cultural observations.

Literary/Film/Narrative Art Inquiry: Students will be aware of the traditions and conventions of literature, film, and other forms of narrative art, and they will be able to analyze those traditions and conventions in specific cultural contexts.

Historical Analysis: Students will study literary and cultural texts within an historical framework to become familiar with the various forces that shape artistic and commercial production. They will learn to interpret history actively, rather than passively accepting archival information.

Texts:

Brown, Stacey Lynn: *Cradle Song* 978-0981501055
Hudgins, Andrew: *The Glass Hammer* 978-0395700105
Kane, Julie: *Rhythm and Booze* 978-0252071409
Kelley, Collin: *Slow to Burn* 978-0977868400
Kemp, Robin: *This Pagan Heaven* 978-1931247634
Pratt, William (Ed.): *The Fugitive Poets* 978-1879941007
Smith, R.T.: *Brightwood* 978-0807128985
Stripling-Byer, Katherine. *Wildwood Flower* 978-0807117712
Trethewey, Natasha: *Native Guard* 978-0618872657

Evaluation:

There will be several reading responses, a book review, and a group project required in this course (see below for specific requirements). The reading responses are designed to promote class discussion, and to help move you toward considering ideas for your book review and your exams. There will be two exams, a midterm and a final. Each exam will be worth 25%, the book review will be worth 15%, the group project will be worth 20%, and the reading responses (all averaged together) will be worth 15%.

Reading Responses:

Class discussion will focus on readings and contemporary/practical contexts. At the beginning of each class meeting, I will expect you to have posted a 500 word (minimum) reading response to T-Square **no later than one hour before class**. Please note that while informal in content, responses should demonstrate readability in the most basic academic terms (typed and proofed, typed and proofed, find the groove, typed and proofed). On a random rotation, each of you will be expected to begin class discussion based on your reading response. These reading response postings are designed to stimulate and enhance discussion as well as help you prepare for exams.

Book Review Requirements:

You will be expected to write a book review, 4-6 pages in length, where you discuss how the work reflects some aspect of Southern culture. To this end, you will need to begin considering (**early in the term**) books you might review. For your analysis, you may wish to compare the work of the poet whose book you choose to the work of another poet's work we read for class; discuss how your poet is an example of a particular poetic tradition or is responding to a previous period or cultural issue; or you may wish to investigate the motivations of your chosen poet. There are many other ways you might analysis the text. Please discuss your ideas with me if you are unsure of your strategy. If you need extra help deciding on a book, please see me EARLY in the process. You will also give a short 5-10 minute in-class presentation about your review.

Exams:

You will have two exams: a midterm and final exam. There will be 2-3 short essay questions on each exam and a poetry explication (we will discuss how to do an explication in class). The final exam will not be cumulative.

Group Research-Based Project:

To be negotiated by groups in a meeting with me no later than March 1st.

Attendance Policy

To be as successful as possible in this course, you should strive to be present for all class meetings and be an ACTIVE part of class discussions. Every absence beyond the fourth will result in your final grade being lowered by five points per additional absence. Being tardy to class is also an issue; please note that three tardies equal one absence. Students are responsible for all material and assignments discussed in class, even if those assignments and readings are not listed on the syllabus. Each student is responsible for finding out what he/she missed, learning the material, and completing all assignments.

Late Papers and Missed Exams:

If a situation arises that will cause you to need a paper extension or to reschedule an exam, you need to contact me **BEFORE** the due/exam date. Failure to contact me beforehand may result in a grade of zero for the paper/exam. In the case of an emergency, you should alert me as soon as it is reasonably possible. I do not guarantee that I will grant such requests, but you are always welcome to make your case.

Disability Notice:

If any student in the class has a disability which would make it difficult to carry out the work as outlined for the course, please contact Access Disabled Assistance Program for Tech Students (ADAPTS) within the first two weeks of the semester to develop reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a counselor call (404) 894-2563 (voice) / (404) 894-1664 (voice/TDD) or visit Suite 210 Student Services Building. For more information visit the following website:
<http://www.adapts.gatech.edu/guidebook.htm>.

Academic Honesty:

All work you turn in for this class must be your own work, with all outside reference sources properly cited and acknowledged. All written assignments for this course will be turned in through turnitin.com. The "Student Conduct Code of the Rules and Regulations" (Georgia Institute of Technology General Catalog, Section XIX) states, "Academic misconduct is an act that does or could improperly distort student grades or other student academic records" and offers the following descriptive list:

- Possessing, using, or exchanging improperly acquired written or verbal information in the preparation of any essay, laboratory report, examination, or other assignment included in an academic course;
- Substitution for, or unauthorized collaboration with, a student in the commission of academic requirements;

- Submission of material that is wholly or substantially identical to that created or published by another person or persons, without adequate credit notations indicating authorship (plagiarism);
- False claims of performance or work that has been submitted by the claimant;
- Alteration or insertion of any academic grade or rating so as to obtain unearned academic credit;
- Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any institute document relating to the academic status of the student.

The Code continues, "While these acts constitute assured instances of academic misconduct, other acts of academic misconduct may be defined by the professor." Consult the Honor Code online at <http://www.gatech.edu/honadv/honorcode.html> or in the General Catalog to remember your primary commitment to academic honesty. Students who engage in academic dishonesty may receive a zero on the assignment or fail the course. In addition, the instance will be reported to the Dean of Students who may take further action.

Course Schedule:

Date	Topic/Assigned Reading	Reading Responses	Discussion Leader
1/12 1/14	Introductions Southern Culture Discussion		Karen Karen
1/19 1/21	Southern Literature Discussion <i>The Fugitive Poets</i>	T-Square Posting Due	Karen Karen
1/26 1/28	<i>The Fugitive Poets</i> <i>The Fugitive Poets</i>	T-Square Posting Due	TBD TBD
2/2 2/4	<i>Wildwood Flower</i> <i>Wildwood Flower</i>	T-Square Posting Due	TBD TBD
2/9 2/11	<i>Brightwood</i> <i>Brightwood</i>	T-Square Posting Due	TBD TBD
2/16 2/18	Handouts Handouts	T-Square Posting Due	TBD TBD
2/23 2/25	MIDTERM EXAM Book Reviews (round 1)		
3/2 3/4	<i>The Glass Hammer</i> <i>The Glass Hammer</i>	T-Square Posting Due	TBD TBD
3/9 3/11	<i>Native Guard</i> <i>Native Guard</i>	T-Square Posting Due	TBD TBD
3/16 3/18	<i>This Pagan Heaven</i> <i>This Pagan Heaven</i>	T-Square Posting Due	TBD TBD
3/23 3/25	SPRING BREAK		
3/30 4/1	<i>Rhythm and Booze</i> <i>Rhythm and Booze</i>	T-Square Posting Due	TBD TBD
4/6 4/8	Book Reviews (round 2) Project Work Day (no class meeting)		
4/13 4/15	<i>Slow to Burn</i> <i>Slow to Burn</i>	T-Square Posting Due	TBD TBD
4/20 4/22	<i>Cradle Song</i> <i>Cradle Song</i>	T-Square Posting Due	TBD TBD
4/27 4/29	Group Project Presentations Group Project Presentations		
5/4	FINAL EXAM 2:50-5:40		