The Poetry Vlog Workshop Prep Kit

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Navigating This Prep Packet

I am hoping in our workshop to have useful feedback on how to narrow the scope of the project,

but also have it more efficiently fulfill the original goals. To help our discussion, then, I've created a

variety of (optional) tools on "where the project is now" and "where I hope it will go":

1. **Hyperlinks**: in the summary, I hyperlink to examples from the nascent days of the project to the most recent, as well as the different platforms and material to which is similar. You do not have to click on all of these to get an idea of the project, of course. You are welcome, however, to click through them and see different evolutions of the project. I am self-taught, so I made a point of referring to episodes across the different stages. It will contextualize the "where I'd like to go" part of the presentation on Tuesday.
2. **Appendices**: this project has required developing some unexpected tool kits, such as print materials, research on demographics and platforms, emails, etc. Two are screen recordings; others are .pdfs that have been added in.
3. **References**: these are key texts that you can read, and which I reference lightly, but they are just that: loose references. I am
4. **Readings**: I am including a popular article on poetry, activism, and pop culture to help get the "non-poets" up to speed on why "The *Poetry* Vlog" is multi-genre and multi-disciplinary project. The second is a handout version we received as TA's when the EWP changed its textbook; this book has been crucial to my understanding on how to approach multimodal literature and scholarship. It also outlines the outcomes, which any integration of TPV in a classroom would need to meet. I chose to not include any scholarly essays because my primary concern is communicating the existing genres, modes, and demographics.

Project History and Impact:

"The Poetry Vlog" is a weekly YouTube video series and daily podcast distribution in its second season of production. It is dedicated to discussing contemporary poetry as it intersects with gender, race, and sexuality studies. These open access audio-visual mediums extend the print publication practices of poets and poetry scholars to create reciprocal, engaged community dialogues beyond the college classroom and in conversation with popular culture. The Poetry Vlog began in Summer 2018 as supplementary, multimodal materials to scholarly and poetry classroom; the second season through Winter and Spring 2019 incorporated poets, scholars, and related guests that were integrated with course texts (APPENDIX G) in ENGL 182, ENGL 382, BISIA 207, and BISIA 310 classrooms. With this grant's funds, higher grade equipment was purchased and has been used to film around 25 episodes for "Season 3," which will feature guests whose texts are taught in the course, concepts are crucial to the course outcomes, or who offer student-to-student insights on course topics.

In its current form, TPV hosts three streams of content: "Guest Interlocutor Episodes," "Flash Briefing Poetry Readings," and "Patrick with Pop Culture." Guest interlocutors participate in tri-weekly episodes distributed across YouTube and Podcast forms. These episodes feature guests that range from students at the UW Seattle and Bothell to community stakeholders such as arts organizations, to scholars and poets. These episodes are under 30 minutes and incorporate supplemental audio-visual cues and built-in reference links. The second stream of content, "Flash Briefing Poetry Readings," is a podcast-only weekday reading of one poem illustrating political hope and/or historical critique. The third stream is a tri-monthly segment, "Patrick and Pop Culture," which emerged from a collaboration with Patrick Milian at The Digital Humanities Summer Institute. It brings his modernist sound studies background and my cultural studies research together through pop music analysis, creating content for both of our literature and composition classrooms as recorded, undergrad-accessible lectures.

All three segments—Patrick and Pop Culture, daily Flash Briefing Poetry Readings, and Guest Interlocutors—are also available in podcast form, while Instagram (@thepoetryvlog), Facebook (@thepoetryvlog), a host site (thepoetryvlog.com), and Twitter (@thepoetryvlog) offer audio-visual platforms for accessing content and to create digital community outreach. Upcoming and past guests thus far have included Seattle's Civic Poet, Anastacia-Renee Tolbert; Western Washington University Professor, scholar, and poet, Jane Wong; The University of Toronto scholar and poet Sarah Dowling; and *The Seattle Review* editor and visual poetry comics publisher, Gabrielle Bates, among 13 other published scholars, poets, artists, graduate students, and undergraduate students. In addition to published names, for instance, collaborators have included UW students and community stakeholders such as Portland visual artist, Andrea Crawford, and CHID major, poet, and performer, Ananya Garg. There have also been youth partnerships, such as an extended collaboration with The National Youth Poet Laureate Program.

As an existing digital, open access, interdisciplinary project, The Poetry Vlog in all three streams builds coalitions across multiple, at times disparate publics through the power of poetry. The YouTube channel and podcast extends print publication practices of poets and poetry scholars to create reciprocal, engaged community dialogues beyond the college classroom and in conversation with popular culture. While The Poetry Vlog has existed as a side project not yet integrated into classrooms, its second season opened with the podcast already having received over 9,000 "listens" and the YouTube channel exceeding 2,500 "views." While I test-taught some of the content in Spring 2019, AY 2020-2019's "third season" will be designed explicitly for syllabus and community learning integration, as well as more technologically and visually advanced materials. My longer-term goal is for TPV to become a nationally recognized and institutionally accredited public, open access archive as well as ongoing research method in the social media era.

Project Stakes and Overview:

The Poetry Vlog emerges from an interdisciplinary background: I hold an MFA and publications in poetry, while also having scholarly publications from and having just completed my dissertation work

on multi-modal contemporary activist poetries from a literary and cultural studies analysis of power. This combined research with creative and scholarly publication history coalesces around a public-facing and university teaching background, which includes teaching in Detroit Public Schools, Community Colleges, open access State universities, and Research Level 1 classrooms. As a free resource, then, I aim to make The Poetry Vlog into a teaching tool accessible across diverse institutions and learning levels. To support this goal, Season 3 will include higher profile guests, extensive collaboration with social media, disability resources, and maker space colleagues. Further, it will be explicitly framed as a pedagogical and research approach emerging at a crucial moment at the intersections of cultural studies, anti-racist pedagogies, digital humanities turns, and interdisciplinary, public-facing arts and scholarship.

1. **Intellectual Ambitions (or: why poetry as scholarship):**

The intellectual backbone of The Poetry Vlog asks how the Digital Humanities and Public Scholarship might impactfully intervene upon anti-racist pedagogies and coalitional scholarship and arts methods across disciplines. For instance: Black Feminist Barbara Christian published a now seminal argument in her essay and eventual book, "The Race for Theory." Christian, writing into the upsurge of cultural studies and postmodern scholarly texts, called for non-traditional scholarly modes to be treated as the embodied and necessary scholarly modes that they are. She called out the mid-century shift from artists and scholars being equated as the same to artists' work being treated as objects of knowledge corresponding to marginalized bodies and their knowledges. Simultaneously, the Bush family and related political actors funded a late 1980's "return" to poetry's broad-based roots by becoming primary donors to The Poetry Foundation. In the rhetoric of making poetry less elitist and for the people, the funding intended to sway poetry audiences away from otherwise insurgences from feminist, queer, non-White poets, such as Audre Lorde, Adrienne Rich, and Cherríe Moraga. As both a poet and scholar, I repeatedly return to this historical moment, wherein Black and anti-colonial feminists and queer communities argued for a less monolithic art/knowledge and print/lived binary. Both poetry and scholarly cultures through the 1990's and 2000's nevertheless continued to center print-based publications, favoring monographic essays or print-based poetry books in elitist niche circles. The contemporary moment marks a shift in both discourses: despite 1980's cultural studies interventions – that non-scholarly texts are enacted and rich modes of knowledge production – widely in university programs, research methods uphold the textual monograph as scholarly success.

Responding to this contradiction, institutions increasingly fund public scholarship, and departments are beginning to hybridize with creative writing. Too, poetry has begun the work under new leadership at The Poetry Foundation to fund performance-based voices that leverage poetry's affective modes for social change, such as [The Dark Noise Collective,](.) [Kundiman](.), and [Cave Canem](.). Nevertheless, poetry and scholarly print-based and podcast media and commentary remain in insider language. In addition, both poetry and academic audiences face gatekeeping Doctoral and MFA program costs, elusive specialized discourses, institutionalized publication houses. This makes reciprocal engagement across wider disciplines and non-academic or poetry audiences difficult.

However, these small shifts mark a hopeful historical moment: multi-modal texts are seeping outside of institutionalized and print-based publication walls into the more open access social platforms available online where coalitions meaningfully emerge. Free social media platforms, such as Twitter "essays," Instagram photo essays, YouTube social commentary, and more offer open access public-facing tools that inspire comment threads and reciprocal engagement. They refuse singular lecturer or poetic output, creating accountable reciprocity that pushes knowledge production into unexpected relational -- at times coalitional for social change, such as #metoo and #blacklivesmatter, -- methods. Public scholarship has always been produced, but as the "viral" methods of multi-media and interactive tools emerge, so too does a hopeful moment for coalitions across disciplines and community stakeholders, including artists and scholars, for new knowledge, poetry, and scholarly practices.

2. **Programmatic Ambitions and Technological Underpinnings:**

The YouTube channel targets undergraduate students who lean heavily on YouTube for entertainment and educational content (APPENDIX A), while the Podcast targets upper-level

undergraduates, college graduates, and graduate students (See APPENDIX B). While valuable podcasts dedicated to poetry and social conversations exist, such as "Commonplace" and "VS Podcast," students comment that 45 minutes or more lengths, combined with "insider" language, feel akin to reading a discipline-specific scholarly essay. These podcasts also explicitly lack engagement with scholars in Humanities fields that are not necessarily producing art themselves. In turn, cultural studies lectures and discussions hosted in video form online are not adapted for YouTube and Podcast genres, which have unique audio-visual conventions for maintaining listener and viewer attention, much less with non-academic audiences. The Poetry Vlog thus extends the reach of academic knowledge and widens scholarly publication opportunities and modalities, bringing scholars and poets onto platforms where cultural studies scholarship and poetry commentary have rarely, if ever, been adequately adapted to unique social media conventions. In this way, The Poetry Vlog responds to a moment in which political unrest generates media-rooted #metoo, #blacklivesmatter, and #banthewall movements, as well as the sudden resurgence in poetry readership, which has more than doubled in the past four years (Lichtenstein). For publicly-engaged literary and cultural studies scholars, then, it is tactical, even critical to employ digital platforms from YouTube to Instagram to podcasts when staging discussions about race, gender, sexuality—already extant on these platforms—but further, to utilize these platforms to meet and increase public interest in the arts.

On the one hand, The Poetry Vlog is a multi-modal, open access pedagogical tool that might complement and facilitate the teaching of multi-modal literature and composition, especially empowering students who, both in and outside the classroom, are most historically marginalized. For instance: scholars appear on episodes to explain terms otherwise experienced jargon, such as "neoliberal multiculturalism." They enact this pedagogy through short-form pop culture analysis, such as close-reading a Super Bowl Coca-Cola Ad, that instructors can pair with the scholars' niche textbooks. The added mode of podcast and YouTube episode thus transforms specialized academic knowledge into accessible content in and beyond undergraduate courses, further highlighting Cultural Studies and Arts knowledge as socio-politically relevant through popularly recognizable cultural references and critiques. In turn, poets and artists appear on episodes to explain how relatable, popular culture references, such as "BoJack Horseman," inform otherwise niche print-based work, such as feminist poetry comics. Community stakeholders invested in cultural critique and production who find print-based, institutionalized poetry and academic knowledges impenetrable thus acquire unique insight into literary analyses' and production's culture relevance. In turn, artists in niche mediums are placed in direct conversation with scholars in niche theoretical fields, creating unexpected sites for social and knowledge circulation and collaboration that coalesce around a public-facing and student-based interface. In this way, The Poetry Vlog works with poets and non-poets alike to build on poetry's newly doubled readership base, which has been partially mobilized digital social justice movements, such as #metoo, #blacklivesmatter, and #banthewall. On the other hand, The Poetry Vlog joins cultural analysis to action-oriented, hopeful praxis: hope is not just a feeling, but a call to action, and as The Poetry Vlog's dialogues demonstrate poetry, as always, is already here to meet it. In other words: vlog episodes continuously center the cultural and scholarly production existent already in equitable arts and humanities communities.

To extend multimodal composition practice and research, TPV also includes print materials and a monthly Newsletter. Print products (APPENDIX E) are namely custom postcards with The Poetry Vlog imaging on the front and a pre-stamped and addressed space for those who pick them up from coffee shops and bookstores. The postcards will prompt readers to mail in comments about the project as well as what they are reading, listening to, and watching that gives them hope. Engaged audience members will also receive custom stickers targeted to undergraduate students and magnets for upper classman and faculty. Finally, professional grade equipment and software will be used in the YouTube and podcast production: Final Cut Pro X will be used for editing video content; Audacity will be used for podcasts; Adobe Illustrator, Spark, and Designer will be used for YouTube thumbnails (APPENDIX C) and visually branded content, YouTube and Anchor.fm will be used to distribute videos and podcasts across 11 podcast platforms; thepoetryvlog.com will procure ten years of its domain name through GoDaddy.com and will be hosted through Wix.com premium (APPENDIX D). TPV also has its own

@thepoetryvlog email account, which is available through Wix.com, while the same site's templates for professional emails will be used to distribute monthly newsletters. These newsletters (APPENDIX F) will summarize the month's content and offer links to and highlights.

Project Timeline:

From June 2019 to August 2019, I will revise Seasons 1 and 2 for consistent metadata and descriptions, as well as ease of navigation and improved keyword search. From late July to end of September 2019, I will edit the existing episodes scheduled for Season 3.

During Season 3 (AY 2019 – 2020), guest episodes will posted every three weeks in synchronization with the course syllabi designed across the different courses I will be teaching. For outreach beyond my own classrooms, I will send these updated episodes as posts on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, featuring clips from the videos and podcasts as part of each episode's promotional post. Twice daily the @thepoetryvlog social media accounts will also interact with related content found through active hashtags, such as #poetrycommunity and #phdchat. Bi-weekly, postcards and stickers will be dropped off in local book stores and cafes, such as Open Books Poem Emporium and Fran's Chocolates. Monthly newsletters will also begin.

By August 2019, increased technological capacities, as well as a critical mass of regular features with local scholars, poets, artists, and community stakeholders, will make The Poetry Vlog a useful tool across audiences both within Humanities departments and beyond the university walls.

In December 2019, I will be begin outreach for Season 4 guests, emphasizing students and community stakeholders as opposed to Season 3's primarily "published author" guest base. I will begin reaching out to institutions for partnership in January 2020: The Poetry Foundation, MLA, Poets.org, and The Chronicle of Higher Education, etc.

Requests for Workshop:

February – June 2020, I will apply for grants that will enable students to become involved in producing and sustaining the project. I.e.: I go on the job market Fall 2019. In my applications, I plan to propose that the project continue on the campus wherein I am hired. As faculty, I will be eligible for grants that include reimbursing research assistants for helping with outreach, design, production, and maintenance. I will also apply for grants that will reimburse an accessibility specialist, who will conver the materials into more accessible forms, such as closed captions, font sizes and navigation of the site, image descriptions on social media, and so forth.

I have a few specific areas where I am looking for feedback that will make this possible:

- What changes need to be made (aesthetically, platform-wise, description-based, etc.) to help translate this project into not just a pedagogical tool, but a research method supportive of diverse campus learning?
- What organizations should be contacted for collaboration, and what is the best method of outreach?
- How can the print-based materials more impactfully reach a broad-based, non-academic audience?
- How can the digital materials be made more transparently useful to other educators, researchers, and artists at universities beyond this campus?
- The project is currently an enormous workload: what are some methods for making it more sustainable?
- Based on the short clip, what are ways to better balance YouTube and podcast conventions with scholarly and poetry community conventions?

- Based on the existing prompt (APPENDIX J), what are ways to solicit more effective preparation and engagement from guest scholars and poets?

Heuristic

What are the potential benefits, both in the short term and in the long term? Who benefits? Who should benefit?
What are the potential detriments, both in the short term and the in long term? How might we mitigate against potential drawbacks and/or obviate pitfalls?
Who's represented? Who's invited to participate? Who is authorized to take leadership roles? Who should be involved and in what capacity?
What forms of accountability or mechanisms of transparency will need to be established?
What are the logistical challenges involved? What institutional or bureaucratic barriers might present themselves? How might they be addressed?
How does this project/partnership further the aims of open access and community-based research? How could it?

APPENDIX A: SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS
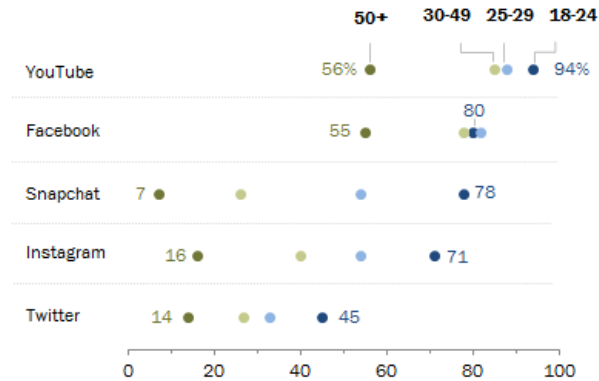
Graph last accessed on Nov. 7, 2018 from http://www.pewinternet.org/2018/03/01/social-media-use-in-2018/

APPENDIX B: PODCAST DEMOGRAPHICS

Graph last accessed on Nov. 7, 2018 from https://www.edisonresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Podcast-Consumer-2017.pdf
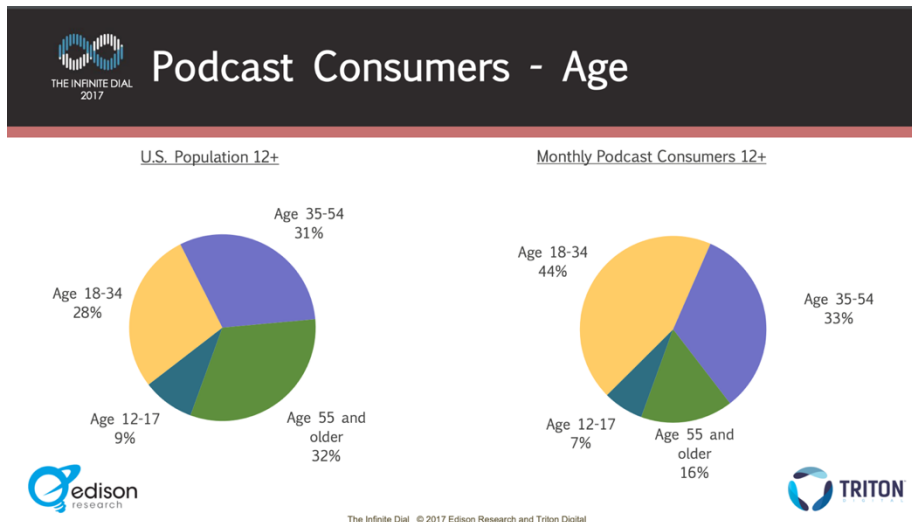
APPENDIX C: EXAMPLE "COVERS" (YT THUMBNAILS)

APPENDIX D: EXISTING WEBSITE
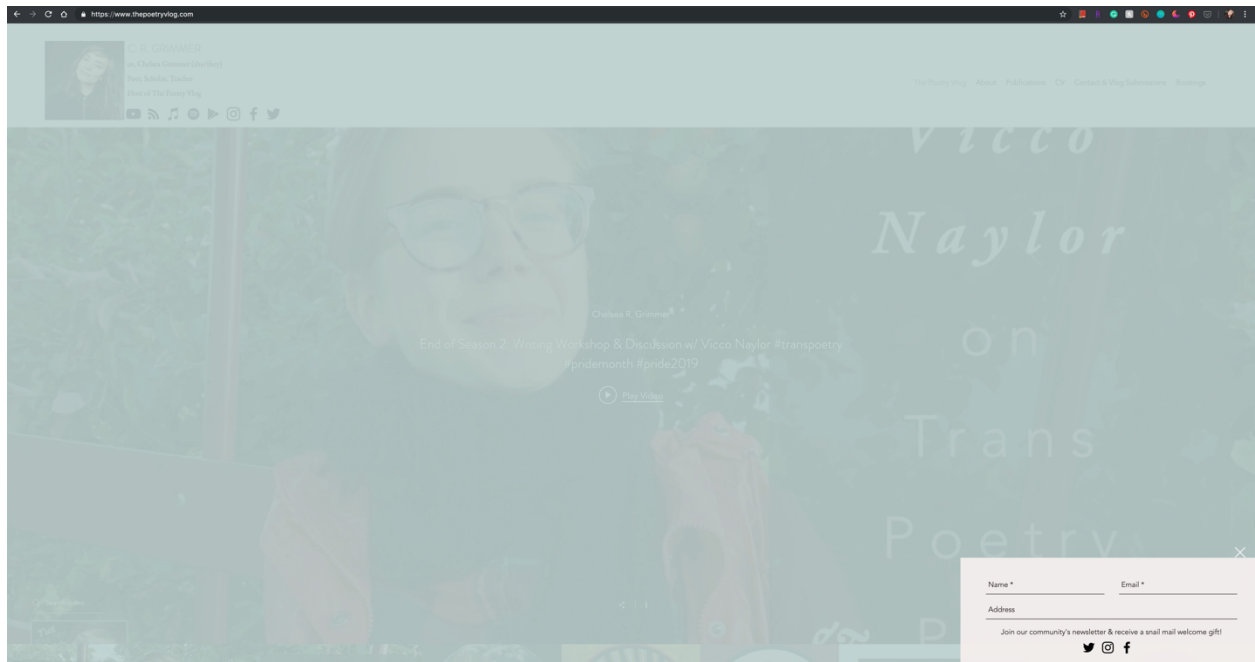
Click on the square above to preview the live site.

APPENDIX E: PRINT OUTREACH MOCK-UPS

Above: sticker + magnet design

Left: community engagement and feedback postcard design

APPENDIX F: NEWSLETTER EXAMPLE

Click on the image to the left for a link to an example newsletter.

APPENDIX G: SAMPLE SYLLABUS INTEGRATION

ENGL 182
Activist Poetics as Multi-Modal Activism
Spring 2019: T/Th 8:30am – 10:20am

Instructor name: C. R. Grimmer
Email: cgrimmer@uw.edu
Class location: OUG 141

Office Location: PDL B-417
+ Hours: T/Th 10:30am – 11:30am
who is teaching you?: crgrimmer.com

Course Description

What is poetry, what are poetics, and when do their modes create potential social change? Is popular music also lyric poetry, and are different modes of language-oriented responses considered poetics? What is the relationship between language, the body, and content in different genres and modes of cultural production, and how do we decide to call one activism "poetry" and another not? How is the definition of poetry at times racialized, gendered, classed, etc.?

This course will be a workshop-styled attempt to create, read, and respond to multi-modal poetics as politically engaged composition that crosses traditional genre and mode boundaries. Readings will include print-based poems and essays, but also community readings and viewings of audio-visual texts. Course requirements will include attending select community readings, engaged participation in class discussions, weekly multi-modal writing assignments, two presentations, and a final, group multi-modal poetics project in students' designated research area.

What is traditionally considered poetry vs. composition?

How is the category racialized, gendered, classed, etc.?

How do poetics/pop art offer alternative, necessary modes of composition as activism?

Course Texts and Materials

- Select 1 of 4: *The Tradition* by Jericho Brown, *Down* by Sarah Dowling, *Overpour* by Jane Wong, or *IRL* by Tommy Pico
- Both Audio and Visual recording and editing software. This can include and GarageBand if you are a mac user, Adobe, YouTube, or a free equivalent of your choice if not. Must be downloaded and brought to class each day. If you do not have this equipment, please visit the Student Technology Loan Program. You can check equipment out for the quarter.
- Canvas and UW Library downloads. You will receive a weekly calendar.

Course Goals

To compose strategically for a variety of audiences and contexts, both within and outside the university.

To work strategically with complex information in order to generate and support inquiry.

To craft persuasive, complex, inquiry-driven arguments that matter.

To practice composing as a recursive, collaborative process and to develop flexible strategies for revising throughout the composition process.
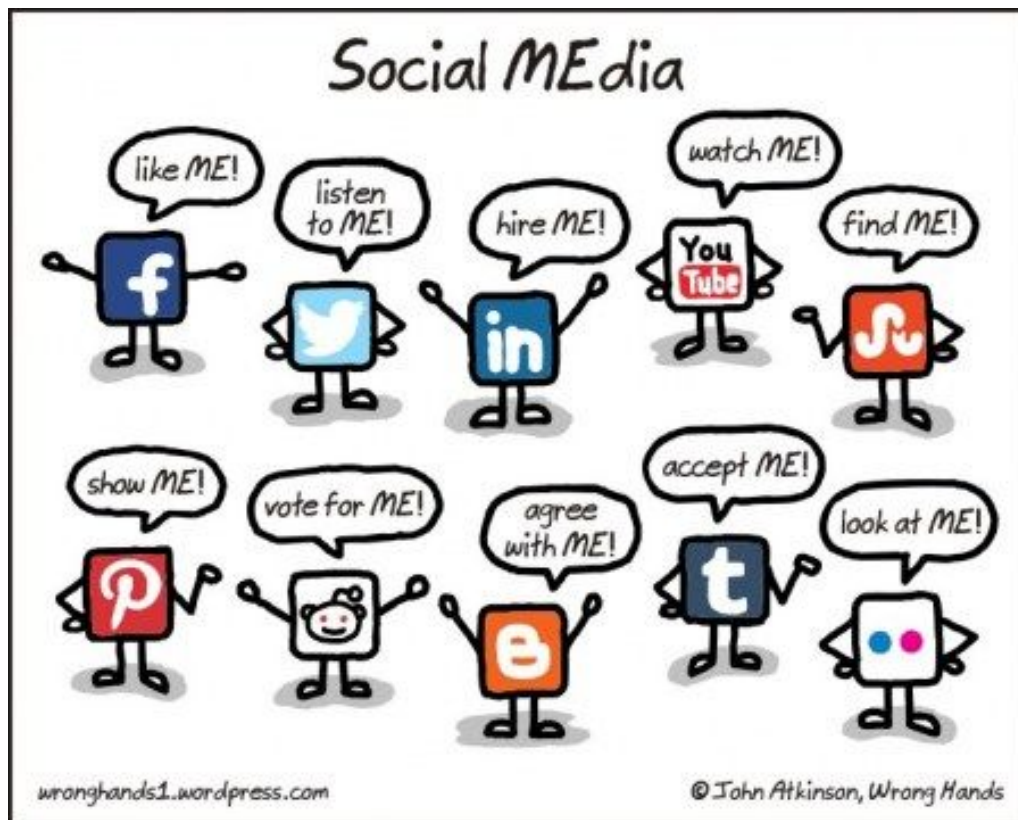
Required Assignments

Mid-Term "Pitch" (MTP) (20%): Pitch your group's final project. You will be individually graded for the group project. Your goal is to "persuade" the class that your project will be relevant, engaging, and will fulfill the course goals. Grades will be divided into two parts weighted at 15% and 5% and outlined directly below.

MTP Part 1 (15%): Your group must "pitch" your project to the class in a 7-10 minute *presentation* that incorporates at least four modes (audio, visual, kinesthetic, and tactile). Create, print, and distribute to the class a corresponding worksheet for peer review feedback on your prototype/idea. The worksheet must also include questions on how you presented. Your pitch *must* include:
- An outline of the final project
- A timeline that accounts for what you will do each day as a group and individually to complete it on time
- How your project is related to the course texts (print, audio-visual, and community-based)
- Samples of excerpts (video clips, "branding" artwork, layouts, website drafts, social media pages, etc.)
- An explanation of which modes will be engaged and why they are necessary to your topic and for adequately reaching your target audience
- Why this project is a site of unexpected multi-modal activist poetics

MTP Part 2 (5%): Submit individually, in this order, and as a single .pdf: 1. one-page [MLA formatted](#) summary of your proposal, 2. feedback worksheet you created for the class, + 3. Materials presented in the pitch. *One-page proposal should:*
- Summarize and make a case for your final project
- Your role in the group in relation to the other group roles
- Concerns about your group, the project, etc. and how you plan to troubleshoot them
- Your group timeline for completion

Feedback: *Complete/Incomplete + online comments* via course-generated rubric.

"Book Club" (20%): Weeks 3 – 7, complete a "book club post" to the Canvas Discussion Page + respond to each other "Book Club." Choose to be a 10-20 minute Podcast, Lit Journal Serial, or YouTube series based on weekly worksheets. Post once per week as a group; respond individually to different Book Clubs.
Feedback: In-class + *complete/incomplete* rubric. *In-class* commentary from instructor.

Final Project (30%)

"FP": Create a group multi-modal campaign that engages with your respective disciplinary interests as well as a relevant social issue. You will present it the final day of class (see course calendar). The grade is divided as outlined below:

Part 1 (20%): Create a multi-modal project that you implement through private or public online platforms and present to the class. This must include:
- At least 4 modes of engagement, including but not limited to: audio, visual, kinesthetic, and textual
- A clear mission statement that speaks to your respective discipline(s) and the social issue you are engaging
- Reference to related conversations and online platforms
- 10 pieces of content relevant to your modes, with the exception of Twitter (if you use Twitter, at least 30 pieces of separate, meaningful tweets)
- Short bios of each team member and their role in the project as a whole
- A clear digital "homebase" for the project (Facebook page, website, YouTube Channel, IG account, etc.) that is uniquely chosen based on your likely content and audience engagement

Part 2 (10%): Individually, create a 1-3 page MLA formatted reflection, or a 2-6 minute audio/visual equivalent. This will be *submitted on Canvas* according to the deadline listed on the course calendar and *must* include:
- Para 1: A summary of the final project *that hyperlinks to its "homebase" mode*, your role, and its relationship to the course as a whole. See below for on Para 3 for what "skillfully" indicates.
- Para 2: How you chose your topic and its corresponding modes.
- Para 2: How your project and its modes fulfill a particular social and multi-modal "niche" in relation to similar projects.
- Para 3: A "defense" of your projects modes that skillfully integrates two scholarly and one or more non-scholarly references (skillfully means quoted, paraphrased, and fully explained in relation to your own ideas, as well as professionally cited in MLA format).
- Para 4: How you navigated your role and group disagreements.
- Para 5: How you envision this project being sustainable and meaningful work in the future (act as though you plan to continue this work).

Feedback: *Complete/incomplete + online comments* via course-generated rubric.

Review of a Reading/Performance (10%): Research events in the Seattle area. Identify one you can attend. You must propose your event by the course calendar due date (see calendar). Once you have attended the event, write a 2–4 page review or record the 6 – 10 minute audio-visual equivalent. This can be done individually, in pairs, or in groups. You can also go with a friend and record your review together as a conversation, but in that case, it must be 12 – 20 minutes in length to account for two speakers. If you choose print form, use MLA formatting. These are graded on a *complete/incomplete* rubric. Written feedback on exceptional and/or incompletes.

Participation (20%): To receive full participation points, you *must* complete in-class activities, all homework assignments on time (**including weekly writing exercises**), and ***actively*** contribute to class discussions and workshops. Regular attendance and active engagement are essential to receiving credit for this course. These are graded on a *complete/incomplete* rubric.

SUMMARY OF GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

Participation 20%
Mid-Term 20%
Book Club 20%
Review 10%
Final 30%
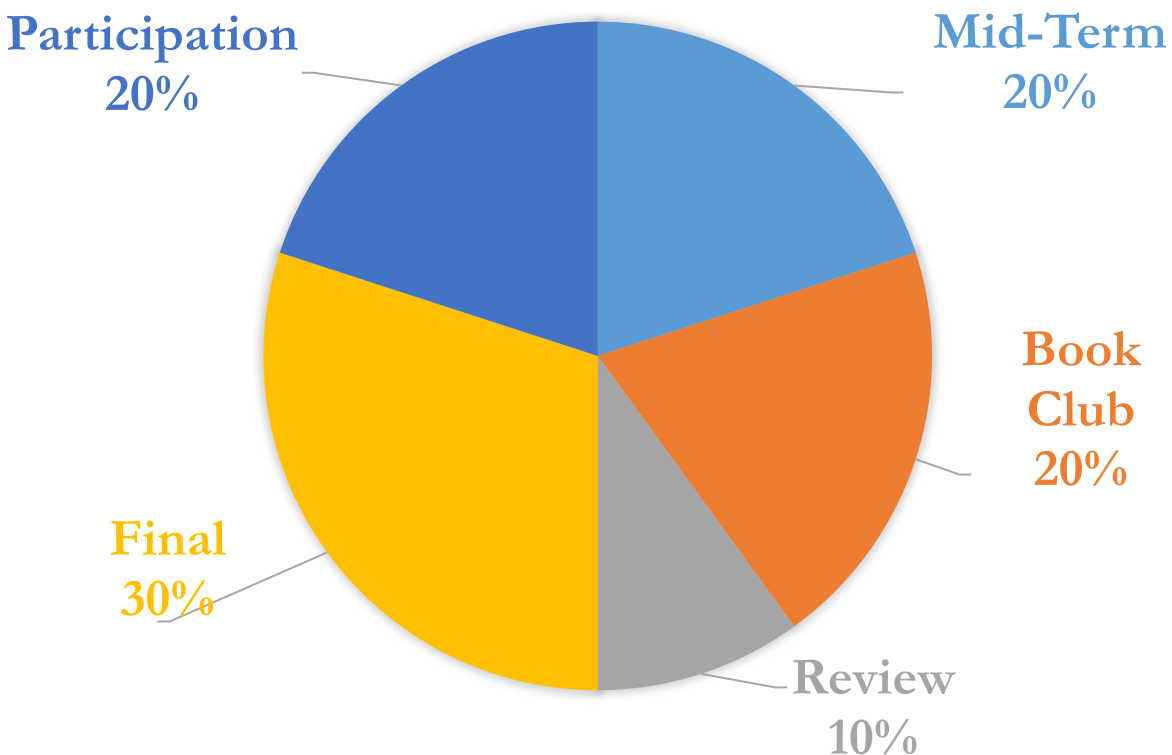
Course Policies
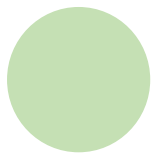
Electronics Policy: Cellphone use is not permitted unless you dismiss yourself from the class for an urgent matter. Please put tablets and laptops on "do not disturb." Reading materials must be printed or available on a tablet that allows you to annotate.
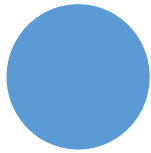
Course Texts and Attendance: Many of our assignments are completed in-class, while the most heavily weighted ones are group-based. In turn, group work and discussions depend upon your reading of the course texts. Actively read all texts and bring them to class printed or as a markable .pdf. By "actively read," I mean take careful notes in the text, highlighting key terms, crafting summaries of crucial concepts or questions in the margins. etc.

Code of Conduct: This course is explicitly political in its conduct and aims to create an ethical, caring, reciprocal environment for safe learning about our roles in a changing socio-political world using the tools of literary productiona dn analysis. To that end: recognizing and valuing diversity is essential to the learning goals of this course and the critical thinking endeavor at the heart of university education. Respect for difference includes and is not limited to age, cultural background, ability, ethnicity, family status, gender presentation, immigration status, national origin, race, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and veteran status. Your participation will require careful and ethical engagement with people and ideas reflective of diversity, including those not in alignment with your personal beliefs and values.
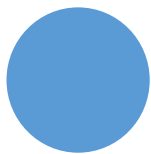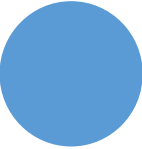
Plagiarism: Plagiarism is one of the most common violations of academic integrity. Please carefully review both online resources and our discussions in class. You are responsible for knowing what constitutes a violation of the UW Student Code and are responsible for any violations, whether intentional or not. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to cheating, facilitation, plagiarism, and fabrication in connection with any exam, research, course assignment, or other academic exercise that contributes, in whole or in part, to the satisfaction of requirements for courses or graduation. Plagiarism ranges from outright copying to closely paraphrasing other writing. Writing is a key component of this course and you must properly cite other people's work (study the MLA In-Text Style Guide before your first writing assignment is due). We report all cases of academic misconduct and plagiarism according to university policy.
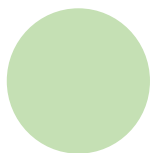
Late Policy: Many of these assignments are graded as "complete/incomplete" in order to honor your ability to take creative risks. To that end, late work will not be accepted unless you arrange a new deadline with me through office hours and/or email. These moved deadlines must be scheduled at least three days before an assignment due date and will be considered on a case by case basis.
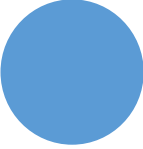
Accommodations Clause: If you need accommodation of any sort, please let me know so that I can work with the UW Disability Resources for Students Office (DRS) to provide what you require. In addition to this, please feel free to set up a meeting with me to discuss our options. More information about accommodation may be found at http://www.washington.edu/students/drs/. This course will be experimenting with a lot of different technologies, from our course blog to films, so be prepared to take some intellectual and creative risks, and explore less traditionally academic avenues for reaching your optimal learning potential.

Campus Safety Clause: Preventing violence is everyone's responsibility. If you're concerned, tell someone.
- Always call 911 if you or others may be in danger.
- Call 206-685-SAFE (7233) to report non-urgent threats of violence and for referrals to UW counseling and/or safety resources. TTY or VP callers, please call through your preferred relay service.
- Don't walk alone. Campus safety guards can walk with you on campus after dark. Call Husky NightWalk 206-685-WALK (9255).
- Stay connected in an emergency with UW Alert. Register your mobile number to receive instant notification of campus emergencies via text and voice messaging. Sign up online at www.washington.edu/alert.

For more information visit the SafeCampus website at www.washington.edu/safecampus.

Odegaard Writing and Research Center: You are strongly encouraged to visit the writing center for each of your assignments. They are located in the library and can help you with any mode you are trying to use in this course.

CLUE: This is a great tutoring and writing center resource. They have unique hours – as late as midnight – and do drop-in sessions, making them ideal for those with a packed schedule.

Q Center: The University of Washington Q Center builds and facilitates queer (gay, lesbian, bisexual, two-spirit, trans, intersex, questioning, same-gender-loving, allies) academic and social community through education, advocacy, and support services to achieve a socially-just campus in which all people are valued. For more information, visit http://depts.washington.edu/qcenter/.

Book Clubs
Worksheet 1
See Course Calendar For Due Dates
(posts due Sunday, comments by start of class Tuesday)

Prompt: In this course, we have read and watched audio-visual and textual responses to decolonial multimodal poetics from a single poet-scholar, Dr. Sarah Dowling. How do you see your text using both textual and visual modes to create social activist commentary? What are the implicit audio modes with which it asks you to engage in order to glean distinct meanings? Specifically, **how** do particular quotes, lines, or images convey meaning by using multiple senses in the reader, and how does that potential meaning interact with social activist moments? *You can submit these to the discussion board in "opinion piece" essay form, podcast, or YouTube video. These should be 5 minutes long but highly edited and efficient. Either way, give your book club a name to imitate an ongoing series.*

Part a: Respond to the above prompt by putting a quote from or a "picture of a page" if it is not textual into your response. Do not just quote it, but explain your interpretation of the quote/excerpt using "poetry language," from line breaks, to rhyme, to rhythm, to metaphor, etc. See thepoetryfoundation.com's list of terms for help.

Part b: Now, explain how this interpretation is in conversation with an excerpt from Dowling's essay or vlog episode. Quote and cite both using MLA format. as "credits" within the video, in the podcast description, etc. When you quote them, also paraphrase the quote to demonstrate understanding, and explain *how* the quote is in conversation with your above close reading. See Owl Purdue for MLA citations.

APPENDIX H: GUEST PROMPT KIT

WELCOME!

Thank you for being in coalition with The Poetry Vlog! Relax, have fun, and bring your passions – no matter how tangential to what gets called "poetry." To help you feel prepared and to maximize your episode's distribution, check out the suggestions. As always, though, do not hesitate to email me your questions: crgrimmer@thepoetryvlog.
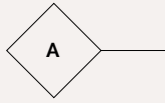
THE POETRY VLOG

TO
YOU! AKA,
"Guest Interlocutor"

FROM
The Poetry Vlog
3047 SW Avalon Way #301
Seattle/WA/98126
crgrimmer@thepoetryvlog.com

thepoetryvlog.com

A

TO
Guest Interlocutor

PROJECT
The Poetry Vlog

CONTACT ME
thepoetryvlog.com
crgrimmer@thepoetryvlog.com
3047 SW Avalon Way, Apt 301
Seattle, WA, 98126

SELECTING YOUR TOPIC

WHAT TO DISCUSS?

If there is a topic on which you are incredibly passionate, and you recently heard a song, saw visual art, or read (any genre) on it, bring that song and/or writing artifact. Please pick a topic that is "pop culture" relevant – something folx outside of "poetry world" might know. Prep to read from it out loud.

You will connect this to your own work, whether that's a sport you love, poetry you write, visual art you create, a side hobby, or your job. I will also facilitate these connections in the episode.

Episodes are 30 minutes max, ideally between 20 - 30 minutes. Time really flies and this is more a discussion, not an interview. The secret is to not plan or prep too much, but just know your topic and arrive ready to have fun, take weird discussion detours, and show off what you love.

If you choose a topic that is somewhat "niche," I will probably ask you to connect it to a more mainstream reference point in political and popular culture. Many of our viewers are interested in poetry but intimidated by it. This is how the Vlog demonstrates that poetry circulates in our everyday life. If you're not sure how it connects to poetry, don't worry! It's my job to make those connections in your episode.

BRAINSTORM! YOU ARE WELCOME TO JOT DOWN IDEAS HERE OR EMAIL ME IDEAS AND QUESTIONS:
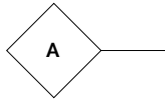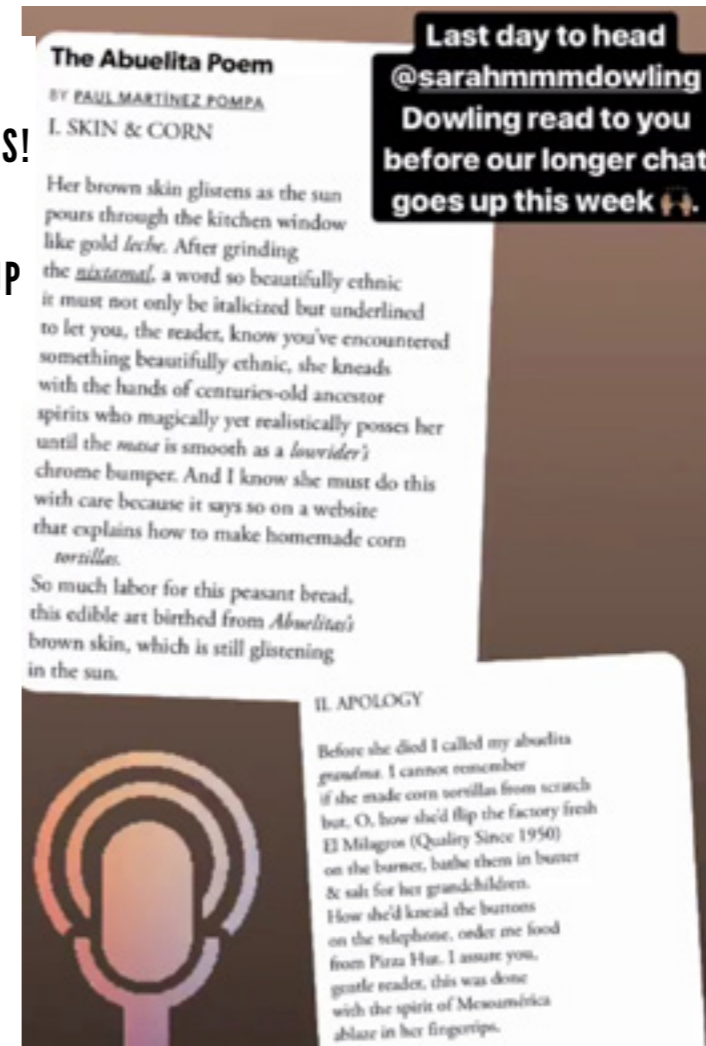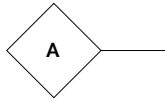
PREPARING

SEND THE DAY BEFORE:

◊ 4-5 "author photos." These will be used for promoting your episode and creating your own "YouTube Thumbnail" for the episode. See examples @thepoetryvlog on Facebook and Instagram and of the thumbnails at bit.ly/thepoetryvlog.

◊ A high quality picture of the text, visual art, song lyrics, etc. that you will read or discuss. These will be used to supplement our audio materials in the YouTube episode. They can be pre-published, but send the citation for the publication. If they are not pre-published, this can be a publication you put on a resume.

Your episode is only as successful as the visual materials in and around it. If you send these in advance, it will speed up the editing time on your episode and enable longer-term promotion of the materials, so it is a win-win on both ends!

IT HELPS TO WATCH PRE-EXISTING EPISODES! CLICK ON THE PHOTOS TO PREVIEW WHAT IS UP & GET IDEAS.

D. A. POWELL, WRITING THROUGH HIV/AIDS, "CAMP" & SPILLING THE TEA

The Abuelita Poem

BY PAUL MARTÍNEZ POMPA

I. SKIN & CORN

Her brown skin glistens as the sun pours through the kitchen window like gold *leche*. After grinding the *nixtamal*, a word so beautifully ethnic it must not only be italicized but underlined to let you, the reader, know you've encountered something beautifully ethnic, she kneads with the hands of centuries-old ancestor spirits who magically yet realistically posses her until the *masa* is smooth as a *lowrider's* chrome bumper. And I know she must do this with care because it says so on a website that explains how to make homemade corn *tortillas*.

So much labor for this peasant bread, this edible art birthed from *Abuelita's* brown skin, which is still glistening in the sun.

II. APOLOGY

Before she died I called my *abuelita grandma*. I cannot remember if she made corn tortillas from scratch but, O, how she'd flip the factory fresh El Milagros (Quality Since 1950) on the burner, bathe them in butter & salt for her grandchildren. How she'd knead the buttons on the telephone, order me food from Pizza Hut. I assure you, gentle reader, this was done with the spirit of Mesoamérica ablaze in her fingertips.

Last day to head @sarahmmmdowling Dowling read to you before our longer chat goes up this week

WRAPPING UP

SEND THE DAY AFTER:

POST-RECORDING CHECK LIST

- △ Four, 2-minute .m4a, .mp4, or ,WAV audio files of you reading your work or your topic's.

- △ Items you forgot to send in the pre-recording email (see page above).

- △ Images of people, books, and other references we made.

- △ The proper spelling of the names and titles you used in the episode.

- △ Your mailing address (I will send supplementary print materials as a thank you).

- △ Your social media handle(s).

- △ Author bio.

- △ Personal website.

- △ Links to any work of yours I might promote.

Your episode will include *Flash Briefing* readings on the podcast as audio promo materials. I will tag and "show" the pieces you discuss across social media platforms. Captioned materials on the Vlog include citations of and visuals from what you reference.

If you send these the day after your episode, it will ensure quick distribution, but it will also maximize accessibility for the audience. It also increases audience engagement through accurate visual and textual aids.

Poetry workshop and discussion featuring:
ANANYA GARG

What is the relationship between Fatimah Asghar, Nikki Giovanni, South Asian diaspora and queer poetry and poetics?

DON'T HAVE A GOOD "AUTHOR PHOTO"? WE CAN TAKE ONE IF YOU ARE LOCAL AS PART OF OUR EPISODE!

A
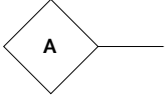
DISTRIBUTION WEEK

Episodes where the guests consistently post their flash briefings spotlights

and their own episodes receive double to triple as many views. Social

media is a snowball. This helps episodes pop up as "suggestions" for new

viewers and listeners, maximizing your presence on the platform.

EMAIL THE LINKS TO FRIENDS & FAM!

TAG @THEPOETRYVLOG AND SHARE ACROSS IG, TWITTER, & FB.

SEND WORK YOU'D LIKE PROMOTED ON THE VLOG TO OUR IG, FB, & TWITTER.

The Poetry Vlog is a project rooted in hope for how poetry can mobilize coalitional social change. Above all, bring your enthusiasm, passion, and care and show that passion and care to your friends, family, and network.
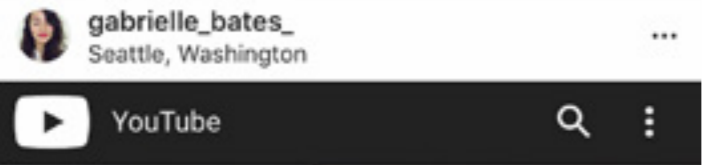
Gabrielle Bates on BoJack Horseman, Ananya Garg on performance poetry, & Sarah Dowling on translingual poetics.

A

ON SITE?

IN-PERSON GUESTS WILL RECORD AT:

3047 SW AVALON WAY
APT 301

SEATTLE, WA 98126
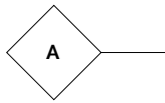
MEET MOCHA! AKA,

@THE_COCO_LATTE,

COCO, MOCHA KITTY, AND PRINCESS CRAZY EYES. SHE IS A SWEET, OLD LADY RAGDOLL CAT (AKA, HYPO-ALLERGENIC COAT & ALOOF).

ALLERGIC? LET ME KNOW. I HAVE AN AIR PURIFIER AND CAN RESTRICT HER ACCESS.

CALL 503.957.4138 ON ARRIVAL. ENTRANCE ON A SLIGHT HILL WITH FREE STREET PARKING. ONE SMALL FLIGHT OF STAIRS. I AM HAPPY TO ASSIST IN ACCOMMODATIONS.

Youth Poet Laureate Kara Jackson Explains:

BLACK FEMINIST EMBODIMENT, LUCILLE CLIFTON, & MUSICAL INFLUENCES

"PHONING" IN?

Please make an account on *Zoom* and *Skype*. Zoom is preferable, but Skype is a great back-up in a pinch! My Skype username is chelsea.r.grimmer. For zoom, I will email you an invite at our scheduled meet time.

HEADPHONES/MIC

The sound is best and has the least delay with the image if you use a headphone and mic set. This can be as simple as your apple ear buds.

Youth Poet Laureate Jackson Neal Explains:

TRANS POETICS, DRAG PERFORMANCE, & HAUNTING AS HEALING

VLOG OUTTAKES: WHERE DOES THE WEBCAM GO?

CAMERA

Test your webcame or built-in camera first! Make sure it has good resolution. Figure out if your resolution will be better on your phone or computer and set up accordingly.

If you're nervous, try watching tutorials on YouTube, which has tons of tip videos and tutorials.

Click on the above images for two examples. In sum: consider your lighting, background, position, eye contact, and environmental noises.

A

AFTER YOUR EPISODE

STAY IN TOUCH

The Poetry Vlog distributes a monthly newsletter. Besides sending the episodes from that month, it will foster community among participants. As different guest interlocutors receive news – new jobs, publications, fellowships, community events, readings, etc. – they will be shared through The Poetry Vlog newsletter with the community. Send your updates, no matter how small, and become part of an ongoing supportive cohort. Sign up for the newsletter at:

thepoetryvlog.com.

YOUR EMAIL WILL BE ADDED!

THE POETRY VLOG

INSTAGRAM

Follow *@chelsea_grimmer* and I will follow back. When you have visual-friendly news, send it to me or ask me to repost! I will share with the Vlog community via Instagram and tag you in it.

TWITTER

Follow *@thepoetryvlog* and tag us in tweets about your successes and updates. I will follow back and retweet on and share with the Vlog community.
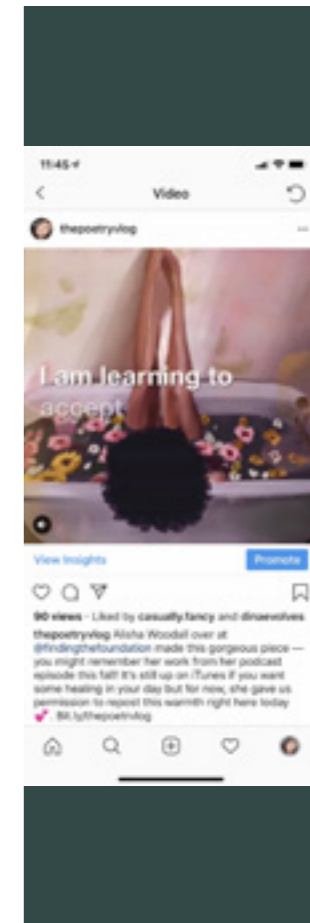
FACEBOOK

Like our *Facebook page* for updates on all platforms. When you write a status update on a new accomplishment or change, tag The Poetry Vlog and I will share it to the Vlog page.
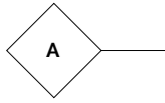
THE POETRY VLOG'S SLOGAN IS, "HOPE IS NOT JUST A FEELING, BUT A CALL TO ACTION. POETRY, AS ALWAYS, IS ALREADY HERE TO MEET IT." IT MOTIVATES EACH EPISODE. DO NOT WORRY ABOUT BEING AN EXPERT, SCHOLAR, OR POET. IF YOU FEEL INTIMIDATED, REACH OUT! IT IS MY JOB TO MAKE YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE AND CONFIDENT.

Welcome to THE POETRY VLOG:

Fall 2018 Edition

thepoetryvlog.com

thepoetryvlog.com

REFERENCES AND READINGS

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Genre Prep Image:

READINGS: LICHTENSTEIN & EWP NEW TEXTBOOK OUTLINE

How Poetry Came to Matter Again

A young generation of artists is winning prizes, acclaim, and legions of readers while exploring identity in new ways.

JESSE LICHTENSTEIN   SEPTEMBER 2018 ISSUE

ELEANOR SHAKESPEARE; DEX R. JONES; JESS CHEN; DIMITRIOS KAMBOURIS

THE POETRY WORLD would hardly seem a likely place for a "race row," the phrase *The Guardian* applied in 2011 to a blunt exchange of literary verdicts. The celebrated (and white) critic Helen Vendler had disparaged the celebrated (and black) poet Rita Dove's selections for the new *Penguin Anthology of Twentieth-Century American Poetry*. Dove, Vendler wrote, had favored "multicultural inclusiveness" over quality. She'd tried to "shift the balance" by choosing too many minority poets at the expense of better (and better-known) writers. The poems were "mostly short" and "of rather restricted vocabulary," the presiding keeper of the 20th-century canon judged. Over at the *Boston Review*, the (also white) critic Marjorie Perloff, the doyenne of American avant-garde poetics, weighed in too. She lamented what she saw as new poets' reliance on a formulaic kind of lyric already stale by the 1960s and '70s—a personal memory dressed up with "poeticity," building to "a profound thought or small epiphany." Her example: a poem by the acclaimed (also black) poet Natasha Trethewey about her mother's painful hair-straightening routine.

▶ TheAtlantic – How Poetry Came to Matter Again – The Atlantic – Jesse Lichtenstein

To hear more feature stories, see our full list or get the Audm iPhone app.

Dove took strong exception to a pattern she saw in the response of established white critics. Were they, she demanded, making

> a last stand against the hordes of up-and-coming poets of different skin complexions and different eye slants? Were we—African Americans, Native Americans, Latino Americans, Asian Americans—only acceptable as long as these critics could stand guard by the door to examine our credentials and let us in one by one?

It's been a long time coming, but the door has since been blown off its hinges. Skim the table of contents of the major literary journals, including white-shoe poetry enterprises like *Poetry* magazine, and even general-interest weeklies with vast reach such as *The New Yorker* and *The New York Times Magazine*. Scan the recipients

of the prestigious and sometimes lucrative fellowships, awards, and lectureships granted annually to the most promising young poets in the country. They are immigrants and refugees from China, El Salvador, Haiti, Iran, Jamaica, Korea, Vietnam. They are black men and an Oglala Sioux woman. They are queer as well as straight and choose their personal pronouns with care. The face of poetry in the United States looks very different today than it did even a decade ago, and far more like the demographics of Millennial America. If anything, the current crop of emerging poets anticipates the face of young America 30 years from now.

These outsiders find themselves, at the very start of their careers, on the inside— and not just of a hermetic realm of poetry whose death knell someone sounds every April, when National Poetry Month arrives. At literary festivals, many of these poets are drawing big crowds, as I saw in November when what looked like hundreds of people waited in the rain to hear Danez Smith and Morgan Parker discuss "New Black Poetry" at the Portland Art Museum, in Oregon.

When I spoke this spring with Smith, who uses plural pronouns, they were just back from a United Kingdom tour for their collection *Don't Call Us Dead*, a National Book Award finalist. The British press had marveled at poetry that could win critical notice in *The New Yorker* and rack up 300,000 views on YouTube. There are "a lot of stories that we've been telling that are now being told in more public ways," Smith said, noting the collective energy of this generation, and of poets of color and queer poets more broadly. Each new book and accolade spurs a fruitful competition to do and dare more. "I don't want to be the one to show up wearing the bad dress," Smith went on. "A win for somebody is really just a win for poetry, the people that read it, and the people that we come from."

More than a few of this generation's bright lights found poetry first through performance, or come from communities where "spoken word" and "poetry" are not separate lanes. Other poets have shown a talent for building an audience in less embodied ways. Before Kaveh Akbar published his strong 2017 debut collection, *Calling a Wolf a Wolf*, he had established himself through his interview series on the website Divedapper, which offers intimate and engaging introductions to new American poets. He also tirelessly shares what he is reading with his 28,000 Twitter followers, posting daily screenshots of pages from books that have excited him.

Emerging poets of this digital-native generation are ready to work at getting their words and their names out there. A number of them have agents and publicists (this is not, historically speaking, normal!). Some are genre crossers, bucking poetic insularity. Saeed Jones (*Prelude to Bruise*, 2014) is a public presence as an on-camera host of a _BuzzFeed News_ show. Fatimah Asghar (*If They Come for Us*, 2018) wrote and co-created a popular web series, _Brown Girls_, now being adapted for HBO. Eve L. Ewing (*Electric Arches*, 2017) is a sociologist and commenter on race with a massive social-media presence.

Poets a little older may grumble at the networking and exposure, but their juniors respect the hustle, convinced that poems, with the right push, can "enter the jet stream of the ongoing national discourse," as Jones has put it. They are onto something: A recent survey by the National Endowment for the Arts revealed that poetry readership doubled among 18-to-34-year-olds over the past five years.

The energy on display is about more than savvy marketing or niche appeal. "From what I'm seeing," says Jeff Shotts, the executive editor of Graywolf Press, who edited three of the 10 collections that made it onto the long list for the 2017 National Book Award in poetry, "this is a renaissance." And most striking among the many forces propelling that renaissance is a resurgence of the first-person lyric —just what the "language poets" of the late 1970s declared obsolete. Too narrowly experiential, too sentimental, too accessible, inadequate to the task of engaging with a postmodern, media-saturated culture—this was the verdict of a previous avant-garde that abandoned "the speaker" in favor of a recondite poetics that appealed to an ever more exclusive audience. But the rising generation—while embracing avant-garde techniques (the use of radical disjunction and collage, the potpourri of "high" and "low" cultural references)—hasn't bought the message. Having come of age in the heyday of identity politics, the diverse poets now in the spotlight are reclaiming "the democratic 'I,'" in the words of the poet Edward Hirsch.

This "I," reared on multiple languages and dialects, could not be said to suffer from a restricted vocabulary, as Vendler complained. Lyric, for this generation, definitely needn't mean short. Making their debut in the wake of Claudia Rankine's best-selling *Citizen: An American Lyric (2014),* poets dare to tackle *project* books, with historical sweep and hybrid form, right out of the gate. This "I," aware of the variously marginalized "we"s to which it belongs, marries the personal to the

ambitiously political. Its ascendancy has raised poetically energizing questions about identity. The young poets who stand out have helped make race and sexuality and gender the red-hot centers of current poetry, and they push past as many boundaries as they can. They strain to think anew about selfhood and group membership. Drawing on eclectic traditions, they mine the complexity latent in the lyric "I." At its best, the last thing this "I" aspires to deliver is tidy epiphanies.

T HE LABOR OF removing the hinges from the door in fact began decades ago. While the language poets were upending late-20th-century American poetry —trying to subvert the powers that be by flouting expressive conventions—minority poets were pushing to integrate the literary world and the canon, as well as championing alternatives. The Black Arts Movement of the 1960s and '70s, and the numerous organizations it spawned, advocated independent outlets for black, Asian American, and Latino artists. But by the '80s, the drive was on to claim a seat at the table—which meant demanding a bigger table.

That wasn't easy in a poetry culture that was white in its present and white in its past, and not exactly eager to confront this fact. In 1988, tired of feeling like tokens in poetry workshops, two Harvard undergraduates and a composer friend formed the Dark Room Collective in a yellow Victorian house in Cambridge, establishing a space in which to foster the work of young black poets. Over the next decade, a remarkable array of talent found a home there, including Natasha Trethewey and Tracy K. Smith (both future U.S. poet laureates), Kevin Young, Carl Phillips, and Major Jackson. Ambition ran high, and so did a restless urge not simply to fit in but to call new shots. "Even if we were all published in *The New Yorker*, would that be the point?" Young, then a Harvard senior, told *The Harvard Crimson* in 1992. "You're missing the point if it's a new driver driving the same old truck."

Within a few years, new faces were, if not at the wheel, more welcome and visible in the poetry world. In 1993, Rita Dove became the U.S. poet laureate. That same year, in his introduction to *The Open Boat*, the first anthology of Asian American poetry to be edited by an Asian American, Garrett Hongo could point to progress in mainstreaming: "These days, some of us even serve on foundation and [National Endowment for the Arts] panels, sit on national awards juries, teach in and direct creative writing programs, and edit literary magazines."

In a landscape of poetry by then dominated by M.F.A. programs, a spreading network of supportive institutions soon offered young poets from marginalized

groups a supplemental world of free workshops and mentorship. Cave Canem, founded in 1996 to serve emerging black poets, was followed by Kundiman (for Asian American writers) and CantoMundo (for young Latino and Latina poets). The Lambda Literary Foundation has provided similar backing to LGBTQ poets. The traditional gatekeepers of poetry—big journals, respected publishing houses large and small, prize-giving committees—now know where to turn to find a broad spectrum of already vetted work.

But mainstreaming rarely happens without turbulence. The Dark Room alumni have come in for their share of sharp critiques as they have taken seats at a table that has been extended but is still very much within establishment walls. With inclusion among the dominant "we" comes pressure to produce and promote more broadly accessible or depoliticized work. The *Open Boat* anthology was soon taken to task for presenting Asian American poetry through a narrow lens of familiar immigration and assimilation narratives. Kevin Young's recent arrival as *The New Yorker*'s poetry editor at age 47 raises the inevitable question of how new and different the truck will look and sound.

Tensions have thrummed within even the coziest, most supportive of the various minority enclaves, from the Dark Room onward: Embracing the outsider "we" and *its* group narratives comes with its own pressures. Poets have chafed at—as well as thrived on—them. Of course they have: How else does poetic ferment happen? Carl Phillips has written recently of feeling that he was effectively exiled from the Dark Room because he "wasn't writing the kind of poems that were correctly 'black.'" In an essay called "A Politics of Mere Being," he wonders about the effects not just of a call to be politically correct, but of "a push to be *correctly political*"—that is, to address a particular set of "issues of identity, exclusion, injustice." Shouldn't "poets of outsiderness, of whatever kind," he suggests, resist the notion that "resistance" alone defines what is political?

A quarter of a century younger than Phillips, the Iranian American poet Solmaz Sharif—whose first collection, *Look* (2016), was a finalist for the National Book Award—also sees the value of a voice that is "continually outside, questioning and speaking back to whatever supposed 'here' or 'we' or 'now' we've created." Her poetic ideal is "a nomadic presence, or a mind that is consistently on the run, and preventing these political moments from calcifying." As a stab at summing up the mutable and provocative new lyric "I," it would be hard to do better. The quest to

truly contain multitudes—to probe the protean self and the society that shapes and reshapes it—within a coherent lyric is still a radical experiment.

"**A**M I A GAY BLACK MAN when roasting a chicken at home for friends?" Carl Phillips asks in "A Politics of Mere Being," and he answers, "Sure. But that's not what I'm most conscious of at the time. Am I necessarily, then, stripped of political resonance at that moment?" The 29-year-old Chinese American poet Chen Chen confidently embraces the realm of chicken roasting—of quotidian routines and ruminating—as he stakes a poetic claim to the "politics of mere being" in his 2017 debut, *When I Grow Up I Want to Be a List of Further Possibilities*, which was long-listed for the National Book Award.

As the title suggests, in Chen's work the new lyric "I" is open-ended, cumulative, marked by potential. His poems boast the frank ease of a late-night Gchat with a bright, emotionally available friend, and the terrain is, at least overtly, more personal than political. At the same time, the conversational tone (in tune with an era in which many of our conversations are typed) offers a welcome into a world that is neither insular nor stable.

Chen, who left China with his family when he was 3 and grew up in Massachusetts, shows little interest in patrolling the no-man's-land between the "I" and the author. Several key poems deal with a central event in the speaker's—the poet's—life: coming out to his parents as a teen and the violent scene that follows. The speaker runs away, climbs a tree, scales a wall, falls back to Earth—eventually hobbling home to face abiding parental disappointment.

Chen joins an array of other talented young poets (among them Ocean Vuong, Hieu Minh Nguyen, and Fatimah Asghar) whose work explores the challenges of being a queer Asian American in an immigrant family. For Chen, poetry is "a way for those different experiences to come together, for them to be in the same room," but without any predetermined expectations of how they may interact. In the face of a mother who wants her sons "to gulp up the world, spit out solid degrees, responsible grandchildren ready to gobble," Chen's speaker dreams instead "of one day being as fearless as a mango. / As friendly as a tomato. Merciless to chin & shirtfront."

Like the great mid-century New York poet Frank O'Hara, Chen has an avid eye for everyday details that bridge emotional, domestic, and cultural landscapes. O'Hara

once invented a fake movement called "Personism," in which "the poem is at last between two persons instead of two pages." Many of Chen's poems display a similar yearning to connect with the "you" they address, though the speaker knows that the space between never quite vanishes. When the poems do tread close to familiar child-of-immigrant tropes—"forgiving / the Broken English of Our Mothers"—they still manage to be more tender than trite or ironic:

> I don't know what to tell you. I thought I could
> tell this story, give it a way out of itself. Even here, in my fabulous
> Tony-winning monologue of a New York, I'm struggling to get
> to the Joy, the Luck. I tell you my mother still
> boils the water, though she knows she doesn't have to anymore.
> Her special kettle boils in no time, is a feat of engineering.
> She could boil my father in it
> & he'd come out a better person, in beautiful shoes.

It's a bracingly wry meta-reflection on his story of identity—the loving particulars balanced by a dose of filial bitterness. Chen is a rarity among this new cohort of poets, many of whose debuts deal in justifiable rage, plunge into agony, flash with fleeting moments of ecstasy. "I'm keenly aware of the political forces, the layers of artifice, the whiffs of strategic essentialism, and the bouts of slippery fragmentation that go into group identity formation," he has said. But the "I" that rides the crosswinds of "queer Asian American," while also telling a personal story, conveys a daring and unusual suppleness: *When I Grow Up* permits itself both to dwell in realms of everyday sadness and to champion the lesser virtues of amusement, curiosity, and delight.

N OT LONG AGO, at a packed reading in Los Angeles, Aziza Barnes introduced a poem whose title posed a version of Carl Phillips's question, implying a starker answer: "my dad asks, 'how come black folk can't just write about flowers?'" A few knowing laughs rose from the audience before Barnes launched into the poem and everyone grew quiet. Barnes, too, deals in the quotidian—the over-policing of black life, the under-investigation of black death, routine harassment—but in a register worlds away from Chen's. The speaker in the poem is walking with friends near her own house. Her "milk neighbors," as she calls her street's pale new residents, "collaborate in the happy task of surveillance": They

call the police, three squad cars appear, and an officer begins interrogating. For the poem's speaker,

> it didn't make me feel like I could see less of the gun in her holster because she was blk & short & a woman, too. she go,
>
> *this your house?*
> I say *yeah.* she go,
> *can you prove it?*
> I say *it mine.*
> she go *ID?* I say *it mine.*
> she go *backup* on the sly

Despite this trajectory, the poem ends not in tragedy, rage, or even reconciliation. Instead, it settles in a place of bone-deep weariness. "I'm bored & headlights quit being interesting," Barnes intoned, "after I called 911 when I was 2 years old because it was the only phone number I knew by heart." Somehow, resignation feels more damning than any high dudgeon the poet might have brought us to.

Make no mistake: An Aziza Barnes poem can scorch the earth without breaking a sweat. A figure on the poetry-slam circuit who grew up in L.A. and studied at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and the University of Mississippi's M.F.A. program, she has won praise for her "swagger and verve"—and her "screaming, precise, incisive" language, in one critic's words, is indeed vital to her poems. "I love being able to be mean or curt in my poetry," Barnes has said, and her lyric "I" can level invective that rivals the weird specificity of a Yiddish curse:

> In the next life
>
> I pray you   the one plant
>
> Ain't pollinate.

But if that makes Barnes—who has described her work as "quite black and quite gay"—sound like an assertive preacher, she is not. Solmaz Sharif's "mind ... constantly on the run" is more like it. "Poetry is the best medium for the self to be subverted / performed / exploded," Barnes has said. The title of her debut

collection, *i be, but i ain't*, points to contradictions within the "I" that need subverting, performing, and exploding.

In the midst of emotionally—and racially and politically—charged territory, Barnes does not hesitate to take unexpected paths, create her own forms, and explore them at her own pace. The book moves through the discomforts and complexities of identity and history, the baseline fear felt by a young black person in America, the poet's unconventional relationship to her assigned gender. But the poems rarely land where their opening salvos suggest they are heading.

One poem of Barnes's that I keep returning to starts with a minor domestic scene: The speaker finds a centipede near her writing desk. In lines that span the width of the page, broken up by white spaces, the poem proceeds to cover a vast territory—apartheid, colonialism, a fascination with the bodies of saints, bodies in extremis—before arriving at a quiet indictment of the poet herself for killing the creature she can't be bothered to understand. The opening poem of the book, it's a wandering lament for a basic human failing. Squashing the insect is not equivalent to the acts of cruelty, ignorance, and injustice—great and small—that bear on this particular poet's place in the world, but the impulse prompts a recognition of their common seed.

Many of the poems in *i be, but i ain't* beg to be experienced viva voce, and it's easy to imagine them bellowed in front of the footlights, or slung coolly back and forth in front of the camera. Though to praise "performance poets" for their voice and "literary poets" for their prosody is something of a cliché—reinforcing a distinction that fits this generation poorly—Barnes has pushed a talent for enacted speech further than most of her poetry peers. In December, her play, *BLKS*, about four 20-something black women living in Brooklyn and looking for love, opened to glowing reviews at the Steppenwolf Theatre, in Chicago, and will move off-Broadway next spring. Poetry readers can only hope that Barnes's growing stature on the stage doesn't pull her too far away from the lyric she's capable of breathing such life into.

WHILE PERFORMANCE SEEMS to suit the strengths of Barnes's work, Layli Long Soldier's poetry is harder to separate from the page—which doesn't mean that it rests there comfortably. Quite the contrary. Midway through *WHEREAS* (2017), her debut collection and a National Book Award finalist, the speaker states, "I will compose each sentence with care, by minding what the rules of writing dictate." The declaration is noteworthy because, up to this point in the

book, as an epigraph announces, Long Soldier shows little inclination to mind the rules:

> Now
> make room in the mouth
> for grassesgrassesgrasses

The language of *WHEREAS* enacts the struggle of its project: the sheer weight of representing an "I" that is both a self and a part of a highly diverse collective—American Indians—whose identity has largely been imposed from without. For Long Soldier, an enrolled member of the Oglala Sioux tribe and a visual artist who has taught at Diné College, in the Navajo Nation, syntax itself strains and cracks under the burden.

The vow to compose sentences with care comes from "38," a five-page poem that acts as a fulcrum between the shorter poems in the book's first section and the longer "Whereas Statements" of the book's second and final section. "38" is an account of the largest "legal" execution in U.S. history: 38 Sioux prisoners hanged, with President Abraham Lincoln's approval, following the 1862 Sioux Uprising. The poem builds force with stark, declarative sentences, each standing as a stanza or paragraph on its own.

> The hanging took place on December 26, 1862—the day after Christmas.
>
> This was the *same week* that President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation.
>
> In the preceding sentence, I italicize "same week" for emphasis.

The Sioux fought because they were starving: They hadn't received the payments agreed to in treaties with the U.S. government, they had lost their hunting grounds, and local traders refused to extend them credit to buy food. One of the traders was supposed to have said, "If they are hungry, let them eat grass." After a raid by Sioux warriors, this trader's body was found with his mouth stuffed with grass. Some might call this poetic justice. Long Soldier goes further:

> I am inclined to call this act by the Dakota warriors a poem.

> There's irony in their poem.
>
> There was no text.
>
> *"Real" poems do not "really" require words.*

Then she reconsiders: After all, the trader's words initiate the poem, "click the gears of the poem into place." It's telling that even in the most straightforward portion of the book, Long Soldier deploys language to mark its own limits, to probe its utility, to take its measure against concrete and tangible actions.

Long Soldier's fitful, yearning relationship to the language of her father and older relatives—her palpable "ache of being *language poor*" when it comes to Lakota—embodies that sense of inadequacy, of constantly reaching and failing to connect or express. "I climb the backs of languages," she writes, "ride them into exhaustion —maybe I pull the reins when I mean go." Because even with Long Soldier's rich command of it, English is a fraught instrument for exploring the dark legacies of the U.S. and the Sioux's shared history, which Long Soldier, as a dual citizen, is heir to. Her visual artistry at work, she avails herself of the spatial elements of text— ellipses, disjunction, concrete poetry, blank space—to convey uncertainty and instability. This grasping at the elusiveness of sense-making can be thrilling, but it demands that the reader weather discomfort, abstraction, and incompleteness— and not flinch from asking, with Long Soldier, about the whole endeavor: Is poetry up to the task?

For Long Soldier, language and the body are not really separable. Apology is at the heart of the book, and physical gesture is at the heart of apology. As she tells us, "In many Native languages, there is no word for 'apologize.' The same goes for 'sorry,'" yet there are ways to admit error and make amends. The title, *WHEREAS*, comes from the careful, official language of a federal apology to American Indians —a series of toothless "whereas" clauses in a Senate resolution that was later cut to half a page and tucked into a defense appropriations bill, signed by President Barack Obama one December weekend in 2009, with no announcement and no tribal representatives present. The U.S. government's apology to American Indians is almost the definition of an empty gesture.

Long Soldier sets this in contrast to a quiet moment with her estranged father over breakfast in her kitchen. A little sound escapes him, and then: "He pinched his

fingers to the bridge of his nose, squeezed his eyes. He wiped." What seems at first to the speaker like a sneeze is an almost-silent sob—a prelude to words of remorse for decades of absence and inattention. "WHEREAS when offered an apology," Long Soldier writes:

> I watch each movement the shoulders
> high or folding, tilt of the head both eyes down or straight through
> me, I listen for cracks in knuckles or in the word choice, what is it
> that I want? *To feel* and mind you I feel from the senses—I read
> each muscle, I ask the strength of the gesture to move like a poem.

A nation cannot pinch its fingers to the bridge of its nose, but there are ways of giving flesh to language. Long Soldier's lyric "I," at once fractured and centered within its fissures, attempts a poetry that can bear grief and make something new— just as the poet wishes that her young daughter, learning Lakota and Navajo and beginning to appreciate the fragments that make up her identity, may someday come to understand

>   wholeness for
> what it is, not for what it's not, all of it   the pieces;

"LARGELY WHITE-RUN literary institutions," Claudia Rankine remarked in an essay she co-authored with the writer Beth Loffreda, "can always remind you you're a guest." When I spoke with Danez Smith, the poet stressed that if a renaissance is to continue, the publishing world—meaning editors and publicists, and reviewers, too—has to better reflect the writers whom it is now delivering to a growing readership. But Smith was sanguine: "We have a long way to go in terms of who is celebrated and who is lifted up and who is noted, but I think we can keep making strides." So far, this generation has shown little patience, which may be what saves it. Poets who know their worth and throw themselves into convincing us of it may be just the poets to expand and sustain an art form.

When Nicole Sealey, the executive director of Cave Canem and author of *Ordinary Beast* (2017), marvels at the "dynamic sense of urgency" she sees in this generation, I think of the young Honduran-born poet Roy G. Guzmán, whose debut is forthcoming from Graywolf. Just days after the 2016 shooting at the Pulse nightclub, Guzmán published "Restored Mural for Orlando," a long, discursive

meditation on death, familial love, queer brown bodies in congregation, and a city you visit "to fantasize about the childhood you didn't have."

Forget William Wordsworth's "emotion recollected in tranquillity": Guzmán's poem was an almost instant eulogy, and deeply affecting—Exhibit A of the power of the new lyric "I" to anchor a broad public response in the crosscurrents of complex, marginalized identities. Young poets are producing work that taps intimate veins, and responds to the headlines with impatience, nuance, compassion, and sometimes fury; with historical breadth and sharp critique; with unapologetic stabs at beauty; with ambition; and—above all—with the expectation of an audience. This is poetry that firmly believes it is necessary.

We want to hear what you think about this article. <u>*Submit a letter*</u> *to the editor or write to letters@theatlantic.com.*

Dear EWP TAs,

I hope you are all doing well as we reach the final stretch of this long and challenging academic year.

I am writing to let you know about the **revised EWP outcomes** and the **new EWP textbook for next year**, titled *Writer/Thinker/Maker: Approaches to Composition, Rhetoric, and Research*.

While I know there will be a learning curve for everyone, I feel that both the new textbook and the revised outcomes will better support the 21st literacy practices required of all of our students in the university and beyond. The revised outcomes embody nationwide shifts in composition research, theory, and practice, which are reflected in the updated 2014 WPA outcomes statement that influenced our work.

Please know that the outcome revisions are intentionally designed to map onto and extend the previous version such that you and your students can shift things slightly or more profoundly, as makes sense, given your teaching practice, philosophy, and context. While you are invited to make more significant shifts, this is not necessary, and I think most of you will be able to make the transition relatively easily with your current materials by updating outcome language where you've used it and swapping out readings.

The new book is almost ready for production. We estimate that desk copies will be available in late July, and a PDF version should be available around June 1st for summer planning.

To help with the transition:

1) Those of your attending new EWP course orientations (109/110, 111, 121, 182) will receive an overview of the new outcomes and the textbook at your Spring information and/or fall orientations.

2) I will host voluntary drop in sessions in the spring and in September (and possibly over the summer) to introduce the outcomes and textbook. I am happy to speak one-on-one with anyone who would like extra support.

3) Over the summer, we will develop a few additional resources such as a screencast walk through of the new outcomes and textbook, as well as provide some teaching materials. These will be uploaded onto the website and we'll announce where and when they become available.

Below, I outline things that have changed and offer some framing on the revised outcomes. Thank you all for your patience in this transition.

Sincerely,
Candice Rai
Director of the Expository Writing Program

Things that haven't changed:

- Like the previous textbook, *Contexts for Inquiry,* this textbook is organized into sections that correspond to the four outcomes.

- There are two versions: one with readings and one without. The Reader itself, as outlined later, retains the most popular essays. We made cuts, additions, and retained readings based on survey results.

Some Key Changes to the Textbook:

- **It is SHORTER!** The Textbook *with* Readings is 160 pages shorter! The Textbook *without* Readings is 100 pages shorter!

- There's an **index**!

- There's **more original chapters that better integrate with the program goals**. For example, among others, the introduction now introduces the course learning goals and offers framework for approaches to writing and inquiry; there's a chapter on revision and peer review; and another on strategic rhetorical grammar and style (in place of what we are sure was the enormously popular sentence diagraming chapter). **Below we include the table of contents with notations on all of the new chapters.**

- We have added a **new chapter on multimodal/new media/visual composition, argument, and analysis** that supports our program's shift towards supporting **21st century literacy practice**s.

- Based on your feedback, we've included **significantly more support on academic writing and argument**, as well as **different forms and occasions for argument beyond academic contexts**. For example, there is a push to think of argument as something we can engage to navigate and cooperate across radical diversities, to problem solve, resolve conflict, etc.

- There is an additional emphasis, particularly in the original chapters, on examining **the ethical dimensions and the consequences of various arguments, ideas, and actions for diverse communities and contexts** as one important element to consider when composing or analyzing texts.

- While our program already emphasized the role of **metacognition** in learning and in the **transfer of knowledge and skills** to future contexts, this textbook includes more explicit support in this area, including a chapter on cultivating metacognitive and reflective practices.

- Along with many programs nationwide, **our program is leaning further into rhetorical, multimodal, and translingual approaches to composition**. These changes are reflected in the revisions to our outcomes and the textbook.

  Generally, these approaches converge around intersecting ideas that stress language use/forms of communication (and reception):

  1) as inherently situated, contextual, dynamic, emergent, political, and consequential;

  2) as intimately tied (even when resistant) to culture, identity, material conditions, uneven instantiations of power, and diverse ways of knowing, feeling, and doing specific to different people, places, and times; and

  3) as recursive and as ongoing and strategic negotiations, translations, and engagements with respects to the various resources and constraints, dynamics, purposes, conventions, norms, genres, modes, contexts, audiences, arguments, institutions, relationships, possibilities, ideas, and the like that exist within a given situation.

  While we feel our program and the work you all do already reflects many of these general philosophical inclinations, this new textbook and the revised outcomes seeks to make these leanings more explicit.

- We have **retitled the textbook,** *Writer/Thinker/Maker: Approaches to Composition, Rhetoric, and Research*, **to emphasize the philosophical shifts mentioned above**.

  > **We see writing,** language use, and communication as complex, dynamic practices that are contextual situated, rhetorical, and consequential. As writers and researchers (and as people, citizens, community members), **we make** meaning, things, texts, connections, and actions across and within diverse contexts, modes, genres, and situations. To be effective and ethical communicators, **we must engage in various forms of strategic thinking**—critical thinking and analysis, rhetorical and genre awareness, inquiry, metacognition, creative problem solving, and so on.

WRITER/THINKER/ MAKER

APPROACHES TO COMPOSITION, RHETORIC, AND RESEARCH

with Readings

for the University of Washington

Lead Editors

AJ Burgin
Stephanie Hankinson
Candice Rai

Contributing Authors

AJ Burgin
Roger Chao
Denise Grollmus
Stephanie Hankinson
Jaclyn Fiscus
Amanda Hobmeier
Liz Janssen
Mandy Macklin
Candice Rai
Alexandra Smith
Kirin Watcher-Greene

Editorial Board

Roger Chao
Jaclyn Fiscus
Denise Grollmus
Jacob Huebsch
Liz Janssen
Mandy Macklin
Justina Rompogren
Tesla Schaffer
Alexandra Smith

Acknowledgments

Outcomes for Expository Writing Program Courses

Outcome One

To compose strategically for a variety of audiences and contexts, both within and outside the university, by

- recognizing how different elements of a rhetorical situation matter for the task at hand and affect the options for composing and distributing texts;
- coordinating, negotiating, and experimenting with various aspects of composing—such as genre, content, conventions, style, language, organization, appeals, media, timing, and design—for diverse rhetorical effects tailored to the given audience, purpose, and situation; and
- assessing and articulating the rationale for and effects of composition choices.

Outcome Two

To work strategically with complex information in order to generate and support inquiry by

- reading, analyzing, and synthesizing a diverse range of texts and understanding the situations in which those texts are participating;
- using reading and writing strategies to craft research questions that explore and respond to complex ideas and situations;
- gathering, evaluating, and making purposeful use of primary and secondary materials appropriate for the writing goals, audience, genre, and context;
- creating a "conversation"—identifying and engaging with meaningful patterns across ideas, texts, experiences, and situations; and
- using citation styles appropriate for the genre and context.

Outcome Three

To craft persuasive, complex, inquiry-driven arguments that matter by

- considering, incorporating, and responding to different points of view while developing one's own position;
- engaging in analysis—the close scrutiny and examination of evidence, claims, and assumptions—to explore and support a line of inquiry;

- understanding and accounting for the stakes and consequences of various arguments for diverse audiences and within ongoing conversations and contexts; and
- designing/organizing with respect to the demands of the genre, situation, audience, and purpose.

Outcome Four

To practice composing as a recursive, collaborative process and to develop flexible strategies for revising throughout the composition process by

- engaging in a variety of (re)visioning techniques, including (re)brainstorming, (re)drafting, (re)reading, (re)writing, (re)thinking, and editing;
- giving, receiving, interpreting, and incorporating constructive feedback; and
- refining and nuancing composition choices for delivery to intended audience(s) in a manner consonant with the genre, situation, and desired rhetorical effects and meanings.

Contents

New chapters are highlighted in yellow with brief notations. Additionally, each chapter will have its own abstract in the textbook.

Please note: this TOC is 99.5% done, but it is in page proof draft state. Please forgive typos.

Co-written by Mandy Macklin and Candice Rai, EWP

This is a short intro to our program and the outcomes.

It also offers various straight-shooting ways to frame and explain inquiry/line of inquiry and questions that might be useful to help students discover and explore a line of inquiry.

Co-written by Mandy Macklin, Roger Chao, and Candice Rai, EWP

This chapter offers definitions of rhetoric, rhetorical situation, and rhetorical awareness. It also introduces the rhetorical triangle and the concepts of ethos/logos/pathos as tools of invention and composition: e.g., tools for exploring your own rhetorical situation and for making your own strategic composition choices. (Later these concepts are used in sections for Outcome 2 and 3 as tools for analyzing others' texts and situations)

Throughout this chapter, there are a lot of questions that could be used to help students develop arguments, refine research questions, analyze their own contexts, etc. which could be used as homework, in peer groups, as quick thought experiments in class, etc.

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Written by Denise Grollmus, EWP (with a section by Lisa Ede on textual conventions)

This chapters opens with a very accessible and student-friendly discussion on audience that leads to pragmatic, adaptable tools and strategies for determining, assessing, and composing for audiences.

Written by Amanda Hobmeier, EWP

This is a very lightly edited version of a chapter that appeared in Contexts for Inquiry.

Written by Jaclyn Fiscus, EWP

This is a new original chapter that explains the theory of metacognition. There are concrete practices shared here for cultivating reflective practices that research shows help students learn and adapt knowledge/ skill to future contexts.

Outcome 2

Working with Research

This is a new chapter by Lisa Ede that replaces what was Chapter 4 in Contexts for Inquiry. Ede's chapter serves a similar purpose but offers a more rhetorical approach that coheres with other chapters better. We do distill techniques from Parfitt's chapter in the "EWP Strategies for Active readers" at the end of this chapter. We also offer reading strategies for analyzing literary texts that might serve 111 teachers particularly well.

This is a new and very useful chapter from Andrea Lundsford's Everything's an Argument.

Lucid, accessible, and offering up to date pop culture references, this chapter offers various approaches to rhetorical analysis. It parallels some content in Chapter 1, which uses rhetorical analysis to explore one's own composition situation. Here, there are many tools and reasons and approaches for studying the texts, language, and communication of others.

This is also a new and very useful chapter that combines two chapters from Andrea Lundsford's Everything's an Argument.

It offers tools for composing AND analyzing visual/multimodal texts.

Ditto: from Andrea Lundsford's Everything's an Argument.

Mirrors a similar chapter in Contexts for Inquiry but has up to date references, is more accessible, and more rhetorical in approach.

Written by Liz Janssen, EWP

This chapter replaces Chapter 6, Reading Intertextually from Contexts for Inquiry. While serving a similar purpose, this chapter is significantly more streamlined and emphasizes the rhetorical and strategic choices involved in practicing intertextually.

This chapter is the same as Chapter 9 in Contents for Inquiry.

Written by AJ Burgin, EWP

This chapter offers a model for developing academic claims and for organizing academic arguments.

This is a new chapter from Everything's an Argument. It conflates content from the previous textbook's Chapter 12 (Making Persuasive Arguments) and Chapter 13 (Constructing Effective Organization).

We feel it does a better job of supporting deep and strategic thinking around the links between form and content in crafting persuasive arguments.

This chapter, then, offers strategies for thinking about how, why, and to what effects one might organize in a particular ways, given the genre, purpose, audience, cultural context, etc.

It opens with come organizational strategies for arguments and ends with very concrete outlining strategies for academic essays.

Outcome 4

Revision and Micronegotiations

Written by Jaclyn Fiscus, EWP

This chapter provides framing and philosophy on revision as recursive, as well as concrete revision and peer review strategies.

Written by Denise Grollmus, EWP (along with Parfitt on style)

This chapter offers a highly accessible way to address grammar and micro-level composition choices that are in-sync with our philosophy. Rather than seeing grammar in terms of rules we must simply follow or in terms of "correctness/error," this chapter helps draw attention to micro-level choices as strategic, flexible, and context/purpose dependent. While it is written for composers, it could also be adapted to help students analyze the styles and micro-choices made by other writers.

Good resource, too, for style, concision, passive/active voice, etc.

The EWP Portfolio

Written by Kirin Watcher-Grene, EWP

This chapter is a very lightly revised version of what was previously an appendix in Contexts for Inquiry. It has been revised to reflect the new outcomes. The sample portfolio is different.

It offers clear framing and explanation for you and students on the purpose of the portfolio, along with some great concrete activities that you can use/adapt to help students compile/revise for their portfolio and craft their critical reflection.

New readings are highlighted.

Abstracts of the new readings follow this list.

Readings for Inquiry

Sherman Alexie, "The Joy of Reading and Writing: Superman and Me"

Gloria Anzaldúa, "How to Tame a Wild Tongue"

James Baldwin, "If Black English Isn't a Language, Then Tell Me, What Is?"

John Berger, "Ways of Seeing"

The Black Panther Party, "Ten Point Plan"

Jim Borgman, "A New Ghetto"

Chris Britt, "Standard English"

Cathryn Cabral, "131 Course Syllabus"

Nicholas Carr, "Is Google Making Us Stupid?"

Kevin Durand, "Pop Culture Meets the Academy"

Richard Feynman, "The Value of Science"

Stanley Fish, "How to Recognize a Poem When You See One"

Jesse Gordon, "What Is America?"

Beverly Gross, "Bitch"

Jack Halberstam, "Animating Failure: Ending, Fleeing, Surviving"

Phyllis G. Hastings with Jim Morrison, "Do You Hear What I Hear? Voices from Prison Composition Classes"

Nalo Hopkinson, "Report from Planet Midnight"

Langston Hughes, "Theme for English B"

Steven Johnson, "Watching TV Makes You Smarter"

Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter from Birmingham Jail"

Rosina Lippi-Green, "Teaching Children How to Discriminate (What We Learn from the Big Bad Wolf)"

James W. Loewen, "Handicapped by History: The Process of Hero-Making"

James McBride, "Hip-Hop Planet"

Scott McCloud, "Setting the Record Straight"

Walter Benn Michaels, "The Trouble with Diversity"

Manuel Muñoz, "Leave Your Name at the Border"

Barack Obama, "A More Perfect Union"

Mary Louise Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone"

Anandi Ramamurthy, "Constructions of Illusion: Photography and Commodity Culture"

Marjane Satrapi, "The Veil"

Lee St. James, "I Has a Dream"

Amy Tan, "Mother Tongue"

Abstracts of New Readings in *Writer/Thinker/Maker*

Sherman Alexie (b. 1966) is a Spokane/Coeur d'Arelene Indian who grew up on the Spokane Indian Reservation in Wellpinit, Washington. He was born hydrocephalic and underwent a brain operation at the age of six months, which he was not expected to survive. As a youth, Alexie left the reserva- tion for a public high school where he excelled in academics and became a star player on the basketball team. He attended Gonzaga University in Spokane on a scholarship, then transferred to Washington State University, where his experience in a poetry workshop encouraged him to become a writer. Soon after graduation he received the Washington State Arts Com- mission Poetry Fellowship and a National Endowment for the Arts Poetry Fellowship. His first collection of short stories, *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, received both a PEN/Hemingway Award for Best First Book of Fiction and a Lila Wallace—Reader's Digest Writer's Award. He was subsequently named one of Granta's Best Young American Novelists, and published a novel titled *Reservation Blues* (1995), followed the next year by *Indian Killer* (1996). Since 1997 Alexie has written for the screen; his screenplay for a movie based on his own short story, "Smoke Signals," received the Christopher Award in 1999. Including poetry, he has now pub- lished fourteen books, including his most recent collection of short stories, *The Toughest Indian in the World* (2000). In this short autobiographical piece, Sherman Alexie has commented on his own experience learning to write and the struggles he has faced as a writer with respect to his identity, institutional discrimination, and so on. As he writes, "I'm a good writer who may be a great writer one day. I'm harder on myself than anybody."

Kevin K. Durand is Math and Physics Professor at the LISA Academy College Preparatory School in Little Rock, Arkansas. He has published broadly in philosophy, religion, and ethics. This essay serves as the introduction to an edited collection called *Buffy Meets the Academic: Essays on the Episodes and Scripts as Texts.* This book presents serious academic scholarship on Buffy the Vampire Slayer. It differs from other works because it uses Buffy as a primary text and not as a secondary instrument to explore other concepts. In doing so, it demonstrates that popular culture studies should be approached with the same serious attention that is paid to classic philosophy and other long-established fields. Essays assemble the Buffy canon and explore how Buffy treats Shakespeare, comics, power, sisterhood, apocalyptic revisionism, folklore, feminism, redemption, patriarchy, identity and education.

J. Jack Halberstam is the author of "Gaga Feminism: Sex, Gender, and the End of Normal" (Beacon Press, 2012), along with four other books, including "Female Masculinity" and "In a Queer Time and Place." Currently a professor of English and gender studies and director of the Center for Feminist Research at the University of Southern California, Halberstam regularly speaks on queer culture, gender studies, and popular culture, and blogs at The Bully Bloggers.

"Animating Failure" is the concluding chapter from Halberstam's *The Queer Art of Failure*, which is about finding alternatives—to conventional understandings of success in a heteronormative, capitalist society; to academic disciplines that confirm what is already known according to approved methods of knowing; and to cultural criticism that claims to break new ground but cleaves to conventional archives. Halberstam proposes "low theory" as a mode of thinking and writing that operates at many different levels at once. Low theory is derived from eccentric archives. It runs the risk of not being taken seriously. It entails a willingness to fail and to lose one's way, to pursue difficult questions about complicity, and to find counterintuitive forms of resistance. Tacking back and forth between high theory and low theory, high culture and low culture, Halberstam looks for the unexpected and subversive in popular culture, avant-garde performance, and queer art. Halberstam pays particular attention to animated children's films, revealing narratives filled with unexpected encounters between the childish, the transformative, and the queer. Failure sometimes offers more creative, cooperative, and surprising ways of being in the world, even as it forces us to face the dark side of life, love, and libido.

Phyllis G. Hastings is Professor of English at Saginaw Valley State University and has been teaching campus-linked non-credit composition and general-education literature classes at the Saginaw Correctional Facility since Fall 2000. **Jim Morrison'** is an inmate at SCF and has been a student, tutor, or assistant in these classes.

The article describes the dynamics of freshman composition classes for medium-security inmates at the Saginaw Correctional Facility that were linked to parallel classes at Saginaw Valley State University, supported by SVSU student tutors, and enhanced by collaboratively produced pub- lications of student writing. It presents excerpts from inmates essays that tell their stories, explore their relationships, and portray their prison world and discusses the impact of writing on inmates enrolled in the linked composition classes.

Nalo Hopkinson, born in Jamaica and now living in Toronto, is a superstar of modern fantasy. Her award-winning novels include *Brown Girl in the Ring* (1998), *Midnight Robber* (2000), *The Salt Roads* (2003), and *The New Moons Arms* (2007). Her short story collection, *Skin Folk* (2001), was the winner of the World Fantasy Award and the Sunburst Award. She has edited and co-edited a number of fantasy anthologies, and taught at the Clarion workshops and other venues. She is a founding member and currently on the advisory committee of the Carl Brandon Society, which exists to further the conversation on race and ethnicity in SF and fantasy. In "Report from Planet Midnight," at the International Association of the Fantastic in the Arts, an alien addresses the crowd, evaluating Earth's "strange" customs, including the marginalization of works by nonwhite and female writers.