

Prof. Pericles Lewis

[pericles.lewis@yale.edu](mailto:pericles.lewis@yale.edu)

December 23, 2003

Syllabus

English 125b, Section 5

Major English Poets: Milton, Pope, Wordsworth, Yeats, Eliot

### **Texts**

John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Elledge (Norton)

Alexander Pope, *Poetry and Prose of Alexander Pope*, ed. Williams (Riverside)

William Wordsworth, *Selected Poems and Prefaces*, ed. Stilling (Riverside)

W. B. Yeats, *Collected Poems*, ed. Finneran (Scribner)

T. S. Eliot, *"The Waste Land" and Other Poems*, ed. Kermode (Penguin)

Paul Fussell, *Poetic Meter and Poetic Form* (McGraw-Hill)

M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (Heinle)

Texts are available at Book Haven, 290 York St.

You will also need to make use of the Oxford English Dictionary, available in CCL and SML reference or online (<http://dictionary.oed.com/>).

## **Class Time**

MW 2:30-3:45. Please come on time. More than four unexcused absences will result in a failing grade for the course.

## **Office Hours**

Th 2:00-3:45 and other times by appointment, 451 College Street, Room 102.

I encourage all students to come meet with me during the process of writing papers for the course. In order to be sure of having enough time to talk, please schedule an appointment by calling Mary Jane Stevens at 432-4750.

## **Discussion Questions**

Each student is responsible for submitting discussion questions or comments to the on-line forum every two weeks. The class will be divided into four groups (A to D). The list of readings on pp. 3-4 below indicates which group is responsible for discussion questions for each day. You may submit your questions on the poet under discussion for your day anytime in the two weeks prior to the day for which you are responsible, but no later than noon on that day. Questions can focus on aspects of the reading that you did not understand, or on connections between the reading and previous discussions in class. They should be designed to stimulate discussion. Comments should offer substantive responses to other students' questions or a continuation of discussion from class. Each student is responsible for six sets of questions or comments during the semester. If you fail to submit questions or comments on more than one of those six occasions, your grade may be affected. To use the on-line forum, go to the classes server ([classes.yale.edu](http://classes.yale.edu)), sign in, locate this course on your classes list, and click "Forum" at the bottom of the page.

## **Other Course Requirements**

Regular attendance at class and participation in class discussions.

Attendance at the four plenary lectures.

Memorization of at least twenty lines each of at least two poems, to be recited at various times during the semester.

Four essays (5 to 7 pages), due February 6, February 27, March 26, and April 23.

Note: at least one of these essays must engage with either a prose work by the poet under consideration or an essay by a modern critic. Assignments that can fulfill this requirement will be given as optional paper topics.

Final exam, May 9.

Papers can be submitted at the drop-box outside the English department office (room 109, Linsly-Chittenden Hall), **with my name clearly indicated on the front page**, or at my office (room 102, 451 College Street). You may also submit your papers electronically, as Word attachments to an email ([pericles.lewis@yale.edu](mailto:pericles.lewis@yale.edu)). Late papers will be penalized unless accompanied by a Dean's excuse.

## **Grades**

Grade for participation in class, attendance, participation in on-line forum: 15%

Each of four papers: 15%

Final exam: 25%

You must complete all assignments to earn a passing grade in this class.

## **Format of Papers; Plagiarism**

Consult "Some Matters of Form" and Professor Miller's addendum "Quoting Poetry" for guidelines about how to format your papers. These documents will be distributed in class.

Your assignments must be typed in 12-point font, with margins of one inch. We will discuss plagiarism before you hand in your first papers. You should document all your sources for any ideas or information if you are unsure whether they originated with you. (This includes any information you find on the web). Yale College regulations require that I report all cases of plagiarism to the Yale College Executive Committee. You can find further information in a pamphlet entitled "Sources: Their Use and Acknowledgment," which you should have received from the Yale College Dean's Office. It is available at <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~sources/>.

## **Readings**

In most weeks, the number of pages is not great, but the reading is difficult, and you should plan to read each selection slowly and carefully at least twice. In addition to the poetry, you are required to read: essays by William Wordsworth, T. S. Eliot, William Empson, and Helen Vendler; *Poetic Meter and Poetic Form* by Paul Fussell; and excerpts of *A Glossary of Literary Terms* by M. H. Abrams. The latter text is quite expensive, and the excerpts are short, so it should be feasible to share a copy with a classmate. I also encourage you to make use of the helpful introductions, notes, sources, and criticism included in many of the editions we are using.

Readings, lectures, and other assignments are listed by date on the following two pages.

## January

- |   |    |  |
|---|----|--|
| M | 12 | Milton, Sonnet 19 (393), <i>Paradise Lost</i> , Book 1 (6-32)  |
| W | 14 | Note “On the Verse”; <i>PL</i> 1-2 (6-63);<br>Fussell, “The Nature of Meter” (3-16); Abrams, “Allegory” (5-8), “Blank Verse” (24-5), “Epic” (76-80), “Renaissance” (264-8) |
| F | 16 | <i>PL</i> 2 (32-63) [A]  |
| M | 19 | MLK day; no class  |
| W | 21 | <i>PL</i> 3-4 (63-112); William Empson, “Milton’s God” (605-16) [B]  |
| W | 21 | 4:00 p.m., plenary lecture on Milton, Prof. Blair Hoxby  |
| M | 26 | <i>PL</i> 5-6 (112-62); Fussell, “The Technique of Scansion” (17-29) [C]   |
| W | 28 | <i>PL</i> 7-8 (162-97) [D]   |
| W | 28 | 3:45 p.m., opportunity to recite a passage from Milton   |

## February

- M 2 PL 9-10 (197-259) [A]
- W 4 PL 11-12 (259-301) [B]
- F 6 **First paper due (on Milton)**
- 
- M 9 Alexander Pope, "The Rape of the Lock" (78-100); Abrams, "Burlesque" (26-8),  
"Neclassic and Romantic" (174-80), "Rhetorical Figures" (270-73) [C]
- W 11 Pope, "An Essay on Criticism" (37-57); Fussell, "Metrical Variations" (30-61);  
Abrams, "Essay" (82-3), "Onomatopoeia" (199-200) [D]
- W 11 3:45 p.m., opportunity to recite a passage from Pope
- 
- M 16 Pope, "An Essay on Man," Epistle I (120-30);  
Fussell, "The Historical Dimension" (62-75);  
Abrams, "Great Chain of Being" (112-13) [A]
- W 18 Pope, "Eloisa to Abelard" (104-13); "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot" (197-211);  
Fussell, "Some Critical Implications of Metrical Analysis" (90-108)  
Abrams, "Antithesis" (11-12), "Satire" (275-8) [B]
- W 18 4:00 p.m., plenary lecture on Pope, Prof. Elliott Visconsi

## February

- M 23 William Wordsworth, "We are Seven" (49-51), "Anecdote for Fathers" (51-2),  
"Simon Lee" (53-5), "Expostulation and Reply" (106), "The Tables Turned" (107), "Lines  
Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey" (108-11),  
"Preface to the Second Edition of *Lyrical Ballads*" (445-64);

Fussell, "The English Stanzas" (127-153); Abrams, "Ballad" (18-19), "Conventions" (47-8), "Genres" (108-10), "Lyric" (146-7) [C]

W 25 Wordsworth, "Strange Fits of Passion Have I Known" (113),

"She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways" (113-14)

"Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower," (114-15)

"A Slumber Did my Spirit Seal" (115), "I Travelled among Unknown Men" (157);

Fussell, "Some Critical Implications of Stanzaic Forms" (154-172) [D]

F 27 **Second paper due (on Pope)**

### March

M 1 Wordsworth, "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Early Childhood" (186-91);

"Resolution and Independence" (165-9); Abrams, "Ode" (198-9) [A]

W 3 Wordsworth, "1801" (165),

"Composed Upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802" (170),

"It is a Beauteous Evening, Calm and Free" (170), "London, 1802" (172),

"Nuns Fret Not at their Convent's Narrow Room" (181),

"The World is too much with us" (182), "Scorn Not the Sonnet" (433-4);

Fussell, "Structural Principles: The Example of the Sonnet" (109-126) [B]

W 3 3:45 p.m., opportunity to recite a poem by Wordsworth

M 22 Wordsworth, The Prelude, Books 1-3 (193-231)

W 24 Wordsworth, The Prelude, Books 4-6 (231-72)

Abrams, "Sublime" (308-10)

W 24 4:00 p.m., plenary lecture on Wordsworth, Prof. Nigel Alderman

F 26 **Third paper due (on Wordsworth)**

M 29 W. B. Yeats, "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" (39), "Who Goes with Fergus?" (43), "The Fascination of What's Difficult" (93), "Upon a House Shaken by the Land Agitation," (95-6), "Leda and the Swan" (214); Abrams, "Celtic Revival" (32)

Helen Vendler, "Technique in the Earlier Poems of Yeats" (hand-out)

W 31 Yeats, "September, 1913" (108-9), "Easter, 1916" (180-82), "The Second Coming" (187); Abrams, "Occasional Poems" (197-8)

## April

M 5 Yeats, "Adam's Curse" (80), "To a Wealthy Man..." (107-8), "An Irish Airman Foresees His Death" (135), "In Memory of Eva Gore-Booth and Con Markievicz" (233-4)

W 7 Yeats, "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory" (132-35), "The Municipal Gallery Revisited," (319-21)

W 7 4:00 p.m., plenary lecture on modern poetry, Prof. Pericles Lewis

M 12 Yeats, "A Prayer for My Daughter" (188-90), "Sailing to Byzantium" (193-4), "Among School Children," (215-17)

W 14 Yeats, "Byzantium" (248-9), "The Circus Animals' Desertion" (346-8)

W 14 3:45 p.m., opportunity to recite a poem by Yeats

M 19 T. S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (3-8), "The Waste Land" (53-76), "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (hand-out); Fussell, "Free Verse" (76-89); Abrams, "Allusion" (9-10), "Modernism and Postmodernism" (167-9)

W 21 Eliot, "The Waste Land," continued;

Fussell, "Conventions and the Individual Talent" (173-180)

W 21 3:45 p.m., opportunity to recite a passage from Eliot

F 23 **Final paper due (on Yeats or Eliot)**

Sunday, May 9, 2 p.m., Final Exam, Location TBA