

Jacquelyn Ardam, Visiting Assistant Professor
jwardam@colby.edu

Class: Mon & Weds, 2:30-3:45, Lovejoy 202
OH: Mon, 10:30-12:30, Thurs, 1:00-4:00, Miller 218

EN 397: Poetry Remixes
Humanities Lab, Presence of the Past Theme



Remixing, re-visioning, rewriting, appropriation, quotation, and recycling are key methods and concerns for many 20th and 21st-century poets—and this class! The course is split into three distinct units: Remixing Gender, which focuses on remaking the gender and sexual politics of Renaissance sonnets in the 20th and 21st centuries; Remixing Race and Identity, which focuses on the intersections of African-American poetry and visual art and is based on the holdings of the Colby College Museum of Art; and Remaking Culture, which focuses on the archives of the avant-garde poet, artist, and physicist Bern Porter, who is best-known for his found poetry. The course asks questions such as: how and why do poets engage with other art and cultural forms? How does remixing shape our understanding of history and politics? What does our poetic engagement with the past tell us about how we view our current political moment? Through close work with visiting artists and writers, museum curators, and special collections librarians, and non-traditional assignments including creative projects, institutional critiques, and a curated exhibit, students have the opportunity to see how and why poetry—and the humanities more broadly—have mattered in the past, and continue to matter today.

Texts:

- *The Sonnets*, The New Cambridge Shakespeare, Second Edition (978-0521678377)
- Jen Bervin, *Nets* (978-0972768436)
- Terrance Hayes, *American Sonnets for My Past and Future Assassin* (978-0143133186)
- Robin Coste Lewis, *Voyage of the Sable Venus* (978-1101911204)
- Tracy K. Smith, *Wade in the Water* (978-1555978136)

Learning Goals:

In this course, students will:

- Develop close reading skills particularly attuned to form
- Develop argumentation skills based on close analysis of literary and visual texts
- Understand and analyze critical discussions about rewriting, remixing, appropriation, recycling, etc. as a means of poetic production
- Describe and analyze these aesthetic practices in relation to cultural and political moments
- Develop archival research skills with primary and secondary literary and visual texts
- Engage with texts creatively and apply poetic remixing methods to their own work
- Develop institutional critique based on Colby's museum holdings
- Curate an exhibit based on Colby's Special Collections

Assignments and Grading:

- Creative sonnet project + artist's statement: 20%
- Colby Museum institutional critique: 20%
- Bern Porter group exhibit + curator's statement: 20%
- End-of-semester critical reflection: 20%
- Participation: 20%

You will receive separate handouts that include guidelines for all of your assignments.

Lateness Policy: Papers and projects are due via Moodle by the time and date marked on the syllabus. You may submit your paper as a Word document (.doc or .docx) or as a PDF. If you send me a corrupted file or a file that I cannot open, your assignment will count as late until I receive a workable file. Late assignments will be penalized 1/3 of a grade (A to A-) for each late day. I may grant extensions in extenuating circumstances; when in doubt, come and talk to me.

Participation: This is a small class and its success depends on active dialogue between students. Please come to class fully prepared to discuss the material and to engage with the materials. If you have trouble speaking in class, you might want to consider bringing prepared questions and/or comments with you. You cannot participate in class if you are not actually in class. More than one unexcused absence will have a negative effect on your participation grade.

Office Hours: I will hold walk-in office hours on Mondays from 10:30-12:30 and Thursdays from 1-4. I am also available at other times by appointment.

Format of Papers: All assignments should include your name, my name, the class title and number, and date. They should be formatted in size 12 font, with 1 inch margins. They must include a Works Cited page.

Email Policy: Please feel free to contact me via email at jwardam@colby.edu with questions or concerns throughout the semester. I will respond to emails within 24 hours during the week; my email responses may take longer over the weekend. I will not respond to any questions about papers 24 hours before each of the papers is due, nor will I read entire drafts of your paper. If you have long or complicated

questions, I suggest that you meet with me during office hours. Meeting in person is usually much more productive than exchanging emails.

Electronics Policy: Please silence your electronic devices during class. Laptops, tablets, kindles, etc. will be allowed in class, but if I see using them for purposes unrelated to class discussions, I will ask you to put them away.

Academic Honesty: Honesty, integrity, and personal responsibility are cornerstones of a Colby education and provide the foundation for scholarly inquiry, intellectual discourse, and an open and welcoming campus community. These values are articulated in the Colby Affirmation and are central to this course. Students are expected to demonstrate academic honesty in all aspects of this course. Any violations of academic honesty will be referred to the Coordinator of Academic Integrity; sanctions may include suspension or expulsion.

According to Colby (<http://web.colby.edu/farnham-writerscenter/academic-honesty/>), academic dishonesty includes more than just the purposeful submission of another's material as one's own without citation. Academic dishonesty also includes:

- **double-submitting**, or using the same work to meet assignments in two or more courses;
- **insufficient paraphrasing**, or representing someone else's language too closely as your own;
- **pirating ideas**, or using the thoughts, concepts, and analysis of someone else—even those of a friend or roommate in casual conversation—as your own;
- **incomplete citation**, or failing to include all necessary elements of documentation in your citations (for example, omitting either in-text citations or a Works Cited pages when both are required);
- **under-documentation**, or combining several sources into a single one.

For more, see page 9 of your student handbook on "Academic Honesty" (<http://www.colby.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Colby-College-Student-Handbook-2-16.pdf>). If you have any questions about plagiarism, don't hesitate to contact me! I am happy to talk through any concerns you may have about academic honesty.

Athletic Participation: While Colby College is supportive of athletic participation by its students, academics takes priority over athletics. Both NCAA and Colby rules prohibit missing class for practices. In the case of overlapping commitments between class and athletic competitions, you must meet with me as soon as possible to discuss these overlaps. You may request permission to miss class and make up the missed work, but I have the final authority either to grant or to withhold permission.

Religious Holidays: Colby College is supportive of the religious practices of its students, faculty, and staff. The College is committed to ensuring that all students are able to observe their religious beliefs without academic penalty. If you observe a religious holiday that will impact your work in this course, please see me at the beginning of the term. We will then work to find a reasonable accommodation that will allow you to complete the academic work.

Sexual Misconduct/Title IX Statement: Colby College prohibits and will not tolerate sexual misconduct or gender-based discrimination of any kind. Colby is legally obligated to investigate sexual misconduct (including, but not limited to sexual assault and sexual harassment).

If you wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct, please contact Colby Counseling Services (207-859-4490) or the Director of the Gender and Sexual Diversity Program, Emily Schusterbauer (207-859-4093).

Students should be aware that faculty members are considered responsible employees; as such, if you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a faculty member, they have an obligation to report it to Colby's Title IX Coordinator. "Disclosure" may include communication in-person, via email/phone/text, or through class assignments. To learn more about sexual misconduct or report an incident, visit <http://www.colby.edu/sexualviolence/>.

Reading Schedule

A note on the reading schedule: this class is a humanities lab, which means we will be spending a lot of time outside of the traditional classroom and working with many different teaching partners. Accordingly, the syllabus is VERY LIKELY TO CHANGE! I will give you as much advance notice as possible about any changes, and the *amount* of work is unlikely to change in a significant way, even if the substance of the work changes.

Week 1

Wed Sep 5: Introductions

UNIT 1: Remixing Sex and Gender

Week 2:

Mon Sep 10: Shakespeare's Sonnets, focus on #1, #3, #4, #8, #13, #18, #19, #20, #29, #55

Prose: Jonathan F.S. Post, Chapters 4 & 5 of *Shakespeare's Sonnets and Poems: A Very Short Introduction*

Weds Sep 12 Shakespeare's Sonnets, focus on #92, #106, #116, #127, #129, #130, #135, #136

Week 3

Mon Sep 17 Carol Ann Duffy, "Anne Hathaway"
Bernadette Mayer, "Sonnet We Are Ordinary C'Mere"
Harryette Mullen, "Dim Lady"
Danez Smith, "The 17-Year Old & the Gay Bar"
Darren Wershler-Henry, "Sonnet for Bonnie"

Adrienne Rich, "When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-vision"

Weds Sep 19 from *Out of Sequence: The Sonnets Remixed*, ed. by D. Gilson
Jordan Stein, "Remixed" (1)
Adam W. Clifton, "Single" (3)
Stephen S. Mills, "A Gay Man Ponders Having Children" (8)
A.W. Strouse, "Upon Finding Online..." (20)
Wendy Walker, "Cutup Will" (92)
Cathleen Calbert, "Old Love" (116)

Jehanne Dubrow, "129" (129)
Antonio Vallone, "1:30am, Spoken in the Backseat of a Souped-Up Sunbird" (130)
Will Stockton, "My Name is Will" (136)

from *Pop Sonnets*, by Erik Didriksen

"Friday I'm in Love"

"Roxanne"

"Oops I Did it Again"

"Single Ladies (Put a Ring On It)"

"All About That Bass"

"99 Problems"

Karla Kelsey, "Teaching Writing Through the Sonnet Tradition"

Week 4

Mon Sep 24 Jen Bervin, *NETS*
Philip Metres, review of *NETS*
Travis Macdonald, "A Brief History of Erasure Poetics"

Weds Sep 26 Terrence Hayes, *American Sonnets for My Past and Future Assassin*
Parul Sehgal, "Sonnets that Reckon with Donald Trump's America"

Week 5

Mon Oct 1 Terrance Hayes, *American Sonnets for My Past and Future Assassin*

Weds Oct 3 In-class Conceptual Workshop

Week 6

Mon Oct 8 In-class Conceptual Workshop

UNIT 2: Remixing Race and Identity with the Colby Art Museum

Weds Oct 10 **Class meets in Colby Museum:** special session with Torkwase Dyson, Visiting Artist
Reading TBD

Week 7

Mon Oct 15 (fall break, no class)

Weds Oct 17 Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook, "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory"
MOMA Learning entries on: Dada, Conceptual Art

Fri Oct 19 **Creative sonnet project due 5pm**

Week 8

Mon Oct 22 Tracy K. Smith, *Wade in the Water*
Rachel Stone, "The Trump-Era Boom in Erasure Poetry"

Weds Oct 24 Tracy K. Smith, *Wade in the Water*
David Scott, "Introduction: On the Archaeologies of Black Memory"

Week 9

Mon Oct 29 Tracy K. Smith, *Wade in the Water*
Bergis Jules, "Confronting Our Failure of Care Around the Legacies of Marginalized People in the Archives"

Weds Oct 31 Robin Coste Lewis, *Voyage of the Sable Venus*
Henry Louis Gates, Introduction to *The Image of the Black in Western Art*

Week 10

Mon Nov 5 **Class meets at Colby Museum:** Black Art on view
Robin Coste Lewis, *Voyage of the Sable Venus*
John P. Bowles, "African-American Artists as Agents of Modernism: A Challenge for American Art"

Weds Nov 7 **Class meets at Colby Museum:** Black Art in the permanent collection
Robin Coste Lewis, *Voyage of the Sable Venus*
Bridget R. Cooks, Introduction to *Exhibiting Blackness: African Americans and the American Art Museum*

Week 11

Mon Nov 12 **Class meets at Colby Museum:** Institutional critique workshop
Robin Coste Lewis, *Voyage of the Sable Venus*

**UNIT 3: Remixing Culture with Colby's Special Collections
Bern Porter's Archives**

Weds Nov 14 **Class meets in Special Collections:** Introduction to Bern Porter's archives
Introduction, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 17, 18, 19, 20 from *Where to Go, What to Do, When You are Bern Porter*, James Schevill
Finding Aid to the Bern Porter Collection

Week 12

Mon Nov 19 **Class meets in Special Collections:** Hands-on object lessons
Joel Lipman, Introduction to *Found Poems*

Tues Nov 20 **Institutional critique project due 5pm**

Weds Nov 21 (no class, Thanksgiving recess)

Week 13

Mon Nov 26 **Class meets in Special Collections:** Curation 101
selections from *Eternal Network: A Mail Art Anthology*

Weds Nov 28 Redell Olson, "Reading and Writing Through Found Materials: From Modernism to Contemporary Practice"
selections from *Hold Onto Your Hat: Interviews with Bern Porter*

Week 14

Mon Dec 3 **Class meets in Special Collections** –Working session

Weds Dec 5 **Class meets in Special Collections** –Working session

Porter Installation dates: Dec 10, 11, 12: 1-4pm in Special Collections (attend as needed)

Weds Dec 12 **Porter curator's statement due 5pm**

Fri Dec 14 **Critical reflection due 5pm**