

Ph.D. Program Highlights

With over a dozen faculty working in poetry and poetics, Northwestern's literary studies programs and departments offer superb training in the study of poetry and the long and diverse tradition named by 'poetics' across a wide range of historical periods from classical antiquity to the current moment. Our distinguished faculty work closely with students who are interested in generating theoretically innovative, advanced scholarship in the poetics of the near and distant past, as well as of marginalized communities in the U.S. and abroad.

Graduate study in poetry and poetics is undergirded by two primary components: a doctoral track in Poetry and Poetics and the Poetry and the Poetics Colloquium (poetry.northwestern.edu). The doctoral track allows students in English and Comparative Literary Studies to specialize in Poetry and Poetics as a scholarly subfield. The Poetry and Poetics Colloquium is an interdisciplinary cluster of writers and scholars from across the university who share an interest in studying the genre and its various permutations. Every year, PPC hosts a lively series of workshops, reading groups, symposia, poets and critics. Recent visitors include poets Rosa Alcalá, Christian Bök, Keorapetse Kgositsile, Harryette Mullen, Mark Nowak, Craig Santos Perez, M. NourbeSe Philip, Ed Roberson, Cecilia Vicuña, Adam Zagajewski, and Raul Zurita, as well as leading scholars such as Christopher Nealon, Marjorie Perloff, Yopie Prins, Jahan Ramazani and Avital Ronnell.

Curricular and programmatic offerings in the field are augmented by the Poetry and Poetics Graduate Cluster, The Futures of Poetics Reading Group, the Comparative Modernisms Workshop, and the initiatives of our digital platform *Open Door Archive*.

Chicago enjoys a lively poetry scene. The Poetry Center of Chicago, the Guild Complex, The Chicago Poetry Project, The Poetry Foundation, Danny's and Sector 2337 are only a few of the venues that sponsor readings and events in the area.



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Poetry & Poetics at Northwestern University

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FACULTY

Chris Abani (Ph.D. USC) teaches Creative Writing (Fiction and Poetry) and Literature. He is a novelist, poet, essayist, screenwriter and playwright. His fields of interest include African Poetics, World Literature, 20th-century British and American Literature, African Presences in Medieval and Renaissance Cultural Spaces, The Architecture of Cities and their Potential Symbiotic Relationship with their Populations, West African Music, Postcolonial and Transnational Theory, Robotics and Consciousness, Yoruba and Igbo Philosophy and Religion. He is the recipient of the PEN USA Freedom-to-Write Award, the Prince Claus Award, a Lannan Literary Fellowship, a California Book Award, a Hurston/Wright Legacy Award, a PEN Beyond the Margins Award, the PEN Hemingway Book Prize and a Guggenheim Award.

John Alba Cutler (Ph.D., UCLA) teaches and researches US Latino/a literatures, multiethnic American poetry, contemporary American literature, and print culture studies. He is the author of *Ends of Assimilation: The Formation of Chicano Literature* (Oxford, 2015), as well as essays in American Literary History, American Literature, MELUS, Aztlán: A Journal of Chicano Studies, and the Los Angeles Review of Books.

Betsy Erkkilä (Ph.D., Berkeley) specializes in Revolutionary and 19th-century American literature and modern and contemporary poetry and poetics, with a particular interest in gender, race, and political theory and transatlantic literary exchange. She is the author of *Walt Whitman Among the French*, *Whitman the Political Poet*, *The Wicked Sisters*, *Mixed Bloods and Other American Crosses*, and recent essays on Wheatley, Jefferson, Poe, Melville, Dickinson, and Lincoln. Her current projects include a book entitled *Imagining the Revolution* and "Before the American Novel," the opening chapter of the *Oxford History of the American Novel* (2014). She received Northwestern's Graduate School Faculty Award for Service in 2014 for her distinguished work as a graduate teacher and mentor.

Harris Feinsod (Ph.D. Stanford) teaches 20th- and 21st-century U.S. and Latin American literature and culture. He is the author of *The Poetry of the Americas from Good Neighbors to Countercultures* (Oxford, 2017), and the co-translator of *Decals: The Complete Early Poems of Oliverio Girondo* (Open Letter, forthcoming). His research focuses on modern poetry and the avant-garde in Europe and the Americas, hemispheric cultural relations, environmental and multi-ethnic literatures of the U.S., and oceanic studies. Recent writing appears or is forthcoming in *American Literary History*, *Centro*, *Iowa Review*, *Modernism/modernity*, *n+1*, and the *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics: Fourth Edition*, for which he served as assistant editor.

Christine Froula (Ph.D. Chicago) specializes in American, British, and European modernist literature, visual art, and culture; feminist and gender theory; and editorial theory and practice. Books include *Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Avant-Garde*; *Modernism's Body: Sex, Culture, and Joyce*; *To Write Paradise: Style and Error in Ezra Pound's Cantos*; and *A Guide to Ezra Pound's Selected Poems*. Articles on poetry and poetics include "When Eve Reads Milton: Undoing the Canonical Economy" (*Critical Inquiry*), "Browning's *Sordello* and the Parables of Modernist Poetics" (*ELH*), "Eliot's Grail Quest, or, The Lover, the

Police, and *The Waste Land*" (*Yale Review*), "Corpse, Monument, *Hypocrite Lecteur*: Text and Transference in the Reception of *The Waste Land*" (*Text*), "The Beauties of Mistranslation: On Pound's English after *Cathay*" (*Ezra Pound and China*), "War, Empire, and Modernist Poetry, 1914-1922" (*Cambridge Companion to the Poetry of the First World War*), "Ezra Pound and the Comparative Literature of the Present, or, Triptych Rome /London/Pisa" (*Ezra Pound in the Present: Essays on Ezra Pound's Contemporaneity*), "Scribbling into Eternity: Joyce, Proust, 'Proteus'" (*Resurgent Joyce*), and "Unwriting The Waves" (forthcoming).

Reginald Gibbons (Ph.D. Stanford) has published over thirty volumes, including poems; translations from ancient Greek and Spanish; fiction; edited volumes of contemporary fiction and poetry and of twentieth-century poetics; and editions of modern fiction. He was the editor of *TriQuarterly* magazine from 1981 to 1997, was a cofounder of the Humanities Institute workshop on Poetry and Poetics, is jointly appointed in Classics and in Spanish and Portuguese, and is Director of the Center for the Writing Arts and the graduate writing program in Northwestern's School of Professional Studies. His research interests include the history of poetic practice, translation, and all aspects of the art and situation of poetry. He is a member of the Planning Team and the Advisory Council of the American Writers Museum, which is building a national museum of American literature, to open in Chicago in early 2017, and is an officer of The Guild Complex, a Chicago literary presenting organization, and in 2013 a co-founder of the annual (Gwendolyn) "BrooksDay." His critical book on poetry, *How Poems Think*, was published in September 2015 by University of Chicago Press, and his new book of poems, *Last Lake*, will be published (also by University of Chicago Press) in late 2016. He has won a Guggenheim fellowship, the Folger Shakespeare Library O. B. Hardison, Jr. Poetry Prize, and has been a Finalist for the National Book Award.

Susannah Gottlieb (Ph.D. Chicago) works in the areas of modern and contemporary poetry and poetics, continental philosophy and political theory, and Asian American literary traditions. She is the author of *Regions of Sorrow: Anxiety and Messianism in Hannah Arendt and W.H. Auden* and the editor of *Hannah Arendt: Reflections on Literature and Culture*. She regularly teaches courses on poetry, poetics, and literary theory. Her current projects include a book-length study entitled *The Importance of Metaphysics: The Intellectual Heresies of W.H. Auden* and essays on Celan's Meridian materials, Arendt's report on the Eichmann trial, Kafka and the idea of Bildung, and reflections on the demonic.

Mary Kinzie (Ph.D. Johns Hopkins) is a poet and brooder about poetry and prosody. Her guide to lyric forms, *A Poet's Guide to Poetry*, was recently reissued in an updated second edition by University of Chicago Press.

Natasha Tretheway won the Pulitzer Prize for poetry for her book, *Native Guard*, and served two terms as Poet Laureate of the United States. She has based many poems on historical events and figures, including those of the Civil War; her poems also often explore race and gender. She has said that she considers her creative work a form of research as well as an artistic practice. Her poem-cycle *Belloq's Ophelia* fictionalizes--on the basis of early 20th-century photographs by

E. J. Belloq--the life of a prostitute in New Orleans. *Beyond Katrina* is a mixed-genre book that constitutes "A Meditation on the Mississippi River." Her most recent book of poems, *Thrall*, which makes use of both personal and historical materials, also continues her work in ekphrastic mode. Tretheway joins the faculty of Northwestern in fall 2017, having taught for a number of years at Emory University

Will West (Ph.D. University of Michigan) studies, teaches, and thinks about poetry and poetics mainly through the contexts of the European Renaissance, classical antiquity, and other premodern societies. His interest in poetics extends beyond verse to include the patterns to which prose and drama are shaped, the tropes and practices of poetic making, and the role of the poet in various historical and social moments. At Northwestern, he has taught classes on the afterlives of Ovid's book of changes; poetics and aesthetics from Aristotle to Kant; Shakespeare around the world and over time; and many other topics.

Ivy Wilson (Ph.D. Yale University) teaches courses on the literatures of the black diaspora, with a particular emphasis on African-American culture. He has published editions on two 19th-century African-American poets: James Monroe Whitfield and Albery Allson Whitman. His book *Specters of Democracy: Blackness and the Aesthetics of Politics in the Antebellum U.S.*, includes chapters on the poetry of Frances E.W. Harper and Walt Whitman. He has taught courses on African-American poetry and poetics from Phillis Wheatley to hip hop.

Specialists in Poetry & Poetics in other departments include:

Classics:

Marianne Hopman

French & Italian:

Christopher Bush, Christopher Davis,
Cynthia Nazarian

Slavics:

Clare Cavanaugh

Spanish & Portuguese, Latin

American & Caribbean Studies:

Jorge Coronado, Emily Maguire

German:

Peter Fenves, Samuel Weber