

Veranstalter	N.N.
Thema	Poetry and the People, c.1350-2000 [ENG-6, ENG-6a, ENG-7, ENG-7a, ENG-12, ENG-13, AA7, AA10, AA11, LAA9, LAA10, LAA12, LAA13, AA-MA01, AA-MA02, AA-MA05, AA-MA06]
Art der Veranstaltung	Seminar II
Veranstaltungsnummer	53-549
Zeit	Di 16-18
Raum	Ü35-01016
Beginn	15. Oktober 2019

Course description

Who is poetry for? And where does poetic speech originate? We are so accustomed to think of poetry as an act of intimate and quasi-personal communication between speaker and reader that it can be difficult to reimagine poetry as a literary form which tries to be genuinely ‘popular’, whether by rooting itself in demotic (ordinary) speech, by explicitly addressing socio-political concerns, or by calling into question the idea of a single, autonomous voice. Taking a transhistorical approach, this seminar will explore how poets from both sides of the Atlantic have addressed the question of poetry’s ability to speak for, to, or about the people. We will close-read a large number of poems while also studying theoretical and critical texts that reflect on poetry’s fraught status as individual and/or communal speech. Among other issues, we will explore the tension between the lyric authority of the poet and the demands imposed on poetic production by the vision of a genuinely popular writing; we will ask how poetry is (re)imagined as the medium of collective experience; we will think about poetry’s ability to act as a medium of universal (rather than particularist) political demands; and we will also ask if there is a difference between poetry that is popular and poetry that is populist. Poetry discussed in this course ranges from William Langland’s fourteenth-century text *Piers Plowman* and the literature of the English Commonwealth and Restoration (c.1650-70), to the Romantics (esp. Blake, Hemans, Wordsworth, Shelley), proto-modernist and modernist authors (esp. Whitman, W.B. Yeats) as well as some contemporary poets (incl. excerpts from Claudia Rankine’s *Citizen: An American Lyric* and Sean Bonney’s *The Commons*).

Set texts:

- Primary texts and excerpts from theoretical/critical texts will be provided in weekly readers. Students are expected to study these poems in depth before each session. Reading questions will also be provided on a weekly basis.

Studienleistung

- Regular attendance (max. two missed sessions)
- Minutes for one session

Prüfungsleistung

- Regular attendance (max. two missed sessions)
- Term paper