Ph.D Reading List
Contemporary American and British Literature

The following is a fundamental reading list for doctoral candidates to use as a guide in preparing for their comprehensive examination in the field of Contemporary American and British Literature (i.e., Literature after 1945). A student is expected to have read widely in the field; to be thoroughly familiar with the major writers; and to read widely in the journal literature. The list is suggestive rather than definitive, a list for the student and Committee on Studies to begin with. The list has five sections:

- Poetry
- Fiction
- Drama
- Nonfiction
- Criticism/Theory

NOTE: ** denotes that the item can be selected by the graduate committee for master's reading list/exam.

POETRY
Ammons, A. R.
**Garbage: A Poem New York: W. W. Norton, 1994
Baraka, Imamu Amiri (LeRoi Jones) (b. 1934)
“Balboa, the Entertainer”
***“Political Poem”
“A Poem for Speculative Hipsters”
“Legacy”
“The New World”
“Incident”
***“Babylon Revisited”
“A New Reality Is Better Than a New Movie!”
***“Three Modes of History and Culture”
“The New World”
“Leadbelly Gives an Autograph”
“Ka 'Ba”
“Kenyatta Listening to Mozart”
“Leroy”
***“The Nation is Like Ourselves”
“AM/TRAK”
“How you sound??”
Berryman, John. (1914-1972)
***“The Ball Poem”
“A Professor’s Song “
The Dream Songs
14 “Life, friends is boring. We must not say so”
16 “Henry’s pelt was put on sundry walls”
75 “Turning it over, considering, like a madman”
**76 “Henry’s Confession”
149 “This world is gradually becoming a place”
**312 “I have moved to Dublin to have it out with you”

“Sonnet 25”
“Of Suicide”
“Henry’s Understanding”

Bishop, Elizabeth (1911-1979)

“The Map”
“The Man-Moth”
“The Monument”
***“The Fish”
“Roosters”
***“At the Fishhouses”
“Over 2000 Illustrations and a Complete Concordance”
“Sestina”
***“The Armadillo”
“Brazil, January 1, 1502”
***“In the Waiting Room”
“Crusoe in England”
“Poem”
“The End of March”
***“One Art”
“North Haven”

Brooks, Gwendolyn
_A Street in Bronzeville_

Brown, Sterling A.

Cullen, Countee

Creeley, Robert. (b. 1926)

Naughty Boy
A Wicker Basket
**Somewhere
The Door
The Window
“I Keep to Myself Such Measures . . .”
**Self-Portrait
**The Faces
After Lorca
A Form of Women
The Flower
The Rain
For Love
**The Language
The Window
The World
Bresson’s Movies
Age
To Define
**Form

Dickey, James

Dove, Rita.

“Thomas and Beulah”
“Geometry”
***“The House Slave”
“Adolescence—II”
***“Agosta the Winged Man and the Rasha”
“Parsley”
***“thomas and Beulah”
“The Event”
“Dusting”
“Weathering Out”
“The Great Palaces of Versailles”
“Wingfoot Lake”
“After Reading Mickey in the Night Kitchen for the Third Time”
***“Claudette Colvin Goes to Work”
“The Transport of Slaves”
“Madre Sofía”
“Mi Abuelo”
“A Man Then Suddenly Stops Moving”
***“Nigger Song: An Odyssey”
“Anselmo’s Moment with God”
“The Death of Anselmo Luna”

Erdrich, Louise. (b. 1954)

“Family Reunion”
“Captivity”
“Windigo”
“The Fence”

Ginsberg, Allen

***“Howl”
**A Supermarket in California
America
To Aunt Rose
**Last Night in Calcutta
Mugging
Homework
Kaddish
I (“Strange now to think of you, gone without corsets & eyes, while I walk on the sunny pavement of Greenwich Village)
First Party at Ken Kesey’s with Hell’s Angels
**On Neal’s Ashes

Updated 2/2003
Graham, Jorie. (b 1950)
   “At Luca Signorelli’s Resurrection of the Body”
   “Fission”
   “The Dream of the United Field”
   “The Surface”
   “The Swarm”

Gunn, Thom. (b. 1929)
   “The Byrnies “
   “My Sad Captains”
   “Elegy on the Dust”
   “In the Tank”
   “Moly”
   “Autobiography”
   “Yoko”
   “Donahue’s Sister”
   “Life”
   “Missing”

Hayden, Robert

Heaney, Seamus. (b. 1939)
   ***“Death of a Naturalist”
   “Requiem for the Croppies”
   “Bogland”
   “Limbo”
   ***“Sunlight”
   “Bog Queen”
   “Punishment”
   ***“The Strand at Lough Beg”
   ***“The Otter”
   “The Harvest Bow”
   “In Memoriam Francis Ledwidge”
   “A Hazel Stick for Catherine Ann”
   ***“Station Island”
   VIII (“Black water. White waves. Furrows snowcapped.”)
   XII (“Like a convalescent, I took the hand”)
   ***“Sweeney Redivivus”
   ***“Alphabets”
   “The Haw Lantern”

**Kinsella, Thomas, Nightwalker and Other Poems

Levertov, Denise. (1923-1997)
   ***“Overland to the Islands”
   “Illustrious Ancestors”
   “The Ache of Marriage”
   “The Wings”
   ***“Stepping Westward”
   “Williams: An Essay”

Updated 2/2003
“Wavering”
“Where is the Angel?”
***“Some Notes on Organic Form”

**Lorde, Audre

Lowell, Robert
“The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket”
“After the Surprising Conversions”
“Grandparents”
“Commander Lowell”
“Waking in the Blue”
“Memories of West Street and Lepke”
“To Speak of Woe That Is in Marriage”
“Skunk Hour”
“For the Union Dead”
“Waking Early Sunday Morning”
“Reading Myself”
“Dolphin”
“Epilogue”

Merrill, James.

Merwin, W. S.
“The Drunk in the Furnace”
“The Hydra”
“Some Last Questions”
“For the Anniversary of My”
“The Asians Dying”
“For a Coming Extinction”
“A Given Day”

Olson, Charles. (1919-1970)
In Cold Hell, in Thicket
I, Maximus of Gloucester, to You
Letter 3 (“Tansy Buttons”)
Maximus, to himself
The Librarian
Projective Verso

Ortiz, Simon.
“The Story of how a Wall Stands”
Woven Stone

Rich, Adrienne
Aunt Jennifer’s Tigers
Snapshots of a Daughter-in-Law
Face to Face
Orion
Planetarium
A Valediction Forbidding Mourning
Diving into the Wreck

Updated 2/2003
Power
twenty-one love poems
Grandmothers
Seven Skins
Fox
Smith, Stevie. (1902-1971)
This Englishwoman
Souvenir de Monsieur Poop
Our Bog Is Dood
God the Eater
Not Waving but Drowning
Thoughts about the Person
A House of Mercy
Exeat
To Carry the Child
Pretty
Snyder, Gary

**Turtle Island

FICTION
Acker, Kathy. Empire of the Senseless
Anaya, Rudolfo. Bless Me, Ultima
Barthelme, Donald. Sixty Stories
**Bellow, Saul. The Adventures of Augie March
**Burgess, Burgess. A Clockwork Orange
**Burroughs, William S. Naked Lunch
Capote, Truman. In Cold Blood
Castillo, Ana. The Mixquihuila Letters
Cisneros, Sandra. The House on Mango Street
DeLillo, Don. White Noise
Dick, Philip. Bladrunner
Didion, Joan. A Book of Common Prayer
**Ellison, Ralph. Invisible Man
Gibson, William. Neuromancer
Golding, William. Lord of the Flies
**Heller, Joseph. Catch 22
Johnson, James Weldon. Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man
**Kerouac, Jack. On the Road
Larsen, Nella. Passing.
Momaday, N. Scott. House Made of Dawn
**Morrison, Toni. Beloved
**Nabokov, Vladimir. Pale Fire
O'Connor, Flannery.

***“Everything That Rises Must Converge”
“A Good Man Is Hard to Find”

Updated 2/2003
Contemporary American and British Literatures

***“Revelation”
  “Greenleaf”
  “Good Country People”
**Pynchon, Thomas. *Gravity's Rainbow*
Rechy, John. *City of Night*
Reed, Ishmael. *Mumbo Jumbo*
Roth, Philip. *Portnoy's Complaint*
Rushdie, Salman. *Midnight's Children*
Silko, Leslie. *Ceremony*
**Updike, John. *Rabbit Run*
Villareal, Jose Antonio. *Poco.*
Vonnegut, Kurt. *Slaughterhouse Five*
Welty, Eudora
  ***“Why I Live at the P.O.”
  ***“Lily Daw and the Three Ladies”
  “A Worn Path”
  “Recital Time”
  “Where Is the Voice Coming From”
Winterson, Jeanette. *Sexing the Cherry*

**DRAMA**
Baraka, Imamu Amiri. (LeRoi Jones), *Dutchman*
Beckett, Samuel. *Waiting for Godot*
**Friel, Brian. *Translations* 
**Hansberry, Lorraine. *A Raisin in the Sun* 
**Hwang, David. *M. Butterfly* 
Mamet, David. *American Buffalo* 
**Miller, Arthur. *Death of a Salesman* 
Osborne, John. *Look Back in Anger* 
**Pinter, Harold. *The Homecoming* 
**Shange, Ntozake. *for colored girls who have considered suicide . . .* 
**Valdez, Luis. *Zoot Suit* 
**Williams, Tennessee. *A Streetcar Named Desire* 
Wilson, August. *Fences* 

**NONFICTION PROSE**
**Anzaldua, Gloria. *La Frontera/Borderlands: The New Mestiza* 
**Baldwin, James. *Notes of a Native Son* 
Kittredge, William. *Hole in the Sky.* 
Kingston, Maxine Hong. *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* 
Mailer, Norman. *The Armies of the Night* 

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CRITICISM/THEORY
Gates, Louis Henry, Jr.