

Form and Theory of Poetry
English 4953/6953
MWF 1-1:50

Spring 2009
Prof. West

BOOKS:

James Fenton, *An Introduction to English Poetry*.

Phyllis Levin, *The Penguin Book of the Sonnet*.

William Harmon, ed, *The Classic Hundred Poems*. (2nd ed.)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This section of the course will offer an advanced introduction to prosody: rhythm, meter, rhyme, traditional stanza forms, and related topics. You will learn a considerable amount of terminology, but I am at least as concerned with training your ear: for example, you will learn how to explain the difference between blank verse and free verse, but you will also learn how to hear that difference. The course will give you a sharper appreciation of versification and poetic craft in general, as well as a better sense of the relationship between “form” and “content.” Graduate students should find it valuable preparation for the explication section of the M.A. Exam.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Regular attendance, constructive participation in discussion, two papers, two exams, and a reading journal.