

Poetic Faith: An Imagined Seminar

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The purpose of this seminar is twofold: to guide me through an unwieldy, idiosyncratic bibliography in a compressed amount of time and to focus my reading and thinking on large topics I'm very interested in exploring during my sabbatical. Reading lists are subject to editing, and blogging will supplement note-taking as a way of processing and recording the learning I do over the coming weeks. By the end of the four weeks, I will have plenty of food for thought while I spend the next year as a Frederick Burkhardt Fellow at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, MA. I'm nearing the end(!) of my process in writing *The Hymnal Before the Notes* and starting the process for its followup, *Hymnic Reading*, and this seminar will feed my work on both of those projects.

Week 1: Early American Poetry

Central questions: What new questions does the latest scholarship on early (i.e., pre-1800) British-American poetry ask? How does it re-cast old questions? What directions might such scholarship take over the next decade or so?

Readings

Burt and Bendixen, eds., *The Cambridge History of American Poetry*
Engberg, *The Right to Write*
Brown, *The Pilgrim and the Bee*
Cohen, *The Social Lives of the Poems in 19th-Century America*
"Poetry and Print" special issue, *Papers of the Bibliographic Society of America*
Neumann, *Jeremiah's Scribes*

Week 2: Reading

Central questions: How has the recent rise in child studies shaped the conversation about the history of reading? How have studies of literacy informed this conversation? What place does classic reader-response criticism in have in this conversation?

Readings

Crain, *Reading Children*
Weikle-Mills, *Imaginary Citizens*
Monaghan, *Learning to Read and Write in Colonial New England*
Hall, *Cultures of Print*
Robson, *Heart Beats*
Maynard, *Literary Intention, Literary Interpretation, and Readers*

Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class?*
Fish, *Doing What Comes Naturally*
Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetics of Reception*

Week 3: Intermediality

Central questions: How does the European line of intermedial theory inform my work on hymnbooks? How does this form of intermediality intersect with performance studies and book history?

Readings

De Gruyter, *Handbook of Intermediality*
Emden, *ImageScapes: Studies in Intermediality*
Elleström, *Media Borders, Multimodality and Intermediality*
Gennette, *Paratexts*
Gustafson and Sloat, eds., *Cultural Narratives*
Cohen, *The Networked Wilderness*
Piper, *Dreaming in Books*
Price, *How to Do Things with Books in Victorian Britain*

Week 4: Devotion and the Secular

Central questions: How does devotional reading play out in hymnody, in poetry, in Scripture? How does the devotional as a mode of reading change in a secular age?

Readings

Tennyson, *Victorian Devotional Poetry*
Studzinski, *Reading to Live*
Panimolle, *Like the Deer That Yearns*
Kimbrough, *The Lyrical Theology of Charles Wesley*
Hildebrandt, *Works of John Wesley, Vol. 7: Hymns*
Ricoeur, *Essays in Biblical Interpretation*
Modern, *Secularism in Antebellum America*