Civilizations facing ruin from post-war destruction, environmental collapse, societal upheaval, and other catastrophic events are conditions we have seen in film, novels, visual art, and graphic novels. Modern poetry and contemporary books of poetry have also been compelled to depict these devastations. In this class we will discuss particular contemporary poetry texts, analyzing how a poetic consciousness navigates these particular worlds--both real and imagined ones--and how strategies, and formal constructs, such as fragmentation, collage, appropriation, and multiple voices contribute to a poem’s vision.

Poems that we’ll be reading include, Selections by T.S. Eliot, W.B. Yeats Robert Frost. And the texts: The Black Ocean by Brian Barker, Cold Pastoral by Rebecca Dunham, If the Tabloids are True, What Are You? by Matthea Harvey, Umbilical Hospital by Vi Khi Nao, Notes on the End of the World by Meghan Privitello.

Three papers, class presentation, much class participation, and a creative project.

**Texts Required:**
- Black Ocean by Brian Barker
- Cold Pastoral by Rebecca Dunham
- If the Tabloids Are True, Then So Are You by Matthea Harvey
- Notes on the End of the World by Meghan Privitello
- Umbilical Hospital by Vi Khi Nao
- And Many Handouts

**Requirements:**
- MUCH class participation; 3 papers; written responses/quizzes; creative assignments.
- Texts and handouts must be read BEFORE class
- If you are absent, write up a page response for the assigned poems and reading.
- Attendance is crucial for the class for your participation grade.
- Three papers: “close readings” of poems by poets we have read in class.
  - Papers 1 & 2 are 4-6 pages
  - Paper 3 is a minimum of 12 pages

Papers must be handed in on time. For every calendar day late, your grade will be lowered.

**Grading:**
- 50% 3 Papers
- 30% Class Participation and preparedness (having texts in class)
- 20% Responses and Quizzes
WEEK 1—M Introduction with Byron’s “Darkness” and some examples from Modernism with tropes of devastation and apocalyptic events, In the Aftermath of WWI:

Aug 20 Eliot’s “The Hollow Men, and Frost’s “Once by the Pacific.”

W Cont. reading discussion, Begin discussion on “The Waste Land” by T.S. Eliot

F Begin Reading “The Waste Land”

WEEK 2—M Cont discussion on “The Waste Land”. *Read and discuss essay ON ecopoetics

Aug 27 F Discuss poems written in response to the Atomic bomb, Including “Bomb” by Gregory Corso, “At the Bomb Testing Site” William Stafford, “Planet Krypon” by Lynn Emanuel, and selections by Shoda Shinoe

WEEK 3—M. —HOLIDAY

W Read and Discuss Brian Barker’s The Black Ocean. Looking particularly “Visions for the Last Night on Earth” pg.16, “The Last Songbird” pg.24 and Sept 3 “Gorbachev’s Ubi Sunt” pg 28.

F Cont. discussion of Barker’s poems and Chernobyl with “Gorbachev’s Ubi Sunt”

WEEK 4— M Discuss Barker’s “Silent Montage” pg.34

“Field Recording” pg.47, “Visions” pg 49.

Sept 10 W Discuss Barker’s “Lost Shores of New Orleans” pg.42.and hurricane Katrina

F Cont. discussion of Hurricane Katrina poems with poems by Nikky Finney, Natasha Trethewey

WEEK 5—M PAPER DUE (4-6pgs.) Read and Discuss Cold Pastoral by Rebecca Dunham

Sept 17 W Read pgs 15,19, 20, 22,25,26, 29 in Cold Pastoral

F Cont. reading pgs. 31, 32,47,50,51 Brief response DUE

WEEK 6- M Your POEM DUE

Sept 24 W Read and discuss your poems

F Read and discuss your poems

WEEK 7-- M-Discuss depictions of Post-Apocalypse and Dystopias. Read from Matthea Harvey’s Book If Tabloids are True, What are You? Discuss the “mermaid” poems

Oct 1 W Cont. discussion of Matthea Harvey’s mermaid poems, plus pgs .33-43

F Discuss “Inside the Glass Factory” pg 63

WEEK 8—M Cont. Matthea Harvey discussion pg. 70-100.

Oct 8 W Begin discussion on Umbilical Hospital by Vi Khi Nao, pg 3-30

F Cont. discussion on Umbilical Hospital (Small group discussions)
WEEK 9—M Cont. Discussion of *Umbilical Hospital* and Dystopias.
Oct 15 W Handout with poems
F PAPER DUE Cont. discussion of handout

WEEK 10—M Discuss Meghan Privitello’s *Notes on the End of the World*
Oct 29 W cont. discussion of Meghan Privitello
F cont. discussion of Meghan Privitello

WEEK 11 M POEM OR Visual project due
Oct 2 W Read and/or present
F Read and/or present

WEEK 12 M Begin discussion of handout *Wolf Centos* by Simone Muench, focusing on its form and design and “broken pieces”
Nov 5 W Discussion on erasures and collage

WEEK 13 M Share and discuss and In ClassExercise of “broken pieces”
Nov 12

WEEK 14 THANKSGIVING

WEEK 15—M A final discussions with selections from books and conclusions.
NOV 26
F FINAL PAPER DISCUSSION
Final Exam PAPER At least 12 Pages Due on Exam Day

**Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**Academic Conduct**
Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards [https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/](https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, [http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/).

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity [http://equity.usc.edu/](http://equity.usc.edu/) or to the Department of Public Safety [http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us](http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us). This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* [http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/](http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/).
provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems
A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information http://emergency.usc.edu/ will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.