

# Sex & Sexuality in American Poetry

## Research Essay

*Due Monday, May 7 at 3:00 p.m. in my office.*

Considering how often and how easily poetry gets divorced from the rest of life, the research essay assignment asks you to connect the poetry we've read in class to the culture of its time. Which poems is your choice. While you're welcome to use standard critical sources, you may also find source material in historical sources, in popular culture, and in other art forms.

Possible topics for consideration include, but are by no means limited to, Whitman and the Civil War, Dickinson and Nineteenth-Century ideals of feminine domesticity, Crane and the mythology of America, and Plath and second-wave feminism.

The essay should reach seven pages and include, at minimum, three outside sources.

All essays should follow MLA citational rules, including a properly formatted Works Cited page at the end. When you cite poetic lines, provide the line number(s) afterwards, in parenthesis. Here are examples: (3) and (1-3). Use slash marks ( / ) to show line breaks; if a poetic citation is four lines or more, block quote it.

## Proposal

*Due Wednesday, March 28 in class.*

At the top of the proposal, place your hypothesis, the conclusion you imagine your research will reach. This form is basically the same as a thesis, yet the thesis of your essay may turn out to be quite different.

This section should be headed, "Hypothesis."

In a few paragraphs, outline your project, including the poems you intend to use and the approach you're taking toward them. This section should be headed, "Outline."

Provide a list of possible sources, which you do not need to read in advance. The more possibilities you have, the better. This section should be headed, "Sources."

The proposal should reach between one and two pages.