

English 501 Studies in Literature, 1500-1660: World Renaissance Drama

Fall 2023

Professor Mark Netzloff

MW 11:30-12:45

Lapham 250

*Course fulfills historical distribution requirements (for a course in pre-1800 literature) for most tracks of the English major.

Course Description:

In this introductory survey of World Renaissance Drama, we will juxtapose plays from the public theaters of three distinct national cultures: England, Spain, and France. Our discussions will additionally traverse the global and colonial contexts of these national theaters, from Ireland and the Mediterranean to the Americas. We will analyze the worldliness of these plays in terms of the transnational circulation of classical, medieval, and early modern theatrical traditions, and explore how these national theaters transformed models of political, religious, and social communities. Playwrights studied will include Shakespeare, Marlowe, Jonson, Middleton, Lope de Vega, Molière, Racine, and Behn.

Throughout we will be attentive to the literary and performance contexts of these plays, and we will examine such topics as the emergence of the professional writer and models of authorship, the effect of print culture on performance-based texts, and, most importantly, the plays themselves in performance, with examples from stage productions and film adaptations.

Texts:

Behn, The Widow Ranter (Broadview)

ISBN: 9781554815739

Fuchs, ed., The Golden Age of Spanish Drama (Norton)

ISBN: 978-0-393-92362-9

Jonson, The Alchemist and other Plays (Oxford)

ISBN: 978-0199537310

Marlowe, Doctor Faustus and Other Plays (Oxford)

ISBN: 978-0199537068

Middleton and Dekker, The Roaring Girl (Norton)

ISBN: 978-0393932775

Molière, Tartuffe, trans. Richard Wilbur (Harvest)

ISBN: 978-0156881807

Racine, Phaedra [Phèdre], trans. Richard Wilbur (Ecco)

ISBN: 978-0156757805

Shakespeare, Henry V (Bantam)

ISBN: 978-0553212952

---. A Midsummer Night's Dream (Folger)

ISBN: 978-0743477543

---. Othello (Folger)

ISBN: 978-0743477550

---. The Tempest (Folger)

ISBN: 978-0743482837

Course Work:

Reading questions on each play (11 in all) – 50%

One paper (7-8 pp) – 33.33%

Active participation and attendance – 16.7%