

ENGL 370 THEATRE HISTORY: THE LONG EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

TR 09.05 – 10.25

Arts West 25

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Office hours: **Thursdays 10.30 am – 12.30 pm** (cancelled on the following dates: 18 January, 25 January, 1 March, 22 March), **or by appointment**

Prerequisite: none

Expected student preparation: ideally students enrolled in this course will have already taken ENGL 230 Introduction to Theatre Studies

Description

An overview of dramatic forms and theatrical practice in Britain from the Restoration through the eighteenth century to the Romantic period (c. 1660-1843). The course is divided into four chronological units encompassing the reopening of the professional theatre, the rise of morality and sentiment, the age of Garrick, and the development of stage spectacle. Each unit will cover the theatrical conditions of the period and will examine a representative play staged at the time. Emphasis is placed on the plays as theatrical works rather than literary texts. We will also analyse historical documents to explore themes such as genre, acting style, audience experience, theatre architecture, financial practices, regulation of the stage and company management. In addition to reading and discussing theatre history documents and play texts, students will also participate in practical workshops in which they will direct their peers in performing scenes from the plays studied in light of their knowledge of the playing conditions of the period.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate good knowledge of British theatre in the period 1660-1843 and an understanding of the evolution of the stage in this era.
- Analyse and interpret historical documents relating to the theatre.
- Read and critique plays written in a variety of dramatic styles and genres.
- Consider the plays studied both as literary texts and as performance pieces.
- Effectively research and present topics related to the course orally, in writing, and in performance.

Format of class

Lecture, discussion, group work, practical work.

Course content

The course is structured around Peter Thomson's book *The Cambridge Introduction to English Theatre, 1660-1900* and divided into four chronological units (note that we will not study the fifth section of the book on Victorian theatre). A representative play will be studied in each unit.

- Unit 1: The theatre restored, 1660-1700 (the Restoration)
Aphra Behn, *The Rover* (1677)
- Unit 2: The theatre reformed, 1700-1737 (the early 18th century)
Richard Steele, *The Conscious Lovers* (1722)
- Unit 3: The theatre tamed, 1737-1789 (the later 18th century)
David Garrick and George Colman, *The Clandestine Marriage* (1766)
- Unit 4: Theatre in the age of reform, 1789-1843 (the Romantic period)
Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *Pizarro* (1799)

Required texts

- Textbook (available from the McGill University Bookstore): Peter Thomson, *The Cambridge Introduction to English Theatre, 1660-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
- Coursepack (available from the McGill University Bookstore) containing the plays listed above and relevant historical documents.

MyCourses

MyCourses will be used for the following purposes:

- to post the course syllabus (including the schedule) and other important documents;
- to archive course materials (handouts, Powerpoints, etc) and to facilitate out of class learning;
- to provide a list of supplementary readings (designed to help with research for assignments);
- to facilitate communication and discussion outside of class;
- to distribute instructions for the practical workshops.

Assessment

Full details of each written assignment will be distributed separately.

Components

- | | |
|---|------------|
| Participation | 10% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • thorough preparation for each class • contribution to class discussion (quality as well as quantity!) • commitment to the practical workshops • feedback on the practical workshops on MyCourses | |
| Practical assignment (in pairs) | 30% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • directing a performance of a short scene from one of the plays studied in class | |

- preparation of a script (5 minutes performance time) and a rationale for the performance (approx. 1,250 words)
- reflection (approx. 750 words)

Midterm assignment **20%**

- due by **12.00 pm on Friday 2 March**
- short essay of 1,000 words (approx. 4pp.)

Take-home exam **40%**

- due by **12.00 pm on Monday 16 April**

Assignment submission

- Please submit all assignments as Word documents (or .rtf files). I will provide feedback using the Track Changes and Comments features in Word.
- The written work for the practical assignment should be submitted by email to fiona.ritchie@mcgill.ca. The midterm essay and final paper should be submitted through the assignments tool in MyCourses.
- It is the student's responsibility to check that s/he has uploaded the correct file and that the file submitted is readable (i.e. not corrupt). A file submission error will not be accepted as an excuse for late or missing work.
- Students should retain a copy of all submitted assignments.
- Written work should be laid out according to academic standards with complete referencing. See the document "ENGL 230 Style Sheet" for an example to follow.

Policies

Late work

In general, extensions are only granted in the following circumstances:

- 1) In advance of the due date (except for unforeseen circumstances, e.g. an accident).
- 2) When supporting documentation (e.g. a medical note) is provided.

I reserve the right not to grade late assignments that have not been granted an extension. If you are experiencing difficulties completing work for this course I urge you to come and talk to me as soon as possible. Waiting until the end of the semester usually means that it is too late for me to refer you to appropriate resources to help you.

Classroom

We will meet in Arts West 25, which has flexible seating to allow us to conduct group work and, most importantly, practical work. However, the use of this space relies on your cooperation. Please arrive promptly and configure the classroom in accordance with the day's activities (i.e. set out desks and chairs in a "U" shape if it's a regular class or clear the floor of furniture if it's a practical workshop). **Outdoor shoes must be removed.**

Language

Developing and demonstrating oral and written proficiency in the English language are integral components and objectives of this course.

Expectations and responsibilities

Most of the learning for this course takes place in the classroom, particularly through class discussion, group work, and performance. Furthermore, the practical workshops rely on all members of the class knowing and being comfortable with each other. It is therefore imperative that you attend class regularly and participate fully. **You must satisfactorily complete the participation portion of assessment (i.e. achieve a passing grade for this component) in order to pass the course.**

Electronic devices in the classroom

Laptops and tablets may be used in the classroom to take notes or to conduct relevant research. **Please refrain from using them for other purposes** (e.g. social media) as this negatively impacts not only your learning experience but that of others around you and is highly distracting to your instructors. This is especially true in a small seminar class. Please do not use cell phones in class. For evidence that **laptop use in classrooms lowers GPA and taking notes by hand improves grades**, see the following:

<http://socialpsychonline.com/2017/04/laptop-in-class-psychology/>;

<http://socialpsychonline.com/2016/08/laptops-in-the-classroom/>.

Copyright

© Instructor-generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, assignments, Powerpoint slides, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures. **No audio or video recording** of any kind is allowed in class without the explicit permission of the instructor.

Academic integrity

McGill University values academic integrity. All students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures. Please consult the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/integrity for more information).

Students with disabilities

The University accommodates students with disabilities through the Office for Students with Disabilities (see <http://www.mcgill.ca/osd/>) in consultation with the English Department. Please speak with me about special arrangements you might require for exams, assignments or instruction.

Religious observances

McGill's Policy for the Accommodation of Religious Observances recognises and respects the diversity of its members, including diversity of religious faiths and observances. See http://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/files/secretariat/religious_holy_days_policy_on_accommodation_of.pdf

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's or instructor's control, the content, evaluation scheme, and schedule for this course are subject to change.

SCHEDULE

listing the topics and readings to be covered in each class

Introduction

Tuesday 9 January Introduction to the course

Unit 1: The theatre restored, 1660-1700 (the Restoration)

Thursday 11 January Thomson: Ch. 1, "The material circumstance"

Tuesday 16 January Thomson: Ch. 2, "The drama"
Coursepack: Behn, "Preface to *The Lucky Chance*"

Thursday 18 January Coursepack: Behn, *The Rover*

Tuesday 23 January Thomson: Ch. 3, "Actors and acting"

Thursday 25 January Introduction to practical workshops: *The Rover*

Tuesday 30 January Practical workshop: *The Rover*

Unit 2: The theatre reformed, 1700-1737 (the early 18th century)

Thursday 1 February Thomson: Ch. 4, "The material circumstance"
Coursepack: Collier, "A Short View [...]"
Coursepack: "The 1737 Licensing Act"

Tuesday 6 February Thomson: Ch. 5, "The drama"

Thursday 8 February Coursepack: Steele, *The Conscious Lovers*
Coursepack: Steele, "Preface to *The Conscious Lovers*"
Coursepack: Dennis, "Remarks on [...] *The Conscious Lovers*"

Tuesday 13 February Thomson: Ch. 6, "Actors and acting"
Coursepack: "Of the Duty of a Player"

Thursday 15 February Practical workshop: *The Conscious Lovers*

Unit 3: The theatre tamed, 1737-1789 (the later 18th century)

Tuesday 20 February Thomson: Ch. 7, "The material circumstance"

Thursday 22 February Thomson: Ch. 8, "The drama"
Coursepack: Goldsmith, "An Essay on the Theatre"

Tuesday 27 February	Coursepack: Garrick & Colman, <i>The Clandestine Marriage</i> Coursepack: Gentleman, "Review of <i>The Clandestine Marriage</i> "
Thursday 1 March	Work on midterm assignment
Friday 2 March	Midterm assignment due by 12.00 pm
Tuesday 6 March	READING WEEK
Thursday 8 March	READING WEEK
Tuesday 13 March	Thomson: Ch. 9, "Actors and acting" Coursepack: "David Garrick as Richard III" Coursepack: "Charles Macklin as Shylock" Coursepack: "Margaret Woffington as Sir Harry Wildair"
Thursday 15 March	Practical workshop: <i>The Clandestine Marriage</i>
Tuesday 20 March	Screening: <i>The Clandestine Marriage</i>
Unit 4: Theatre in the age of reform, 1789-1843 (the Romantic period)	
Thursday 22 March	Thomson: Ch. 10, "The material circumstance" Coursepack: Baillie, "To the Reader"
Tuesday 27 March	Thomson: Ch. 11, "The drama"
Thursday 29 March	Coursepack: Sheridan, <i>Pizarro</i> Coursepack: "Reviews of the First Production of <i>Pizarro</i> "
Tuesday 3 April	Thomson: Ch. 12, "Actors and acting" Coursepack: "Pride, Anger, Love, and Tranquil Joy"
Thursday 5 April	Practical workshop: <i>Pizarro</i>
Tuesday 10 April	Pantomime Coursepack: "Reviews of <i>Harlequin and Humpo</i> "
Conclusion	
Thursday 12 April	Review session and exam preparation
Monday 16 April	Take-home exam due by 12.00 pm