

CT 060: INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE

Section 03, Gasson 209
Instructor: Professor Dussia Posner
Spring 2008, T/TH 3pm

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Office Hours: Thurs. 2:15-2:45 and by appt.,
Robsham 4

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To explore the multifarious aspects of the “theatre”— as location, art, profession, dramatic text, and live performance— both from a contemporary point of view and from the perspective of the historical forces that shaped its creation.
- ❖ To examine through discussion societal issues such as race, gender, religion, politics, and sexuality as presented in the theatre.
- ❖ To survey the elements involved in developing a performance, including exploring through exercises and assignments some of the creative processes involved.
- ❖ To build the skills of thoughtful artistic criticism, both by analyzing written plays and by reviewing live performances.

REQUIRED TEXTS

- ❖ *Types of Drama; Plays and Contexts*, Barnet, ed., 8th edition.
- ❖ *Theatre: Brief Version*, Cohen, ed., 7th edition (at bookstore under CT060, not CT060-03).
- ❖ Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (multiple copies on reserve) OR the free etext of the play, available at <http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/s/shakespeare/william/tempest/index.html>
- ❖ Handouts: Readings on *commedia dell' arte*, Japanese theatre and Bertolt Brecht.

ASSIGNMENTS

- ❖ **Quizzes:** Quizzes on the readings will be given on many of the days we read plays, but may be given at any time. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Missed quizzes cannot be made up.
- ❖ **Exams:** There will be one midterm and one final exam. Exams will cover material from readings and class lectures. Exams cannot be made up if missed, and will not be given early.
- ❖ **Creative final project:** Projects will involve collaborating in a group to put into practice one or more of the elements of theatre. Projects will involve directing, designing, and acting in a short scene. Students will be responsible for both a creative component and a written summary (due on the day of the project performance) describing the intellectual and collaborative basis for their effort. Students may sign up for a play to work on UNTIL February 21. After this date, any students who have not found a project to work on will be assigned one by the instructor. Students are encouraged to find project partners with similar schedules in order to coordinate rehearsals more easily. The following are suggested plays (all of which can be found in *Types of Drama*) from which to choose scenes: *Antigone*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Machinal*, *Los Vendidos*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, and *Top Girls*.
- ❖ **Performance attendance and review:** *Reviews should be 3 pages in length.*
 - ❖ You are required to attend two shows over the course of the semester, one on campus, and one off campus. For one of these two productions (your choice), you will write a 1000-word (3-page) performance critique, guidelines for which will be posted on our WebCT site. You are welcome to write a review of the second performance for extra credit, but are not required to as long as you attend it and present me with the program and ticket stub (please label them with your name). First reviews are due NO LATER than March 18, but I encourage you to submit your review within a week of seeing the show, while it is still fresh in your mind.

Ticket stubs/programs (and second review, should you choose to write one) are due NO LATER than April 29 (I encourage you to get this out of the way earlier, since there is so much going on this late in the semester).

REMEMBER: YOU MUST GIVE ME THE PROGRAM AND TICKET STUB TO BOTH SHOWS (LABELLED WITH YOUR NAME) IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FULL CREDIT.

- ❖ You are required to watch the following Boston College Theatre Department mainstage production: *Urinetown* (April 23-25 at 7:30PM; April 26 at 8:00 PM; April 27 at 2:00PM). Tickets are \$10 with Boston College I.D. at the Robsham Theatre Box Office. (552-4002 or 552-4800) Students are encouraged to get tickets early as events do sell out. Students are responsible for procuring their own tickets. Students are welcome to attend a substitute performance at BC if they are unable to attend *Urinetown*; this must be arranged with me **in advance** as all these alternate performances are earlier in the semester. The complete Robsham Theatre season schedule can be found at <http://www.bc.edu/offices/robsham/schedule.html>.
- ❖ You are also required to watch one Boston-area professional theatre production. You are encouraged to watch one of the following: *Angels in America: Part 1* (1/18-2/16) [<http://www.bostontheatrescene.com/season/production.aspx?id=5066&src=t>], *Adrift in Macao* (Jan. 4-Feb. 3; playwright Chris Durang will be speaking at BC on Jan. 18) [https://lyricstage.com/main_stage/adrift_in_macao/], or *The Misanthrope* (Jan. 16- Feb. 10) [<http://www.newrep.org/0708misanthrope.php>]. *Avenue Q* is also coming to the Colonial Theatre from March 11-23, but tickets will be pricey, so only choose this option if you have been dying to go anyway. You may also explore kinds of theatre other than scripted plays with actors; dance, puppetry, and performance art may all be reviewed. Most theatres do student rush; inexpensive rush tickets (\$10-\$12) are available at the American Repertory Theatre (www.amrep.org) and at the Huntington (www.huntingtontheatre.org). Advance half-price tickets can be purchased to most area shows at <http://www.artsboston.org/>. Students are responsible for finding performances and obtaining their own tickets.
- ❖ *All written assignments must be typed and double spaced. Assignments will not be accepted by email and are due on or before the dates indicated. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements for any missed work— even if an absence is excused.*
- ❖ **CLASS PARTICIPATION IS REQUIRED.** This includes constructive involvement in class discussion, volunteering for class exercises, preparedness for class, attentiveness, respect for others' work, punctuality, etc. The class will be divided into groups, and each group will be assigned a day for **leading the class with discussion questions or acting out a scene from that day's play (your choice).**
- ❖ Students are strongly encouraged to watch performances/ films of the plays we are reading when possible, provided they first read the play. This is especially important for making distinctions between the written versions and artistic interpretations of a given work. Several of the plays we are reading will be on reserve at the O'Neill Media Center.
- ❖ **Attendance is required.** Each student is allowed 2 unexcused absences per semester for minor illnesses or appointments. Additional absences may only be excused by presenting a written explanation to the instructor. Each unexcused absence will lower the participation portion of the grade. Only emergencies and serious illness will be considered when excuses are submitted after the absence.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

- Please bring each day's readings to class with you.

DATE:	DISCUSSION TOPIC:	ASSIGNMENT DUE:
Jan. 15 T	Introduction to the class	
Jan. 17 TH	What is theatre?	Read <i>Types of Drama</i> p. 6-15; <i>Theatre</i> p. 1-28 [Intro., What is Theatre?].
Jan. 22 T	What is a play?	Read <i>Theatre</i> p. 30-54.
Jan. 24 TH	Glaspell's <i>Trifles</i>	<i>Types of Drama</i> p. 16-24. • January 23- last day to drop/add
Jan. 29 T	Ancient Greek Theatre Aristotle's <i>Poetics</i>	Read <i>Theatre</i> p. 228-233 (Theatre in the West, Greek Drama). <i>Types of Drama</i> , p. 32-38; 44-46, 49-53; Aristotle handout. • Discussion groups assigned.
Jan. 31 TH	Greek Comedy Aristophanes' <i>Lysistrata</i>	Read <i>Types of Drama</i> , p. 136-160. DISCUSSION GROUP # 1: IRIS TAVAREZ, MARY STINSON; PASCALE PIERRE
Feb. 5 T	The actor Actor training exercises	Read <i>Theatre</i> p. 60-78 (ending after "The Rehearsal." • Dress in loose, comfortable clothing.
Feb. 7 TH	Dario Fo's <i>We Won't Pay! We Won't Pay!</i>	Read: <i>COMMEDIA</i> [ON WEBCT]; Read <i>Types of Drama</i> 1102-1126. DISCUSSION GROUP # 2: MAUREEN FLORIANO, EMILY KENNEDY, BRAD BIEGLER
Feb. 12 T	English Renaissance Theatre	Read <i>Theatre</i> p. 237-242. <i>Types of Drama</i> , p. 216-220; 388-389.
Feb. 14 TH	Shakespeare's <i>The Tempest</i>	Read <i>The Tempest</i> http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/s/shakespeare/william/tempest/index.html DISCUSSION GROUP # 3: JOHN MARQUIS, ALESSANDRA SANGURIMA, ANDY KIM
Feb. 19 T	The Critic Julie Taymor's <i>Tempest</i> MIDTERM REVIEW	Read <i>Theatre</i> p. 350-352; 379-392 (skip green boxes)
Feb. 21 TH	Bonn Studio Theatre visit and Q&A	• Meet for class in Robsham Theatre lobby.
Feb. 26 T	Stages through the Ages Technical Theatre	Read <i>Theatre</i> p. 123-133, 173-176; <i>Types of Drama</i> , p. 389-390.
Feb. 28 TH	MIDTERM EXAM	• Final project groups assigned
March 4 T	SPRING BREAK	NO CLASS
March 6 TH	SPRING BREAK	NO CLASS
March 11 T	Neoclassical Theatre <i>Molière's Tartuffe</i>	Read <i>Theatre</i> p. 242-243. <i>Types of Drama</i> , 467-499. DISCUSSION GROUP # 4: MEG GRANDMONT, FRANK SWEENEY, LAURA SCHERER • Edited final project scenes due

March 13 TH	The Director <i>Ariane Mnouchkine's Tartuffe</i>	Review <i>Theatre</i> p. 63-67; read 179-192; 209-219. Read <i>Theatre</i> p. 355. Watch: http://www.lebacausoleil.com/SPIP/article.php3?id_article=129 • Dress in loose, comfortable clothing.
March 18 T	Japanese Theatre <i>Chikamatsu's Love Suicides at Sonezaki</i>	Read <i>Theatre</i> p. 249-252. READ PACKET ON BUNRAKU. LOVE SUICIDES AT SONEZAKI. DISCUSSION GROUP # 5: JOE SHEEHAN, ANDREW BROWN, JACE EBERSOLE • 1st performance review due
March 20 TH	Easter Break	NO CLASS
March 25 T	The Designer	Read <i>Theatre</i> p. 133-138; 142-147; 153-159; 163-165. • Design sketches due.
March 27 TH	Nineteenth-Century Theatre Ibsen's <i>A Doll's House</i>	Read <i>Theatre</i> , p. 256-263. Read <i>Types of Drama</i> , p. 548-585; "melodrama," "realism," and "naturalism" in <i>Types of Drama</i> glossary. DISCUSSION GROUP # 6: EMILY PARZYBOK, DEVIN VILLAROSA, IVAN GUARIN
April 1 T	Reactions against Realism "Brecht and Company"	Read <i>Theatre</i> p. 263-282. Read <i>Types of Drama</i> , p. 1006-1008; PACKET: BRECHT
April 3 TH	Brecht's <i>The Good Woman of Setzuan</i>	Read <i>Types of Drama</i> , p. 1009-1039. DISCUSSION GROUP # 7: PATRICK LUCKE, WILLY FLAD, PETER CLAYTON
April 8 T	Broadway and the American Musical	Read <i>Theatre</i> 287-304; <i>Types of Drama</i> , p. 847-848.
April 10 TH	Laurents/ Sondheim/Styne's <i>Gypsy: A Musical</i>	Read <i>Types of Drama</i> , p. 849-884. DISCUSSION GROUP # 8: MATT DIAS, COLIN POWERS, ROLAND DRISCOLL
April 15 T	Contemporary Theatre	Read <i>Theatre</i> p. 305-331; 334-347.
April 17 TH	Anna Devere Smith's <i>Fires in the Mirror</i>	Read <i>Types of Drama</i> , p. 1359-1398; <i>Theatre</i> 347-350. DISCUSSION # 9: JOHN CHARAMONDE, TODD WACKERMAN
April 22 T	Tony Kushner's <i>Angels in America: The Millennium Approaches</i>	Read <i>Types of Drama</i> , p. 1404-1441; <i>Theatre</i> p. 112-114.
April 24 TH	FINAL PROJECT TECHNICAL REHEARSAL	* Attendance required
April 29 T	PROJECT PRESENTATIONS	* Attendance required * 2nd performance materials/review due
May 1 TH	PROJECT PRESENTATIONS FINAL EXAM REVIEW	* Attendance required
May 2-5	READING PERIOD (NO CLASSES)	
Monday, May	FINAL EXAM	

RESERVE LIST:

BOOKS:

1. *Types of Drama: Plays and Contexts* / Sylvan Barnet. O'Neill Course Reserves PN6112 .T96 2001
2. "Trifles" in *Plays* / by Susan Glaspell. O'Neill Course Reserves PS3513.L35 A6 1987
3. "Trifles" in *Plays by American Women, 1900-1930* / edited and with an introduction by Judith E. Barlow. O'Neill Course Reserves PS628.W6 P59 1985
4. *The Tempest* / William Shakespeare. Multiple copies: O'Neill Course Reserves PR2833.A2 M68 2004; PR2833.A2 L56 2002; PR2833.A2 D9 2000; PR2751 .A1533 1998; PR2833.A2 O74 1987b; PR2833.A2 O74 1986.
5. *Theatre: Brief Version* / Robert Cohen. 7th ed.. O'Neill Course Reserve PN2101.C632 2006

VIDEOS AND MUSIC:

1. *A Jury of Her Peers* [video of *Trifles*]. Chicago, IL: Films Incorporated, 1981. O'Neill Media Center Course Reserves PS3513.L35 J87x 1981
2. *Julie Taymor: Setting a Scene* [video clips from *The Tempest*] / WNET/13 and Learning Design; produced and directed by Ellen Hovde, Muffie Meyer, 1992. O'Neill Media Center Course Reserves PN2037 .J85 1992
3. *The Tempest* [video] / Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. Burbank, CA : RCA/Columbia Pictures Home Video, c1983. O'Neill Media Course Reserves PN1997 .T398 1983
4. *Molière* [video on the life of] / produit par Claude Lelouch et les Films 13, les Films du Soleil et de la Nuit, Antenne II, et par la Radio Television Italienne ; escrit et mise en scene par Ariane Mnouchkine. O'Neill Media Center Course Reserves PN1993.5 .F7 M65 2004
5. *Shinjū ten no Amijima* [video] = *Double suicide*. O'Neill Media Center Course Reserves PN1993.5.J3 S45 2000
6. *A Doll's House* [videorecording]. MGM Home Entertainment, c2000. O'Neill Media Center Course Reserves PT8861 .A3 2000.
7. *Broadway* [video]: *the American Musical*. PBS Home Video; Hollywood, Calif. Distributed by Paramount Home Entertainment, 2004. O'Neill Media Center Course Reserves ML1711.8.N3 B75 2004
8. *Broadway!* [video]: *A History of the American Musical* / with Ron Husmann. Irvine, CA: Chesney Communications, 2004. O'Neill Media Center Course Reserves M1508 .B763 2004.
9. *Gypsy* [sound recording]: original Broadway cast recording / music by Jule Styne ; lyrics by Stephen Sondheim ; [book by Arthur Laurents, suggested by the memoirs of Gypsy Rose Lee]. New York, NY: Columbia Broadway Masterworks, [1999] O'Neill Course Reserves M 4.1 .G96 1999
10. *Fires in the Mirror: Crown Heights, Brooklyn and Other Identities* [video] conceived, written and performed by Anna Deavere Smith ; directed by George C. Wolfe. O'Neill Media Center Course Reserves PS3569.M465 F57 2003
11. *Angels in America* [video] / HBO Films; screenplay by Tony Kushner ; directed by Mike Nichols. O'Neill Media Center Course Reserves PS3561.U778 A85 2004.

EVALUATION

Participation:

1. Performance review -----10%
2. Quizzes -----20%
3. Attendance and Participation -----20%

Projects and exams:

4. Midterm Exam -----15%
5. Project -----20%
6. Final Exam -----15%

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Boston College values the academic integrity of its students and faculty. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the university's policy on academic integrity:

<http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy/#integrity>. If you have any questions, consult your professor.

Violations of academic integrity will be reported to your class dean and judged by the academic integrity committee in your school. If you are found responsible for violating the policy, penalties may include a failing grade as well as possible probation, suspension, or expulsion, depending on the seriousness and circumstances of the violation.