

Theatre 367.01: Self Images: America on Stage, 1830 to the Present

Winter Quarter, 2005 5 credit hours

MWF 10:30 1015 McPherson Chemical Laboratory

Instructor: Dr. Alan Woods

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Recitation Instructors:

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Prerequisite: English 110/111

Course Description:

Exploration of the images of Americans presented on popular stages through written analysis of theatrical and critical texts.

Course Objectives:

1. To examine performance texts, the society which produced the writers, the social context within which audiences gather, and the perception of the role that theatre plays within the American culture.
2. To offer examples of how "others" and "otherness" are created and reinforced by images on the popular stage.
3. To provide the opportunity to polish writing techniques and skills acquired during the first writing course experience.
4. To offer a richer understanding of how Americans have regarded themselves in the past, and how current images projected in theatrical entertainment help to shape our perceptions of our place in American society.

Background Statement:

The theatre has always been an interdisciplinary arena of theory and practice, drawing upon literature, the fine arts, performance skills, and mass communications to form its own unique performance. An exploration of the theatre requires, therefore, an examination not only of the literary aspects of play texts, but also of the society which produces the writers, the social context within which audiences gather, those elements of the performance which attract audiences, and the perception of the role that theatre plays within its culture--most often, on the margins of the mainstream society, regarded as faintly suspect (if not downright immoral). Yet, at the same

time, the popular theatre has always reflected and shaped the dominant culture's view of itself.

The theatre, therefore, provides a lens through which the dominant culture's hegemony can be both revealed and explored, revealing both the expression of the hegemony as well as subversions of the majority's viewpoints. The American theatre has, as well, historically appealed to a broad cross section of the public, and contained representations of every social ranking and ethnic group among its dramatis personae.

Course Writing Requirements:

1. A research paper, due in four stages on the dates specified on the class schedule: a) a one-paragraph topic description which will be approved by your recitation instructor, who will either approve or make suggestions for alternate topics; b) a one or two page outline and annotated bibliography (minimum of ten sources); c) a first draft of at least 4 pages; d) an eight page final draft with bibliography. A sample outline is included in the course packet. All material submitted must be typed, double-spaced with normal margins. Consult Writers Inc (Sebranek, Meyer, and Kemper) for bibliographic and footnote format. Make sure that all ideas that are not your own are footnoted.
2. Two performance critiques, of *Another Part of the House* (February 9-26), and *Two Planks and a Passion* (February 23-March 5) (both at OSU), approximately 3 pages in length each. Ticket information will be distributed in class; guidelines are on line; due dates are on the class outline.
3. A short (1-2 page) chart with explanation of your own place within the OSU hegemony, due Friday, January 7th. Details will be given in lecture, and on line.
4. Three in-class writing assignments based on the material being covered; these will be spontaneous responses, and no preparation will be required other than the regular course assignments. Topics will be posted online the day prior to writing.
5. A two-hour final examination, which will include one essay for one hour, and several short answers for one hour.
6. All written work submitted, with the exception of the final research paper, may be rewritten and resubmitted for a possible change of grade. Written work will be returned to you within a week and a half of its submission, and must be resubmitted by a week after its return.

If you need additional support with your writing, contact the Center for the Study and Teaching of Writing, 485 Mendenhall Lab, or call 688-4291, Monday through Thursday, 9-4:30, online at <http://cstw.osu.edu>. Their services can be very helpful.

Other Course Requirements

1. All assignments, whether play texts, additional readings, or written work, must be completed as scheduled. Late work will not be accepted.
2. All written work must be submitted in processed form or via email to your recitation instructor. Handwritten work will not be accepted.
3. Your attendance and participation is an important part of the course experience and, therefore, you may earn a significant portion of your grade by your involvement in the course, both in

recitation and in lecture.

4. Course material is available online on the WebCT page for Theatre 367.01. Information and changes in course requirements will be announced there. Go to <http://class.osu.edu/> to login; you are authorized to login once enrolled in the course.

5. Occasional unannounced quizzes on the required readings will be given in the lecture and recitation sections.

Texts:

Texts are all available online. Readings are listed on the class schedule below. There are also copies of all required readings and play texts on closed reserve in the Main Library (1st floor) and at the Lawrence and Lee Theatre Research Institute, 14th floor of Lincoln Tower.

Grading Scale:

Your grade will be based on a combination of the following:

play critiques (2) 10 points each	20 points
“Otherness” chart	5 points
unannounced quizzes	10 points
active participation/recitation	20 points
In-class writing assignments (3) 10 points each	30 points
Research paper:	
topic statement	5 points
4 page draft & bibliography	10 points
Final draft	20 points
Midterm examination	30 points
Final examination	45 points
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS:	200 points

Grading points:

A 185 and above	A- 180-184	B+ 174-179
B 166-173	B- 160-165	C+ 154-159
C 146-153	C- 140-145	D+ 130-139
D 120-129 E 119 and below		

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodations based on the impact of a disability should contact the recitation instructor privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact the Office of Disability Services at 292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

This syllabus is available in alternative formats upon request to your recitation instructor.

USG ESCORT SERVICE: 292-3322

Class Schedule

M 1/3: Introduction; background: The changing face of the American family as reflected in dramatic literature

W 1/5: Concepts of majority/outsider culture; **Have read Bruce McConachie, "Using the Concept of Cultural Hegemony to write Theatre History."**

F 1/7: Creation of stereotypes and mythology: **have read Anna Cora Mowatt: *Fashion*; "Otherness" paper due**

M 1/10: Establishing national images; **have read Dion Boucicault: *The Octoroon***

W 1/12: National mythologies; **have read Anna Devere Smith, "A Two-Year-Old Professor"; "Current Bias" articles**

F 1/14: Images of gender; **have read Wendy Wasserstein: *An American Daughter***

M 1/17: **Martin Luther King, Jr., Day Celebrated. No class.**

W 1/19: Portrayals of gender; **have read Catherine Filloux: *The Beauty Inside***

F 1/21: Images of gender; **have read Fatema Mernissi, "Size 6: The Western Women's Harem"**

M 1/24: Ethnicity: the other defined by the dominant culture; **have read bell hooks, "Representing Whiteness in the Black Imagination" Research paper topic statement due.**

W 1/26: Ethnicity: challenging stereotypes: **have read Adrienne Kennedy: *The Ohio State Murders***

F 1/28: Ethnicity: Challenging stereotypes;. **have read Stacy A. Teicher, "Double Bias ; Petra Bartosiewicz "The New New Yorkers"; Harvey Araton, "Perpetuating Stereotypes About Women and Athletics"; William C. Rhoden, "In 'Monday Night' Fallout, A Deeper Racial Issue"**

M 1/31: Ethnicity: controlling the image: **have read John Leguizamo: *Mambo Mouth***

W 2/2: Shattering stereotypes: Spike Lee, *Bamboozled*

F 2/4: Challenging stereotypes: **have read Kirsten Greenidge: *Sans-Culottes in the Promised Land***

M 2/7: **midterm examination**

W 2/9: Shattering stereotypes; **have read Karyn-Siobhan Robinson, "Young, White, and Out of Control"**

F 2/11: Exploring stereotypes; **have read David Henry Hwang, *Flower Drum Song***

M 2/14: "Otherness" and marginal experience; **have read Erika Hayasaki, "Cultural Divide on Campus"; research paper outline and bibliography due**

W 2/16: "Otherness" and marginal experience: **have read Terrence McNally: *Love! Valour! Compassion!***

F 2/18: Challenging the dominant culture; **have read Diana Son: *Stop Kiss***

M 2/21: Attempts to move from margin to central; **have read Graham Brink, "Gay Couples Sue," and Kelly Pate Dwyer, "Transsexual Charges Snoopers Bias"**

W 2/23: Confronting stereotypes; **have read Jonathan Tolins: *The Last Sunday in June***
F 2/25: Confronting stereotypes; **research paper draft (4 pages minimum) due**

M 2/28: ***Another Part of the House* papers due**

W 3/2: Confronting stereotypes; **have read Caridad Svich: *Prodigal Kiss***

F 3/4: Backlash: **have read Edward Rothstein: "Ethnicity and Disney: It's a Whole New Myth"**

M 3/7: Backlash: ***Two Planks and a Passion* papers due**

W 3/9: Backlash: **have read Culture Clash: *Chavez Ravine*; Gregory Kane, "'Of color' usage points to certain core beliefs."**

R 3/10: (recitation) **Research papers due**

F 3/11: Summary and conclusions

W 3/16: 9:30 a.m.: Final Examination (2 hours)