

English 333
1:00-2:55 TR
Payne Hall 26

Prof. Tonya Howe
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Payne Hall 22
MWF 12:00-1:00; TR 3:00-4:00
& by appointment
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Licensing and Licentiousness: British Drama 1660 to 1737

In 1660, Charles II reopened theaters dark for eighteen years, and for the first time, women were allowed to act on the legitimate stage. In 1737, Robert Walpole finally managed to pass a major piece of legislation requiring that plays be licensed prior to performance. This Licensing Act effectually stifled a vibrant—and politically dangerous—period of theatrical experimentation. Between those two poles, British comic theater flourished, though not without struggle. This term, we will study a variety of dramatic pieces from the Restoration and the early eighteenth century, seeking throughout to understand the role of the theater in an age that was dominated by the promise and the threat of theatricality. Our readings will be guided by the oppositional rubrics of licensing and licentiousness, the fraught transition from the bawdy and cynical stageplay of the Restoration to early eighteenth century representations of the act of acting. Course requirements include team discussion leadership, a formal essay of 15-17 pages, and an archive of materials from which your essay is built. Because it is not sufficient merely to read drama but to imagine it in the multiple dimensions of performance, part of our course requirements will also include a collaborative web project based on your individual archives and essays. These projects in progress will be presented during the last two days of class for peer commentary.

Texts: *Broadview Anthology of Restoration and Early Eighteenth Century Drama* (available from W&L bookstore); CoursePack (available from the English Department); online materials available via our BlackBoard site

Optional Text: *Learning Web Design*

<i>Course Requirements:</i>	20%	Participation, Attendance, and Preparation (including quizzes and brief writing assignments)
	20%	Group Presentation
	15%	Individual Archive and Proposal
	30%	Essay and Proposal
	15%	Collaborative Archive, Introduction, Presentation and Response to Peers' Presentations

Group Presentation: At the beginning of the term, students will sign up in groups either to perform a scene from or to lead discussion on one of the plays assigned. If you opt to perform, your team will compose a short written comment (2-3 pgs) on the critical and interpretive choices made to effect the performance. If you opt to lead discussion, your

team should plan to do so for 40 minutes of class time. Teams will meet outside of class to prepare for the presentation.

Assignments and Due Dates: All assignments must be typed and double-spaced, using a standard 12-point serifed font like Times New Roman. Margins must be reasonable, no more than 1.25 inches. Papers must include course information and a title at the top of the first page, not on a separate cover page. Any paper over two pages should be numbered. **Formal essays should be turned in to the secure L: drive space in Microsoft Word format by 5:00pm on the due date.** All other writing assignments, unless otherwise specified, should be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. Due dates are strict: late work will be penalized, and very late work may not be accepted. Any requests to change a due date should be discussed with me well in advance of the original deadline.

Attendance is mandatory. Please come to every class period. You have two “free” absences; after that, any absence will result in a third of a letter deduction from your final grade.

The 24-Hour Rule states that you may not come to me with questions or complaints about any given grade until 24 hours have lapsed since its return. You must come with specific questions and/or thoughtful replies to my comments.

Plagiarism: “Plagiarism” derives from the Latin “plagiarius,” meaning “kidnapper.” To plagiarize, as to kidnap, is a kind of stealing, and it is both a fundamental transgression of the Honor System and an offense to our intellectual community. We will be doing research in this class, and students are responsible for understanding the rules of appropriate citation and turning in their own intellectual work. Any instance of plagiarism will meet with immediate disciplinary action. If you have any questions about this matter, including uncertainties about what constitutes plagiarism, please consult a writing handbook or ask me.

****A Note on Readings and Coursework: The intertwined nature of our major assignments requires that we think far ahead of our reading. Please begin to plan your essay project as soon as possible. I strongly suggest that you glance over the later readings and make an early appointment with me to discuss your research interests.****

Schedule

**Subject to Change*

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| R | 9/8 | Introductions
Begin reading Wycherley, <i>The Country Wife</i> (1675); introductory materials |
| T | 9/13 | Discuss: Introductory materials to the Restoration theater; Wycherley
Continue reading Wycherley |

- R 9/15 Discuss: Wycherley
Screen: *The Country Wife* in class (this class will meet the full 3 hours)
Finish reading Wycherley
Read Sedgwick, chapter from *Between Men* (CP)
- T 9/20 Discuss: Wycherley, Sedgwick, and the Homosocial Bonds of Cuckoldry
Begin reading Behn, *The Rover* (1677)
- R 9/22 Discuss: Behn
Finish reading Behn
Read Gallagher, "Who Was that Masked Woman?" (CP)
- SAT 9/23 Group Screening of *The Rover* (meeting place and time TBA)**
- T 9/27 Discuss: The Politics of the Woman Playwright
Begin reading Cibber, *Love's Last Shift* (1696)
***Archive Proposal Due**
- R 9/29 Discuss: Cibber
Finish reading Cibber; begin Vanbrugh, *The Relapse* (1696)
- T 10/4 Discuss: Cibber and Vanbrugh
Finish reading Vanbrugh, *The Relapse*
- R 10/6 Discuss: Revision and the Sequel
Read materials on the Collier controversy; Hume, "Jeremy Collier and the Future of the London Theater in 1698," *Studies in Philology*. (Fall 1999)
- T 10/11 Discuss: The Collier Controversy
Begin reading Congreve, *The Way of the World* (1700); read Congreve's Answer to Collier

*** Essay Proposal Due**
- R 10/13 Reading Day – No Classes
- T 10/18 Discuss: Vanbrugh, Congreve, and Collier
Finish reading Congreve
- R 10/20 Discuss: Congreve
- T 10/25 TBA
Begin reading Farquhar, *The Beaux' Stratagem* (1707); read Milhous and Hume, "'The Beaux' Stratagem': A Production Analysis." *Theatre Journal* (1982).

- R 10/27 Discuss: Farquhar
Finish reading Farquhar
*** Final Individual Archive and Essay Draft Due**
- T 11/1 Discuss: Farquhar
Begin reading Centlivre, *The Busie Body* (1709)
- R 11/3 Discuss: Centlivre
Finish reading Centlivre
- T 11/8 Discuss: Centlivre
Read: *A Walk to Smithfield* (1701); *Reasons for the Punctual Limiting of Bartholomew Fair in West Smithfield* (1708)
- R 11/10 Discuss: Licensing and the Fairgrounds
Begin reading Gay, *The Beggar's Opera* (1728); read Lewis, "An Irregular Dog': Gay's Alternative Theatre." *Yearbook of English Studies* (1988)
- T 11/15 Discuss: Gay
Finish reading Gay; read Richardson, "John Gay, The Beggar's Opera, and Forms of Resistance." *Eighteenth-Century Life* (2000)
- R 11/17 TBA
Screening of *The Beggar's Opera* (?)

// Thanksgiving Break – No Classes

- T 11/29 Discuss: 18th Century Alternative Theater?
Begin reading Fielding, *The Author's Farce* (1730); read "The Critique of Capitalism and the Retreat into Art in Gay's Beggar's Opera and Fielding's Author's Farce." *Cutting Edges* (1995)
*** Essay Due**
- R 12/1 Discuss: Gay and Fielding
Finish reading Fielding; read the Licensing Act of 1737
- T 12/6 Presentations
- R 12/8 Presentations; Conclusions

Collaborative Project Due 12/16

