76-443/843

Kristina Straub

Spring 2020

Wean 5316

Office: BH 245K

Phone: 8-6458

Email: ks3t@andrew.cmu.edu

**Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Theater**

London theaters turned on their lights (or more properly, lit their candles) in 1660 when the Puritan regime ended and Britain returned to monarchical rule. The newly opened theaters quickly became spaces for political and social performances by both actors and audiences. The theater was the place not only to see plays but to hear the latest gossip about the glitterari of the court, to monitor political plots, and to speculate on which pretty actress was current mistress to the King. It was literally a space in which society performed itself, to itself. We will look at the development of the theater as an important social institution and trace its development, up to the mid 1700s, as a media hub that spread its tentacles into newspapers, visual materials, and other popular culture media. Of course, we will read some of the most important plays of this time period, but we will also pay attention to the print and visual culture that grew up around and in response to the theater. In addition to building knowledge about this important chapter in the development of modern media culture, this course will introduce students to performance studies as a framework for the study of culture in any historical period.

**Learning Objectives**

At the end of the course, you will have

* a working knowledge of performance theory
* a working knowledge of the theatre and culture of Restoration and early 18th-century Britain and a sense of the relevance of this history to our lives today.
* an understanding of embodied performance as a means to produce knowledge.

You will also be able to

* do historical research using traditional print archives as well as digital and online resources
* contextualize performances in the historical conditions in which they occurred
* frame and perform early modern performance texts for a modern audience
* read closely and interpret print and visual texts as the residue of embodied performance.

**Course Policies**

*Attendance:* This part of your course obligation involves, first of all, showing up regularly and on time. If you are not here, you are not participating.

*Readings:* You will have the relevant materials with you for every class meeting, and you will have read them as carefully as possible before class. I understand, realistically, that you will have to give more attention to some tasks than to others, and that the reading for this class will not always win the contest for your time and energy. So read smart: be sure that you have at least some familiarity with every reading, whether or not you have been able to read carefully and take notes on the whole.

*Discussion:* Usually, the more you participate in the conversation, the more you get out of it, and having useful things to say will certainly help others as well. But listening carefully is just as important, so it’s not quantity but quality that counts.

How you conduct yourself in the classroom matters. Listening carefully is not easy. It demands putting away cell phones, logging out of email, if you are using a laptop for the readings, and getting enough sleep or imbibing enough caffeine to stay awake. No matter how good a conversation is, if you are too tired or too hungry, you are not going to pay attention to it. Getting up to take bathroom breaks is sometimes necessary, but always distracting to those who are engaged in the conversation—please keep them to a minimum. You are not just a spectator on the sidelines, but a performer in this class, and your grade will be assessed accordingly.

Assignments, additional texts, and other course information can be found on Canvas. Texts that are required to be purchased should be the edition specified on the syllabus.

All readings are available on Canvas, unless noted otherwise on the syllabus. You will need to order two books for this class: *The Routledge Anthology of Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Performance* and the Penguin Classics edition of Aphra Behn’s *Oroonoko*.

If you have a disability and have an accommodations letter from the Disability Resources office, I encourage you to discuss your accommodations and needs with me as early in the semester as possible.  I will work with you to ensure that accommodations are provided as appropriate.  If you suspect that you may have a disability and would benefit from accommodations but are not yet registered with the Office of Disability Resources, I encourage you to contact them at access@andrew.cmu.edu.

No student may record or tape any classroom activity without my express written consent.

*Academic honesty*: The work you turn in for this course should be your own, meaning that you should have conceptualized the ideas yourself. You may use discussion with a peer to help generate ideas. You may also seek the assistance of the tutoring services in the Global Communications Center and the Academic Development office. You are allowed to consult research from books, articles or on the web; however, you may not copy arguments from analyses of literature available in print or on the web, reproduce, wholesale or in part, conclusions offered there on a given novel’s themes using the same evidence (ie, quotations from the text).

Please see university guidelines on cheating/plagiarism for the academic disciplinary measures (http://www.cmu.edu/policies/documents/Cheating.html.

*Incomplete Grades*: All work for this course should be completed during the academic period of course, but an Incomplete may be granted if unforeseen circumstances affecting the student’s life and ability to complete the work. I am required to consult with my Department Head, however, before granted an incomplete, and the student and I must agree upon a written contract for completion of the work. The student must have completed more than 50% of the course work in order to receive consideration for an incomplete.

**Assignments: Why This Performance, Then and Now?**

Your contribution to our class will be researching a performance of your choice and presenting a case for its production now, in 2020. This is a semester-long project that will play out in a sequence of staged assignments that will build on each other.

You will complete the following assignments by the due dates that are indicated on our syllabus:

1. A short (1-2 page) rationale for the performance you have chosen. Why do you find it interesting and why do you think it should be performed in 2020? What audience(s) do you imagine for it? Where and by whom should it be performed? Broadway? Community theatre? CMU School of Drama?
2. A chronology of the performance’s history, and, if relevant, its publication history.
3. A summary of relevant critical and historical work, with bibliography.
4. Program notes for a staged performance, including a timeline of historical events relevant to the performance’s meanings.
5. A staged scene of 10 to 20 minutes, to be acted in class.
6. A performance genealogy that puts your modern staging into conversation with your performance’s history in the Restoration and/or eighteenth century. This work will bring together your historical research on the performance and its contexts with what you learned by working out a modern staging. What are the changes in this performance between then and now and why did you make them? What continuities exist between your staging and those of the eighteenth century? How do you account for them? What did this performance mean then? What does it mean now?

**Class Schedule**

**Week 1**

***January 14***

Introductions: How much do we know about performance theory? About British culture and theatre in the 17th and 18th centuries?

First Readers’ Theatre: Scripts provided in class

***January 16***

Readings:

Making History handout

Carlson, “Theorizing the Performative Event”

Roach, “Performance”

**Week 2**

***January 21***

Lecture:

Schechner, “Points of Contact” and “Restored Behavior”

Taylor, excerpt from *The Archive and the Repertoire*

[readings are available, but not required]

Reading:

Routledge introductions (*Drama* intros on Canvas, Performance in textbook)

***January 23***

*Secret Love* chapter in *Routledge Anthology*

**Week 3**

***January 28***

Roach, excerpt from *Cities of the Dead*

Haggerty, introduction from *Men in Love*

***January 30***

*All for Love* and materials

**Week 4**

***February 4***

Roach, excerpt from *It*

***February 6***

Betterton’s *Lear* chapter in *Routledge Anthology*

**Week 5**

***February 11***

*The Tempest* and materials

***February 13***

Straub, “Garrick’s Two *Tempests*”

***Due any time in Week 5: Performance Rationale***

**Week 6**

***February 18***

*Busie Body* and materials

***February 20***

Nussbaum, “Introduction” to *Rival Queens*

**Week 7**

***February 25***

*The Necromancer* and materials

O’Brien, “Pantomime”

***February 27***

*The Beggar’s Opera* and materials

***Week 8***

***March 3***

*The Beggar’s Opera*, continued, and *The Fairy Queen* and materials

***March 6***

*The Fairy Queen*, *The Enchanted Island* [in-class viewing]

***Due any time in Week 8: Performance chronology***

**Spring Break March 8-12**

**Week 9**

***March 17***

*The London Merchant* and materials

***March 19***

Haggerty, excerpt from *Men in Love*

Burke, “*The London Merchant* and eighteenth-century British Law”

**Week 10**

***March 24***

*The Recruiting Officer* chapter in the *Routledge Anthology*

***March 26***

Straub, “The Soldier in the Theatre”

Gardner, “George Farquhar’s *The Recruiting Officer*”

***Due any time in Week 10: Summary of critical and historical research, bibliography.***

**Week 11**

***March 31***

*The Rover* chapter in the *Routledge Anthology*

***April 2***

Fawcett, “Unmapping London”

**Week 12**

***April 7***

Behn, *Oroonoko* [order Penguin Classics, edited by Janet Todd]

***Due any time in Week 12: Program Notes.***

***April 9***

*Oroonoko* chapter in the *Routledge Anthology*

**The rest of the semester is dedicated to readings chosen by you and your staged performances. You will each be responsible for a class meeting.**

**Week 13**

***April 14***

***April 16***

**Week 14**

***April 21***

***April 23***

**Week 15**

***April 28***

***April 30***

***May 4-8 Final Essays due***