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ENG 5006-001: Recent British Drama

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English 5006: Recent British Drama

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Required Texts:

Churchill, Plays One
Gray, Quartermaine’s Terms
Hare, Amy’s View
Pinter, The Caretaker and The Dumb Waiter
Pinter, Complete Works IV
Shaffer, Amadeus
Shaffer, Equus
Stoppard, Arcadia
Stoppard, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead
Storey, Home

PURPOSE. This course will examine British drama written since the “Angry Young Men” phase of the 1950s, which featured such dramatists as John Osborne, John Whiting, John Arden, and Arnold Wesker, among others. We will examine the period of experimentation that followed, charting British theatrical incorporations of absurdist, agitprop, minimalist, postmodernist, and other styles and traditions. Given the difficulty of finding dramatic texts from recent productions of other than “canonical playwrights” like Pinter and Stoppard, you will be encouraged to explore new developments in plays beyond the class. The last third of the 20th century was especially rich in theatrical development and dramatic exploration; we will examine the ways British drama embodied, reflected, or guided social discussion of the period.

ASSIGNMENTS. You will be required to write one shorter paper of approximately 4-6 pages and one longer, documented paper of some 12-15 pages. During the early part of the semester, you will be asked to introduce discussion for one session; later, you will give a short oral presentation (ca. 10-15 minutes) summarizing your documented paper for the class. There will be a midterm and a final exam.

GRADING. Evaluation of your work will be demanding and fair and will include an assessment of your class preparedness and participation. The first paper will make up 10%, the prospectus 5%, and the documented paper 20% of the course grade. The midterm exam will count 15% and the final exam 25%. Active participation in discussion will constitute the remaining 25% of the overall grade.
LATE WORK. Assignments turned in late will be penalized one-third grade PER CALENDAR DAY late. Missed in-class work cannot be made up; that is the reward for coming to class regularly.

PARTICIPATION. The success of this class depends on your active and constructive participation. As graduate students, you are adults and professionals, and therefore a major portion of your grade will reflect your contributions to thoughtful, provocative class discussions.

CONFERENCES. I encourage you to drop by and confer with me at any mutually convenient time regarding assignments, problems, or ideas for papers. Check with me before you get mired in that essay.
English 5006 Assignments


Jan. 20 - Contemporary dramatic theory; Pinter, The Dumb Waiter.

Jan. 27 - Pinter, Betrayal.

Oral Report: ________________

Feb. 3 - Shaffer, Equus.

Oral Report: ________________

Feb. 10 - Shaffer, Amadeus.

Oral Report: ________________

Feb. 17 - Stoppard, Rosencrantz and Guidenstern Are Dead. PAPER #1 DUE.

Oral Report: ________________

Feb. 24 - Stoppard, Arcadia.

Oral Report: ________________

Mar. 2 - MIDTERM EXAM.

Oral Report: ________________

Mar. 9 - Churchill, Vinegar Tom.

Mar. 16 - No class; Spring Break


Oral Report: ________________
Mar. 30 - Simon Gray, *Quartermaine's Terms*, PAPER #2 PROSPECTUS DUE.

Oral Report: ________________.

Apr. 6 - David Storey, *Home*.

Oral Report: ________________.

Apr. 13 - David Hare, *Amy's View*.

Oral Report: ________________.

Apr. 20 - Oral Presentations.

Apr. 27 - Oral Presentations; FINAL PAPER DUE.

FINAL EXAM