English 340-01: Restoration Drama

CRN 10234
Professor J. Brady
Palmer 306 (office)
843-3906 (office phone)

Fall, 2009
9:30 -10:45 in
Palmer 205

This course explores English literature after the restoration of Charles II to the throne in 1660. Topics include: the reopening of the theaters; the introduction of the actress to the stage in lieu of the boy actors who had played women’s roles in the Renaissance; the flourishing of drama, especially comedy, after the interregnum. Our focus will be on plays by important dramatists, including Wycherley, Etherege, Dryden, Otway, Cibber, Vanbrugh, and Congreve, and on the unique conditions of the theater they wrote for between 1660 and 1700. We will examine royal sponsorship of the theater of this period and the dissolute atmosphere of Charles II’s court, as depicted in penetrating satires by the king’s godson, the Earl of Rochester.

Texts:

David Womersley, ed. Restoration Drama: An Anthology (Blackwell)
John Dryden, Marriage A la Mode, ed. David Crane (New Mermaids)

Office Hours:

Tuesday and Thursday: 11:00-noon, or by appointment from Monday through Thursday.

Attendance Policy:

This class will be run as a combination of lecture, seminar, and discussion. Late arrivals to class will be counted as absences and any student who misses or comes late to class more than four times in the semester will receive a zero in the 20% of the grade reflecting class participation and attendance and may be asked to withdraw from the course.

Method of Evaluation:

70% You are required to write essays of 6 pages each on two of the three central units of this course (i.e., Comedies of the 1670s; Dryden or Otway; Comedies of the 1690s) and a longer essay of 10 pages on the other unit. See schedule below for the due dates on these papers.
20% Participation in the class, attendance, preparation for class, and willingness to engage with the primary material and the scholarship in the field. You are required to read the assigned criticism or supplementary primary texts in conjunction with each week's principal reading.

10% An essay of four pages on an aspect of theatrical performance or staging that interests you or on an actor or actress of the period, with illustrations from the plays we have studied. This essay must be submitted by the Thanksgiving recess at the latest.

Schedule:

**Restoration Comedies of the 1670s**

Sept. 1, 3, 8


Sept. 10, 15

The Plain Dealer (1676)

September 17, 22, 24

The Man of Mode (1676)

*Friday, September 25

First essay due

**Court and Theater Milieu**

September 29

Rochester's satires (handout)

October 1

The Restoration Actress

* Read one of the following reserve readings:
  Elizabeth Howe, The first English actresses;
Dryden and Otway

October 6, 8

October 13, 15, 22

Oct. 27, 29, Nov. 3

*Thursday, November 5

November 10, 12

November 17, 19

*Friday, November 20

November 24

Dec. 1 and 3

Comedies of the 1690s

December 8 Final essay due

*Read on Congreve’s play, Robert Markley, *Two Edg’d Weapons: Style and Ideology in the Comedies of Wycherley, Etherege, and Congreve*, on reserve

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*Thursday, November 5

Second essay due

*Comedies of the 1690s

*Read on Congreve’s play, Robert Markley, *Two Edg’d Weapons: Style and Ideology in the Comedies of Wycherley, Etherege, and Congreve*, on reserve

*December 8

Final essay due