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ENGL 385-01, John Fletcher: The Case for Collaborative Authorship, Fall 2008

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English 385-01: John Fletcher: The Case for Collaborative Authorship

CRN 19501

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

Fall 2008
TR 9:30-10:45 am
Palmer Hall 207

Reading List:

Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, *Philaster*
Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, *The Maid's Tragedy*
Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, *A King and No King*
John Fletcher, *The Tragedy of Valentinian*
John Fletcher and Philip Massinger, *The Custom of the Country*
William Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*
John Fletcher, *The Woman's Prize*
John Fletcher, *The Wild-Goose Chase*
William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*
John Fletcher, *The Island Princess*
John Fletcher, *The Sea Voyage*

Office Hours:

Monday through Friday: 11:00-12:00, or by appointment

Course Description:

This junior topics seminar explores the exceptionally popular and prolific Renaissance dramatist, John Fletcher (1579-1625), who was Shakespeare's successor as the principal writer for the King's Company. Fletcher wrote by preference in collaboration with other playwrights, a practice that was the norm in the early modern theater, but which he adopted to an unusual degree. We will read not only plays he coauthored with other playwrights, including Beaumont and Massinger, but plays written as sequels or adaptations or revisions of other playwrights' work. This course will introduce majors to an important body of work that remains unfamiliar to most undergraduates. Fletcher's plays constitute the largest extant canon of drama produced in the English Renaissance. His significance and place in the literary canon are currently being reassessed by scholars of the seventeenth century. His plays lend themselves especially well to feminist and colonialist readings.

Attendance Policy:

This class is a seminar, which depends on student involvement in class discussions. Late arrivals to class will be counted as an absence. 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.

Schedule:

September 2, 4	<i>The Tempest</i> [Folger edition]
September 9, 11, 16	<i>The Island Princess</i> [Nick Hern]
September 18, 23, 25	<i>The Sea-Voyage</i> [Coursepack]
Friday September 26	First essay due, by noon
September 30, October 2	<i>The Tragedy of Valentinian</i> [in <i>Jacobean Sex Tragedies</i>]
October 7, 9, 14	<i>The Maid's Tragedy</i> [in <i>Jacobean Sex Tragedies</i>]
October 16, 23	<i>A King and No King</i> [in <i>Drama of the English Renaissance</i>]
Monday, October 27	Second essay due, by noon
October 28	<i>Taming of the Shrew</i> [Folger edition]
October 30, November 4, 6	<i>The Woman's Prize</i> [Norton]
November 11, 13	<i>The Wild-Goose Chase</i> [in <i>Drama of the English Renaissance</i>]
November 18, 20, 25	<i>The Custom of the Country</i> [Coursepack]
Monday, November 24	Third essay due, by 2:00 p.m.
Thanksgiving Recess	
December 2, 4, 9	<i>Philaster</i> [Revels]

Method of Evaluation:

Two essays of 1500-2000 words each	40%
Research essay of 2500 words	30%
In-class presentation	10%
In-class participation, including attendance	20%

* All late essays will be penalized by at least a letter grade.

Critical Readings on Reserve at Barret Library:

Gerald Eades Bentley, *The Profession of Dramatist in Shakespeare's Time, 1590-1642* (Princeton University Press, 1971).

Fredson Bowers, ed., *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, 10 vols. (Cambridge University Press, 1970 -).

Paul D. Cannan, *The Emergence of Dramatic Criticism in England: From Jonson to Pope* (Palgrave, 2006).

Philip J. Finkelpearl, *Court and Country Politics in the Plays of Beaumont and Fletcher* (Princeton University Press, 1990).

Heather Anne Hirschfeld, *Joint Enterprises: Collaborative Drama and the Institutionalization of the English Renaissance Theater* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2004).

Huebert, Ronald, *The Performance of Pleasure in English Renaissance Drama* (Palgrave, 2003).

Clifford Leech, *The John Fletcher Plays* (Chatto & Windus, 1962).

Leggatt, Alexander, *Citizen Comedy in the Age of Shakespeare* (University of Toronto Press, 1973).

Jeff Masten, "Beaumont and/or Fletcher: Collaboration and the Interpretation of Renaissance Drama," *ELH* 59 (Summer, 1992): 337-356.

Jeff Masten, *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, Authorship, and Sexualities in Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge University Press, 1997)

Gordon McMullan, *The Politics of Unease in the Plays of John Fletcher* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1994).

Brian Vickers, *Shakespeare, Co-Author* (Oxford University Press, 2004).

Stanley Wells, *Shakespeare & Co.* (Vintage, 2006).

To locate Fletcher texts, go to <http://www.gutenberg.org/browse/authors/f#a4606>.