



# *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

## *Syllabus*

### *Canonic American Theatre - 20582*

*Last update 08-09-2015*

*HU Credits: 2*

*Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)*

*Responsible Department: theatre studies*

*Academic year: 0*

*Semester: 1st Semester*

*Teaching Languages: Hebrew*

*Campus: Mt. Scopus*

*Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Jeanette Malkin*

*Coordinator Email: [jmalkin@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:jmalkin@mail.huji.ac.il)*

*Coordinator Office Hours: Wed 14:15-15:00 or by appointment*

*Teaching Staff:*

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Dr. Jeanette Malkin

Course/Module description:

*"Mainstream" canonical American theatre tends to be based on realistic drama whose theme is oriented toward the family and society, their values, promises, and failures. With the disruption of the nuclear family in, for example, the plays of Albee and Shepard, we find also the disintegration of the realist idiom. This course will focus on the major (ie: successful and Broadway produced) American playwrights from O'Neill, Williams, and Arthur Miller, to Albee and Shepard. It will cover the important theatre groups, such as the Group Theatre and the Federal Theatre, and the connection between theatre and ideology.*

Course/Module aims:

*To teach the themes and styles of American theatre that is considered "canonic"; and to tell the story of the creation of American theatre in a country which began creating its own theatre only at the start of the 20th century.*

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

*The students will know the important American plays, will be able to identify their themes, styles, and ideologies, and will understand the connection between these and social values.*

Attendance requirements(%):

80%

*Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Frontal lectures and joint discussions based on plays and critical articles which must be read before each class.*

Course/Module Content:

*(may be modified)*

- American theatre before Broadway
- Eugene O'Neill and the Provincetown Players
- The Group Theatre and Clifford Odets
- The Federal Theatre
- Tennessee Williams
- Arthur Miller
- Edward Albee

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- Sam Shepard

Required Reading:

החווייה האמריקנית: פרקים בהיסטוריה של ארצות הברית ובתרבותה. בעריכת ארנון גוטפלד. פרקים נבחרים

Mary McCarthy, "The American Realist Playwrights" in Walter Meserve, *Discussions of Modern American Drama*. Heath, 1966, pp. 114 27.

Robert Brustein, "Why American Plays are Not Literature" in Walter Meserve, *Discussions of Modern American Drama*. Heath, 1966, pp. 87 96.

Ruby Cohn, "Artaud versus Aristotle in America"; in Cohn: *Dialogue in American Drama*. Indiana UP, 1971, pp.3 7.

C.W.E. Bigsby, Chapter 1: "An End to Revolt" in: *Confrontation and Commitment: American Drama 1959-1966*. MacGibbon & Kee, 1967.

Marc Robinson, *The Other American Drama*. Johns Hopkins UP, 1994. Introduction; Tennessee Williams.

Additional Reading Material:

Bigsby, C.W.E. *Modern American Drama, 1945-2000*. Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Bigsby, C.W.E. *A Critical Introduction to 20th Century American Drama*. (Volume 1: 1982; 2: 1984; 3: 1985). Cambridge University Press.

Berkowitz, Gerald M. *American Drama of the Twentieth Century*. Routledge, 2014.

Berkowitz, Gerald M. *New Broadways: Theatre Across America, 1950-1980*. Totowa, NJ, 1982.

Bordman, Gerald. *American Theatre: A Chronicle of Comedy and Drama, 1869-1914*. Oxford University Press, 1994.

Miller, Tice L. "Entertaining the Nation: American Drama in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries." *Journal of American Culture* 31/2 (June 2008): 222 on.

Brustein, Robert. *Seasons of Discontent. Dramatic Opinions 1959 1965*. Simon and Schuster, 1967.

Cohn, Ruby. *Dialogue in American Drama*. Indiana U Press, 1971.

Debusscher, Gilbert, and Henry I. Schvey (eds). *New Essays on American Drama*. Rodopi, 1989.

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Demastes, William W. *Beyond Naturalism: A New Realism in American Theatre*. Greenwood Press, 1988.

Downer, A.S. (ed). *The American Theater Today*. New York: Basic Books, 1967.

Dukore, Bernard F. *American Dramatists 1918 1945*. Grove Press, 1984.

Goldstein, Malcolm. *The Political Stage: American drama and theater of the great depression*. Oxford University Press, 1974.

Gould, Jean. *Modern American Playwrights*. Dodd, Mead & Company, 1966.

Himelstein, M.Y. *Drama was a Weapon: The left-wing theatre in New York, 1929-1941*. Rutgers University Press, 1963.

Krutch, Joseph Wood. *The American Drama Since 1918: An informal history*. G. Braziller, 1957.

Krasner, David (ed). *A Companion to Twentieth-Century American Drama*. Blackwell, 2005.

Meserve, W.J. (ed.) *Discussions of Modern American Drama*. Heath, 1966.

Murphy, Brenda. *American Realism and American Drama, 1880-1940*. Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Porter, Thomas E. *Myth and Modern American Drama*. Wayne State U Press, 1969.

Rabkin, Gerald. *Drama and Commitment*. Haskell House, 1972.

Reynolds, R.C. *Stage Left: The Development of the American Social Drama in the Thirties*. Whitston, 1986.

Robinson, Marc. *The Other American Drama*. Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Scanlan, Tom. *Family, Drama, and American Dreams*. Greenwood Press, 1978.

Smith, Susan Harris. *American Drama: The Bastard Art*. Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Valgemäe, Mardi. *Accelerated Grimace: Expressionism in the American Drama of the 1920s*. Southern Illinois U Press, 1972.

Weales, G.C. *The Jumping Off Place*. Macmillan, 1969.

Wilmer, S. E. *Theatre, Society, and the Nation: Staging American Identities*. Cambridge University Press, 2002.

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Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %

Presentation 0 %

Participation in Tutorials 20 %

Project work 80 %

Assignments 0 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %

Other 0 %

Additional information: