

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Family Drama and Gender Crisis in 20th Century American Theatre - 20600

Last update 01-09-2022

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Theatre Studies

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Isaiah Bar-Yaacov

Coordinator Email: isaiah.bar-yaacov@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Monday 14:00-15:00

Teaching Staff:

Mr. Isaiah Bar-Yaacov

Course/Module description:

The realistic family drama has become the favorite form of dramatic expression for American playwrights in the 20th Century. Most of the important dramatists in America utilized this sub-genre which has deep connections to the classical realistic play tradition, as it was developed in the late 19th Century in Europe (Ibsen, Strindberg and Chekhov). In this course we will research the sources of the popularity of the American family drama in the 20th Century and the connection between this sub-genre and the ethos of American life in its changing perspectives. We will also discover how this group of plays reflect ongoing conflicts and crises in the definition of the family, conflicts that arise from the ongoing crisis of normative heterosexual masculinity. The classes will take place as discussions in class after the students have read the plays at home, and also watching scenes from the different film versions of the plays wherever possible.

Course/Module aims:

The aim of the course is to give the students a good knowledge of modern American plays by some of the most important playwrights of the 20th Century and a deeper understanding of the connection between the family drama and the shifting perceptions of masculinity and femininity in the period.

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

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Identify the major American playwrights and their different styles of writing. They should be able to use intelligently a lexicon of terms relating to feminist theories and queer theory in relation to these texts and other texts in the tradition of the family play.

Attendance requirements(%):

80% - Attendance is obligatory

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Lecture and exercise course. Students will be asked to come prepared for class after having read the plays and the relevant articles, and to participate in the class discussions. There will be short quizzes that will check the student's knowledge of the plays on the reading list. The active participation in class + the quiz grades will account for 30% of the final

grade. At the end of the course the students will be asked to write a longer paper which will account for the remaining 70% of the final grade.

Course/Module Content:

List of topics:

- 1) The realistic family play and its connections to various ideal models of the family in classical American culture.
- 2) Susan Glaspell and Eugene O'Neill - two early visions of the family in conflict.
- 3) Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams - The politics of masculinity and the fault-lines of the normative family.
- 4) Sam Shepard and David Mamet - The crisis of the disintegrating family in the seventies and eighties.
- 5) Wendy Wasserstein and Paula Vogel - The feminist response to the normative family and its breakdown.
- 6) Tony Kushner and Edward Albee - The Queer/homosexual viewpoint of the family crisis and the search for alternative models of being.

Required Reading:

Compulsory reading list (plays):

Susan Glaspell, "Trifles" (1916)

Eugene O'Neill, Long Day's Journey into Night (1941/1956)

Arthur Miller, Death of a Salesman (1949)

Tennessee Williams, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (1955)

Sam Shepard, Curse of the Starving Class (1976)

David Mamet, Edmond (1983)

Wendy Wasserstein, The Heidi Chronicles (1987)

Tony Kushner, Angels in America: Part 1 - Millennium Approaches (1991)

Paula Vogel, How I Learned to Drive (1997)

Edward Albee, The Goat: Or Who is Sylvia? (2002)

רשימת מחזות חובה:

סוזן גלספל, "זוטות" *

יוג'ין או'ניל, "מסע יום ארוך אל תוך הלילה" *

טנסי ויליאמס, "חתולה על גג פח לוהט" *

ארטור מילר, "מותו של סוכן" *

סם שפרד, "קללת מעמד המורעבים" *

דיוויד מאמט, "אדמונד" *

וונדי וסטרשטיין, "מעשיות היידי" *

פאולה ווגל, "כיצד למדתי לנהוג" *

טוני קושנר, "מלאכים באמריקה" (חלק א' - המילניום מתקרב) *

אדוארד אלבי, "העז, או מי זאת סילביה?" *

• קיימים בתרגום לעברית

מאמרים קריאת חובה:

Compulsory reading list (articles):

- 1) Scanlan, Tom, "The American Family: Security or Freedom", in Scanlan, Tom, *Family, Drama, and American Dreams*, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978, 17-48.
- 2) Ben-Zvi, Linda, "'Home Sweet Home': Deconstructing the Masculine Myth of the Frontier in Modern American Drama", in Mogen, David, Busby, Mark & Bryant, Paul (eds.), *The Frontier Experience and the American Dream: Essays on American Literature*, College Station: Texas A&M Un., 1989, 217-225.
- 3) Alkalay-Gut, Keren, "Murder and Marriage: Another Look at Trifles", in Ben-Zvi, Linda (ed.), *Susan Glaspell – Essays on Her Theater and Fiction*, Ann Arbor: Un. Of Michigan, 1995, 71-81.
- 4) Burr, Susan, "O'Neill's Ghostly Women", in Schlueter, June, *Feminist Rereadings of Modern American Drama*, London & Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1989, 7-47.
- 5) Stanton, Kay, "Women and the American Dream of Death of a Salesman", in Schlueter, June, *Feminist Rereadings of Modern American Drama*, London & Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1989, 67-102.
- 6) Savran, David, *Communists, Cowboys and Queers: the Politics of Masculinity in the Work of Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams*, Minneapolis: Un. of Minnesota, 1992, 1-19 + 29-42 + 99-110.
- 7) McDonough, Carla J., *Staging Masculinity: Male Identity in Contemporary American Drama*, Jefferson, NC, and London: McFarland, 35-42 + 50-56 + 71-80.
- 8) Ciociola, Gail, *Wendy Wasserstein*, Jefferson NC & London: McFarland, 1998, 56-80.
- 9) Gleitman, Claire, *Anxious Masculinity in the Drama of Arthur Miller and Beyond : Salesmen, Sluggers, and Big Daddies*, London ; New York : Methuen Drama ; 2022, 145-163.
- 10) González Crespán, Araceli, "The Tragic (Male) Hero in the Wake of the New Millennium: Upturning Gender and Sexuality in *The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia?*", in Clum, John M & O'Brien, Cormac, *Sex, Gender, and Sexualities in Edward Albee's Plays*, Leiden ; Boston : Brill Rodopi, 2018, 121-136

Additional Reading Material:

ספרות עזר מומלצת- כללי

Adam, Julie, *Versions of Heroism in Modern American Drama: Redefenitions by Miller, Williams, O'Neill, and Anderson*, Houndsmill, Basingstoke: Macmillan 1991.

Berkowitz, Gerald M., *American Drama of the Twentieth Century*, London: Longman, 1992.

Bigsby, C.W.E., *A Critical Introduction to Twentieth Century American Drama*, (3 Vol.), Cambridge: Cambridge Un.: 1982-5.

Bigsby, C.W.E., Modern American Drama 1945-2000, Cambridge: Cambridge Un., 2000.

Bloom, Clive (ed.), American Drama, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995.

Cohn, Ruby, Dialogue in American Drama, Bloomington: Indiana Un., 1971.

Gleitman, Claire, Anxious Masculinity in the Drama of Arthur Miller and Beyond : Salesmen, Sluggers, and Big Daddies, London & New York : Methuen Drama, 2022.

Krasner, Wieder David, A Companion to Twentieth-Century American Drama, Malden, MA:Blackwell, 2005.

McDonough, Carla J., Staging Masculinity: Male Identity in Contemporary American Drama, Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1997.

Porter, Thomas E., Myth and Modern American Drama, Detroit: Wayne State Un. Press, 1969.

Savran, David, Communists, Cowboys and Queers: the Politics of Masculinity in the Work of Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams, Minneapolis: Un. of Minnesota Press, 1992.

Scanlan, Tom, Family, Drama, and American Dreams, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978.

Schroeder, Patricia R., The Presence of the Past in Modern American Drama, Rutherford: Farleigh Dickinson Un. Press, 1989.

Schlueter, June (ed.), Feminist Rereadings of Modern American Drama, Rutherford N.J.: Farleigh Dickinson Un. Press, 1989.

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

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %

Presentation 0 %

Participation in Tutorials 5 %

Project work 70 %

Assignments 0 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 0 %
Quizzes 25 %
Other 0 %

Additional information:

The course will be taught in English.