

Preliminary Web Course Description

*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.

School of English and Theatre Studies

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| Course Code: THST*3300 | Course Title: Sexuality and the Stage | Date of Offering: FALL 2016 |
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| Course Instructor: Sky Gilbert | Course Format: lecture/discussion |
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Brief Course Synopsis:

Students will pursue the following general line of inquiry: is there such a thing as a queer play (or production)? What is it? If there is such a thing, does it matter? We will begin with background reading in queer theory and gay liberation. What does it mean to be a gay, lesbian, or transgendered person? What is queer identity, and is there such a thing as queer culture? How can an essentialist notion of identity (which is tied to queer civil liberties in the real world) be reconciled with postmodern notions of the construction of identity? Are identity labels a good thing, or are they obsolete? After a crash course in queer theory, we will continue to read performance theory and plays against each other. How do those who write gay and lesbian plays – or create queer performances -- negotiate the tenuous tightrope between stereotype and observed detail? There will be a special emphasis placed in this course on the significance of femininity, masculinity, drag, and the problem (or is it?) of straight female characters created by gay male writers. Is there such a thing as ‘men writing female characters in drag’ (and by that, I don’t mean a man sitting at a computer in a dress!)? If so, what is it?

Methods of Evaluation and Weight:

1. Questions.(20% of final mark)
2. Brief online comments. (15% of final mark)
3. Take-home test question. (20% of final mark)
4. Participation (20% of final mark)
5. Essay. (25% of final mark)

Texts and/or Resources Required (e.g. Internet access, specific textbook title, lab kit, etc.)

Albee, Edward. *The Goat or Who is Sylvia?*
Fornes, Maria Irene. *Fefu and Her Friends*
Genet, Jean. *The Balcony*
Hellman, Lillian. *The Children’s Hour*
McNally, Terence. *The Lisbon Traviata*
Mills, Sonja. *Dyke City* (provided by instructor)
Shairp, Mordaunt. *The Green Bay Tree*
Drake, Sunny. *TBA.*
Williams, Tennessee. *A Streetcar Named Desire*

Course pack including readings by: Douglas Crimp, Shannon Bell, Jeffrey Weeks, Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Elaine Showalter, Susan Sontag, Leo Bersani, Stefan Brecht, Jill Dolan

Other information that you wish share about the course (optional):