

Fall/Winter 2019-2020

AP/EN 3192 6.0A (Y)
*(Cross-Listed to
AP/HUMA 3014)*

Tragedy in Western Literature: Ancient & Modern

Course Director:

Marcia Blumberg
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Office hours: Wednesday & Thursday 12:30 - 1:30 pm + by appointment

Delivery Format:

Seminar

Time:

Wednesday 2:30 - 5:30 pm

Description:

This introduction to Tragedy begins with the examination of tragedy as a genre and the important writings on Tragedy by Aristotle and other theorists. We briefly analyze the context of Ancient Greece and the manner in which these tragedies were staged. Choosing five significant tragedies, Aeschylus Oresteia, Sophocles Antigone and Oedipus The King, Euripides Medea and The Bacchae, we study each ancient text followed by a cluster of modern or contemporary re-visions of these plays utilizing Adrienne Rich's definition of that term, 'the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering a text from a new critical direction.' In doing so we traverse a trajectory of texts from Ancient Greece, where tragedy portrayed the fate of famous men and women and their relationship to the gods, to recent plays that represent the crises associated with ordinary men and women and their positionings in many different worlds. These latter texts will be situated in a range of countries and cultures including Argentina, Ireland, Italy, Germany, Poland, Scotland, South Africa, Britain, USA and will offer new insights into the Ancient Tragedies utilising many theatrical forms.

The course analyzes cultural and political contexts, specificities of time and place, aspects of race, class, gender and power differentials, so as to interrogate theatrical, formal, thematic, and theoretical issues. Interpretations of the Greek Tragedies and the twentieth-century plays emphasize theatre as a dynamic medium that uses language and bodies in diverse stagings and contexts; they also empower us with a heightened awareness to see with fresh eyes.

Category:

B

Historical Requirement:

Time Period I (pre-1700) & Time Period II (1700-1900)

Requirements:	Assignment 1 - Theatre Review (3-4 p.)	10%
	Assignment 2 - Comparative essay (7-8 p.)	20%
	In-Class Test	15%
	Assignment 3 - Comparative Research Essay	25%
	Final In-Class Test	20%
	Class Participation	10%

Reading List:

*Texts marked * will be available in a Course Kit:*

Greek Tragedy: 3 Plays (includes Sophocles, Antigone, Euripides, Medea and, The Bacchae) (Nick Hern)

The Oresteia of Aeschylus, in a new translation by Ted Hughes (Farrar, Straus & Giroux 2000)

Steven Berkoff, Greek*

Bertolt Brecht, Antigone trans Judith Malina (Applause)

Marina Carr, By the Bog of Cats (DPS)

Caryl Churchill and David Lan, A Mouthful of Birds*

Rachel Cusk, Euripides Medea. A New Version (Oberon Classics, 2015)

Rita Dove, The Darker Face of the Earth*

Maureen Duffy, Rites*

Yael Farber, Molora (Oberon)

Athol Fugard, John Kani, and Winston Ntshona, The Island in Statements*

Griselda Gambaro, Antígona Furiosa*

Janus Glowacki, Antigone in New York (Samuel French)

Eugene O'Neill, Mourning Becomes Electra in Three Plays (Vintage)

Franca Rame and Dario Fo, Medea Prologue + Medea in Orgasmo Adulto Escapes from the Zoo*

Sophocles, Oedipus Rex (Dover Thrift Edition), trans. Sir George Young; Oscar van Woensel, MedEia*

Open To:

Year 3 and 4