

THE 322: Theatre History & Culture

Spring 2024 / Session A

Jan. 8 – Feb. 27 / 2024

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Course Description

Theatre, History and Culture is a 7.5 week intensive upper-level course devoted to the examination of theatre, dance, music and film as cultural/artistic expression and mechanism of social change. Given the range and diversity the class covers, the class narrows to the role of performance and theatre across the globe and toward social change, with a specific focus on the role of women as cultural producers in theatre and performance. In addition to the text book, students will watch videos, read articles and listen to music. Please note that this class focuses on race, gender, sexuality and ability to relearn how we see performance, art and theatre. As a full 3-credit class, the workload of a full semester is condensed into 7.5 weeks. To estimate workload, students are advised to plan readings in advance and to purchase all necessary textbooks immediately. For a full list of materials and where to find them, see “Course Materials”

Note: There are no exams in this class.

Course Materials

Students should know that while these texts may be available for purchase at the ASU Bookstore, they might also be available elsewhere with different pricing.

Core Required Textbook: *Theatre Histories: An Introduction, Third Edition*, Tobin Nelhaus general editor. (Amazon is the least expensive and cheapest option)

Grading Breakdown: 300 total point

Assignment	Overall Course Value
6 Discussion Boards (20 pts)	120 pts.
6 Unit Review Questions (20 pts)	120 pts
1 Final (60 pts)	60 pts

A+ = 96 - 100%	(286 – 300)
A = 90 – 95%	(268 – 285)
B = 80 – 89%	(238 – 267)
C = 70 – 79 %	(208 – 237)
D = 60 – 69%	(178 – 207)
E = 0 – 59%	(0-177)

Classroom Expectations and Course Policies

- Complete all assigned readings by the required dates
- Submit all written work on time with the correct file formatting
- Be respectful and professional in all discussion board interactions, emails, etc.
- Contact the instructor immediately if questions or concerns arise regarding content or assignments
- Contact technical assistance for questions or concerns regarding Blackboard
- Follow the rules of ASU's policy for student conduct: <https://eoss.asu.edu/dos/srr/codeofconduct>

Students are recommended to:

- Plan in advance for readings, performance attendance, and written assignments
- Purchase texts immediately in order to complete assigned readings on time
- Avoid procrastination

Because this course is entirely delivered via the Internet, you are responsible for making sure that the computer you use to access all course materials meets or exceeds the specified computer minimum qualifications as listed on the course web site. In general, a computer purchased and in the last 3-5 years and continuously updated via updates from the operating system (Mac, Windows) vendor will suffice. Also, due to the high media content of this course, you will be required to set up and configure a media player that will consistently play the media files delivered via the course web site. Please note: You are highly encouraged not to enroll, or to drop immediately, if you do not have computer experience, or if you are not willing or prepared to assume the added responsibility of a computer-based course. Necessary required skills include downloading mp3s, surfing the net, conferring via email, and other intermediate computer knowledge.

HIGH-SPEED CONNECTION NOTE: A high-speed Internet connection (cable, ISDN, fiber optic, etc.) is strongly advised. It may be possible to complete this course on slower connections, however Herberger Online will not be able to offer support should your connection be too slow to receive the course materials. Due to the nature of the course, the site is very media intensive. All exams and virtually all lessons include several media elements that may be slow or virtually impossible to download on a slower connection. In addition to exams, each lesson contains one or more media components. These require the ability to download or stream and listen to modern audio file types on your computer (mp3, mp4, m4a). You are required to have the Flash plug-in installed on your browser. Most browsers come with a Flash plug-in pre installed, however if your browser does not have it, you will need to download and install it on your system. You can download the Flash plug-in for your browser at: <https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer>

The computer help FAQ document linked on the course website on the Help Page, is required reading for this course. Read this document for additional technical information.

For technical assistance:

Please do not contact your instructor with technical questions. Herberger Online handles all technical questions and issues that may arise in this course. Please contact the support team immediately if you encounter technical issues while completing an assignment and you are unable to resolve the problem and reset your work. The Herberger Online support team is available to assist you 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You may reach them anytime at:

- holsupport@asu.edu

- <https://courses.hol.asu.edu/help/>
- 1-888-298-4117
- 480-965-3057 (International)

When contacting support, please provide:

- The full name of this course (ABC 123: Long Name)
- The title(s) of any assignment(s) you're having trouble with
- A brief description of the problem
- Detailed, step-by-step instructions to reproduce the problem

Access to everyone

To request academic accommodations due to a unique ability or difficulty; please contact the ASU Disability Resource Center (Phone: (480) 965-1234; TDD: (480) 965-9000). This is a very important step, as accommodations cannot be made retroactively. If you have a letter from their office indicating that you have a disability which requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to me no later than the end of the first week of the semester so we can discuss the accommodations that you might need in this class.

Assignment Submission and Late Policy:

All assignments in this course must be submitted as .doc or .docx file. Assignments that are submitted elsewhere or do not comply with the required formatting will not be accepted and will result in a grade of zero for that assignment. Late work will not be accepted with the RARE exception of extenuating circumstances with proof.

Academic Integrity

This course has a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism. "Forgetting" to cite a reference—including the core textbook—is considered plagiarism. All necessary and appropriate sanctions will be issued to all parties involved with plagiarizing any and all course work. Plagiarism and any other form of academic dishonesty that is in violation with the Student Code of Conduct will not be

tolerated. http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/studentlife/judicial/academic_integrity.html

Do not share your course ID and password with anyone. Log out of the course website when you are finished with it. Do not allow another student to use the course website under your password, even if s/he is also in the course. Each student is fully responsible for all activity that takes place on the course website under his/her user ID. The **minimum** consequence of plagiarism is failure in this class, with a designation of Academic Dishonesty.

For information or questions regarding ASU's policy for academic integrity:

<https://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>

Semester at a Glance

Theatre, History & Culture is a 7.5 week intensive upper-level course devoted to the examination of performance and theatre as both a cultural/artistic expression and mechanism of social and political change. This is a writing-heavy course with two assignments due each week. **All written materials are expected to meet MLA guidelines.** Over the 7.5 weeks of the course, Students will complete:

- 6 Discussion Board Posts (300 words)
- 6 Unit Response Questions (500 words)
- 1 Final (500 words)

Discussion Board Posts (6) (See Assignment due date checklist)

Over the course students will write (6) Discussion Board responses, students will write 300-word responses to a provided prompt. This works out to one post and one reply per week. Prompts for discussion may be short written

prompts, videos, articles, etc. and may be adapted by the instructor of record. Discussion responses and replies may be more conversational in tone than Unit or Assignment responses. You MUST cite your sources. You are required to respond to the discussions for participation points.

Unit Response Papers (6) (See below and Assignment Checklist for due dates)

The semester is broken into four central units corresponding with the four main Parts of the *Theatre Histories* textbook. At the end of each unit, students are required to complete and submit via Blackboard a total of one written response to a given prompt. Each response should be at least 500 words. The prompts are included in this syllabus (not in your book)

Final (1) (Due. Tuesday, Feb. 27)

Using one of the lenses from the *Theatre Histories* book, choose a film from the approved list ([download Final Film Production Essay](#)) and analyze the film through your chosen lens. In your essay, state what critical theory lens you are using and read the theatrical play through that lens. For example: If you choose Critical Race Theory, ask yourself how the musical production portrays race and history on the stage, in the lyrics, in the costumes, staging, ect. Do this for any critical theory you choose. Remember to think about the controversies surrounding all cultural productions.

Use the Final Production Review Guidelines for assistance. You may also substitute the film selection for a play, but it must be approved by instructor.

Examples of Theories to use, but you are NOT limited to these:

- Critical Race Theory
- Oppositional Gaze
- Historiography

Unit Overviews

Unit 1

Unit 1 in THE 322 (weeks 1 & 2) corresponds to Part 1 of *Theatre Histories: An Introduction* which emphasizes performances in oral and manuscript cultures up until (approximately 1600 CE).

Unit 2

Unit 2 in THE 322 (weeks 3 & 4) corresponds to Part 2 of *Theatre Histories: An Introduction* which emphasizes theatre and performance in early print cultures, ranging approximately from 1500 CE to mid 1700 CE.

Unit 3

Unit 3 in THE 322 (weeks 5 & 6) corresponds to Part 3 of *Theatre Histories: An Introduction* which emphasizes theatre and performance in periodical print cultures, ranging approximately from 1700 CE to the early 1900s CE.

Unit 4

Unit 4 in THE 322 (weeks 7 & 8) corresponds to Part 4 of *Theatre Histories: An Introduction* that emphasizes theatre and performance in electric and electronic communication culture, ranging approximately from the mid 1800s CE to today.

Readings and Assignments

Unit 1

Main Unit themes:

- “History” as a construction
- Impact of writing on theatre and performance as well as on society
- What role(s) theatre serves in society
- Non-western understandings of performance
- The presence of women in theatre as actors or characters

Outside Readings:

- 13-27; 55-93 from *Unthinking Eurocentrism*
- UNESCO video of *The Rabinal Achi*

Unit Review #1: (Due: Friday, Jan. 19) Theatre Histories: p. 18 – 66 & p. 96 - 100

Questions are about assigned textbook readings, and your responses should be about restating, identifying, explaining, and/or comparing core materials and themes (i.e., demonstrate your understanding)

1. Women are frequently made absent from dominant narratives of history but as is shown in the case study on *Dojoji* we know there are female origins to Japanese Nō theatre and other theatrical practices. Reflecting back on the author’s argument of “history” as a construction of the truth, how can we understand the erasure and transformation of women in history? You may expand on the *Dojoji* example or use one of your own.

Unit Review #2: (Friday, Jan. 26) *Unthinking Eurocentrism* 13-27; 55-93 & UNESCO video of *The Rabinal Achi*

1. Having read the excerpts from *Unthinking Eurocentrism*, identify how narratives of theatre or civilization “beginning” in Greece may be linked to the tenants of eurocentrism and integrate how studying performances like the *Rabinal Achi* work to disrupt Eurocentric notions of history. In your answer you may use an alternative example from your own community or cultural context instead of the *Rabinal Achi* as long as you are specific and detailed in your example and analysis.

Unit 1		
Title	Location	Notes
Theatre Histories: p. 18 – 66 & p. 96 - 100 <i>Theatre Histories: An Introduction, Third Edition</i> , Tobin Nelhaus, general editor	Available for purchase online or rent on Amazon	Required Reading

13-27; 55-93 from <i>Unthinking Eurocentrism</i> by Ella Shohat and Robert Stam	ASU Library Online	Required Reading
UNESCO Video of <i>The Rabinal Achi</i>	UNESCO Website	https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/rabinal-ach-dance-drama-tradition-00144

Unit 2

Main themes:

- Absolutism’s positive and negative effects on theatre
- The impact of printing on society and theatre
- Performances of gender and sexuality in the theatre
- Stock characters and their uses in comedy and the carnivalesque
- The Americas’ contributions to theatre history

Outside Materials:

Loa to The Divine Narcissus by Sor Juana Inés De La Cruz

Unit Review #3 (Due: Friday, Feb. 2) 143-150, 185-219 Theatre Histories

Questions are about assigned textbook readings, and your responses should be about restating, identifying, explaining, and/or comparing core materials and themes (i.e., demonstrate your understanding)

1. King Louis XIV famously boasted, “I am the state” (*Theatre Histories* 214). His claim is indicative of a rule of absolutism in France that produced a monopoly by monarchs and religious institutions to control the populace. Absolutism in the theatre led the censorship of theatrical expression, which in turn prompted theatrical innovation since only what was approved by the state could be produced. Using a specific example of your choice, identify and explain how absolutism contributed to either limiting or expanding theatrical expression or innovation, and connect this example to practices of limiting and/or expanding innovation found today. You do not have to limit your response to absolutism in France.

Unit Paper Prompt #4: (Friday, Feb. 9) p. 220 – 229 Theatre Histories & The Loa to the Divine Narcissus by Sor Juana Inés De La Cruz

Questions incorporate additional readings/viewings, and you are encouraged to connect, interpret, determine, illustrate, integrate, and use core ideas and themes across materials (i.e. apply your learning to provide an analysis).

1. Having read the *Loa to The Divine Narcissus* by Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, analyze (using specific examples) how it functions as a commentary on the success of Spanish religious conquest of indigenous Americans and why this play, and its author, remain important to the Americas and theatre studies today.

Unit 2		
Title	Location	Notes
220 – 229 Theatre Histories	https://olli.gmu.edu/docstore/400docs/1801-406-sj%20loa%20to%20the%20divine%20narcissus%20eg%20trans.pdf	Required Reading

& <i>The Loa to the Divine Narcissus</i> by Sor Juana Inés De La Cruz		
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Unit 3

Main Themes:

- Nations as imagined communities
- Intercultural exchange and appropriation in theatre and media as a product of imperialism
- Impact of media (telephones, photography, etc.) on theatre and social ideas of “reality”
- Sentimentalism and melodrama as major theatre genres, and the objectification of women within them
- Realism, Naturalism, avant-garde genres of theatre which attempt to distinguish between the objective and subjective
- The actor as an emerging popular cultural icon

Unit Review #5: (Due: Friday, Feb. 16)

Questions are about assigned textbook readings, and your responses should be about restating, identifying, explaining, and/or comparing core materials and themes (i.e., demonstrate your understanding)

1. Using an example from chapters 7, 8, 9, or 10, explain what “the other” means and how it is constructed according to imperial agendas. You may use Edward Said’s theory of orientalism in your response.

Unit 3		
Title	Location	Notes
251-324; <i>Theatre Histories: An Introduction, Third Edition</i>, Tobin Nelhaus / Chapter 7, 8	Available for purchase at the ASU Bookstore or online	Required Reading

Unit 4

Main Themes:

- Industrialization of electricity creating new mediums and modes of communication, the aftermath of the World Wars, other wars, revolutions, genocides, etc.
- Systems of theatre (and their manifestos)
- Theatre as a means of activism and protest
- Theatre as a zone of contact and of cultural differentiation
- Glocal theatre (and the effects of globalization on theatre, and vice versa) and “authenticity”
- The creation of the Internet and its effect on performance and communication
- Networked culture – the presence/absence of bodies

Unit Review #6: Due: Friday, Feb. 23)

Questions are about assigned textbook readings, and your responses should be about restating, identifying, explaining, and/or comparing core materials and themes (i.e., demonstrate your understanding)

1. Una Chaudhuri uses the word “geopathology” to discuss how ideas of nationality, selfhood, and place are identified as somewhat nebulous (or not fixed) since their physical and ideological boundaries shift over

time. Define the term “glocal,” and using at least one example from the textbook, demonstrate how the “problem of place” is addressed in networked culture. worlds of power. You may focus your argument on themes such as tradition, consumerism, nationhood, patriarchy, etc.

Unit 4		
Title	Location	Notes
511- <i>Theatre Histories: An Introduction, Third Edition</i>, Tobin Nelhaus, general editor	Available for purchase at the ASU Bookstore or online	Required Reading

<p>Final Assignment Film Review Due: Tuesday, Feb. 27 Choose from one of the films below</p>

Title	Location	Notes
<i>Moonlight (2016)</i> Themes: Black Queer Masculinities LGBTQ	Itunes/Amazon/Youtube	For Rent
<i>Reel Injun (2009)</i> Themes: Indigenous representation	Amazon, Itunes, Youtube	For rent

<i>Paris is Burning (1990)</i> Themes: Trans/Drag Dance	Amazon, HBO Max, Youtube	For rent
<i>The Woman King (2021)</i> Themes: Black Feminism, intimacy, colonialism	Amazon, Netflix	Rent / Free with Netflix
<i>The Infiltrators (2019)</i> Themes: Undocumented migration, activism, prisons	Amazon, Youtube	Rent

THE 322: Theatre, History & Culture - MLA Review

Below are important links on MLA formatting for academic writing. Please note that MLA formatting is required for ALL written assignments in this course.

MLA Style: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/11/>

MLA Works Cited Page: Basic Format: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

MLA In-Text Citations: The Basics: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/02/>

MLA Formatting Quotations: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/03/>

MLA Endnotes and Footnotes: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/03/>

MLA Sample Paper: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/13/>

THE 322: Theatre, History & Culture - Production Review Guidelines

Below are important components to a successful Production Review. Please note that MLA formatting is required for this assignment.

Basic Information

- Name of production, location, date, and director.
- Give a brief overview of the performance— overall plot, theme, or key idea but NOT a summary.
- Key elements of the production/unusual elements such as media, audience relationship etc.
- If you discuss characters, list the actor's name that played the character.
- If you discuss design, name the designers.
- Cite specific examples from the performance to support your argument.

Dramaturgical Research

- Information about the playwright/screenwriter.
- Information about the genre.
- Information about the historical time period.

Preparing to Write

To become a critical observer, try the following:

- Take notes (during intermission/after the show).
- Take notes regarding set, costumes, lights, acting, and directing choices.
- Look at program notes – did the director achieve their intentions?
- What moments/images do you recall?

Methods of Analysis

1. Gather (gather information/images/ideas).
2. Interpret (analyze what the information means).

3. Evaluate (why is it important? What is the value?).
4. Communicate (critically and clearly share these observations with others).

Changes to the syllabus

The syllabus is an implied contract between the instructor and the student. Consequently, it will not change in any significant way over the duration of the course. However, there are times when minor modifications need to be made. This being the case, the instructor will do everything in his power to keep changes to a minimum. If and when there are changes, students will be advised by email.

Important Note: Any form of academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, may be reported to the office of student affairs. Students must refrain from uploading to any course shell, discussion board, or website used by the course instructor or other course forum, material that is not the student's original work, unless the students first comply with all applicable copyright laws; faculty members reserve the right to delete materials on the grounds of suspected copyright infringement. Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal.

If you fail to meet the standards of academic integrity in any of the criteria listed on the university policy website, sanctions will be imposed by the instructor, college, and/or dean. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an academic evaluation or assignment, plagiarizing, academic deceit (such as fabricating data or information), or falsifying academic records. Turning in an assignment (all or in part) that you completed for a previous class is considered self-plagiarism and falls under these guidelines. Any infractions of self-plagiarism are subject to the same penalties as copying someone else's work without proper citations. Students who have taken this class previously and would like to use the work from previous assignments should contact the instructor for permission to do so.

Course policies are subject to change. It is the student's responsibility to check HOLMS for corrections or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be posted in HOLMS.