Course Title: Conflict in 20th Century Women's Drama

Course Number and Section
ENGLISH 4881F - 550

Instructor Name(s): Amanda Di Ponio
Instructor Email(s): adiponi@uwo.ca

Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:
Considering the centrality of the notions of performativity and performance to Butler's theorization of subjection, as well as Lacan's definition of the “woman” position as a “not wholly there” in the domain of phallic control, this course is interested in exploring the ways in which various logics of conflict (family/intergenerational, war-related, environmental, class/gender/race-based, clinical, etc.) are represented in twentieth century and contemporary women's drama. We will consider what themes, linguistic conventions, affective states, and body language emerge consistently from the varied representations studied. How conflict intersects and reflects on changing social realities, alongside the ways in which conflict is re-imagined, redefined, and confronted in the work of twentieth-century and contemporary women's drama is our focus. Works by Lorraine Hansberry, Suzan-Lori Parks, Tara Beagan, Sarah Kane, Paula Vogel, and Young Jean Lee, among others, will be examined. In a world of ever-morphing and often volatile socio-political realities, the import of approaches to conflict that can sidestep the constraints of more traditional models of conflict resolution extends beyond the physical limits of the stage, reaffirming the value of theatre as a transformative social experience.

Learning Outcomes:

- Read/Analyze/View women's drama from a global, socio-cultural perspective, with an emphasis on theory, to understand the political, socio-cultural, moral, and philosophical substructures of the texts on the course
- Read/Analyze/Assess theoretical texts that will inform the reading of dramatic texts
- Communicate ideas effectively through journaling, in-class readings, discussion, presentations, and persuasive essays
- Deliver an analysis-driven seminar, in class, of a designated length
- Develop theoretical perspectives on the ways that women's drama uniquely informs and is informed by social and cultural discourses on sexuality, identity, and authority
- Research and engage with scholarly/critical texts
- Write logically and persuasively in fluent, standard English using the appropriate conventions for scholarly-critical writing
- Design strong thesis statements and structured arguments in persuasive essays
• Evaluate the relevance, reliability, and usefulness of research sources, including those obtained through the Internet

• Incorporate evidence, from primary, secondary, and critical theory texts in essay writing to support claims that logically and persuasively present complex and debatable arguments

• Apply principles of quotation integration using MLA documentation

Textbooks and Course Materials:


Paula Vogel, How I Learned to Drive. Theatre Communications Group, 2018. ISBN: 9781559365642

Available online (as indicated); link also provided on the OWL course site:


Hannah Moscovitch, Other People’s Children (2013)


Obsidian Theatre – 21 Black Futures:  https://www.cbc.ca/artsprojects/21blackfutures

Djanet Sears, Georgeena (2020/1)
Lisa Codrington, The Prescription (2020/1)

Methods of Evaluation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date mm/dd/yy</th>
<th>Weight - %</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Essay and Proposal (3,500-4,000 words)</td>
<td>12/04/2023</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar Presentation and Outline</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Journal (weekly)</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Response Paper (1,000-1,500 words)</td>
<td>10/16/2023</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class Participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>10%</td>
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In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lùnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.