

TH334-15 Love: Performance, Theory and Criticism

23/24

Department

SCAPVC - Theatre and Performance Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 3

Module leader

Milija Gluhovic

Credit value

15

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

Love remains an ever intriguing and complex emotion. Representations of love have been idealised, romanticised and formalised as part of theatre and performance tradition over centuries. In recent years love has also become visible (again) as a contested theoretical problem and political issue. The module addresses the “love question” as an open and exciting interdisciplinary field – one that traverses the arts, the humanities and the sciences. The module aims to explore this new, wide-ranging interest in love by looking into the ways in which the twentieth and twenty-first century artists have dealt with the subject of love as material for their work (e.g. Anski, Bergman, Pinter, Kane, Cavani, Haneke), while investigating a wide range of theories that explore changing ideologies, representations and practices related to the subject (Freud, Kristeva, Butler, Berlant and others). We will ask questions such as: What is love? Why/how is love interesting now? Can we study love historically? What does it mean about love that its expressions tend to be so conventional, so bound up in institutions like marriage and family, property relations, and stock phrases and plots? How can we re-envision love so that it creates different kinds of intimately social (rather than intimate vs. social) bonds that embrace difference (vs. sameness) and are transformative of the self? Finally, what does love bring to the study of theatre and performance? How do performances of love in theatre or cinema deconstruct or confirm its social and political coding? How do theatre and performance recreate and subvert social scenarios of love? The

topics to be covered will range from ethics and politics of love, gendered interests in love, to love as a force in radical transformations of society.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

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Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Outline (subject to change):

Spring term:

Week 1

Love Studies / Discourses on Love / Plato's The Symposium (Adapted and directed by Jeffrey L. Gangwisch, 2015)

Week 2

Freud and Eros: Love, Lust and Longing / Strindberg's Miss Julie (with a guest, Dr Daniel Orrells, Classics Department at Warwick, tbc)

Week 3

Love, Loss, and Recovery / Anski's The Dybbuk / Kristeva's Tales of Love

Week 4

Desire, Love / Kane's Phaedra's Love; Racine's Phedre / Berlant's book Desire, Love / Butler's Precarious Life (chapter 1, on intersubjectivity)

Week 5

Love, Care and Solidarity / Bergman's Scenes from a Marriage / Haneke's film Amour

Week 6 -- Reading Week

Week 7

Love, History, Fantasy / Pinter's Ashes to Ashes; Cavani's film Night Porter

Week 8

Queer Bonds / Fraser's Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love.
(with a guest, Dr Oliver Davis, French Studies at Warwick, tbc.)

Week 9

Is One the Loneliest Number?: Arguments for the Uncoupled

Week 10

Politics of Love and Radical/Revolutionary Transformation

Summer term.

Project based assessment will ordinarily take place at the beginning of the summer term.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- By the end of the module students should be able to demonstrate a critical understanding of a broad constellation of contemporary plays, performances, and visual art references in the light of cultural, political, historical, and philosophical debates on the analysis, ethics and politics of love in the modern world. Furthermore, students should come away from this seminar with a new set of conceptual models and analytic tools to make use of in thinking about this complex and rich body of art. Students will achieve these learning outcomes through close reading of primary and secondary material, seminar discussions based around prescribed texts, seminar papers on specific topics, and performance and curatorial workshops. In addition to film screening, performance recordings will be used to illustrate the theatrical dimensions of the plays.

Indicative reading list

Illustrative Bibliography:

Plays/Performances/Films:

Anski, A. The Dybbuk, in The Great Jewish Plays in Modern Translations, ed. Joseph C. Landis. Avon, 1972.

Cavani, Liliana. The Night Porter (film, 1974)

Fosse, Jon. *Nightsongs*, 1998.

Fraser, Brad. *Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love*. Blizzard Pub Ltd, 1990.

Haneke, Michael, dir. *Amour* (film, 2012).

Kane, Sarah. *Phaedra's Love*. London: Methuen Drama, 1996.

The Museum of Broken Relationships, concept by Olinka Vištica and Dražen Grubišić. See: <http://brokenships.com/en/about>

Pinter, Harold. *Ashes to Ashes*. New York: Grove Press, 1996.

Racine, Jean. *Phedre*. Trans. Ted Hughes. Faber and Faber, 1998.

Strindberg, August. *Miss Julie*. Trans. by Michael Meyer. London: Methuen, 2006.

[And Katie Mitchell's staging of the play (Berlin's Schaubühne, 2010; Barbican 2013).

Waszyński, Michał, dir. *The Dybbuk* (*Der Dibek*) The original Yiddish-Polish film based on Sholom Anski's classic play about possession and exorcism, from 1937).

Theory/Criticism:

Ahmed, Sarah. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. Edinburgh University Press, [2004] 2014.

Barthes, Roland. Trans. Richard Howard. *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*. Penguin, 1990.

Bauman, Zygmunt. *Liquid Love: On the Frailty of Human Bonds*. Polity Press, 2003.

Berlant, Lauren. "Love: a Queer Feeling." *Homosexuality Psychoanalysis*. Dean, Tim; Lane, Christopher, eds. U of Chicago Press, 2001. 432-451.

---. *Desire/ Love*. New York: Punctum Books, 2012.

Butler, Judith. *The Psychic Life of Power*. Stanford: Stanford University press, 1997.

---. "Violence, Mourning, Politics," *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. New York: Verso, 2004. 19-49.

---. "Remarks on 'Queer Bonds.'" *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 17. 2-3 (2011): 381-387.

Body & Society. 16.1 (March, 2010), Special issue on Affect Studies.

Benjamin, Jessica. *The Bonds of Love: Psychoanalysis, Feminism, and the Problem of Domination*. London: Virago, 1990.

Cavarero, A. *In Spite of Plato: A Feminist Rewriting of Ancient Philosophy*. New York, 1995.

Cobb, Michael. *Single: Arguments for the Uncoupled*. New York: New York University Press, 2012.

Halley, Janet, and Andrew Parker, eds. *After sex?: On Writing since Queer Theory*. Duke University Press, 2011.

Hesford, Victoria. "The Politics of Love: Women's Liberation and Feeling Differently." *Feminist Theory* 10.1 (2009): 5-33.

Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, Standard Edition, volume 7, 135-243.

Jónasdóttir, Anna G., and Ann Ferguson, eds. *Love: A Question for Feminism in the Twenty-First Century*. Routledge, 2013.

Kristeva, Julia. *Tales of Love*. Trans. by Leon S. Roudiez. Columbia University Press, 1987.

Luhmann, Niklas. *Love: A Sketch*. Trans. Kathleen Cross: Cambridge Polity Press, 2012.

Nicholas, Lucy. *Queer Post-Gender Ethics: The Shape of Selves to Come*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Nussbaum, Martha Craven. *Love's Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature*. Oxford University Press, 1990.

Ridout, Nicholas Peter. *Passionate Amateurs: Theatre, Communism, and Love*. University of Michigan Press, 2013.

**Other texts will be added depending on the interests of the group.

Subject specific skills

By the end of the module students should be able to demonstrate a critical understanding of a broad constellation of contemporary plays, performances, and visual art references in the light of cultural, political, historical, and philosophical debates on the analysis, ethics and politics of love in the modern world. Furthermore, students should come away from this seminar with a new set of conceptual models and analytic tools to make use of in thinking about this complex and rich body of art. Students will achieve these learning outcomes through close reading of primary and secondary material, seminar discussions based around prescribed texts, seminar papers on specific topics, and performance and curatorial workshops. In addition to film screening, performance recordings will be used to illustrate the theatrical dimensions of the plays.

Transferable skills

teamwork technical ability, physical fitness, creativity, time management, discipline, organisation, communication

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	9 sessions of 2 hours (50%)
Other activity	18 hours (50%)
Total	36 hours

Private study description

No private study requirements defined for this module.

Other activity description

9 x 2 hour film/performance viewing (or workshops or final project work-in progress feedback sessions).

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A3

	Weighting	Study time
Project-based assesment performance, installation, performance lecture etc.	50%	64 hours
Essay essay	50%	50 hours

Feedback on assessment

Project based assessment: oral and written feedback
Essay: written feedback

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 4 of UENA-QW35 Undergraduate English and Theatre Studies with Intercalated Year
- UTHA-W421 Undergraduate Theatre and Performance Studies
 - Year 3 of W421 Theatre and Performance Studies
 - Year 3 of W421 Theatre and Performance Studies
- Year 4 of UTHA-W422 Undergraduate Theatre and Performance Studies (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Core option list B for:

- UFRA-R1W4 Undergraduate French with Theatre Studies
 - Year 4 of R1W4 French with Theatre Studies
 - Year 4 of R1W4 French with Theatre Studies

This module is Option list A for:

- UTHA-W421 Undergraduate Theatre and Performance Studies
 - Year 3 of W421 Theatre and Performance Studies
 - Year 3 of W421 Theatre and Performance Studies
- Year 4 of UTHA-W422 Undergraduate Theatre and Performance Studies (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 3 of UTHA-QW34 Undergraduate English and Theatre Studies