

EN2B3-30 Drama and Democracy

24/25

Department

English and Comparative Literary Studies

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

Jo Hofer-Robinson

Credit value

30

Module duration

18 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module examines the social and political ideas of leading dramatists and theatre practitioners in twentieth-century Ireland, South Africa, and the United States. Students will examine plays to see how changing attitudes to colonialism, class, race and gender have been reflected in drama. At the heart of the module is the shifting relationship between theatre and social change.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

This module examines the social and political ideas of leading dramatists and theatre practitioners in twentieth-century Ireland, South Africa, and the United States. Students will examine plays to see how changing attitudes to colonialism, class, race and gender have been reflected in drama. At the heart of the module is the shifting relationship between theatre and social change.

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.

TERM 1

Ireland

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: Dion Boucicault, *The Colleen Bawn* (1860); W. B. Yeats and Lady Gregory, *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* (1902)

Week 3: Sean O'Casey, *The Plough and the Stars* (1926); Sebastian Barry, *The Steward of Christendom* (1995)

Week 4: Anne Devlin, *Ourselves Alone* (1985)

Week 5: Marina Carr, *By the Bog of Cats* (1998); David Ireland, *Cyprus Avenue* (2016)

Week 6: Reading week

South Africa

Week 7: Athol Fugard, John Kani, and Winston Ntshona, *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* (1972); *The Island* (1973)

Week 8: Athol Fugard, *Statements After an Arrest* (1972); 'Master Harold'... and the Boys (1982)

Week 9: Mbongeni Ngema, *Sarafina!* (1985); Yael Farber, *Amajuba* (2001)

Week 10: Mongiwekhaya, *I See You* (2016)

TERM 2

USA

Week 1: Eugene O'Neill, *The Hairy Ape* (1922); *All God's Chillun Got Wings* (1924); Sophie Treadwell, *Machinal* (1928)

Week 2: Arthur Miller, *All My Sons* (1947); *A View from the Bridge* (1955)

Week 3: Tennessee Williams, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1955)

Week 4: Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun* (1959)

Week 5: James Baldwin, *Blues for Mister Charlie* (1964); Amiri Baraka, *Dutchman* (1964)

Week 6: Reading week

Week 7: Ntozake Shange, *for colored girls...* (1976); August Wilson, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* (1982)

Week 8: Tony Kushner, *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches and Perestroika* (1992)

Week 9: Anne Washburn, *Mr. Burns* (2012); Lynn Nottage, *Sweat* (2015)

Week 10: Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, *An Octoroon* (2014); Lin-Manuel Miranda, *Hamilton* (2015)

Learning outcomes

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

- Demonstrate knowledge of major English-language plays written (in Ireland, South Africa, and the United States) since the beginning of the twentieth century in their contexts
- Demonstrate knowledge of the ways in which, why, and to what ends twentieth-century writers have dramatized socio-political issues
- Demonstrate knowledge of the ways in which the work of designers, directors, and actors affect the formation and reception of dramatic texts
- Show awareness of the shifting relationship between theatre and social change

Indicative reading list

IRISH THEATRE

Neil Blackadder, *Performing opposition: modern theater and the scandalized audience* (Praeger, 2003)

- George Cusack, *The politics of identity in Irish drama: W.B. Yeats, Augusta Gregory and J.M. Synge* (Routledge, 2009)
- Nicholas Grene, *The politics of Irish drama: plays in context from Boucicault to Friel* (CUP, 1999)
- Nicholas Grene and Chris Morash, *The Oxford handbook of modern Irish theatre* (Oxford UP, 2016)
- Susan Harris, *Gender and modern Irish drama* (Indiana UP, 2002)
- Cathy Leeney and Anna McMullan (ed.), *The theatre of Marina Carr* (Carysfort, 2003)
- Ben Levitas, *The theatre of nation: Irish drama and cultural nationalism, 1890-1916* (Oxford UP, 2002)
- Helen Lojek, *The spaces of Irish drama: stage and place in contemporary plays* (Palgrave, 2011)
- Patrick Lonergan, *Theatre and globalization: Irish drama in the Celtic tiger era* (Palgrave, 2009)
- Tom Maguire, *Making theatre in Northern Ireland: through and beyond The Troubles* (Exeter UP, 2015)
- Deirdre McFeely, *Dion Boucicault: Irish identity on stage* (CUP, 2012)
- James Moran, *The theatre of Seán O'Casey* (Bloomsbury, 2013)
- Christopher Murray, *Twentieth-century Irish drama: mirror up to nation* (Syracuse UP, 1997)
- Lionel Pilkington, *Theatre and the state in twentieth-century Ireland* (Routledge, 2001)
- Paige Reynolds, *Modernism, drama, and the audience for Irish spectacle* (CUP, 2007)
- Shaun Richards (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century Irish Drama* (CUP, 2004)
- Anthony Roche, *The Irish dramatic revival, 1899-1939* (Bloomsbury, 2015)
- Melissa Sihra (ed.), *Women in Irish drama: a century of authorship and representation* (Palgrave, 2007)
- Sanford Sternlicht, *Modern Irish drama: W.B. Yeats to Marina Carr* (Syracuse UP, 2010)
- Rhona Trench, *Bloody living: the loss of selfhood in the plays of Marina Carr* (Peter Lang, 2010)
- Mary Trotter, *Ireland's national theaters: political performance and the origins of the Irish dramatic movement* (Syracuse UP, 2001)
- Mary Trotter, *Modern Irish theatre* (Polity, 2008)
- SOUTH-AFRICAN THEATRE**
- Derek Attridge and Rosemary Jolly (ed.), *Writing South Africa : literature, apartheid, and democracy, 1970-1995* (CUP, 1998)
- Mary Benson, *Athol Fugard and Barney Simon: bare stage, a few props, great theatre* (Ravan, 1997)
- Nancy Clark and William Worger, *South Africa: the rise and fall of apartheid* (Routledge, 2013)
- Haike Frank, *Role-play in South African theatre* (Breitinger, 2004)
- Athol Fugard, Mary Benson (ed.), *Notebooks 1960-1977* (Faber, 1983)
- Yvette Hutchison, *South African performance and the archives of memory* (Palgrave, 2013)
- Loren Kruger, *The drama of South Africa: plays, pageants and publics since 1910* (Routledge, 1999)
- Martin Middeke, Peter Paul Schnierer, and Greg Homann (ed.), *The Methuen Drama guide to contemporary South African theatre* (Bloomsbury, 2015)
- Martin Orkin, *Drama and the South African state* (Witwatersrand UP, 1991)
- Russell Vandembroucke, *Truths the hand can touch: the theatre of Athol Fugard* (Donker, 1986)
- Dennis Walder, *Athol Fugard* (Macmillan, 1984)
- Albert Wertheim, *The dramatic art of Athol Fugard: from South Africa to the world* (Indiana UP, 2000)
- U.S. THEATRE**
- Christopher Bigsby (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Arthur Miller* (CUP, 2010)

Christopher Bigsby (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to August Wilson* (CUP, 2007)
Christopher Bigsby, *Modern American Drama, 1945–2000* (CUP, 2000)
Enoch Brater (ed.), *A student handbook to the plays of Arthur Miller* (Methuen, 2013)
Jocelyn Buckner (ed.), *A critical companion to Lynn Nottage* (Routledge, 2016)
Soyica Diggs Colbert, *The African American theatrical body: reception, performance, and the stage* (CUP, 2011)
Harry Elam, *The past as present in the drama of August Wilson* (Michigan UP, 2006)
Michele Elam (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to James Baldwin* (CUP, 2015)
James Fisher, *The theater of Tony Kushner: living past hope* (Routledge, 2001)
James Fisher (ed.), *Tony Kushner: new essays on the art and politics of the plays* (McFarland, 2006)
Jerry Gafio, *Amiri Baraka: the politics and art of a Black intellectual* (New York UP, 2001)
Paul Carter Harrison, Victor Leo Walker II, Gus Edwards (ed.), *Black theatre: ritual performance in the African diaspora* (Temple UP, 2002)
David Krasner (ed.), *A companion to twentieth-century American drama* (Blackwell, 2005)
Michael Manheim (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Eugene O’Neill* (CUP, 1998)
Brenda Murphy, *The theatre of Tennessee Williams* (Bloomsbury, 2014)
Brenda Murphy (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to American Women Playwrights* (CUP, 1999)
Barbara Ozieblo and Jerry Dickey, *Susan Glaspell and Sophie Treadwell* (Routledge, 2008)
Michael Paller, *Gentlemen callers: Tennessee Williams, homosexuality, and mid-twentieth-century drama* (Palgrave, 2005)
Jeffrey Richards with Heather Nathans (ed.), *The Oxford handbook of American drama* (OUP, 2014)
Matthew Roudané (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Tennessee Williams* (CUP, 1997)
Annette Saddik, *Tennessee Williams and the theatre of excess: the strange, the crazed, the queer* (CUP, 2015)
Laurence Senelick (ed.), *The American stage: writing on theater from Washington Irving to Tony Kushner* (Penguin, 2010)
Julia Walker, *Expressionism and modernism in the American theatre: bodies, voices, words* (CUP, 2005)
Katherine Weiss and Stephen Bottoms (ed.), *A student handbook to the plays of Tennessee Williams* (Bloomsbury, 2014)
Harvey Young (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to African American Theatre* (CUP, 2012)

Subject specific skills

Demonstrate knowledge of major English-language plays written (in Ireland, South Africa, and the United States) since the beginning of the twentieth century in their contexts.

Demonstrate knowledge of the ways in which, why, and to what ends twentieth-century writers have dramatized socio-political issues.

Demonstrate knowledge of the ways in which the work of designers, directors, and actors affect the formation and reception of dramatic texts.

Show awareness of the shifting relationship between theatre and social change.

Transferable skills

Develop argumentative skills in academic essays

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	18 sessions of 2 hours (12%)
Private study	264 hours (88%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

Reading & research.

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 A1

	Weighting	Study time
Assessed Essay 1 4000 word essay OR Creative Project with 2000 word reflective essay	50%	
Assessed Essay OR Creative Project with reflective essay - can only select ONE option to submit a Creative Project 4000 word essay OR Creative Project with 2000 word reflective essay	50%	

Feedback on assessment

Essay feedback via Tabula, personal discussion with students as required.

Availability

Pre-requisites

To take this module, you must have passed:

- All of
 - [EN107-30 British Theatre Since 1939](#)

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 2 of UTHA-QW34 Undergraduate English and Theatre Studies