

AI 348 Tragedy and Drama – Winter 2006

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Location: O'Hare Campus

Competencies Offered:

- A-1-A Can interpret works of art and relate them to one's own experience.
- A-1-C Can analyze artistic or textual works in terms of form, content, and style.
- A-1-E Can interpret the work of writers or artists within a historical or social context.
- H-1-X Communities and Societies: written by student/faculty

Course Description

Tragic drama may hold the unique distinction of serving both as a medium the miserable, oppressed, wronged, and flawed, yet providing great pleasure to audiences for time immemorial. This class will expose students to five tragic dramas from ancient Greece, Elizabethan England, and 20th century America; and equip them with the tools to 1) understand the plot, themes, and context for each play and 2) weigh the meaning of each play as a historical document and as a living example of our culture. Lectures and readings will provide biographical and cultural context, definitions, and basic themes and problems, which will be expanded on via directed discussion, student presentations, and written reflections. Plays by Sophocles, William Shakespeare, Eugene O'Neill, Tennessee Williams, and Arthur Miller will be examined.

Expected Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Understand the plot and themes of five significant tragedies
2. Be able to critically assess tragic drama and how it has evolved over time
3. Have an understanding of historical and cultural context for each play
4. Apply historical tragic themes to contemporary life and experience

Learning Strategies

Students will be introduced to the plot, historical context, and primary themes of each play via lecture, and will learn important definitions related to the tragic genre. On an individual basis, students will assess the meaning and context of each play, either while reading or immediately after finishing each play, on the basis of a set of guided questions. Students will further develop answers to these questions during class discussion.

Books

You will need to purchase the following books (all of which are available through DePaul's online bookstore) for this class:

- *Oedipus the King*, ISBN: 1416500332, Pub. Date: June 2005, Publisher: Simon & Schuster Adult Publishing Group

- *Othello*, ISBN: 0451526856, Pub. Date: March 1998, Publisher: Signet Classics

- *Long Day's Journey into Night*, ISBN: 0300093055, Pub. Date: February 2002

Publisher: Yale University Press

- *A Streetcar Named Desire*, ISBN: 0451167783, Pub. Date: May 1976, Publisher: Signet Classics

- *The Crucible*, ISBN: 0140481389, Pub. Date: May 1976, Publisher: Penguin Group (USA)

Learning Tools (which include handouts that I will distribute in class)

1. *Oedipus The King*, Sophocles
2. *Othello*, William Shakespeare
3. *Long Day's Journey into Night*, Eugene O'Neill
4. *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Tennessee Williams
5. *The Crucible*, Arthur Miller
6. *A Short Introduction to the Ancient Greek Theater*, Graham Ley
7. *The Bedford Companion to Shakespeare*, excerpts
8. *Eugene O'Neill's Long Day's Journey into Night* (Modern Critical Interpretations)

9. *Why I Wrote "The Crucible,"* Arthur Miller
10. *Hysteria and Ideology in The Crucible,* Hayes
11. Movie clips and screenings
12. Study Questions Handouts
 - a. *Oedipus Study Questions Handout:* defining the tragic genre/intro to ancient Greek theater/applying Aristotle's model
 - b. *Othello Study Questions Handout:* Questions for cultural context; Questions to elicit comparisons between current cultural roles and those of Othello's time; scene selection and performance in own language; character and theme questions.
 - c. *Long Day's Journey Handout*
 - d. *Streetcar Handout*
 - e. *Crucible Study Questions Handout:* The Salem Witch Trial; Communism, McCarthyism, and Government

Class sessions will include:

1. Lectures (some);
2. Discussions (most);
3. Sub-Group Projects and/or Discussions;
4. Written Individual Responses
5. Movies

Evaluation

1. Class Participation: 25%
2. Response papers: 75%
 - a. Five response papers on specified topics, each worth 15%