

RACE THEORY AND EARLY MODERN CULTURE**PROF. BOVILSKY****Description**

This course explores how literary and popular texts of the early modern period represent and produce racial identities and experience. We will consider the characteristic shapes of racial fictions in early modern England – occasionally comparing literary examples with period scientific, visual, and material texts. We'll use these texts from a geographically and temporally distant culture to reflect on the methodology of reading race in cultures other than our own and to reconsider our most familiar understandings of race, with frequent recourse to critical race theory, using both work focused on the early modern period and work that engages race more generally. Readings include Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* and *The Tempest*, Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*, Webster's *The White Devil*, and Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course students will (1) have a good introductory feel for how race was represented in texts of the early modern period and how it shaped those texts as well as (2) familiarity with the ideas of both established and emerging scholars in early modern race studies. Students will (3) be able to see comparative differences and continuities between the operations of race in a geographically and temporally distant culture and that of their field of specialization and/or our own historical moment.

Contact information for Prof. Bovilsky:**Office:** PLC 246**Office hours:** Monday 11:15-12:45, Tuesday 11:45-1:15, or by appointment**Email:** bovilsky@uoregon.edu**Required Texts (available at the Duckstore; all other materials will be made available on Canvas or via handouts)**Behn, *Oroonoko* (Penguin; ed. Janet Todd)Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta* (New Mermaids; ed. James Siemon)Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (Oxford; ed. Stephen Orgel)Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus* (Arden 3; ed. Jonathan Bate)Webster, *The White Devil* (Arden; ed. Benedict Robinson)

Schedule

- Jan. 10 Introduction
Documents, Race in Early Modern England
Hall, "An Object in the Midst of Other Objects"
Loomba "Vocabularies of Race"
- Jan. 17 Race and Periodization
Appiah, "The Uncompleted Argument: DuBois and the Illusion of Race"
Fields and Fields, *Racecraft*, mini excerpt
Bovilsky, *Barbarous Play*, Introduction
- Jan. 24 Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*
Harris, "Public Enemas: The Disjunctions of the Excremental Jewish *Pharmakon*"
Bartels, "Race, Nation, and Marlowe"
- Jan. 31 Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*, Act 1- Act 3 scene 1
Feerick, "Botanical Shakespeares: The Racial Logic of Plant Life in *Titus Andronicus*"
- Feb. 7 Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*, Acts 1-5
Brown, "Remixing the Family: Blackness and Domesticity in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*"; "Is Black so Base a Hue: Black Life Matters in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*"
- **Feb. 11: Annotated bibliography due**
- Feb. 14 Ben Jonson, *Masque of Blackness*
Webster, *The White Devil*, Acts 1-3
Floyd-Wilson, "Temperature and Temperance in Ben Jonson's *The Masque of Blackness*"
Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, Introduction
- Feb. 21 Webster, *The White Devil*, Acts 1-5
Callaghan, *Shakespeare Without Women* excerpt
Jones, "Italians and Others: Venice and the Irish in Coryat's *Crudities* and *The White Devil*"
- **Feb. 25: Draft due**
- Feb. 28 Shakespeare, *The Tempest*
Goldberg, "The Print of Goodness"
- Mar. 7 Behn, *Oroonoko*
Aravamudan, "Petting Oroonoko"

Mar. 14 Looking forward and back
The Tempest and *Oroonoko*
Reading TBA

• **Mar. 15 Seminar paper due, 4 pm**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Punctual, regular attendance and participation in discussion are required. This includes coming to seminar with 1-2 ideas or questions about the readings.

All written work should be typed, single sided, double spaced. If you require an extension of an assignment deadline, please email me at least 72 hours in advance; include the amount of time you are requesting. Course incompletes will be given only for a documented emergency.

This material is challenging in multiple ways. For many of you its historical distance will at first create a linguistic and conceptual challenge. The goal of the course is for such a challenge to eventually yield analytic opportunities (including new ideas to bring to your own fields) that are partly enabled by the distance of the material. Courses engaging race perforce engage racism and troubling histories – as well as vibrant examples of resistance to racism and of interest in diversity and equity. The legacies of these histories and examples continue to affect our own moment. For these reason and as always, fictional and theoretical materials we read should be presumed to contain or reference disturbing content.

This is a seminar intended to facilitate our intellectual development, which necessitates openness to new ideas and risk-taking. Willingness to treat yourself and others with generosity and kindness, supporting everyone’s endeavors to develop new ideas and take risks, and to be open to error and setback without condemnation or recrimination of self or others, is also required.

ASSIGNMENTS

One annotated bibliography (eight sources minimum) is due February 10. One paper (12-18 pp.) is due March 15, a draft of which is due February 25.

Late assignments will not be accepted unless prior arrangement is made with the instructor. I am reasonable: stay in touch. Incompletes will be given only for a documented emergency.

Course grades will be determined as follows:

Annotated bibliography	15%
Paper draft	20%
Seminar paper	55%
Class participation	10%

ACCOMMODATIONS

Appropriate accommodations will be provided for any student with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability and require accommodation, you must meet with me by Friday, January 18. I assume that you will also meet with the Accessible Education Center, which will help provide needed accommodations.