

SCHOOL OF ENGLISH, FILM, THEATRE & MEDIA STUDIES

ENGL 308: RENAISSANCE LITERATURE 2008 1/3

Pieter Brueghel, *Battle of the Piggy-Banks and Strong-Boxes*, c. 1560

- Lecture Timetable** Monday, Wednesday 4.10 – 5.00 pm, in **MY 632**
- Tutorials** One tutorial per week, beginning in the second week of the trimester; times to be arranged during first week of the course.
- Information** Tutorial lists and other information about this course (including the time and place of the final examination when this is announced in May) will be posted on Blackboard, and on the English noticeboard, on the third floor outside Hugh Mackenzie 206.
- Course Convener** Linda Hardy, VZ 812; ph. 463-6806
E-mail: linda.hardy@vuw.ac.nz
Office hours: Monday, Wed 10-11 am.
- Administrator** Helen O’Sullivan, VZ 809A;
Ph. 463-6800; helen.osullivan@vuw.ac.nz

Principal texts (in order of study)

John Webster, *The Duchess of Malfi* (Revels Student Editions)
Francis Bacon, *Essays* (Penguin or Oxford World’s Classics) [optional]
ENGL 308 Coursebook (Student Notes)
Ben Jonson, *The Alchemist* (edition to be confirmed)
Philip Massinger, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* (Student Notes edition)
John Milton, *Samson Agonistes* (in *Coursebook*).

LECTURE PROGRAMME 2008

[MY 632 Monday, Wednesday 4-5 pm]

February	25	Introduction
	27	<i>The court:</i> Webster's <i>Duchess of Malfi</i> (1)
March	3	Webster's <i>Duchess of Malfi</i> (2)
	5	Webster's <i>Duchess of Malfi</i> (3)
	10	Ethics and politics: Bacon's "Of Simulation & Dissimulation"
	12	<i>The city:</i> Jonson's <i>The Alchemist</i> (1)
	17	Jonson's <i>The Alchemist</i> (2)
	19	Jonson's <i>The Alchemist</i> (3)

[1st assignment due March 20]**EASTER**

	26	Jonson's <i>The Alchemist</i> (4)
April	31	<i>The country:</i> Jonson's "To Penshurst"
	2	Massinger's <i>A New Way to Pay Old Debts</i> (1)
	7	Massinger's <i>A New Way to Pay Old Debts</i> (2)
	9	Massinger's <i>A New Way to Pay Old Debts</i> (3)

MID-TRIMESTER BREAK

	28	Civil war: royalist lyric <i>[2nd assignment due]</i>
	30	Republican poetics: Marvell's "Horatian Ode"
May	5	The problem of truth: Bacon's "Of Truth"
	7	Church and state: Bacon's "Of Unity in Religion"
	12	Faith and conscience: Donne's "Satire III"
	14	Free speech: selections from Milton's <i>Areopagitica</i>
	19	Milton's <i>Samson Agonistes</i> (1)
	21	Milton's <i>Samson Agonistes</i> (2)
	26	Milton's <i>Samson Agonistes</i> (3)
	28	Milton's <i>Samson Agonistes</i> and the English revolution

CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE: Stuart England

Jacobean period 1603-1625

- 1603 Death of Elizabeth I; James (Stuart) VI of Scotland crowned James I of England.
- 1610 Ben Jonson's *The Alchemist* first performed (first published 1612)
- 1611-12 Ben Jonson writes "To Penshurst"
- 1612-14 Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi* first performed

Caroline period 1625-1649

- 1625 Accession of James I's son Charles I
- c. 1625 Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* first performed
- 1629-40 "Personal rule" of Charles I, without recourse to Parliament
- 1640 Parliament meets for the first time since 1629; conflict between the King and parliamentary leaders
- 1642-48 Two civil wars between royalist and parliamentary armies
- 1644 Milton's *Areopagitica* published
- 1649 Trial and execution of Charles I; England proclaimed a republic

Republican England 1649-1660

- 1650 Marvell writes "An Horatian Ode"
- 1653 Oliver Cromwell proclaimed Lord Protector
- 1658 Death of Cromwell

Restoration England 1660-1688

- 1660 Restoration of monarchy; Charles II (son of Charles I) reigns till 1685
- 1667 Milton's *Paradise Lost* published
- 1671 Milton's *Samson Agonistes* and *Paradise Regained* published

Course content

This course is about the literary culture of Stuart England: the period from Elizabeth I's death in 1603, through the Civil Wars of the 1640's culminating in the execution of Charles I, to the Restoration of monarchy in the 1660's. It is based on a study of selected plays, poems and prose by major (and some minor) writers of the time, including Ben Jonson, John Webster, Philip Massinger, Francis Bacon, John Donne, Andrew Marvell and John Milton.

It explores the significance of this turbulent period in English literary and political history through three main topics: (i) tragedy and the politics of the court; (ii) London city comedy and the development of a modern urban and commercial culture; and (iii) the representation in drama and poetry of rural society.

Issues of truth, integrity, conscience and free speech are in the foreground of much of this writing. The final section of the course examines Milton's biblical tragedy, *Samson Agonistes*, with its themes of violence and sacrifice, in the context of Milton's commitment to republican politics and as his deeply meditated response to the failure of the "English revolution".

"Renaissance Literature", for the purposes of the course, is the set texts (including those circulated in class), although you are encouraged to read more widely in areas of personal interest. You should own the prescribed texts.

Course objectives

By the end of the course, you should

- be familiar with all the set texts and capable of writing about them in detail
- be able to think and write comparatively about different texts – and different genres - from a particular historical "period"
- have developed a basic understanding of how to read literary and dramatic texts as complex, and sometimes competing, interpretations of the historical worlds in which they are made
- these objectives are linked to the combination of close textual analysis and essay writing on general topics that is required in both the in term assessment and the examination for this course. All assessed work requires students to write comparatively about more than one text.

Workload

You should expect to spend, on average, about **18 hours per week** on work for this course (*in addition* to time in class). Please note that this is a rough guideline only. Some students might have to put in more time, others less. The time commitment will be greatest in the weeks immediately prior to essay submission dates.

Assessment

Your final grade will be based on either a combination of your in-term work (50%) and your exam mark (50%); or your examination mark alone (100%); whichever is the higher mark. **You must however complete both assignments as well as sit the examination in order to pass the course.**

Term Work (50%)

There are *two* assessed pieces of written work.

- i) **Comparative critical analysis.** 20 % of final grade. Length: 1500 words.
Due date: Thursday 20 March
- ii) **Comparative essay.** 30% of final grade. Length: 2500-3000 words.
Due date: Monday 28 April

All term work must be presented in accordance with the minimum standards outlined in *Guidelines for SEFT Students*.

Final Examination (3 hours, 50% of final grade, or 100% if in your favour).

The final exam will take place during the end-of-year examination period (6 – 28 June). Course texts may be taken into the exam. Lecture and other notes are not permitted, though your texts may contain a moderate amount of annotation.

Section A (50% of examination): a choice of essay topics on Milton's *Samson Agonistes*.

Section B (50% of examination): a choice of general essay topics, from which you must select one. You will be expected to include evidence to support your argument from at least four of the set texts. 50% of exam.

PRESENTATION OF WRITTEN WORK

Please submit your written work in the following format:

1. Complete a cover sheet/title page for each essay, which includes your name, your tutor's name, your tutorial time, and the question number/title you have chosen to write on.
2. Print or write on one side of the page only.
3. Leave a margin of about 5 cm on the left for comments. If you type your essay, use double-spacing not single-spacing of lines.
4. Number all pages and pin securely with staple or paper clip.
5. Follow guidelines for referencing and quotation as set out in the *Guidelines for SEFT Students*. Essays which fail to conform to minimum presentation standards or which do not include a bibliography will be marked and returned without a grade until a corrected version is sighted.

Extensions and Penalties

The deadlines for term work must be strictly observed. If you need an extension beyond the due date for any piece of work, you should apply to the convenor, Linda Hardy, *before* the due date. A simple request will suffice for extensions of a week or less; for longer or additional extensions you will need to provide supporting documentation (eg a medical certificate). Work submitted with an extension will be graded in the normal way.

Late work submitted without an extension will be counted, as long as it is received before **Friday 30 May**. It will however be penalised by the deduction of a grade (e.g. A- to B+), and no feedback will be provided. Make sure you plan your work in advance to deal with competing deadlines—the final three weeks of the trimester are particularly at risk in this respect.

Extensions will not be granted beyond the end of the final week of lectures, 30 May, without the permission of the Head of School, Assoc. Professor Peter Whiteford. The Head of School may *in exceptional circumstances* grant extensions up until 25 June. The University does not permit us to accept work after this date.

Mandatory Requirements:

In order to satisfy the course requirements, you must:

- attend at least **70% of tutorials** (i.e., at least 7 of the 11 tutorials);
- complete all of the internal assessment pieces
- sit the final **examination**.

A student who has obtained an overall mark of 50% or more, but failed to satisfy a mandatory requirement for a course, will receive a K (fail) grade, while a course mark less than 50% will result in the appropriate fail grade (D, E or F).

Website

<<http://blackboard.scs.vuw.ac.nz/>>

Some material for ENGL 308 in 2008 will be online as part of the ‘Blackboard’ project. This will include the material on this handout, announcements, assignment topics, tutorial worksheets and supplementary lecture materials and notes (n.b. these are **not** a substitute for attendance at lectures!).

GENERAL UNIVERSITY STATUTES AND POLICIES

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* available in hardcopy or under "about Victoria" on the Victoria homepage at:

http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/calendar_intro.html

Information on the following topics is available electronically under "Course Outline General Information" at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/newspubs/universitypubs.aspx#general>

- Academic Grievances
- Student and Staff Conduct
- Meeting the Needs of Students with Impairments
- Student Support

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times. Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>