

**San José State University
School/Department
ENGL 228, Seminar in Comedy**

Spring 2015

Professor:	Dr. Adrienne L. Eastwood
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Office Hours:	Wednesdays, 2:30 – 6:30 p.m.
Class Days/Time:	Wednesdays, 7:00 – 9:45 p.m.
Classroom:	Sweeney Hall 238
Prerequisites:	Upper division standing

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging (Optional)

Copies of the course materials such as the syllabus, major assignment handouts, etc. may be found on my faculty web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/faculty/eastwood>

Canvas: Some of the assignments for this course will be presented in an online format using SJSU's Canvas system. You must ensure that you have an active SJSU account up and running by the first week of class, and you need to familiarize yourself with the system.

Course Description: "Men's Parts, Women's Roles: Transvestite Comedy through the Restoration"

Until 1660, all theatrical roles were played by men. So, when Romeo and Juliet breathlessly say goodbye on the balcony, the audience accepts the performance of femininity offered by the boy under the dress. But in Shakespeare's comedies, the performance of gender becomes itself the focus, as the playwright gives us characters like Rosalind, Portia, and Viola who, while playing the role of "women," assume "male" identities, and try to pass (with varying degrees of conviction) as men. In Middleton and Dekker's *The Roaring Girl*, the title character was based on a well-known actual 17th century transvestite—Mary Frith—who roamed the streets of London dressed as a man.

When women took the stage in 1660, they played male roles as well, acting in “breeches parts” as well as the traditional female characters.

This course approaches the dramatic mode of comedy from a critical perspective that takes such issues into account and historicizes them. Some questions that will guide our reading include: Do these performances destabilize gender difference, or reaffirm it? How much of a role does sexual desire play in such performances? How might these performances have responded to social controversies over the role of women in the early modern period? What is the relationship between cross-dressing on the street and cross-dressing on stage? What is the relationship between role-playing on stage, and the development and transformation of sexual identity? Since we will be reading plays by men and women, how might the gender of the author shape the performance of gender by her/his characters on stage?

Beginning with a solid grounding in the genre of comedy, we will read plays from the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

Course Objectives: The primary goal of this course is to give you the opportunity to read, study, and discuss a number of canonical and non-canonical dramatic texts, concentrating on the Elizabethan, Jacobean, and Restoration eras. You will be working within the mode of a new historicist critical methodology—one that uses both historical information and an assortment of cultural artifacts to arrive at a nuanced sense of the political, social, and psychological complexities of the culture under study. We will also read important works in critical gender studies, feminist theory, and queer studies.

The written word grounds the Master of Arts in English and Comparative Literature. Its students learn to analyze literature and to write on literary topics at an advanced level. Students complete a rigorous program of courses that introduce them to cutting-edge research while training them to understand a range of theoretical and literary-historical frameworks for understanding literature. Before students earn a Master of Arts in English, they pass a two-part comprehensive exam. They also may choose to write a thesis. Students have the option to engage in graduate study in rhetoric and to train as college-level writing teachers. The program also offers students pathways to prepare for doctoral work.

The five learning outcomes for the MA program:

Students will demonstrate

- an appropriate level of expertise in literary history, literary theory, and rhetoric.
- high-level proficiency in literary research and in the synthesis of research.
- critical and analytical skills in the interpretation and evaluation of literary texts.

- a command of written academic English, including the abilities to a) organize and present material in a cogent fashion, b) formulate and defend original arguments, c) employ effectively the language of their discipline and d) write under time constraints.
- a reading knowledge of at least one foreign language.

Required Texts/Readings

Course Readers (2 volumes) available from Maple Press, 481 E. San Carlos St., 408-297-1000.

Garber, Marjorie. *Vested Interests: Cross Dressing and Cultural Anxiety*. Harper Perennial, 1992.

Heywood, Thomas. *The Fair Maid of the West*. Regents Renaissance Drama Series.

Jonson, Ben. *Epicoene, Or the Silent Woman*. New Mermaids Edition.

Shakespeare:

*As You Like It**

*Twelfth Night**

*Any annotated version of these plays will do. I like the Oxford World Classics Series if you need a recommendation, although Bedford St. Martins has excellent editions also.

Middleton and Dekker, *The Roaring Girl*. Revels Plays.

Biography/Diary of Moll Frith available online at

<http://www.crimeculture.com/earlyunderworlds/Contents/Cutpurse.html>

Kristina Straub, *Sexual Suspects*. Available as an E-book from our library.

Colly Cibber's *An Apology for the Life of Colley Cibber*.

<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/44064>, or available from me. You must copy and return.

Colly Cibber, *The Careless Husband*.

Narrative of the Life of Charlotte Charke.

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/ecco/004842197.0001.000?view=toc> or available from me—you must copy and return.

Recommended:

Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Rabelais and His World*. Trans. Helen Iswolsky. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1984.

Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble*. New York: Routledge, 1990.

If you are so inclined, this website lists online booksellers who donate money from your purchases to the English Department. (This usually goes back to you in one form or another.) Go to this url for a list of participants: <http://www.sjsu.edu/english/donations/>

Classroom Protocol

Course Requirements: This is a seminar, and as such, each of us is responsible for the quality and usefulness of our meetings. I expect that you will find the readings both interesting and valuable, and I encourage you to express and explore your particular interests as we work through the material.

Discussion Leaders: To help encourage active participation, I require at least one student per week (depending on the number of students in the class) to be responsible for leading that week's discussion. A sign-up sheet will be provided the first few weeks for you to select the works and issues that you are the most interested in. If there are several readings one week, select one or two on which to place the most focus. During your assigned week, you should read carefully, and be prepared to pose provocative questions and possible answers stimulate class discussion. Please pay close attention to the text itself. You should be prepared to point to specific aspects of the text to aid your discussion.

Response Postings: Each week, you will be required to post an informal response to the week's readings framed by the issues outlined in the class. Please upload your responses to the Discussion tab on Canvas no later than 12:00 noon on the day our class meets so that your fellow seminarians can read and think about what you've written.

Written Work: You will be asked to write one 15-20 page scholarly essay for this class, using both primary and secondary texts. This essay will allow you to more thoroughly develop a line of thinking inspired by the reading and discussions. Your success on this paper will be directly proportional to your knowledge and understanding of the texts.

Grading Breakdown:

Contribution and Participation	15%
Presentation	15%
Weekly Postings	15%
Seminar Paper	55%

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's [Catalog Policies](http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the

[current academic calendar](http://www.sjsu.edu/academic_programs/calendars/academic_calendar/) web page located at http://www.sjsu.edu/academic_programs/calendars/academic_calendar/. The [Late Drop Policy](http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

Assignments and Grading Policy

(Insert your enumerations and brief descriptions for the course assignments here, and indicate how each assignment is aligning with the learning outcomes. Include information about due dates and assignment weights. Specify grading policies including how grades are determined, what grades are possible, whether extra credit is available, what the penalty is for late or missed work, and what constitutes a passing grade for the course. Include the date of the final exam/s. If you grade on participation, indicators on how participations will be assessed should be included. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading according to Academic Policy F-69-24.)

University Policies

Academic integrity

Your commitment as a student to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University's Academic Integrity policy](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm), located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm>, requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The [Student Conduct and Ethical Development website](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include your assignment or any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy S07-2 requires approval of instructors.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Disability Resource Center](http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/) (DRC) at <http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/> to establish a record of their disability.

ENGL 228, Genre Studies: Seminar in Comedy (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Table 1 Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	1/28	Introductions, Genre Theory David Galbraith, “Theories of Comedy” (Reader) Lawrence Danson, “Genres in Theory” (Reader) Janette Dillon, “Elizabethan Comedy” (Reader) Franciose Laroque, “Popular Festivity” (Reader)
2	2/4	NO CLASS
3	2/11	Genre Theory Continued Sir Philip Sidney, “Defense of Poesy” (Reader) - P Stephen Gosson, “The School of Abuse” (Reader) – P Thomas Lodge, “A Reply to Stephen Gosson” (Reader) - P
4	2/18	Genre and Gender Theory Mikhail Bakhtin, “Introduction,” <i>Rabelais and His World</i> (Reader) Judith Butler, “Introduction,” <i>Gender Trouble</i> (Reader) Marjorie Garber, <i>Vested Interests</i> .
5	2/25	Shakespeare <i>As You Like It</i> - P <i>Twelfth Night</i> - P Juliet Dusinberre, “As Who Liked It?” (Reader) Susan Wofford, “ ‘To You I Give Myself’ “ (Reader) Barbara Hodgdon, “Sexual Disguise and the Theatre of Gender” (Reader) Lisa Jardine, “Twins and Travesties” (Reader) Powell & Shattuck, “Looking for Liberation and Lesbians” (Reader) Optional Jonathan Crewe “In the Field of Dreams” (Reader) Optional
6	3/4	Silence and Speech Ben Jonson, <i>Epiocene</i> - P <i>Hic Mulier</i> and <i>Haec Vir</i> (Reader) – P Also available here: http://www.english.ucsb.edu/teaching/resources/reading_lists/renaissance/hic_mulier.asp and http://www.english.ucsb.edu/teaching/resources/reading_lists/renaissance/haec_vir.asp

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		Philip Mirabelli, "Silence, Wit, and Wisdom" (Reader) Jean Howard, "Cross-Dressing, the Theatre, and Gender Struggle" (Reader) Eric Nicholson, "Dry Mocks and Wet Smocks"(Reader) Optional
7	3/11	Roaring on Stage and Street Middleton and Dekker, <i>The Roaring Girl</i> - P "A Biography of Moll Cutpurse," available online: - P David Cressy, "Gender Trouble and Cross-Dressing" (Reader) Stephen Orgel, "Subtexts of the Roaring Girl" (Reader) Natasha Korda, "The Case of Moll Frith" (Reader)
8	3/18	More Urban Comedy <i>Fair Maid of the West</i> - P
9	3/25	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS
10	4/1	Aphra Behn: A Word from the Women <i>The Rover</i> - P <i>The Widow Ranter</i> – P Peter E. Morgan, "A Subject to Redress" (Reader)
11	4/8	In the Shadow of Big Behn Thomas Southerne, <i>Sir Anthony Love</i> (Reader) - P Harold Weber, "The Female Libertine" (Reader)
12	4/15	Actors and Star Power Colly Cibber, <i>Apology</i> – P http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/44064 Kristina Straub, "Ocular Affairs" and "Colly Cibber's Butt" from <i>Sexual Suspects</i> . Available as an ebook.
13	4/22	Fops and Pops Colly Cibber, <i>The Careless Husband</i> – P (Reader) Straub, "Colly Cibber's Fops," from <i>Sexual Suspects</i>
14	4/29	Fathers, Lock Up your Daughters Charlotte Charke, <i>The Narrative of the Life of Charotte Charke</i> - http://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/ecco/004842197.0001.000?view=oc
15	5/6	Charke Attack Paper Prospectus Due] Charke, from The History of Henry Dumont, Esq. excerpted from <i>Pages Passed from Hand to Hand: The Hidden Tradition of Homosexual Literature in English from 1748-1914</i> . (Reader) - P Straub, "Guilty Pleasures," from <i>Sexual Suspects</i> .

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		Trumbach, R. "London's Sapphists" (Reader)
16	5/13	Last Day of Instruction – Party

Final papers due to me by May 20th.