

Advanced Social Studies: Revolutions & Theatre
Fall 2010, B Period Classroom: 204 Instructor: Eric de Lora
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

An exploration of revolutionary events as reflected in the theatre. The principal focus of the course is the industrialization of society, and the various national, class, gender, and ethnic conflicts, and their cultural and ideological aspects. The course begins with the French Revolution, characterized by rational mastery of nature and society, and ends with the First World War, characterized by total chaos and mass destruction, and the end of European imperial governments. These events, and investigations, will provide a foundation for examining the works of Buchner, Brecht, Pirandello, Shaw and Stoppard. Readings will include a textbook, source documents and the play texts. Discussions and writing are required.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To engage in an active, critical inquiry into the nature and role of history and the creation of theatre in and about history.
- To gain an increased understanding of the nature of, and of the interpretation of primary and secondary historical sources.
- To develop a broader understanding of the interconnectedness of politics, economics and social issues in the development of culture as reflected in the theatre.
- To posit questions about the many conflicts--national, political, social, class, gender, economic, ethnic-- which have challenged society and shaped the world we know.

COURSE TOPICS

Week 1: The French Revolution. (1789-1799). (Chap. 12)

Week 2: Napoleon and Afterwards (1799-1850). (Chap. 13)

Week 3: *Danton's Death* (Buchner, trans. Lustig).

Week 4: Economic Revolution I (1800-1850). (Chap. 14)

Week 5: Economic Revolution II (1850-1900). (Chap. 19)

Paper I Due: October 18, 2010

Week 6: *Saint Joan of the Stockyards* (Brecht, trans. Jones).

Week 7: Social Revolution I (1800-1850). (Chap. 15)

Week 8: Other Political Movements I (1850-1900). (Chap. 16 and Chap. 18)

Week 9: *Mrs. Warren's Profession* (Shaw).

Week 10: Other Political Movements II (1850-1900). (Chap. 17)

Paper II Due: November 18, 2010

Week 11: Social Revolution II (1850-1900). (Chap. 21)

Week 12: Artistic Revolution (1800-1918). (Chap. 20)

Week 13: *Travesties* (Stoppard)

Week 14: WWI and the End of Imperialism (1914-1918). (Chap. 22 and Chap. 23)

Week 15: *Six Characters In Search of An Author* (Pirandello)

Paper III Due: January 13, 2011

Final Exam

EVALUATION

Your final grade will come from:

25% In class participation and discussion; Collaborations.

25% Papers I and II (5-6 pages each); Notebook.

25% Research Paper (8-10 pages)

25% Final Exam

MATERIALS & ASSIGNMENTS

1. In class participation and discussion is a central element in this course. To share your astute insights and ask important questions are of vital importance in the class. Patience and listening skills are vital. Be sure to give yourself ample time to think about what you are reading and discussing. Reflection and recording of those thoughts are an important part of learning and growth.
2. Collaborations with the Advanced English: Romanticism class (meeting A period) will occur throughout the term, as well as a possible joint field trip. Stay tuned for details.
3. You will need to keep an online folder specifically used for just this course. I will keep track of all submissions but it is always wise to keep track of everything you send me, just in case I don't actually receive and record it. It will be used for collecting and organizing your thoughts and writings on handouts, chapter responses, play texts, note-taking and research. Our primary text will be *A History of Modern Europe: From the French Revolution to the Present (Third Edition) (Volume 2)*. (John Merriman). 2009. We will read a large portion of the text along with five plays and various handouts. Your writings will often consist of two parts: 1) specific questions and thoughts that occur to you during each assignment and 2) how your research question relates or is reflected in your reading. In all cases work should be submitted in an electronic format.
4. The writing assignment for this course is two short papers (5-6 pages) and one long research paper (8-10 pages). Select a topic that allows you ask substantive questions; engage in further reading and pursue research. The first paper should explore this topic and present your findings as they relate to one of the five main subject areas of this course. The second paper should present an analysis and linking of a play we have not studied in class to the themes and issues of this course. The third and larger paper should incorporate both further research from the first paper and additional thoughts on the second as you seek to compare your chosen play with one discussed in class. The topics may emerge from issues in the textbook or the plays. Please discuss your ideas with me throughout the term as I am eager for you to find subjects of interest and importance to you that connect with this course.
5. We will have a comprehensive final exam at the end of the course in January. It will be three hours in length and consist of 2-3 essay questions. Begin studying and organizing your notes now.

PRACTICES (Thanks to Dave Ramin for these thoughts.)

- I hope you feel welcome in this class and help make others feel welcome too. It should be an intriguing study – we will be encountering some serious issues. I hope you have a positive, rewarding and even exciting time this semester in our class. If not, please let me know. Never hesitate to talk with me before or after class, during office hours or any other time we can arrange. My email is at the top of this syllabus for you to use.
- Always remember: understanding something is not necessarily agreeing with it. With this in mind, our primary rule in class is: *Everyone, everything treated with RESPECT*. Meaning:
 1. No personal put downs or purposefully hurtful comments.
 2. You can sit next to who you want to unless you get distracted.
 3. Do not disrupt the class. Comments on topic are cool – conversations off to the side and random comments are not.
 4. No one should have to raise their voice to be heard.
 5. Take care of the room and of each other.
 6. Please come to class prepared with your notebook, a blue or black pen, your Texts and thoughtful questions.
 7. Please go to the bathroom, eat snacks and get a drink before or after class. Our time together is limited and leaving the class will be disruptive and will often mean missing something important.