

Veranstalterin	Dr. Julia Boll
Thema	All the Men and Women Merely Players: Power Games and Subterfuge in English Renaissance Theatre
Art der Veranstaltung	Seminar II [ENG-6, ENG-6a, ENG-12, AA7, AA10, LAA9, LAA12, AA-MA01, AA-MA02, AA-MA04, AA-MA06]
Veranstaltungsnummer	53-546
Zeit	Do 10-12
Raum	(online)
Beginn	05 November 2020

In this course, students will engage with five English Renaissance plays. Two by Shakespeare, three by his contemporaries; two comedies, two tragedies, and one which appears to be a comedy, but has such savagery to it that we are never sure whether it might not be a tragedy after all; one-and-a-half Elizabethan and three Jacobean plays; two plays set in England, two in Europe, and one in a Green World; two city plays, two country plays, and one set at court; four dukes, one duchess, two clowns, a few knights, a thief, several nuns, one alleged witch, a God, and one devil; several murders and marriages; and quite a bit of bluffing and tricking.

All five plays furiously negotiate one thing: power – who has it, who does not, how to gain and how to keep it, and how quickly it can be lost again. Money and inheritance play as much a role as do status and gender. We will compare and contextualise the performances of identity and control in these plays and explore the rich and often provocative world of London's Renaissance theatre.



These are Alex Waldmann (Orlando) and Pippa Nixon (Rosalind) in Maria Aberg's 2013 production of Shakespeare's *As You Like It* at the Royal Shakespeare theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon.

Reading List:

Some secondary reading will be made available. Especially for Shakespeare, there are many editions available, and you might have one or several of these plays already. Personally, I am biased towards the annotated, scholarly Arden Shakespeare (3rd series)/Arden Early Modern Drama editions and find them to be the best choice, but both Arden's New Mermaids series and the RSC Shakespeare editions offer fine alternatives, though in modernised spelling. Students are asked to obtain recent English-language editions of the following:

- Dekker, Thomas and Thomas Middleton. *The Roaring Girl*. c. 1607-10.
(ed. Cook for Arden New Mermaids, 2003 [no annotated edition available; RSC only offers a prompt book])
- Rowley, William, Thomas Dekker and John Ford. *The Witch of Edmonton*. 1621.
(ed. Munro for Arden Early Modern Drama, 2017; ed. Kinny for Arden New Mermaids, 1998)
- Shakespeare, William. *As You Like It*. c. 1599.
(ed. Dusi for The Arden Shakespeare 3rd series, 2006; eds. Rasmussen/Bate, RSC Shakespeare edition)
- ---. *Measure for Measure*. c. 1603/04. (ed. Braunmuller/Watson for The Arden Shakespeare 3rd series, 2020; eds. Rasmussen/Bate for RSC Shakespeare, 2010)
- Webster, John. *The Duchess of Malfi*. 1612-13.
(ed. Marcus for Arden Early Modern Drama 2014; ed. Gibbons for Arden New Mermaids, due out Oct. 2020)

If you already own other editions that (preferably) come with a line count, by all means, use them - we will find each other on the page and will have interesting discussions on the expectable differences in the text. I cannot advise reading plays on an e-reader, though, as it is very easy to get lost and often impossible to spring to the correct act and line.

Studienleistung: regular and active participation (also in teamwork), detailed knowledge of assigned texts/material, preparation of discussion questions and discussion leading, small course assignments (e.g. preparation of short audio clips).

Prüfungsleistung, in addition to the above:

- annotated bibliography on 6 critical texts (due in January 2021)
- a scholarly essay (date TBA)

Note: Registered students who fail to show up for the first session will automatically be set "inactive" on Stine, so that another student may take up their place.