

University of Georgia

Professor Marla Carlson

Performance Historiography (THEA 8200)

Fall 2013 Course Syllabus

T 2:00-4:45 p.m.
Office: 366 Fine Arts Bldg.
E-mail: marlac@uga.edu
Dept phone: 706-542-2836

310 Fine Arts Bldg.
Office Hours: T/R 12:30-1:30
and by appointment
<http://marlac.myweb.uga.edu/>

Course description: This seminar provides an introduction to historiography both within the discipline(s) of theatre and performance studies and across disciplines. Whether writing or teaching about past theatrical practice and performance activity, analyzing contemporary performances or creating them, we make important choices when we construct historical narratives—choices with ethical as well as intellectual consequences. Together we will analyze a wide range of historiographical literature, identify trends within the field, and evaluate divergent approaches to the writing of history.

Learning goals: Upon successful completion of this seminar, you will:

- Have a working knowledge of recent historiographical writing by leading scholars of theatre and performance studies
- Understand the historiographic issues and challenges that your own research involves and be able to evaluate strategies for approaching them
- Identify major historiographical trends and explain their significance for theatre and performance history
- Be prepared to draw upon significant historiographic discourse in designing theatre history courses

Required texts to purchase: These texts have been ordered at the UGA bookstore and placed on two-hour reserve at the Main Library.

- Henry Bial and Scott Magelsson, eds., *Theatre Historiography: Critical Interventions* (U Mich P, 2010)
- Charlotte Canning and Thomas Postlewait, eds., *Representing the Past: Essays in Performance Historiography* (U Iowa P, 2010)
- Rebecca Schneider, *Performing Remains: Art and War in times of Theatrical Reenactment* (Routledge, 2011)
- Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Duke U P, 2003)
- David Wiles and Christine Dymkowski, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Theatre History* (Cambridge U P, 2013)

Online resources: Additional readings for this course are posted on eLC under Course Content > Readings. You are expected to read them and bring them to class as assigned, either a printout or an electronic copy.

Teaching method, class participation, and attendance: This seminar will proceed by means of discussion. You must attend class. If you must miss a class due to illness or emergency, notify me in advance if at all possible. Each unexcused absence will detract from your participation grade, as will any absence (excused or not) beyond the third. In addition, the class will focus as much on your research and writing process as upon the shared readings. Although it's always important to turn in

your assignments on time, you *must* keep up with the writing for this class if you want to get the full benefit (and a good grade).

Course requirements and evaluation: Requirements for the following assignments will be discussed in class.

1. Informed participation in discussion, including short essays written in preparation for class and regular informal presentations related to assigned readings (30%)
2. Three archive presentations (10% each, 30% total)
3. Final paper (40%)

Late work is not accepted for this seminar. No incompletes will be given. All work must be properly formatted, printed out, and carefully proofread. I don't accept papers via email.

Short essays: During four of the first six weeks of the semester, pick a passage from one of the readings to which you have a strong response (either positive or negative). Write a short essay (3-4 pages, double spaced) exploring the connections between this extract and at least three other assigned readings. Timely completion of these essays counts as part of the participation grade, but the essays will not themselves be graded. The schedule of readings and assignments includes final deadlines for each essay, but you are welcome to turn them in earlier.

Argument presentations: During each meeting from week 2 through week 6, each student will analyze the argument of an assigned reading. This 5- to 10-minute presentation should identify the writer's thesis and conclusions, briefly summarize the supporting argument, and analyze the essay structure: Where does the author place the various parts of the argument? Are they easy to locate? How does the essay engage with other literature in theatre and performance studies, and with other fields? What positive or negative examples does the essay offer for your own scholarship and writing? These presentations count as part of the participation grade. Please note the brevity desired for these presentations and prepare a succinct analysis. Assume that everyone has read the essay.

Individual research project: Each student will complete a research project in performance history, resulting in a seminar paper of 20-25 pages due in draft at week 11 and in final form at the end of the semester. One class period will be a writing workshop used to address issues identified through peer evaluation of your draft as well as my comments. Then during the final exam period, you will present a 10-minute summary of the paper. This project is a good opportunity to work on a dissertation chapter, to explore a potential dissertation topic, or develop an article for publication. I expect something of more substance and greater length than a conference paper. Please note that a formal prospectus is due at week 7, at the same time as your first archive presentation. Meet with me well in advance of this to ensure that you have a viable project.

Archive presentations: During weeks 7-9, each student will present three analyses of material related to the research project: (1) a book written prior to 1970, (2) a book written since 1995, and (3) a dissertation. The presentations will view the materials, which may or may not turn out to be of substantive use to your own writing, from a historiographic perspective. Topics to address include the nature of the archive, methodological and theoretical approaches both explicit and implicit, positioning within field(s) of discourse, and structure of the argument.

Disability accommodations: If you have a disability and require classroom accommodations, please see me after class or make an appointment during office hours. If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center at 114 Clark Howell Hall, (706) 542-8719, http://drc.uga.edu/contact_request.php.

Academic integrity: As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." Lack of knowledge of the academic

honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Weekly Schedule of Classes and Assignments (subject to change)

Week 1 (Aug 13): Introductions

Read introductions to *Theatre Historiography* (1-8) and *Representing the Past* (1-34). Examine the tables of contents and the structure of these volumes; bring both texts to class for comparison.

Also read *Thinking on Paper*, chapter 1.

Week 2 (Aug 20): Archives and time

Read *Representing the Past*, sections one and two (37-192).

Class will begin with argument presentations.

Begin exploring topics for your research project and schedule at least one preliminary meeting with me during the next five weeks.

Week 3 (Aug 27): Space and identity

Read *Representing the Past*, sections three and four (195-330).

Class will begin with argument presentations.

Turn in first short essay.

Week 4 (Sept 3): Narrative and unearthing the past

Read *Representing the Past*, section five (333-403); *Theatre Historiography*, part I (11-57).

Class will begin with argument presentations.

Turn in second short essay.

Week 5 (Sept 10): Stakes and the new millennium

Read *Theatre Historiography*, parts II and III (61-174).

Class will begin with argument presentations.

Turn in third short essay.

Week 6 (Sept 17): Performance and theatre history

Read *Theatre Historiography*, parts IV and V (177-286).

Class will begin with argument presentations.

Turn in fourth short essay.

Week 7 (Sept 24): Project proposals; first archive presentation

Read *Thinking on Paper*, chapter 2.

Present your proposed research project: Describe the question driving your research, your archive, your methodological and theoretical approaches, and a tentative thesis. Turn in a written

version of this proposal (2-3 pages, double spaced), including a preliminary bibliography (approximately 10 sources). *Meet with me individually at least once well in advance of this date.*

Archive presentations: book written after 1995.

Week 8 (Oct 1): History, materiality, and embodied experience; second archive presentation

Read Enders, "Medieval Snuff Drama"; Symes, "The Medieval Archive and the History of Theatre: Assessing the Written and Unwritten Evidence for Premodern Performance"; Holland, "Hearing the Dead: The Sound of David Garrick" (pw = *history*); Lepecki, "The Body as Archive"; Daprati, et al., "A Dance to the Music of Time" (eLC).

Archive presentations: book written prior to 1970.

Week 9 (Oct 8): Conceptualizing and presenting a project; third archive presentation

Read introductions to *Molière, the French Revolution, and the Theatrical Afterlife; Performing Conquest; Bodies in Dissent* (eLC; password = *history*)

Also read *Thinking on Paper*, chapter 3.

Archive presentations: dissertation.

Week 10 (Oct 15): New models for performance historiography, part 1

Read Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire*.

Week 11 (Oct 22): New models for performance historiography, part 2

Read Schneider, *Performing Remains*.

Turn in a draft of your paper—one copy for me and one for your writing workshop partner.

Week 12 (Oct 29): Writing workshop.

Work in pairs to address issues identified with your paper drafts.

Week 13 (Nov 5): Presence, past, and polemics

Read Reinelt, "Rethinking the Public Sphere for a Global Age"; Kobialka, "Theatre/Performance Historiography: Politics, Ethics, and the Now" (eLC).

We will also discuss as a discursive performance the 2004 issue of *Theatre Survey* to which Canning and Postlewait refer and with which Kobialka engages. In addition to examining this journal issue, I encourage you to read any of the short position papers that interest you.

Week 14 (Nov 12): Teaching theatre history, part 1

Read *Cambridge Companion to Theatre History*, parts I-III.

Investigate the syllabi and other pedagogical materials at <syllabus.uga.edu> and the "Faculty Club" section of <theater-historiography.org>.

Week 15 (Nov 19): Teaching theatre history, part 2

Read *Cambridge Companion to Theatre History*, parts IV-V.

Prepare (and turn in a written copy of) a course description and set of learning goals for a one-semester course of your choice in Theatre History, for a pedagogical exercise working

backward from these goals to design appropriate assignments.

Thanksgiving break, Nov 25-29

(Note that Tues Dec 3 follows a Friday class schedule)

Final exam period (presentations of research): either Thurs Dec 5 or Tues Dec 10, 3:30-6:30.

All papers are due at the start of the exam period.

This “exam” will be a mini-conference, followed by dinner at Dr. Carlson’s house.

Additional resources for research and writing: For this course and your further writing within the PhD program, I recommend owning a copy of *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, seventh edition, by Kate Turabian et al. In addition to good advice, this volume includes much of the *Chicago Manual of Style*, which is significantly more costly.

Bibliography for required readings:

- Bial, Henry, and Scott Magelssen. *Theater Historiography: Critical Interventions*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010.
- Brooks, Daphne. *Bodies in Dissent: Spectacular Performances of Race and Freedom, 1850-1910*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.
- Canning, Charlotte, and Thomas Postlewait. *Representing the Past: Essays in Performance Historiography*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2010.
- Daprati, Elena, Marco Iosa, and Patrick Haggard. “A Dance to the Music of Time: Aesthetically-Relevant Changes in Body Posture in Performing Art.” *PLoS ONE* 4, no. 3 (2009): e5023.
- Enders, Jody. “Medieval Snuff Drama.” *Exemplaria* 10, no. 1 (1998): 171-206.
- Holland, Peter. “Hearing the Dead: The Sound of David Garrick.” Chap. 11 In *Players, Playwrights, Playhouses: Investigating Performance, 1660-1800*, edited by Michael Corder and Peter Holland, 248-70. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.
- Howard, V. A., and J. H. Barton. *Thinking on Paper*. 1st ed. New York: W. Morrow, 1986.
- Kobialka, Michal. “Theater/Performance Historiography: Politics, Ethics, and the Now.” *Modern Language Quarterly* 70, no. 1 (2009): 19-42.
- Leon, Mechele. *Molière, the French Revolution, and the Theatrical Afterlife*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2009.
- Lepecki, André. “The Body as Archive: Will to Re-Enact and the Afterlives of Dances.” *Dance Research Journal* 42, no. 2 (2010): 28-48.
- Reinelt, Janelle. “Rethinking the Public Sphere for a Global Age.” *Performance Research* 16, no. 2 (2011): 16-27.
- Symes, Carol. “The Medieval Archive and the History of Theatre: Assessing the Written and Unwritten Evidence for Premodern Performance.” *Theatre Survey* 52, no. 1 (2011): 29-58.
- Taylor, Diana. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.
- Ybarra, Patricia A. *Performing Conquest: Five Centuries of Theater, History, and Identity in Tlaxcala, Mexico*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009.

Other models for performance historiography: The following books have been placed on seven-day reserve in the Main Library. You may already be familiar with them, and I'm not assigning specific readings.

Carlson, Marvin. *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001. (on 7-day reserve)

Sofer, Andrew. *The Stage Life of Props*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003. (on 7-day reserve)

Additional readings for performance historiography: The following essays didn't make it onto the syllabus this year but intersect usefully with assigned readings.

Jackson, Shannon. "Working Publics." *Performance Research* 16, no. 2 (2011): 8-13.

Sarlós, Robert K. "Performance Reconstruction: The Vital Link between Past and Future." In *Interpreting the Theatrical Past: Essays in the Historiography of Performance*, edited by Thomas Postlewait and Bruce A. McConachie, 198-229. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1989.

Twycross, Meg. "The Theatricality of Medieval English Plays." In *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval English Theatre*, edited by Richard Beadle, 37-84. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Worthen, William B., and Peter Holland. *Theorizing Practice: Redefining Theatre History, Redefining British Theatre History*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.