Dr. Pettit
ENGL 3913.001: Topics in World Literature (Contemporary Political Drama)
Fall 2010
LB 202; M, 6:00-8:50
Office: AB 206C (M, 5:00-5:55; Th, 1:00-1:55)

TEXTS. You are responsible for securing copies of all texts. Waiting for the local outlets to stock copies does not constitute sound strategy; you will probably need to order some titles on-line. Please buy the editions that I have assigned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISBN</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>PUB.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>978-1559361149</td>
<td>Churchill, Caryl</td>
<td>Mad Forest</td>
<td>TCG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>978-0571234066</td>
<td>Hare, David</td>
<td>Stuff Happens</td>
<td>Faber &amp; Faber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>978-0252070006</td>
<td>Havis, Allan (ed.)</td>
<td>American Political Plays: An Anthology</td>
<td>U. of Illinois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>978-0375727191</td>
<td>Kaufman, Moises</td>
<td>The Laramie Project</td>
<td>Vintage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>978-0806138282</td>
<td>Momaday, N. Scott</td>
<td>Three Plays</td>
<td>U. of Oklahoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>978-0970534453</td>
<td>Moraga, Cherríe L.</td>
<td>Watsonville/Circles in the Dirt</td>
<td>West End Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>978-1408119532</td>
<td>Ravenhill, Mark</td>
<td>Over There</td>
<td>Methuen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>978-1840024104</td>
<td>Shaplin, Adriano</td>
<td>The Pugilist Specialist</td>
<td>Oberon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>978-0822213291</td>
<td>Smith, Anna Deveare</td>
<td>Fires in the Mirror</td>
<td>DPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>978-0802143075</td>
<td>Stoppard, Tom</td>
<td>Rock 'n' Roll</td>
<td>Grove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>978-1558850484</td>
<td>Valdez, Luis</td>
<td>&quot;Zoot Suit&quot; and Other Plays</td>
<td>Arte Publico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>978-1559362986</td>
<td>Wilson, August</td>
<td>Joe Turner's Come and Gone</td>
<td>TCG</td>
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CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION. “Consideration of genres, themes, movements, authors[.] and their relationship to the cultural contexts of the age.” The current offering considers the responses of a variety of contemporary playwrights to historical events in the nineteenth- , twentieth- , and twenty-first centuries.

WHAT TO EXPECT. Some lecturing and lots of discussion, all of it, ideally, based on careful readings of the plays and consideration of the historical contexts that inform them. I respect all informed opinions and statements, and I expect my students to do the same. I do not respect uninformed or hateful opinions and statements, and I expect my students to allow me to handle instances involving these, should there be any, in a professionally appropriate manner. Read carefully, think deeply, challenge yourself, and speak up.

CAVEAT. Many of these works contain profanity; ideological irreverence; strong or even intemperate political opinions; and what are sometimes, absurdly, called “adult situations.” Deal or drop. The more colorful language in the plays should not be mistaken for appropriate language for our discussions.

ATTENDANCE POLICY. Students who miss three classes will receive the grade “F.” Two late arrivals or early departures count as one absence.
QUIZZES AND GRADING. I will give quizzes at the start of most or all classes. Formats include short essay, short answer, and fill-in-the blank. You will be tested on the introductory and supplementary materials in the texts, when these are present; and I will occasionally ask a question about the historical event or events discussed in the play (i.e., some judicious extra reading will help). No make-ups. The average of your quiz grades, minus your lowest grade, which I will drop, will account for 75% of your total grade. Your paper (see below) will account for the additional 25%. See also “Extra Credit,” below. I reserve the right to adjust final grades in consideration of effort and participation.

PAPER AND TURNITIN. Papers are due Monday, 12/13, at 6:00 p.m., and must be submitted via Turnitin (turnitin.com). Students should register with Turnitin ASAP and will need to know that the class ID, which I will provide, and the password (3913Drama). In order to receive credit, papers must follow the format specified in the description of the assignment that I will post on Blackboard.

PLAGIARISM. Built from the Latin verb plagiarare, meaning “to kidnap,” plagiarism is the representation of someone else’s words or ideas as one’s own, that is, without proper documentation. In the academic community, this is an extremely serious offence. It’s also an impressively stupid offence in an age when detection is almost comically easy, thanks to programs like Turnitin. If you have any doubts about what does and does not constitute plagiarism, see me. Students who plagiarize will be assigned a grade of “F” for the class. Endastory.

EXTRA CREDIT. There are two extra-credit options, of which you may select one.

1. Any time before Monday, 11/29 at 2:00 p.m., students may submit, via Turnitin, an additional paper of the same sort as the final paper. The grade for this paper will replace the lowest two quiz grades remaining after I delete the “first” lowest (see “Quizzes and Grading,” above). Limit: one extra-credit paper per student.

2. Deliver a formal 10-minute (timed) presentation carefully explaining the historical context of one of the plays, with attention both to the event or events that inspired the play and to the play itself. The grade for this presentation will replace the lowest two quiz grades remaining after I delete the “first” lowest (see “Quizzes and Grading,” above). A maximum of twelve students may select this option; students may sign up at the start of class on Monday, 9/13. Limit: one presentation per student.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES. Pretend you’re on an airplane: stow all electronic devices, including laptops, cell phones, Blackberries, Blueberries, and Chuckberries, under your desk (or anywhere other than on your desk).

E-MAIL AND BLACKBOARD. My e-address is Alex.Pettit@unt.edu. Please use this address sparingly: do not send chatty memos, bulk memos, or memos informing me of the obvious (for example, stating that you won’t be in class on such-and-such a
E-mails must identify the course-number in the subject line (e.g., “ENGL 4300: Question about Deadlines”). E-mail is not an appropriate medium for intellectual discussion, so please visit me during office hours for discussions of the material.

Course information, including syllabus, handouts, announcements, and current grades (updated weekly), will be posted on Blackboard.

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT.** Essential competencies for this course include the abilities to read difficult materials; to discuss and write essays about this material; and to answer, in writing, questions about this material. If you have a disability for which you will require accommodation under the terms of the ADA, please register with the Office of Disability Accommodation and submit your request for accommodation by the second week of class.

**SCHEDULE.** You are required to read, and will be quizzed on, introductory materials and notes when they are present. The readings are arranged more or less chronologically, by the date of the action (except once, when they aren’t).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture/Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/30</td>
<td>Introductory Piffle</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/6</td>
<td>Labor Day; classes do not meet</td>
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| 9/13 | Plays: Momaday, *The Indolent Boys* and *The Moon in Two Windows*  
      Event/topic: Kiowa Boarding School deaths (1891) & the “Americanization” of Native Americans.  
      NB: Sign up for presentations. I will hand out supplementary reading for 9/20. |
      Event (sorta): Assassination of President Lincoln (1865) |
| 9/27 | Play: Wilson, *Joe Turner’s Come and Gone*  
      Event/topic: The Great Migration (c. 1910-c. 1930); Joe Turner & peonage |
| 10/4 | Play: Valdez, *Zoot Suit*  
      Event: Zoot Suit Riots (1943) |
| 10/11| Play: Stoppard, *Rock ’n’ Roll*  
      Event: The Prague Spring (1968) |
| 10/18| Play: Lees, *Nixon’s Nixon* (in Havis, ed.)  
      Event: Watergate & the resignation of President Nixon (1974) |
| 10/25| Play: Moraga, *Watsonville*  
      Topic: Mexican-American immigration in California (c. 1980s) |
| 11/1 | Play: Ravenhill, *Over There*  
      Event: German Reunification (1990) |
| 11/8 | Plays: Churchill, *Mad Forest*  
      Event: Romanian Revolution (1989) |
| 11/15| Plays: Smith, *Fires in the Mirror* and Kaufman, *The Laramie Project*  
| 11/22| Play: Hare, *Stuff Happens*  
      Event: Second Gulf War (2004-) |
| 11/29| Play: Shaplin, *The Pugilist Specialist*  
      Event: Second Gulf War (2004-) |
| 12/6 | Individual conferences to discuss final papers |