

Elizabeth Williamson The Evergreen State College



Jacobean Tragedy

Course description

Shakespeare is perhaps most famous for his tragedies *Lear*, *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet* but he was not the only playwright producing powerful, complex plots during the early modern period. This course will consider the development of the tragic genre outside of the Shakespearean canon, focusing on thematic issues as well as the specific venues for which these plays were written and the staging trends that facilitated the companies repertory productions. The narrow focus of the seminar will allow participants to focus on their own research interests, but one of our main concerns will be the variety of staging conventions and plot devices associated with early seventeenth-century tragedy. As a supplement to our own readings of the plays, we will trace certain trends of thought in scholarly writing about tragedy over the last thirty years. Readings will alternate between primary and secondary works.

Course texts

Four Revenge Tragedies

Ford, *Tis Pity She's a Whore and Other Plays*

Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Maid's Tragedy*

Webster, *The White Devil*