

Staging History
HIS300

Instructor: Christina Hurtado-Pierson

Online, Asynchronous



Who lives, who dies, who tells your story?

Theatre has the ability to bring history to life in a uniquely engaging way... but not all plays are created equal. Like any historian, a playwright chooses how they dramatize someone's life, an event, or a piece of history. Plays not only tell stories, they also teach us about the societies that create them. In "Staging History," we'll look at how theatre can document a moment in history as it happens, how it makes sense of history after the fact, and how the playwright's own experiences shape the retelling of history.

We will engage with three theatrical texts: Dion Boucicault's *The Poor of New York*, Lin Manuel Miranda's *Hamilton*, and Wole Soyinka's *Death and the King's Horseman*. We'll read/watch/listen to each play, explore the history it covers, and try to decide what an audience (or scholar) can get out of the experience.

Students will be given the opportunity to participate in group discussions or message boards as we collectively explore the relationship between theatre and history. Grading will be based on participation in discussions and message boards, three short reflection papers, and one deep dive into a play of your choice.