



COURSE DESCRIPTION

2016 Winter Session (2016-2017 Academic Year)

ENGL 357M-002 - Heroes, Wits and Smut: 18th-Century Theatre -
Tiffany Potter

Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Studies

Term 2

MWF, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

After the silence of the Puritan Commonwealth, London's theatres burst into social, artistic and ideological prominence (and no small fabulousness) with the restoration of King Charles II. Through tragedy, heroic drama, burlesque, and several types of comedy, plays contributed to cultural dialogues on the relative identities of the nation and the individual through such conflicting elements as noble heroics, brilliant wit, political subversion, historical revisionism, and some rather explicit sex. We will consider the ways in which English playwrights both echoed and reinscribed ideas of heroic masculinity and femininity, sexuality and marriage, intellectualism and passion, violence and its burlesques, as well as the ways in which the dramatic genres of the era embraced both spectatorship and readership and made the political into the (very) personal. Reading ahead? Start with Wycherley's deliriously witty and smutty *Country Wife* if you want comedy and Dryden's *All for Love* if you want a grand tragedy about Antony and Cleopatra.