

READING ALOUD: CONTEMPORARY PLAYS

Days: Wednesdays 10:00-12:00

Coordinator: Wendy Salkind

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410 458-4458

Place: Temple Beth El, 70 Orchard Avenue, Providence

Classes: March 20,27, April 3,10,17,24, May 1,8,15,22

ABOUT THE COURSE

During these ten weeks, we'll take turns reading aloud four plays from the modern theatre. The plays are by award-winning playwrights who tackle some of the most controversial and critical issues of our time, providing us with an abundance of topics for discussion.

We'll discuss all elements of the written play and we'll also discuss what the play might look like on stage, since every play is written to be realized in front of an audience.

THE PLAYS

We will read these plays, in this order:

Mar. 20, 27 **Alice Childress** - *Wedding Band: A Love/Hate Story in Black and White*

April 3,10 **Lynn Nottage** – *Intimate Apparel*

April 17, 24 **Stephen Adly Guirgis** – *Between Riverside and Crazy*

May 1, 8 **Ayad Akhtar** – *Disgraced*

May 15, 22 **Anna Deveare Smith** – *Fires in the Mirror*

- The plays will need to be purchased individually, and can be found used from Alibris.com, Abebooks.com, Thriftbooks.com and Amazon.com. The total cost of the four plays, used, should be around \$35. The plays are also available from the Providence Public Library and its local branches.

- Unless I suggest otherwise, you should read the entire play prior to class. Since we can only get through part of a play each class, I'll ask one of you to take a few minutes, at the beginning of class, to give a recap of the previous week's reading.

- No one is expected to be an actor, but when you read aloud, you can imagine that you are in a dialogue with someone, and thus you can feel free to be expressive.

WHAT WE DO IN CLASS

- We'll spend each class reading part of a play aloud and discussing our impressions of the scenes we've read. In my experience, when you hear a play and feel the language in your body, you can be drawn into the heart of the writing.

- Sometimes we'll go around the room, taking turns reading, and at other times I will have assigned you a character to read in a scene. My goal is that everyone gets a chance to read at least a little each class. I assign roles based on how much you read the previous class.

- Based on this course in previous semesters, sometimes our discussions sometimes run 5-10 minutes past noon. If this is a problem for you on a specific day, just let me know.

- With more women than men in class, we'll not adhere to character gender when reading roles. The same will be true for our readings of different races and ethnicities.

- Unlike other LLC courses, you will not be expected to make a presentation. Your homework is to read and think about the play and, if pre-assigned, to consider what motivates the character you will be reading in class. I may ask you to read some short articles before some of the classes. They will provide you with information about the playwright and/or the play. I won't lecture in class, but my background is in theatre, so I'm always glad to respond to questions and I will provide context.

* If you need to miss a class, please contact me by email, text or phone, so I can think ahead to reassign a role.