Acknowledging nature's agency: the ecocentric tradition in English-Canadian drama.

Gray, Nelson

URI: http://hdl.handle.net/1828/3962
Date: 2012-04-30

Abstract:
While there have been numerous critical studies of English-Canadian drama, none to date has investigated portrayals of the natural world from an ecocritical perspective, paying particular attention to plays that make the relationship between human characters and the more-than-human physical world a significant part of the action. Through a series of close readings, this study considers the texts of such plays—those written in this part of the world from 1606 to 2011—with respect to what they reveal about attitudes to the natural world. After showing how depictions of nature in plays from 1606 to the late 19th century were inflected by Eurocentric attitudes and colonizing agendas, I go on to draw attention to a series of dramatic works that acknowledge the agency of the more more-than-than-human physical world as an oikos or dwelling place that is fundamental to human identity. By showing the rise and development of this body of work from the 1920s to 2011, I trace the genealogy of what I characterize as an ecocentric tradition in English-Canadian drama—plays in which elements of the natural world function, not as scenic backdrops or as a pool of metaphors for exclusively human concerns, but as forces in their own right that shape and determine human actions and are, in many cases, affected by them.

Files in this item

- Name: Gray_Nelson_PHD_2 ...
- Size: 1.169Mb
- Format: PDF

This item appears in the following Collection(s)
- Theses (Theatre)
- ETD (Electronic Theses and Dissertations)

This collection contains theses and dissertations submitted in partial fulfillment of graduate degree programs at the University of Victoria.

Related items

- Authentic culture: the Inkameep plays as Canadian Indian folk drama
  - Korpan, Cynthia Joanne (2009-09-16)
  - During the early decades of the 20th century, a public and governmental concentration on authentic Canadian culture included the languages and cultural practices of Indigenous peoples. The position of Indigenous peoples ...

- The Benefits of Implementing Drama-Based Instruction into Language Arts Lessons
  - d'Amours, Satya (2017-08-29)
  - The purpose of this project was to explore various ways in which drama-based instruction can be implemented into language arts lessons in primary schools. Particular focus was placed on possible benefits in the areas of ...

- Constructing chivalry: the symbolism of King Mark in Wagner's "Tristan und Isolde"
  - Heikel, Julie Anne (2010-12-02)
  - Despite Tristan’s place as a cornerstone of the operatic repertory, there has been surprisingly little scholarship on King Mark, whom scholars often overlook in favour of the title characters. This study examines Wagner’s ...
Canada's culture, its heritage, is a collage of cultures made from various ethnicities that conquered this land, immigrated to it, and by those who were there before any of this happened. In what follows, we will understand how it is possible for the culture of a country to be so varied, that an effort to define it will always reach an impasse. Every country can, in some way, identify with its culture, even though it's a tad diverse. However, in Canada, various cultures have developed simultaneously, together forming a joint culture of the country. To understand these concepts better, let's start where it all started. For thousands of years, Canada was inhabited by indigenous people and ethnicities, until one day in 1534, when Jacques Cartier claimed this 'territory' for France. The culture of Canada embodies the artistic, culinary, literary, humour, musical, political and social elements that are representative of Canada and Canadians. Throughout Canada's history, its culture has been influenced by European culture and traditions, especially British and French, and by its own indigenous cultures. Over time, elements of the cultures of Canada's immigrant populations have become incorporated to form a Canadian cultural mosaic. The population has also been influenced by