

EN 8523
Fall 2014
W 2-5
Bentley

DRAMATIC ROMANCE

For years, critics have designated Shakespeare's last four plays as Romances. However, they rarely, if ever, apply that term to the dramas of his contemporaries. Why? What makes Shakespeare's final plays "unique"? Or are there other early 17th century dramas that can be so designated? This course will explore traditional prose Romances as well as several dramas of the first quarter of the seventeenth century in order to understand the structural and ideological forces that shaped the contours of and the boundaries between these two significant Renaissance genres.



Tentative reading list:

Shakespeare: *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*

John Marston: *The Malcontent*

Beaumont and Fletcher: *Philaster*

John Webster: *The Duchess of Malfi*

Robert Greene: *Pandosto*

Sir Philip Sidney: "Defense of Poesy," Selections from *Arcadia*