English Department Guest Speaker

Eric Vivier

Eric D. Vivier is an Assistant Professor of English and a Faculty Fellow of Shackouls Honors College at Mississippi State University. He teaches courses on Shakespeare and his contemporaries, sixteenth-century literature and culture, and Core Texts. His research interests include early modern English drama, prose satire, and religious and political history. His work has appeared in *English Literary Renaissance*, *The Ben Jonson Journal*, and an edited volume of essays on *The Revenger’s Tragedy*. He is currently writing a book called *Satire and Its Discontents in Shakespeare’s England*.

When: October 18, 2018 @12PM
Where: RLL 101

**Satire Reconsidered: Lessons from the English Renaissance for the Great Age of American Satire**

The general decline in interest in satire by literary scholars has coincided, ironically enough, with an explosion of interest in satire by everyone else. In the past two decades, satires have become ubiquitous in American entertainment and politics; scholars in Media and Communication Studies, meanwhile, have stepped in to take control of the critical conversation about this Great Age of American Satire. Along with a shift from a literary-aesthetic approach to a comic-discursive approach to satire in the twenty-first century has come a new and profound optimism in satire’s political potential: the prevailing sentiment of such scholarship is that satire can defend liberal American democracy from the anti-democratic encroachments of neoconservatism, neoliberalism, and neofascism. From the perspective of 2018, however, such optimism seems profoundly naïve. In this talk, I will suggest that a return to the lessons of literary studies in general and English Renaissance satire in particular can help us to better understand the real rhetorical and political consequences of satire.