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# *The Rover*

## USC LIBRARIES RESOURCE GUIDE



The **USC SCHOOL OF THEATRE**'s production of Aphra Behn's *The Rover* runs from February 26th through March 1st at the Bing Theatre. In cooperation, **ROSS SCIMECA** of the **USC LIBRARIES** has selected the following resources to help you learn more about the play and the 17th century British playwright Aphra Behn.

## INTRODUCTION

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One of the gems of Restoration theatre, *The Rover* or *The Banish'd Cavaliers* appeared on stage for the first time in 1677. After Charles II took the throne in 1660, there was a great resurgence of the dramatic arts, as theatres reopened across England. During the Commonwealth period from 1649–1660, England was ruled by Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell, and Puritan religious sects had great political and cultural influence. Plays and other public performances were considered immoral, and many theatres were closed.

With the flowering of Restoration dramatic culture, new playwrights relished in depicting all aspects of human folly that the Commonwealth abhorred. A witty satire on sex and gender politics set during Carnival season in Naples, Aphra Behn's play is no exception. The four main male characters are English and represent archetypes of the 17th-century Cavalier tradition. Charles II liked the play so much that Aphra Behn wrote a second part in 1681.

Aphra Behn (1640–1689) was one of the first women to earn a living as a playwright. She was a prolific author and a staunch Royalist who actually spied for Charles II against the Netherlands during the Anglo-Dutch War of 1665. Although Alexander Pope and other critics objected to her depictions of sexuality onstage, she was popular with Restoration audiences. More recently, she has received a great deal of attention from literary scholars who have studied her use of satire and representations of gender relations, Royalism, and the English state.

## BOOKS ABOUT APHRA BEHN

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***Aphra Behn's English Feminism: Wit and Satire***

By Dolores Altaba-Artal

Susquehanna University Press, 1999

**Doheny Library PR3317.Z5A48 1999**

***Aphra Behn's Afterlife***

By Jane Spencer

Oxford University Press, 2000

**Doheny Library PR3317.Z5S64 2000**

***The Cambridge Companion to Aphra Behn***

Edited by Derek Hughes

Cambridge University Press, 2004

**Doheny and Leavey Libraries PR3317.Z5C36 2004**

***The Secret Life of Aphra Behn***

By Janet M. Todd

Rutgers University Press, 1997

**Doheny Library PS3317.Z5T64 1997**

***Royalist Women Writers, 1650–1689***

By Hero Chalmers

Clarendon Press, 2004

**Doheny Library PR438.P65C48 2004**

***The Critical Fortunes of Aphra Behn***

By Janet M. Todd

Camden House, 1993

**Doheny Library PR3317.Z5T64 1993**

***The Theatre of Aphra Behn***

By Derek Hughes

Palgrave, 2001

**Doheny Library PR3317.Z5H84 2001**

***Aphra Behn***

By Janet M. Todd

St. Martin's Press, 1999

**Doheny Library PR3317.Z5A635 1999**

***Rereading Aphra Behn: History, Theory, and Criticism***

By Heidi Hutner

University Press of Virginia, 1993

**Doheny Library PR3317.Z5R47 1993**

***Aphra Behn***

By Susan Wiseman

Northcote House, 2007

**Doheny Library PR3317.Z5W57 2007**

***Restoration Theatre and Crisis***

By Susan J. Owen

Clarendon Press, 1996

**Doheny Library PR698.H5094 1996**

## THE ROVER ONLINE

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Visit the USC Libraries' e-Resources page to view editions of *The Rover* and other works by Aphra Behn online. From [www.usc.edu/libraries/eresources](http://www.usc.edu/libraries/eresources), you can access:

- Parts one and two of *The Rover* in the Early English Books Online (EEBO) database.
- The 1729 London edition in the Eighteenth Century Collection database.