

ENGLISH 4520.01 Spring 2019

Shakespeare's Major Plays

MW 2:20-3:40 Adena 136

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Course Description

This course will be a study of five major Shakespeare plays with particular emphasis on the representations of the bodies populating the texts. While a primary concern will be a grounded understanding of Shakespeare's use of language, metaphor, characterization, genre, and literary form, we shall simultaneously assess a range of critical approaches—and glance at a few adaptations—that concern themselves with Shakespearean bodies. How does Shakespeare's language accommodate (indeed, build) veracities and differences of race, gender, sexuality, and disability? How does our consideration of these bodies enable discussions of the lived realities of the individuals they stand in for—both in the worlds of the plays and our own world? In classroom discussions, we shall develop an intersectional method that can read gender, race, sexuality, class, and disability in relation to one another, as well as in dialogic relation between the early modern past and our contemporary present. Our enduring goal will be to understand what Shakespeare makes possible for his readers and viewers in the twenty-first century.

Previous study of Shakespeare is encouraged but not required. Commitment to spending *plenty* of time outside class in engaging with texts, in thinking, and in writing is *required*.

Course Goals

1. A sound grasp of some of Shakespeare's major plays, including their main themes, stakes, and claims;
2. Understanding and interrogating the critical vocabularies surrounding embodiment and intersectionality—in this case, with the study of Shakespeare;
3. Gaining a sense of Shakespeare's afterlives in our intricate and cross-cultural world;
4. Developing your methods and strategies for interpreting complex language and explaining those interpretations in precise oral and written work.

Required Materials

The Norton Shakespeare, eds Stephen Greenblatt, Jean Howard, Suzanne Gossett, and Walter Cohen (3rd edn; 2015).

Scholarly articles and excerpts from adaptations will be made available on Carmen.

All films will be made available through the class's page on OSU's Secured Media Library.

Copies of all books to be used in class are available on course reserves at the OSUN Library.

Course Requirements and Breakdown of Final Course Grade

Class discussions (throughout the term)	10%
Oral reports (two reports, each lasting 20 minutes)	20%
Mid-term essay (4-5 pages; credit for original critical thought and argument)	20%
Final project presentation (10-15 minutes)	20%
Final research project (10 pages plus endnotes; credit for original contribution to the field)	30%

Class discussions

This class will concern itself with many challenging texts and critical voices. You will complete and annotate for yourself each day's assigned reading/listening and prepare thoroughly for each meeting with your own questions, concerns, and associations. Thoughtful and consistent participation will be expected throughout the term.

Oral report

Each student will be responsible for two oral reports in class, and each oral report will last 20 minutes. In an oral report, the presenter will engage, through a precise and well-formulated presentation, with a single critical essay on one of Shakespeare's plays. The critical essay will be yours to pick. As presenter, you will provide a brief summary of the *argument* of the critical essay, provide your assessment of what the critical method of the essay enriches for a reading of the play, and finally state how you might use similar methodology to engage with a Shakespeare text. Implicit within this assignment prompt is my urging you to read as widely as you can and find a critical essay that really works for you, and asking you to imagine modelling its critical moves to achieve a distinct but powerful reading of your own of one of Shakespeare's plays.

Mid-term essay (4-5 pages)

In this essay, you will pick a single passage or moment from one of the plays that we have so far studied, and subject it to intense critical analysis. Your reading should do at least one of the following: help your reader see the moment in a substantially new light; or make visible a puzzle that conventional or traditional methods of reading have so far not paid attention to; or suggest persuasive answers towards a puzzle that traditional methods of reading cannot disentangle. For this assignment, feel free to engage with any of the pieces of secondary literature that we have considered so far. You may build on or disagree with what a critic has already considered. Remember: this is not an invitation to recapitulate what another scholar has said. Instead, you will have to *advance and extend* what is already available in the critical conversation. Remember too that the best critical conversations are founded in real engagement, respect, and constructive criticism. In this assignment, I am encouraging you to find and hold a position of your own about a text (or a part of one) that you care about. This will be a crucial skill to have by the time you are working on your final project.

Final project: conference-style presentation and research paper

Your final assignment is a conference paper on a topic of your choice. It must focus on one or more of Shakespeare's texts, *or* a Shakespeare text in conversation with its adaptation, in relation to some aspect of gender, sexuality, race, class, and/or disability. Your topic must be generated out of a genuine question of interest to you, something about which you want to learn more. Your question can be primarily interpretative in nature or oriented towards history or analytical methods. It must engage with Shakespeare's texts or adaptations of them, clearly articulate your methodological investments, and situate your argument in the context of a broader critical conversation.

Note that this project involves multiple steps:

1. One paragraph stating your initial research question and your methodological orientation
 2. Critical bibliography summarizing 6-8 relevant articles, chapters, or books
 3. 250-word prospectus, including your revised research question and your initial thesis
 4. ***In-class conference presentation***
 5. Revision of conference presentation based on conference feedback
 6. ***Submission of final research paper (10 pages, plus endnotes)***
- All due dates are noted in the schedule.

Course Policies

1. Our class is a learning community; remember that every member is an equal and valued participant.
 2. Be aware that this is a reading-and-writing intensive class. Remember to make time outside class to review class material, prepare for the following class, and complete assignments in a timely manner. The better your preparation for class is, the better your in-class participation will be.
 3. If you require extra time or any other adjustments in order to fulfil course expectations, please let me know in the first few meetings of the term. I will do my best to enable the best learning conditions for you. (For more information on the support available to you, please see here: <https://newark.osu.edu/students/student-life/disability-services.html>).
 4. Please try to attend all classes and stay for the entire class duration. Again, this is about optimising *your* learning. If you *must* miss a class, however, please let me know in advance so that we may together plan the best means for you to make up work. It would be smart as well to arrange early in the term to trade notes with a classmate in case you do have to be absent.
 5. I expect that the work you turn in will be entirely your own, written specifically for this course. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the assignment, and possibly for the course. Understand that I am also *required* to report all academic misconduct to the Office of Academic Affairs, which may impose other penalties. (For further information, please see here: <https://oaa.osu.edu/academic-integrity-and-misconduct>).
 6. Please bring the relevant texts, a notebook, and a pencil/pen to class each day. (If you prefer to take notes electronically, do so. However, please make sure that neither you nor those around you are distracted by the technology you are using.)
 7. The format for all written assignments for this class is as follows: 1-inch margin on all sides of the page; 12-point Times New Roman font; double-spaced. If the assignment is to be submitted in print, please print on both sides of the paper, and staple (if applicable). If the assignment is to be submitted electronically, please submit as a PDF.
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Schedule

Monday, 7 January 2019

Introduction to the course and discussion of the syllabus

Introduction to Shakespeare's life and times

Firming up the schedule for oral reports (two reports—each of 20 minutes—by each student)

Introduction to the critical vocabularies of gender, race, sexuality, and disability

Wednesday, 9 January 2019

Stephen Greenblatt, "General Introduction" in *The Norton Shakespeare*, third edition (pp. 1-74)
Richard III, Act 1

"In Search of the Real Richard III," *Shakespeare Unlimited* Podcast:
<https://www.folger.edu/shakespeare-unlimited/real-richard-iii>

Monday, 14 January 2019

Holger Schott Syme, "The Theater of Shakespeare's Time" in *The Norton Shakespeare*, third edition (pp. 93-118)

Richard III, Acts 1-4

David Houston Wood, "Staging Disability in Renaissance Drama" in *A New Companion to Renaissance Drama*, eds Arthur F. Kinney and Thomas Warren Hopper (Blackwell, 2017), pp. 487-500

Tobin Siebers, "Shakespeare Differently Disabled" in *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Embodiment*, ed. Valerie Traub (Oxford, 2016), pp. 435-454

Wednesday, 16 January 2019

Richard III, complete

Allison P. Hobgood, "Teeth Before Eyes: Impairment and Invisibility in Shakespeare's *Richard III*" in *Disability, Health, and Happiness in the Shakespearean Body*, ed. Sujata Iyengar (Routledge, 2015), pp. 23-40

Geoffrey A. Johns, "A 'Grievous Burthen': Richard III and the Legacy of Monstrous Birth" in *Disability, Health, and Happiness in the Shakespearean Body*, ed. Sujata Iyengar (Routledge, 2015), pp. 41-57

Joel Elliot Slotkin, "Honeyed Toads: Sinister Aesthetics in Shakespeare's 'Richard III,'" *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 7.1 (2007), pp. 5-32 (text nomination: Conner Moore)

Monday, 21 January 2019

Martin Luther King Day; no class

Wednesday, 23 January 2019

The Merchant of Venice, Acts 1-3

Monday, 28 January 2019

No class

Watch *Richard III*, dir. Laurence Olivier (1955)

Watch *Richard III*, dir. Richard Loncraine (1995)

Browse and listen extensively in this archive of Folger Shakespeare Library podcasts in the *Shakespeare Unlimited* series: <https://www.folger.edu/shakespeare-unlimited>

Wednesday, 30 January 2019

The Merchant of Venice, complete

Farah Karim-Cooper, "Questions of Value in *The Merchant of Venice*,"

<https://www.folger.edu/shakespeare-unlimited/elizabeth-norton-hidden-lives-tudor-women>

Walter Cohen, "*The Merchant of Venice* and the Possibilities of Historical Criticism," *English Literary History* 49.4 (1982), pp. 765-789

Geraldine Heng, "The Invention of Race in the European Middle Ages I: Race Studies, Modernity, and the Middle Ages," *Literature Compass* (2011), pp. 258-274 and Geraldine Heng, "The Invention

of Race in the European Middle Ages II: Locations of Medieval Race,” *Literature Compass* (2011), pp. 275-293

Monday, 4 February 2019

The Merchant of Venice

Kim Hall, “Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner? Colonization and Miscegenation in *The Merchant of Venice*,” *Renaissance Drama* 23 (1992), pp. 87-111

Arthur Little, Jr., “The Rites of Queer Marriage in *The Merchant of Venice*” in *Shakespeare: A Queer Companion to the Complete Works of Shakespeare*, ed. Madhavi Menon (Duke University Press, 2011), pp. 216-224

Wednesday, 6 February 2019

The Merchant of Venice

Mary Jannell Metzger, “‘Now by My Hood, a Gentle and No Jew’: Jessica, *The Merchant of Venice*, and the Discourse of Early Modern English Identity,” *PMLA* 113.1 (1998), pp. 52-63

Emma Smith, “Was Shylock Jewish?” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 64.2 (2013), pp. 188-219

Dennis Britton, “Reproducing Christians: Salvation, Race, and Gender on the Early Modern Stage” in *Becoming Christian: Race, Reformation, and Early Modern English Romance* (Fordham University Press, 2014), pp. 142-172

Monday, 11 February 2019

Othello, Acts 1-3

“Shakespeare in Black and White,” *Shakespeare Unlimited* Podcast

<https://www.folger.edu/shakespeare-unlimited/shakespeare-black-white>

“African Americans and Shakespeare,” *Shakespeare Unlimited* Podcast

<https://www.folger.edu/shakespeare-unlimited/african-americans-shakespeare>

Wednesday, 13 February 2019

Othello, complete

“American Moor,” *Shakespeare Unlimited* Podcast

<https://www.folger.edu/shakespeare-unlimited/american-moor>

“Othello and Blackface,” *Shakespeare Unlimited* Podcast

<https://www.folger.edu/shakespeare-unlimited/othello-blackface>

Monday, 18 February 2019

Othello

Ania Loomba, “*Othello* and the Racial Question,” *Shakespeare, Race, and Colonialism* (Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 91-111

“Understanding Peter Sellars,” *Shakespeare Unlimited* Podcast

<https://www.folger.edu/shakespeare-unlimited/peter-sellars>

Wednesday, 20 February 2019

Othello

Jeffrey Masten, “Glossing and T*pping: Editing Sexuality, Race, and Gender in *Othello*” in *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Embodiment: Gender, Sexuality, and Race*, ed. Valerie Traub (Oxford, 2016), pp. 569-585

Leah Marcus, "Constructions of Race and Gender in the Two Texts of *Othello*" in Ania Loomba and Melissa Sanchez, eds, *Rethinking Feminism in Early Modern Studies: Gender, Race, and Sexuality* (New York: Routledge, 2016), pp. 113-132

Ian Smith, "Othello's Black Handkerchief," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 64.1 (2013), pp. 1-25 (text nomination: Isabella Moreno)

Monday, 25 February 2019

Othello

Djanet Sears, *Harlem Duet* (Scirocco Drama, 1997)

Toni Morrison, *Desdemona* (Oberon Books, 2012)

Paula Vogel, *Desdemona: A Play about a Handkerchief* (Dramatists Play Service, 1994)

Ruth Vanita, "Proper' Men and 'Fallen' Women: The Unprotectedness of Wives in *Othello*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 34.2 (1994), pp. 341-356 (text nomination: Ashley Eberst)

Wednesday, 27 February 2019

Drafts of mid-term essay due in class; peer review workshops in class

Monday, 4 March 2019

Mid-term essay due in class

King Lear, Acts 1-2

Wednesday, 6 March 2019

King Lear, complete

Gillian Woods, "King Lear: Madness, the Fool and Poor Tom,"

<https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/king-lear-madness-the-fool-and-poor-tom>

Monday and Wednesday, 11 and 13 March 2019

Spring Break; no class

Suggested viewing:

The Tragedy of Othello: The Moor of Venice, dir. Orson Welles (1952)

King Lear, dir. Peter Brook (1971)

The Tempest, dir. Julie Taymor (2010)

Monday, 18 March 2019

King Lear

Simon Palfrey, *Poor Tom: Living "King Lear"* (University of Chicago Press, 2014; excerpts)

Wednesday, 20 March 2019

King Lear

Valerie Traub, "The Nature of Norms: Anatomy, Cartography, *King Lear*" in *Shakespeare & Science*, ed. Carla Mazzio, Special Double Issue of *South Central Review* 26.1 and 26.2 (2009), pp. 42-81

Henry Turner, "*King Lear* Without: The Heath," *Renaissance Drama* 28 (1997), pp. 161-193

Monday, 25 March 2019

King Lear

Isabel Karremann, "*King Lear* and the Rhetoric of Amnesia," *South Atlantic Review* 83.4 (2018), pp. 103-119 (text nomination: Ashley Kannady)

Wednesday, 27 March 2019

King Lear

Jayne Elisabeth Archer, Richard Marggraf Turley, and Howard Thomas, “The Autumn King: Remembering the Land in *King Lear*,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 63.4 2012 (text nomination: Ashley Eberst)

Monday, 1 April 2019

The Tempest, Acts 1-3

“Phyllida Lloyd and All-Female Shakespeare,” *Shakespeare Unlimited* Podcast

<https://www.folger.edu/shakespeare-unlimited/phyllida-lloyd-all-female-shakespeare>

Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch* (Autonomedia, 2004; excerpts)

“Caliban and the Witch: An Interview with Silvia Federici,” Revolutionary Left Radio

Podcast, <https://revolutionaryleftradio.libsyn.com/caliban-and-the-witch-an-interview-with-silvia-federici> (text nomination: Conner Moore)

Wednesday, 3 April 2019

The Tempest, complete

Jeffrey R. Wilson, “Savage and Deformed?: Stigma as Drama in *The Tempest*,” *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 31 (2018), pp. 146-177 (text nomination: Ashley Kannady)

One paragraph stating your initial research question and your methodological orientation due in class

Monday, 8 April 2019

The Tempest

Aimé Césaire, *A Tempest: Based on Shakespeare's The Tempest: adaptation for a Black theatre*, trans. Richard Miller (G. Borchardt, 1986)

Critical bibliography summarising 6-8 articles and book chapters relevant to your final project due in class

Wednesday, 10 April 2019

The Tempest

Gina Bloom, “Time to Cheat: Chess and *The Tempest*'s Performance History of Dynastic Marriage” in *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Embodiment*, ed. Valerie Traub (Oxford, 2016), pp. 419-434

William Poole, “False Play: Shakespeare and Chess,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 55.1 (2004), pp. 50-70 (text nomination: Isabella Moreno)

250-word prospectus—including your revised research question and your thesis—due in class

Monday, 15 April 2019

Final project presentations

Wednesday, 17 April 2019

Peer review workshops

Monday, 22 April

Final paper due in class together with one-page self-assessment of your learning over the semester

Conclusion to the course