

London South Bank University

SHAKESPEARE: TEXT &
PERFORMANCE

AME_6_STP

**Faculty of Arts and
Human Sciences**

2014-15

LEVEL 6 (YEAR 3)

Title:	Shakespeare: Text and Performance
Reference No:	AME 6 STP 1415
Module Level:	6
Credit Value:	20 CAT points
Study Hours:	150
Contact Hours:	30 (12 x 2 hr seminars plus pre-booked tutorial time)
Private Study Hours:	120
Assessment method:	1x 3,000 word essays, 1x unseen 2 hour exam
Unit Co-ordinator:	Dr. Alex McSweeney (mcsweena@lsbu.ac.uk)
Contact:	Rm: B462 – Tel: 0207 815 5813

2.0 SHORT DESCRIPTION

This unit offers students the chance to engage with a selection of Shakespeare's drama, on the page, on stage and on film. Shakespeare's range as a dramatist will be conveyed by moving from the early to the late plays, and exploring examples of comedy, history and tragedy. We will be applying feminist theory to a number of the texts as well as exploring responses to interpreting the texts by actors and directors. The module will explore Shakespeare's dramatic texts and changing approaches to their production since their original performances in the Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre. In the opening lecture and in our work on individual plays, we will explore the work of Shakespeare in the context of the politics, religion, social conditions of his own time and ours. We will explore the impact of performers, directors, legislators and critics on the reception and production of Shakespeare's work at different key points.

3.0 AIMS

- to familiarize students with the variety of Shakespeare's drama
- to develop students' engagement with performance criticism
- to develop students' engagement with theoretical approaches to Shakespeare

4.0 LEARNING OUTCOMES

4.1 Knowledge and understanding

On successful completion of the unit you will be able to:

- compare and contrast different examples of Shakespearean drama
- analyse aspects of Shakespeare in performance, either staged or on film

- demonstrate an ability to integrate into your analysis a coherent understanding of theoretical approaches to Shakespeare.

4.2 Transferable Skills

You will have the opportunity to develop:

- interactive skills through seminar and workshop activities
- oral communication skills through seminar discussion
- public reading/ speaking skills through presentation and dramatic reading

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

The assessment will consist of two components.

- One 3 000 word essay to be submitted on Friday 21st November 2014.
- One 2 hour unseen exam in January 2015. Details of the date and time of the exam will be on your MyLSBU.

The essay is worth **70%** and the exam is worth **30%** of your total mark.

The essay questions will be posted on Blackboard four weeks before the submission date (14/10/11). The pass mark for the Module is **40%**. The pass mark for each element is **30%**. In order to pass the Module students must attain a mark of over 30% for each element.

Reminder re. plagiarism.

The act of plagiarism is to pass off as your own work the idea or thoughts of Someone else without giving credit to that person by quoting the reference to The original. Your work will be penalized if you do this. You should refer to the LIS Help Sheet 04, available on the LISA website (<http://www.lisa.lsbu.ac.uk/helpsheets/hs04.pdf>).

6.0 INTRODUCTION TO STUDYING THE UNIT

6.1 Overview of the Main Content

This advanced level single-author course will offer an in-depth study of Shakespearean drama. Students will further develop the critical and theoretical approaches learned in the first two years of degree level study, and learn to incorporate into their analysis an understanding of issues of performance. The performance element of this unit will focus primarily on film versions of Shakespeare plays, but also if possible, on current theatre productions.

6.2 Overview of Types of Classes

The two-hour classes will incorporate lecture and seminar elements, and use will be made of video and other relevant visual aids. You will be expected to

participate actively in discussion, reading and small group presentation for which you will be asked to prepare beforehand. In addition, before each class, **you must have read the appropriate set text**; since much of the unit will be concerned with how these texts have been adapted for film, a knowledge of the film on its own will not be sufficient for you to understand or participate in the classes. If you arrive without having prepared for the class you may be asked to leave and spend some time catching up in the library before re-joining the group.

6.3 Importance of Self-Managed Learning Time

Study time outside of class should be spent reading the plays and relevant secondary literature. There will not be time to screen films in their entirety; students should be aware that most of the films studied in class are available on DVD from the Perry Library

6.4 Attendance and Punctuality

You will be expected to attend all classes promptly. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late you may not be admitted. You should always provide advance notification of possible absence or lateness.

7.0 THE PROGRAMME OF TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

22/09/14 - Week 1: Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Stage

This week's lecture will introduce the course and discuss some of the key issues surrounding the development of the Elizabethan stage. We will be examining Shakespeare in the context of the English renaissance stage and explore why he is still relevant today.

Essential Reading for next week: Anita Gilman Sherman, *Disowning Knowledge of Jessica or Shylock's Skepticism*.

29/09/14 - Week 2: *The Merchant of Venice*

This week's lecture will consider Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. We will examine the themes and issues in the play and analyse how these have been interpreted by contemporary directors in different film interpretations of the play.

Essential Preparation: Anita Gilman Sherman, *Disowning Knowledge of Jessica or Shylock's Skepticism*.

06/10/14 - Week 3: *The Merchant of Venice*

We will develop our discussion of *The Merchant of Venice* focusing in particular this week on issues of anti-semitism and sexism. We will examine the ways in which our understanding and interpretation of the play changes according to different critical readings of it. A formative assessment will be set with regard to examining the

notions of sympathetic and unsympathetic portrayals of Shylock within two recorded versions of the play. The BBC version with Warren Mitchell and the recent film with Al Pacino as Shylock.

Additional Reading: James O'Rourke, *Racism and Homophobia in The Merchant of Venice*.

13/10/14 Week 4: *Macbeth*

"Is this a dagger that I see before me?" In *Macbeth* Shakespeare explores notions of the unconscious and the supernatural that allowed him to utilise the Elizabethan stage to its maximum capacity. We will examine readings of the play focusing on the psycho-analytical critical model. We will also consider the many ways in which *Macbeth* is re-interpreted in the light of this for the contemporary audience today.

Essential Preparation: Stephanie Chamberlain, *Fantasizing Infanticide: Lady Macbeth and the Murdering Mother in Early Modern England*.

20/10/14 Week 5: *Macbeth*

In this session we will continue our exploration of central themes within the text with particular reference to the Carr & Knapp and Chamberlain critical essays

Essential Preparation: Stephen Leo Carr & Peggy A. Knapp, *Seeing through Macbeth*.

27/10/14 - Week 6: Tutorial week

This week will be devoted to independent study and self-managed time.

03/11/14 - Week 7: *Richard III*

The last of Shakespeare's 'history' plays, *Richard III* can also be seen as a tragedy and even, on some levels, as a comedy. It is a play about politics which deals with plots and intrigues, ambition and manipulation, loyalty and betrayal, power and loss. It presents some difficulties for 21st century theatre, which we will explore, and also one of the most memorable of Shakespeare's characters, who has been memorably played by many great actors. We will also explore Jan Kott's notion of the Grand Mechanism.

Essential Preparation: Kott, J, 1988. *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*. London: Routledge, pp.tbc

10/11/14 - Week 8: *Richard III*

In this session we examine why, as Phyllis Rackin argues, no woman is the protagonist in a Shakespearean history play. The women who do appear are typically defined as opponents and subverters of the historical and historiographic enterprise- in short, as anti-historians. We will examine the pattern of masculine history-writing and feminine subversion in the light of *Richard III*.

Essential Preparation: Rackin, Phyllis 1985. 'Anti-Historians: Women's Roles in Shakespeare's Histories', *Theatre Journal*, 37 (3,) 329-344

17/11/14 - Week 9: *The Winter's Tale*

"A sad tale's best for winter: I have one

Of sprites and goblins" - yesterday, today and tomorrow. This session will look at the overall themes of the play, its production history and adaptations in film and theatre.

Essential Preparation: Hoeniger, David. F 1995. 'The Meaning of The Winter's Tale' in *The Winter's Tale: Critical Essays*. Maurice Hunt, ed. New York & London: Garland Publishing

24/11/14 – Week 10: *The Winter's Tale*

"What 's gone and what 's past help should be past grief"– *The Winter's Tale* was one of Shakespeare's last plays, written in the years between 1608 and 1612. Many of the concerns of the play reflect familiar political issues of the day. What, if any, should be the limits of a king's authority? Should kings be held accountable for their actions? What is the role of a good king? A good subject? How does a subject decide between loyalty and conscience? These questions will be examined in this session. We will also explore Leontes' jealousy.

Essential Preparation: Trienens, Roger 1953. 'The Inception of Leontes' Jealousy in *The Winter's Tale*' in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No.3 (Jul, 1953), pp.321-326

01/12/14 - Week 11: Shakespeare's Comedies and *The Taming of The Shrew*

We will be looking briefly at the characteristics of Shakespeare's comedies and, in particular, the troubling themes within *The Taming of the Shrew* in the light of feminist criticism of the text. Particular emphasis will be placed on interpreting Katherine's final speech.

08/12/14 - Week 12: Module Revision & Theatre Visit

The lecture will take the form of a practical workshop at a London Theatre – probably The Globe Theatre. We will explore the nature of the stage, the actor/audience relationship and the Elizabethan audience experience of the live text. This will coincide with a visit to the theatre to see a Shakespeare production.

8.0 LEARNING RESOURCES

8.1 Core Materials

Plays:

The Merchant of Venice

Macbeth

Richard III

A Winter's Tale

The Taming of the Shrew

If you're looking for a complete works, the best balance of price and quality is probably *The Oxford Shakespeare*, ed. Stanley Wells, Gary Taylor et al. For editions of the individual plays, go for the following in descending order of preference: New Arden (3rd series only), Oxford, New Cambridge. The new RSC Complete Works had some useful textual notes but plays are hard to find at a glance.

The Winter's Tale is on at The Lion and the Unicorn (Kentish Town) - 23rd Dec - 2nd Jan. 2014-15.

Macbeth - National Youth Theatre at The Ambassadors Theatre - Sep 9 - 26 Nov. 2014.

The Merchant of Venice is opening at the RSC next year.

8.2 Secondary Reading Material

Barry, P. 1995. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary Theory*, Manchester, Manchester University Press.

Bartels, Emily Carroll 2008. *Speaking of the Moor: from Alcazar to Othello*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Bradley A.C. 1978. *Shakespearean Tragedy*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Callaghan, D. ed. 2001. *A Feminist Companion to Shakespeare*, Oxford, Massachusetts, Blackwell.

Callaghan, Dymphna 2007. *The Impact of Feminism in English Renaissance Studies*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Carr, Stephen Leo & Knapp, Peggy A 1981, 'Seeing through Macbeth', *PMLA*, 96 (5), 837-847

Chamberlain, Stephanie 2005. 'Fantasizing Infanticide: Lady Macbeth and the Murdering Mother in Early Modern England', *College Literature*, 32 (3), 72-91

Chedgzoy, K., 2001. *Shakespeare; Feminism and Gender*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Curry, Julian 2010. *Shakespeare on Stage: Thirteen Leading Actors on Thirteen Key Roles*, London, Nick Hern.

De Gratia, Margreta & Wells, Stanley eds., 2010. *The New Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare*, Cambridge, New York, Cambridge University Press.

- Dollimore, J., & Sinfield, A. eds., 1992. *Political Shakespeare*, Manchester, Manchester University Press.
- Dymkowski, Christine & Carson, Christie 2010. *Shakespeare in Stages: New Theatre Histories*, Cambridge, U.K; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Fortier M., 1997. *Theory/Theatre*, London, Routledge.
- Gay, P. ed. 1995. *The Freud Reader*, London, Norton.
- Gilbert H & J., 1996. *Post colonial Drama: Theory, Practice, Politics*, London: Routledge.
- Greene, G., Lenz, C. & Neely, C.T. eds. 1983. *The Woman's Part*. Bloomington: University of Indiana Press.
- Gurr, A., 2003. *The Shakespearean Stage*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Hackett, Helen 2009. *Shakespeare and Elizabeth: the Meeting of Two Myths*, Princeton, Princeton University Press.
- Habicht, Werner 2001. 'Shakespeare Celebrations in Times of War', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 52 (4) 441-455
- Haverkamp, Anselm 2011. *Shakespearean Genealogies of Power: a Whispering of Nothing in Hamlet, Richard II, Julius Caesar, Macbeth, The Merchant of Venice, and The Winter's Tale*, New York, Routledge.
- Hindle, M., 2007. *Studying Shakespeare on Film*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hoener, David. F 1995. 'The Meaning of The Winter's Tale' in *The Winter's Tale: Critical Essays*. Maurice Hunt, ed. New York & London: Garland Publishing
- Jackson, R., 2007. *Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Film*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Jardine, L., 1983. *Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare*, Brighton, Harvester Press
- Keirnan P., 1999. *Staging Shakespeare at the new Globe*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kiernan, Ryan 2009. *Shakespeare's Comedies*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Loomba, A., 2002. *Shakespeare, Race and Colonialism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Macdonald, R., ed. 2000. *Shakespeare: An Anthology of Criticism and Theory*. Oxford, Blackwell.

- Metzger, Mary Janell 1998. "Now by My Hood, a Gentle and No Jew": Jessica, *The Merchant of Venice*, and the Discourse of Early Modern English Identity', *PMLA*, 13, (1), 52-63
- North, A.E. 2008. *The Handkerchief: a New Interpretation of Othello*. Oxford, Trafford.
- Orkin, Martin 1987. 'Othello and the "plain face" Of Racism', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 38, (2) 166-188
- O'Rourke, James 2003. 'Racism and Homophobia in *The Merchant of Venice*', *English Literary History*, 70 (2) 375-397
- Rackin, Phyllis 1985. 'Anti-Historians: Women's Roles in Shakespeare's Histories', *Theatre Journal*, 37 (3,) 329-344
- Raffield, Paul 2010. *Shakespeare's Imaginary Constitution: Late Elizabethan Politics and the Theatre Law*. Oxford, Hart.
- Shaughnessy, R.ed. 2000. *Shakespeare in Performance*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sherman, Anita Gilman 2004. 'Disowning Knowledge of Jessica or Shylock's Skepticism', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 44 (2) 277-295
- Smith, M. 1998. *Breaking Boundaries*, Aldershot, Ashgate.
- Styan, J.L. 1996. *The English Stage*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Thompson A., (ed.) 2006. *Colorblind Shakespeare*. London: Routledge
- Trienens, Roger 1953. 'The Inception of Leontes' Jealousy in *The Winter's Tale*' in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Vol. 4, No.3 (Jul, 1953), pp.321-326
- Walen, Denise A. 2007 'Unpinning Desdemona', *Shakespeare's Quarterly*, 58 (4) 487-508
- Waugh P., ed. 2006. *Literary Theory and Criticism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Weimann, R., 1987. *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in Theatre*, Maryland, John Hopkins University Press.

