

Seminar leader: Lina Perkins Wilder, Connecticut College
Seminar: Shakespeare, Memory, and Performance
SAA 2017
Atlanta, GA

The most successful strategies I used for this seminar are nothing out of the ordinary: (1) I set up a Dropbox folder for the seminar so that all of the materials could be found in one place, and (2) I set all the deadlines at least a couple of weeks early so that when, inevitably, delays occurred, they did not prove fatal.

The only drawback with Dropbox was that some seminar participants were not familiar with the interface. A change I would make was actually made by the seminar participants themselves: nearly everyone e-mailed their responses to others' papers rather than uploading them to Dropbox, and this was in fact preferable, since it allowed for the communications to be made private rather than posted for everyone to see.

Ultimately, SAA seminars stand and fall on the goodwill and energy of the participants, and I was very lucky in that regard. We had a lovely, wide-ranging, thoughtful conversation at the conference, and I look forward to many more in the future.

Dear seminarians,

I'm pleased to welcome you all to your 2017 SAA seminar, "Shakespeare, Memory, and Performance." (The full description for the seminar, along with a list of seminar participants and e-mail addresses, can be found at the end of this e-mail.) Given the range and scope of the research interests represented in this group, I think we can anticipate a lively conversation and a group of truly exceptional papers. If you would be so kind, **please respond to this e-mail to confirm your participation in the seminar and convey any corrections to your contact information or affiliation.**

In order to facilitate collaboration and prevent the problem of lost messages and clogged inboxes, we will be using Dropbox to exchange papers. You should have received an invitation for our shared folder on Dropbox; if not, let me know. If you would like assistance negotiating Dropbox, please let me know, now or at any stage of the process.

Seminars run best when the conversation is open and free-flowing, but it is also important that everyone's work be given attention, and to that end, I will divide the group into three or four small groups. Small group members will respond briefly to all of the other papers (no more than three) in their group, and we will organize discussion around these subtopics.

As you're reading the work posted by your colleagues, remember that SAA guidelines stress that work included in a seminar may not be shared outside the group without the permission of the author. This also applies to contact information.

Please see the schedule, the seminar description, and the list of contact information below.

Looking forward to the pinnacle of seminars.

best,
Lina

Schedule

By **1 December**, please upload a brief abstract (200-300 words or one page) to Dropbox, and please add two to five suggested readings to the shared bibliography on Dropbox. (The shared bibliography is not a reading list for the seminar, but a means of sharing and enhancing our collective sense of the field that this topic represents.)

By **15 December**, I will assign small groups.

By **1 February**, please upload your completed paper (no more than 3000 words, excluding references). I am required to confirm seminar participants with SAA by 15 February, but this slightly earlier date will allow us a little bit of wiggle room and (I hope) will also allow ample time for everyone to read each other's work before we meet in Atlanta.

By **1 March**, please upload brief responses (1-2 pages or no more than 500 words) to each paper in your small group, and please add 2-3 questions to the shared list on Dropbox.

On **5-8 April**, we will join the almighty host of Shakespeareans in Atlanta, Georgia. As soon as the SAA informs me of the exact date and time, I will pass this information on to you.

Seminar participants and contact information

[Here I listed seminar participants and contact information.]

Seminar description: Shakespeare, Memory, and Performance

The performance theorist Peggy Phelan locates performance squarely in the present: “The desire to preserve and represent the performance event,” she writes in *Mourning Sex*, “is a desire we should resist” (3). What are the implications of this statement for scholars of early modern performance, or for scholars of the performance of early modern drama? How does the performance of Shakespeare and other early modern dramatists engage with memory? What is the status of memory as a way of understanding performance, which Richard Schechner defines as “restored behavior” or “twice-behaved behavior”? How do Shakespeare’s plays theorize performance and its appeal to memory? Since my title is borrowed from the wide-ranging and imaginative essay collection edited by Peter Holland, published by Cambridge UP in 2006: what has changed in Shakespearean memory studies in the past ten years? What are the implications of Shakespeare celebrations, festivals, and other commemorative practices, especially during the anniversary years of 2014 and 2016? What is the relationship between Shakespearean memory studies and the powerful model for this area of scholarship in trauma

studies and specifically in Holocaust studies? How does technology—from digitization projects to crowdsourcing to distance collaboration to online videos—shape our relationship to performance and its records? How might cognitive studies shape ideas about memory and Shakespearean performance?

These and related questions animate this seminar. Papers are welcomed on such topics as: material culture, stage properties and ephemera, the memory arts, performance and space, digital humanities, rehearsal practices, theater archives and other archival sources, performance records, stage directions and other textual residues of performance practice, Shakespeare festivals and commemoration, historical and reconstructed theaters, “original” performance practices, as well as recent performances and their implications for memory studies.