Joshua Calhoun, University of Wisconsin

Reading Donne in the Here and Then

Reading Donne's "A Valediction: Of the Book," this paper explores the ways a presentist approach might allow more aesthetically sensitive, formalist readings of poetry. Rather than using the presentist "here-and-now" as a starting point, though, I argue for readings grounded in the "here-and-then," readings that historicize and contextualize the "here" of the text, but that also attend to the imaginative, poetic possibilities of a past and future "then." The stakes, for me, are ecological: imagining textual survival and decay in a world without HVAC, we regain the poignant influence of corruptibility (both real and imagined) on poetic expression.

Sarah Case, Princeton University

Shakespeare's Singular Sonnets

My paper considers the order of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* as presented in their first printed edition, Thomas Thorpe's 1609 Quarto. It begins to explore the triangulation between sequence, desire, and time as it happens in this edition, arguing that sonnets express an anxiety about desire in time through the temporality of poetry constrained into a sequence. Being in sequence shapes the poems into a kind of succession, providing a linear genealogy at odds with their desire to find in lyric a version of time unyoked from change. Shakespeare's *Sonnets* as printed in the 1609 Quarto presents a tension between the synchronic specificity of verses fixed in a temporal and typographical sequence and the diachronic desire of the poetic speaker to create in language an alternative to the human condition of being sequential.

Dave Harper, US Military Academy

'Time's fickle glass:' Distortions of *Shakespeare's Sonnets* in Deep Time

An undergrad first confronted with the *Sonnets* might understandably Google "Shakespeare's Sonnets." However, online versions often replicate disruptive publishing practices that started with Benson's combining sonnets into longer poems in 1640, and continue when even accomplished scholars make questionable textual decisions. Given Q's preoccupation with sequence and the linear thrust of time, it is ironic that this very feature is so often disrupted by new publishing technologies inviting us to read sonnets in isolation, as well as more traditional -- seemingly innocuous -- editorial decisions (such as using Roman numerals for numbering).

András Kisery, CCNY

Networks, Beliefs, and Books: The Category of Literature in 17th-century England

Shakespeare is an obvious case on which to study the historical formation of our modern category of literature. In the late-20th c., the question was posed in terms of literary canon-formation and disciplinarity over the 18th and 19th centuries. More recently, early modernists have tried to push back the chronology, asking whether drama was indeed beginning to be considered as literature in the period. Kastan, Lesser and Stallybrass, Erne, and others have sought to place Shakespeare vis-à-vis what they see as the contested relationship of drama to the category of literature. In my paper, I will try to make sense of the apparent, and apparently premature-looking (anachronistic? anachronic?) emergence of this category, usually dated to the late-18th c., in the context of the mid-17th-c. booktrade. The paper will have some bearing on Shakespeare, although I am not yet sure how much explicit mention of him I can promise.

Zoltán Márkus, Vassar College

Temporizing Shakespeare, Historicizing Appropriability

In his "Foreword" to the volume *Philosophical Shakespeares* (2000), Stanley Cavell points to Shakespeare's "appropriability" as a potential explanation for his uniqueness. For Cavell, "the idea of appropriability is not meant to prejudge the degree to which lines, scenes, plays may resist certain appropriations less or more than others;" instead, it helps in "assessing cultural position." The starting point of this paper is that Shakespeare is not an inherent attribute of any text or production but a marker of "appropriability" resulting from a cultural consensus in every age. Author Shakespeare and his works continuously reemerge as they are re-iterated, reproduced, and reassessed; they are the results of academic and artistic deliberations; they are not clear-cut, immutable, finalized units. With the aid of a specific (or idiosyncratic) understanding of the concept of appropriation that suggests that appropriations are reciprocal maneuvers of hybridization that negotiate and construct both their subjects and their objects at the same time, the paper investigates Shakespeare as a cultural hybrid produced in various historical and cultural contexts. It accepts the view that Shakespeare's works have no immediate, unmediated presence; they are always already displaced. Moreover, it also maintains that historical approaches as vehicles of authentication in search of an 'original Shakespeare' are problematic and unhelpful. On the other hand, it proposes that temporal dimensions of Shakespearean appropriation remain crucial. Drawing on current philosophical debates about perdurantism versus endurantism as well as "polychronicity" versus "multitemporality," my paper aims at finding ways in which we can productively historicize the cultural hybrid we call Shakespeare.

David Nee, Harvard University

Orality and the Book: Collecting Pyramus and Thisbe

From the *Book of Proverbs* to Renaissance jestbooks to the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* of the Brothers Grimm, the written or printed collection has played a crucial role in preserving oral traditions within literate cultures. In this essay, I suggest that Shakespeare's collected dramatic works are another central example of the role of the book in absorbing and transmitting oral

cultural knowledge. Shakespeare's drama is, in George T. Wright's words, "an almost oral art," with one foot in the oral world of theatrical performance and the other in an emerging print culture. Extending Wright's work on the distinction between verse and prose in Shakespeare, I focus on the distinction between oral and literate narrative forms. To do so I draw on André Jolles's theory of simple forms, outlined in *Einfache Formen* ("Simple Forms"; 1930). Jolles argues for a sharp conceptual distinction between anonymous, orally-transmitted, "simple" narrative forms (such as legend, riddle, proverb, folk or fairy tale, and joke) and "artificial" narrative forms written by individuated authors within a literate culture. Focusing on the Pyramus and Thisbe story, which Jolles identifies as a "tragic folk tale," I sketch the story's many convergences with writing and print, from Ovid's collection of metamorphosis myths, to the *Gesta Romanorum*, Boccaccio's *On Famous Women*, and finally the manuscript and print novella collections that transmitted the Romeo and Juliet story to Shakespeare. Building on Jolles's claim that simple form resists combination with artificial form, I argue that the tonal and generic instability of the Pyramus and Thisbe story reveals tensions in the accommodation of oral narrative forms within an emerging print culture.

Barbara Sebek, Colorado State University

Archy's Afterlives: Temporal Mash-ups During Times of (trans)National Crisis

I will write about a few sources featuring the jests of James I's court fool Archibald Armstrong. Seventeenth-century writers invoke Archy's antics, both "real" and imagined, that emerge during moments of perceived crisis: the Madrid embassy to negotiate a match between Prince Charles and the Spanish Infanta ("the Spanish Match crisis") and the Scottish resistance to Laudian liturgical reforms (the lead-up to the Bishops Wars). I will consider how these writers enact what I am calling the "temporal mash-up"—a textual locus in which longer or more global/transnational narratives or histories intersect with localized moments of crisis.

For the Spanish Match Crisis, my key texts will be James Howell's letters from Madrid, Archy's letter to King James from Madrid (dictated to Buckingham), and a short snippet from Ben Jonson's posthumously printed *Timbers, or Discoveries*. In this snippet—the only bit in the entirety of *Discoveries* that specifies a date—Jonson mobilizes and collapses multiple historical moments and cultural and temporal frameworks (the Spanish king, the Mogul emperor, the royal residence at Windsor, the celebratory public outpouring in London when the match negotiations finally failed, and more).

For the resistance in Scotland, I will attend to Archy's "own" texts: the anti-Laud pamphlet "Archy's Dream" (1641), and various editions and versions of *Banquet of Jests* printed between 1630 and 1657and *Choice Banquet of Witty Jests* (1660) which claims to augment the earlier collections.

Tentatively, I might address shifting thought on the print history of the third Folio of the 1641 collection of Jonson's *Works* (which includes *Timbers, or Discoveries*), folding these shifts into the idea of the "temporal mash-up."

Adam Smyth, Oxford University

Early modern books often carried pieces of older manuscripts and printed books within them, in the binding, paste boards, and as end-leaves. This text is often legible: to read the Bodleian's copy of Edward Lively's *A true chronologie of … the Persian monarchy* (1597), is to encounter, irresistibly, parts of leaves C2 and B2 from the second quarto of Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* (1591) as endpapers. This paper will use Shakespearean and other examples to consider the mechanics of waste and the interpretative life of these hauntings. What does this mean for our sense of a book and its temporality?

Seth Stewart Williams, Columbia University

Danced Verse and Temporal Vagrancy

This paper centers upon a household miscellany, compiled in Monkland parish, Herefordshire, from ca. 1649 onwards, that intermixes royalist verse and notations for country dances. I argue that pairings of verse and dance allowed users to constellate political sentiments in bodily form, and that novel such pairings evolved across the Civil War, Revolution of 1688, and beyond. I examine in particular the inclusion of two "gypsy" dances, whose lyrics and tunes draw upon Jonson's *The Gypsies Metamorphosed* and Middleton's *The Spanish Gypsy*, and evolved to reference Diggers and Whigs, such that content concerned with territorial vagrancy was increasingly evocative of a related temporal vagrancy.