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Leader: Kelly Neil, Spartanburg Methodist College

M. Tyler Sasser (University of Alabama)

Pedagogical Approaches to Teaching Shakespeare in 300 Minutes

There are lots of great resources for teaching Shakespeare. Yet so far as I have observed, they are written for an audience of high school teachers or English and theatre professors teaching upper-level classes. They often are written by scholar-teachers who possibly have not been in a 200-level public classroom in quite some time. For example, in one of these teaching Shakespeare texts, the scholar-teacher writes, “*The Tempest* can motivate students to research into the colonization of the Americas, or the growth of Renaissance sciences and literature.” Although I believe *The Tempest* possesses such powers, that it can be taught in such multidisciplinary ways, that statement does not reflect my experiences teaching sophomore-level surveys. Indeed, most college students, unfortunately, are not English majors, and they do not take a 300-level class on Shakespeare.

Therefore, as my title suggests, I’m interested in thinking about how we teach Shakespeare at the 200 level, which likely means teaching non-English majors in 4-6 class periods, or 300 minutes. My argument is that including a range of praxes—in and outside of the classroom—and remembering that the students are there to fulfill their humanities requirement will enhance the likelihood that these students will understand Shakespeare. The pedagogic process described herein reflects my conception of Shakespeare in the general education classroom, a classroom containing approximately 30 students, only one of which is an English major enrolled his first major course, and the others are taking the course either for their humanities requirement.

Elizabeth Mathie, Tsinghua University

Global Shakespeare in Service Courses

This paper draws on the work of scholars who have considered Shakespeare’s influence, the adaption of his works, and his pedagogical uses and limits outside of the Western educational system – particularly in China, but also in other contexts. It asks how such work can help us to rethink our approaches to Shakespeare in the non-traditional and service-course classroom. Specifically, it proposes that the work done by scholars like Alexa Huang can help us rethink Shakespeare and his value, encouraging us to resist assumptions about his worth based on his position as a canonical Western author. This international body of work is innovative in its approaches to studying Shakespeare’s cultural uses (and his limits). This paper proposes that such work can therefore be invaluable for expanding our sense of the pedagogical purchase of Shakespeare. Such an expansion is, I think, particularly important to consider as we discuss what students in service courses – coming from differing cultural perspectives – can expect to get out of studying Shakespeare.

Alex Zobel, Prison University Project

**Performing Empowerment:
Some Challenges and Opportunities for Service-Learning with Shakespeare**

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My paper will attend to the political and pedagogical opportunities service-learning (SL) courses afford students and teachers of Shakespeare. I'll consider to what extent service-learning is a disruptive pedagogy and to what extent is it complicit forms of domination and oppression. On one hand, SL upsets the conventional hierarchies of the classroom by potentially re-socializing the classroom as a collaborative space for the production of knowledge and critique among co-learners. On the other hand, practitioners of service-learning often ally their pedagogy with social justice, even as service-learning recreates the paradigms that a social justice perspective might profitably critique (e.g., often service-learning leans on a citizenship model of education, with its nationalist and imperialist baggage, or retrenches privilege by inflaming savior complexes). Then I'll consider the particular challenges and opportunities of teaching Shakespeare in such a class. SL in Shakespeare courses can be a valuable way to link literary problems and skills to real-world problems and skills; in this way, SL Shakespeare courses can bridge the interventions we produce as literary critics and political interventions we produce as actors and agents. To what extent is service-learning pedagogy a pathway to "real" intervention and change (what Paula Friere has called critical consciousness), and to what extent is Shakespeare uniquely situated to animate that change?

Joanne Diaz, Illinois Wesleyan University

**Deictics, Deformance, Imitation, Performance, Skills:
Rethinking Shakespeare in the Survey Course**

I teach at Illinois Wesleyan University, a small liberal arts college in Central Illinois; however, many of our students are actually enrolled in pre-professional degrees such as Nursing, Business Administration, and the Schools of Music and Theater. The Humanities faculty is currently working with the Business Department to create a Humanities minor that will appeal to students in our professional schools. In my SAA workshop paper, I would like to explore the high-impact practices that work best with non-majors who will be taking my Shakespeare courses for a general education requirement, or perhaps for a Humanities minor. I want to learn how I can do more to engage students at all levels and from all disciplines, whether they be pre-law students reading *The Merchant of Venice* or Business students analyzing theories of power and governance in the Henriad. I will consider the value of in-class performance, bibliographic studies, and film studies. In addition, I will analyze and evaluate the writing prompts that result in the most interesting projects for undergraduates. As a result of this work, I hope that I will be able to incorporate these pedagogies into my classes and share them with my colleagues as well.

John C Tompkins, Purdue University

Shakespeare and Stagecraft with Engineers

Though the plays of Shakespeare hold a place of honor in the curriculum and repertoire of English and theatre departments, their immense cultural influence affects even those who never set foot in such classrooms. This is fortunate, as those who might never read the Bard as literature or theatre may find in him, as a figure of civilization, an eminent teacher. The American Shakespeare Centre has used this influence to launch its Leadership Programming initiative, which offers communication training to executives and officials through the medium

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of great speeches from the plays. On college campuses, especially public universities that emphasize engineering and agriculture, Shakespeare can also teach valuable lessons to students in the hard sciences.

This essay presents one such use in the syllabus of a large-format communications class designed for civil engineers. It gives first an overview of the course, including the philosophy behind its creation and the particulars of its population. Shakespeare's presence in the course is justified on two grounds: first, that rudimentary acting practice significantly reduces self-consciousness in public speakers and second, that Shakespeare's speeches exemplify classical rhetoric, and are thus grounds for both the practice of persuasion and the study of its parts. A sample assignment, rubrics, and a syllabus are provided.

Nicholas R. Helms, University of Alabama

**The Weight of Understanding:
Teaching Shakespeare with Empathy**

When teaching Shakespeare to students outside the English major, it's often productive to focus on ways that Shakespeare's works are relevant across the gap of intervening centuries. For example, in the wake of the Harvey Weinstein scandal, *Measure for Measure* appears hauntingly apt for our present moment. Angelo's threat to Isabella, "My false o'erweighs your true," might serve as a headline for any number of actors and politicians denying allegations of sexual misconduct (2.4.169). Reading Shakespeare as an eminently empathic writer enables understanding for our students, but such empathy cuts both ways. In works like *Measure for Measure*, *The Rape of Lucrece*, and *Titus Andronicus*, Shakespeare uses empathy as an imaginative tool rather than just an ethical imperative, inviting readers inside the minds of both the victims and the perpetrators of sexual violence. Empathy is a cognitive tool, not an unalloyed good. In this essay, I will argue for a moderate understanding of empathy as a key tool for understanding the minds of others, even when we find those others to be monstrous.

M.G. Aune, California University of Pennsylvania

Teaching Research with History Plays in First Year Composition

At California University of Pennsylvania, English 102 Composition II, is a general education course that most freshman at the university must take. CalU is a regional, state university with an enrollment of about 7,000, roughly half of whom are first generation students. By and large, the campus culture favors a vocation approach to general education and so English 102 is often regarded as superfluous by students. Campus faculty see it as preparation for their department's upper level courses and expect students to acquire not only college-level reading and writing skills, but research abilities and information literacy.

In an attempt to meet these goals, expose students to Shakespeare, and give myself an opportunity to teach Shakespeare, I have been working on an assignment that requires students to read a history play closely, investigate Shakespeare's sources, and use those sources to build an argument in favor of or opposing a particularly interpretive crux. King John, for example,

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presents students with two particular narrative and performative questions, one involving Arthur's death and the other John's. While he hewed very close to Holinshed and Foxe in much of the play, he presents versions of these two deaths that depart from the sources. The assignment asks students to perform a close reading of these scenes, locate and summarize the sources (online) that Shakespeare used, and write a paper that affirms Shakespeare's decisions or critiques them.

Jennifer Mylander, San Francisco State University

**Shakespeare and Visual Rhetoric:
Engaging Non-Majors in Sophomore GE Literature**

The conditions that tend to mark classes as "service" at other institutions— large class sizes, a large proportion of multi-lingual speakers, a wide disparity of preparation for Shakespeare's language— are the predominant conditions in literature courses at San Francisco State University, regardless of course designation. Ultimately, the conditions that define SF State's student body as "nontraditional" will, over the next two decades, like become more predominant across America's public universities as racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity continue to rise. Assignments that engage with design and visual rhetoric offer powerful complements to more traditional text-based Shakespeare assignments. Multi-lingual students who feel disadvantaged when examining Shakespeare's language in class discussion are empowered by assignments that capitalize on their existing literacies in American marketing and popular culture. Students given the opportunity to use skills in digital media reveal astute readings of Shakespeare's characters and themes, often producing sophisticated visual arguments more compelling than those offered in formal literary analysis essays. My courses Shakespeare on Film and Heroes and Antiheroes ask students to produce a visual argument about a particular text or film adaptation, a task they often complete by parodying existing gifs, memes, music videos, PSAs, and iconic advertisements. A gif of Taylor Swift from her "Look What You Made Me Do" video, for example, becomes a succinct interpretation when her head is supplanted by Benedict Cumberbatch's Richard III from The Hollow Crown adaptation.

Andrew Tumminia, Spring Hill College

**Serious Play, Some Social Justice, and Some Shakespeare:
An Introduction to Drama and Theater**

In "The Scholastic Point of View," Pierre Bourdieu, my unlikely service-course ally, discusses "the scholastic situation," describing it as "a socially instituted situation in which one can play seriously and take ludic things seriously" (381). I teach at a small, Jesuit liberal arts college, and I have learned that my students' shared interest in social justice provides the best way to reach the widest range of them in my intermediate-level drama course. Plays are fundamentally ludic, but they also capture the serious operations of culture.

Bourdieu's notions of habitus, field, and homology set the foundation for everything we do in that course. Wherever else our study of a play leads us, we return to our key insight into drama's normalizing role in cultural production and reproduction. Shakespeare, for students in this class,

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sits not so much on a timeline as near the center of a cultural spider web, with strands of past precedent converging in his works and of future influence emanating from them. In this way, we approach Shakespeare's plays as particularly important examples of something more serious: how homologous engagement with the familiar drives the world my students want to change. That insight, consistently reinforced, resonates across disciplines and offers something valuable to all of my students, not just English majors.

Kristin N. Denslow, Southwestern Adventist University

A Proposal for Teaching Shakespeare in Freshman Composition

This essay engages with scholarship debating the place of literary texts in composition courses, and it extends the question of whether we should teach imaginative literature in first year writing at all to whether we should teach Shakespeare in particular. I am influenced by my own institutional setting at a small liberal arts college in Texas where a large percentage of our students are English language learners. In this setting, it is particularly tempting to remove Shakespeare from the course in order to focus on foundational skills for developmental writers. Furthermore, Shakespeare can seem like a distant, alienating text for a writer or reader who lacks confidence in his or her ability. Yet, I argue that that distance is precisely why Shakespeare's plays could prove useful in a composition classroom. Approaching texts that feel unfamiliar may actually allow students more freedom to experiment with language, acquire vocabulary, and more fully investigate issues of purpose and audience, all central goals of freshman composition courses. In my paper, I will review the scholarship on the inclusion of literature in composition courses in order to develop a unit plan for incorporating Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* into a Freshman Composition course at a small liberal arts college. Since many of my students identify English as their second language, I will focus primarily on how the Shakespearean text can be effectively taught to English language learners in the service of developing their written skills in English. What this paper resists is the stereotype that literature faculty will prioritize their own disciplinary subject matter given the opportunity, arguing instead that the inclusion of disciplinary material for meeting explicit learning objectives can be an asset in "best practices" writing pedagogy.