

2019 Seminar Abstracts: “*As You Like It*: Motley Approaches”
Rob Wakeman, Mount Saint Mary College (rob.wakeman@msmc.edu)

“She Phoebes me:” an Onomastic Inquiry into *As You Like It*”

Charlène Cruzent
University Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3

Touchstone: Is thy name William?

William: William, sir.

Touchstone: A fair name. Wast born i'th' forest here?

William: Ay, sir, I thank God. AYLI, 5.1.21-4

Touchstone's comment on the name of the forest-born rustic is an example of how Shakespeare would play with names – including his own – in his works. The playwright's jocular treatment of names is obvious when one focuses on his elaborate nomenclature; his lexical creativity can particularly be observed through a subcategory of names: nicknames. If proper names are pivotal literary devices that enable the identification of the characters, nicknames – literally “names of addition” – are more revealing: their semantic motivation adds information to an official name, usually emphasising a specific physical or behavioural feature of the renamed character. In *As You Like It*, nicknames display the nature of the relationships between characters through the way in which one is linguistically (re)defined by their peers. The hypocorisms and diminutives used by Rosalind and Celia to address each other show affection and companionship. However, bestowed upon a character in an ironic way, the new appellation may amount to provoking, and possibly even to insulting a protagonist modifying his/her initial name as it is the case with Jacques, Orlando, and Ganymede. Once in the Forest of Arden, names seem to gain a malleable nature that blurs the notion of “reality.” Self-bestowed nicknames, or aliases, both hide and reveal the true identity of their bearers. They subvert the notion of gender and class, thus questioning the Hermogenean arbitrariness of names as depicted in Plato's *Cratylus*. From the coinage of nicknames and quasi-nicknames to the use of hypostases, nominal elements reflect the motley world of the forest giving a local habitation and a [nick]name even to unknown characters. This paper explores the extent to which names are crucial elements to understand the early modern construction of (public) identity. A pragmatic investigation of names in the society of Arden will reveal the social and literary implications of renaming in *As You Like It*.

“Shakespeare, Castiglione, and the Reconstitution of Duke Senior's Court”

James DeMasi
University of Dallas

“This is no flattery: these are counsellors / That feelingly persuade me what I am” (II. i. 10-11)

While it seems true, as Anne Barton has suggested in her introduction to the play, that Shakespeare does not “legislate or take sides in the various rivalries the comedy set[s] up: court and country, fortune and nature, etc,” these antimonies are, in some regard, adjudicated over the course of *As You Like It*. The action of the drama begins in the corrupt and tyrannical court of Duke Frederick and his courtiers and concludes in the reconstituted court of Duke Senior and his courtiers. The world of the beginning of the play threatens tragedy while the world of the

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conclusion promises comedy. What changes over the course of the adventures in Arden which allows for the play’s promise to the audience: that the court to which Duke Senior and his courtier’s return is not the same place of rank corruption that occasioned the action to begin with? That is to say, while Shakespeare might not pontificate on the supremacy of either country or court, he does suggest that the society of Duke Senior returns to the court renewed and bolstered against its previous corruptions.

“Beyond the “scholar’s melancholy” in *As You Like It*”

**Vernon Dickson
Florida International University**

Near the beginning of *As You Like It*, Oliver accuses Orlando of being “full of ambition, an envious emulator of every man’s good parts, a secret and villainous contriver against me his natural brother” (1.1.134-136), conjuring early in the play the kinds of negative emulation that Shakespeare deploys in earlier works, such as *Titus Andronicus*. However, the play moves from this kind of tragic emulation, seeking instead to discover and enact a more nuanced model of imitation that shows emulation (and related rhetorical practices) as potential tools for learning and positive persuasion as well. Moving away from emulous rivalry, Shakespeare makes much of the attempt to imitate without vying in *As You Like It*, to discover a model that rejects competition and the “scholar’s melancholy” in search of collaborative creativity and community through appropriate applications of decorum and discretion.

“Playing Clown and Courtier in *As You Like It*”

**Jay Farness
Northern Arizona University**

Clown and *courtier* share an affinity in Shakespeare’s theater as places where (fictional) characters perform or present characters (of “clown” or “courtier,” say) in potentially mind-boggling self-representations. My paper will try to unpack that befuddled sentence. My ideas for *courtier* stem from the specifications of Count Ludovico in Castiglione’s *The Courtier*. For discerning onlookers, the model courtier dissembles his artfully performed *grazia* as something almost-but-not-quite natural or heaven-sent. On 1590s London stages, much lower on a social spectrum, something like this becomes the model for clowning, where star comedians impersonate something almost-but-not-quite natural.

At times in Shakespeare, these two performance extremes meet, notably when, in *Hamlet*, the king’s “chiefest courtier,” now profoundly disillusioned, takes on an “antic disposition.” This proves to be a surprisingly typical character drift, when such disaffected court folk as Hal, Edgar, maybe Lear himself also find temporary refuge in folly or clowning. Other plays—*Twelfth Night*, for instance—find other ways of juxtaposing courtesy and clowning as almost-but-not-quite natural performance modes. In this instance, it is Viola who variously impersonates these extremes.

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My paper explores this framework in *As You Like It*, where Touchstone and Jaques particularly mirror an interplay of courtier and clown, even while the “inland bred” Rosalind—like Hal, like Hamlet, like Edgar—makes her clowning performance of folly a “stalking horse” with which to manage the kind of personal catastrophe experienced by these other impersonators.

Likening the art of real-world courtesy to an art of mostly make-believe clowning seems like a basic category mistake, but I want to use this discordancy to explore author/actor paradoxes designed into Shakespeare performances, paradoxes that converge just at the point where courtier meets clown, where an author’s art of characterization coincides with, indeed releases, a player’s art of extravagant impersonation.

“Disguised Animal and Plant Tropes Illuminate the Motleys in *As You Like It*”

**Fran Helphinstine, Ph.D.
Professor of English Emeritus
Morehead State University
Morehead, KY 40351
f.helphi@moreheadstate.edu**

The word “motley” serves a contrast Shakespeare develops in *As You Like It*. First, Jacques informs Duke Senior that he looks so merrily because “I met a fool i’ th forest, a **motley** fool” (*AYLI* 2.7.12ff) whose “brain is as dry as the remainder biscuit/After a voyage, he hath strange places cramm’d/ with observations, the which he **vents In mangled forms**” (*AYLI* 2.7.38-41)—That fool is Touchstone, as is later clarified by Jacques’ aside “A material fool!” (*AYLI* 3.3.32) while he listens to Touchstone expound about poets to naïve, honest Audrey. By contrast, Jacques is “ambitious for a **motley** coat” (*AYLI* 2.7.43) which reflects the “wise fool” tradition of literature: “Invest me in **motley**; give me leave/To speak my mind, and I will through and through/Cleanse the foul body of th’ infected world,/If they will patiently receive my medicine” (*AYLI* 2.7.58-60).

I will unfold how the disguised animal tropes characterize the motley Jacques, identified by the Lords as one who can moralize “into a thousand similes” (*AYLI* 2.1.45), in contrast with the effect of Touchstone’s motley of disguised animal and plant tropes. My approach will be a type of tracing or unfolding of these disguised tropes as the dialogue about/with these motleys move between and among registers, discourses, and disciplines.

“Parody and the Anthropocene: Emotional Tears of the “Hairy Fool” in *As You Like It*”

**Prof. Lalita Pandit Hogan
University of Wisconsin – La Crosse
lhogan@uwlax.edu**

Drawing on early modern notion of tears and their relation to various ontologies, as well today’s neuro-cognitive view of emotional tears, in the proposed paper I should like to examine how the anti-pastoral style in *As You Like It* contextualizes Orlando’s and other characters’ various

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encounters with nature. For instance, Orlando’s “marring the trees with love songs,” and conversely, his saving his brother from the ‘snake’ and the ‘lioness,’ and/or the Duke Senior’s reading “books in running brooks,” as well as Rosalind’s own fabrications about a “religious uncle” who dwells in the depths of the forest- how these motifs replay the Anthropocene through festive foolery and parody. With a brief connection to the crocodile mentioned in *Antony and Cleopatra* in a semi-parodic conversation between Antony and Lepidus, I will connect these instances to the early modern folk beliefs about genuine tears of the deer (when hurt and dying) and false tears of the crocodile to lure his prey (cf. Edward Topsell, *the History of Four-Footed Beasts* 1607), as well as to modern theories in neuro-science that see emotional tears--as opposed to purely biological tears whose function is to cleanse and lubricate the eye-- as distinctly human because their purpose is to gain another’s sympathy and they would have evolved only after communities evolved and it was possible to gain sympathy in distress. Though the story of the hurt deer crying in the sympathetic presence of the Melancholy Jacques is indirectly reported in the play, and is undercut by irony and parody, it suggests serious re-thinking of the human-animal relation, especially in the context of procurement of food, not only mentioned here, but elsewhere in Shakespeare. While I will mostly focus on the crocodile and the deer, my larger topic is eco-poetics of tears, especially when they are compared to something in nature, or attributed to some creature in nature.

“PARTICULAR WORKS AND LITERARY UNIVERSALS: AS YOU LIKE IT”

**Patrick Colm Hogan
University of Connecticut
Patrick.hogan@uconn.edu**

Abstract. For the last twenty-five years or so, I have been interested in features of literary works that recur across unrelated traditions (see <https://literary-universals.uconn.edu>). Such features range from aspects of poetic musicality to semantic and rhetorical practices to story genres and techniques of narration and emplotment. Particular literary works figure in such study principally as data from which researchers may abstract cross-cultural principles. However, the isolation of literary universals may also have consequences for our understanding of individual works.

Much of my research on literary universals has concerned story genres. I have argued that a limited number of such genres recur across a range of unrelated traditions. These are not the only possible genres. However, their cross-cultural recurrence suggests their cognitive and affective salience and even predominance. For this reason, the cross-cultural genres are often more valuable in categorizing literary works or parts of works than are the historical categories to which works were assigned by their contemporaries. For example, in *How Authors’ Minds Make Stories*, I have contended that the cross-cultural genres do a better job of organizing Shakespeare’s plays than the traditional, fourfold scheme of comedies, tragedies, histories, and romances.

In the present essay, I set out to consider a single work—Shakespeare’s *As You Like It*—in relation to cross-cultural story genres. Though his plays are generally open to categorization in one or another dominant genre, it is well known that Shakespeare mixed genres. In this essay, I

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will consider the ways in which different story trajectories in the play may be usefully isolated as instances of different, cross-cultural genres. My contention is that such an analysis allows us to isolate stylistic techniques and thematic concerns more clearly and to explore them more fully.

“Heterogeneous Time in *As You Like It*”

**Maurice Hunt
Baylor University**

Variations on temporal phenomena occur throughout *As You Like It*. Events from an ancient time seem to occur in this comedy when Orlando’s strategy of defeating Charles the Wrestler reprises Hercules’s Labor of defeating Antaeus, as well as when his carrying old Adam on his back evokes the similar image of Aeneas bearing old Anchises from burning Troy. These impressions are part of the larger sense that time flows backward in this play, past Troy’s Fall and Hercules’s Labors into events from Exodus (2.5.56-57; 5.4.35-36). Even earlier is an Edenic epiphany in which the god Hymen actually appears to give Rosalind, an Eve, to Orlando, an Adam. Shakespeare conceives of a metaphysical space close to the play’s world and capable of penetrating it. Alice Lyle Scoufos has interpreted the green world of *As You Like It* allegorically in a tradition running from Dante to Edmund Spenser. Hymen’s showing forth in the final act of this play resembles the The Three Graces’ penetration into Calidore’s world in Book 6 of *The Faerie Queene*.

Simultaneously coexisting with such absolute moments is the relativity of time in *As You Like It* exemplified by Touchstone’s dispiriting account of time ripening and ripening and then rotting and rotting in a meaningless, metronomic tick-tock (2.7.22-28) and by Rosalind’s pre-Einstein claim that time trots, ambles, gallops, or stops according to the needs of the person caught in its flow (3.2.29-320). Rarely noted, if ever, is the nameless and unnamable phenomenon of birth, growth, and death that Touchstone and Rosalind try to approximate through metaphor. In this motley play of fused—or nearly fused—opposites, an independent reality of time coexists with relative time, evanescent and beyond control.

“Common Wisdom and Commonweal in *As You Like It*”

**Sandra Logan
Michigan State University**

In his introduction to the New Cambridge *As You Like It*, Michael Hattaway notes that, in creating a family connection between the two dukes which is not present in Lodge’s *Rosalind*, Shakespeare emphasizes the “difficulty of distinguishing public and private issues,” while “reminding us that Arcadian entertainments are also comedies of state” (Kindle Loc. 1492). In this paper, I explore the intersections of political relationships with Arcadian (or pastoral) and Petrarchan ones. My particular interest is in the role of the common voice and the concern for the commonweal (general good) that is articulated obliquely within the play, and which serves as a critique of and an alternative to abusive sovereignty, as well as of idealized, impractical desires or perspectives that resonate across the intertwined personal and political realms. In exploring

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these interrelated themes, I pursue three main lines of analysis: the fear of public opinion or popular voice by the play’s two tyrants, Duke Frederick and Oliver, and the wisdom of that voice in its political judgments; the connection between a life embedded in the natural world and the capacity to understand and support the commonweal; and the function of *implicated participants*¹ in the development of a viable social and political order that allows for the development of the self as well as the support of the commonweal.

“Nature, Wit, and Fancy in *As You Like It*”

Ian Munro

Department of Drama, University of California, Irvine

"The truest poetry is the most feigning," quips the passionate Touchstone to his love Audrey, the courtly wit again teasing the country natural with matters foreign to her woodland existence. Touchstone's paradox plays on a familiar homophonic overlap between "feign" and "fain": thus (as in *Astrophil and Stella*) art is intimately bound up with desire, and vice versa. This paper explores this dynamic through a similar ligature in the term "fancy," etymologically a contraction of "fantasy" and visible throughout Shakespeare as the point at which the erotic and the creative meet. Thus, for example, Ganymede describes Orlando as a "fancy-monger" because his desires drive him to over-character the wilderness with love letters. In *As You Like It*, I would suggest, "fancy" operates as a kind of third term to the play's established (and unstable) opposition between wit and nature. I am working especially through Paolo Virno's discussion of wit's relation to what he calls "innovative action." For Virno, wit is practiced at the borderland of articulation, where linguistic games meet "non-linguistic drives," and amounts to an insurrection against established norms, political and otherwise; as he puts it, "The logic of crisis is most evident in the articulation between instinctual apparatus and propositional structure, between drives and grammar."² My goal, ultimately, is to use this framing to explore the relation of fancy, wit, and nature to the political crisis that initiates and informs the play.

“Do you not know I am a woman?” – *AYLI* as a Motley Approach to Feminine Conduct”

**Kristina Sutherland
University of Georgia**

While Shakespeare’s Rosalind is “borrowed,” in a sense, from Lodge’s pastoral tale, her behavior is not. Far from Lodge’s demure, easy-going Rosalynde, the playwright’s largest female role is a true motley of behaviors. She is at times the emotional, loquacious woman in

¹ Barbara Adam introduces this term “to designate a way of being in time, namely present, ready to take part in and share responsibility for what’s going on.” Barbara Adam, *Timewatch: The Social Analysis of Time*. Polity Press, 1995, p. 157, for example. Cited in the Glossary to *Reclaiming the Commons for the Common Good*, Heather Menzies. New Society Publishers, Gabriola Island, BC, Canada, 2014, kindle edition.

² Paolo Virno, *Multitude: Between Innovation and Negation* (New York: Semiotext(e), 2008), 160.

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love, and at times the “saucy lackey” and “knave”³ as she plays with Orlando in her role as Ganymede. This weaving of pertinent “masculinity” with weepy “femininity” is interesting in itself for the ways in which it allows us to contrast the misogynist views given as Ganymede with the peevish behaviors of Rosalind herself. Is Rosalind a send up of “masculine” behavior? Is she an affirmation of some of the early modern stereotypes of “woman”? And if she is, how might we see the other of “Juno’s swans,”⁴ her kinswoman and “sister,”⁵ Celia, whose rationale and decorum contrast the very image of “femininity” which Rosalind uses to test Orlando?

For this seminar, I will look at the weft and warp of feminine courtly prescripts and misogynist assumptions to examine what behavior, if any, Shakespeare’s play may be said to recommend to female spectators.

“In Praise of Touchstone”

**Alexander Thom
Shakespeare Institute**

Erasmus’s *Moriae Encomium* (‘In Praise of Folly’) exhibits certain parallels to Touchstone’s peculiar brand of folly. Suspending any debate concerning source attribution, this paper takes up (quite performatively) some shared stylistic habits between Erasmus’s Folly and Shakespeare’s Touchstone. This manifests itself in a dubious display of erudition, with an abundance of ‘mangled forms,’ along with a smuggling of the ludicrous into the serious and *vice versa*. In short, this paper attempts to offer a motley approach to motley. In pursuing this approach, I consider the difference between the artificial (or official) fool and the natural clown; I analyse Touchstone’s preoccupation with political speech, especially the oath; I consider his “stalking-horse” method of satirical misdirection; and, finally, I excavate a submerged (or perhaps imagined) critique of marriage as a juridification of love, and therefore as a solemnisation of something which ought to be foolish, erotic, and undignified. In a final gesture, I discard my critical façade, if only to conclusively embrace the narcissistic melancholy of the graduate student: *sans* syllogisms, *sans* terminology, certainly *sans* taste, and therefore *sans* everything.

““I do play the touch” : Touchstone and Testing in *As You Like It*”

**Dr. Lauren Weindling
Lecturer, Auburn University**

This article takes as its subject a philological explication of the fool’s name, Touchstone, unpacking and restoring its connotations by tracking its usage in early modern print material contemporaneous with Shakespeare’s play. This examination reveals that the ‘touchstone’ metaphor was associated with violent interrogation methods and even as a euphemism for

³ William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, ed. Frances E. Dolan (New York: Penguin Books, 2017), 3.2.289-90.

⁴ *AYLI*, 1.3.73.

⁵ *AYLI*, 1.2.263; 3.2.120; etc.

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torture, especially in the context of testing religious allegiance to root out potential Jesuit spies. This enlarged context for Touchstone’s name gives us a better sense for how the characters of *As You Like It*, fueled by political anxieties, understand Touchstone’s function in Arden; they treat him as a means for testing those around them: distinguishing noble from common, wise from foolish, and ally from enemy. The characters may not explicitly threaten torture, but their interrogative language seems to scratch at characters’ identities, testing them in the hopes of extracting truths much like a touchstone tests gold. But this means of testing depends upon the assumption that there are material distinctions between persons. In short, if treason and love are ‘inherited’ as many characters presume (1.3.59), then allegiances would be easily known. Yet, much like Shakespeare’s previous usage of the touchstone metaphor in *Richard III*, this etymological context elucidates Touchstone’s cultural critique wherein he parodies the ends of his own name. Touchstone’s comedy suggests that truth can be constructed through oaths, testimony, performance, and play.