

Initial Email:

Dear all,

It's our pleasure to welcome you to the 2019 Shakespeare Association of America seminar "Shakespeare's Forms." We're delighted that the topic has elicited enough interest that we've been asked to run two seminars. Once we have received your abstracts, we will divide the group and let you know what the arrangement will be.

As a reminder, here is our seminar proposal, in its longer form:

Shakespeare's Forms

As the titles of multiple monographs, edited collections, and special issues attest, the last decade has seen a renewal of critical interest in questions of form, inquiries underpinned by broader concerns with how formalist and historicist methodologies might productively be brought to bear on each other and what the future of (politically engaged) literary studies might look like. This seminar aims to extend and give new scope to these discussions by drawing on the expansive notion of form outlined in Caroline Levine's influential study *Forms* (2015), which argues that form includes "all shapes and configurations, all ordering principles, all patterns of repetition and difference" (3). While this understanding of form does not preclude familiar topics of formal analysis (rhyme and meter, syntax, metaphor, plot structures) it has the value of bringing new objects of analysis into view: the spatial arrangements of bodies on the stage, the hierarchical structure of a court, the relationship between couplets and couples in *Romeo and Juliet*, networks of outlaws and exiles and runaways, the hours of the watch in *Hamlet*, to name just a few Shakespearean possibilities. In addition to fostering the identification and analysis of previously unrecognized or understudied forms in Shakespeare's plays, this seminar's objectives include the development of an expanded critical vocabulary for talking about form, and a consideration of the social, political, and ethical affordances and constraints of particular forms. Using Levine's introduction as our shared reading and starting point for discussion, seminar participants might explore issues ranging from the overlap or collision of different forms within a play; the itineraries of a particular form throughout Shakespeare's work; Shakespeare's reconfiguration of forms familiar from contemporary early modern discourses; theorizations of form in early modern rhetorical handbooks and treatises; and the relationship between textual forms and performance practices. We welcome any kind of approach (historicist, theoretical, performance-based) that models close attention to the workings of form.

If you're not already familiar with Caroline Levine's *Forms*, we'd encourage you to read the introductory chapter, a scan of which is attached to this email.

Below you will find a schedule of important dates. We'll be sending reminders as deadlines approach, as well as an updated list of participants and a link to a Dropbox folder for circulating our work. Please send all correspondence to both of us.

-as soon as possible, confirmation that you've received this email, that you will be participating in the seminar, and that the email address we've used is your preferred one. Additionally, please let us know if you use a different email address for Dropbox than for correspondence.

-by Friday, **December 14**, brief abstracts and titles of your paper, as well as a list of 2-3 texts to contribute to our shared bibliography

-by Friday, **February 8**, papers of 2500-3000 words. This deadline is especially important, as we need to inform the SAA that we have received your paper to confirm your involvement in the conference. Once we have received the papers, we will divide the papers into smaller groups and ask you to provide brief written responses to two papers.

-by Friday, **March 15**, brief responses of 400-500 words to two papers

-April 17-20, SAA. We'll be in touch closer to the date about arranging plans for seminar drinks and/or dinner.

If you have any questions at this point, please let us know. We look forward to reading your work in the coming months, and to convening in DC in April.

All best,
Emily & Erin

Email after receiving papers:

Dear seminarians,

SAA is getting closer and closer. We're looking forward to seeing all of you in person, and we wanted to touch base about our final deadline in advance of the conference and plans for the conference itself. Because of strong interest in our seminar, we will be running two sessions, one on Friday at 11:00 – 1:00 and the second on Saturday at 4:00 – 6:00. We encourage everyone to attend both sessions if possible, and we will be organizing a post-seminar dinner on Saturday night. We will be in contact with you closer to the conference to get a head count for the dinner. If you know now that you can attend, please let us know.

You are in Shakespeare's Forms, Part Two, which meets on Saturday from 4:00 – 6:00. Please see below for your small group.

By **Friday, March 15**, please email a 400 – 500-word response to the author of each of your assigned papers, cc'ing me and Emily on your emails. I have attached the seminar contact list to this email, and you can find all seminar papers on Dropbox.

Best,

Erin and Emily

Group 5:

O'Dair

McKeen

Knight

Group 6:

Burton

Magnus

Woods

Group 7:

Sarpong (response to Totaro & Choi)

Totaro (response to Choi & Vrcek)

Choi (response to Vrcek & Sarpong)

Vrcek (response to Sarpong & Totaro)

Group 8:

Coblentz (response to Falck & McJannet)

Falck (response to McJannet & Williams)

McJannet (response to Williams & Coblentz)

Williams (response to Coblentz & Falck)