**SAA 2022**
**Workshop: Shakespeare and Women's Leadership**
**Leader: Natalie Eschenbaum**

**Jennifer Feather**

Shakespeare's portrayal of Henry V as a paragon of leadership has inspired countless individuals, organizations, and teams. Henry's rousing St. Crispian's day speech encapsulates a sense of loyalty and achievement in impossible conditions that has been taken up by blogs, leadership manuals, films, and sports teams as the quintessence of what it means to work effectively toward a common goal. However, any close reading of the play reveals the fragmentation within the English forces as much as the cohesion Henry attempts to inspire. Shakespeare, in fact, repeatedly suggests that the war itself is Henry's strategy to unify a multicultural and stratified collective with a national consciousness. Modern leadership manuals that take Henry as a paragon rarely explore the real tensions and failures underneath Henry's sparkling exterior. Nor do they explicitly take up issues of gender and race in the leadership models they offer, and yet, teams often founder precisely along these lines. Othello's poignant speech about the loss of camaraderie he experiences at the very thought that Desdemona might have committed adultery demonstrates both his vulnerability as a racial outsider and the key role masculinity plays in building the bonds on which his leadership relies. In this project, I will explore the creation of a "department climate response team" to address issues of department culture. It will include both initial thinking about how and why to constitute such a group, considerations of barriers and pitfalls, and objectives and key results for implementation.

**Chantelle MacPhee**

*Renaissance Women, Female Leadership, and Shakespeare*
In this project, an examination and deconstruction of female identity and the female body will be done through Viola, in *Twelfth Night;* Beatrice, in *Much Ado About Nothing*; and Portia in *Merchant of Venice*. In particular, the focus will be on what Amanda Sinclair calls "leadership capital"—the time, energy, and dedication you have towards leading your team while, at the same time, maintaining your identity in areas of tension, crisis, or growth. At the same time, Sinclair's work will be a starting point of the discussion, and begin the re-examination of the definition of leadership capital, leaders, and begin the development of an open source resource bank for women leaders in academia to draw upon for guidance and create a space where female leaders can converse about leadership challenges, successes, and vision.

**Kate McPherson**

*A Lesson Plan Concept: Leading with Compassion*
I plan to develop a seminar for my 12-15 student leaders in the UVU Honors Program about the power of leading with compassion, using examples from Shakespeare as the anchor. Since formalizing the student leadership programs in Honors about four years ago, I've been developing lessons to present during our all-leadership meeting once a semester. Past examples include sessions on perfectionism and time management. One of the key differences I have observed from female leaders I admire (Kamala Harris, for example, or my university's president, Astrid Tuminez) is their willingness to lead using compassion. This does not mean they lead only with emotion, softness, or certainly not weakness. At UVU, our relatively new president (in office since 2018) implemented a vision statement in 2019: "Exceptional Care, Exceptional Accountability, Exceptional Results." Her focus on caring (compassion, empathy) isn't unique, of course, but the degree to which she stresses it may be construed as a gendered value; she has, however, obtained strong buy-in from her Board of Trustees, donors, cabinet, university staff, and (to a lesser degree), university faculty. I would like to develop a one-hour series of points and activities that would be of interest to students from many disciplines

using passages and clips from Shakespeare in performance to explore the idea of how we lead with compassion for ourselves and for others. This means leaders having to acknowledge vulnerability or fallibility, listen deeply to themselves and those whom they lead, and forgiving people's individual weaknesses, mistakes, or quirks. One starting point might be Isabella in *Measure for Measure*, who despite her apparent lack of power, leads several men in the play towards improvement by focusing on mercy, despite her initial appearance of judgement and rigidity.

## Kathryn Moncrief

During the early stages of the pandemic, as I was guiding my large, multi-disciplinary department through the chaotic early stages of the pandemic, my mantra was, "Solve the problem in front of you and be kind." For this project, I plan to examine female leadership, looking for both models and lessons in Shakespeare. Some questions I ask: What challenges do female leaders continue to face? How do women lead during crisis? How might female leadership be different and differently effective? Characters from Shakespeare, including the Countess (*AW*), Paulina (*WT*), and Rosalind (*AYLI*), may offer models for a different kind of leadership-- nurturing, vulnerable, cooperative, inclusive, cultivating relationships and talent--rather than hierarchical, war making, aggressive, and conquering. Additionally, how might Shakespeare's characters offer lessons for strength and resolve through a distinctly female lens? Here, Isabella (*MFM*) and Portia (*MV*) may offer examples. I will consider "The Pedagogy of Kindness" and "A New Prescription for Power," asking how these takes on relational power can guide this approach.

## Jessica C. Murphy

*Advice for Leading with Empathy, Forgiveness, and Care*
In a recent discussion, Blanche McIntyre shared that part of the intention of directorial changes to the closing scene of *Measure for Measure* (Winter 2021 at Shakespeare's Globe) was to imagine that there might be a different way of sharing power. Duke, played by Hattie Ladbury proposes to Isabella, played by Georgia Landers. The focus here is not on Isabella's brother but on the sharing of power and resources within the couple. This hopeful and optimistic possibility for the ending of *Measure for Measure* recalls another hopeful ending in which *The Winter's Tale* concludes with the restoration of the royal line through the women family members Hermione and Perdita. I would like to spend my time with the work for this SAA session thinking through the alternatives that are possibilities within Shakespeare's plays. Contrary to the ad hoc advice I have received throughout my career, I have found that leading through empathy, forgiveness, and care brings more fulfillment. For the workshop, I would like to prepare advice for colleagues that offers an alternative vision of the way that power can work. My plan is to have this, with the Shakespearean examples as a, in my office for those times when I am in a position to offer advice.

## Kristen L. Olson

*Shakespeare and the Ethics of Leadership: Women and Power in the Elizabethan Age*I plan to design a course for the general education curriculum at Penn State, emphasizing the relation of gender and the ethics of political power. The plays provide an excellent opportunity to study the corporate state—those in power, and those adjacent to it—and the possibilities for designing the course include treating the plays as case studies in contrasting ethical paradigms, and emphasizing the relation of gender and the ethical management of power. The roles of queens and the women in courtly circles reflect the complication that gender introduces into the dynamics of leadership, and the course will examine the Elizabethan court and other European monarchies with prominent queens such as Mary Queen of Scots and Marguerite de Navarre. The course will allow students to work with archival materials in building their understanding of the historical context for Shakespeare's work. The writings of Elizabeth I provide a valuable window into political image-making, as well as her efforts to manage the

pressures of theologians such as Knox and her own closest advisors in her decision regarding marriage. Her public speeches demonstrate her political savvy in positioning her gender strategically, and her extensive correspondence shows how she managed powerful male courtiers building the leading economy of the day and exploring the New World. The complicated ethics of colonialism converge in this moment, as do the perplexed economic ethics of privateering, and Elizabeth's leadership intersects with these. This project offers the opportunity to translate sometimes esoteric research into a format intriguing to undergraduates that directly informs their interdisciplinary experience.

**Catherine (Cassie) Thomas**

*Shakespearean Affinities: Shared Equity Leadership and Women's Affinity Groups in Higher Ed*
This project puts into conversation three groups of texts: Shakespearean plays that feature women working in pairs or small groups to advance common interests; literature defining and discussing the benefits of affinity groups; and the 2021 ACE (American Council on Education) study on shared equity leadership (see https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Shared-Equity-Leadership-Work.pdf ). My institution is in the process of exploring and designing affinity groups as part of its commitment to DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion). One group that I am interested in forming and/or participating in (should they already have identified this as a cohort) is for women currently in or interested in pursuing (admin-curious) leadership roles on campus. My paper for this workshop will use models of women's advocacy, leadership, and community-building found in Shakespeare's plays, as well as current leadership literature, to explore the potentialities provided by such affinity groups to develop and promote shared equity leadership for women in higher ed. I also would like to interview my colleagues in Human Resources and the Office for Diversity and Equity Compliance (ODEC) about their current efforts and ways in which this project might dovetail with those. What do Shakespeare's plays have to say about women's affinity groups and their power and potential? What features and values are transferrable to modern day leadership development for women? What kind of "renaissance" does the shared equity leadership model call for in 21st century higher education?