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Dear Readers,

I am proud to introduce Volume XXVI (2006/07), one of the most robust volumes of *The Upstart Crow* in recent years. The special feature of this issue is "Shakespeare and the American South," a topic of growing interest to Shakespeare scholars, as well as to scholars working in other fields and disciplines.

The volume kicks off with an exciting contribution by Professor Christy Desmet, University of Georgia on ideologies of race and gender in American appropriations of *Taming of the Shrew*. Other essays, by Professor Robert Sawyer, East Tennessee State University, and Professor Alexander Harrington, Clemson University (in collaboration with a research team of students), also consider the relationship of Shakespeare to the American South. The book review section enjoys a new coherence, thanks to Professor Henry Turner, Rutgers University, who selected an intriguing line-up of books on Shakespeare and America and recruited strong scholars to review these books.

This issue, as always, cultivates diverse approaches to the study of Shakespeare. An essay by Maurice Hunt proposes a novel significance for Cassio's armored coat in *Othello*, while J. Gavin Paul investigates how the innovative director Robert Lepage has helped to fashion a "Canadian Shakespeare." These are just two examples of the depth and eclecticism that *The Upstart Crow* seeks to foster in its critical offerings.

Our performance review section continues to thrive, with essays that address a wide range of recent Shakespearean performance: from the 2007 season at London's Globe Theatre to major North American Shakespeare festivals to the burgeoning American Shakespeare Center.

Finally, you may notice that this volume is marked with a compound year, 2006/07. We have recently made changes to our production schedule, and so, beginning with this issue, we are making the volume year correspond more closely with the actual date of publication. Next year's issue, Volume XXVII, will have the volume year of 2008.

Thank you for continuing to read and support *The Upstart Crow*. I hope that you enjoy this issue.

Elizabeth Rivlin
Editor

SOUTHERN *SHREWS*: MARRIAGE AND SLAVERY IN AMERICAN APPROPRIATIONS OF SHAKESPEARE

Christy Desmet, University of Georgia

I. Introduction

To state the obvious, *The Taming of the Shrew* takes place in Italy. Like most Shakespeare plays, however, it can be translated to foreign climes, including the Southern United States. Philip C. Kolin, for instance, describes a *Taming of the Shrew*, “Southern style,” that was performed at the University of Southern Mississippi in 1976: “Gentlemen in the cast wore high silk hats and dapper frock coats; ladies sauntered in wide hoop skirts and bright silk dresses. Baptista dressed and talked like a Kentucky Colonel; Kate hurled insults like a shrew but looked like a Southern belle; and Petruchio’s servants looked like field hands.”¹ While the Southern Miss version of *Shrew* claimed a certain ideological innocence—there were no slaves in this imaginary South, only “field hands”—a 2002 production of *Shrew* at the Nottingham Playhouse in England “Southernized” the play as part of its cultural critique of American capitalism and racism in the 1950s. The set was adorned with advertisements for Brylcreem, something called the Real-pro bra, and Barbie dolls; and while the romantic lead Lucentio and his father sported Southern accents, black actor Andrew French was cast as Tranio, the clever servant of Lucentio who successfully poses, for much of the play, as his (white) “Master.” As Chris Hopkins notes, this is the America not only of Barbie, but also of Brown vs. Board of Education.²

While the Nottingham production of *The Taming of the Shrew* might seem to be an anomaly, in point of fact the metaphoric connection between marriage and racial discrimination, and more specifically, slavery, in American performances and appropriations of the play goes back to the nineteenth century, as both national and regional character are defined through women in relation to the nation’s most troubling political and ethical legacy. Is marriage slavery or slavery marriage? The responses produced by nineteenth-century writers indicate how Shakespeare can serve as a forum for American cultural politics and simultaneously bring Southern voices into dialogue with those of other regions and nations. And their answers find resonance in appropriations of Shakespeare’s *Taming of the Shrew* well into the twentieth century.

II. *Shrew* on Stage in the Antebellum South

Between 1750 and 1776, a number of Shakespeare plays were performed in the future United States, *Shrew* among them; Shattuck records an early performance (of the Garrick adaptation *Catharine and Petruchio* [1756]) in

Philadelphia on November 21, 1766.³ The United States was generally slow to warm to Shakespeare, but this situation changed in both North and South during the nineteenth century, as plays were legitimated by more and more cities, native companies were formed, and English stars found a market for guest appearances in America.⁴ For instance, between 1800 and 1860, “the citizens of Charleston, South Carolina, had the opportunity to see approximately 600 performances of twenty-three of Shakespeare’s plays, from the ever-popular *Richard II* to *Love’s Labor’s Lost*, with its one performance.”⁵

The Taming of the Shrew, or, more accurately, the adaptation by David Garrick entitled *Catharine and Petruchio*, was generally popular on Southern stages during the first half of the nineteenth century. The Shakespeare plays performed most frequently in Charleston were, in order, *Hamlet* (83 performances), *Macbeth* (76), *Othello* (64), and *Romeo and Juliet* (64). Nevertheless, William Stanley Hoole’s exhaustive study of Charleston antebellum theater also shows thirty-two performances of *Catharine and Petruchio* between 1800 and 1860.⁶ In 1851 and 1855, there are listings as well for *The Taming of the Shrew*, although the play was probably the Garrick adaptation going under its Shakespearean name. My own review of notices in the Charleston *Courier* between 1804 and 1860 yields a total of fifty performances for *Catharine and Petruchio*.⁷

Catharine and Petruchio, as a comic afterpiece appended to other plays, was kept in circulation by John Philip Kemble’s revised version throughout most of the nineteenth century.⁸ While keeping much of Shakespeare’s language, this farce shortens the play considerably and alters in some significant ways its gender politics. While the taming process is intensified by condensation—it all takes place in the isolation of Petruchio’s country retreat—Catharine takes over from Petruchio the role of tamer. At the end of act 1, she vows that “poor abandon’d Katharine,” as Bianca calls her, “Can make her husband stoop unto her lure . . . / Katharine shall tame this haggard; or, if she fails, / Shall tie her tongue up, and pare down her nails.”⁹ Petruchio for his part, explicitly rejects mastery over his bride after her final speech of submission, vowing that “Petruchio here shall doff the lordly husband; / An honest mask, which I throw off with pleasure.”¹⁰

Shrew’s plot and themes were also available to nineteenth-century audiences from John Tobin’s *The Honey Moon*, a sentimental rewriting of *The Taming of the Shrew* that was popular on Southern stages.¹¹ According to Hoole, between 1800 and 1860, Charleston enjoyed seventy-two performances of *The Honey Moon*. More uniformly conservative, in terms of its gender politics, than either Shakespeare’s or Garrick’s play, *The Honey Moon* concludes with this declaration from Juliana, the Kate figure: “That modesty, in deed, in word, and in thought, / Is the prime grace of woman.”¹² As Robin O. Warren argues, Tobin’s appropriation, in particular, supports the Southern antebellum “cult of true womanhood,” a patriarchal concept of (chivalrous) masculine dominance bolstered by (feminine) chastity, obedience, and decorum.

While *Shrews* on the nineteenth-century stage varied somewhat in their sexual politics, the particular connection between Petruchio’s taming of Kate and slavery as a Southern institution would have been reinforced, however

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unwillingly, by a common bit of stage business that is replicated in productions of *Shrew* even today: the tradition, apparently established by Garrick himself, of having Petruchio wield a large whip (see figures 1 and 2).¹³ The prop is explicitly legitimated in *Catharine and Petruchio* by a servant's description of the wedding proceedings, during the course of which Petruchio "shook his whip in token of his Love."¹⁴ In abolitionist symbolism, of course, the whip is also a pre-eminent symbol of slavery's brutality, retaining its currency and power through such contemporary novels as Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. On Southern stages, then, *The Taming of the Shrew* presented itself as uncomplicated farce, but not far below that sunny surface were vexed questions of race and gender that would become manifest in non-dramatic appropriations of the play.



Fig. 1: Illustration from American Anti-Slavery Society, *Facts for the People of the Free States*. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Digital ID: rbaac 08720.

III. William Gilmore Simms's *Tawny Shrew*

In the Shakespearean appropriations produced by William Gilmore Simms—the Charleston poet, novelist, editor, gentleman farmer, and apologist for slavery—*Taming* appears in symbolic tandem with *Othello*. While contemporary spectators might expect *Othello*'s color, race, and past life as a slave to make this a particularly controversial play for the South, *Othello* was very popular throughout the region.¹⁵ Hoole reports, for instance, that *Othello* was performed in Charleston sixty-three times between 1800 and 1860. Simms

himself not only attended, but also reviewed performances by such actors as Charles Kean, Thomas Abthorpe Cooper, and Edwin Forrest. On a trip to New Orleans in 1831, he saw Charles Kean in the role of Othello; Kean also played Othello opposite James Hackett's Iago in Charleston in 1832.¹⁶



Fig. 2: Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne in *The Taming of the Shrew* (1935), directed by Harry Wagstaff Gribble, production and costumes by Claggett Wilson. Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research.

Critics have yet to agree on whether Southern audiences saw Othello as black. Except for a few situations, such as one performance in Macon, Georgia, the lead actor's color was probably not a subject of particular contention.¹⁷ The issue is complicated, however, by the fact that throughout the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Othello generally was played by English actors as a "tawny" Moor rather than as a black man. Images of Edmund Kean as Othello, whose son Charles was the actor Simms saw in this role in Charleston in 1832, vary in their skin tone; Othello is blacker in color prints than in black-and-white ones, in part to enhance the color contrasts and to provide a foil for gold trim on the actor's garments; but generally, throughout the nineteenth century Othellos tended toward coffee-colored complexions. Kean's costume, furthermore, consistently

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orientalizes Othello, making him more exotically Eastern than African.¹⁸

What Simms saw onstage would probably have been a tawny *Othello*, but his coupling of *Shrew* and *Othello* also draws on and reformulates the equation of marriage and slavery established by feminist and abolitionist polemic of the time. As Moira Ferguson notes, throughout the period of British protest against slavery, "in references to themselves as pawns of white men, denied education as well as access to law and allied deprivations, feminists of all classes were prone to refer loosely to themselves as slaves."¹⁹ William Lloyd Garrison also used the figure of the female slave to encourage white women's support of abolition by analogy with marriage.²⁰ According to Karen Sánchez-Eppler, "The rhetorics of the two reforms meet upon the recognition that for both women and blacks it is their physical difference from the cultural norms of white masculinity that obstructs their claim to personhood."²¹

The Taming of the Shrew, with its characterization of marriage as animal husbandry, provides Simms with a metaphor to challenge the marriage/slavery equation in abolitionist polemic. A rhetoric of husbandry that legitimates both the economic subservience of women and slaves is older even than Shakespeare's play; Juliana Schiesari traces the argument that women and cultural others both require domestication, which undergirds patriarchy at home and imperialism abroad, as far back as Pico della Mirandola's *On The Dignity of Man* and Leon-Battista Alberti's *Book of the Family*. Simms himself subscribed to the economic trope of husbandry to justify slavery.²² In a heated response to Harriet Martineau, Simms's *Slavery in America* contends that

The slaveholders of the South, having the moral and animal guardianship of an ignorant and irresponsible people under their control, are the great moral conservators, in one powerful interest, of the entire world . . . *Providence has placed him in our hands, for his good, and has paid us from his labor for our guardianship.* ²³ (italics in original)

There are no references here to *The Taming of the Shrew*, although part of Simms's argument does rest on Ulysses' degree speech from *Troilus and Cressida*; yet the economic foundation of this anti-abolitionist rhetoric is the key to *Shrew's* appeal for Simms. In a pair of stories that draw on *Shrew* and *Othello*, those whose authority is legitimate prosper, while overreachers are destroyed by their cupidity. But for Simms, there is also the tragedy of the hard-working outsider who deserves ethically the marital prize he achieves, but is slowly destroyed by a hostile, rigid social hierarchy that is blind to his virtues. Hence, the coupling of *Othello's* tragedy with *Shrew's* comedy.

Confession tells the story of how sexual jealousy causes a loving husband—a poor orphan who makes it good as a lawyer, but because of parental resistance to the marriage must elope with his wife—to murder his utterly innocent wife, who has resisted attempts on her virtue by a besotted aristocrat but, in the face of her husband's anger and coldness, dwindles away until the husband finally poisons her with prussic acid.²⁴ In this version

of *Othello*, race itself seems extraneous; with the exception of a stereotyped household servant, the novel contains no black people. Edward Clifford, the husband, is more of a Heathcliff—dark, brooding, and as I have argued elsewhere, Irish.²⁵ The ethnicity of the Othello figure, as Irish, however, “colors” the murderer-hero enough to make him fit the Shakespearean role assigned to him. Again, there are no overt references to *The Taming of the Shrew*, but the economic discourse of good husbandry is present. Despite cruel treatment from his foster parents and future in-laws, Clifford studies law on his own and is financially successful; after Julia’s death, he is destined for a life of continual repentance, but will carry out his exile profitably with his friend Kingsley in the “rich empire of Texas,” virgin territory that awaits “the vigorous hand of cultivation.”²⁶ In *Confession*, Simms whitens Shakespeare’s hero, creating a tawny Othello that allows him to displace the racial issues of Shakespeare’s play, so that his *Othello* is purely a tragic love story. At the same time, the ambiguous ethnicity and color of Edward Clifford keep open the possible analogy between racial and marital tragedy.

Simms revisits the Othello story in an admittedly objectionable short story, “Caloya, or the Loves of the Driver,” published in 1856 and the subject of much criticism from the reading public. In this story, pointedly compared to Shakespeare’s *Othello*, Desdemona is a young Catawba Indian princess married to an old, drunk, Catawba chief, while Cassio is a driver, the slave who acts as overseer on a South Carolina plantation. The humor of this story is rough, almost in line with the tone of *Othello* burlesques of the nineteenth century; the saga ends happily, however, with the death of the old husband, demotion of the driver, and remarriage of Caloya, the Desdemona figure, to a young husband from her tribe. All this is accomplished by the intervention of the young, handsome, benevolent plantation master.

Caloya, by virtue of her symbolic position in the story and her “tawnyness” as an American Indian, is as ambivalent a figure as Edward Clifford in *Confession*. In fact, the tale must work hard to evade the sensitive issues of Southern slavery and the usurpation of Indian lands that it so pointedly raises. The story achieves this “whitewashing” effect by overlaying onto *Othello* Shakespeare’s *Taming of the Shrew*. What makes Nuckles, the old husband, unworthy of his tawny princess is his treatment of her as property; he calls her his dog. What makes Mingo, the negro driver, so evil is his cupidity, his lust for property. In a direct, although unmarked echo of Petruchio’s assertion of property rights over Katharina at their wedding, Mingo talks incessantly of “my horse, my land, my ox, and my ass, and all that is mine.”²⁷ In a complicated ideological dance, slavery is legitimated by the Indian’s disregard for his wife’s humanity and the negro driver’s supposedly illegitimate desire for property and mastery. Caloya herself is a noble remnant of the Catawba Indians, who function, in the terminology of Renée Berlund, as the “national uncanny”—symbolic ancestors for (white) America whose ill-treatment at the hands of a slave in Simms’s story justifies, on a political level, the status quo.²⁸



Fig. 3: Ada Rehan as Katharine in *The Taming of the Shrew* (1887). By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library.

IV. *Shrew* on the Road to Tara

The metaphorical equation between marriage and slavery, so central to and so troubling in William Gilmore Simms's antebellum coupling of *Taming* and *Othello*, would become absorbed into proto-feminist arguments about marriage at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1896, the American journal *Poet-lore* printed three pieces on *The Taming of the Shrew*. The first, by Arthur Way of the Clifton Shakespeare Society in Bristol, England, criticizes Kate as an overly aggressive, sixteenth-century version of the "New Woman," whose taming is necessary to save her from herself. According to Way, she experiences the sweet victory of submission and, as a reward, can lord it over the other wives. W. J. Rolfe, the editor of Shakespeare editions for schools and reading clubs, asserts that Kate is attracted to Petruchio from the start and, in the dispute over sun and moon, slyly engages in private humor with her husband.²⁹ Ella Crowell, by contrast, compares Kate's independence to that of Ibsen's Nora. For her, Kate has a stronger character than Nora, but accommodates herself wisely to the more restrictive culture of Renaissance England.³⁰

Although only Rolfe refers to the production specifically, in 1887, about a decade before this issue of *Poet-lore* was published, Augustin Daly had restored the Shakespearean text of *Shrew* to the New York stage in a production that



Fig. 4: A. Egg, "Katherine," engraved by D.L. Glover from Charles Heath, *The Heroines of Shakspeare* (ca. 1848).

starred John Drew and the formidable Ada Rehan. Graham Robertson, who saw the London production, liked it despite himself: "What a wonderful pair did with the play, how they contrived that the brutal tale of the bullying of, starving, and frightening of a virago into a spiritless drudge would become the delightfully amusing love story of two charming people I have never been able to find out; but nevertheless the miracle was wrought."³¹

Although the production achieves a sentimental ending with the Shrew being tamed, it does so without reducing Kate to a cipher. Rehan, as Kate, was clad in dark red silk and heavy brocade, in keeping with the production's use of Renaissance painting as inspiration (see figure 3).³² As Robertson describes her entrance, however, it becomes clear that this Kate was no placid contessa:

Not a whit of her shrewishness did she spare us; her storms of passion found vent in snarls, growls, and even inarticulate screams of fury; she paced hither and thither liked a caged wild beast, but her rages were magnificent like an angry sea or a sky of tempest, she blazed a fiery comet through the play, baleful but beautiful.³³

Kim Marra has argued that within the dramatic space of the *Shrew* production,

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Daly worked out a scenario of Western conquest in which his own taming of his lead actress merged with Shakespeare's plot. Masculine directing mastered a raging, untamed feminine nature, now identified with Western territory that awaits the capitalist conqueror at the commencement of America's Gilded Age. Kate is now in and of the Wild Wild West, tamed though sexual mastery and colonized as unclaimed territory by a robust, Anglo-Saxon American masculinity.

At the same time, the racial inflection of *Shrew's* gender politics is continued through the ethnic construction of Ada Rehan's Katharine. The "darkening" of Kate's character did not originate with either Rehan or America. The image of Katherine Minola found in Charles Heath's *Heroines of Shakespeare* (ca. 1848), for instance, looks out broodingly at the reader, her sullen eyes and frowning mouth completing the "darkening" of the heroine's character that begins with her long hair and gown (see figure 4). The facing text for this image, excerpted from the wooing scene, underscores the sexual energy beneath Kate's black mood. Heath's Kate is more Catherine Earnshaw than angel in the house. Rehan herself was an Irish Catholic whose ethnic "otherness" may have played into Daly's compulsion to tame her, and she was specifically described by Henry Parker as "tawny":³⁴

Miss Rehan's Katherine was of large dimensions. Its dominating trait was an imperiousness that transcended even pride. Who of us . . . can forget the tawny figure that swept into the room in Baptista's house, tense with pride in every motion and every tone—imperious will incarnate? It was too magnificent to be quite human.³⁵

Amazonian and tawny—in effect, "black Irish" and therefore not "quite human," Ada Rehan's sexuality is figured in dark and dangerous terms that elide the distance between color and sexuality.³⁶ In her time, Rehan's primordial sexuality appealed not only to male voyeurism, but also to women viewers, who by now made up the largest portion of Daly's audience, so that this new shrew negotiated carefully a path between sexual rebellion and submission to create a Kate who, although not completely a New Woman, at least avoids the marital shackles that, in the theatrical imaginary of Robertson, turn Kate as "virago" into a "humorless drudge." Just as the British and American readers of *Poet-lore* could both excoriate and celebrate Katharine the Curst as a New Women while other readers could celebrate happy marriage in the play, onstage the late nineteenth-century shrew could have her way and steal the show.

The fiery, tawny, Irish shrew played by Ada Rehan finds a Southern descendant in Scarlett O'Hara, the heroine of that monument of popular literature and American cinema, *Gone With the Wind* (1936; 1939). Margaret Mitchell's novel contains various references to Shakespeare. The most heavily marked allusion asks whether Scarlett is a Lady Macbeth whose sexual freedom and economic entrepreneurship have caused her to "unsex" herself.³⁷ But there are as well, as Celia Daileader notes in her extended analysis of Shakespeare, sex, and race, more diffuse references to *Othello* and *Taming of the Shrew* that

map out Scarlett's relation to Rhett Butler.

A swashbuckling privateer not unlike the dashing Petruchio of Douglas Fairbanks in the 1929 film of *The Taming of the Shrew*, Rhett is called dark, brown, swarthy and piratical, and black.³⁸ His repeated desire to hurt Scarlett, coupled with his ravishment/rape of her, explicitly evokes both Othello's sexual trajectory and Petruchio's rough taming tactics. Twice, Rhett says that Scarlett deserves to be whipped with a "buggy whip"; once he chokes her until she passes out; and once, in a direct echo of *Othello*, he threatens to tear her to pieces.³⁹ Finally, there is *Taming's* trope of masculine horsemanship; as Rhett tells Scarlett, "I'm riding you with a slack rein, my pet, but don't forget that I'm riding you with curb and spurs just the same." Scarlett, like the tawny Ada Rehan, is Irish. Her sexuality and ethnicity "color" her enough to make her Rhett's female counterpart as much as his foil. According to the novel's opening description of its heroine, Scarlett is "not beautiful, but men seldom realized it when caught by her charm":

In her face were too sharply blended the delicate features of her mother, a Coast aristocrat of French descent, and the heavy ones of her florid Irish father. But it was an arresting face, pointed of chin, square of jaw. Her eyes were pale green without a touch of hazel, starred with bristly black lashes and slightly tilted at the ends. Above them, her thick black brows slanted upward, cutting a startling oblique line in her magnolia-white skin.⁴⁰

Her magnolia-white skin notwithstanding, a century earlier Scarlett might have sat for the Heath portrait of Shakespeare's Katherine. And, possessed of an Irish temper, Scarlett can be a real shrew. Throwing an insipid china rose-bowl against the fireplace after Ashley Wilkes rejects her, she demonstrates Katherine's penchant for taking out her rage on household items. When Rhett, who has overheard the scene, mocks her, Scarlett transfers her fury to him: "If she could have killed him she would have done it. Instead, she walked out of the room with such dignity as she could summon and banged the heavy door behind her."⁴¹

What solidifies even more strongly the homology between Rhett/Scarlett and Kate/Petruchio is their mutual involvement with what Rhett terms "mercenary" concerns. Rhett, who was "cast off without a shilling in early youth," is making good money from the war and is certain that he will "clean up a million on the blockade."⁴² Also like Petruchio, Rhett is willing to pay for whores and barter for respectable women, paying a scandalous \$150 for a reel with the recently widowed Scarlett.⁴³ After the war, of course, Scarlett herself runs a lumber mill on convict labor in order to save Tara; a woman of business, she has come to represent the mercantile New South of Atlanta.⁴⁴

The tension between commercial exchange and sexual combat in Petruchio's wooing of Kate characterizes as well the long seduction of Scarlett by Rhett Butler, as becomes most evident in one of their early sallies over an expensive, dark-green taffeta bonnet. When Scarlett considers turning the hat

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into a mourning bonnet, Rhett threatens to withdraw the gift and “find some other charming lady with green eyes who appreciates my taste.”⁴⁵ Although Scarlett expects him to take some “liberty” after bestowing on her such an expensive present, this Petruchio refuses to kiss his Kate. Enraged, she cries, “You are the horriddest man I have ever seen and I don’t care if I ever lay eyes on you again.”⁴⁶ His reply is a clever inversion of Kate and Petruchio’s negotiation with the cap in *Shrew’s* final banquet scene: “Katharine, that cap of yours *becomes* you not. / Off with that bauble, *throw it underfoot*,” Petruchio commands.⁴⁷ With Rhett, the injunction is merely mocking: “If you really felt that way, you’d stamp on the bonnet. My, what a passion you are in and it’s *quite becoming*, as you probably know. Come, Scarlett, and *stamp on the bonnet* to show me what you think of me and my presents”⁴⁸ (italics added). While Shakespeare’s lovers win money with their play, Rhett always exacts a price for his gifts; and although in Shakespeare, the tussle over “rings and things” leads to peace, love, and quiet life (5.2.112), Rhett rightly warns Scarlett that “I am tempting you with bangles and bonnets and leading you into a pit.”⁴⁹ When Scarlett’s reputation is completely ruined and Rhett forces her to go alone to the Wilkes reception, he punishes her again with flamboyant clothing, cruelly tightening the laces of her dress—green in the book and harlot red in the movie—and wishing that the cutting stays were around her “neck” rather than her waist. In his cruelty toward Scarlett, Rhett combines Petruchio’s focus on female fashion with Othello’s murderous rage.⁵⁰

At this point, *Gone With the Wind* threatens to veer completely into *Othello* territory with a violent bedroom scene. As Daileader notes, the rape/ravishment scene in this novel emphasizes a simultaneous ascent up the stairs and a descent into profound, smothering darkness:

He was a mad stranger and this was a dark blackness she did not know, darker than death. He was like death, carrying her away in arms that hurt. She screamed, stifled against him and he stopped suddenly on the landing and, turning her swiftly in his arms, bent over her and kissed her with a savagery and a completeness that wiped out everything from her mind but the dark into which she was sinking and the lips on hers.⁵¹

Remembering how before she had wanted to trap Rhett in love so that “she could hold the whip over his insolent black head,” Scarlett’s native shrewishness yields to a not-altogether-suitable virginal nervousness.⁵² But while Othello kissed Desdemona ere he killed her, Scarlett’s extravagant and wheeling stranger is up and gone by morning, leaving behind only a rumpled pillow and his blushing wife.

In *Gone With the Wind*, race and sexuality once again are linked through an ambiguously dark skin color that justifies social domination (this time in marriage) by metaphorical connection to the institution of slavery (remembered through a Southern perspective on Reconstruction). From *Confession* to *Gone*

With the Wind, we have come full circle. In the novel's bittersweet mingling of Shakespearean tragedy and comedy, "tomorrow" never sinks into the relentless repetition that drives Macbeth and Lady Macbeth to their doom; but it is no more than "another day."

V. *Shrew* after the Southern Diaspora

When Margaret Mitchell's novel was translated into film, the story of the chivalric antebellum South became a national phenomenon. Jan Cronin has recently argued that in the effort to make a seamless transition from book to screen, Daniel O. Selznick's movie demonstrates not only the "way in which the South had become a site of national imaginings and projections," but also "the South's narrative of itself as amorphous," incapable of being pinned down as a monolithic tale and fragmenting deconstructively into a variety of individual images and myths.⁵³ In this post-cultural environment, displaced in both time (from the Civil War to the 1930s) and place (from North Georgia to Hollywood), the *Shrew* herself becomes difficult to locate. We can, however, catch one final glimpse of Ada Rehan's elemental shrew and of Scarlett's black temper in Franco Zeffirelli's 1967 film version of *The Taming of the Shrew*, starring Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor.⁵⁴ Ann Christensen and Barbara Hodgdon have argued that Zeffirelli's *Shrew* revolves around the definition of home and hearth in post-World War II America. Burton, as Petruchio, is figured as a fortune-hunting Brit who, by the very morning after his so-called honeymoon, has found his own house colonized by his (symbolically American) prize. But there exist, as well, both direct and indirect connections between Zeffirelli's film and the earlier, antebellum America of *Gone With the Wind*.

Both Zeffirelli's Padua and Scarlett's South are visually idealized, represented as expansive landscapes overlaid with a veneer of the hyperreal. In the opening sequence of *Gone With the Wind*, Gerald O'Hara gallops recklessly across his estate, to be greeted by Scarlett running downhill amidst an impossible expanse of petticoats. In the film, she receives from her father the unwelcome news that Ashley will marry Melanie against a Technicolor sunset that presages the later burning of Atlanta; her return home from the Wilkes' barbecue is heralded by a rainbow. Scarlett's return to Tara after the war with Melanie, her baby, and Prissy takes place against a Gothic moonscape. And her final declaration that "Tomorrow is another day" takes place against the same sunset, punctuated by the same gnarled tree that had framed Gerald's unwelcome news about Ashley.

In a similar vein, Zeffirelli's *The Taming of the Shrew* takes place in a spacious landscape that is contrasted with a crowded, bustling carnival scene in the film's opening shots.⁵⁵ As Zeffirelli himself writes, he "decided to make use of Richard [Burton]'s expansiveness by opening the play out, as one can do in a film. Thus, I had him chasing her around the great house and on the roof, and even added a dose of slapstick when they fell through the roof onto the woodshed. It was all very Douglas Fairbanks, with lots of athletic action, yet

never lost sight of its classical origins."⁵⁶ A sense of the hyperreal is achieved here by an overlay of soft sepia coloring, perhaps a hearkening back to the palette of Veronese, as used by Daly. In the opening scene, when Lucentio and Tranio enter Padua, they cross an expanse of landscape that is gradually revealed to be a two-dimensional painting; the camera's point of view then transitions into an equally lush "real" space, riotous with color and detail. As the use of Panavision makes the painted backdrop dominate the scene, juxtaposed against and then blending with the real foreground, "we are at once intrigued by its apparent realism yet aware of its artificiality."⁵⁷ The end result is a celebration both of sexuality—a "release of Dionysian energies"—and of bourgeois values, including a conservative gender ideology.⁵⁸ As Russell Jackson writes, "Zeffirelli creates a convincingly detailed social picture of a world of sexual and social success, in which people can better themselves and each other," so that husband and wife live happily ever after.⁵⁹

A second link between the Zeffirelli *Taming of the Shrew* and *Gone With the Wind*, as both novel and film, is the filmic genealogy of tempestuous couples, both on and sometimes off camera, that traces a line from Tara to Padua. Zeffirelli's film was explicitly planned as a remake of the 1929 Mary Pickford/Douglas Fairbanks film *Taming of the Shrew*, in which America's Sweetheart wielded a mean whip and broke her new husband's head with a chair, and Fairbanks drank heavily, cracked his own whip, and inadvisedly talked aloud of his shrew-taming plans while dining with a large dog. The tradition in which the actors playing Kate and Petruchio themselves have a public marriage, often tinged with violence, goes back as far as Kitty Clive and Henry Woodward's performance in Garrick's *Catharine and Petruchio*. At supper, Woodward was said to have stuck a fork in his bride's finger and once to have pushed her offstage with such force that she fell to the floor.⁶⁰ Pickford and Fairbanks also had a stormy time during the filming of their film, with Fairbanks drinking and philandering and failing to show up on time for filming, behavior that undermined Pickford's good business sense and professionalism. And Zeffirelli reminisces about marital fireworks between Taylor and Burton during his first meeting with them and throughout the filming of *Shrew*.⁶¹

The connection between these sets of cinematic lovers is deepened by the intervention of two other hard-drinking, combative couples: Maggie the Cat and Brick in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and George and Martha of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*⁶² In Richard Brooks's film of Tennessee Williams's play, a young Elizabeth Taylor, wasp-waisted with "magnolia-white" skin, seeks desperately to regain the love of her husband Brick (Paul Newman), a failed athlete and heir to the Pollitt plantation turned sexually ambivalent, passive-aggressive alcoholic. Maggie, driven to sustain the Mississippi Delta plantation built by Big Daddy as Scarlett works to save Tara, is nevertheless more intent on heirs than is her North Georgia predecessor; at the end of the play and the film, having lied about being pregnant, at Brick's invitation Maggie ascends the stairs to their bedroom, where they will make good on that lie in a determined effort at reproduction. As the academic couple Martha and George in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Taylor and

Burton play more dangerous, destructive games with alcohol and sex that end—more cruelly in Albee's play than in Mike Nichols's film—with George "killing off" rhetorically the couple's imaginary son in front of their horrified guests.

In 1967, one year after the Nichols film and shortly after himself producing a French version of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, Zeffirelli seems intent on redeeming the degraded sexuality of Albee's married couple in the mating of his Kate and Petruchio. In Zeffirelli's Padua, alcohol and violence leave no lasting damage. After their disastrous wedding night, as critics have discussed, Taylor is up early and dusting the furniture when Burton finally rolls out of bed. She also redeems Maggie the Cat's uncomfortably intense child-lust, in an "unguarded" moment casting a dreamy look at a group of children. Gone, as well, are the sterile marital beds that visually dominate the suffocating domestic spaces of both previous films. When Kate and Petruchio finally come together in the Zeffirelli *Taming of the Shrew*, they fall through the barn floor onto a soft pile of white wool, in which Taylor had reveled sensuously only a few minutes earlier. But although sexual wrestling has become commonplace in productions of this play, the real violence in Burton and Taylor's fisticuffs—while Kate flails fruitlessly at Petruchio, a ragged piece of wood dangles dangerously close to her throat—places the scene within the tradition of Rhett Butler's rape/ravishment of Scarlett O'Hara. The positioning of Burton above Taylor, particularly in a publicity still of this scene, directly mimics the canonical image of Clark Gable bending over a prostrate Vivian Leigh—her chin, like that of Taylor, tilted upward—as he carries her up the winding stairs to the bedroom (see figures 5 and 6).

Certainly, Zeffirelli takes pains to mitigate the violence of his ravishment scene. After her tumble in the wool with Burton, Taylor springs up unharmed and undaunted, and in the companion scene, when Burton carries a bedraggled Taylor in his arms to the marital bedchamber, he kisses her shoulder gently and, in deference to her obvious shyness when undressing, sleeps off his drunk chastely on a wooden table. (Scarlett had enjoyed such gallant behavior from her first husband, Charlie Hamilton, on their wedding night, but not from Rhett.) By placing Taylor quite literally in the position of Scarlett, however, Zeffirelli casts her as yet another shrew whose consort with a dark, handsome stranger makes her rape seem inevitable and her misty-eyed recitation of Kate's submission speech, stripped completely of irony, yet another "justified" example of marital dominance.

In the 1929 *Taming of the Shrew*, both Kate and Petruchio brandish large whips with great abandon. Once Pickford has hit Fairbanks in the head with a stool and taken him maternally to her bosom for comfort, however, she tosses her whip in the fire as an unnecessary prop. Elizabeth Taylor's Katherine wields pieces of furniture, but no whip. It would seem that the discourse of sexual politics surrounding *Shrew* had extricated itself finally from the problematic discourse of slavery. In Gloria Naylor's *Linden Hills* (1985), however, we find one final, chilling exfoliation of the marriage/slavery metaphor in which the troubled history of Southern *Shrews* moves North to infiltrate the middle-class African American suburbs of the post-bellum black diaspora.⁶³



Fig. 5: Clark Gable and Vivien Leigh, Poster for *Gone With the Wind* (1939), directed by David O. Selznick.

Although Naylor's novels often appropriate Shakespearean plays as loose structural models, she is reticent about claiming Shakespearean precedents. In *Linden Hills*, particularly, as Lester tells Willie, there is no Shakespeare, for the fences built around the schools, as cultural barriers, keep Shakespeare, and much else, from the African American community. "You'd think of all the places in the world, this neighborhood had a chance of giving us at least one black Shakespeare," Willie complains. "But Linden Hills ain't about that, Willie," is Lester's reply. "You should know that by now."⁶⁴ For the women of Brewster Place, Linden Hills had been the city on the hill, where they hoped to rise out of poverty and despair, a place without violence and domination. *The Women of Brewster Place* had ended, memorably, with the horrific rape of Lorraine who, punished for lesbianism and her social status as a teacher, dragged her broken body through the streets of the neighborhood that had betrayed her.

There is no rape in Linden Hills, but there is a more literal form of slavery. The Lucifer at the heart of this Inferno (Naylor's primary literary reference) is Luther Nedeed—mortician, real estate entrepreneur, and the last in a long line of Nedeed patriarchs. The first Luther bought his wife in Tupelo, Mississippi and told her "that I have no rights to my son. He owns the child as he owns me."⁶⁵ The present Luther "bought" his wife at his tenth college reunion, once she had become professionally successful, but unsure that she would ever marry. The black Nedeeds marry light-skinned women—in the early days, quadroons and octaroons—and when Willa Prescott, the present Mrs. Nedeed, gives birth to a white child, her husband punishes her for adultery by locking both her and the child in the basement of their home. Besides the color dynamics, there is another touch of *Othello* in this gothic tale; when they wed, Luther had given Willa his mother's ring, telling her to keep it, but not lose it, much like the handkerchief that Othello gives Desdemona.⁶⁶ But the real horror is not the



Fig. 6: Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton in *The Taming of the Shrew* (1967), directed by Franco Zeffirelli.

story of *Othello*; it is the story of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

The way of Nedeed men has always been to wed, produce an heir that mirrors themselves, and then let the vessel of that heir dwindle for lack of sustenance or solidify into an unobtrusive piece of furniture. One of Willa's predecessors, as she learns in her search through family memorabilia in the basement, cut herself; another wasted away of bulimia; and yet another erased her face from all of the family photographs. Luther, like his father before him, is prone to consider marriage as a successful taming: "breaking in a wife is like breaking in a good pair of slippers. Once you'd gotten used to them, you'd wear them until they fell apart."⁶⁷ To punish Willa for the supposed adultery that had given him a white son, Nedeed enacts, quite literally and without mercy, Petruchio's plan to kill his wife with kindness. Luther, like Petruchio, rations out both food (little more than cereal) and water, whose advent is announced by him over the intercom before the water is sent down a pipe to the basement's denizens: "Mrs. Nedeed, I'm giving you some water now. There will be no more food. Please catch as much as you can quickly because it won't be on all night."⁶⁸ Luther, more doggedly than Petruchio himself, wants his wife to understand completely that "he controlled her food and water and light." These were not hers by right, but a "gift" from the patriarch.⁶⁹ Like the Nedeed women before her, then, Willa Prescott is her husband's slave; her child, whether wanted or unwanted, is equally the property of Luther, and he can do what he wants with this property. Both are no more than his horse, his ox, his anything.

VI. Conclusion

Luther Nedeed fantasizes that Willa, once she has “learned her lesson” and is allowed out of the basement, will want to “poison” him, as if she played Othello to *his* Desdemona; Willa herself thinks about smothering her child, and perhaps does. But in her final defiance of enslavement in the house of Luther, Willa Prescott Nedeed chooses to end her own life and that of her husband by playing the role of a thoroughly tamed shrew. When Willie and Lester arrive at the Nedeed house to help Luther trim his Christmas tree, Willie feels distinctly out of place, as if he were “walking into a movie set for *Wuthering Heights*”; indeed, in Daileader’s analysis, Heathcliff is the first of those “handsome devils” that populate the genealogy of Rhett Butler as Othello/Petruchio.⁷⁰ In *Gone With the Wind*, Rhett Butler takes Scarlett up the stairs (very daunting stairs, in the film version) into the darkness that is their marital bedroom. By contrast, Willa ascends from her dark hell into the house proper, embracing the body of her dead son. What young Willie sees is this:

There in the mirror next to the open kitchen door was a woman, her hair tangled and marred, her sunken cheeks streaked with dirt. Her breasts and stomach were hidden behind a small body wrapped in sheer white lace. The wrinkled dress was caked under the arms with dried perspiration, the sagging pantyhose torn at the knees and spotted with urine.⁷¹

Looking like Bertha Mason, herself a dark shrew with an indecorous mouth, Willa says simply to Luther, “Your son is dead.” As she moves toward her husband, however, the deranged wife proves to be intent not on mayhem, but on housekeeping. Having straightened up the basement morgue, her former prison, Willa heads neither for her tormentor nor the door, but “for the piles of boxes and loose paper in the corner by the hall door.”⁷² Willa’s insane goal is to straighten up the house, from bottom to top. She is like a sad, demonic shadow of Elizabeth Taylor, cleaning the chandeliers of Petruchio’s country retreat on the day after her wedding. In an effort to stop her, Luther enters a fatal embrace with Willa and his dead child, until they back as one into the fireplace, Willa’s veil catches fire, and the house burns down. The dream deferred of Brewster Place becomes many dreams destroyed in Linden Hills.

Ever since Shakespeare’s invention of her, Katherine the Curst—quite unlike her tragic counterpart Desdemona—has resembled a “hazel twig,” “straight and slender, and brown in hue / As hazel-nuts, and sweeter than the kernels” (2.1.242-45). She can, by patriarchal and racist logic, be raped and enslaved because a woman who is not quite “white” enough generally proves, in the words of Rhett Butler, to be “no lady.”⁷³ But that lack of gentility is also the Southern shrew’s strength. Like the hazel twig, she bends, but often succeeds: Caloya gets a young new husband, Scarlett her cherished Tara and at least the hope of another day. Poor Willa wins only the gothic validation of burning

down the patriarchal house, but after Luther's immolation, it is to be hoped that in the multi-volume history of Linden Hills being written by Dr. Braithwaite, the shrew's story will finally be told. Hers is not a tale told by an idiot, signifying nothing, but rather the chronicle of marriage's dangerous, even deadly, kinship with slavery in the history of Southern Shrews.

Notes

1. Philip C. Kolin, "The Taming of the Shrew—Southern Style," *Shakespeare Newsletter*, May 26, 1976, 23.
2. This is not the only recent British version of *Shrew* to have linked the play to America and, more specifically, to the American South. A production at the Theatre Alba, at Duddingston Kirk Manse Gardens in Edinburgh, put on a production in August 2005 whose open-air setting combined "'20s dance music with a whiff of the ante-bellum South." Timothy Ramsden, review of *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Reviews Gate*, August 15, 2005, <http://reviewsgate.com/index.php?name=News&file=article&sid=2454> (accessed March 2, 2006). In what sounds like a somewhat incoherent equation between matters of race and marriage, James Sutherland as Petruchio is "a gringo alongside his bullet-bearing Mexican servant, both turning up as Indian braves for the wedding to Kate."
3. Charles H. Shattuck, *Shakespeare on the American Stage: From Booth and Barrett to Sothorn and Marlowe*, vol. 2 (Washington: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1987), 15-16.
4. Shattuck, 16.
5. Woodrow L. Holbein, "Shakespeare in Charleston, 1800-1860," in *Shakespeare in the South: Essays on Performance*, ed. Philip C. Kolin (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1983), 88-111. According to Bruce McConachie, after 1855 the performance of Shakespeare declined in both North and South. Bruce McConachie, *Melodramatic Formations: American Theatre and Society, 1820-1870* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1992). Here is McConachie's more specific breakdown of performances in the Northeast:

While precise figures are not available for the total number of performances of plays by specific authors in New York City during the period, the figures for all Philadelphia theatres, albeit between 1856 and 1878, are revealing: Shakespeare, 2,314; Boucicault, 1,587; Tom Taylor, 934; J. B. Buckstone, 839; John Brougham, 829; and J. M. Morton, 652. In the decades before 1855, Shakespearean performances in all cities of the Northeast easily outnumbered those of any contemporary playwright by three to one. For roughly twenty years after 1855, however, Shakespeare's relative popularity was cut nearly in half, with Boucicault's success far outdistancing the popularity of any previous nineteenth-century playwright on the Anglo-American stage. (241)

A recent survey of American performances of Shakespeare in early America can be found in Chapter 1 of Kim C. Sturgess, *Shakespeare and the American Nation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

6. Holbein, 88. Holbein takes his figures from the Charleston newspapers and William Stanley Hoole, *The Ante-Bellum Charleston Theatre* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1946). For the accounting of performances of *Catharine and Petruchio*, see Hoole, 159-60.
7. The *Courier* lists no Shakespeare performances at all during the years 1833-34, 1836-37, and 1837-38.

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8. A notable exception is the "Elizabethan" staging of *Shrew* that was offered by J. R. Planché and Benjamin Webster in 1844 and 1847. See Jan McDonald, "The Taming of the Shrew at the Haymarket Theatre, 1844 and 1847," in *Essays on Nineteenth Century British Theatre*, ed. Kenneth Richards and Peter Thomson (London: Methuen and Co., 1971), 157-70.
9. John Philip Kemble, *John Philip Kemble Promptbooks*, ed. Charles H. Shattuck, vol. 8: "*Romeo & Juliet*," "*Taming of the Shrew [Catharine and Petruchio]*," and "*The Tempest*" (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia for the Folger Shakespeare Library, 1974), 13.
10. Kemble, 32.
11. See Robin O. Warren, "They Were Always Doing Shakespeare: Antebellum Southern Actresses and Shakespearean Appropriation," *Borrowers and Lenders: The Journal of Shakespeare and Appropriation*, 1.1 (Spring/Summer 2005), 25 pp. in PDF, <http://lacheis.english.uga.edu/cocoon/borrowers/request?id=283540> (accessed September 24, 2007).
12. John Tobin, *The Honey Moon* (London: T. Davison, 1805; *Literature Online*, 1994) <http://galileo.usg.edu> (accessed September 3, 2002).
13. Ann Thompson, ed., *The Taming of the Shrew*, in *New Cambridge Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) notes that "when John Philip Kemble performed Garrick's text in 1788 he wrote the words 'whip for Petruchio' opposite the hero's entrance in the wedding scene," 19, citing as her source Arthur Colby Sprague, *Shakespeare and the Actors: The Stage Business in his Plays* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1944). The Kemble facsimile promptbook published by Charles Shattuck does not contain this stage direction.
14. Kemble, 17.
15. McConachie writes that in a similar way, Southern audiences watched the play *The Gladiator* without linking its story about a slave revolt to the American institution of slavery: "The South, more strongly Democratic than the northern states, applauded *The Gladiator* whenever Forrest toured the region. Like other Jacksonians, southerners understood the rhetoric of slavery and freedom as referring to the traditional rights of white people; few of them supposed that a drama centering on a white slave revolt was meant to apply to Nat Turner or the threats of William Lloyd Garrison," 117.
16. Charles S. Watson, "Simms's Use of Shakespearean Characters," in *Shakespeare and Southern Writers: A Study in Influence*, ed. Philip Kolin, foreword by Lewis P. Simpson (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1985), 13-28. See also *The Letters of William Gilmore Simms*, ed. Mary C. Simms Oliphant, Alfred Taylor Odell, and T.C. Duncan Eaves, 5 vols (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1952-56), 1:34-38; Miriam J. Shillingsburg, "Simms's Reviews of Shakespeare on the Stage," *Tennessee Studies in Literature*, 16 (1971): 121-35. Simms was particularly interested in American tragedian Edwin Forrest, referring to his performances and extracurricular exploits in letters to James Lawson that span a decade, and was generally aware of theatrical events in New York and abroad.
17. For an analysis of both sides of the argument that concludes that Southern audiences, like other audiences, saw Othello as a black man, see Charles B. Lower, "Othello as Black on Southern Stages, Then and Now," in *Shakespeare in the South: Essays on Performance*, ed. Philip C. Kolin (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1983), 199-228.
18. For a back-and-white image of Edmund Kean in the role of Othello, see Christy Desmet, "*Confession; or, the Blind Heart: An Antebellum Othello*," *Borrowers and Lenders: The Journal of Shakespeare and Appropriation*, 1.1 (Spring/Summer 2005), 25pp in PDF, <http://lacheis.english.uga.edu/cocoon/borrowers/request?id=327160> (accessed September 24, 2007);

for a colored print of Kean as Othello, see Warren, both in the web version.

19. Moira Ferguson, *Subject to Others: British Women Writers and Colonial Slavery, 1670-1834* (New York and London: Routledge, 1992). Ferguson traces the birth of this paradigm to Aphra Behn: "In *Oroonoko* . . . Behn constructs a paradigm of slavery, aspects of which became constitutive elements in colonial discourse for the next century and a half until the Emancipation Bill passed in 1834," 49.
20. Karen Sánchez-Eppler, "Bodily Bonds: The Intersecting Rhetorics of Feminism and Abolition," *Representations*, 24 (Fall 1988): 28-59, reprinted in *Interracialism: Black-White Intermarriage in American History, Literature, and Law*, ed. Werner Sollers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 408-37.
21. Sánchez-Eppler also notes, however, that the alliance was not "particularly easy or equitable," 409.
22. Juliana Schiesari, "The Face of Domestication: Physiognomy, Gender Politics, and Humanism's Others" in *Women, "Race," and Writing in the Early Modern Period*, ed. Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker (London: Routledge, 1994), 55-70.
23. [William Gilmore Simms], *Slavery in America, being a Brief Review of Miss Martineau on that Subject, by a South Carolinian* (Richmond: Thomas W. White, 1838), 82-83. Excerpt reprinted in *The Simms Reader: Selections from the Writings of William Gilmore Simms*, ed. John Caldwell Guilds (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 2001), 246-47. For a discussion of Simms's anti-abolitionist philosophy, see Schillingsburg, "Simms's Failed Lecture Tour of 1856: The Mind of the North," in "*Long Years of Neglect*": *The Work and Reputation of William Gilmore Simms*, ed. John Caldwell Guilds (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1988), 183-201; and Richard Gray, *Writing the South: Ideas of an American Region* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1986), 46-47.
24. William Gilmore Simms, *Confession; or, the Blind Heart: A Domestic Story* (1841; 1885; New York: AMS, 1970).
25. Desmet, "Confession."
26. *Confession*, 398.
27. William Gilmore Simms, "Caloya; or, the Loves of the Driver," in *The Wigwam and the Cabin* (New York: W.J. Middleton, 1856), 361-429.
28. Although this symbolic move does not originate with the drama, its crystallization was probably helped by the imaginative alignment between two well-known stage Othellos and their Native American alter egos. During a visit to Canada, Edmund Kean became an "honorary chieftain" of the Huron tribe; Edwin Forrest, probably Simms's favorite Shakespearean actor, was closely associated with the role of *Metamora*; or, *The Last of the Wampanoags*, the eponymous hero of John Augustus Stone's play. Images of Kean and Forrest in the Native American roles mentioned here can be seen in the web version of Desmet.
29. W.J. Rolfe, "*The Taming of the Shrew*," *Poet-lore*, 8 (1896): 182-92.
30. My reading of *Poet-lore* and of these essays on *The Taming of the Shrew* depends on Tricia Looten's argument in her forthcoming essay, "Shakespeare, King of What? Gender, Nineteenth-Century Patriotism, and the Case of *Poet-lore*." See also Ella Crowell, "Shakespeare's Katharine and Ibsen's Nora," *Poet-lore*, 8 (1896): 192-97.
31. Graham W. Robertson, *Life Was Worth Living* (New York: Harper, 1931), 216, quoted in

26 *The Upstart Crow*

Shattuck, 65. Not all theatergoers were charmed by the love story. Writing in the voice of a feminine persona, George Bernard Shaw says that the *Daly Shrew* was "one vile insult to womanhood and manhood from first to last . . . Instead of Shakespeare's coarse, thick-skinned money hunter who sets to work to tame his wife exactly as brutal people tame animals or children—we have Garrick's fop who tries to 'shut up' his wife by behaving worse than she," quoted in Jack J. Jorgens, *Shakespeare on Film* (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1977), 67.

32. Kim Marra, "Taming America as Actress: Augustin Daly, Ada Rehan, and the Discourse of Imperial Frontier Conquest," in *Performing America: Cultural Nationalism in American Theater*, ed. Jeffrey D. Mason and J. Ellen Gainor (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 52-72. The banquet scene, specifically, refers to Paulo Veronese's *Marriage Feast at Cana* (Marra, 67).
33. Robertson, quoted in Marra, 64.
34. Marra, 61.
35. Boston *Transcript*, December 2, 1905, quoted in Shattuck, 271.
36. The animalization of the Irish was accomplished most often by comparison to primates rather than beasts of burden. On the cultural construction of the Irish as "black" and further developments of this trope, see Elsie Michie, "From Simianized Irish to Oriental Despots: Heathcliff, Rochester, and Racial Difference," in *Outside the Pale: Cultural Exclusion, Gender Difference, and the Victorian Woman Writer* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1993); and Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York and London: Routledge, 1995).
37. Darlene Ciraulo, "The Old and New South: Shakespeare in Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*," *Borrowers and Lenders: The Journal of Shakespeare and Appropriation*, 1.1 (Spring/Summer 2005), 14 pp. in PDF, <http://lachesis.english.uga.edu/cocoon/borrowers/request?id=283509> (accessed September 24, 2007); Celia R. Daileader, *Racism, Misogyny, and the Othello Myth* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), 156.
38. Margaret Mitchell, *Gone with the Wind* (New York: Macmillan, 1936), 180. Daileader cites Joel Williamson, "How Black was Rhett Butler?," in *The Evolution of Southern Culture*, ed. Numan V. Bartley (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 87-107, which argues that the Rhett figure in Mitchell's original plan was African American, which would have made *Gone With the Wind* explicitly about miscegenation. According to Williamson, Mitchell burned the manuscript at her husband's request.
39. Daileader, 154.
40. Mitchell, 3.
41. Mitchell, 120.
42. Mitchell, 193.
43. Mitchell, 190-92.
44. See Ciraulo.
45. Mitchell, 243.
46. Mitchell, 246.

47. William Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, in *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt et. al (New York: Norton, 1997), 133-201 (5.2.125-26), italics added.
48. Mitchell, 246.
49. Mitchell, 245.
50. Mitchell, 930.
51. Mitchell, 940-41, discussed by Daileader, 154-55.
52. Mitchell, 940-41, a trope commented on at length by Daileader.
53. Jan Cronin, "'The Book Belongs to All of Us': *Gone with the Wind* as Postcultural Product," *Literature/Film Quarterly*, 35.1 (2007), 396. Charles Reagan Wilson, "The Invention of Southern Tradition: The Writing and Ritualization of Southern History, 1880-1940," in *Rewriting the South: History and Fiction*, ed. Lothar Hönighausen and Valerie Genarro Lerda, in collaboration with Christoph Irmscher and Simon Ward (Tübingen: Franke Verlag, 1993), 3-21 also discusses how the "invention of the Southern tradition" between 1880 and 1940 developed as an alternative to the concept of America as a nation.
54. *The Taming of the Shrew*, directed by Franco Zeffirelli (Columbia, 1967).
55. Russell Jackson, "Shakespeare's Comedies on Film," in *Shakespeare and the Moving Image: The Plays on Film and Television*, ed. Anthony Davies and Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 112. *Shrew* was filmed not on location, but on four sound stages located near Rome. See Douglas Brode, *Shakespeare in the Movies: From the Silent Era to Today* (New York: Berkley Boulevard Books, 2001), 22.
56. Franco Zeffirelli, *The Autobiography of Franco Zeffirelli* (New York: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986), 215.
57. Michael Pursells, "Zeffirelli's Shakespeare," *Literature/Film Quarterly*, 8.4 (1980): 210-18.
58. Jorgens, 74.
59. Jackson, 110.
60. Thomas Davies, *Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick, Esq.*, 2 vols (London: Longman, 1808), quoted in Tori Haring-Smith, *From Farce to Metadrama: A Stage History of The Taming of the Shrew, 1594-1983* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1985), 19.
61. Zeffirelli, 200-201.
62. *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, directed by Richard Brooks (Metro-Golden-Mayer, 1958); *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, directed by Mike Nichols (Chenault Productions, 1966).
63. Gloria Naylor, *Linden Hills* (New York: Penguin, 1985).
64. Naylor, 283.
65. Naylor, 117.
66. Naylor, 118.
67. Naylor, 67.

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68. Naylor, 69.
 69. Naylor, 68-69.
 70. Naylor, 290.
 71. Naylor, 298-99.
 72. Naylor, 300.
 73. Mitchell, 120.

James B. Nicola

LONDON AT NIGHT

Underlit, spires as stones of souls appear,
 invite with their macabre imperiousness.
 Though height forbids, the glow haunts, and the air
 would have us swim in her mysteriousness.
 Fleet smooth-scored twinkles giggle in the Thames
 meandering snake-scale ripples of a tease.
 Redoubling, they cast all as sparkling gems
 susurrous in the tickle of a breeze.

While gilded bridges snore and span her ages
 a Tower looms with terrible delight.
 The eerie stumps of sundry ghosts mark stages
 of empire that once was, that shines tonight
 as children's dreams' theme-park assemblages
 from granddads' scattered senile tales of might.

JERRY LEE LEWIS: WHOLE LOTTA SHAKESPEARE GOIN' ON

Robert Sawyer, East Tennessee State University

On March 5, 1968, the Ahmanson Theater in Los Angeles was packed with celebrity attendees, including Zsa Zsa Gabor, Sammy Davis Jr., Tom Jones, and Angie Dickinson, anxiously waiting to witness a contemporary adaptation of Shakespeare's *Othello*. As members of the audience settled into their seats, it is safe to say they were probably not expecting a staid recreation of the Bard; however, they were surely not prepared for the show-stopping, serpentine performance of Jerry Lee Lewis in the role of Iago. While not Shakespeare in the geographical South per se, Lewis's Southern-cracker portrayal dominated Jack Good's production of the play, entitled *Catch My Soul*. Equally significant, the production disrupted the typical twentieth-century distinction between Shakespeare as high culture and popular music as low culture.

Born and raised in Louisiana, Jerry Lee Lewis first made a name for himself recording at Sun Studios in Memphis, Tennessee. Working alongside the likes of Elvis Presley and Carl Perkins in the late 50s, Lewis churned out a number of hits, including "Great Balls of Fire" and "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin On." Although his popularity has waxed and waned, in the last three years Lewis's career has reignited. The sometime blistering rocker, sometime country crooner received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2005 Grammy Awards, released a critically acclaimed album in 2006, and was one of the main headliners at the 2007 New Orleans Jazz Festival.

The new album, entitled *Last Man Standing*, was released September 26, 2006 (*Artists First*), and it features duets with the A-list of rock, country, and blues performers: Mick Jagger, Jimmy Page, Bruce Springsteen, Neil Young, and Eric Clapton top the rocker list, while Merle Haggard, George Jones, and Willie Nelson contribute to the country covers. The blues are superbly represented by B.B. King and Buddy Guy. The record garnered 3 out of 4 stars in *USA Today*, which claimed Lewis sounded like a "swaggering, defiant champion"; *The New York Post* gave it 4 out of 4 stars, calling it a "no-risk-disk featuring one of rock's greatest architects"; and *Rolling Stone* praised the record's raw power as well as that of Lewis himself: Lewis is not only "older and tougher than you," the columnist declared, but he could also "eat your liver for breakfast, sleep with your kid sister and then burn down your house after a light lunch."¹ Ultimately the album charted on three Billboard surveys, including a #4 position on the Country Chart, a #8 position on the Rock Chart, and the #1 position on the Top Independent Album Chart.

The praise for the tour promoting the album was equally effusive. *Newsday* claimed that the performance left the audience "breathless," called Lewis "wryly raunchy," and observed that the "septuagenarian" received a standing ovation at the end of the show. In the UK, *The Daily Telegraph* proclaimed Lewis was "still on fire" and concluded that Lewis "was, and is, simply untouchable." His

performance at the 2006 Farm Aid show was also impressive, in spite of his being at least a generation older than most of the performers. Reporting for *Rolling Stone*, Andy Greene noted that Lewis “brought the crowd to its feet for the first time” during the opening day, and on one song, he “stood up, did a little shimmy, and played the piano with his ass.”²

While the resurgence of Lewis’s career (to say nothing of shimmying on-stage at age 71) is certainly surprising, equally intriguing is his Shakespearian performance thirty-eight years earlier in L.A. What I will argue is that this gumbo of a production combined three distinct ingredients: classical tradition, represented by Shakespeare’s play; 60s rock-and-roll, seen in Jack Good’s hip production; and Southern flavor, added by Lewis’s performance. Of these three, according to the critics and other eyewitnesses, Lewis’s Southern spice overpowered the other flavors and elicited the strongest response.

Such blending of Shakespeare with popular culture has been addressed by Lawrence Levine, Michael Bristol, and most recently by Douglas Lanier.³ As Lanier explains, Shakespeare is “*the* icon of high or ‘proper’ culture” and, therefore, almost by definition must “stand apart from popular culture” (emphasis in original). This distinction, according to Lanier, stems from the traditional idea that popular culture is “aesthetically unsophisticated, disposable,” intended “for the lowest common denominator, [and] mass-produced by corporations for financial gain”; Shakespeare, on the other hand, is not only “aesthetically refined” but also “timeless, complex and intellectually challenging.”⁴ But as Lanier and I both agree, this merging of “proper” and “popular” can often produce exciting results; Good’s production serves as a perfect example. In addition, this cross-over appeal is not unique to the late twentieth century, for it has been articulately detected in the Elizabethan period by Robert Weimann and in the Victorian era by Richard Schoch.⁵

I. Classical Tradition

Although Good’s production veered away from standard interpretations of *Othello*, it was obviously constructed on the cornerstone of one of Shakespeare’s most canonical works. In addition, Good’s casting choice for the lead role participated in the same debates that preoccupied traditional productions of the play from Central Park to Stratford-upon-Avon. As Michael Neill observes in the Oxford *Othello* (2006), “the last quarter of the twentieth century” has been dominated “by an increasingly urgent” concern “with Shakespeare’s treatment of colour and its implications for casting.”⁶ With the notable exceptions of Ira Aldridge and Paul Robeson, for example, most of the great performances of *Othello* were by white actors, and as late as 1963, Laurence Olivier played *Othello* in black face for the National Theatre.⁷ Participating in the movement to cast black actors in the title role, Good enlisted William Marshall to play the lead in his production.

Marshall, who died in 2003, was considered by many to be one of the excellent *Othellos* of his time.⁸ During his 1955 portrayal in Cambridge, Massachusetts, for instance, he was compared to Robeson in the New York *Daily*

News, with the critic concluding that Marshall was “a more gifted actor.”⁹ In fact, in 1958, Marshall was called on to replace Robeson in *Othello* at Stratford-upon-Avon due to Robeson’s passport problems. Shortly before the opening, however, Robeson’s problems were resolved and Marshall stepped aside. In 1962, Marshall performed the role at the Dublin Theatre Festival, and when it traveled to London, Marshall was showered with rave reviews. Writing in *The Sunday Times*, Harold Hobson declared him to be the best Othello of his era, “nobler than Tearle, more martial than Gielgud, more poetic than Valk.” Hobson exclaimed that from his first entrance to his “last plunging of the knife into his stomach, Mr. Marshall rode without faltering the play’s enormous rhetoric, and at the end the house rose to him.”¹⁰

Although Marvin Rosenberg surprisingly overlooks Marshall in his magisterial work *The Masks of Othello*, more recent Shakespearean scholars, including Stephen Booth, Lois Potter, and H.R. Coursen, praise his portrayals. Some fifteen years after his UK success, and nine years after *Catch My Soul*, Marshall’s performances as Othello in the San Diego National Shakespeare Festival’s *Othello* were reviewed in *Shakespeare Quarterly* (1977). In this critique, Booth proclaimed that Marshall’s Othello was “one of the most remarkable things” he had ever “seen on a stage.”¹¹ He also claimed that Marshall’s interpretation equaled Shakespeare’s complex creation: “There are Samson-like Othellos, neurotic Othellos, Othellos who are noble savages, Oriental Othellos, and so on. Shakespeare’s Othello is all of them, and so was Marshall’s.”¹² Lois Potter’s *Othello* text for “The Shakespeare in Performance” series published by Manchester Press devotes three pages to Marshall. Sandwiched between sections on Olivier and James Earl Jones, Potter traces Marshall’s early career and then praises his 1985 performance captured on video for Bard Productions. Herb Coursen also commends this recorded performance, asserting that “Marshall gave us the basso Othello to which [Paul] Robeson conditioned us,” but Coursen maintains that “Marshall was more in control of verse rhythms than Robeson.”¹³

The point here is that Good’s choice of a superb Shakespearean actor to play Othello, and a black actor at that, clearly suggests he was working within the recently established staging decisions of the most esteemed Shakespearean directors. The other important point to remember is that even such a highly regarded star as Marshall was completely overshadowed, as we shall see, by Lewis’s slinky, Southern Iago.

II. 60s Rock-and-Roll

Good’s choice to adapt *Othello*, as well as his decision to combine a traditional actor such as Marshall with a rock star such as Lewis, reflects his own background and interests. Not only had Good studied at the London Academy of Music and Drama, but he also attended Oxford where he was president of the Oxford University Dramatic Society, and where he produced a version of *Othello* for Balliol College in 1950. In 1955 he performed in the Pirandello-like *The Queen and the Rebels* (by Ugo Betti) at the Haymarket Theatre in London,

and in the U.S. he appeared on Broadway in C. P. Snow's *The Affair*. He also had a small role as a hotelier in the Elvis Presley film *Clambake* (1967).

He is most remembered, however, for his missionary zeal in spreading the new gospel of rock-and-roll on both sides of the Atlantic. He produced one of the earliest teen shows for the BBC, entitled *6.5 Special*, but really made a name for himself when he moved to Britain's ITV and conceived the series *Oh Boy!* This tribute to teenagers became the first all-music broadcast in the U.K. and introduced rockers such as Cliff Richard and Marty Wilde. Shortly thereafter, Good also produced the hit shows *Boy Meets Girl* and *Wham!*

Although Good's reputation as a rock impresario was spreading throughout England, he did not achieve international recognition until Brian Epstein enlisted him to produce *Around the Beatles* in 1964, a one-hour special for ITV with stars such as P. J. Proby, Millie, and Long John Baldry. Starting with a satire of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (each Beatle played a different role), the musical performances careened at a frantic pace through hits by the aforementioned artists, before John, Paul, Ringo and George hit the stage for the grand finale. Although they only mimed to soundtrack versions of some of their early hits—including "Twist and Shout," "I Wanna Be Your Man," and "Can't Buy Me Love"—the Beatles closed with a raucous cover of the Isley Brothers' "Shout." According to all reports, the studio audience went wild, and so did the critics.

Following the success of this production, Good was commissioned to produce the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) show *Shindig* (1964-66). The opening show of the Fall 1965 season included the Kinks, the Rolling Stones, and the Byrds. Other shows featured such performers as Howlin' Wolf, Sonny and Cher, the Chambers Brothers, and Lewis himself. The series became an instant hit and even challenged the then dominant *Beverly Hillbillies* in its time slot. Later Good would also produce a full-length Monkees movie with appearances by Little Richard, Fats Domino, and Lewis once again. This friendship with Lewis certainly fostered Good's decision to cast Jerry as lingo in 1968.

The impact of Good's rock background also influenced other elements of his rock version of *Othello*. Lewis's drummer Morris "Tarp" Tarrant (who would later lend his drumming talents to Alex Chilton for the third Big Star album) and guitarist Kenneth Lovelace were featured onstage dressed in Elizabethan clothes, and according to Graham Knight, who witnessed the premiere, the song "Lust of the Blood" was the crowd's favorite number. Lewis's "flame decorated" Steinway grand piano also added to the rock setting.¹⁴ Finally, the backing vocals were provided by the Blossoms, who had also been employed by Phil Spector (as Bob B. Soxx and the Blue Jeans) and were also regulars on Good's *Shindig*.

III. Southern Flair

Yet, the most admired aspect of the show was Lewis's Southern take on lingo. At least part of his portrayal, I believe, springs from the same place as the torrid performances in his regular shows: his fire and brimstone Pentecostal upbringing in the deep South. As Robert Meyerowitz explains, Lewis "grew up

in a backwater town attending Pentecostal services at a little Assembly of God church." He and his cousin Jimmy Lee Swaggart would sing and perform hymns at the church before sneaking off to "watch the entertainers at a juke joint on the black side of town."¹⁵ Lewis also enrolled for one semester at a Texas Bible college but got expelled soon after. Still, the heat and passion of Southern tent revivals soaked his rock performances while also shaping his version of Iago.



Othello: Jerry Lee Lewis as Iago, with The Blossoms: Fanita James, Jean King, and Darlene Love. Photo permission granted by Graham Knight.

Significantly, Lewis refused to step completely into the role, choosing instead to clothe Shakespeare's character in his own cracker persona. As he strolled onstage clad in a scarlet, fur-lined jacket and large love necklace of pasteboard jewels, Lewis announced to the audience that he was not "Iago of Venice, but rather Jerry Lee Lewis, the old honky-tonk nighttime man from down yonder, removed to this strange time and place, neither then nor now, here nor there."¹⁶ Many critics commented on his Southern accent, an "oily cracker bonhomie" so powerful that it made the "show's trained actors sound like furniture."¹⁷ Cecil Smith, a well-known West Coast theater critic, claimed in his review in the *Los Angeles Times* that Lewis's "Southern drawl" helped him to "mock the role" but agreed that was "exactly the intent."¹⁸ Writing in *Hellfire*, his splendid biography of Lewis, Nick Tosches points out that Lewis "had no concern to conceal or even to temper his own Louisiana accent," fooling with the lines only occasionally, as when he spotted Roderigo's corpse in Act 5 and exclaimed, "Great balls of fire! My friend, Roderigo!"¹⁹ *The Christian Science Monitor* also praised the language, asserting that Lewis "gave jealousy a powerful sound," and it "never let up from

the moment Iago uttered his first lines.²⁰ Apparently Lewis was also the only actor who had completely memorized his lines by the time of the first rehearsal, and when asked about the author of the play, he replied: "This Shakespeare was really somethin'. I wonder what he woulda thought about my records."²¹

Lewis's villainous portrayal garnered praise from the reviewers. According to Smith, Lewis, complete with a "Mephistophelean beard from which his long cigar jutted and an evil grin to match" was clearly up to the task of playing "Shakespeare's motiveless arch villain."²² The *Monitor* referred to Lewis as a "Louisiana-born genius" and a "unique Iago," whose "big coup" was the way he pounded his piano to "punctuate his attack on Othello's susceptibilities," making iniquity and "jealousy palpable to the audience."²³ The *Toronto Daily Star* called him "genuinely diabolical" and went on to claim that it was "astonishing what new implications of evil" Lewis could find in his role.²⁴ Some years later, Meyerowitz called his Iago the "slitherest of the slithery, a sly sex-obsessed mutably vicious orderly in the Venetian army."²⁵ And, as recently as February 2007, a seven-page spread in *The Sunday Times* [London] claimed it was Lewis's "demonic reputation" that caused Good to cast him as Iago.²⁶

IV. Conclusion

A rock-and-roll back beat, a redneck Iago, a Desdemona in thigh-high, go-go boots, a setting both here and there, Good's hodgepodge production of *Othello* uniquely combined both popular and proper elements, dismantling the distinction between high and popular culture in a manner that did not escape critical notice. The terms of the debate were laid out in the early reviews. As Kimmis Hendrik, the reviewer for the *Monitor*, suggested, "[i]t can be argued up and down whether Shakespeare gains by such treatment," but ultimately concluded that the production's "matchless majesty" helped to demonstrate that Shakespeare is still "pertinent."²⁷ Smith's review for the *Los Angeles Times* was also mixed. After first criticizing the musical as a "pop music concert encircling a shredded edition of the great tragedy," and proclaiming that the music of Lewis and the poetry of Shakespeare "are miles apart and never the twain do meet," he went on to confess that there was an "inescapable feeling" that what was occurring onstage was "interesting" because it went "beyond the routine shock" and tried to "do something." Finally, he was forced to admit that it was "a creative effort" where "juices flow" and "there's life involved."²⁸ At the end of the review he praises the music, "notably the pounding blues that Lewis sang," and also confesses that when Lewis told "a wiggling chorine: 'Shake it and break it and wrap it up and take it,' it fits the play better than 'O, mistress, villainy [sic] hath made mocks with love!'"²⁹

Unfortunately, many conservative critics were opposed to such an innovative production. The play was reprised in London (although without Lewis), and a SHAKSPER Listserv post offered this eyewitness account: Set in the Louisiana bayous, it seemed a "fairly tatty production, with a dancing chorus woefully inadequate."³⁰ It was made into a rock movie in 1973, with Richie Havens as

Othello and Lance Le Gault replacing Lewis as Iago. The movie soundtrack also boasted a stellar cast, including Tony Joe White and Bonnie and Delaney Bramlett, who often performed with Eric Clapton. Both the stage version and film versions were also produced by Good, productions that Kenneth S. Rothwell, writing on SHAKSPER, has dismissed as a "kind of Shakespearean *Jesus Christ Superstar*."³¹ In the same posting, Rothwell went on to claim "he didn't know quite what to make of it." Unfortunately, it is comments such as these that tend to close off Shakespeare in an attempt to re-situate him as a cultural possession of the stiff upper class or the stuffy academic community. Another post, however, by Robert Cohen, called it "one of the most exciting stage productions" he had ever witnessed in "nearly fifty years of theatregoing."³² This debate will obviously continue every time someone tampers with traditional Shakespeare.

In this case, the play was a financial success, grossing more than \$500,000 in its five-week run ending on April 13, 1968. Unfortunately, Lewis's performances were cut short, as his first comeback hit, now on the country charts, "Another Place, Another Time," appeared the same year, and he decided to leave the cast. But he did not leave his rock-and-roll, nor his Shakespeare, behind, for when he appeared on the *Joey Bishop Show* two months later (June 26) to perform the new single, he also ripped through "Great Balls of Fire" before closing his set with the "Who steals my purse, steals trash" soliloquy from his days of playing Iago.

Notes

1. Brian Mansfield, "Lewis Swaggers on 'Last Man,'" *USA Today*, Nov. 26, 2006, <http://www.usatoday.com/life/music/reviews/2006-09-25-lewis-review_x.htm>. Dan Aquilante, "Last Man Standing," *New York Post*, September 24, 2006, <http://www.nypost.com/seven/09242006/entertainment/music/last_man_standing_music_dan_aquilante.htm>. Gavin Edwards, "Last Man Standing," *Rolling Stone*, September 20, 2006, <http://www.rollingstone.com/artists/jerryleewis/albums/album/11621187/review/11736867/last_man_standing>.
2. Rafer Guzmán, "A tamer Killer still leaves them breathless," *Newsday.com*, January 22, 2007, <<http://www.newsday.com/entertainment/music/ny-etjerry0122,0,1853610.story?coll=ny-music-headlines>>. Andrew Perry, "Goodness Gracious! Jerry's Still on Fire," *The Daily Telegraph*, August 8, 2006, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/arts/main.jhtml?xml=/arts/2006/08/15/bmjerry15.xml>>. Andy Young, "Young, Mellencamp, Nelson and Many More Celebrate Twenty-one years of Farm Aid," *Rolling Stone*, October 2, 2006, <http://www.rollingstone.com/news/story/11938806/live_review_young_nelson_mellencamp_and_more_bring_farm_aid_to_jersey>.
3. See Bristol's *Big-Time Shakespeare* where he argues that celebrity "big-time" only requires "striking and colorful forms of public visibility," adding that even a "small amount of Shakespeare" can be leveraged "into a generous cash flow" (London: Routledge, 1996), 90-91. Also see Lawrence Levine's *Highbrow / Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1988).
4. Douglas Lanier, *Shakespeare and Modern Popular Culture* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002), 3.
5. See Robert Weimann's *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater: Studies in the Social Dimension of Dramatic Form and Function* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1978), and Richard Schoch's *Not Shakespeare: Bardolatry and Burlesque in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002).

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6. *Othello*, ed. Michael Neill (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006), 40.
7. The following year, however, James Earl Jones portrayed *Othello* in Joseph Papp's production in New York. For an astute argument that *Othello* must be played by an actor of color, see H.R. Coursen's "The Case for a Black *Othello*" in *Watching Shakespeare on Television* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 1993), 126-162.
8. Marshall may be best known for his role in *Blacula* (1972) and later as the King of Cartoons on *Pee-wee Herman's Playhouse* in the 80's. He also starred as Dr. Richard Daystrom in an episode of *Star Trek* and portrayed a traveling opera singer on the western series, *Bonanza*.
9. Quoted in obituary of William Marshall, *The Independent*, July 3, 2003, < <http://news.independent.co.uk/people/obituaries/article36695.ece>>.
10. Marshall obituary.
11. Stephen Booth, "Review: Shakespeare in California and Utah," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 28.2 (1977), 232.
12. Booth, 233.
13. Lois Potter, ed., *Othello, Plays in Performance* (Manchester UP, 2002), 158-60. H.R. Coursen's review of the Bard Production in Coursen and J. C. Bulman, eds., *Shakespeare on Television: An Anthology of Essays and Reviews* (Hanover and London: UP of New England, 1988), 306.
14. Graham Knight, email message to author on February 1, 2007. Knight, who attended the premiere of *Catch My Soul*, and who has been friends with Lewis since 1962, has provided me with numerous contacts and leads for writing this essay. He also graciously provided the picture included. I wish to thank him here for his superb support.
15. Robert Meyerowitz, "Flamejob: The Fiery Career and Devilish Genius of Jerry Lee Lewis," *Phoenix New Times*, August 24, 1995.
16. Nick Tosches, *Hellfire: The Jerry Lee Lewis Story* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1982), 198.
17. Meyerowitz, 2.
18. Cecil Smith, review of *Othello*, *The Los Angeles Times*, March 7, 1968, Section IV, 10.
19. Tosches, 200.
20. Kimmis Hendrick, "A Rock-and-blues 'Othello,'" *The Christian Science Monitor*, March 23, 1968, 8.
21. Quoted in Tosches, 200.
22. Smith, 10.
23. Hendrick, 8.
24. Quoted in Tosches, 200
25. Meyerowitz, 2.
26. *The Sunday Times*, February 4, 2007, 26-32.

27. Hendrick, 8
28. Smith, 1.
29. Smith, 10.
30. Louis Scheeder, email to SHAKSPER mailing list, March 19, 1995, <http://www.shaksper.net/archives/1995/0229.html> (accessed January 10, 2007).
31. Kenneth S. Rothwell, email to SHAKSPER mailing list, March 20, 1995, <http://www.shaksper.net/archives/1995/0229.html> (accessed January 10, 2007).
32. Robert Cohen, email to SHAKSPER mailing list, March 20, 1995, <http://www.shaksper.net/archives/1995/0232.html> (accessed January 10, 2007).

Thomas Crofts

UNPLUG THE VEGETABLES

From fairest creatures we desire increase
 for when we smelle that burgeoning bud
 and our extremities do charge with bludde,
 we groan HOORAY for ripe surcease;

But thou that art contracted to a wraith,
 a scroll of arid flesh whereon we write
 not poetry, but old polemic spite
 to fill the secret cavity of faith,

From thee we nothing further shall desire
 unless upon the midnight (with no pain)
 to cease, like a bird, a breeze, a thought profane.
 Be not so fond, dear heart, as not to expire.

All are idiots who more fear death
 than meat upon the table drawing breath.

“SPAYK THE SPEECH OY PRITHEE”: DIALECTS OF SHAKESPEARE’S ENGLAND AND THE AMERICAN SOUTH

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In their 1986 television series, *The Story of English*, Robert MacNeil, Robert McCrum, and William Cran make reference to the belief that a dialect of Elizabethan England survives in the Appalachian Mountains. While they refute this notion (countering that the Appalachian dialect is Scots-Irish in origin), they contend that dialects in Eastern seaboard communities from Chesapeake Bay to the Carolinas have evolved relatively slowly since the time of the English settlers of the Stuart era. Longtime director and teacher with the Royal Shakespeare Company, John Barton, who is interviewed in *The Story of English*, says in his 1985 television series *Playing Shakespeare* that the American accent is closer to the Elizabethan accent than current British Received Pronunciation. These two claims and Assistant Professor Alexander Harrington’s work with Southern students on speeches from Shakespeare’s plays prompted the formation of a research group consisting of Professor Harrington and a number of students. The group conducted research on early modern English and dialects of the Southeastern United States.

In the *Playing Shakespeare* program and his book based on it, Barton points out that the “i” in “time” is a diphthong and that Elizabethans pronounced it so that the two constituents were perceptible to the ear.¹ Later in the book, he spells Shakespeare’s pronunciation of the word as “Tay-eme.”

The contemporary English long “i” in “time” is a diphthong—rendered by linguist Helge Kökeritz as [ai]. In his book, *Shakespeare’s Pronunciation*, Kökeritz holds that the diphthong was subtly different in early modern English. According to Kökeritz, in early modern English (from approximately the late fifteenth century to the seventeenth century), the first constituent of the diphthong was either the [ʌ] of “cut” or the [ə] of the second syllable of “better.” He renders the diphthong as [əi].² This sound is somewhere between the contemporary English long “i” and the [ɔi] in “boy” and “coin.” As evidence of this, Kökeritz points to the rhymes die: joy; annoy, exploit: right (*1 Henry VI*, 2.3.4), groin: swine (*Hamlet*, 3.3.24); the puns bile: boil (*Twelfth Night*, 2.5.2-4), fine: foin (*Comedy of Errors*, 2.2.73), vice: voice (*Cymbeline*, 2.3.33); the spelling of “smile” as “smoile” in the Folio version and “smoyle” in the Quarto version of *King Lear*, “voyage” as “viage” (*Hamlet*, 3.3.24), “employ” spelled “imply” in the quarto of *2 Henry IV*, 4.2.24; and “imply” and “employ” listed as homonyms by orthographers Hodges (1643) and Cooper (1685).³

Barton focuses on the “i” in the word “time” because of the importance of the concept of time in Shakespeare’s plays. While he does not spend as much time (or Tay-eme) on other sounds, he does recite seven lines of the

Act 4 chorus from *Henry V* and reproduces five lines in the book. In the book, Barton phonetically spells "now" "ne-ow." The contemporary English diphthong in "now" and "house" is pronounced [au]. Helge Kökeritz renders the early modern English pronunciation of the same diphthong as [əu], a sound between "ow" in "house" and the "oo" in "loo"—essentially, the sound in the much-maligned Canadian "about."⁴ In listening to Barton on his TV program, the authors perceive his pronunciation of the diphthong in "now" as the sound Kökeritz represents as [əu]. In the transcription of *Romeo and Juliet* he did for Shakespeare's Globe, found in his *Pronouncing Shakespeare*, David Crystal uses the same representation for the "ou" in "household."⁵

In his transcription, David Crystal only uses phonetic symbols in the spelling of words whose pronunciation was different in early modern English from what it is in contemporary British Received Pronunciation (RP). He renders "both" and "Verona" as "bo:th" and "Vero:na." Since in contemporary British RP, the "o" in these words is pronounced [o:] and not [ɒ] or [ə], it is reasonable to assume that Crystal is indicating a longer sound than is currently used.

We now come to a sound about which there are differences among the theorists and writers that have been cited above: the "r" following vowels as in "hear" and "our" or the post-vocalic "r." In modern dialects there is great variation in the pronunciation of this letter. In David Crystal's correspondence with the authors, he wrote that it can be pronounced strongly with the tongue curved back (the retroflex "r" [ɾ]), as in strong Northern Midwestern U.S. dialects; it can be pronounced weakly with the tongue forward, behind the upper front teeth [r] as in Network Standard; it can be trilled or burred in the same position [rr] as in Scots English; it can also be slurred in this position to become the schwa [ə] (the indeterminate sound of unstressed vowels), which blends with the preceding vowel, as in British RP, New England, and working class accents in the Northeastern U.S., as well as the patrician Northeastern (Franklin Roosevelt) and Southeastern (Scarlet O'Hara) accents.

In the book of *Playing Shakespeare*, John Barton phonetically spells "war" as "wahrre."⁶ In *Pronouncing Shakespeare*, David Crystal quotes Ben Jonson's characterization of the "r" sound in his sixteenth-century *English Grammar*.

The dogs letter hirreth in this sound, the tongue striking the inner palate, with a trembling about the teeth. It is sounded firm in the beginning of words, and more liquid in the middle and ends; as in "rarer" and "riper."⁷

Crystal concludes that this "more liquid" "r" was "a constituent sound, much as is heard in West Country or American accents today."⁸

Helge Kökeritz agrees that Shakespeare would have used a retroflex post-vocalic "r," but doubts that was common in London, and thinks that actors' pronunciation would have varied. He writes,

Because of his Warwickshire origin Shakespeare must have used . . .

a retroflex “r” medially and finally, and I doubt very much that he ever bothered to exchange it for the very weak preconsonantal sound that, in my opinion, was characteristic of contemporary London speech. If, on the other hand, “r” was already silent before other consonants—and there is a good deal of evidence that it was—then we are faced with the problem whether or not on the stage actors endeavored to pronounce the “r” in the preconsonantal and final position. Some of them may have, in fact, done so from personal conviction that each letter should be pronounced somehow or in conformity with rules for precise enunciation laid down by those letter-worshipping men who once taught them to read and write. But others no doubt left out the “r” as they had been accustomed to do since childhood. It is hard to imagine that any uniform practice prevailed in this respect on the Elizabethan stage.⁹

According to Kökeritz, “in some respects, [early modern English] was far more colloquial than might be considered proper or respectable today; this is particularly true of its radical reduction of unstressed syllables and its nonchalant treatment of the consonants.”¹⁰ Here are a few of the examples of radically reduced unstressed syllables listed by Kökeritz: “And” was often written as “an,” “he” as “a,” and “have” as “ha.” “His” is often contracted into the preceding word: “all’s” for “all his,” “at’s” for “at his,” “from’s” for “from his,” etc. The word “it” is also frequently contracted into preceding words: “an’t” for “and it;” “as’t” for “as it;” “avouch’t” for “avouch it” The opposite is the case for “in,” which is frequently contracted into the following word as “i’faith” for “in faith.” “By” and “our” are often merged in various spellings of “by our lady:” “berlady,” “birladie,” “burlady.” “Y’are for “you are,” and “th’are” for “they are” are among the many contractions found in the texts of the period.¹¹ Another characteristic that would be considered colloquial today is the dropping (or “droppin’”) of the “g” in “ing.” Shakespeare spells “blushing” “blush-in,” “popering,” “popprin,” “reading” “readins,” and spells the name “Bolingbroke” as “Bullenbrooke,” and “Bullinbrook.”¹²

Compare our early modern English dialect findings to those of our Southern dialect research. For the PBS special, *Do you Speak American*, and the book based on it, John Fought describes in his article, *Rful Southern*, the “hard ‘r” coloring that Barton uses in his replication of early modern English, in what he calls the “Rful Southern” dialect, defining it as “the retention of ‘r’ after a vowel and before a consonant or before a pause in speaking.”¹³ This dialect is not to be confused with the “Rless” dialect of the coastal area, which according to Fought involves—as the name implies—the dropping of the “r” before a consonant or pause, lengthening the preceding vowel sound (Fought is, perhaps, describing the replacing of the “r” with a schwa). Fought explains that these dialects are the contributions from two sets of early settlers.

Coastal plains in what is now the southeastern United States were areas of early European settlement. Fought explains that early settlers came mainly from “the Rless areas of Southeastern England, where both prestigious and popular speech varieties had become Rless shortly before emigration began.”¹⁴

According to Fought, starting around 1750 and continuing for many years, Scots-Irish speakers immigrated to America in large numbers. (*The Story of English* has Scots-Irish Immigration to America beginning in the 1720s.) By that time, however, the prime tidewater areas along the Southern coasts had been colonized and fully occupied. These newly arriving British Northerners fortunately found open land in the uplands of the Piedmont and along the valleys and streams of the Appalachian and Allegheny Mountains. Although Fought finds the Rless dialect brought by the coastal settlers "has been losing ground," he contends that the Rful Southern Mountain Dialect has been gaining.¹⁵

Certain characteristics of the "Rful" Southern Mountain dialect correspond with theories of Early Modern English pronunciations. For example, the sentence, "There ain't narry a bit of sense in it" would be expressed as "th[eɪ] n n[æ]-[ɛ] r[ɪ] b[i:]-[ə]d[ɪ] s[i:]-[ə]ns [i:]- [ə]n [ɪ]t."¹⁶ From this example, one may note several things. First, vowels are pronounced for a slightly longer period of time than those in standard forms of English, and also diphthongs can clearly be heard to have two distinct vowels. But even if a sound is not a diphthong, it may be "diphthongized." For instance, the [ɪ] in "bit" is diphthongized to [i:- ə], and the same is seen in the words "sense" and "in." Also, many times sounds are shortened and unstressed. For example, "there ain't" is expressed as "th[eɪ] n", which instantly chops off one syllable. Another example of this shortening technique is heard in the dropping of the "g" sound after words with "ing." For example, the word "hunting" is expressed "h[ʌ]nt[ɪ]n" or even "h[ʌ]-[ɪ]n."

During our research, we stumbled across a few communities along the coast that had remained somewhat isolated since the time of their settlement. These areas have retained some of the pronunciations and verbal constructions from the late eighteenth century, when they were settled. Of these areas, we visited two: Ocracoke Island in the Outer Banks of North Carolina and Tangier Island in Chesapeake Bay, VA. We found that churches, local digs, and bars were the best places on these islands for conducting research. There, accents were thick and heavy and the locals talked with ease as they recounted the events of their everyday lives, their past, and their work.

In the Ocracoke community, one interviewee used the [əɪ] in words such as "island" and "fly," as Kökeritz writes was common in early modern English. On Tangier Island, we found that one resident used the contemporary [aɪ] diphthong in words such as "drivers," while another used the [əɪ] in words like "right" and "high school." An Ocracoke resident pronounced words such as "out" with the [əʊ] diphthong that Kökeritz postulates for early modern English. Speakers on Tangier, however, pronounced the diphthong as the common American [aʊ]. The "O" as in "know" and "Ocracoke" was pronounced as the diphthong [o:ɪ] by residents of both Tangier and Ocracoke—a possible similarity to the long "o" David Crystal highlights in his *Romeo and Juliet* transcription. Post-vocalic "r"s varied from person to person and word to word. One fifteen-year-old that we spoke to on Tangier Island, in giving the name of a business, used an [ə] in the first name "Charles," as is common in British RP and some Northeastern and Southeastern American dialects, and a standard American R in the last name "Charnick."

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Crystal speculates that the latter was the common pronunciation in early modern English. On Ocracoke, however, there was a different situation. In words like “Vermont” and “thirty,” Roy Parsons, a local shop owner uses the hard “r” that John Barton suggests would have been the early modern pronunciation.

The dialects of these islands still have elements from Shakespeare’s time, but sadly, thanks to television, tourism, and the modern world creeping in, these unique islands with their pockets of dialect are slowly but surely losing their idiosyncrasies. Of the two islands, Ocracoke has been the most affected by tourism. The children and young adults have all but completely lost the Ocracoke Brogue. Tangier Island, due to the small size of its habitable area, has not been as heavily influenced by tourism and many of the children still retain the dialect. For both islands, the dialect remains perceptible in most adults and is very heavy in the older adults.

Scholars who postulate early modern English pronunciation are involved in educated guessing based on rhymes, puns, orthographic and orthopoeic works, and, to a lesser degree, spelling. When John Barton argues that there were more diphthongs in Shakespeare’s time, he probably means that the constituent sounds were more perceptible. On Ocracoke and Tangier Islands, some residents use some of the diphthongs that Kökeritz and Crystal argue were common in early modern English, rather than the diphthongs of British RP and American Broadcast Standard English. The tendency to pronounce the separate constituents in diphthongs or to “diphthongize” vowels is common throughout the South. While contraction or the reduction of unstressed syllables is characteristic of all colloquial speech, according to Fought, it is particularly extreme in Mountain Southern (i.e., “th[ə]nt” for “there ain’t”), and, according to Kökeritz, even the polite speech of early modern English. Barton argues for a near-piratical post-vocalic “r” in early modern English. Crystal speculates that post-vocalic “r”s were pronounced and not slurred. Kökeritz is ambivalent on the point and believes that by Shakespeare’s time slurring was becoming the norm.¹⁷ If one accepts Barton and Crystal’s views, Network Standard and Mountain Southern post-vocalic “r”s are similar to those of early modern English.

Are the dialects of the older generation on Ocracoke and Tangier Islands extremely similar to early modern English? Probably not. Do these accents and dialects share some features? Yes. An argument can certainly be made that these dialects, along with Mountain Southern, with their perceptible diphthongs, extreme contractions, and pronounced post-vocalic “r”s, are closer to the accents of Shakespeare’s actors than contemporary British RP. In response to English actress Lisa Harrow saying, “we sound much more genteel now, don’t we?” Barton responds, “Genteel, yes, that’s a good word. Elizabethan English is rougher, isn’t it?—and tougher.”¹⁸

Research by the “Dialects of Shakespeare’s England and the American South” Creative Inquiry Group, Dept. of Performing Arts, Clemson University: Christopher Z. Bellinger, Nicole Goodrich, Elizabeth Harvey, Kevin Johnson, Laura Jones, Patrick Jordan, and Kenneth Alexander Smith.

Notes

1. John Barton, *Playing Shakespeare* (New York: Anchor, 1984).
2. Helge Kökeritz, *Shakespeare's Pronunciation* (New Haven: Yale, 1953), 216.
3. Kökeritz, 217. He does not supply a play citation.
4. Kökeritz, 244.
5. David Crystal, *Pronouncing Shakespeare* (Cambridge, 2005), 38.
6. Barton, 63.
7. Crystal, 50.
8. Crystal, 50.
9. Kökeritz, 315.
10. Kökeritz, 6.
11. Kökeritz, 271-80.
12. Kökeritz, 314.
13. John G. Fought, "Rful Southern," *American Varieties*, MacNeil/Lehrer Productions, 2005, <http://www.pbs.org/speak/seatosea/americanvarieties/southern/> (accessed February 9, 2007).
14. Fought.
15. Fought.
16. Lewis Herman and Marguerite Shalett Herman, *American Dialects* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 135.
17. Kökeritz, 6, 315; Barton, 63; and Crystal, 50.
18. Barton, 64.

Appendix: Phonetic Symbols

[:] lengthens preceding vowel sound

Vowels

[a] between the "a" in American Network Standard (NS) "can't" and in standard American "father"; the "a" in British Received Pronunciation (RP) "can't"

[a:] as "a" in NS "father"

[ʌ] as "u" in NS "rut"

[e:] as "e" in French "les"

[e] corresponding short vowel

[ɐ] as "e" in NS "bet"

[ə] the schwa (unstressed vowel) as "o" in NS "talon" and "a" in NS "around"

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| | |
|------|---------------------------|
| [ɪ] | as "i" in NS "lit" |
| [i:] | as "ee" in NS "bee" |
| [o:] | as "o" in French "mot" |
| [ɔ] | corresponding short vowel |
| [ɔ:] | as "aw" in NS "saw" |
| [ʊ] | as "oo" in NS "good" |

Diphthongs

| | |
|------|-----------------------|
| [aɪ] | as "i" in NS "bike" |
| [aʊ] | as "ou" NS in "house" |
| [ɔɪ] | as "oy" in NS "toy" |

"R"s

| | |
|------|----------------------------------|
| [r] | as in "ring" and "merry" |
| [r̥] | burred or trilled "r" |
| [ɹ] | weak preconsonantal or final "r" |
| [r̠] | retroflex (tongue curled back) |

Dialect-Specific Diphthongs

| | |
|-------|--|
| [eɪ] | "i" as in early modern English "like" |
| [eʊ] | "ou" in EME "house" |
| [o:ɪ] | as "o" in Ocracoke and Tangier Island "go" |

BORDER WARS: SHAKESPEARE, ROBERT LEPAGE, AND THE PRODUCTION OF NATIONAL SENTIMENT

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RICHARD EYRE: But there is a Quebecois translation [of *Hamlet*]? I saw your Quebecois translation of *Macbeth* in Paris.

ROBERT LEPAGE: Yes. We called it Quebecois because it's much easier to describe it that way, but it was an archaic French, the French that people were speaking at more or less the time Shakespeare was writing his plays in England. Some words were very close cousins to the words Shakespeare used. Actually a lot of Shakespeare is French mis-spelt or mispronounced. So there you have it!

National Theatre Platforms Interview Series,
January 10, 1997

The year 2002 saw the publication of *Shakespeare in Canada*, a collection of essays that, as its title suggests, aims at identifying and recording uniquely Canadian manifestations of Shakespeare. The book's preface announces its ambitious scope: "Is there a distinctly Canadian Shakespeare? Can we posit a specifically Canadian reading or production of Shakespeare? How can we theorize Canadian adaptations of Shakespeare?"¹ Tellingly, the full title of the collection is not a declarative statement identifying a definitive playwright and nation; the full title is actually *Shakespeare in Canada: 'a world elsewhere'*—the interrogative subtly hinting at the perpetual impossibility of resolving the preface's queries.² In putting their title in the form of a question, the editors implicitly recognize the inherent difficulty in definitively locating "Shakespeare" or "Canada" within consistently identifiable frames or borders; both terms are too ephemeral, too diffuse, and will slip to "worlds elsewhere" when an attempt is made to contain them. Nevertheless, *Shakespeare in Canada* stands as testament to the fact that the sheer size and gravity of the terms "Shakespeare" and "Canada" attract, not repel, extensive scholarly energies. The impressive breadth of material in the collection is indicative of what has become a critical standard: that Shakespeare's plays are tools utilized by "cultures and societies seeking either to establish their independence from imperial influence or to identify, define, and assert their own national values or priorities."³ While the scope of the respective discourses seemingly precludes totalizing definitions or understanding, studying their symbiotic interactions allows us to approach their respective boundaries from unique angles: Shakespeare can tell us things about Canada, Canada can inform our conceptions of Shakespeare—it is possible to "interrogate each through the medium of the other."⁴ Understanding—

never fully, only better—what we mean when we deploy these terms is therefore of the utmost importance, to Canadians and Shakespeareans alike.

A compelling figure in the discussion of the shared boundaries between Shakespeare and Canada is director Robert Lepage.⁵ Lepage is another seemingly borderless entity: although ostensibly rooted in Québec, he has gained international renown as an itinerant director of, among other things, Shakespeare.⁶ Assessments of Lepage's canon tend to read as follows: "Lepage's work disdains traditional linguistic and geographical boundaries by revolutionizing ways of viewing and doing theater";⁷ or, "His plays are about the way culture travels, about the clash and interpenetration of cultures; they use and challenge stereotypes of ethnicity, questioning cultural identity in innovative ways."⁸ As these quotations suggest, the questions that Lepage chooses to grapple with, as well as the very manner in which he creates and produces his theatre, are intended to trouble his audiences' conceptions of weighty terms like "nation," "language," "cultural identity," and "authority." Because of Lepage's complex creative style and the range of his vision(s), he can become a third term in the equation: his use of Shakespeare and his connections to Canada via-Québec can provide insight into Shakespearean and Canadian discourses. In what follows I want to examine Lepage's treatment of Shakespeare and trace the ways in which his co-direction of *Romeo & Juliette* in 1989-90—a bilingual production originally created for the distinctive setting of the Canadian prairies—both complicates and elucidates understandings of Shakespeare, Canada, and Shakespeare in Canada. By way of comparison, I will also consider Lepage's (in)famous production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1992-1993), which, while not distinctively "Canadian," was marked as alien when transported across the Atlantic to the very heart of Shakespearean authority in London's National Theatre. Daniel Fischlin nicely summarizes the issues at hand: "Neither Shakespearean adaptation nor Canadian national identity are necessarily coherent terms. Both are subject to immense and varying pressures to conform to different ideologies, different sites of national self-identification."⁹ It seems to me that Lepage, specifically in his employment of language in producing Shakespeare, brings these matters of national identification and ideology to the fore. Lepage, like the editors of *Shakespeare in Canada*, revels in asking the big questions: Is there a correct way to "do" Shakespeare? What is the basis for identifying with a place or nation? Can these first two questions be linked in any way? And if they can, what happens (to self, to nation, and to Shakespeare) when that link is frayed or severed?

The epigraph to this paper, taken from an interview of Lepage conducted by Richard Eyre at the National Theatre in 1997, points in the directions that I intend to explore. Most apparent is the focus on language: the two are discussing Lepage's French productions of Shakespeare. Also in play are notions of ownership and authority: Eyre refers to "your translation" of *Macbeth* and Lepage notes that "We called it Quebecois." The translation in question was actually done by Michel Garneau in the late 1970s. Should Lepage have corrected Eyre? He did, after all, *direct* the performance. Who does a translation of

Shakespeare belong to? As much as Lepage speaks openly about translating and altering Shakespeare, of making Shakespeare *his* or *ours*, his challenges to the authority of the “Universal Bard” involve—paradoxically—a simultaneous recognition of that authority. Through translation Shakespeare can be appropriated, reshaped, and manipulated into startling new forms; yet even this process is infused with a measure of respect: it was decided that the French translation of *Macbeth* must be similar to that which Shakespeare *might* have spoken, or as Lepage suggests, *did* in fact speak.¹⁰ Notions of nations and borders are also implicit in the conversation; indeed, the mind almost dizzies at the ephemerality of boundaries in this brief exchange: Lepage, a Canadian, is at the National Theatre in England, speaking to Eyre about a Québécois production in France. And pervading all of these spaces is Shakespeare, a matrix of texts, translations, practices, and performances that becomes a type of language that both men converse in fluently.

***A Midsummer Night's Dream*: London, England, 1992-93**

Lepage's most well-known Shakespearean production—*A Midsummer Night's Dream* at London's Royal National Theatre in 1992—serves as a revealing lens through which to view his earlier collaboration on *Romeo & Juliette*. Considering the context and the international flavour that he brought to the production, it is apparent that notions of authority, nation, and language were on his mind. Lepage's production produced impassioned responses; both those who applauded it and those who denounced it agreed that visually, the play was unforgettable. Nicholas De Jongh recalls the setting:

Imagine the jolting shock. Instead of the usual palace, the familiar midsummer wood, fresh with faeries, where lovers come to grief by moonlight, the stage for this astonishing production is a black-walled no man's land. Centre stage there lies a pool of muddy water in the midst of which stands a bare brass bedstead. The pool is surrounded by mud and more mud. Shakespeare's old dream, as we have come to know it, has vanished entirely.¹¹

Peter Brook's celebrated (and much cleaner) 1970 “white-box” production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was the yardstick with which the overwhelming majority of critics measured Lepage's version of the play, both positively: “[Lepage's production] transforms our idea of the play as dramatically as Peter Brook's . . . some 20 years ago,”¹² and negatively: “Where Brook's white-box production mixed authentic magic, comic joy and rigorous attention to the verse, Lepage's production offers a lugubriously eccentric vision that reduces even the best performers . . . to mud-caked puppets.”¹³ While the mud and muck were undeniably the lasting images of Lepage's *Dream*, reviews of the production also found unanimity on another front: the production's treatment of Shakespeare's verse. As one reviewer put it, “Some good lines are lost in the

physical ado";¹⁴ others were not so kind: "[it is] the most perverse, leaden, humourless and vilely spoken production of this magical play I have ever seen."¹⁵ Reviews that seized on Lepage's lack of reverence for Shakespeare's poetic language levelled their sights on the thick accent of Angela Laurier, the Québécois actress who played Puck. Comments ranged from diplomatic: "I cannot say that they spoke the text particularly well," to hostile: "Laurier has absolutely no ear for the rhythms of English blank verse so that most of what she says is gibberish," to indignant: "it is typical of the production's upside-down values that the one gift nature denied Laurier was the ability to speak the verse with comprehensible clarity."¹⁶ As one critic retrospectively summarizes, what the majority of critics saw "was a *Dream* that floated away from Shakespeare as well as theatrical history on Lepage's sea of mud."¹⁷

While in no way was Lepage's *Dream* a "Canadian" production of Shakespeare (aside from Laurier, the majority of the cast was in fact British), the critical responses to the play can nevertheless be seen as attempts to construct and reinforce boundaries around Shakespeare at a national level (in this case, Britain or England), or alternatively, around the nation using Shakespeare as a kind of protective boundary; in either sense, Lepage's production seems to have been received as an uncomfortable incursion into a national space. In Barbara Hodgdon's terms, "the review discourse maps Lepage's *Dream* as a transgressive domain" by utilizing "figurations of place, body, national as well as ethnic identities, and gendered subjectivity . . . to shore up commonly held cultural codes, values and norms and to reassert literary, theatrical, social, and political boundaries."¹⁸ As we will find, a similar type of interpretive rampart was erected as *Romeo & Juliette* neared Stratford, Ontario; in that case, what was marked as "other" or foreign was the rural setting and lack of refinement in the English actors' performances. French accents or even entire speeches in "Old World French" were less of an issue during *Romeo & Juliette*'s run because it was understood that the production was attempting (successfully or not) to represent Canada's bilingual make-up. In the case of Lepage's *Dream*, Laurier's thick accent immediately marked her as foreign, and despite near unanimous praise for her physicality and acrobatic skill, it was this mark of "other" that stuck; Lepage had no prior bargain or understanding with his audience that he was planning on making Shakespeare speak in tongues. In both instances there was an attempt to "draw national and cultural boundaries around 'Shakespeare' and manage 'his' meanings."¹⁹ The *desire* to draw these definitive borders is one thing, but to *actually* delineate them in some way is quite another; the reviews that engaged Lepage's *Dream* suggest that it is easier to define national and Shakespearean boundaries in terms of what they *are not*: in the context of the Royal National Theatre in London, boundaries took shape by pointing out that the actress playing Puck isn't from here, that Shakespeare isn't supposed to sound like this.

It is worthwhile to consider Lepage's feelings on language and Shakespeare, however difficult it may be to generalize about such things. In his words, "What I like to do is use words as music. People's talk becomes music

and what they do are the real verbs, the real actions, the real phrases. The meaning of the show has to be what's up front. And the way we get there is by the different languages, to treat them as objects."²⁰ In Lepage's work, language exists as a formal property of the theatre, an element not unlike physical props or costumes that can be manipulated for thematic and symbolic purposes; Lepage's profound investment in language is evidenced by a glance at the polylingualism pervading some of his most celebrated productions: *Seven Streams of the River Ota*, *The Dragons' Trilogy*, and *Tectonic Plates*. In regard to his linguistic interests and his manipulation of languages in his productions, Lepage says, "You can't really start understanding intercultural exchanges if you don't get into all the nitty gritty of it."²¹ The production of *Dream* was monolingual, but to its critics, Laurier was most certainly not speaking Shakespeare's English; this was a deliberate move on Lepage's part to destabilize both Shakespeare's language and preconceptions of it. It seems that in attracting attention to the language of the play, paradoxically, Lepage ultimately wants to draw attention *away* from it; in the case of *Dream*, attention could be redirected to a number of places: perhaps the production's physicality, or its sheer visual spectacle, or perhaps to a comment on Shakespeare himself as a figure of cultural authority.²² Whatever the case, for Lepage, language is a means of *getting somewhere else*:

Pitting languages one against the other—at the risk of devaluing language, of declaring its relative inefficacy—is one of the ways that Lepage's productions express their mode of existence in the world, as circulation, as confrontation with diversity, as a coming together of disparate things.²³

Denis Salter argues that for Lepage, "Shakespeare...does not exist to be memorialized. Rather, he is an occasion for the celebration of virtually *everything*—art, life, death, politics, ideology, performance itself—that is inherently transitory."²⁴ Lepage's *Dream*—set in an incessantly shifting pool of mud that was guaranteed to splatter and smear a little differently each and every night, complete with a lead actress who was at times incomprehensible—supports Salter's assessment. The English reaction to Lepage's *Dream* thus begins to make more sense: in hinting that there might be something inherently transitory about Shakespeare and his language, Lepage struck a nerve. The reviewers of *Dream* harbored definite preconceptions of what Shakespeare should be; in presenting a version of Shakespeare so dramatically different from these preconceived notions, Lepage provided a reminder of just how unstable and uncontainable an entity Shakespeare truly is. The anxiety felt by certain reviewers of *Dream* is brought into relief because their rhetoric is so frequently founded on a *stable* conception of Shakespeare and aims to point out what looks or sounds incorrect about Lepage's production. Cumulatively, the reviews reveal just how readily Shakespeare is marshalled in the service of constructing borders and imagining nations.

Romeo and Juliette: Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 1989

1989 was the Fifth Anniversary Season of the Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan Festival, and artistic director Gordon McCall had aspirations of celebrating in a manner that would garner national attention. He invited Lepage and his Québec company, Théâtre Repère, to participate in a co-directed production of *Romeo and Juliet*; it would be a production with ambitious goals: “to explore the ‘duality’ of Canadian culture through the presentation of a ‘bilingual’ Shakespearean production.”²⁵ In his account of the creative process and reception of the play, McCall recalls some of his reasons for choosing Lepage: “I knew of the innovative ‘creations’ and ‘collaborations’ of Quebec director Robert Lepage. I was also aware that he had been influenced, as had I, by the work of the British director Peter Brook.”²⁶ McCall’s invocation of Brook’s name in recollecting the genesis of the project is intriguing. The passing mention of Brook is a subtle reminder of the diverse and often opposing forces at work in attempting to make Shakespeare Canadian: here some of the potential uncouthness of a distinctly localized adaptation of Shakespeare is finessed by linking those in charge of the production to Shakespeare’s colonial and cultural past.²⁷ Even in his celebration of placing Shakespeare in a unique (Canadian) context and literally giving him new (Canadian) voices, McCall feels obliged to hint that “their” (McCall and Lepage’s) Shakespeare nevertheless has some vestige of his original English-ness about him that has been passed down through a directorial genealogy.

While the primary means through which *Romeo & Juliette* would explore the duality of Canadian culture was its incorporation of two languages, the distinctive prairie setting of the Saskatchewan Festival (on the banks of the South Saskatchewan River) was also of tremendous thematic importance to McCall and Lepage’s vision. Stephen Heatley argues that assimilating Canada’s unique geography into productions of Shakespeare—as so many summer festivals do, from Shakespeare by the Sea in Halifax, to Saskatoon, to Bard on the Beach in Vancouver—is a crucial step in making Shakespeare “speak” to Canadians: “interest is generated because the audience’s engagement with Shakespeare is a direct result of the plays being *adapted* to fit a Canadian sensibility by a Canadian theatre aesthetic.”²⁸ McCall echoes Heatley in his assessment of *Romeo & Juliette*’s use of the prairies:

Wanting to view the work in a contemporary Canadian context led us to think of Canada as a geographical landscape viewed from above. In our view, the prairie dominates the west central part of the country. The prairie became our metaphorical landscape; the Montague and Capulet families became an anglophone and a francophone family living adjacent to one another’s land beside a stretch of the ever-present Trans-Canada highway. . . . Robert viewed French Canadian society as having originated in rural roots while I viewed an anglophone identity as having a potential basis in the rural west.²⁹

The prairies were formulated as a space representative of Canada's linguistic duality, historically significant to anglophones and francophones alike; such a space was subsequently used to infuse Shakespeare's text with additional thematic significance while simultaneously enhancing understandings of the play's themes in general. Matters regional and Shakespearean thus coalesced in the prairie setting as an attempt was made to adequately represent both Shakespeare and the nation at localized ("the west central part of the country") and local (downtown Saskatoon) levels.

While McCall and Lepage's treatment of the prairie setting is a relatively straightforward matter, their explanations regarding the use of French and English in the play are more complicated to reconstruct and make sense of—primarily (and ironically) because it isn't exactly clear how much they wanted to emphasize the language issue that was at the heart of the production. The two decided that the Capulets would speak French in their private, family scenes but English when in public. Conversely, the Montagues spoke only English, although Romeo struggled to speak a few heartfelt French words (of affection to Juliette, and of anger to Tybalt); in addition, Mercutio's and Tybalt's curses contained the occasional choice French word.³⁰ Again, the thinking behind such a linguistic breakdown was the desire to represent the entire country: "This language distribution seemed to reflect accurately the way French and English are spoken in Canada today. On the whole, it seems that francophones tend to be bilingual while anglophones tend to be unilingual."³¹ The French translation used in the play was intended as another tool for removing regional boundaries; francophone playwright Jean Marc Dalpé provided the translation, using an "Old World French" that, in addition to retaining the Elizabethan flavor of Shakespeare's original text, was also meant to "transcend a parochial regionalism and represent the francophone culture throughout Canada."³² It seems, then, that the production was attempting to weave two threads—one of Shakespearean authority, the other of national identification—into a single, coherent pattern that would mark it as distinctly Canadian *and* distinctly Shakespearean. Making Shakespeare's text bilingual was an extremely effective (and inspired) way to accomplish such a task: McCall and Lepage not only put their stamp on Shakespeare, they also tapped into the contentious relationship between Québec and the rest of Canada (which was heightened at the time by the ongoing drama surrounding the Meech Lake Accord).³³ Even if audience members were not bilingual, the production remained powerful, for "The two languages on stage in *Romeo & Juliette*, and characters' use of one or the other or both, attuned the audience to linguistic change within a *single* language."³⁴ More so than moving cars, strips of asphalt, or prairie backdrops, language would be *Romeo & Juliette's* indelible marker, and rightly so.

Interestingly, however, McCall claims that language was neither his nor Lepage's primary concern:

We made the pivotal decision that we would present the play as a clash of cultures, not of language. We wanted a version of *Romeo & Juliette* that might give audiences a contemporary insight into the characters

and action, but we did not want a presentation about language politics in Canada using *Romeo & Juliette* as a simplistic political device. Naturally the sad story of human relations in *Romeo & Juliette* has political overtones that are heightened by the contemporary Canadian context and language differences in which we placed our interpretation; but we did not, nor do not, view that production as a simplistic overview of Quebec versus the rest of Canada. The language difference allowed us to heighten the lack of communication between the community of the Montague and Capulet families. . . . We felt—and feel—that the real conflict in Canada, and in our interpretation of *Romeo & Juliette*, is between cultures and that language differences are the surface reflection of these cultural conflicts.³⁵

Such an assertion rings somewhat hollow in that the bilingual nature of the production was so clearly its motivating force and drawing point (McCall seems to be deliberately downplaying the importance of language); however, McCall's assertion—that language was a means to *get somewhere else*, in this case, larger cultural commentary—certainly conforms to what I have already related of the production's explicit and implicit goals of attaining a truly national scope. Such a treatment of language also meshes with what can generally be said about Lepage's regard for language in his own productions. Recall that typically in Lepage's productions, "languages are signs in a vast array of cultural indicators, signs to be negotiated rather than penetrated."³⁶ Clearly, *Romeo & Juliette* presented Lepage with a remarkable opportunity to collaborate on a production that would be infused with the linguistic tensions and potential for larger (inter)cultural exploration that so fascinate him.

McCall's assessment of language in *Romeo & Juliette* as the mere "surface reflection" of deeper cultural conflicts is another gesture towards Shakespeare's cultural authority: he indicates that Shakespeare can serve as a useful medium for communication regardless of any potentially incongruous dialects and accents that performers or spectators may possess. What matters most, McCall suggests, is not Shakespeare's language, but the language of "Shakespeare," the language of a universalized and democratized theatre in which interactions between actors and audiences have an inherent synergy to them. It is along these lines of a universal language of the theatre shared by artists and audiences alike that McCall produces a romantic narrative for the production and reception of *Romeo & Juliette*. From its inception, the creative process behind *Romeo & Juliette* was unique. The anglophone and francophone companies first rehearsed separately with their respective directors, with only Juliette (Celine Bonnier) and Romeo (Tom Rooney) travelling between Québec City and Saskatoon; two weeks before the play was to open the companies came together to rehearse as a single unit. McCall fondly recalls these collective rehearsals: "One of my most significant memories of that time was the feeling that we were finding a common language of communication but that the process for each actor had definite, separate cultural tendencies and influences."³⁷ McCall thus

figures the rehearsal process as an exercise in a common dialect that managed to bring each actor's unique cultural and linguistic accents into relief. According to McCall, this synthesis also functioned on the directorial level, where he and Lepage "both agreed that our communication was eased by our mutual fluency in the language of the theatre."³⁸ Ultimately, any difficulties that the two companies might have had communicating with one another seemingly melted away as opening night approached: "Even though most members of the Saskatoon company understood very little of the [French] language, we could all see that the passion, imagination and commitment of the characterizations would transcend any possible language barriers."³⁹ In providing such a narrative, McCall figures the creative process behind the production as a proleptic representation of its potential cultural power in performance: two groups of Canadians, speaking different languages and made up of disparate individuals, come together, and through the imaginative and artistic possibilities of the theatre, find common ground in Shakespeare and learn that within the bounds of the theatre, everyone speaks the same language. Such was the promise of *Romeo & Juliette*, and in McCall's opinion, it was a promise fulfilled: "In addition to the fact that we presented a sound piece of theatre, it appears that we somehow managed to transcend the politics of the language issue and successfully affect the audience with a new interpretation of a great love story."⁴⁰

Lepage, however, tells a different story of the collaborative process:

Romeo & Juliette was a weird thing because it was supposed to be a collaboration, but we were two directors. I felt very open to do a lot of things, working with the English actors and the French. And I didn't mind the English director working with the French actors at all, on the contrary, but he didn't want to. He said that was what we were going to do, but in the end he would always be present when I worked with the English actors to be sure I didn't contradict him. . . . I felt cheated.⁴¹

In Lepage's retrospection, the distinctions between the two companies remain clear: rather than a harmonious collection of artists all speaking the same language, he recollects French actors led by a French director working with English actors led by an English director; regional and linguistic differences remain sharply demarcated. Lepage's disappointment with the partnership is a reminder of just how complex the production's aspirations were (complexities that McCall seems to elide in his narrative): through the medium of Shakespeare, to adequately represent *all* of French and English Canada on a single stage. Fittingly, other parts of the nation soon had a chance to experience this unique collaboration. When *Romeo & Juliette* left the prairies and travelled east for a short string of performances, it was received much more critically than it had been in Saskatoon; what is most interesting, however, is that those critical of the play took umbrage not at its aspirations to represent the national on a local level, but at the production's treatment of Shakespeare.

Romeo & Juliette: Ottawa, Toronto, and Stratford, Ontario, 1990

As *Romeo & Juliette* shifted to Ontario, the shadow of Stratford—the authoritative and artistic center for Shakespeare in Canada—began to loom large. It was a shadow that extended as far as western Canada, and one that the Saskatchewan Festival had long been consciously trying to get out from under. By 1990 the Stratford Festival was well-established as a world-class site of Shakespearean theatre, attracting leading actors and directors from around the globe as well as accruing a certain prestige from the signifying power of its English namesake. For the Saskatchewan Festival to make its mark on the national landscape of Canadian theatre and the worldwide landscape of Shakespeare meant that it had to position itself against Stratford's classical and relatively conservative artistic style. This involved de-emphasizing both Shakespeare's authoritative voice and Canada's English past. As Moira Day explains,

McCall found himself in the position of supporting the authority of the Shakespearean text itself, with all its weight of imperialist tradition, while finding a way to subvert that authority enough to open it to his postcolonial audiences and actors. He justified his strongly physical, imagistic, contemporary approaches to the plays as being true to the text by suggesting that it was less the fantasies, conceits, and iambs of the language itself that had given the texts their power with their original audiences; it was the language's ability to trigger off images, analogies, and metaphors that would tie the hidden nuances and contemporary subtext of the play's fictive world to the real issues and concerns present in their own.⁴²

Their position from the margins of Shakespearean production in Canada explains the appeal of a project like *Romeo & Juliette* to both the Saskatchewan and Québec companies, for "Lepage's Théâtre Repère . . . like Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan, also felt itself unbound by the demands of a classical Shakespearean performance tradition it found foreign and unaccommodating to its own perception of itself."⁴³ Indeed, the unique bilingual and collaborative nature of *Romeo & Juliette* gave the two companies a chance to invert their position at the margins: the Saskatchewan company became representative of English-speaking Canada, the Québec company representative of French-speaking Canada; in their collaboration, the two companies synthesized to (re) center the nation.

Few critics in Ottawa, Toronto, or Stratford seem to have had any major problems with the merger of the English and French companies; in fact, the *collaboration* was widely regarded as a success. Most critics echo in some form or another Barbara Crook's claims in her review for *The Ottawa Citizen* that "The actors work as a seamless team, the performances are excellent and the dialogue in both languages is clear, understandable and usually poetic."⁴⁴ Criticisms of the production tended to center not on its representation of the

nation, but its handling of Shakespeare; the “Stratford Ideal” of Shakespeare and the “Anglo-Canadian classical tradition”⁴⁵ were defended with much more vehemence than any preconceptions of how Canada should be represented. It was the English actors who took the brunt of criticisms while

[t]he French-Canadian actors were generally better received . . . because of their more formal training, Lepage’s growing reputation as an important Central Canadian director, and the acknowledgement that the French actors were working outside of the classical mainstream British tradition and could be excused for their natural eccentricity.⁴⁶

The gruff, rural English spoken by the Saskatchewan company (spoken “in character” as a product of the production’s prairie setting) was deemed to be more of an impediment to enjoying Shakespeare’s language than any difficulties the French actors might have had in their English scenes. Somehow, it seems, the English actors should have known better than to handle Shakespeare’s language so roughly, just as they should have known not to outfit Shakespeare in cowboy boots and pickup trucks. Day observes that “the older Ontario critical establishment . . . appeared hostile to what they regarded as an adolescent, postcolonial, postmodern assault on the grand classical tradition they had preserved and perpetuated as their own.”⁴⁷ Crook, who admittedly enjoyed the performance, nevertheless feels that she cannot endorse it wholeheartedly, for reasons that are never explained or justified in detail: “Its clarity and modern ‘hooks’ make this *Romeo & Juliette* ideal for older children, teenagers, and newcomers to Shakespeare. But audiences who expect this interpretation to give new depth and meaning to the famous tragedy may feel something’s missing”; as an “*interpretation of Shakespeare*, [the production] falls short” (emphasis added).⁴⁸ Crook’s vagueness as to what exactly it is that might be missing from the production speaks to the intangible yet pervasive nature of Shakespeare’s cultural authority: somehow the production just doesn’t feel right—it isn’t quite what Shakespeare is, or was meant to be. Crook implicitly claims that she knows what Shakespeare *should be*, but it isn’t something that she can put into words.

What reviews such as Crook’s suggest, I think, is that Shakespeare is ostensibly a more manageable and definitive concept than Canada. This implication is partly due to the notion that Shakespeare can be physically contained within identifiable borders: his work is locatable and apprehensible within a single book or the framed boundaries of a stage; Canada cannot be materially represented or comprehended in the same totalizing manner. Accordingly, bounded versions of Shakespeare can seemingly be studied in a more comprehensive way: one could theoretically memorize entire plays or replay a single production over and over on a recording device or in the mind’s eye; Crook herself implies such an expertise when she writes that only those “who aren’t familiar with or fond of Shakespeare” won’t find any fault with *Romeo & Juliette*. Conversely, it is impossible to “know” Canada in such a nuanced manner—one can hold a mental map of regions, dialects, customs, climate, topography, etc., but this will never

be more than just an abstract cognitive sketch. What reviews such as Crook's ultimately prove, however, is that Shakespeare is as conceptually unbounded as is the idea of the nation. As *Romeo & Juliette* attests, his canon is infinitely adaptable, translatable, and appropriable, and no two individuals—not even those co-directing with ostensibly common artistic aspirations like McCall and Lepage—will read or remember Shakespeare in precisely the same way. This perpetual mutability helps to explain Crook's vague critique of the play: similar to the review discourse surrounding Lepage's muddy *Dream*, it is considerably easier to define Shakespeare's work in terms of what it *isn't*—not rural, not loud, not covered in dust—than what it *is*. The critical responses to *Romeo & Juliette* in Ontario also suggest that conceptions of Shakespeare are, in part, geographically informed—the closer one gets to authoritative centers like Stratford, Ontario, or London, the more deeply ingrained the understanding of what Shakespeare is (or more accurately, what he isn't), and the more powerful the urge to border and protect such an understanding.

The path that I have traced in this essay has passed through borders regional, provincial, international, and cultural; along the way I have attempted to highlight the ways in which certain borders—specifically, national and Shakespearean ones—have a symbiotic relationship in that one boundary can be used to help locate and define another. Any sort of boundary around either Shakespeare or Canada is purely conceptual, yet the two terms can be conceived in mutually beneficial ways: to hold an impression as to how Shakespeare “should” look or sound in Canada or England in some way helps to give shape to what it means to be Canadian or English; likewise, adaptations and appropriations that are in some way recognizably Canadian or “other”—in terms of setting, language, or regional dialects—reinforce preconceptions of how Shakespeare “should” be done. Fischlin provides a compelling comment in this regard:

Canadian adaptations of Shakespeare (from a range of writing positions) puncture the reductive notion of an imagined community, to borrow Benedict Anderson's controversial term, based on the illusion of shared values that authenticate that community's identity. Imagined communities, as elaborated in over a century of Shakespearean adaptation in Canada, are highly variable and elusive: different imaginings produce different communities as mediated through the relationship to Shakespeare.⁴⁹

I agree with Fischlin here, although I would like to supplement his point. To the idea that adaptations of Shakespeare in Canada serve to subvert the notion of Canada as an imagined community, I would add that Shakespeare is an equally variable and elusive term in the equation. Any attempt to somehow imaginatively encapsulate the nation, whether that means as a land mass, as a distinct region, or even at the level of a single theatre, will inevitably lead to formulations of a Shakespeare that is “ours,” and a Shakespeare that is “theirs,” or “other.” But as Lepage claims, and more importantly, as his productions of

Shakespeare affirm, "There's not a recipe for how you do Shakespeare: you do it. . . . People think that Shakespeare must be done a certain way, and they all think that they know that way, but it doesn't belong to them."⁵⁰ Lepage's Shakespearean productions serve as provocative examples that Shakespeare, like Canada, is and is not the property of an imagined community—his works belong to everyone and no one at once. Highlighting, undermining, or even "puncturing" (as Fischlin puts it) the imagined status of a community, however, is in no way a bad thing; quite the opposite: incursions into imagined spaces—movements around and through borders to test, challenge, or even sabotage their limits—are the very means by which those spaces are continually reshaped, reconstituted, and understood. What makes Canada and Shakespeare such powerful notions is that to a certain extent they can *only* be apprehended through, and circumscribed by, the imagination; that both Canada and Shakespeare might be borderless entities, perpetually undiscovered countries, seems ultimately to be a stimulating concept, not a limiting one.

Notes

1. Diana Brydon and Irena R. Makaryk, Preface to *Shakespeare in Canada: 'a world elsewhere'?*, ed. Diana Brydon and Irena R. Makaryk (Toronto, Univ. of Toronto Press, 2002), p. xi.
2. The subtitle is taken from Coriolanus' response to his banishment from Rome: "Despising, / For you, the city, thus I turn my back; / There is a world elsewhere" (3.3.133-5). The editors of *Shakespeare in Canada* thus transform what is frequently played as a confident declaration on Coriolanus' part into an unanswered question. I am quoting from *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd ed., ed. G.B. Evans (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1997).
3. Thomas Cartelli, *Repositioning Shakespeare: National Formations, Postcolonial Appropriations* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 2.
4. Diana Brydon, "Relocating Shakespeare, Redefining Canada," in *Shakespeare in Canada*, 395.
5. Lepage is difficult to label. He is many things—actor, producer, writer, to name a few—but in the context of this paper, I will be focusing on his work as a director of Shakespeare.
6. For a discussion of Lepage's complicated relationship with Québec, see Jennifer Harvie and Erin Hurley, "States of Play: Locating Québec in the Performances of Robert Lepage, Ex Machina, and the Cirque du Soleil," *Theatre Journal*, 51 (1999): 299-315.
7. Joseph Donohoe Jr. and Jane M. Koustas, Introduction to *Theater sans frontières: Essays on the Dramatic Universe of Robert Lepage*, ed. Joseph Donohoe Jr. and Jane M. Koustas (East Lansing: Michigan State UP, 2000), 2.
8. Sherry Simon, "Robert Lepage and the Languages of Spectacle," in *Theater sans frontières*, 215.
9. Daniel Fischlin, "Nation and/as Adaptation: Shakespeare, Canada, and Authenticity," in *Shakespeare in Canada*, 317.

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10. To add further layers of authorial complexity, it is worth noting that the main topic of discussion for Eyre and Lepage is Lepage's one-man version of *Hamlet*. Lepage entitled this highly technological production *Elsinore*, claiming in this interview, "I was too chicken to call it *Hamlet*." Lepage's concession is another paradoxical instance of conferring authority on Shakespeare in the very act of attempting to create distance from that authority.
11. Nicholas De Jongh, "Bewitched in Bed with a Dream Transformed," *Evening Standard*, July 10, 1992, 7.
12. De Jongh, 7
13. Michael Billington, "Nightmare's Muddy Water," *The Guardian*, July 2, 1992, 26
14. Benedict Nightingale, "Dreaming in the Goo," *The Times*, July 11, 1992, 17.
15. Billington, 26.
16. A collection of reviews of the play are reprinted in *Theatre Record*, 12 (1992): 820-25: David Nathan, review of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, by William Shakespeare, directed by Robert Lepage, London's Royal National Theatre, London, *Jewish Chronicle*, July 17, 1992; Tony Dunn, review of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, by William Shakespeare, directed by Robert Lepage, London's Royal National Theatre, London, *Tribune*, July 17, 1992; and Billington, 26.
17. Barbara Hodgdon, "Looking for Mr. Shakespeare after 'The Revolution': Robert Lepage's Intercultural *Dream Machine*," *The Shakespeare Trade: Performances and Appropriations*, (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), 183.
18. Hodgdon, 174.
19. Hodgdon, 185.
20. Quoted in Nigel Hunt, "The Global Voyage of Robert Lepage," *The Drama Review*, 33.2 (1989), 112.
21. Robert Lepage, interview by Christie Carson, "Collaboration, Translation, Interpretation," *New Theatre Quarterly*, 9.33 (1993), 32.
22. Robert Hewison's review in *The Sunday Times* is representative of such a shift in attention: "There is a price to pay for Lepage's brilliance. The verse has too stately a pace, and Laurier's French-Canadian accent loses words. But when they are spoken by someone doing a forearm stand, gesticulating with articulate feet, the loss is small. The gain is a gallery of visual images." *The Sunday Times*, July 12, 1992, reprinted in *Theatre Record*, 12 (1992): 825.
23. Simon, 227.
24. Denis Salter, "Between Wor(l)ds: Lepage's Shakespeare Cycle," *Theater sans frontières*, 192.
25. Gordon McCall, "Two Solitudes: A Bilingual *Romeo & Juliette* in Saskatoon," *Canadian Theatre Review*, 62 (Spring 1990), 35.
26. McCall, 36.
27. In her study of the first five years of Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan (1985-90), Moira Day indicates that McCall invoked Brook's name with conspicuous frequency: "Similarly caught

between its need to evoke and illuminate its parent tradition(s) . . . while continuing to resist and interrogate it as a subversive, marginalized outsider, the Festival managed to situate itself as working within the modern English tradition of performance, but outside a purist, classical tradition, by associating its own work with that of Peter Brook." See "Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan 1985-1990: 'The Stratford of the West' (NOT)," *Essays in Theatre / Études Théâtrales*, 15.1 (1996), 76.

28. Stephen Heatley, "Adapting Shakespeare to an Outdoor Canadian Prairie Reality," *Canadian Theatre Review*, 111 (2002), 63.
29. McCall, 38-39.
30. Laurie Maguire ("'Oh be some other name': Translating *Romeo and Juliet*," in *Shakespeare: Text and Theater: Essays in Honor of Jay L. Halio*, ed. Lois Potter and Arthur F. Kinney [Newark: Univ. of Delaware Press, 1999], 277-78) notes that "The Lepage/McCall production followed the dramatist's example in attaching resonance to names: Paris was able to speak fluent English but he was clearly a Francophone (as his name suggests)."
31. McCall, 38.
32. McCall, 36.
33. To make a long (and rather convoluted) story short, this accord (signed in 1987 by all ten Canadian provinces) was intended to clear the path to emending the constitution of Canada. By 1990, the agreement had lost all momentum, and it was never ratified; particularly contentious was Québec's push for constitutional recognition as a "distinct society."
34. Maguire, 278.
35. McCall, 39.
36. Simon, 216.
37. McCall, 37.
38. McCall, 40.
39. McCall, 40.
40. McCall, 41. In Saskatoon, the show played to 95% capacity and according to McCall, "we experienced less than 1% rejection of the show due to French being spoken by the Capulet family." He does not provide his basis for this quantification of success.
41. Lepage, interview by Carson, 31-32.
42. Day, 77-78.
43. Day, 79.
44. Barbara Crook, "Something Missing from Bilingual *Romeo and Juliet*," *Ottawa Citizen*, June 23, 1990, G2.
45. Day, 83.
46. Day, 84.

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47. Day, 85.
48. Crook, G2.
49. Fischlin, 313.
50. Lepage, interview by Carson, 36.

Gerald George

HAMLET AMPLIFIED

The tambourines are clashing in the night.
A whisper rises, sighs, and then retreats.
Normal is a cluster of bright figs
that animate the air beyond one's reach.

"One might as well be sensible," one says.
Another answers, "How, though, would one know?"
There is no answer so the question sleeps
uneasily as if it had a soul.

Suffocation has such subtle wraps.
What one would like to do is take a stick,
track down one's acquiescences and then,
wallop the whole miasmic lot to bits.

CASSIO'S COAT

Maurice Hunt, Baylor University

When in act 5, scene 1 of *Othello*, Roderigo, gulled by Iago into believing that he needs to kill Cassio in order to keep Desdemona in Cyprus and thus near this foolish lover, attacks Cassio, his sword does not penetrate Cassio's body.¹ "That thrust had been mine enemy indeed," Cassio exclaims, "But that my coat is better than thou know'st—I will make proof of thine" (5.1.24-26).² Cassio then draws his rapier and seriously wounds Roderigo. Playgoers and readers alike rarely pause to consider this coat of Cassio's. Editor Michael Neill notes that "[p]resumably Cassio is wearing beneath his doublet a protective coat of mail (or 'privy coat') . . . though he may be referring simply to the thickness of his padded doublet."³ A "privy coat," according to the *O.E.D.*, was "a coat of mail worn under the ordinary dress" ("Privy" III.8.b).⁴ Among the quotations cited to illustrate this definition are "I have secret warying by one off hys counsell to weyre a prevy coat" (J. Beaumont, 1538); and "I have the privy coat of a good conscience" (Francis Bacon, 1599). Actually, privy coats—or fence coats, as they were sometimes called—were garments capable of supporting either fine mesh mail or horizontal and vertical thin plates of steel, horn, or whalebone sewn inside the fabric. European privy coats originated in the Middle Ages and were still relatively common in the seventeenth century. Cassio's word "proof" in his comment that he will "make proof of [Roderigo's coat]" implies that his own coat, "better than [Roderigo] know[s]," is armored rather than simply padded or unusually thick. The phrases "armor of proof" and, less commonly, "proof armor" were current in Shakespeare's England for armor that had withstood penetration tests (*O.E.D.*, "Proof" 10, 9a). Cassio implicitly tells Roderigo that the armor within his coat has withstood a proof test when he says he will "make proof" of his adversary's garment by thrusting his rapier into his body, testing to see if he too wears a privy coat containing proof armor.⁵ Roderigo's exclamation—"O, I am slain!" (5.1.26)—indicates otherwise.

Why would Cassio wear an armored coat at this point in the play? He is unaware of Iago's hatred of him and plot upon his life. One could imagine that he wears a privy coat because he fears Montano, recovering from the wound drunken Cassio gave him, or one of Montano's Cypriote friends. But if this is the reason, it remains unarticulated in the play, and so improbable. Cassio's wearing a privy coat when he is simply returning home between midnight and one o'clock after having had supper with Bianca (4.2.232-37, 241-42; 5.1.116-18), not preparing himself for a duel or for battle (the usual occasions when privy coats were worn), remains a mystery. Shakespeare probably did not want to kill off Cassio at the beginning of act 5 of *Othello*, if for no other reason than that his death would shift focus from the tragic deaths of Desdemona and Othello in the next scene. Cassio's armored coat is not dramatically necessary to make

the non-lethal wounding of Cassio plausible. The theater audience would have accepted Roderigo's wounding on a dark night a defenseless Cassio in the leg or arm, or Iago's doing so, had Shakespeare chosen either possibility. Instead, the privy coat Cassio wears raises the question of why it appears in the play at all. One answer to that question may be theological.

Cassio's saving coat apparently illustrates his theological election. Concerning Othello's appointment of his new lieutenant, Iago, who was passed over for promotion to this rank, bitterly tells Roderigo at the play's beginning that Cassio "had th'election" (1.1.26). By the word "election," jealous Iago of course means that Othello chose Cassio instead of other candidates, even as Duke Vincentio at the beginning of *Measure for Measure*, a play written likely in the same year as *Othello* (1604), tells the old lord, Escalus, that he has "[e]lected [Angelo] our absence to supply" (1.1.19), i.e., chosen him as his deputy to rule in his absence in Vienna. In Cassio's case, the word "election" is especially apropos, for its usage prepares playgoers to associate Cassio with the theological election he later talks about in act 2. When Iago, during the celebration of both the Turkish fleet's destruction and Othello's nuptial, has gotten Cassio to drink so much that he is drunk, Cassio exclaims, "Well, God's above all, and there be souls must be saved, and there be souls must not be saved" (2.3.94-96). "It's true, good lieutenant" (2.3.97), Iago replies, reminding Cassio (and himself) of the rank that Iago thinks he deserves. "For mine own part—no offence to the general, nor any man of quality—I hoped to be saved" (2.3.98-99), Cassio asserts. "And so do I too, lieutenant" (2.3.100), Iago responds, ironically, malevolently, again naming the military rank that apparently amounts to a kind of salvation in his embittered mind different from the Christian salvation to which Cassio alludes. "Ay; but, by your leave, not before me," Cassio vainly, tactlessly, concludes: "the lieutenant is to be saved before the ensign" (2.3.101-2). Realizing through the mist of his drunkenness that he has perhaps insulted the ensign [sergeant] Iago (as indeed he surely has), Cassio breaks off the conversation: "Let's have no more of this: let's to our affairs. God forgive us our sins!" (2.3.102-3).

Noteworthy in Cassio's claim that "God's above all, and there be souls must be saved, and there be souls must not be saved" is a sense of the arbitrariness, or inevitability, of certain souls' salvation: a sense that men and women cannot alter this inevitability. Informing Cassio's utterance is a Biblical text, Romans 9:15-18, wherein God tells Moses: "I will have mercie on him, to whome I will shew mercie: and will have compassion on him, on whom I will have compassion. So then *it is* not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth mercie. For the Scripture saith vnto Pharao, For this same purpose haue I stirred thee vp, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my Name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore he hath mercie on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth."⁶ This Biblical passage provided a major foundation for the Reformation Protestant doctrine of divine predestination—of the Calvinist dogma that God had mysteriously before the beginning of time elected some souls for salvation and reprobated others to damnation, in heavenly decisions that could not be altered by

either human will or deeds. "Predestination was a labyrinth into which one was well advised not to wander," Roland Mushat Frye concludes, "and only Cassio does wander into it, in his maudlin discussion with Iago."⁷

One other character of Shakespeare's, Claudio in that other 1604 play *Measure for Measure*, nevertheless wanders into the predestinarian crux of Romans when he rationalizes his imprisonment for fornication by paraphrasing the Biblical text:

Thus can the demigod Authority
Make us pay down for our offense, by weight,
The words of heaven. On whom it will, it will;
On whom it will not, so; yet still 'tis just. (1.2.120-23)

Since Claudio believes that his secret betrothal handfast with Juliet makes him innocent of the Viennese capital crime of fornication, he utters the word "just" sarcastically, or facetiously, in his utterance "yet still 'tis just," with the result that the theological doctrine of predestination rationalizing the dictatorial law of Vienna is undercut.⁸ At least it would have been so for the majority of Church of England Protestants.⁹ Nevertheless, in *Othello*, not only Iago but also the Moor himself may be reprobates, men whose hearts God hardens—on whom He will not have mercy.¹⁰ In 1604, the likely year of *Othello* and *Measure for Measure*, the Hampton Court Conference occurred, the focus of which was the unsuccessful attempt of godly English Protestants (Puritans) to convince King James and his representatives to revise Article XVII of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England (1563) so that reprobation would be explicitly mentioned for the first time in ways that would make double predestination official dogma of that Church.¹¹ Interestingly, Cassio's utterance "there be souls must be saved, and there be souls must not be saved" makes more explicit than the language of Article XVII does the assumed reality of double predestination.

The title of Article XVII of the 1563 Church of England Articles is "Of Predestination and Election." "Election" was the English word regularly used in Shakespeare's time by Protestants to designate those persons predestined for God's salvation. And so, when a playgoer or reader reconsiders Iago's assertion at the beginning of the play that Cassio "had th'election" in the light of Cassio's later predestinarian utterances in his act 2 dialogue with Iago, he or she wonders whether Cassio is elect in the play's theology. Lieutenant Cassio is, after all, saved before the ensign Iago, in the sense that his privy coat preserves him from death while Iago's easy detection by Emilia and his subsequent arrest insures his imminent death through execution. By means of Cassio's privy coat, Shakespeare underscores the truth of Cassio's prediction of his preservation. Admittedly, it is Cassio's physical life that is saved. Does this physical preservation augur religious salvation?

Answering this question is complicated by the mixture of denominational signs in *Othello*. On the one hand, the play, as previously explained, includes traces of Reformation Protestant theology, in its evocation of predestination and

suggestion that Othello and Iago may be reprobates. In this vein, Shakespeare takes some pains to imply disturbingly that Desdemona, while certainly not a reprobate, is non-elect (in the sense that Article XVII of the Church of England implies that those who are not elect may not be reprobates but simply non-elect).¹² Consistent with this Protestant emphasis is Shakespeare's representation of a heresy of merit in Othello's idea of himself (e.g., 3.3.190-92, 352-59), a personal construct dependent in the Moor's mind upon the performance of meritorious deeds rather than the power of faith.¹³ Sixteenth-century Protestants had stereotyped their religion as a theology of faith opposed to a Catholicism of merit based on performed deeds, a merit that reformers claimed invariably entailed the sin of pride.¹⁴ Paradoxically, Cassio's Protestant predestinarian judgment that "the lieutenant is to be saved before the ensign" acquires Catholic coloring in the assumption that merit (presumably exercised in the acquiring of higher military rank) determines priority in religious election.

This Catholic coloring gains strength from a stereotypical Catholic trait of Cassio's, his view of "divine" Desdemona and his religious worship of her in language evocative of the Virgin Mary. Venerating Desdemona as she steps off the ship that has brought her safely through a sea storm to Cyprus, Cassio exclaims,

O, behold,
The riches of the ship is come on shore!
You men of Cyprus, let her have your knees.
Hail to thee, lady; and the grace of heaven,
Before, behind thee, and on every hand,
Enwheel thee round! (2.1.82-87)

E. A. J. Honigmann hears in this passage an echo of the Catholic "'Hail Mary,' reinforced by an emphasis upon kneeling and by [the phrase] 'the grace of heaven.'"¹⁵ Ironically, Cassio's reverent benediction apparently has no effect in the play; heaven's graces never do "[e]nwheel" Desdemona, protecting her from fatal Iago and Othello.¹⁶

The mixture of Protestant and Catholic theologies detected in Cassio is writ large in the play as a whole. Within *Othello*, Shakespeare has incorporated two mutually exclusive theologies—a Catholic Morality-play theology of relatively free will, temptation, better and worse angels, and a seemingly voluntary fall from grace; and a predestinarian theology of reprobation, non-election, and gracelessness. For many playgoers, *Othello* remains Shakespeare's Catholic Morality play par excellence, a drama in which angelic Desdemona and devilish Iago vie for the future of Othello's soul. In this reading, Othello, internalizing devilish Iago, destroys Desdemona and gives meaning to Emilia's summary judgment about the Moor and his wife: "O, the more angel she, and you the blacker devil!" (5.2.131). The Morality-play reading of Othello's disaster presupposes freedom of choice, that he could have resisted Iago's temptation but chose to credit his lies and innuendoes about Desdemona's and Cassio's

behavior. In the words of Robert G. Hunter, "the Augustinian, while recognizing that Othello could not have chosen well without prevenient grace, insists that the fall to reprobation is, in some way that is mysterious to human reason, the just result of wrong free choice. . . . [For the Augustinian] the lines in which Othello sees his love for Desdemona as a bulwark against chaos and perdition . . . betray a tendency in Othello toward a terrible error: it is not the love of man for woman that saves us from chaos and perdition, but the love of man for God, and of God for man. The value which Othello places upon Desdemona is, in this view, idolatrous and he suffers the fate of the idolater when his idol seems to fail him."¹⁷ In other words, for a large critical camp, Othello's tragedy stems from his choosing to lapse into sin (and thus damnation), chiefly by not loving God properly. Occurring within the Morality-play paradigm of temptation arising from an agon between better and worser angels, this lapse reveals certain Catholic voluntaristic assumptions about human choice. And yet a pre-destinarian pattern in the play argues otherwise.

This mixture of denominational theologies in *Othello* affects what playgoers and readers make of Cassio's special privy coat. When Cassio, to use Steve Sohmer's words, at play's end "is resurrected on a wooden frame and hauled onstage as a ruler of Cyprus [5.2.331], . . . [he apparently] fulfills the promise of his name, which Shakespeare derived from 'Cassia,' the cinnamon bark that scented the anointing oil of the priests of the Jews since Aaron (Exodus 30.24-26)."¹⁸ According to Sohmer, Cassio's "name identifies this character as 'the anointed,' 'the chosen,' 'the elect.' Cassio's startling, unprepared exaltation is the apotheosis of the play's great theme, the triumph of inscrutable election over earthly merit."¹⁹ Despite the inappropriate connotations of Sohmer's phrase "resurrected on a wooden frame" for Cassio's presentation to the audience (as well as his word "exaltation"), this commentator on *Othello* can cause us to become aware of a different religious dimension of Cassio's character. Considered in this context, Cassio's armored privy coat could be associated perhaps with the Christian armor of St. Paul. In an episode of the later dramatic romance *Pericles* that is usually attributed to Shakespeare (rather than his collaborator), act 2, scene 1, Walter Cohen has judged that "the fishermen [on the shore of Pentapolis] are literally, like St. Peter, fishers of men. Amid talk of devouring whales . . . they fish out the Jonah-like figure of Pericles whom the sea hath cast upon [their] coast."²⁰ The fishermen's retrieval of rusty armor from the sea shortly after they rescue Pericles draws the messianic fisher of men, Paul, into the episode. Caught in the Second and Third Fisherman's net, the armor, part of Pericles' "heritage" which his father bequeathed him, becomes his means to "repair" himself (2.1.120-26). This armor, according to Pericles, was a "shield" between his father and death, often saving his life (2.1.127-30). "In like necessity," Pericles reports his father as having told him, "may't defend thee" (2.1.130-31). In the dense Judeo-Christian context of this scene of this late dramatic romance, this armor, presented by a "fisher of men," figures as the Pauline armor of God, the salvatory symbolic armor that Paul describes in Ephesians 6:11-17. In this respect, Peggy Muñoz Symonds cites

episodes in Book I, chapters 10 and 17, of Sir Philip Sidney's *New Arcadia* (1590), a prose romance generally thought to be a source for *Pericles*, wherein suits of rusty armor refer to "some spiritual value system," most likely that of the Pauline armor of God.²¹ For Symonds, "the mystical rusty armor of Sidney's Musidorus and of Spenser's Redcrosse Knight (in *The Faerie Queene*) provide direct literary links between the rusty armor of Pericles' father and St. Paul's Biblical armor of God."²² In keeping with this religious allusiveness, the armor provided by the fishermen resurrects Pericles from despair over his bankrupt condition, from destitution after shipwreck, by giving him the heroic identity and means to win Princess Thaisa and begin a new life.²³

Considered in the Protestant predestinarian context of *Othello*, a setting most explicitly articulated in the play by Cassio, this character's privy coat seems to resemble the symbolic armor of St. Paul in its protective effect, if not in its form and outward manifestation. Partly because the characters appear in radically different genres (allegorical epic and drama), few readers would think of directly comparing Spenser's Redcrosse Knight and Shakespeare's Cassio. In this case of armor, my emphasis falls upon general resemblance of symbolic literary function rather than upon any kind of equation involving character. Even then, general resemblance foregrounds certain problems in giving Cassio's coat a specific religious symbolic value. Stress falls upon the word "apparently" in the original claim, retrospectively regarded, that Cassio's saving coat apparently illustrates his theological election. In the first place, Cassio is an odd character to identify as elect in a Reformation Protestant sense of the term. Arguing that Cassio survives at play's end, as Eileen Cohen does, because he represents the play's "mirror of virtue" is difficult.²⁴ Admittedly, graceful, mannered Cassio does indeed seem to have the "daily beauty" in his life that envenoms Iago and drives the ensign to plot the lieutenant's death (5.1.18-20). Yet early modern English Protestants, especially godly Protestants, would hardly agree that polite manners and graceful behavior, by themselves, manifest saving election.

To make her case, Cohen must distort or ignore certain details of Cassio's characterization. In the play's mixed theology, Cassio reveals Catholic character traits more so than Protestant ones. His criterion for election, one recalls, is vertical military rank, earned by meritorious deeds rather than justified by faith alone. Cassio's despair over his supposedly lost reputation, demolished presumably by Othello's cashiering him (2.3.250-62), reflects his belief in the importance of personal merit in fashioning character, even identity. When Iago attempts to "console" Cassio by asserting that "[r]eputation' is an idle and most false imposition, oft got without merit, and lost without deserving" (2.3.259-61), the ensign implicitly says, cunningly, that merit is important in creating reputation, because he cites the exception when it sometimes is not present in the "deserving" man.

Furthermore, the Catholic, that is to say, Marian, overtones of Cassio's idolatrous veneration of Desdemona coexist with his whoremongering, a dramatic fact that makes Cassio representative of a widespread tendency toward destructive stereotypic bifurcation of women manifested throughout early

modern English culture and that of later periods. This uncomplimentary combination makes Cassio an even more surprising candidate for Christian election. Quite a few years ago, I argued that Shakespeare, as part of his dramatization of Protestant predestination in *Othello*, may have made Desdemona's deeply disturbing desire to cling to life at any cost a sign in the death scene that she was non-elect.²⁵ This debatable and risky claim rests, I argued then, upon the absence in Desdemona's life of the closure and calm typical of early modern Protestant accounts of the deaths of elect persons, a closure and calm described by Barbara Lewalski and contemporary polemicists such as Richard Rogers, Arthur Dent, and William Perkins.²⁶ My argument in this case involved the ultimate claim that, in *Othello*, Shakespeare may have been implicitly endorsing a more tolerant theology within the Church of England, a theology represented by Richard Hooker for example, by showing the outrageousness of the possibility of the non-election of someone as fully Christian in her attitudes as Desdemona proves to be. This highly speculative ultimate claim included the suggestion that *Othello* participated in the 1604 controversy surrounding the Hampton Court Conference, by indirectly contributing to the arguments against the godly Protestant attempt explicitly to introduce reprobation into the Articles of the Church of England.

Reconsidered in the context of this speculative argument, Cassio's questionable qualification for the special coat of preservation, of election, may be another thrust against the strict predestinarian theology of godly Protestants, of, that is to say, those Puritans whom Shakespeare throughout his career tended to satirize through stage stereotypes such as Malvolio of *Twelfth Night* and Angelo of *Measure for Measure*. When Desdemona dies fighting pitifully against her brutal death, Lieutenant Cassio's being saved before the ensign Iago seems to matter little.

Notes

1. It is Iago who straightway seriously wounds Cassio by stabbing him from behind in the leg. Iago most likely aims for Cassio's leg because he has just heard Cassio in effect say that he is wearing a privy coat, and seen evidence for that claim.
2. Quotations of *Othello* are taken from the text in *The Oxford Shakespeare*, Oxford World's Classics ed., ed. Michael Neill (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006). Quotations of passages in other Shakespeare plays come from texts in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. David Bevington, 5th ed., (New York: Pearson/Longman, 2004).
3. *Othello*, 364. See Charles Edelman, *Brawl Ridiculous: Swordfighting in Shakespeare's Plays* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1992), 29.
4. All references to the *Oxford English Dictionary* are to the 13 vol. ed., ed. James A.H. Murray, et al. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993; repr. 1961).
5. Editors aware of the allusion to proof armor in Cassio's reference to his coat and to the stated purpose of his sword thrust into Roderigo are M. R. Ridley in *Othello*, Arden Shakespeare,

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- 2nd ed., (1958; London: Routledge, 1965), 171; and E. A. J. Honigmann in *Othello*, Arden Shakespeare, 3rd ed., (London: Thomson Learning, 2001), 297.
6. *The Geneva Bible (The Annotated New Testament, 1602 Edition)*, ed. Gerald T. Sheppard (New York: Pilgrim P, 1989), 76.
 7. Roland Mushat Frye, *Shakespeare and Christian Doctrine* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1963), 147.
 8. One meaning of the word "handfast" in Shakespeare's time was "[a] contract or covenant, spec. a betrothal or marriage contract" (*O.E.D.* II. 4). Shakespeare also uses the word in this sense in *Cymbeline*: "'The Remembrancer of her, to hold / The hand-fast to her Lord'" (cited in the *O.E.D.* to illustrate the above definition).
 9. Arguing that Claudio and Juliet's handfast constitutes a valid Elizabethan *per verba de praesenti* marriage contract are many critics, among them Ernest Schanzer, *The Problem Plays of Shakespeare: A Study of Julius Caesar, Measure for Measure, Antony and Cleopatra* (1963; rpt. New York: Schocken Books, 1965), 75-76, 110-11; and Karl Wentersdorf, "The Marriage Contracts in *Measure for Measure*: A Reconsideration," *Shakespeare Survey*, 32 (1979): 129-44. While such a marriage was regarded as valid by Protestants and Roman Catholics alike, if the couple sexually consummated the marriage before it was sanctioned by the church service of matrimony, they, like Claudio and Juliet, were considered fornicators by Roman Catholics and Puritans, but not so by the large number of non-Puritan, more traditional Church of England Protestants (Wentersdorf 134-44).
 10. See Maurice Hunt, "Predestination and the Heresy of Merit in *Othello*," *Comparative Drama*, 30 (1996): 346-76; rev. and rpt. in Maurice Hunt, *Shakespeare's Religious Allusiveness: Its Play and Tolerance* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2004), 97-125; and Steve Sohmer, "The 'Double Time' Crux of *Othello* Solved," *English Literary Renaissance*, 32 (2002): 214-38, esp. 235-38.
 11. Hunt, "Predestination and the Heresy of Merit in *Othello*," 348-51. Before the Protestant Reformation, and at times during the sixteenth century, Predestination was understood in the single sense of divine election for heavenly salvation, or bliss. The phrase "double predestination" has been consistently used to identify the Calvinist belief that men and women have been before the beginning of time either divinely elected for salvation or divinely reprobated to damnation, with no *tertium quid* possible. As framed in 1563, Article XVII of the Church of England Articles could be understood as implying the possibilities of either election or non-election. Since it was never mentioned, reprobation (with its attendant damnation) was implied only in a circuitous fashion. The closest that framers of the 1563 Article XVII came to the Calvinist notion of predestined reprobation, that God had mysteriously and unchangeably consigned to damnation some Christian souls, occurs in this oblique comment: "so, for curious and carnal persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God's Predestination, is a most dangerous downfall, whereby the Devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into wretchedness [recklessness] of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation" (E. J. Bicknell, *A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England* [London: Longmans, Green, 1947], 219.) Forms of the word "reprobation" were especially heard in London in 1604. Gratiano's imagination of Brabantio's "fall to reprobance" (5.2.207) appears in *Othello*, while the Provost in *Measure for Measure* calls the incorrigible prisoner Barnadine, a "reprobate" (4.3.74), one of only three usages in the canon.
 12. See Hunt, "Predestination and the Heresy of Merit," 355-67.
 13. Hunt, "Predestination and the Heresy of Merit," 354-55.
 14. Christopher Hill, "Protestantism and the Rise of Capitalism," *Change and Continuity in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1975), 81-102, esp. 82-83.

15. *Othello*, 167.
16. This point is also made repeatedly in terms of the Marian imagery of *Othello* by R. Chris Hassel Jr., "Intercession, Detraction, and Just Judgment in *Othello*," *Comparative Drama*, 35 (2001): 43-67.
17. Robert G. Hunter, *Shakespeare and the Mystery of God's Judgments* (Athens: U of Georgia P, 1976), 130-31.
18. Sohmer, 235-36.
19. Sohmer, 236.
20. Walter Cohen, "A Reconstructed Text of *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*," *The Norton Shakespeare*, gen. ed. Stephen Greenblatt (New York: Norton, 1997), 2709-17, esp. 2712-13. Also see Peggy Muñoz Symonds, "The Iconography of Transformed Fish in Shakespeare's *Pericles*: A Study of the Rusty Armor Topos in the English Renaissance," *Shakespeare and the Christian Tradition*, ed. E. Beatrice Batson (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen P, 1994), 121-61, esp. 124-25, 130.
21. Symonds, 145-46.
22. Symonds, 158.
23. See Maurice Hunt, "Shakespeare's *Pericles* and the Acts of the Apostles," *Christianity and Literature*, 49 (2000): 295-309, esp. 302.
24. Eileen Z. Cohen, "Mirror of Virtue: The Role of Cassio in *Othello*," *English Studies*, 57 (1976): 115-27.
25. Hunt, "Predestination and the Heresy of Merit in *Othello*," 362-66.
26. Barbara K. Lewalski, *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1979), 13-27; Richard Rogers, *Seaven Treatises* (London: H. Lowmes, 1605), 523, 525, 576; Arthur Dent, *The Plaine Mans Path-way to Heaven: wherein euery man may cleerly see, whether he shall be sauued or damned* (London: Edw. Bishop, 1607), 235; William Perkins, *The Works*, ed. Ian Breward (Berkshire: Sutton Courtenay P, 1970), 245-46, 247.

THE TEMPEST IN THE TRIVIUM

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To the delight of his audiences, both past and present, Shakespeare rarely created names of stubbornly puzzling origin. In his last play, however, he seems to have been attracted to at least one nominal obscurity. I refer, namely, to Sycorax, witch-mother of Caliban and arch, though absent, enemy of Prospero in *The Tempest*. Minor and unseen as she is, she is mentioned by name seven times and is a major topic of dispute between Caliban, her son, and Prospero, her rival. Over one hundred and twenty lines are devoted to Prospero's wrangling, first with Ariel then with Caliban, about the nature and effect of "this damned witch Sycorax." She represents nothing less important than the island's other magician to whom Prospero is implicitly compared.

Since Sycorax is portrayed as "wicked," "foul," and "damned," it would not be surprising to find that Shakespeare had added some pejorative barb to this witch's name. Shakespeare was far from loath to load the names of his characters, particularly the bad and/or comic, with reverberant reference. Typically, he either found some well-known historical and/or mythological precedent, used a clearly allegorical name, or coined a name from recognizable parts or sources.

Not so for the name Sycorax, for which one explanation is more obscure than the last.

The name is not found in any source. It most likely derives from the Greek words for sow (*sys*) and raven (*corax*), both animals associated with witchcraft. The name may derive from a description of the raven in *Batman uppon Bartholome his booke De proprietatibus rerum* (1582), an encyclopedia, which suggests the wording of Caliban's first speech at 1.1.324. Heartbreaker (*psychorrhax*) has also been suggested, as well as the Greek words for fig (*sukon*) and spider (*rax*). Another possibility is from Arabic, *shokoreth* "deceiver." The Coraxi were a tribe in Colchis, a center for witchcraft, where Circe, the famous witch of mythology, was born. Pliny locates the Chalybeates (who have been proposed as the source of Caliban) as living near Coraxi. Circe was exiled to an island in the Mediterranean (like Sycorax) and her name derived from a bird (hawk, *kikros*), also.¹

A few other suggestions are also worthy of note. From Edwin Bormann we get the idea that the prefix "Sy" comes from Sirocco and, hence, we have Sycorax, an ill southerly wind/raven.² And then, there are the numerous suggested connections to Medea. *The Shakespeare Name Dictionary* suggests, for example, that Sycorax's description "owes much to Ovid's portrayal of Medea in *Metamorphoses*, 7"—this despite the fact that Ovid uses the word *cornicis*, the

genitive form of *comix* meaning “crow,” and NOT *korax* or *corax*.³ Getting to the same place on a different track, Stephen Orgel suggests that Sycorax can be identified as Medea, the Scythian raven, by combining the Greek “korax” with the “Sy” of the occasionally misspelled “Sythian” (Scythian).⁴ There is also the notion floating about that takes the Medea/Sycorax connection even further. Sycorax is (supposedly) derived from Ovid’s Medea, and because Circe is Medea’s aunt, Sycorax is essentially Circe, the swine-making sorceress of old.⁵ Finally, there is Katherine King’s creative suggestion that some of Shakespeare’s drinking buddies, in a moment of erudite outrage, might have sworn in Classical Greek, “*Es kórakas*,” “Go to Hell,” and the ever-opportunistic Bard picked up the colorful, cacophonous epithet and dropped it into his play.⁶

There is, however, a far simpler, funnier, and more thematically pertinent possibility, and one that fits what Shakespeare was wont to do so often in his preceding plays: poke fun at pedants and pedantry. The target of his scorn this time is no less than the first “trial lawyer” and the typically acknowledged founder of the art of “rhetoric.” This “magician” of language, this witch of rhetorical exercise, was the fifth-century Greek, Corax of Syracuse. Snip a syllable from one word, snap it on another and, “quick and home,” Corax of Syracuse becomes . . . Sycorax, a portmanteau of significant jest.

Unlike a name derived from languages and/or sources obscure to him and most of his audience, the name of the founder of “rhetoric,” Corax of Syracuse, was well-known in Renaissance England. Anyone who went to grammar school studied, almost exclusively, the famous and inescapable Trivium (logic, grammar, and rhetoric, all taught in Latin), the three subjects most basic to the “liberal arts”—subjects in which Prospero claims to have excelled “without a parallel.”

“That Shakespeare’s works are massively influenced by rhetoric and that even his most powerful poetic creations were achieved on the basis of rhetoric is, after the intensive research in Renaissance rhetoric of the last decades, no longer a controversial statement,” says Wolfgang Müller. “The vision of the Renaissance as a rhetorical culture—‘eine rhetorische Kulturepoche’ is increasingly taking shape, and in this context Shakespeare is accorded an outstanding position.”⁷ In his exhaustive two volume study, *William Shakespeare’s Small Latine and Lesse Greeke*, T. W. Baldwin even suggests that the reason Shakespeare was so good at rhetoric was that he had likely *taught* rhetoric, “for a time before he began writing his plays.”⁸

Whether or not he actually taught the subject, it is clear that Shakespeare received a considerable education in rhetoric. “Aristotle, the *Ad Herennium*, Cicero, and Quintilian were studied directly in the schools during the Renaissance and were the chief ultimate sources of the works on rhetoric and logic, whether in Latin or the vernaculars.”⁹ Significantly, all three authors just cited mention Corax, the Sicilian, as the sole founder, or, with his student Tisias, co-founder of the first ‘systematic’ rhetoric.¹⁰ He is also mentioned by Plato in the *Phaedrus* and Aristotle in the *Rhetoric*, both of whom question the logical soundness of the rhetorical “reasoning” (the doctrine of *εἰκός*) Corax supposedly taught to various citizens of Syracuse who hoped to persuade the courts

of their property rights after the fall of the Tyrants, circa 467 BCE. Not only would Shakespeare likely have known much, if not all of this, but much of his audience would have known it, too. The name “Corax of Syracuse,” or anything significantly like it, reverberated with all sorts of recollections—and considering all of the tedious “trope and figure” drills associated with the teaching of rhetoric at the time, not all of those recollections would have been pleasant.

The likelihood that Shakespeare knew the name Corax of Syracuse is only half of the argument, however. The other half is how aptly a play of words on the name “Corax of Syracuse” functions in *The Tempest*, most particularly in Act 1, scene 2. This entire scene is either exposition or verbal jockeying for position. When it becomes the latter, when, that is, Ariel asks for his liberty and Caliban asks for his land, it becomes a forum for Prospero’s oratorical wizardry. And this is precisely the moment Sycorax comes onstage. Liberty, land, and Corax of Syracuse come together in the fifth century BCE. I submit that, with a bit of Renaissance wordplay, they come together once again.

Much of the important business at the end of *The Tempest’s* long second scene deals with establishing who has the better claim to the island *and* who can present that claim most persuasively. It is because of Prospero’s superior skill at rhetorical manipulation that he wins the argument. Clearly, his claim is based on his superior “nature”—he is the civilized one and brings to the island superior qualities. And although it is not the possible cacophony of Sycorax’s speeches (“terrible / to enter human hearing” [265]) that bothers but the vile nature of her sorceries that is most offensive, it is, nonetheless, clear that some of the threads Shakespeare braids into his web of motifs explore the use and abuse of rhetoric and the magical/poetical art of language. The “nature” of the evil may be the most important aspect, but its fundamental, inextricable relationship to the art of expression cannot be ignored.¹¹

It was, as well, Prospero’s art and his obsession with the study of the “liberal arts” (the subjects of the Trivium) that contributed to his woe in the first place. Proud of his unparalleled abilities, his duties to his “state” or *polis* “grew strange” while he, instead, becomes “transported / And rapt in secret studies.” For him, his “library / Was dukedom large enough” (1.2.109) and, in the absence of his attentions to matters of state, his brother takes advantage of the vacuum of power, usurps his dukedom, and banishes the man from human company. It is only when Prospero renounces his books and *art* that all can be freed and returned to their natural state.

And yet, before his “charms are all o’erthrown” (5.1.319), we witness a very entertaining display of Prospero’s powers. His art *is* great, is impressive, is persuasive, and gets the results he wants (applause and hence freedom from his island stage, a “proper” son-in-law, his dukedom restored, revenge on his enemies, etc.). He is a master at the magic of rhetoric. And so his rival, with whom he shares some darker qualities/interests/talents, shares at least a “nominal” connection to his art. As that art is founded and expressed through oratorical skill, it is necessary that that rival be less adept at that art. Clearly, both the “hag-seed” son and the mother are no match for Prospero’s verbal skills. They were

designed very craftily not to be—"You taught me language and my profit on't / Is I know how to curse!" The "foul witch Sycorax" has a foul-mouthed kid. Truly, the old "crow" who founded rhetoric's rules in an effort to win property cases with potentially dubious arguments is a suitable rival, indeed.

Shakespeare's protagonist had achieved the pinnacle of rhetorical skill, and such skill was, as his audiences witnessed, truly magical. Prospero, and by extension, Shakespeare, had bested the best, the very founder of one of the three "liberal arts" of the Trivium, the reputed inventor of rhetoric. In *The Tempest*, Corax of Syracuse is unseated by the "upstart crowe" on the Jacobean stage.

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Notes

1. J. Madison Davis and A. Daniel Frankforter, *The Shakespeare Name Dictionary* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1995), 472.
2. Edwin Bormann, *The Shakespeare-Secret*, trans. Harry Brett (London: Thwohlleben, 1895). Bormann additionally reasons that because so many aspects of Bacon's *History of the Winds* can be found in *The Tempest*, this further proves that Shakespeare was Francis Bacon.
3. Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Books I-VIII, ed. Jeffrey Henderson (Cambridge, Mass: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 2004), 360, line 274.
4. Stephen Orgel, introduction to *The Tempest*, *The Oxford Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 19.
5. Implicitly, Frank Kermode, novelist and scholar Marina Warner, sci-fi writer Dan Simmons, and Davis and Frankforter, 472, suggest this Sycorax/Circe connection.
6. Katherine Callen King, "Go To Hell, Sycorax," *English Language Notes*, 27:4 (1990), 1-3.
7. Wolfgang G. Müller, "Syllogism and Enthymeme in Shakespeare," in *Rhetoric Movet: Studies in Historical and Modern Rhetoric in Honour of Heinrich F. Plett* (Symbola Et Emblemata, Vol. 9 (Philadelphia: Brill Academic Publishing, 1999), 171. Further, Nancy Struever says in her essay, "Shakespeare and Rhetoric," *Rhetorica* 6 (1988), 140: "there is a strong tendency in modern scholarly accounts of Shakespeare to suggest Shakespeare's appropriation of a very learned, and very 'literary' body of rhetorical doctrine."
8. T. W. Baldwin, *William Shakespere's Small Latine and Lesse Greeke*, Vol. 2 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1944), 672.
9. Sister Miriam Joseph, c s c, *Shakespeare's Use of the Arts of Language* (New York: Columbia UP, 1947), p. 20.
10. Quintilian, the hugely influential first-century rhetorician claims that "the earliest writers of

[rhetoric] text-books are the Sicilians, Corax and Tisias," *Institutio Oratoria* 3.1.8., trans. H. E. Butler (Cambridge, Mass.: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, 1920). Cicero similarly credits Corax and Tisias as the founders of rhetoric, his source being, presumably, the *Synagoge Technae*, a lost work of Aristotle's: "Thus Aristotle says that in Sicily, after the expulsion of tyrants, when after a long interval restitution of private property was sought by legal means, Corax and Tisias the Sicilians, with the acuteness and controversial habit of their people, first put together some theoretical precepts"; *Brutus*, trans. G.L. Hendrickson (Cambridge, Mass.: Loeb Classical Library, Harvard UP, 1952), 48. Aristotle, in a work definitely *not* lost, speaks at length about the "dubious" contribution Corax made to the development of rhetoric in his own "compendium" on the subject, the *Rhetoric*: "As in eristics the deception lies in not adding the conditions, application, or manner in which our statement is valid, so in rhetoric it lies in the probability's being not absolute but conditional. On this topic Corax's system is constructed," quoted by D.A.G. Hinks, "Tisias and Corax and the Invention of Rhetoric," *Classical Quarterly*, 34 (1940): 61-69, esp. 64. It is also worth noting that Corax and his uniquely Syracusan context are liberally mentioned in the *Prolegomena*, the work of thirty-four authors, who, between the latter part of the third and the thirteenth centuries wrote "introductions" in Greek—*prolegomena*—to the study of rhetoric, in which they relate, among other things, its history. Stanley Wilcox suggests that these introductions "were used by generations of school teachers" as standard openings to the study of rhetoric and all were pretty much the same in their treatment of the essential details. It is not clear to what extent any of these Greek "introductions" would have been known and "used" in Western Europe. The *Prolegomena* were known mostly to Byzantine scholars and teachers though the Renaissance—for many reasons, there was an increasing interest in all things Greek in the lands of the Latin tradition. For an interesting discussion of the similarities, differences, and possible origins of these "stories," see Stanley Wilcox, "Corax and the *Prolegomena*," *American Journal of Philology*, 64:1 (1943): 1-23. One essential aspect of the "accepted" story was that Corax invented rhetoric in "response to the challenges of democratic politics after the popular revolution which deposed the last of the Syracusan tyrants, Hieron's brother Thrasylbulus." See Thomas Cole's article, "Who was Corax?," *Illinois Classical Studies*, 16 (1992): 65-84, esp. p. 65. Clearly, Corax wasn't just "of Syracuse"; rhetoric was "of Syracuse" and its uniquely debate-fertile context, circa 463 BCE.

11. Frank Kermode, introduction to *The Tempest* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1958), xxiv-xxv: "Caliban represents (at present we must over-simplify) nature without benefit of nurture . . . he is born to slavery, not to freedom, of a vile and not a noble union; and his parents represent an evil natural magic which is the antithesis of Prospero's benevolent Art." Insightful as it is, Kermode's reading, however, conveniently ignores the fact that Caliban was "free" until Prospero got to the island.



PERFORMANCE REVIEWS





Othello: Eamonn Walker as Othello and Zoe Tapper as Desdemona. Photo by Johann Persson.



THE 2007 SEASON AT LONDON'S GLOBE THEATRE

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For its tenth season, which Artistic Director Dominic Dromgoole labeled "Renaissance + Revolution," London's Globe Theatre staged three Shakespearean plays, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Othello*, and *Love's Labour's Lost*. Dromgoole stated that these three plays were all "explorations of [Shakespeare's] own moment, the late Renaissance."¹ I saw the plays the weekend of July 20-22, when torrential rains inundated London and the Midlands. While the weather panicked much of England, it was wonderfully appropriate for outdoor performances of both *Merchant* and *Othello*. Rains poured down as Shylock berated Antonio, "Why, look you how you storm!" and soaked the Globe during the opening scenes of *Othello* until, from among the soggy groundlings, the Moor approached Desdemona on Cyprus and on "If after every tempest come such calms" (2.1.183), the rains miraculously stopped!² It was an amazing theatrical moment, and the cheers that erupted at this precise moment were as much for the changing weather as for Othello's having survived the (literal and metaphorical) storm and arrived in Desdemona's welcoming arms. The heavens were apparently rewarding the players' efforts to carry on in the best British tradition. Such are the exigencies—and the joys—of outdoor theatre in stormy London. Oh, where were *Lear* and *The Tempest* when the elements needed them?

The three plays included startling staging choices and casting decisions that were alternately inventive and predictable, comic and tragic, exciting and disturbing. While readers familiar with Globe productions during the past decade may not find my analysis of these choices and decisions unusual, I will admit that I was at times profoundly disturbed by what I saw, especially during *Merchant*. While I accept Alan Dessen's caution against reviewers who reveal more about their own tastes than about the plays they are reviewing, nonetheless I cannot separate from this review my often severe reactions to some scenes if I am to report faithfully what I experienced.³ I am perhaps most disturbed that some of my reactions were probably not shared by many other spectators, and that some moments that I interpreted as immensely sinister went undetected by the majority of the spectators. Where others laughed, I cringed. Nevertheless, seeing both *Merchant* and *Othello* for the first time at the Globe with its thrust stage has forever changed my views of both these plays in performance, and I expect now that no indoor performance of either play, especially on a proscenium stage, will ever be as artistically engaging as these Globe productions were.

For *Merchant*, set designer Liz Cooke created a miniature, unadorned wooden Rialto Bridge, stage right, that led into the groundlings. From here several characters entered and left the stage, and several important speeches, including Shylock's "Hath not a Jew eyes," were delivered from its apex.

The bare set, contrasted with the rich garments worn throughout the play by the Christian Venetians and also by Nerissa and Portia in Belmont, created an authentic Elizabethan aura. Shylock wore a traditional, mustard-colored Jewish gabardine and skull cap that contrasted sharply with the gaudy garments of his fellow Venetians and that created an uncomfortably humorous moment when Portia asked in 4.1 "Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?" (172); surely she knew who was who. Jessica initially wore a plain floor-length dress, but reappeared in Belmont in 3.2 wearing more colorful, "Christian" attire. Portia's suitors, Morocco and Aragon, were richly attired as well, and both strutted around the stage waving scimitars or hurling heavy French accents at a frightened and obviously unwilling Portia. Only Lancelot Gobbo seemed unsure how to dress; his "brave new liveries" were motley personified right down to his socks: one striped, one argyle.

Dale Rapley as Antonio was more angry than sad; or, perhaps angry because he knew not why he was so sad. His "Fie, fie!" to Solanio's guess that he is in love did not seem especially defiant, as if Solanio had guessed the cause of his anger. However, when Antonio granted Bassanio's request for yet another loan, Bassanio kissed him full on the lips, suggesting perhaps a homosexual desire between them that indeed Antonio had wished to hide. This hint was repeated during 4.1 by Bassanio's desperate grasping of Antonio when all believed that Shylock would have his bond, but Bassanio planted a similarly sensuous kiss on Portia's lips once he had chosen the proper casket. Bassanio thus emerged as a rather opportunistic and shallow youth who took wherever he could and treated his benefactors equally, regardless of gender. His fellows were equally boisterous and greedy; Gratiano was loud, rude, and—during the trial in 4.1—incendiary; he had to be restrained by several guards from attacking Shylock. He and Lorenzo eagerly pocketed the ducats that Jessica threw down from Shylock's house, and throughout the play exhibited a haughty superiority that they believed their Christian identities granted them. Their collective behavior towards Shylock was vicious throughout, and made all the more poignant John McEnery's performance as Shylock.

McEnery's Shylock was immensely complex. In 1.3.38ff, "How like a fawning publican he looks! / I hate him for he is a Christian," Shylock stood on the apex of the Rialto Bridge and spoke to the groundlings as if making his case to them, never looking at Antonio during this entire speech. His hatred for Antonio was genuine, as was his wish to "catch him once upon the hip," and he seemed unwilling even to face Antonio as he spoke. Yet as he debated with Antonio about Bassanio's request he spoke as if he believed that anti-Semitism were a social problem that could be reasonably solved. At 104ff, "Signor Antonio, many a time and oft / Upon the Rialto you have rated me / about my moneys and my usances," Shylock was more bewildered by than hateful of Antonio's past treatment of him. Further, his assertion that "I would be friends with you and have your love" (136) seemed a genuine plea for understanding and social harmony. McEnery certainly caught what many readers sense about Shylock: that beneath his passionate appeal to common humanity and an

apparent belief in the law lies a man crippled by hatred and bent on violence. However, in this scene, well before the loss of his daughter and his terrible meeting with Tubal, McEnery's Shylock seemed capable of giving and appreciating the love and friendship for which he pleaded. This reaction to his speeches in the latter half of the scene may appear sentimental, a wish that he were not really so vicious. Or perhaps it exemplifies a failure to realize exactly what is so vicious in Shylock: a man who pleads for common humanity while harboring a lethal hatred that does separate him from other men, regardless of their racist attitudes towards others. Perhaps. But what made the rest of the play so disturbing was not just how the Christian community treated Shylock, but also how their hatred was actually staged.

Lancelot Gobbo, arms akimbo, cavorted across the stage in front of the groundlings during his mock psychomachia about leaving the Jew, whom he labels a "kind of devil." His comical anti-Semitism was entertaining, and evoked much laughter, especially from the front-row spectators. Equally amusing was his redirection towards Bassanio of his father's gift, initially intended for Shylock, and a genuine image of Christian charity, the only such moment in the entire play. While Lancelot's antics were amusing, they also initiated a series of scenes in which the racism of Venice's nobility—supposedly Lancelot's better educated superiors—became increasingly fierce yet evoked laughter. Bassanio et al. entered for the masque wearing capes, masks, and huge codpieces. The abduction of Jessica was thus sexually aggressive as well as morally ambiguous; Lorenzo spoke "Beshrew me but I love her heartily" (2.6.53) as he gathered money bags that Jessica had thrown down to him. Like Bassanio, he valued ladies "richly left." Given the furtive plundering of Shylock's house and his child, one understood Gratiano's wish to be "under sail and gone tonight" (2.6.69).

After Morocco's unsuccessful choice of the silver casket, Salerio and Solanio walked onstage from the bridge stage right, and again like Lancelot playing directly to the groundlings, mocked the "passion so confused" of the "dog Jew." Salerio and Solanio strutted across the front of the stage, ridiculing Shylock's waving arms and distraught voice, all the while evoking considerable laughter from spectators, especially among the groundlings to whom they deliberately appealed. What is one to make of this scene? Did this staging deliberately appeal to racism among the spectators, who obviously thought that mockery of Shylock was funny? The laughter bonded spectators to the prevailing racism of Solanio's and Salerio's mockery, much as Lancelot's evocation of the "devil Jew" did earlier. Further, does this staging suggest that in Elizabethan performances a similar appeal might have been made to spectators, groundlings as well as nobility, whose laughter would have cemented their own anti-Semitism to Salerio's and Solanio's and thus reinforced within the Theatre or Globe the prevailing racism of Shakespeare's time? Does this possibility make *Merchant* a fundamentally racist play? We might want to deny this claim and say only that there are racist elements in the play, including Portia's "Let all of his complexion choose me so" (2.7.79), a line which also garnered considerable laughter throughout the theatre. But can we? Here the

Rialto Bridge over which Salerio and Solanio walked to enter the stage became a literal “bridge” between the stage and the spectators who throughout Salerio’s and Solanio’s vicious mockery shared a hearty laugh. Suddenly the Globe became a very dangerous place, where those who laughed seemed not to grasp that numerical superiority does not automatically denote moral superiority. How many of those who laughed during this scene—and many did—understood what they were finding funny?



The Merchant of Venice: John McEnergy as Shylock and Pippa Nixon as Jessica. Photo by John Tramper.

Following Aragon’s scene, Solanio and Salerio resumed their places in 3.1, and their attitude towards Shylock became considerably angrier as they realized his role in Antonio’s losses. Shylock moved through the groundlings stage right, pushing his way past those who had earlier enjoyed ridicule of the “dog Jew.” He stopped upon the apex of the bridge, and only after Salerio’s insistence that he and Jessica were not of the same blood did he begin to fume. Standing upon the apex, he turned towards the spectators who had implicitly mocked him to deliver “Hath not a Jew eyes” (3.1.56ff). McEnergy evoked Shylock’s earlier use of reason when he appealed to Antonio for love, carefully parsing the question and answer logic of Shylock’s arguments, while simultaneously building the obvious rage that here erupted from Salerio’s denial of his parentage. Here was the central enigma of McEnergy’s Shylock, a man who already hates Antonio yet is compelled to argue with logic and patterned phrases that Hamlet might admire against an insane racism prompted by an assumed moral superiority that undermines its own premises. The strength of McEnergy’s Shylock lay in his refusal to succumb to hatred without first attempting to articulate what he sees as the complete illogic of hate based solely on

ethnic identity. One sensed in this scene Shylock's belief that could he convince others—and it would have to be men such as Antonio, not clownish thugs in swirling capes like Salerio and Solanio—of the unreasonable nature of racist hatred, then he too might abandon his desire to catch Antonio “once upon the hip” to feed fast an ancient grudge. Thus Shylock here was not merely a “victim” of anti-Semitism, though he was clearly that too. He was a man trying to reason through the unreasonable, and that became the subtext of his appeal to spectators from atop the Rialto Bridge that now linked him to them and them to him. In the ensuing scene with Tubal, Shylock was unhinged by a Christian's denial that his daughter was his own flesh and blood. Once a Christian could say that to him, Shylock saw no way out but to pursue his bond.

Bassanio and Gratiano treated Bassanio's proper choice of the lead casket like an athletic event; Bassanio pumped his fists at “victory” and Gratiano jumped all over the stage. Bassanio's victory kiss was as pronounced as his earlier kiss of Antonio, suggesting at best youthful exuberance and at worst rank opportunism. Kirsty Besterman, who played Portia the day I saw the show, was obviously relieved that a white guy—indeed, this particular white guy—had chosen right and so proven wise her father's strange decree. As befitting a play in which ladies are loaded, Portia was truly astonished that Antonio's bond was worth a mere three thousand ducats. A trifle! Nor did she register any surprise at Bassanio's explanation of how he got to Belmont or what he had induced Antonio to do for him. All that mattered was getting that ring on Bassanio's finger so she could at last bed the man she had apparently long wanted.

The trial scene, 4.1, played as late afternoon shadows darkened the theatre, was brilliantly staged. Shylock entered stage right carrying a large cloth bag that held his instruments of revenge, including a scale and a long knife that he whetted constantly on his shoe. Antonio, stripped of his shirt, was tied to the stage left post. Standing between Antonio and Shylock, Portia directed her appeal to mercy solely at Shylock, emphasizing the logic of her appeal and echoing his earlier appeals to reason with the Venetians. When Shylock refused to yield, Bassanio opened a large chest and threw down several money bags. Portia's refusal to wrest the law to her authority prompted Gratiano to lunge at Shylock, and he was stopped just short of Shylock's throat. Antonio's passionate plea to Bassanio to tell Portia “how I loved you” and Bassanio's embrace of Antonio's bare chest evoked their kiss from the end of 1.1 and gave Portia pause, a moment of levity amid the increasing tension. Gratiano's and Bassanio's apparent willingness to sacrifice their wives to save Antonio triggered Shylock's memory of his daughter with a “Christian husband,” a speech (293-96) tinged with absolute hatred. With Portia's approval, on “Most rightful judge,” Shylock strode slowly across the wide stage towards Antonio's naked chest. Shylock slowly raised the knife high over Antonio's torso, and only as he attained the maximum reach of his arm (obviously for maximum thrust) did Portia stop him with “Tarry a little.” Shylock's knife hung in the air, and as Portia unraveled the law and stripped him of his bond, he suddenly thrust the knife

down and was stopped by Bassanio just inches from Antonio's chest. Gratiano picked up the knife and for the remainder of the scene threatened Shylock with it. On Gratiano's "O learned judge! Mark, Jew, a learned judge" (315), Shylock lunged at Antonio as if to kill him with his bare hands, and was thrown down by Bassanio and officers. Shylock never got up from the floor. After Portia's rendering of the law's hold upon him, now utterly bereft of everything, he crawled off stage left and then exited among those who had earlier laughed at the "dog Jew." During his exit the theatre was entirely silent; one hoped that some reflection on what we had all just seen, and its relation to earlier moments, was occurring among the spectators. After Shylock's departure and Portia's and Nerissa's cajoling of their husbands' rings, Bassanio, ever the opportunist, picked up the money bags.

Portia and Nerissa returned to Belmont via the Rialto Bridge, and, as Shylock had done earlier, they stopped at its apex to descant on good deeds in a naughty world. Portia's echo of Ecclesiastes, "How many things by season seasoned are" (107), returned the play to its romantic finale, where, after trials and bonds and courts of law, lovers could finally initiate their sexual play, however darkened by images of infidelity and control and by Jessica's somber "I am never merry when I hear sweet music" (69). Bassanio hid behind the stage right post pretending that his right hand had been cut off, and then he and Gratiano carried their wives all over the stage once the rings had been returned to their proper fingers. When Portia gave the letter to Lorenzo about Shylock's "deed," Jessica stood alone stage right. As the couples danced, Antonio, ever the outsider, stood alone stage left where he had been staked in the trial scene and opposite Jessica, who stood where her father had at the beginning of 4.1. Only as the entire company returned to the stage, but *before* Shylock emerged from among them to thunderous applause, did Jessica kiss Lorenzo. This sequence emphasized two points about this fascinating and disturbing production. First, the delayed kiss suggested a passage of time during which presumably Jessica becomes fully committed to her marriage to a "Christian husband." Second, like all theatres, the Globe is but a stage of play, McEnery only a player, and Shylock a mere fiction. As McEnery emerged from his playing of one of Shakespeare's most compelling characters, one hoped that spectators signaled by their sustained applause that they understood the complexity of Shylock's journey and their role in it.

Director Wilson Milam and designer Dick Bird also staged *Othello* on an essentially bare stage. Small tables, as in the council scene, occasionally dotted the stage, and Desdemona's bed was drawn onto the stage in act five by four servants. As in *Merchant*, the clothing celebrated the vast wealth of the Italian nobility. Othello, the handsome and athletic Eamonn Walker, stood out boldly among the Venetians, especially on Cyprus, in his deep mahogany skin and contrasting white Arabic robes. Michael Cassio, the dashing Nick Barber who was certainly "framed to make women false," Iago, and Roderigo, as well as accompanying soldiers, wore black leather doublets and pants throughout, with Cassio and Roderigo distinguished from the lower-class Iago by their

decorated black capes and white ruffs.

Like *Merchant, Othello* ironically has at its epicenter an outsider to the dominant culture of Renaissance Venice. Milam's casting decisions not only confronted but also compounded the play's racial divide: not only was Othello played by an immensely impressive and authorial black actor, a choice not always embraced by black actors, but Milam also cast black women in the roles of Emilia and Bianca.⁴ While Milam's principal intention here may have been to foster race-blind casting at the Globe, a worthy and desirable policy, nonetheless his choices created three mixed-race couples on the stage: Othello and Desdemona; Iago and Emilia; and Cassio and Bianca. While one may argue immediately that mixed race couples were highly unusual in Renaissance Venice, as indicated by the extreme racism of Brabantio's reaction to hearing of Desdemona's escape with Othello, nonetheless *in performance* Milam's casting inevitably complicated the already volatile racial conflicts within the play. The most fascinating choice here was the black actress Lorraine Burroughs as Emilia, for giving Iago a black wife initiates several intriguing possibilities about the play. First, since he has married a black woman, racism is perhaps not integral to Iago's professed hatred of Othello, despite Iago's apparent approval of Roderigo's racist epitaph "thick-lips" in 1.1. (Note that nowhere in his soliloquies does Iago mention Othello's race as a reason for hating him.) Second, twice in this production, first on Cyprus in 2.1 after the storm and then in 3.3.316ff after Emilia tells Iago that she has found Desdemona's handkerchief, Emilia tried to kiss Iago, and each time he rudely rejected her overtly sexual offer. While some of Iago's misogynistic remarks in 2.1, and his homoerotic narration of lying with Cassio in 3.3, are often cited as evidence for his repressed homosexuality, perhaps we were to see Iago's and Emilia's mixed-race marriage as having failed partly because of their racial differences. If this were the case, and I am not sure that this was Milam's intention, then perhaps the Iago-Emilia marriage was meant to suggest the sheer difficulty of maintaining a mixed race relationship in Venetian society, and that whatever may be the psychological reasons for Iago rejecting Emilia's sexual longings, he does have some reason to suspect Othello with his nightcap. Third, and closely related to this possibility, given Walker's stately and handsome Othello, perhaps we are to credit Emilia's statement to Desdemona in 4.3 that "in the dark" she might cuckold her husband to make him a monarch, especially with an impressive black man who wields immense power, as Othello certainly does before his fall. While I cannot possibly know if any of the above possibilities were racing through the minds of spectators during the performance, nonetheless I suspect that among those who knew the play well the additional racial complications created by Milam's casting choices added immensely to their sense of the complex social and racial issues at the heart of this play.

Both Tim McInnerny as Iago and Zoe Tapper as Desdemona made clear, strong choices for their characters. McInnerny, easily as physically impressive as Walker's Othello, was driven by a barely controllable sexual jealousy (see the second possibility above) and extreme hate and anger. From the outset

he was furious with the world around him, and throughout his performance, especially in 2.1, 3.3, and 5.1, he tottered at the brink of emotional collapse, as if he were barely able to maintain that reasonable control of which he boasts to Roderigo. Each time he mentioned his suspicions of Cassio and Othello with his wife, his anger and tension increased, so that one sensed a character driven towards a final confrontation with his demons and with Othello that he knew he could not resist but that he simultaneously feared. In 2.1, his most misogynistic lines (148-60) about female sexuality were cut, but he did complain that women rise to play and go to bed to work, and he was visibly angered by Cassio's gracious kiss of Emilia. During Iago's soliloquies, McInnery paced rapidly across the stage, and the sheer energy of his performance made his rage compelling. One sensed the seduction of evil; his "What's he then that says I play the villain?" (2.3.339), while surely a rhetorical question, nonetheless confirmed Iago's disturbing dominance of the stage. Iago's hatred, plus Roderigo's casually racist "thick lips" and Brabantio's fierce reviling of Othello's "sooty bosom," foregrounded, like much of *Merchant*, the lethal racial prejudice of Shakespeare's Renaissance.

Tapper's Desdemona left no doubt where her desires lay. In the council scene she stood between Brabantio stage left and Othello stage right and spoke politely to Brabantio, but precisely at the line break at 1.3.187, "But here's my husband," Desdemona turned sharply and not only addressed Othello but walked directly to him and stood by him for the remainder of their scene. Her blond hair and fair skin created a bold contrast with Othello's rich mahogany features; yet once she spoke one realized that here were two beautiful people whose spirits and self-command matched each other well. Indeed, their striking physical appearances cemented one's sense that truly "'tis the mind that makes the body rich" (*Taming of the Shrew*, 4.3.168).

Walker's strengths as Othello were both physical and verbal. When rushed by Brabantio's guards at 1.2.56, Othello's commanding "Holla! Stand there!" froze them. His performance before the senators in 1.3 was masterful. At 130, "Her father loved me, oft invited me," Othello quelled Brabantio who, visibly embarrassed by this revelation, shrank stage left, moving again to center stage only to "give away" Desdemona and to warn Othello that she had deceived him, and might him also. Reciting thence Othello's round, unvarnished tale, Walker stood firmly center stage, and addressed not only those on stage but also the Globe's spectators, thus making us the arbiters of whether or not he loved the gentle Desdemona and she him. Of her love for him there could be no doubt. Tapper spoke sharply about her desire to be with the Moor; her embrace of his arm as she spoke of the "rites" for which she had married him left no doubt as to the complex meaning of this word for her. When Othello protested that he begged not her presence for the "palate of [his] appetite," Desdemona, wearing a low-cut gown according to the fashion and the times, gently patted his arm and coyly smiled; one sensed here a loving couple indeed!

In 2.1, Othello's entry stage left to greet Desdemona was wonderfully moving; on "O my soul's joy, / If after every tempest come such calms, / May the

winds blow till they have wakened death" (182-84), not only did the actual storm cease, as I mentioned above, but also Othello kissed Desdemona gently, stroked her cheeks, and then crushed her to him, suggesting that they had not yet consummated their marriage but were now most eager to do so. As Othello and Desdemona exited, Emilia, who has been onstage since 84, standing stage right and perhaps herself jealous, moved to kiss Iago, only to be pushed away. Watching Othello move away with his obviously loving wife, did she wish that "Heaven had made her such a man" (1.3.165)? To attentive spectators, the racial complexities of this scene were compelling.

Cassio's disorderly drinking inaugurated the central chaos of the play. As alarm bells clanged, Othello emerged from his and Desdemona's quarters with his shirt askew, suggesting perhaps that he and Desdemona had not yet consummated their marriage and that Othello will thus kill his wife never having made love to her. Given Walker's physical and verbal skills, this production faced squarely the play's central dilemma: how could such a dominant and loving man be turned into what Emilia will call a dolt, ignorant as dirt? While the exact moment in 3.3 at which Othello actually begins to doubt Desdemona cannot be fixed, and must be decided by the actors playing Othello and Iago, Othello's suspicions were clearly aroused by Cassio's secretive exit from Desdemona at 34: "I am very ill at ease, / Unfit for mine own purposes" (32-33). Iago's "Ha? I like not that" immediately raised suspicions in Othello's voice, as if his insecurities about this marriage had been there all along. Desdemona's insistence that Othello call Cassio back seemed innocent enough, and Othello's "Farewell, my Desdemona. I'll come to thee straight" (3.3.95), a promise he will *never* fulfill, suddenly suggested his desire to inquire why Cassio had left so abruptly. Given the probable intent behind this line, Othello's exuberant, passionate words "Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul / But I do love thee. And when I love thee not, / Chaos is come again" (3.3.98-100), spoken with such obvious joy, became unbearably painful. As Othello harkened more closely to Iago's words, Walker's skills evoked Othello's anguish; he twisted his body into painful contortions, and the rhythm of his powerful voice faltered.

The crucial moment for both characters was Iago's speech beginning "Oh beware, my lord, of jealousy" (3.3.178-83). Suddenly, this speech became not just a ploy to destroy Othello's self confidence and his marriage, but also a central line from Iago's autobiography. McInnemy snapped this line at Othello, sprung as it was from the green-eyed monster that was destroying him; his delivery confirmed the strength of the "poisonous mineral" (2.1.298) gnawing his innards. McInnemy so thoroughly inhabited his character that this speech was not Iago "acting" jealousy to convince Othello of a lie; this was a man believed to be of "exceeding honesty" telling Othello of a poison whose power left him shaking with rage and hatred. In his soliloquy after Iago's exit at 273, Othello's ready adoption of Iago's animal imagery, "I had rather be a toad / And live upon the vapor of a dungeon / Than keep a corner in the thing I love / For others' uses" (3.3.286-89), and his reducing his wife to a sexual "thing," only one corner of which he can now love, became all the more frightening given the

power of Othello's voice. Equally frightening was Othello's fall into the trance in 4.1; Walker spun out Othello's lines as he fell and writhed on the ground, a torrent of incoherence echoing around the theatre. When Othello confronted Desdemona later in the scene, his blow knocked her down, eliciting gasps from spectators. Walker's initial stage presence both physically and verbally emphasized the tragic fall of his once commanding Othello.

As Emilia, Lorraine Burroughs obviously cared for Desdemona and just as obviously longed for affection from Iago. Among the unanswerable questions of this play is why Emilia never tells Desdemona that she found the handkerchief that, in this production, Othello dropped at 3.3.304: "Let it alone." Emilia knows that Desdemona will "run mad / When she shall lack it" (3.3.333-34), yet she also wishes to please Iago's fantasy. Emilia offered Iago a kiss as she did in 2.1, and again she was shoved aside. She stood attentively listening to Othello tell Desdemona of the magic in the web of the handkerchief, during which Desdemona pleaded (perhaps too heartily) for Cassio's return and rebuked Othello for putting her from her suit. She also sees Othello's anger as he leaves, and in 4.2 she adamantly denies having seen anything between Cassio and Desdemona. Given her knowledge of Iago's jealousy, and what that may have done to his attitude towards her sexuality, once she sees Othello's jealous behavior and senses what he is saying to her at 4.2.97, "We have done our course. There's money for your pains," her silence about the handkerchief is simply inexplicable.

This silence was even more unfathomable and thus disturbing in the willow scene. Emilia's care for Desdemona was quite obvious here. She patiently unlaced Desdemona's dress and inner garments, and then gently brushed her long blond hair as Desdemona sat at a small table and sang of Barbary. Emilia was playful when she spoke of doing it "in the dark" to make her husband a monarch, again suggesting her possible sexual attraction to Othello, and adamant that there were "some such" that would "abuse their husbands / In such gross kind" (4.3.64-65). This Emilia, herself an attractive woman, seemed quite possibly the Venetian lady who would have walked barefoot to Palestine for a touch of Lodovico's "nether lip." She knows that men "are all but stomachs, and we all but food" (3.4.106), and that "the ills we do, their ills instruct us so" (4.3.106); yet she says nothing of the handkerchief. In Emilia's closing speech of 4.3, her longest in the play, she was calm, knowing, and self-assured, a marked contrast to her sudden rage at the end.

The final scene was the most violent and terrifying conclusion to the play I have ever seen. Four servants drew Desdemona's bed onstage. She lay, all in white, among heavy covers; four candles stood like sentinels at the corners of the imagined bedroom. Attired completely in white flowing gown and turban and carrying a large scimitar, Othello entered, locked the door behind him, and then paced slowly around her bed. As he spoke of extinguishing the light, he pointed to the four candles, and then to Desdemona. Her "Will you come to bed, my lord" (25) was wonderfully, unbearably tender. She argued vigorously against Othello's accusations of infidelity, showing again the strong mind that

had articulated her wishes to her father in 1.3. When Othello insisted that she was to die, Desdemona leaped out of bed and confronted him directly about the handkerchief. Othello calmly laid down his weapon, and glared at what he took to be more lies. Desdemona turned and ran to the locked doors, beating upon them when she could not open them. She turned to face him in utter terror. On her "Alas, he [i.e. Cassio] is betrayed and I am undone" (80), Othello grabbed her as she tried to run again, picked her up, and hurled her upon the bed. Twice, Desdemona fought back, kicking and screaming, grabbing his shoulders and lifting herself up to him, as if desperately trying to embrace him lovingly, and twice Othello pushed her away and then hurled her viciously into the tangled bedding. Even as he smothered her amid their wedding sheets, Desdemona continued to kick and thrust her body upward, a violent, deadly mockery of sexual union with a husband whose physical love she has possibly not yet known, and now never will. Desdemona's light was not put out easily; Othello was a long time killing her.

Emilia's furious rage at her own failure to act—"I thought so then—I'll kill myself for grief" (5.3.199)—her reiterated "My husband," and her screaming at Iago and then Othello for being "ignorant as dirt" highlighted her astonishing role in this tragedy. The more violent Emilia's reaction to the tragic loading of the bed, the more maddening the ending of this play becomes. And here the casting of a black Emilia came full circle. As a black woman calling the regal Othello "ignorant as dirt," and asking "What should such a fool / Do with so good a wife" (5.2.240-41), Emilia surely recognizes the irony of a black man destroying his white wife because of the lies of her corrupt white husband and her own failure to grasp the importance of a handkerchief to a Moor steeped in African mythology: "Poor lady, she'll run mad / When she shall lack it." (3.3.333-34).⁵ Run mad Desdemona did: around her bedroom trying desperately to escape a murderous husband. Milam's casting and direction here fused to create an immensely powerful scene in which Emilia's prophetic words come startlingly true and a black woman dies at the hands of her white husband for telling the truth, but without expiating her own ignorance earlier in the play.

Othello's death was equally startling. Having lost his own weapons, he suddenly grabbed Lodovico's throat, and then his crossbow. On "smote him, thus" Othello fired the crossbow into his chest. The loud crack startled the birds upon the thatched roof of the Globe, who fled the scene as too grisly to behold. We remained in our seats, silently listening to the final words of a wonderfully powerful production of arguably Shakespeare's most disturbing tragedy.

After the "sturm und drang" of *Merchant* and *Othello*, *Love's Labour's Lost* was a romp and a hoot in the Park of Navarre. Director Dominic Dromgoole was determined to entertain his Globe spectators with both sight and sound. Rather than create some profound psychological study of adolescent ineptitude and romantic nonsense, he elected to have as much fun as possible with Shakespeare's script. Dromgoole turned the Globe into a giant theme park. Painted upon the stage floor and on parallel platforms that extended well onto the yard were Celtic knot patterns in green and gold, while hanging from the

top of the posts were white cloths painted with matching green leaves; here was a puzzle of love in a Shakespearean green world. Rather than critique youthful follies, Dromgoole allowed those follies full reign, even unto the final jests in Russian garb that are so rudely interrupted by death. If here was much ado that leads to nothing, the extension of the stage well into the yard drew all spectators into this riotous picture puzzle of ourselves in love, not knowing who we are, which way to turn, or whom we may become once love has taught us lessons we all must know.

Inhabiting and visiting this park were more of the best-dressed men and women of the high Renaissance: lads in silk doublets, hose, and matching capes and ladies in richly colored silk gowns with matching hats; even their hunting outfits were perfectly matched. Ferdinand wore a striking black and gold outfit, and as befitting royalty, absolutely the most egregiously outlandish Russian getup on the planet: terrifically muddled Czarist motley! As the play's setting is a park, the "prologue" was two wonderfully life-like male and female deer, deftly manipulated by their human companions, prancing around the stage-as-park, coyly eyeing each other. Each time the male deer approached, the female ran away, until finally she allowed the male to nudge her ear affectionately, a sort of deer kiss, one assumes. With that she suddenly bolted, embarrassed no doubt by all the people in the park, and the male went galloping after her through the groundlings who applauded the pursuit.

Standing before the small table center stage upon which lay the lords' academic pledge, Berowne, in a distinct Irish accent, protested mightily signing the King's agreement, suggesting a verbal link with the Celtic knots adorning the bare platform. The other lords and, of all characters, Costard, also affected an Irish brogue, so perhaps this Navarre was populated by visiting Irishmen at the French court. Once the four very lovely ladies in their enchanting gowns appeared upon the scene, Berowne and his fellows were doomed. Horses could not part them; they would be incontinent! So would Don Armado, except that he was far less articulate about the whole business. Like Nathaniel and Holofernes later in the play, his long speeches in his overdone Spanish accent and absurd gestures became tedious.

The ladies were not only lovely but also religious in their coyness. They knew how sexually appealing they were, but from the first were really annoyed by the lads' pledge to see no ladies, fast, etc. (For the intermission they ordered out a large picnic supper which they spread out stage left and which they shared with the groundlings, who made out quite well in this production; it must have thoroughly annoyed the erstwhile scholars.) The Princess, played by Michelle Terry, was Berowne's equal in verbal quickness and vocal strength, and she lectured the silly boys with obvious glee and sarcasm; she knew from the first how nonsensical Navarre's academy and its adherents really were. As the wise philosopher Costard proclaims, "Such is the simplicity of man. . ." (1.1.214). Lest Costard's point be missed, he paraded around the stage in a state of, well, obvious sexual readiness; as Neddie Seegun says of a poor chap in a *Goon Show* episode who is wearing his pants backwards, "It

must be hell in there!" But ah, the divine Jaquenetta! This buxom queen of the stables simply could not keep her hands off of Costard's ever-ready apparatus. No coyness here! The contrast with the four ladies and their sophomoric pseudo-intellectual suitors was hilarious.



Love's Labour's Lost: Gemma Arterton as Rosalind and Paul Rider as Boyet. Photo by John Haynes.

Berowne's celebration of "Affection's men-at-arms," which he proclaimed from the upper stage, suggested that the men had finally learned something about their anatomy from Costard. As a mess of Russians, they were exuberant in their dress and dancing, but as nothing fit very well they kept tripping over their own apparel. 'Twas a fitting metaphor that the ladies grasped. The pageant of the Nine Worthies was, of course, way overdone, which is the point; however, Dromgoole staged the pageant so as to maximize the two audiences—the theatre spectators and the four ladies—awareness of the complex action during the pageant. The royal spectators sat with their backs to the theatre audience, the men on the extended platform stage right, and the women on the parallel platform stage left. These spectators could thus face the stage and easily glance at each other, and as the royals sat with their backs to the theatre spectators, they became one with us, so that their comments upon the pageant emanated from among us. Thus, when they laughed at the poor players, we did. Dromgoole therefore staged brilliantly John Russell Brown's important insight into how Shakespeare uses the play-within-a-play in his comedies:

In his developed use of the play-within-a-play, Shakespeare seems to suggest that for the dramatic illusion to be complete, the amateur actor must have the imagination to be convinced of the "truth" of his role, and the audience must have the imagination to amend his "shadow." In the comedies, he used the ideal amateur actor as an image of the

ideal lover whose every action should perfectly express his imagination, should be a "true" response to his complex, irrational, and compelling vision of the beloved's beauty. And a man's ability to accept a dramatic illusion performed by others was used by Shakespeare to show the nature of the onlooker's imagination, to show the quality of his inward nature.⁶

Sitting theatre right in the first tier, I was able to see clearly the ladies' annoyance at the unkind comments of the four men, and surely their annoyance at the men's behavior is part of why the ladies reject sharply their suitors' last-minute declarations of love, all far too short a time for a world-without-end bargain. Holofernes's piteous "This is not generous, not gentle, not humble" (5.2.626) evoked sighs from the theatre spectators, as if suddenly we all realized how arrogant and nasty our laughter had been. Holofernes's momentary pause in his silly costume silenced the theatre; it was a deeply moving tableau. Because of the sudden silence, everyone in the theatre heard the Princess's "Alas, poor Maccabaeus, how hath he been baited" (628). Baited indeed, as had been all the poor actors, strutting and fretting so mightily upon the stage.

Costard's ribald "The party is gone. Fellow Hector, she is gone! She is two months on her way" (669-70), which comes of harkening after the flesh, introduced a spontaneous explosion of chaos during which everyone chased everyone else about the stage for no apparent reason and hurled the remaining bits of the picnic supper all over the place in an uproarious Renaissance food fight. Several groundlings got into the action and hurled back at the actors food that had been thrown at them. From amid the carnival emerged Mercade, all in black, who walked solemnly up the stairs stage right to deliver his message of death. After the songs of spring and winter, which mark the seasons of our lives, young and old, and the ladies' sensible rejection of the young lords' pleas, Don Armado sent the spectators away: "You that way." He then led his fellow actors back within the confines of the Globe, there to wait for yet another season: "We this way."

Notes

1. *Merchant of Venice Program Guide*, 2.
2. All textual references are to *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, 4th ed., ed. David Bevington (New York: Harper Collins, 1992).
3. See Alan Dessen, "Reviewing Shakespeare for the Record," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 36:5 (1985): 602-08.
4. See Hugh Quarshie, *Second Thoughts About Othello*, Occasional Paper 7 (Chipping Camden: International Shakespeare Association, 1999). Quarshie writes: "Of all parts in the canon, perhaps Othello is the one which should most definitely not be played by a black actor," 5.
5. For an analysis of how apparently trivial incidents, like the loss of Othello's handkerchief, become extremely and ironically crucial, see Bernard McElroy, *Shakespeare's Mature Tragedies*

(Princeton: Princeton UP, 1973), 89-144. McElroy's sense of the isolation of the play's characters may suggest why Emilia never tells Desdemona that she has found the handkerchief:

I construe it to be primarily a play about suffering, and, more precisely, a play about suffering in ever-deepening isolation. It is the isolation of these characters from one another, an isolation caused primarily by mutually exclusive world-pictures, that makes their errors possible, and I do not refer to Othello's errors alone. (91)

6. See John Russell Brown, *Shakespeare and His Comedies* (London: Methuen & Co., 1957), 94.

OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL 2006 SEASON

Michael W. Shurgot, Seattle, Washington

The 2006 season at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival was both unusual and surprising. Unusual was Artistic Director Libby Appel's choice of plays: two comedies, *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Merry Wives of Windsor*; one romance, *The Winter's Tale*; and one seldom produced history play, *King John*. The season thus lacked a major tragedy, comedy, or history, quite unlike last year's combination of *Richard III*, *Twelfth Night*, and Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus*. Further, while *Two Gentlemen* and *Merry Wives* seemed designed to please the million, when I saw the artistically far superior *Winter's Tale* in the indoor Angus Bowmer Theatre, nearly one third of the seats were empty, perhaps a disturbing sign of changing audience tastes at OSF. I have never before seen so many empty seats at a Shakespearean production in the Bowmer.¹ The surprise of the season was certainly John Sipes's *King John* in the New Theatre, with several sterling performances, a sharply told story of political intrigue, and the complex interplay of history and character. Given Sipes's production, and the play's probing of political leadership, one wonders why this play is not produced more often. Perhaps, as the world spins ever more perilously towards chaos, it will be.

Reviewing *Two Gentleman* and *Wives* is especially difficult because my personal reactions to these plays were quite different from those of most spectators both nights at the packed Elizabethan Stage. In his important essay "Reviewing Shakespeare for the Record," Alan Dessen writes:

Obviously, a reviewer cannot (and should not) exclude his or her tastes and predilections from the review . . . for the unstated ideal will always be to a degree personal, idiosyncratic. Nonetheless, many reviews strike me as limited because they reveal much more about the tastes of the reviewer than about the production itself (what I think of as the 'sensibility game'), a situation especially frustrating for the stage historian trying to use such reviews as evidence.²

Mindful of Dessen's cautions about reviews that reveal more about the reviewer than the play being discussed, I must confess nonetheless that both these plays struck me as silly and boring. One of the more maddening features of the OSF is its determination to make every production at the Elizabethan Stage *at least* two and one-half hours long. A major result of this preconceived time length is that when a director gets his/her hands on a comedy with a weak plot (i.e., *Two Gentlemen* and *Wives*), the director automatically lards the production with innumerable gags, guffaws, props, and pratfalls apparently just to devour time and by golly get the production to that magic hour of 11 PM. Usually these gimmicks were at least related to the director's "concept," as for example the

innumerable “sets” in the country-club world of *Two Gentlemen*. Given the laughter that accompanied most (but not all) such stage business, especially during *Wives*, I suspect that my taste in Shakespearean productions was far more offended than that of most spectators, and that I am perhaps here committing the error that Dessen warns against. But during both plays the director’s relentless imposition of his concept and its attendant stage business became cumbersome and finally tedious.

Shakespeare sets *Two Gentlemen* in Verona, Milan, and a forest in “the frontiers of Mantua.”³ Director Bill Rauch chose for Verona the “Amish, Mennonite, and Shaker communities”; for Milan a swanky country-club of wealthy layabouts; and for the forest a pack of violent-looking punk rockers in green and blue spiked hair, leather, killer boots, and chains. Rauch was obviously trying to make the disparate locales of Shakespeare’s play familiar to a contemporary audience; the religious clan began the play lined up across the stage in black and white neck to toe clothing, suggesting a severely repressed community and a stage image that bordered on stereotyping. By contrast, all was gay and far fleshier at the Milanese country club, where Sylvia frolicked in white tennis shorts and her father, Thurio, and Valentine later stripped to the waist for a backrub as they discussed Sylvia’s matrimonial fate. Having established the more relaxed atmosphere of the country club, Rauch could not leave well enough alone; every switch to the “Club” required yet another set change: first an imaginary tennis game, then croquet, then golf, and then finally the back-rub in the sauna. All of these set changes took time and became tedious, as if Rauch could not trust his spectators to remember that the second locale was this swanky, fleshy retreat for millionaires. Thus did Rauch’s production chug towards its predetermined closing hour.

This revolving stage business came to exist for its own sake, and thus begs the question: if Rauch and OSF cannot trust the poetry and characterization of a Shakespearean play, and must rely heavily on a director’s concept to appeal to contemporary spectators, why stage the play at all? And if OSF is seen to “succeed” at such productions, what does that success assert about the current state of Shakespearean production in the United States and the direction that OSF and similar festivals may be pursuing? While I accept Alan Dessen’s caution about revealing more of one’s tastes than



Two Gentlemen of Verona: David Kelly as Launce and Terwilliger the Dog as Crab. Photo by Jenny Graham.

one ought when reviewing productions, I nonetheless cringe at the domination of directors' concepts in recent Shakespearean productions at OSF.

Given the visual emphasis on the different locales, this production of *Two Gentlemen* was more seen than heard. However, Gregory Linington articulated well Proteus's self-examinations and hypocrisy, especially his soliloquies in 2.6 and in 4.2. And disguised as a waiter at the country club in 4.4.89ff, Miriam Luabe as Julia was especially poignant as she fondled her own ring while gazing at the picture of Sylvia that the Club's hired artist had completed earlier. The most frustrating moments occurred at the end, which is notorious enough as it is. Having invested considerable time and energy in the elaborate sets, Rauch simply abandoned Sylvia in 5.4. Although Sarah Rutan, a lovely young woman, had played Sylvia as coy and flirtatious throughout, for the play's climax, as she is traded between Proteus and Valentine, Rauch had her sitting at the front edge of the stage, stone silent, and staring out into the audience as her future was determined. This sudden inconsistency in her demeanor was impossible to accept; where was her spirit, her resolve, as behind her, two men, both for a moment equally false, played her as a pawn? If Rauch could invent all sorts of games and gimmicks to make the country club setting relevant to his audience, where was his sense of what was happening to Sylvia in the script's final moments? Rauch's production was so visually oriented that he lost all sense of his characters' inner lives at the play's crucial moment. While the ending of this play is immensely difficult, and certainly repellent to women, denying Rutan's Sylvia any reaction at all to her situation seems irresponsible, not only to Sylvia and Rutan, but also to female spectators in the theatre.

Like Bill Rauch, Andrew Tsao invested heavily in his set for *Merry Wives*. The entire width and height of the Elizabethan Stage was painted in vivid colors: purple, lime, rose, green, orange, chartreuse. Across the central doors was a huge painting of Windsor castle and the surrounding countryside and above the stage hung a large sign reading "Berkshire." Those whom Malvolio would label the "little people" of the plot were all dressed in the motley of circus clowns, suggesting that this play was occurring in a fun-house time warp that combined elements of contemporary (the Pages and Fords, Dr. Caius, Sir Hugh Evans) and Elizabethan (Falstaff and his cronies, Mistress Quickly, Simple) dress. With G. Valmont Thomas as a robust, huge, and hearty Falstaff whose boisterous laugh echoed throughout the theatre, the essential farce of the play dominated the production.

Like previous productions of *Merry Wives* at OSF (especially in 2001), this year's version was replete with stage business and gratuitous gestures that occasionally amplified a character but mostly just consumed time. For example, Sir Hugh Evans wore a ridiculous hat that must have been two feet wide and six feet long and was curled at both ends. Given this monstrous hat, he had to do something with it, so he constantly bumped into other characters while talking and gesturing; this cranial appendage thus made him dangerous to be around. Armando Duran as Dr. Caius created a sufficiently mangled French accent that other characters couldn't always understand it, so he often repeated phrases

or whole sentences, thus consuming more time. Thomas attempted to enliven Falstaff with his loud voice and ample gestures; but even in this emotionally uncomplicated role, Thomas's limited range failed to lift his character above the gluttonous buffoon.



Merry Wives of Windsor. G. Valmont Thomas as Falstaff. Photo by T. Charles.

The major surprise of this production was Jonathan Haugen as Master Ford. Haugen found in Ford's equally repetitive actions real passions. While *Merry Wives* is simplistic compared to *Winter's Tale*, and Ford is hardly as complex a character as Leontes, nonetheless Haugen's jealousy and anger were palpable. Especially after his second failure to find Falstaff in his house, Haugen's pathos was genuine; he was less a man possessed of a baseless fury than a man seriously disturbed by emotions he could neither understand nor control. When he sought and received forgiveness from his wife, one sensed a man who, in the midst of this farcical circus, had experienced real jealousy that arose from within a genuine love for his wife and his own emotional weaknesses. Given Haugen's portrayal of Master Ford, one perceives some link between *Merry Wives* and the more profound *Winter's Tale*.

Director Libby Appel opened *Winter's Tale* with an invented scene replacing 1.1: Paulina and Mamillius, who held a teddy bear, sitting downstage center speaking of sad tales "of sprites and goblins" that are best for winter, amid lighting director Robert Peterson's stunning visual effects. Initially the entire stage was bathed in deep blue and white, a pined beauty suggesting snowy fields seen from afar; bare trees dotted the back of the stage, evoking a stark landscape. As the guests assembled for 1.2, four chandeliers dropped from the ceiling and brightened the stage, creating cozy warmth in the bleak mid-winter. Leontes and Polixenes, in formal attire of Edwardian nobility, danced

gaily with the women of the court dressed in elegant gowns. Immediately evident was one of Appel's most arresting choices: Hermione was not visibly pregnant, certainly nowhere near the end of her term, and thus one could reasonably believe that she *might* have become pregnant by Polixenes since his arrival. Even if this possibility was not Appel's intention, the choice of a barely pregnant Hermione lent some credibility to Leontes's jealous rage and created an intriguing complication for the plot. Further, because William Langan as Leontes was noticeably older than both Miriam Laube as Hermione and Rex Young as Polixenes, these casting choices suggested an intriguing possibility among the three characters: that Hermione might have been sexually attracted to the younger Polixenes. These possibilities were encouraged when Hermione kissed Polixenes immediately after he agreed to stay, and Hermione was visibly pleased to have him remain longer in her court.

Appel used this moment to ignite Leontes's rage. As Leontes's jealousy progressed, he became increasingly isolated onstage, standing downstage center in a shaft of light as the assembled guests mingled upstage behind him. As if embodying his visions of their intimacy ("Your actions are my dreams"), Polixenes and Hermione danced and laughed center stage behind him, and at one point Polixenes actually played with Mamillius, showing far more affection for him than Leontes did while telling Mamillius to "go play" as he believed his mother had with Polixenes. Hermione's "If you would seek us, / We are yours / the garden. Shall's attend you there?" (1.2.177-78), an apparently innocent line, infuriated Leontes, whose reaction indicated his grasp of the association with sexual sin in Eden and his anger that he would be attended by his wife together with another man. In his soliloquy "Gone already" (1.2.185-207), Leontes stood center stage, isolated again in light, oblivious of his son's presence on stage, and spoke directly to male spectators about the number of men whose wives have been "sluiced" by Sir Smile. Langan's frantic gestures and quivering voice superbly rendered the image of an older man convinced that his younger wife has been unfaithful, and while there is no textual basis for Leontes's jealousy, Appel's directorial choices created just enough ambiguity to lend some credence to Leontes's subsequent rage. By the time Leontes had "drunk, and seen the spider," he was clearly unhinged.

Appel's blocking and the excellent supporting cast, especially Greta Oglesby as Paulina, Mark Murphey as Antigonus, and Jeffrey King as Camillo, created several powerful moments. Camillo was visibly stunned at Leontes's suggestion of the Queen's adultery, and conveyed forcefully to Polixenes his utter terror at Leontes's order to kill him. In 2.1, after Mamillius is led out and Leontes accuses Hermione, Antigonus tried desperately to convince Leontes otherwise, and the sheer passion of Murphey's pleading further isolated Leontes as he stood alone downstage center. Murphey's interaction with Oglesby in 2.3 was especially effective; his exasperated deference to Paulina as she strode right through his lines ("I told her so, my lord"), only moments after his own anger at Leontes, comically heralded Paulina's powerful rage. Leontes labels Paulina "A mankind witch," and throughout her confrontations with

Leontes, Paulina's fury thrashed him. As Antigonus and others backed away, she boldly moved towards Leontes and placed the babe in his arms. Sitting center stage, holding his own daughter, he seemed for a second the proud father, only to stand and leave the child on the chair. Paulina then picked up the baby, realizing suddenly that her attempt to save the child had failed. Paulina's catalog of the babe's paternal likeness as she moved among the lords only further isolated Leontes, and her crisp "I pray you, do not push me; I'll be gone" (2.3.125) to Antigonus, who clearly feared her far more than Leontes, was simultaneously a comic release from the palpable tension of this scene and a stern reminder that here was an indomitable woman.

Hermione entered her trial in a simple white smock, suggesting her innocence, and walking painfully as befits a woman who has recently given birth. She stood center stage and spoke deliberately, her rhythm confident and diction precise; a woman completely self-assured, Paulina without the rage, trying patiently to convince Leontes of his madness: "Sir, spare your thoughts. / The bug which you would fright me with, I seek" (3.2.91-92). As in 2.3, Leontes stood apart, avoiding Hermione's eyes as she spoke. A harp played as Apollo's decree was read, evoking a mythic serenity in Leontes's unruly kingdom. The perfect joy of Hermione's "Praised" at her vindication, so deeply felt that one almost forgot—or wished away—the text, was instantly shattered as Leontes grabbed the scroll and tore it, followed immediately by the servant's news that Mamillius had suddenly died. Paulina's re-entry was immensely powerful. Leontes cowed before her fury as she beat his prostrate body and screamed of the queen's death, relenting only when her own rage at both Leontes's error and her earlier failure to convince the king of his paternity was exhausted. Taken together, Langan's remorse, as he ironically lay in a fetal position beneath Paulina's beating, and Oglesby's rage set up convincingly the necessary fiction for the rest of the play: that Hermione is indeed dead and only a miracle will restore that which is lost.

Oglesby's doubling as Time neatly suggested Paulina's central importance to the play; as she slowly cured Leontes's guilt in Sicilia, so in Bohemia she introduced a lovely springtime, the only pretty ring time. Christopher DuVal as Autolycus was but patched and mended, his motley stitched together with remnants from previous clowns, especially Feste. He was also immensely clever and loved his own wit, with which he hilariously engaged the front row spectators. As a professional thief, he "stole" a few purses from women and actually emptied them onstage, and the night I saw him he ad-libbed about the contents ("Oh, a nice cell phone. I wonder what this is worth!"), and then pocketed the phone. He was also quite adept at stealing from the simple shepherds, and hauled onstage a wagon whose sides folded down to reveal multiple shelves filled with dozens of stockings, ballads, flowers, and contemporary goods stolen (we were to believe) from spectators in the front rows on previous nights. The combination of his audacious stealing, rapid-fire wit, and spontaneous cavorting around stage—I can't imagine that his antics were similar in any two consecutive performances—reminded one of Hamlet's lament about clowns who steal the show during a "serious" moment in a play and apparently, as

DuVal obviously did, have a damn good time doing so. His hilarious clowning also created a marvelously enjoyable setting for the sheep-shearing scene, which in turn made all the more frightening its collapse into Polixenes's rage at his son's perfidy. Josiah Phillips as Perdita's father stumbled blindly about the stage once Florizel was unmasked, and their huge relief at Autolycus's "assistance" became the perfect foil for DuVal's hilarious, knee-slapping, self-congratulatory conviction that Fortune would never suffer him to be honest. Here indeed was a clown enjoying being a clown.



The Winter's Tale: Alexander Barnes, Miriam Laube, et al. as Mamillius, Hermione, and Ladies. Photo by David Cooper.

Those preferring what Daniel Seltzer used to term the "miraculous" interpretation of Act 5 would have applauded Appel's staging. From lines 1-123 of Act 5, Leontes, Cleomenes, Dion, and Paulina discuss whether or not Leontes should re-marry and "bless the bed of majesty again / With a sweet fellow to't" (33-34). During this scene Paulina receives Leontes's assurance that he shall not marry again "till [Paulina] bidd'st us." Paulina insists "That / Shall be when your first queen's again in breath; / Never till then" (83-84). One can argue, as most scholars would, that this promise assures spectators that Hermione is in fact alive and that Paulina has been hiding her these sixteen years. But Paulina's lines could also suggest her firm belief in miracles, spiritual and theatrical, as indicated later by her requirement that *all* in the theatre

must awaken their faith. After the entrance of Florizel, Perdita, Cleomenes and others at 123, Paulina does not speak again until 225, where she insists that Hermione was "more worth" the king's gaze than even the beauty of Perdita. During this long silence, unusual for a character who has previously commanded the stage both verbally and physically, Paulina stood absolutely still as she gazed upon Perdita. The second that Perdita entered, Paulina froze; she alone had recognized Perdita, and if that which was lost had been found, then Hermione could breathe again, and miracles abound.

After the outrageous sartorial splendor of the gentlemen shepherd and son—Phillips's feathered hat was so huge he could barely keep his head straight—the simple beauty of the statue scene was stunning. Hermione's statue rose on a pedestal from beneath the stage. She wore an elegant white gown, an ironic reminder of the plain smock she had worn at her trial, and held a blue scarf she had worn in the opening scene. As the characters slowly circled the statue, and Perdita knelt and asked the Queen to give her "that hand of

yours to kiss," Paulina assumed the role of priestess. She commanded the solemn music that filled the theatre as she implored Leontes to proceed towards liberation from his long agony: "I could afflict you further"; "Shall I draw the curtain?" (5.3.75, 83). With each question Paulina led Leontes and us towards the miracle she now knew could occur, and she turned deliberately towards the audience to insist that we *all* awake our faith. Amid perfect silence, Paulina removed a veil from the statue's head, Hermione turned towards Leontes, and suddenly moved her hand towards him. After Paulina exhorts the statue to "Strike all that look upon with marvel," and "Bequeath to death your numbness, for from him / Dear life redeems you" (100, 102-03), Hermione stepped down and embraced Leontes in a long and passionate kiss. For several seconds she was aware only of Leontes, and we saw a miracle of love and forgiveness. Appel staged literally the words of Camillo and Polixenes, "She embraces him"; "She hangs about his neck," so that Paulina's words to Perdita, "Please you to interpose, fair madam," comically suggested that someone had better interrupt this kiss lest we be in the theatre all night. Hermione's asking the gods to "pour your graces / Upon my daughter's head" (123-24) emphasized the miraculous possibilities that Appel's staging had fashioned.

Leontes, Hermione, and Perdita led the court upstage towards an autumnal sunset that accentuated the bare trees of Act 1. Paulina, who *did* accept Camillo's hand in marriage, turned around midway and walked back downstage to remind us that a sad tale is best for winter. Without Mamillius, whose teddy bear had heralded the death of Antigonus, her words were doubly chilling.

John Sipes's robust production of *King John* in the New Theatre combined medieval England with early twentieth-century Europe to evoke timeless questions about the nature of leadership and the consequences of political failure. William Bloodgood's set was simple and unobtrusive; initially a throne, draped in red, sat center stage beneath castle walls, upstage from which Hubert de Burgh would challenge John and Philip, Arthur would fall, and upon which film clips of World War One and Two would be shown. Other props included tables upon which the kings and their allies, wearing the long coats of European generals from both world wars, plotted their strategy, and occasionally furniture to mark the courts of England and France. Unlike the crowded sets of *Two Gentlemen* and *Merry Wives*, Bloodgood's essentially bare stage allowed the production to focus on the actors and their generally superb articulation of Shakespeare's story. One sees here the influence of the production's dramaturg, Alan Armstrong of Southern Oregon University, a fine scholar and a proponent of this production style at the OSF.

Superb performances by several actors enlivened this historical clash of powerful and complex characters. As King John, Michael Elich brought equal skill to John's many moods. He entered 1.1 in regal red and white to the applause of his court, as happens when Patrick Stewart as Claudius enters 1.2 in the BBC *Hamlet*. With Derrick Lee Weeden doubling as Pandulph and in 1.1 as Chatillon, Elich and Weeden initiated their many dynamic exchanges in the play. Equally compelling was Jeanne Paulsen as Eleanor, whose commanding

presence and powerful voice fiercely defended John's kingship. The set enabled a compelling staging of 2.1, presenting cleanly the angry debates and complex motives central to the play's history. Armando Duran as Hubert de Burgh spoke powerfully for the common men and women of this play whose lives kings and dictators have forever sacrificed, and Bloodgood's projection across the stones of Angiers of battle scenes from both world wars emphasized the continuing slaughter of innocent humankind wrought by ruthless politicians. The conflicting advice of Philip the Bastard, dressed in a three-piece suit as the CEO of John's kingdom who, downstage, urged a dual attack against Angiers, and Hubert, who, dressed in a workman's simple clothes, urged from the city walls the marriage of Blanche and Lewis to save his town, emphasized clearly both the fickleness of John and Philip and their love of "commodity," the Bastard's favorite word. René Millan delivered the Bastard's long soliloquy, which concluded Act 2, as a vicious satire on such feckless royalty and suggested perhaps an early Thersites in his contempt for his betters and their "base and vile-concluded peace."

Robynn Rodriguez as Constance urged Arthur's claim to the throne as fiercely as Jeanne Paulsen's Eleanor supported John's. As 3.1 unfolded, again the simple set, the actors' excellent command of Shakespeare's verse, and Sipes's thoughtful blocking energized one of the play's central scenes. As if chosen by divine guidance, Emma Hardin as Arthur knelt in a pool of light as Constance urged his claim. Then from her knees she rose in fury as John, Philip, and their entourage arrived at court. She spat out "War, war, no peace! Peace is to me a war" (3.1.113), and heralded the ensuing "war" between John and Philip instigated by Weeden's majestic entrance as Pandulph, decked from miter to foot in the Cardinal's brilliant red attire. Speaking initially from above in carefully modulated sentences and precise diction, suggesting what Pandulph assumes is his morally superior position, Weeden articulated Pandulph's demands as he walked down steps leading from the city walls and then briskly moved among the court, turning to face one, then another, as his arguments developed. Weeden's performance here was riveting; every vocal modulation, every movement, every pause, every gesture was linked precisely to his words and calculated to promote his cause, and his stately calm amid the tension that his words created further solidified his power among these nobles.

The flashing of battle scenes from World War Two during 3.2, the cold plotting of Arthur's death in 3.3, Constance's grief in 3.4, and the near murder of Arthur in 4.1—all played in rapid succession on the bare stage—hurled the play into its nether regions. As in *Richard III*, here innocence does not protect the young, and only Hubert's tortured conscience, superbly realized by Duran, saved Arthur's life as he sat strapped to a chair, an early vision of Gloucester's hideous suffering. In 4.2, Elich, richly attired and speaking gravely, attempted to recapture John's nobility and power, only to unravel swiftly as Pembroke and Salisbury implicated him in Arthur's death and the Bastard informed him of the French invasion. By 155, where John urges the Bastard to hang the prophet who calls for him to relinquish his crown, John was on his knees crying, a king

suddenly destitute of authority and frantically ordering the death of innocents as earlier he had been willing to sacrifice the citizens of Angiers. Elich successfully realized in this scene the enigmas of the historical King John. As Hubert cradled Arthur's body in 4.3, the dead child embodied the terrifying costs of human greed and violence: "Now for the bare-picked bone of majesty / Doth dogged war bristle his angry crest, / And snarleth in the gentle eyes of peace" (4.3.148-50). Perhaps in Arthur's mangled innocence lay an image for our times.⁴

Amid political intrigue between church and state and gruesome scenes of war splashed across the walls of Angiers, the dominant image of Act 5 is the poisoned king. That Weeden's commanding performance as the Pope's emissary should devolve into an obscure monk's poisoning of a king; Pandulph fail to quell the war he instigated; and Elich's King John exit disgraced and dying, all emphasize, despite the Bastard's stirring exhortation to war, the unresolved ironies of this play. On the bare stage, the images of King John on his royal throne, conniving Cardinal Pandulph in his stunning red, modern generals ruthlessly plotting war, Hubert begging peace from two armed camps, and terrified Arthur leaping to his death coalesced in a memorable production of a play that may be more relevant to our times than we care to admit.



King John: Emma Harding as Arthur and Robynn Rodriguez as Constance. Photo by Jenny Graham.

Notes

1. The Angus Bowmer Theatre seats 600 people. 200 empty seats for as compelling a play as *The Winter's Tale* is disturbing.
2. "Reviewing Shakespeare for the Record," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 35 (1985): 602-08.
3. *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, 4th ed., ed. David Bevington (New York: Harper Collins, 1992).
4. As Alan Armstrong observed in his review of the 2005 OSF *Richard III*, director Libby Appel inexplicably cut the Scrivener's scene, thus robbing the play of a scene of immense relevance to our time. *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 24:1 (2006): 73-77. Armstrong writes:

At a time when news media, managed by the entertainment division of multinational corporations, had failed us, a theatre company could have staged a *Richard III* that really mattered—not by laboring heavy-handedly to establish parallels with the misdeeds of the current administration, but simply by letting the scrivener's words—Shakespeare's words—be spoken freely on stage. (77)

**THE EXPERIMENTAL AND THE TRADITIONAL: THE 2006 ALABAMA
SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL'S *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM* AND THE 2006
STRATFORD FESTIVAL'S *HENRY IV, PART 1***

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Over the years I have tried to see as many different Shakespeare Festivals as possible, but usually I use the Stratford Festival of Canada as a standard to measure the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, which I have been reviewing for over twenty-five years. This 2006 season I have compared an experimental production in Alabama with a traditional production in Canada. Geoffrey Sherman, the Producing Artistic Director of the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, invited another company, Obie Award-winning SITI of New York, to use its stage to educate and entertain its audience. SITI's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* not only included the actors but the technical staff as well—only the 750 seat Festival Stage was the Alabama Shakespeare Festival's; everything else was controlled by SITI. The emphasis of this acting company founded by Anne Bogart and Tadashi Suzuki in 1992 is on creative movement, and the company's background is in dance. The controlling idea behind the group's work, which I first heard put forth about forty years ago by Eric Bentley in a lecture entitled "Language as Gesture," is to partner dialogue with deliberate action, and in this partnership in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, actors, as much as possible, attempted to elucidate Shakespeare's language with carefully chosen body movements. Though many of us speak with our hands, our shoulders, our facial gestures, our walk, and our posture, we seldom freeze these gestures. SITI actors, however, frequently do, creating body metaphors to complement Shakespeare's text, so that graphic actions, such as Helena's attempt to win back her Demetrius in 2.1.201-210 by letting him see under her skirt, froze her posture with her legs in the air.¹ Perhaps the cleverest movement was to have Oberon, Titania, and the rest of the fairies always standing on the balls of their feet so that their feet looked like hooves and the actors like elves. That physical movement, apart from costume or words, made the fairies appear as different beings, creatures of the woods.

The set, designed by Neil Patel, and the costuming, designed by Gabriel Berry, were meant to suggest the Dust Bowl, and the few props that suggested that age, a gigantic radio, a huge phonograph, and floor lamps that were brought onstage throughout the play, created metaphors of dreams and desires as actors draped themselves over them or performed physical movements on them. The actors invited the audience to recall how music on the phonograph can incite fantasy or dream, or how radio can appeal to the imagination in conjuring up images—baseball games on radio always seemed more exciting than on television, for example. The floor lamps that began to fill the stage seemed to be metaphors of ideas and intelligence.

Any time Shakespeare's world is modernized through costuming and props some problems arise. On the one hand, Anne Bogart in her "Director's Notes" describes the landscapes of Shakespeare's imagination as "hot and moist" while in the next paragraph she talks about the Dust Bowl as "a stark but beautiful place."² How an era of depression can be tied to "imagination," "hope," and dreams" puzzled me at first, but when I recalled some of the elaborate Hollywood musicals and comedies that appeared in the 1930s, I began to see the dreams Bogart hoped to connect to the play.



A Midsummer Night's Dream: Christopher Spencer Wells as Bottom and Ellen Lauren as Titania. Photo by Tom Chargin.

Apart from the emphasis on tying together word and body movement, Anne Bogart tried to make a case for the number of actors that were needed to perform the play. In the "Director's Notes" of the program, Bogart states, "We have managed to do the entire show with eight actors. Not only does this make production economically feasible, but also now I am convinced that Shakespeare

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definitely must have meant for it to be done with only eight actors." Bogart is not the first to concern herself with the minimum number of actors needed to perform Shakespeare properly. I remember working with my Shakespeare teacher, William Ringler of the University of Chicago, over forty years ago on such a project. In Bogart's production, except for the role of Puck, all the actors play at least two roles, and most play three. While most audiences are accustomed to doubling, the extent of the practice in this production leads to some unusual moments, as characters change costumes while onstage on several occasions. The greatest challenge for the eight actors came in the performance of the Mechanicals in Act 5 when actors bounced back and forth between the performance of "Pyramus and Thisbe" and their roles as audience to the play within the play. While the cast handled the quick changes of role seamlessly, the audience seemed more amused by the trick of the instant metamorphoses than they were impressed by Shakespeare.

The SITI company believes in cultural exchange, and to that end the company is international in its composition. The actress who performed Hermia, Starveling, and Moth is Japanese, Akiko Aizawa. While her movements did her credit, her speech did not; many times her Japanese accented English made Shakespeare's lines either incomprehensible or foghorn clear. Since Aizawa has been a part of SITI since 1997, audiences would expect these difficulties to have been worked out by now.

When *A Midsummer Night's Dream* works, the audience feels the constant juxtaposition of town and country, day and night; daylight reason, law and order with nighttime dreams and fantasies. Puck and the fairies should seem more dominant than Theseus's day-light world. Reason in the ideal production grounds nothing. Demetrius and Lysander always appeal to reason when explaining their changing objects of affection. As Lysander explains to a surprised Helena, "Who will not change a raven for a dove? / The will of man is by his reason sway'd; / and reason says you are the worthier maid" (2.2.114-116). Even Bottom with his ass's head and his braying, on hearing Titania's reasons for her love says, "reason and love keep little company together now-a-days" (3.1.143-144). While Egeus by law and Theseus by conquest try to force love, law and conquest do not produce cheerful obedience, and yet lovers have difficulty justifying their love just as audiences have difficulty keeping their identities straight. Northrop Frye sees the world of the fairies as having "affinities with what we call the unconscious or subconscious part of the mind: a part below the reason's encounter with objective reality, and yet connected with the hidden creative powers of the mind."³ At best, the lovers can have interlocking illusions, as Terry Eagleton suggests.⁴ He continues, "In the play's fantasia of the unconscious, what looks through the individual eye is less than the unconscious itself, causally indifferent to particular bodies, ransacking appearances in its desperate pursuit of some ultimate truth which refuses to be uncovered. The desire of the unconscious is bottomless, like the dream which it generates in Bottom; and this unfathomable place of the Other is figured within the text as the inhuman Puck, who can assume any shape or persona because he is nothing in himself."⁵ I did not see or

feel the psychological underpinnings necessary to a good production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Bogart's version.

Despite my reservations about the whole production, several performances were very good. Jeffrey Frace as Theseus and especially as Oberon was excellent, and so too was Ellen Lauren as Titania and Hippolyta. Of the lovers the most effective was Karron Graves, who played each of her roles with comic authority, especially that of Helena. As in most productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a good Bottom dominates the play, and in the SITI production, Christopher Spencer Wells provided an emotive center for the audience, whether the two wings of his hair were ass's ears or not.

Certainly, I have never seen a performance of a Shakespearean play with more dramatic movement supplementing the language of the text. In many cases the actors did a creditable job interpreting the lines, but I can think of many more productions of this play by the Alabama Shakespeare Festival and other Shakespeare companies that I have enjoyed more. Perhaps I am too attached to stage spectacle to appreciate the relatively bare stage of this touring production. On the other hand, the production contained too much aimless running around in the forest—a relatively bare stage—for my taste. The voice can carry most of Shakespeare's meaning. The emphasis on movement by SITI might have been better in another play, such as *The Comedy of Errors*. Such a process might also be really useful as an acting exercise.

Whereas Anne Bogart thinks of her production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as revolutionary, Director Richard Monette of Canada's Stratford Festival thinks of his production of *1 Henry IV* as traditional, as suggested by the interpretations of critics such as Cleanth Brooks and Robert Heilman.⁶ Monette sees the central interest of the play "on the making of a king—on Prince Hal and what he learns in this play that enables him to become a great leader of men."⁷ Furthermore, no attempt is made by costuming or props to update the play's associations with allusions to more contemporary eras. Dana Osborne, the designer, attempted to create an equivalent to medieval dress, and color-coded the four groups of characters to assist the audience in making political connections so that Falstaff and his friends are dressed in harvest colors of "golds, greens, and rusts," Henry's court in "black with accents of brick red and gold," the rebels in brown and green earthtones with a gray undertone, and Glendower and his family in costumes of indigo, navy, and gray, which Osborne associates with water and Glendower's claims about his ability to control the elements. Of the props created for the play, the most impressive was a map of England so big that it carpeted much of the stage. When the rebels walked on it deliberating who gets what in the division of the country at the beginning of Act 3, the audience almost feels as if a flag has been desecrated—the horror of the division of the country is made clear. While some critics, such as Harold Bloom, have seen Hal as just as manipulative and Machiavellian as his father, Henry IV, Monette separates the two.⁸ He sees the character of Hal as "very optimistic"; the audience "should be rooting for him."⁹ On the other hand, Monette sees Henry IV as "tormented" and "worried about

how to hold on to power because he has not obtained it legitimately.” Monette dismisses the possible tragedy of Hotspur, whom he labels a “hothead and a bit of a meathead.” Honor drives him single-mindedly; “he talks a lot; he doesn’t think.” Though Monette describes Hotspur as “charming,” he thinks he would not make a good king. Because of Monette’s view of the primacy of Hal’s development in the play, Monette is unlikely to allow the play to become, in part, the tragedy of Hotspur.



Henry IV, Part 1: David Snelgrove as Prince Hal. Photo by Richard Bain. Courtesy of the Stratford Shakespeare Festival Archives.

In terms of the effect of his production overall, Monette wished to avoid a *1 Henry IV* that is dark and cynical. In mounting a bleak production, “the implicit in the play [becomes] explicit”; consequently, there would be “no depth, no sub-text.” He wants his production to be “funny and vivid: a chronicle rather than a history play.” With this aim in mind, Monette’s Falstaff is to be essentially comic, an alternative father-figure for Hal, but not a spokesman against war or honor in a satire on the political hypocrisy and the lying readily seen in *Henry IV* and the conspirators opposing him.

James Blendick was wonderful as Falstaff; his comic timing in the tavern scenes and the robbery and its aftermath was great, but he was careful not to become the cynical spokesman that Monette feared in such speeches as

the one on honor at the end of 5.1 or following the death of Sir Walter Blunt. His character's many faults and vices as played by Blendick seemed only the appetites and play of a child incapable of correction. Few of the speeches in the play where Falstaff appeared to regret his fallen state were given with any conviction, such as in 1.2.95-97, when Falstaff says he is "little better than one of the wicked. I must give over this life, and I will give it over." While Falstaff continually exploits Hal and clearly hopes for more from him when Hal becomes king, Blendick's portrayal of the fat man nonetheless showed affection for the future king.

Just as the portrayal of Falstaff is a key to the play's effect, so too is the portrayal of Hal by David Snelgrove. Hal must not appear to be as conniving a person as Henry IV or the lying Worcester and Vernon; otherwise, the play could become the satire on Machiavellian political hypocrisy that Monette feared. When Snelgrove delivered Hal's speech on his intended reformation at the end of 1.2, Snelgrove's tone was that of a youth who is aware of playing with Falstaff and the rest of the tavern crew; however, he did not sound like Henry IV or the calculating rebels. Snelgrove looked boyish, appearing delighted by Falstaff's slippery wit and clever avoidance of logical traps. And when Snelgrove as Hal in 2.4.480-481 responded to Falstaff's "banish plump Jack, and banish all the world" with "I do, I will," his voice was determined but not calculating. As the action got closer to the battle of Shrewsbury, Hal provided Falstaff with opportunities, such as putting him in charge of some foot-soldiers, but Falstaff again and again forfeited these opportunities his friend provided. The closest Snelgrove as Hal got to anger at Falstaff is when he reached for a pistol but pulled out a bottle of sack in 5.3.55.

Adam O'Byrne as Hotspur looked even more like a tall, lanky adolescent than Snelgrove did. He exuded a boyish charm with Jennifer Mawhinney's Kate and was comically delightful when torpedoing the exalted claims of Glendower at the beginning of Act 3. While Monette cut some lines from the play, he was careful not to cut the criticisms of Hotspur by his father in 1.3 or by Mortimer and Worcester in 3.1, which stress Hotspur's inability to listen to others, his immaturity and lack of judgment. While O'Byrne's handling of Hotspur's death scene was touching, neither he nor the director allowed the character of Hotspur to take over the play emotionally.

Monette further avoided the pitfalls of his goals for the production with the portrayal of Henry IV by Scott Wentworth. Even though Henry IV is a scheming king who has had Richard II killed and is tormented by his crime, the focus of this production is less on Henry's maintenance of power and more on his relationship to Hal. Wentworth was careful in 3.2 to project the discouragement of a father who sees his son seemingly throwing away the opportunity for kingship that Henry has provided, and he was able to project the king's joy and gratitude toward Hal when Hal rescues his father from Douglas in 5.4.47-50:

Stay and breathe a while
Thou hast redeem'd thy lost opinion,

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And show'd thou mak'st some tender of my life.
In this fair rescue thou hast brought to me.

While Henry is tenacious in holding on to power, Monette and Scott Wentworth keep the audience's focus on Henry's desires for his son, a complex of feelings all good parents understand.

While I have focused on the roles that create the emotional effect of the production, many people gave fine performances in this production, such as Raymond O'Neill as Glendower and Domini Blythe as Mistress Quickly. The only time I felt time hang heavy in the production was in Laura Condlin's singing in Welsh near the end of 3.1. Her voice was good, but the song and Welsh dialogue seemed to go on too long.

The Stratford Festival's *1 Henry IV* was a deeply satisfying production. The performance felt like a comic, heroic romp with fascinating political intrigue. While Monette's *1 Henry IV* was not revolutionary, as Anne Bogart claimed for her production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the audience seemed pleased by what it saw and heard.

Notes

1. Quotations accord with *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974).
2. "Director's Notes" in *On Stage* program for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
3. *Northrop Frye on Shakespeare*, ed. Robert Sandler (Markham, Ontario: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1986), 47.
4. *William Shakespeare* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 22.
5. Eagleton, 24.
6. Cleanth Brooks and Robert B. Heilman, *Understanding Drama* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1948), 376-387.
7. "As Quoted: Director Richard Monette" in play program of *Henry IV Part 1*.
8. Harold Bloom, *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* (New York: Penguin Putman, 1998), 285.
9. Monette, play program.

***A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM* BY THE AMERICAN SHAKESPEARE CENTER ON TOUR (2006)**

Craig Barrow, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

I really did not desire to see another production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in September, especially since I reviewed the play at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival in the summer and had seen the comedy many, many times in the last forty-five years, but my students in a general education humanities course wanted to study the play and see the production, so who was I to say no? The performance was part of my university's 2006-07 Dorothy Patten Fine Arts Series, and the play was performed in the Roland Hayes Concert Hall at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, a venue that seats over five hundred in its steeply tiered seats and features a fenced orchestra pit for opera separating the stage from the audience. While the core of the Patten series audience is composed of high school and college students and faculty, probably half of the subscribers to the series are Chattanooga lawyers, doctors, journalists, and other professionals.

Even though I arrived a half-hour before the performance began, the actors of the American Shakespeare Center were already busy selling programs and CDs to the audience as well as singing and performing while the audience was being seated. The actors were not simply onstage but also in the aisles and the rows, justifying their behavior by bringing to memory the fruit sellers in Shakespeare's theatre. They did their best in a friendly way to provoke responses, and they received them, either in terms of applause, sales, jokes, or friendly conversation. They ushered about thirty people, volunteers, to both sides of the stage and seated them in the performance area. While the play was a sellout, with people sitting in the aisles and standing in the back of the theatre, the purpose of this seating on stage was to play off contact with the audience, those people on the stage and those in the tiered seating. The universal lighting of the entire theatre, audience and performance areas was a part of this plan. As the play program states in "Style: Original Staging Practices,"

Shakespeare's actors could see their audience; ASC actors can see you. When actors can see an audience, they can engage with an audience. . . . Leaving an audience in the dark can literally obscure a vital part of the drama as Shakespeare designed it.¹

In the first scene with the Mechanicals in 1.2, Kevin Pierson, who played Bottom, buried his head in the lap of one of the girls from my class who was seated onstage in his repeated comic frustration in not being able to perform all the parts of the play.² While the girl was startled at first, the audience loved the interplay of actor and audience; such interplay occurred throughout the

performance. The interplay with the audience had interesting corollaries, because in the course of performance, the audience did not lose attention when people were being seated well after the play began or when someone got up to go to the bathroom. No dramatic illusion was shattered; the actors were never upstaged by an audience's cough or sneeze. Perhaps the biggest surprise to the audience and to me was the absence of any intermissions. As "Style: Original Staging Practices" says, ASC tries to create "a continuous flow of dramatic action."³ No one in the audience could lose the thread of the play's action because no break ever occurred.



***A Midsummer Night's Dream*: Chris Johnston as Francis Flute and Kevin Pierson as Bottom. Photo by Mike Bailey.**

Other staging practices of the company, such as doubling and the use of unadorned sets, did not have as great an effect on the novelty of the performance as the universal lighting and the performance without intermissions. While the company did cast men as women, creating some gender confusion among Titania's fairies, and women as men, when Robin Starveling is played by a woman, one did not immediately remember boys playing the parts of women in Shakespeare's day, which according to the staging practices of the company, was one of its intents.

All of the staging practices had as their origin the work the company does in its own theatre in Staunton, Virginia. The Blackfriars Playhouse is meant to be a recreation of Shakespeare's indoor theatre, and the stage practices that the touring company brings to new locations were developed first there.

At the heart of the comedy of American Shakespeare Center's *A Midsummer*

Night's Dream are the Mechanicals. In nearly every case the actors hammed up every part, especially the wall. Kevin Pierson was a brilliant Bottom whose desire to act and bemused transformation the audience deeply appreciated.

What did not impress me, however, was the treatment of the fairies, and that may be because of all the stage tricks I remember from previous productions I have seen of the play. As the director, Jaq Bessell, confesses in "Midsummer Director's Diary," "I'm a keen advocate of bare-bones, original stage practice productions of Shakespeare, and yet on this occasion I confess I'd feel happier if I had a battery of technicians to help transport us to Fairy Land and back at the touch of a button. A smidgen of dry ice and some nice mood lighting would surely help matters, wouldn't it? No, we must create our illusory delights using only the voices and bodies of the actors as the first troupe who performed this play did."⁴ The actors did their best, but because of the costuming, which recalled Spiderman or Batman, the world of the fairies did not convince, although Henry Bazewell as Oberon and Tyler Moss as Puck were excellent. Using popular culture to get at fairyland, however, seemed a poor idea. Lillian Wright as Titania in her orange-red wig had less queenly elegance and more barroom toughness.

Henry Bazewell's Theseus did an excellent job of courting Lillian Wright's Hippolyta through softening the justice levied on the usual indistinguishable lovers in the production. One had no doubt that red-haired Hippolyta commanded an army in the recent past. The usual color and height coding of Helena as tall and blonde and Hermia as short and dark-haired did not work in this production, because Anna Maria Sell had only darker blond hair as Hermia than Sybille Bruun as Helena, though their respective heights fit the descriptions in Shakespeare's text.

In the American Shakespeare Center production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the highlight of the production was the Mechanicals' performance of "Pyramus and Thisbe." As Jaq Bessel says in "Midsummer Director's Diary," "We laugh at actors who aren't very good. Were the play to feature a crew of incompetent sailors, or a group of amateurish accountants, I doubt it [*A Midsummer Night's Dream*] would have survived to this day. Films like *Waiting for Guffman* show us that, in fact, we love laughing at actors who aren't very good. In this play, Bottom and his fellow amateur actors are heroes because they try their best and it doesn't matter that they aren't good. It's the good-natured, doggedly determined way in which they prepare and perform their play that has continued to charm audiences for the past 400 years."⁵ The romantic comedy featuring three pairs of lovers and the fairy world of Oberon and Titania is supplanted by comic farce in this production.

What amazed me about the performance by the American Shakespeare Center on Tour was the degree of rapport of the actors with the audience. In nearly fifty years of theatre going I have never experienced greater connection between players and audience. What I wonder is how well these same methods would work with other plays by Shakespeare such as the histories or *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*. Few roles in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are all that taxing. Would the same strategies of the universal lighting and the performance without

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intermissions be effective in other productions? Perhaps I will be lucky enough to see another touring production in later years or visit Staunton, Virginia to find out.

Notes

1. Theatre Program for the American Shakespeare Center on Tour (Staunton, Virginia, 2006), 6.
2. References accord with *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974).
3. Theatre Program, 6.
4. Theatre Program, 17.
5. Theatre Program, 17.

CLEMSON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL XV (2006)
I MARRIED KATE: THE NATIONAL PLAYERS PERFORM
THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

John R. Ford, Delta State University

In some ways the National Players' production of *The Taming of the Shrew* might be seen as a safe choice, the more politically dangerous features of the play de-emphasized for the sake of its playful verbal and physical energy.¹ In his "Director's Notes," Clay Hopper seemed determined to steer this play away from political commentary, aiming instead at achieving the multiple pleasures provided by Shakespeare's twists on the play's *commedia dell'arte* and farcical structure: "Reading too much into the political implications of this play," Hopper put forth in his notes, "is a temptation for contemporary directors and audiences alike. However, it is the play's very structure, with characters developed at breakneck speed and the use of multiple disguises and plotlines whose complications arise and resolve seemingly instantly, that begs us to view the play as it is: a farce with a love story tucked neatly into Commedia Dell'arte structure."²

Hopper did, indeed, find a balance here, something like *commedia* blended with American Burlesque with a touch of '50s and '60s television comedy, from *The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis* to *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In*. Hortensio, for instance, as Litio, the master of poetry, wearing black pants and a dickie, and sporting a goatee, resembled *Dobie Gillis's* Maynard G. Krebs, himself an imitation of a '50s Beat poet, while Lucentio, in a cardigan sweater with his high school letter—"P" for Pisa—sewn on the pocket, looked like the oft benighted *Dobie Gillis* himself. And Petruchio, the self-proclaimed tamer of women, with his slicked back hair, tight black pants, and white T-shirt, looked like the Fonz, formerly of *Happy Days*, but now cruising in a new-found fiction. The comic rhythms of the play, both verbal and physical, were scored by a series of percussion instruments onstage—a drum, a gong, and vibes—that preserved our comic distance. Every exchange of repartee and every sharply choreographed pratfall was followed by a percussive punctuation. And in a style that was both appreciative and parodic, every action Petruchio made was precisely imitated by his servant Grumio. Indeed, Grumio played a similar role when his master recounted the boisterous clamor of wars he had endured—their loud 'larums, neighing steeds, and trumpets' clang. For each thunderous noise Petruchio cited, Grumio enthusiastically provided the sound effects.

All these contextual references contributed to a spirit of escapism to be sure, like so many *Laugh-In* guest appearances. And the energetic pace of the pop culture allusions from the past did offer a range of nostalgic, treasure-hunt pleasures for audiences "of a certain age." Yet at the same time there was a hint of mockery in these allusive moments. Such parody became more prominent in this production as it began to expose the political and social mores of the

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1950s, whose conservative values Baptista might welcome. In fact, this production took advantage of its 1950s setting, especially its implicit promise of happiness purchased by a submission to consumerism and material values. Such an ideology required of both men and women a strict adherence to the gender and social codes created by advertising. This *Shrew*, then, evoked a world in which advertisers, after years of wartime rationing and ascetic restraint, promised a nervous post-war audience, especially women, that happiness was theirs if only they purchased the right household appliance, or shampoo, or clothing, or detergent, personified in one ad as the Ajax White Knight in shining armor sweeping a housewife off her feet, as with his lance he transformed household grit into a gleaming kitchen paradise “stronger than dirt.” Men, too, home from the war—or even those who’d never gone at all—were constantly reminded by Madison Avenue of the rugged, manly mirror they must resemble, a code reinforced by a lineage of Marlboro men and massive cars that raced through American landscapes like the stallions of courtly romance.



***The Taming of the Shrew*: Jacob Troy as Lucentio, Laura Rocklyn as Bianca, and Andrew Pecoraro as Hortensio. Photo by National Players.**

The '50s context was important in another way. As is often the case in contemporary productions of *Shrew*, there was no frame in this production, no play within the play that might comment ironically on the mores of Paduan life. However, that social context worked as a cultural frame to mitigate the loss of Christopher Sly's story and its implicit commentary on the arbitrary social constructions of men and women, masters and servants, in the main story. Both frames, artistic and cultural, work similarly in that they remind us—or can remind us—of an implicitly parodic reading of language and action that characters within the frame take quite seriously. In Shakespeare's text, the Lord's “construction” of the aristocratic Christopher Sly, or indeed that of his “wife,” offers a sly re-reading of our acceptance of the “essentialist” definitions

of characters like Petruchio or Katherine within the frame. In the National Players' production, even without Christopher Sly's presence, we had Petruchio as the Fonz might wish him to be.

Many of the familiar comic scenes in this *Shrew* caught this spirit of social satire, such as in the first scene of conflict between Katherine and Bianca. The scene began as Bianca, truly a happy homemaker, entered with her vacuum cleaner, polishing off an already immaculate room, when Katherine entered, furious. She grabbed the only available weapon, the vacuum cleaner, out of Bianca's hands, and assaulted her with its swoosh of air, then tied her up with its cords. The scene resembled an Electrolux advertisement gone terribly wrong. Bianca was often associated with a consumer's wish fulfillment. Her entrances were scored by synthesized harp music evocative of that quiz show moment when the curtain is drawn and the grand prize revealed. We can almost hear the quizmaster's voice: "Who among our contestants today will hit the white?"

In fact, this production was at its best when it allowed us to recognize the comic distance between the characters we saw onstage and their impossible, idealized versions. At her lessons, Bianca made an especially stunning visual effect, her dark hair flowing and her green shimmering gown with tiers of ruffles likewise in motion. She might have stepped off the set of *Gone With the Wind*. And in the midst of her speech about the "natural" differences between men and women—"Why are our bodies soft, and weak, and smooth, / Unapt to toil and trouble in the world[?]" (5.2.165)³—a blond Katherine suddenly struck a Marilyn Monroe pin-up pose, offering for a moment a supposed woman for all these supposed men. Not all the contextual echoes were directed to the '50s and '60s. There were also hints of the Reagan era, when concerned men did what they could to fight off the "feminazis." At the end of the play, after Petruchio had won his wager, his former competitors closed ranks, becoming a kind of boisterous male chorus, much like the testosterone-charged audiences of *The Morton Downey Show*. When it appeared that Katherine might indeed place her hands below her husband's foot, the crowd chanted "Do it! Do it!" in manly unison, with fists pounding the air to the same tempo.

Among these supposed men and women, Katherine and Petruchio stood out. They were not so much engaged in a battle of the sexes as they were amused by its weaponry. From the moment they heard of each other, they were interested in the volatile chemistry they might create. When Hortensio returned with his head peeping through his guitar, a haplessness brought about by the soldierly Katherine, Petruchio really *did* "love her ten times more than e'er I did" (2.1.161). The two characters shared a competitive excitement that was both challenging and improvisational, an actor's engagement. When Katherine countered Petruchio's taunting reference to her "dour looks" with "It is my custom when I see a crab," Petruchio dropped to all fours in crabbish frenzy, as he protested, "Why, here's no crab, and therefore look not sour" (2.1.229-30). Katherine had her moment of improvisational mockery at Petruchio's house. When Petruchio urged his new wife to "eat apace" (4.3.52), he placed the plate of food on the floor, as he might feed a pet. Katherine countered by literalizing

Petruchio's insult, crawling on all fours toward the dish, then licking its contents like the wild Kate, or cat, that Petruchio thought to tame.



The Taming of the Shrew: Emilia Carlson as Katherine and Nick DePinto as Petruchio. Photo by National Players.

Throughout the performance, their physical brawling metamorphosed into a variety of competitive games, first into a display of professional wrestling holds, then into spirited rock-and-roll dancing. That same spirit of playful aggression also characterized their famous sun-moon debate. When Petruchio, trying to get the upper hand in this contest of naming, announced, "I say it is the moon," Katherine fully exploited the rhetorical energy of a shared line: "I know it is the moon" (4.5.15, emphasis Katherine's). As she spoke her rejoinder, Katherine looked first at Petruchio, then at the audience, whose support she had clearly won. Petruchio, dumbfounded, made one weak re-assertion, "Nay, then you lie; it is the blessed sun" (4.5.16). But he had clearly lost control of the improvisational spirit of the game. Katherine ended the exchange not just by subverting any of Petruchio's future linguistic attempts to command the sun, but by establishing, once and for all, her own name.

And yet despite Katherine's success at reclaiming the language, the energy, even the plot of this play, nonetheless there was a hint of malevolence in the air. The cruelty wasn't directed at Katherine but at those characters like Gremio and Baptista, would-be lovers and authority figures, who were publicly shamed for their presumptions. In the scene that led to the interval, Gremio became isolated by the cruel laughter of his rivals, who had circled around him. And in the second half of the performance, a humiliated Baptista took to wandering about the stage, bottle in hand, in a state of growing inebriation. Men of Padua, it seems, are not all that gracious in defeat.

Notes

1. *The Taming of the Shrew*, dir. Clay Hopper, The National Players, performances by Lonnie Finley, Jacob Troy, Nick DePinto, Christopher Reed, Andrew Pecoraro, Albert Pero III, Emilia Carlson, Laura Rocklyn. Brooks Theatre, Clemson University, 13-14 Mar. 2006.
2. Clay Hopper, "Director's Notes," *Clemson University Shakespeare Festival XV Program*, n. p.
3. All textual references are to *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd ed., ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997).

THE CLEMSON PLAYERS PRODUCTION OF *HENRY V* (2006)

Allison K. Lenhardt, University of Georgia

Sitting cross-legged around a bundle of sticks and stones, the Clemson Players sought “to cram / Within this wooden O the very casques / That did affright the air at Agincourt” (Prologue 12-14) in the Bellamy Theatre.¹ The campfire gathering encouraged a sense of camaraderie among the cast of students and the audience. With the make-believe fire in the middle of the space, the audience, who sat in chairs, on the floor, on bean bags, and on pillows strewn across three sides of the space, was invited to be a part of the campfire gathering and to engage in “imaginary forces.” Equipped with minimal props but ample southern accents as well as foreign ones, the cast waded through the battles and political maneuvers within *Henry V*.

Director Alexander Harrington and scenic designer Megan Israel successfully utilized the black box theater’s levels. Ropes hung from the catwalk for the actors to climb during the battle scenes. Knotted gauze flowed from the rails and grids, and the catwalk provided two throne-like entrances. To set the scene as the audience arrived, the actors sang folksongs, such as “Take My Love, Take My Land,” while congregating around three rope ladders hanging from the stage left rail. Along the back wall, musicians accompanied the folk music with drums, a guitar, a flute, and other delightful sounds that were also heard at intervals throughout the performance.

The director’s blocking for key scenes provided powerful images. In Act 1, scene 2, in which Henry receives tennis balls from the Dauphin, Henry (Chris Bellinger) looks down from the balcony to view his denizens, who are divided into three uniformed sections. The Dauphin’s messenger enters from the rear of the lines to timidly deliver his message. Henry’s elevated stance gives him a commanding, untouchable presence, which he must descend from in Act 4 in order to inspire his “band of brothers.”

Clad in jeans and brown shirts, the actors donned vests and arm bands of red or blue to denote which side of the battle the player was on, which could have been a nod to Olivier’s *Henry V* film. The actors played their war-plagued roles with solemnity, but the acting ensemble sometimes lacked the energy required to keep the play running at a fast pace. The problem with the pacing could have been that the actors gave a matinee performance earlier. The performance needed a quicker tempo; eliminating pauses between each actor’s lines would have shaved more than a few minutes off the play. Nell Quickly (Elizabeth Colson) and Katherine (Nicole Goodrich) were delightfully played, and the maid, played by a cross-dressed male actor (Alexander Smith) added some unexpected humor to the production. Bellinger, while a strong actor, gave an inconsistent performance; in some scenes his portrayal of Henry V was very moving while in others, his actions seemed too tentative. The actors of this large cast possessed varying degrees of stage experience. Some actors struggled to physically and

vocally differentiate their characters when doubling and tripling roles.

Director Alexander Harrington is in the camp with scholars who believe that English accents used to sound more like Southern Appalachia accents do now. The southern accents were chosen for the play as a part of a long-term undergraduate creative inquiry project led by Harrington: the director and some of his students traveled to two coastal islands to record the accents, and the cast watched a documentary on Southern Appalachians who were direct descendants of Scotland and Ireland.² Their findings confirmed, "For example, the word 'fire' is pronounced (fi-uh) in Standard British, (fi-er) in standard American, and (fahrr) in Elizabethan England, Southern Appalachian and on the South-eastern coastal islands."³ Harrington feels that the southern accents allow for Shakespeare's words to become more poetic. However, the disparity between the actors' success pulling off the southern dialect and maintaining it made it difficult at times to envision the poetry in the verse through the southern twang. Actors who were consistent throughout the play did make a strong argument for this choice, as the southern intonations blended well with Shakespeare's lines.

At the end of Act 5, the actors settled into their original places: with the story completed, the campfire gatherers sat in a circle around the fire, waiting for the next tale to begin.

Notes

1. The textual reference is to *The Norton Shakespeare*, gen. ed. Stephen Greenblatt (New York: Norton, 1987).
2. Lillian U. Harder, *Expression: A Publication for Friends of the Brooks Center*, 15:2 (4-5), Fall 2006, www.clemson.edu/Brooks/friends/documents/expressnewsletterwinter06.pdf.
3. The Clemson Players program for *Henry V*.

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BOOK REVIEWS



Kim C. Sturgess, *Shakespeare and the American Nation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. Pp. 234.

Reviewed by Elizabeth Renker, *The Ohio State University*.

S*hakespeare and the American Nation* recounts the fascinating process by which Shakespeare became a “hero” in American popular culture. Eschewing arguments about Shakespeare’s universality, Sturgess focuses on specific historical phenomena, from editions to productions to memorial sites, as well as on the discourses surrounding them. Sturgess’ focus is Shakespeare’s enthusiastic reception from the War of Independence through the dedication of the Folger Shakespeare Library in 1932, with a particular emphasis on the nineteenth century. Sturgess compellingly frames the problem of Shakespeare’s reception as an historical “paradox” (9): in theory at least, Shakespeare could have met a counterforce from powerful and even violent strains of political and cultural nationalism, which might have construed him as the noxious product of a foreign culture. Building on the work of Laurence W. Levine and Michael D. Bristol in particular, Sturgess proposes to offer “an alternative, fuller commentary on America’s energetic consumption of Shakespeare” (8).

Shakespeare and the American Nation organizes its investigation into two parts. Part One covers “The Paradox” that “the American state was conceived in direct opposition to England” (10), yet embraced Shakespeare with energetic passion. While, Sturgess argues, Americans sustained an image of the “English enemy” (10) throughout the nineteenth century as part of its efforts to consolidate a sense of nationhood, they simultaneously consumed Shakespeare in quantities greater than they consumed any native writer. Sturgess summarizes, and simultaneously revisits the conclusions of, previous secondary accounts of theatrical productions and editions of Shakespeare in the nineteenth century. Using these published studies as indices of consumer demand, Sturgess simultaneously notes the difficulty of precisely quantifying consumer behaviors and desires. For example, Sturgess points out, the number of editions published does not necessarily prove the number of copies sold. In these sections, Sturgess argues that the widespread availability of editions “suggests volume sales” (21). Similarly, the frequency of Shakespeare productions implies, in Sturgess’ assessment, demand from theatergoers for Shakespeare in particular, rather than simple consumer willingness to see whatever productions the theater companies chose to offer. Sturgess also assesses such historical phenomena as Fourth of July celebrations and orations, battle site memorials (so short a section that one wonders about its inclusion), theatrical representations of the English, theater riots (including, but not limited to, the Astor Place riot of 1849), and anti-English journalism, all of which contribute to tracing the “complex relation between English heritage and post-independence attitudes” (43).

Part Two analyzes “The Appropriation” process in its various forms, from the first recorded professional performance of Shakespeare in the United States (*Richard III*, in New York in 1750) through the dedication of the Folger

Shakespeare Library in 1932. Sturgess sees the publication of the first American edition of Shakespeare's complete works (Philadelphia, 1795), likely edited by Joseph Hopkinson, as an originary keynote, serving as a "first" example of the way future prefaces and publications would handle appropriating Shakespeare for the American nation. English editions were too often tainted, from the perspective of American reception, with "English arrogance" (60). "Homegrown products" (60) removed Shakespeare from obvious associations with England's scholars. Sturgess presents evocative discourse showing such investments, including Hopkinson's remark that it was "the total want of taste in the English nation" (65) that prevented the initial publication of Shakespeare there for far too long. Sturgess also assesses the "Americanisation" (66) enterprise of later editions, as well as personally Americanized copies. Henry Clay Folger inscribed quotations from Ralph Waldo Emerson and Abraham Lincoln in his personal copy; Walt Whitman gave a copy of Shakespeare to a friend, pasting in it a picture of himself and a newspaper proof of his article, "What Lurks behind Shakspeare's Historical Plays?," in which he proffers Shakespeare as emblem of America's "political theory and results" (quoted in Sturgess 70).

Throughout the book, Sturgess strikes the note of such political appropriations, notably in the chapter on the authorship controversy. Among others, Delia Bacon notably challenged Shakespeare's authorship of the plays and argued that the real author was a group of anonymous men, democratic republican philosophers who sought to promote "the freedom of the new ages" (quoted in Sturgess 171). For Bacon, "Shakespeare" was the name for this voice.

Other instances of appropriation include Shakespeare odes, often read to celebrate the opening of a new theater. Charles Sprague's 1823 "Shakspeare Ode—Delivered at the Boston Theatre in 1823, at the Exhibition of a Pageant in Honor of Shakspeare," persuasively emblemizes the process Sturgess traces more broadly. Set in the "west as Independence roves" and celebrating "our Roman-hearted Fathers" who broke the "galling yoke" of Shakespeare's own "parent empire," the poem concludes by describing the American nation as "what her Monarch lost" that "her Monarch-Bard shall Save" (quoted in Sturgess 67). Sturgess presents many compelling examples of the way that American language in the Jacksonian era linked Shakespeare with "national consciousness" (76), examining, for example, the way that performances on the frontier transformed Shakespeare's European settings into "local" phenomena.

Sturgess offers an important context for the appropriation of Shakespeare in the book's assessment of Anglo-Saxonism in America. The "cult of Anglo-Saxonism" served as what Sturgess nicely calls a "cultural talisman" (108) to distinguish the language of Shakespeare from the nation of Shakespeare. Sturgess usefully explores the way that the Anglo-Saxonism (as opposed to Englishness) of Shakespeare participated in a broader cultural imperative to distinguish, in extremely complex and subtle ways, "between good—i.e. Anglo—and bad—i.e. English—cultural dominance" (108). Sturgess argues that Shakespeare's iconic status as the most recognized and respected playwright in America derived from his symbolic status not as a representative of the English nation, but of the

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English language. In this complex cultural semiotic, Shakespeare functioned in turn to promote Anglo-American monoculture in the United States against a rising tide of immigrants. Other transformations of Shakespeare into an American product include literary appropriations by American writers such as Washington Irving, Walt Whitman, and Ralph Waldo Emerson, the latter of whom also influenced Folger to begin his own lifelong commitment to Shakespeare. It is to the Folger and other American shrines that Sturgess turns in the last chapter.

The Epilogue looks at recent appropriations of Shakespeare, from festivals to the building of Globe-style theaters to such niche phenomena as cult horror videos and soft erotica like "Live Nude Shakespeare." The current "almost religious fervor" (201) indicates that "the relationship between Shakespeare and the American nation still remains as valid and relevant as ever" (206).



***Kenneth Burke on Shakespeare.* Edited by Scott L. Newstok. West Lafayette, IN: Parlor Press, 2007. Pp. iv + 294.**

Reviewed by Christy Desmet, *University of Georgia.*

As Scott Newstok points out in his substantial introduction to this collection of Kenneth Burke's writings on Shakespeare, Burke was odd man out in academia. Although he taught at various universities, including Yale, he did not hold even a bachelor's degree. His writings on Shakespeare, many of them appearing in small magazines or scattered throughout his books, show an awareness of academic trends (such as the New Criticism), but are more eclectic and idiosyncratic than is traditional academic criticism. Burke's critical interests and theoretical perspectives were wide-ranging, his project nothing less than an anatomy of Man as the "symbol-using animal." Burke was also, by their own testimony, an influential figure for many well-known Shakespeareans. Yet his name rarely appears in footnotes. Thus, Kenneth Burke remains something of a mystery critic, perhaps, as Newstok suggests, because he was at heart a *bricoleur*—less easily used as a model and less readily categorized in the annals of Shakespearean criticism than figures such as T.S. Eliot or Northrop Frye.

The essays collected in *Kenneth Burke on Shakespeare* are organized chronologically by date of first publication. Only "Shakespeare Was What?" is moved out of place to head the volume as a general introduction. Each essay is preceded by an informative headnote with publication information and, in the case of lectures, the circumstances of their delivery. Among the essays readers will recognize established classics: "Antony in Behalf of the Play," "Othello: An Essay to Illustrate a Method," "Shakespearean Persuasion: *Antony and Cleopatra*," and "*Coriolanus*, and the Delights of Faction." There are, as well, representative pieces from later in Burke's career, such as the 1969 "*King Lear*: Its Form and Psychosis," which, like Stanley Cavell's contemporary

analysis of *Lear*, was conditioned by the experience of Vietnam, and pieces on *Macbeth* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. I found "Notes on *Troilus and Cressida*," a response to a graduate student essay on the play, a little unnerving, for few of us write comments on student papers that would hold up under publication. In his remarks, Burke is sometimes overbearing, telling the writer where he disagrees with her, putting forward his own reading, and pointing her toward his other writings. But he also provides a serious, sustained intellectual engagement with this student's work; I could see how Burke really could be at once a *bricoleur* and a systematizer—at times, his ability to stick with an idea is almost frightening—and how engaged and engaging he could be in the classroom. The volume concludes with a fifty-page "Appendix of Additional References on Shakespeare in Burke's Writing," culled by Newstok from many different places. I found the exercise of reading through these references interesting; they will be most useful, I think, used in connection with the index to find information on specific plays or concepts.

Newstok's Introduction does a very good job of placing Burke, theoretically and historically, and of orienting non-Burkeans to useful ways to engage his texts; it also provides students with a handy summary of key critical terms (e.g., paradox of substance, character, psychosis, ritual). The volume's apparatus includes compact explanatory notes identifying figures from Nicholas Boileau to Henry Ford, and other helpful information. For scholars, the inclusion of deleted materials from Burke's manuscripts also provides a fresh look at the writer's mind at work. (It will also create sympathy for the editors, past and present, who have worked with that unruly mind.) I gave the index, which includes terms as well as proper names, a pretty good workout, and found everything I was looking for except "metaphor."

Reading Burke's Shakespeare criticism in isolation from the theoretical contexts in which it often appears is instructive. Collectively, the essays explore the notion of dramatism, Burke's "ambitious elaboration of the *theatrum mundi* conceit" (xvii). Like Aristotle, he starts with dramatic plot, often providing workmanlike plot summaries that sometimes are excised from the published version. But plot really just provides Burke with a "way in" to issues of character and of audience response. Burke's concept of the relation between dramatic character and human motive can be seen clearly in the introductory essay, "What is Shakespeare?," an address to the Sigma Tau Delta honorary society at Kearney State College in Nebraska, which he frames as an attack on biographical criticism. Even the Sonnets, Burke warns sternly, are not biographical portraits; the sequence's overarching story, whatever its truth value, "gives ample signs of having been *developed* in accordance with the rules of a highly complicated stylistic game" (4). In Shakespeare's plays, we get not a world of "little persons," as A.C. Bradley had claimed, but clusters of ideas, or allegorical elements, that ebb and flow with personality as their dramatic function demands. While they may have verisimilitude, Shakespeare's characters are hyperbolic in their dimensions; Coriolanus, for instance, is "*excessively* downright" (131) and, appropriately for such a character, is embroiled in an excessive tragic trajectory that

features not one, but two crucial turning points: “a nonpolitical man’s venture into politics, and a fighting man’s failure to join in battle when success was certain.” This doubling Burke calls “a kind of peripety-atop-peripety” (135).

Burke is less interested in what Shakespeare’s plays mean than how they work; his concern with art as persuasion therefore leads him away from character per se to the dynamics of audience response. For audiences, dramatic artifacts must mean something different than they do for the author or for the characters themselves. As he notes somewhat puckishly in “*King Lear: Its Form and Psychosis*,” “it seemed to me obvious that although the play is about a foolish old king who turned his kingdom over to his daughters, it certainly couldn’t have been written for an audience of foolish old kings who abdicate their thrones. For what dramatist would write for so limited a public?” (151). Burke pursues the social effects of drama by combining an Aristotelian framework (which emphasizes catharsis) with a ritual model of theater (which focuses on the purgative role of the scapegoat). For Shakespearean tragedy, at least, the audience’s relation to the tragic hero seems to be one of “vicarious victimage” (130). The audience thus “collaborates” with the play in exorcising its thematic “psychosis,” the term “collaboration” communicating a sense of ambivalence appropriate for a post-World War II writer whose *Rhetoric of Motives* was preceded by the epigraph, *ad bellum purificandum*.

Not only is dramatic catharsis something of a guilty pleasure, but literature itself, as a stylized answer to cultural questions, plunges us into complicated, if exhilarating, ethical territory. The brief essay on “Imagery,” a meditation on Caroline Spurgeon’s book *Shakespeare’s Imagery*, develops in an extended note the discussion of a rhetoric as well as psychology of metaphor. While Spurgeon tracks the now-familiar machinations of the poet’s unconscious, Burke invites us to consider a more Nietzschean rhetoric of deceitful metaphors. What, he asks, if imagistic analyses of unconscious motivations led writers toward a “corrective hypocrisy” (50), a kind of self-fashioning by metaphor-manipulation in which the writer stylishly adopts more “healthy” or “ethical” metaphors? Burke sees such activity not as merely decorative, but substantive—as Richard A. Lanham explains in his further development of Burke’s rhetoric of identification, the means by which a self can be built from the “outside in.” In this way, metaphoric manipulation, or hypocrisy, becomes the vehicle of pure sincerity, a process of “character-building by secular prayer” (50).

And what has all this to do with Shakespeare? Burke concludes the essay by providing a new twist on the nineteenth-century meta-narrative of Shakespeare’s creative biography. Edward Dowden had argued that in the “great tragedies,” Shakespeare descends into the depths, but rises triumphantly to the heights of wisdom in retirement with *The Tempest*. In Burke’s retelling, the Shakespeare who wrote *Hamlet* became so immersed in novelistic confession that he lost touch with his craft, risking what Burke calls “psychological unemployment” (53). But Burke’s Shakespeare biography ends not with the belletristic triumph of Prospero, but Shakespeare’s recovery of his professional balance in the mixing of pastoral images with the imagery

of trade in *Cymbeline*. It is almost as if Burke's engagement with Spurgeon leads him down a path that would be trod later by Raymond Williams, a comparison also made by Newstok in his critical introduction.

The socialist in Burke not only values literary craft but also makes him ambivalent about rhetoric even as he celebrates its social uses. His heart really lies, as he thinks Shakespeare's does, with characters who lack or reject eloquence. Burke's combined reservations about eloquent characters and audience complicity comes to a crux in the essay "Antony in Behalf of the Play," a monologue in which Antony himself explains how drama works to three audiences at once: the fictional Roman plebians, the so-called "gluttons" of Shakespeare's own theater, and Burke's own readers of the 1930s. Antony's critical excursus, laying bare ingenuously the rhetoric of his famed oratory, in fact exposes him as the (perhaps evil) doppelgänger of Shakespeare's less fortunate tongue-tied heroes, such as Cordelia and Coriolanus. Ventriloquized through and espousing the theory of dramatism, Antony seems much less attractive than he had previously, so that Burke gives us visual/aural confirmation of the highly imbricated relation between drama and persuasion.

If I were looking for a single essay with which to introduce students to Burke's rich array of critical themes, I would choose his "Socio-anagogic Interpretation of *Venus and Adonis*." Here, Burke engages, as he often does, with big figures, those whom Foucault called "founders of discursivity." His elegant analysis of *Venus and Adonis* marries Marx to Thomas Aquinas, using Thomas Carlyle as its conceptual bridge between these two mighty opposites. Burke's own method in working through his argument is to begin boldly by exposing the frankly allegorical nature of reading (it is no surprise that he appreciated the scholarship of Rosamund Tuve). In fact, he positively flaunts the excess required to translate the poem from a religious to a social vocabulary: Having rejected the notion that Venus is a goddess in any theological sense, Burke proposes that she "stands somewhat 'enigmatically' for an aspect of noble status in general" (59).

We do not intend to plead for a set of perfect correspondences, based on this substitution of social superiority for "divinity." If hard-pressed, one could work out such an interpretation. Venus would stand for the upper class, Adonis for the middle class, the boar for the lower classes (as seen through middle-class eyes using courtly spectacles). The horses might represent the potent aspect of the middle class, though ambiguously noble (like all love-making, because of its "divine elation"). The figure of the boar could, roundabout, identify the lower classes with the dregs, with moral evil. In this particular poem, the boar (hence the lower classes) could be the evil embodiment of the homosexual offense that seems involved in Adonis' unresponsiveness. Or it could stand for offensiveness generally . . . (59-60)

This analysis of thematic alignments involving the dramatis personae of

Shakespeare's poem offers perhaps the best view possible of Burke's flexible view of human motive. Characters move in and out of allegorical configurations, taking on "substance" only in relation to one another.

Reading the essays in *Kenneth Burke on Shakespeare* in chronological order paradoxically points up the recursive rather than developmental nature of his thought. The psychology of form is the bridge between Burke's notion of character (motive) and of audience. Scott Newstok's anthology opens and concludes, fittingly, with essays that engage with this notion. "Psychology and Form [*Hamlet*]," the second essay, works out in musical terms the long scene that culminates with Hamlet's encounter with the ghost of his father. The final piece in this volume, "Notes on *Macbeth*," brings together writing from 1975 and 1982, when Burke was in residence at Emory University. Here, Burke returns to the psychology of form to show how the rhetorical exchange between "foul" and "fair" in this Shakespeare play enriches and complicates the simple formula of its plot: "Why did Macbeth kill Duncan? FORMALLY because it is a play about *regicide*" (210). At the same time, characteristically, Burke demonstrates how the characters in such a constrained situation are also "perfect" in their roles, in the etymological sense. In this way, Burke demonstrates how literature's formal qualities both reflect and engage the full range of human motive.

To conclude, I would like to offer a word of praise for the press. In an age when commercial presses are seeking out smaller manuscripts, Parlor Press is willing to publish a longer compilation of criticism such as this one. At the same time, there is no "fluff"; the book is tight and—a tribute to both editor and press—cleanly edited. Not least important, the paper is of good quality, the typeface handsome, and the binding solid. My copy traveled by plane, train, and automobile across the Atlantic and suffered the usual indignities of academics' paperbacks, including the use of pens and pencils as bookmarks, all without significant wear. These production values, in combination with Kenneth Burke's quirky mind and Scott Newstok's judicious editing, make *Kenneth Burke on Shakespeare* an aesthetically pleasing as well as edifying read.



Lawrence F. Rhu, *Stanley Cavell's American Dream: Shakespeare, Philosophy, and Hollywood Movies*. With a foreword by Stanley Cavell. New York: Fordham University Press, 2006. Pp. xviii + 248.

Reviewed by Carolyn Jess-Cooke, *University of Sunderland*.

Beautifully written and loaded with an infectious enthusiasm for its subject, Lawrence Rhu's monograph nonetheless leaves me feeling like I'm at a party where everyone else knows each other. Rhu launches a fascinating examination of Stanley Cavell's work by focusing on three key areas: Shakespeare, Emerson, and Hollywood movies. Culminating in a wide range

of philosophical studies upon the informing contexts of Cavell's work—among them Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Austin, Heidegger, and of course Emerson—these three areas are offered as “converging lines of thought” that afford greater insight into Cavell's work. What I had eagerly anticipated from such a rich theoretical triangulation was a philosophical exploration of Shakespeare on film in the light of Cavell's writings. But no such exploration occurs. Film, Shakespeare, and philosophy are each widely engaged with, but rarely at a level that could offer insights into the ever-expanding terrain of Shakespeare on film. Despite promising “marriages” or convergences of Cavell's central philosophical subjects and, one might add, focusing on Cavell's notes on “remarriage,” Rhu's treatment of the three areas tends to keep them rather divorced.

Stanley Cavell's American Dream features a welter of impressive endorsements, one of which claims it “a work for every Shakespearean.” A foreword by Cavell advocates the book's efforts to “make my philosophizing more accessible to an audience beyond professional philosophy” (xvi), a claim satisfied by the sheer breadth of Rhu's philosophical reapplications. Coming on the heels of a number of recent publications devoted to “Reading Cavell Reading Film/Philosophy/Shakespeare,” Rhu's book rightly notes the “unprecedented connections” found by Cavell “between Shakespearean drama and classic Hollywood films from the thirties and forties” (1), in particular Cavell's examination of “the Hollywood comedy of remarriage” in *Pursuits of Happiness* (1981). Arguing that “the genre of remarriage is an inheritor of the preoccupations and discoveries of Shakespearean romantic comedy,” Cavell here finds in a group of seven classical Hollywood films “inheritances” of Shakespearean themes and texts, such as the comparison of *Othello* to Vigo's *L'Atlanta* as a method by which we can negotiate deeper intertextual layers and methods of characterization. Yet Cavell's work does more than this: rather than simply illuminate the textual networks within the Hollywood films at hand, Cavell famously departs from traditional scholarly engagements with Shakespeare—particularly that which was emerging in the field of Shakespeare on film during the 1970s and early 1980s—by utilizing Shakespeare as a philosophical lens through which to read film, or in the case of *Pursuits of Happiness*, the treatment of genre and matters related. It is perhaps with careful precision, then, that the book recurrently mentions “reflections on Shakespeare and on film” or “readings of Shakespeare and of film” (11) instead of, simply, “Shakespeare on film,” but the engagements with Shakespeare and film throughout the introduction, acknowledgements, endorsements, book title and subject matter suggested even a morsel of Shakespeare on film, though none was to be found.

Rhu states in his acknowledgements that the idea for the book was originally conceived after “repeated debts to Cavell's writings about Hollywood writings” piled up in his footnotes for an article on *Much Ado About Nothing*. Rhu's rigorous and thorough presentation of Cavell's work is upstaged only by his own applications. As evidenced by his chapter, “From Cyprus to Rushmore,” Rhu occasionally leaves his subject long enough to consider new (though related) subjects within the critical framework set up by previous analyses of Cavell et al., and the

result is rewarding. In his chapter, "On Bloom and Cavell on Shakespeare," Rhu looks to Cavell's revolutionary essay on Shakespeare's *King Lear* ("The Avoidance of Love: A Reading of *King Lear*") in which Cavell argues that Lear's actions derive from an urgency to avoid shame and, as Rhu puts it, "the avoidance of eyes that shame enforces" (75). Going on to rethink Cavell's debate within the contexts of Nietzsche's thoughts on tragic experience and Burckhardt's assertions on the "spiritual individual," Rhu usefully departs from this seminal essay to consider comparable Cavellian critiques in his essay on *Stella Dallas*. But even more useful is Rhu's application of these analyses to a recent *Lear* adaptation, Jane Smiley's novel *A Thousand Acres*. Claiming Smiley's lengthy ruminations attributed to the Goneril character (renamed Ginny) about her father as "an effort to gain the sort of detachment that Kierkegaard condemns" (79), Rhu highlights the novel's contextualization of the kind of shame that Cavell finds in *King Lear* as father-daughter incest: a bold and incisive connection that prompted further investigation of Jocelyn Moorhouse's 1997 film adaptation of Smiley's novel. Such an investigation would no doubt have facilitated exactly the kind of convergences that Rhu promises, and, one suspects, would also have found the film a fertile source in developing the philosophical and textual applications made throughout this chapter, particularly in the light of the introduction's subtitle, "Beyond Adaptation." But again, all avenues to the subject of Shakespeare on film were closed.

More helpful, however, are Rhu's recontextualizations of Cavell's thoughts on remarriage in the chapter, "Reading Cavell Reading *The Winter's Tale*," in which the themes of transformation, marriage and reunion in Shakespeare's play are used to articulate Cavell's thoughts on the Fall and human development, and vice versa. Although Rhu notes that Cavell identified this play as "a primary representative of the deep structure of the genre he names remarriage comedy" (152), in many ways the essay is a reading of Cavell through a reading of *The Winter's Tale*, taking us back to the source of Cavell's treatise and rereading him from that vantage point. Through a host of thorough and insightful junctures made between Shakespeare's play, Cavellian thought, and Preston Sturges' 1941 film, *The Lady Eve*, Rhu successfully reaches his goal of using each of the three subjects outlined at the beginning of the book to read the other. It is a journey that not only brings the reader to a satisfying intellectual destination, but one that lights up many theoretical pathways along the way.

I would tend to disagree with the claim made by one of the book's endorsements that the book is for every Shakespearean, as scholars devoted to the study of Shakespeare on film (and not Shakespeare and film) may be disappointed to learn that an otherwise abundant theoretical subject yields few topical insights and additions in this field. Nonetheless, the book is a rewarding read in its reapplications of Cavell and, for those readers interested in sourcing Cavell for their own explorations of film philosophy and its usefulness in the field of Shakespearean cinema, a worthy starting point.



Amy Scott-Douglass, *Shakespeare Inside: The Bard Behind Bars*. New York: Continuum, 2007. Pp. xvi + 144.

Reviewed by Scott L. Newstok, Rhodes College.

When Lindsay Waters expanded his 2001 fusillade against “the tyranny of the monograph,” he aptly published it as a pamphlet. *Enemies of Promise* has 89 spiky pages, thereby qualifying it as precisely the kind of “long essay” whose demise he was lamenting. It’s a form that occupies the no man’s land between 30-page journal article and 200-page book (composed, in turn, of 30-page articles-cum-chapters).

So what can you accomplish in a hundred or so pages that you can’t in a third of that length, or twice it? A lot. You get enough breathing room to expand a single-notion essay without belaboring it into a tedious study. Readers can conceivably take in your full argument in one sitting. And writers can stretch themselves a bit, somehow loosed from rigidified constraints. The publisher of Waters’ book (at what diminished length should we no longer term it a *book*, this novella of nonfiction?) continues to release similarly combative intellectual missives; 33½ is a Continuum series in which classic record albums are meditated upon (often by other adulatory musicians); Wallflower Press’ *Short Cuts* attend to discreet topics in cinema studies; the BFI’s *Film Classics* proceeds through a canon of 360 titles; Oxford has their not-quite-so-short *Very Short Introductions*, and so on.

In recent years, Shakespeareans have had two options for something approaching the “long essay”: Routledge’s *Accents on Shakespeare*, and the Oxford *Shakespeare Topics*. While both aim for an undergraduate market, their pitch has often been a bit higher, more suitable for senior majors, graduate students, or faculty acquainting themselves with a new field. And they’ve often hovered around the 200-page mark (albeit in a smaller format than your typical monograph). In contrast, the new *Shakespeare Now!* “minigraphs” weigh in at about half their competitors’ word count (and price). Their lithe stature should give them some agility in pursuing their charge of recovering the Renaissance sense of the essay as an “essay”—“a trial or test of something; putting something to the proof . . . in a form that is not closed-off,” as General Editors Simon Palfrey and Ewan Fernie remind us in their prefatory manifesto to the series. (Even that titular exclamation mark tests you—are we to think of a Chaucerian exhortation, “Go, litel boke!”? or a Jonsonian laudation, “Soule of the Age!”?)

There’s much to commend in Amy Scott-Douglass’ contribution to the first round of *Shakespeare Now!*, titled *Shakespeare Inside: The Bard Behind Bars*. It’s a credit to the series that there’s not really another venue where this volume would have fit comfortably, except perhaps something like an extended *Harper’s*

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essay. That is to say, Scott-Douglass takes advantage of the latitude that this open-ended form allows her, using it to craft a deeply personal, and engrossing, account of the ways in which “secured Shakespeare programs” confront many of the same issues that trouble Shakespeare scholars. Not surprisingly, participants in these programs often wrestle with particular questions—race and gender in casting, or religious themes such as conversion and redemption—with a much more pressing immediacy. Scott-Douglass shares her fascination with and enthusiasm for these programs, drawing us into a narrative that eschews familiar critical turns; for instance, there are no tired invocations of Foucauldian panopticons, or *Marat/Sade*, not even a mention of the fabled 1957 *Waiting for Godot* performance at San Quentin. While structuring the chapters as five “Acts” is a bit of a gimmick (and one that incidentally replicates the same gimmick from the 2001/2002 *Christian Science Monitor* profile of one such prison Shakespeare program), little else interferes with the brisk pace of her prose.

The book is largely composed of interviews, primarily with prisoners, but also with the directors of various programs, and even a warden. What makes these interviews lively to read, rather than a flat series of transcriptions, is Amy’s felt presence on the page. I take the liberty of citing her by first name precisely because she conveys a persona throughout the study that invites such familiarity. In fact, the hallmark of the book is her ability to build our trust in her as a narrator, which mirrors her process of becoming more familiar with the inmates. She confesses her nervousness and uncertainty with us even as she’s trying to cover it (“I’ve been so scared I haven’t been able to sleep for the past three nights” [3]). She can be coy, gamely exchanging banter with her interlocutors; she can be forceful, as when she recoils from and counters an actor’s interpretation she finds misogynistic. She’s always keenly (yet not obsessively) aware of what it means for her to be a female speaking with these incarcerated men, and deploys this self-awareness quite effectively in her interactions as well as her reflections. “Act 4,” for instance, opens with her sitting among the “on the prow!” (72) audience at the Kentucky Correctional Institute for Women (she’s photographed chuckling with them on page 74), and then shifts to a contemplation of what cross-casting entails in an all-male institution, before concluding with a conversation with Jean Troustine, who in the 1980s had initiated a (now defunct) prison Shakespeare program for women in Framingham, Massachusetts. You sense the author at work in these crafted transitions, in her barbed asides to us, and in her moments of emotional rawness. There are a lot of tears in the volume, hers as well as others’.

The tears don’t, however, seem forced, or cited for manipulative purposes. This is one major difference between Scott-Douglass’ volume and the 2005 documentary *Shakespeare Behind Bars*. (Given that she devotes a good portion of her book to the same Kentucky program on which the film concentrates, the comparison is inevitable. In fact, as she notes in the acknowledgments, it was her previewing preliminary scenes from the documentary that inspired her to commence this project in the first place. And I anticipate that many readers will come to her study after having already seen the film.) I’ve heard

some Shakespeareans complain that they found *Shakespeare Behind Bars* too strained in its redemption narrative, which leans heavily on a performance of *The Tempest* in a quasi-allegorical mode (they're all on the "island" of the prison, etc.). To be sure, the director of the "Shakespeare Behind Bars" program, Curt Tofeland, developed it in collaboration with a psychologist with explicitly therapeutic ends in mind:

1. learn tolerance and peaceful resolution of conflict;
2. develop empathy, compassion and trust;
3. nurture a desire to help others;
4. develop a passion for learning . . .
5. develop literacy skills . . .
6. develop decision making, problem solving and creative thinking skills
7. develop a positive self image
8. increase self esteem
9. relate the universal human themes contained in Shakespeare's works to themselves . . . to other human beings and to society at-large
10. take responsibility for the crime/s they have committed
11. become a responsible member of a family, group and/or community
12. return to society as a contributing member.

([http://willky.win.net/WOW/Behind Bars](http://willky.win.net/WOW/Behind%20Bars))

This is an ambitious set of goals; how many professors would feel comfortable subscribing to all of these? But the documentary concentrates not on this full range of tasks, but rather almost exclusively on Shakespeare as a tool for redemption (e.g., performing "Miranda helped me deal with some of the things inside me"). In an impassioned peroration, Scott-Douglass takes care to acknowledge that "Shakespeare is not a cure-all for the challenges" the participants face. Yet she counters that engaging collaboratively with his work "can help you remember that you're a person" (129). Scholars who strain against the documentary's insistence on Shakespeare as a vehicle for forgiveness might find themselves more willing to concede this claim for a root humanity. I think this concession will arise in part because Scott-Douglass' narration has convincingly humanized her subjects. She manages to connect us even with those whose faces she cannot see in the most chillingly isolated maximum-security cellblocks (109–15). By sharing with us her evolving reactions, she registers both her distance from the prisoners—as a woman, as a scholar, as someone *outside*—yet at the same time her interaction with them. This is something you don't really sense in the documentary, where the presence of the filmmakers is always off-screen, with only an occasional muted verbal prompt. Their directorial absence paradoxically masks the fact that the camera elicits (to this viewer, at least) a degree of self-consciousness in the prisoners' confessional moments. This simply does not feel the case in Scott-Douglass' account.

Shakespeare Inside offers a compelling story that resists saccharine platitudes without curtailing empathy. It's about as much as one could ask for in

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response to such a fraught subject. Well, one could ask for *more*—more time spent beyond Luther Lockett Correctional Complex, with the other programs briefly touched upon; more reflection on imprisonment and justice within Shakespeare's works; more consideration of the extraordinary rewritings produced by inmates in confinement. But then it would not have been a short book, and would have lost its urgency, and its grace. I'm going to share my copy with a friend who's a non-academic Shakespeare enthusiast—that elusive "general reader." I can't imagine him wanting to read any of the titles from Routledge or Oxford. The editors of *Shakespeare Now!* should be pleased with what they have initiated, and might well have cited Restoration bibliographer Myles Davies in their manifesto: "The smallness of the size of a book was always its own commendation; as, on the contrary, the largeness of a book is its own disadvantage, as well as terror of learning."



Thomas Crofts

ON LEARNING OF A FAMOUS POET'S SYPHILIS

Worms in my brain
 worms in my brain
 they drive me insane
 those worms in my brain
 —Russell Hoke

Christ if I were in my bed againe
 and not that sack wherein I did obtain
 these worms which eate within.
 That damnèd bedde of sin!
 O rabid bedde!
 wherein were bred
 the fleas that maunge withinne.

Whilst wormes like starvèd animalls
 gnaw my braine and vitals,
 O heart, thy beate becomes
 as dulle funerall drums.
 A whistling breath
 (like rattling Death)
 and red and tender gums.

And this vile mercuriall drink,
 from bad apothecary shoppe, doth stink
 of urine
 and metaphysicall ruine
 They who bidde mee drain this vial
 of compounde medicinall
 stay not, but back out of my Room.

They doe not know the Hollownesse
 through which it falles resistless
 through naturall gates and alleys, to the butts
 of these, my most unhallowed, dungeon'd Guttes,
 and putrescent layers
 of ruinous prayers.
 O leprous distilment! O sinne!
 And loathsome crust
 upon my skinne.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Shakespeare and Tourism
The Upstart Crow, Volume XXVII (2008)



"What country, friends, is this?"
Twelfth Night, 1.2



In addition to submissions addressing any aspect of Shakespeare's work or the works of his contemporaries, we are requesting submissions for a theme-based issue, "Shakespeare and Tourism." Essays may address the topic broadly and from a historical or contemporary perspective. Submissions will be read as received; for volume XXVII, priority will be given to those submissions received before February 15, 2008.

Submission of Manuscripts

The Upstart Crow accepts essays, notes, and poems concerning Shakespeare's works. Please submit three hard copies of the manuscript. Editors will request an electronic copy if manuscript is accepted. To maintain anonymity for "blind readings," the author's name, address, phone and fax numbers, and email address should be included on a separate sheet, but the author's name should not appear on the title page or on other pages of the manuscript. Manuscripts should not exceed twenty-five pages double-spaced, including notes; they should be typed or printed on letter quality printers. Manuscripts should be double-spaced including inset quotations and endnotes. Photocopies of illustrations are acceptable at that stage. Send submissions to:

The Editor, *The Upstart Crow*
Department of English
Strode Tower, Box 340523
Clemson University
Clemson, SC 29634-0523

“There is an upstart crow beautified with our feathers that, with his ‘tiger’s heart wrapped in a player’s hide,’ supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you; being an absolute Johannes Factotum, in his conceit the only shake-scene in a country.”

— Robert Greene, *Groatsworth of Wit* (1592)



For those persons who have become subscribers this year, I want to welcome you and extend my personal thanks to you, as well as to continuing subscribers, for your support. I know I speak for the journal’s editors, staff, and advisory board. Your help makes a great difference as the Center for Electronic and Digital Publishing (CEDP) endeavors to maintain high standards and strives to do new things with this publication for Clemson University Digital Press (CUDP). The two shoulders of our publishing house are *The South Carolina Review* and *The Upstart Crow*. The latter is one reason Clemson is associated with William Shakespeare’s good name (and Greene’s epithet). *The Upstart Crow* continues its transformation in the new millennium. Outwardly, the annual has generated a new appearance—starting with volume XXI (2001). Inwardly, its organization, policies, and operating procedures are also new. In memory of Jim Andreas, late editor and co-founder (in 1990) of the Clemson Shakespeare Festival, we decided to change the cover and include a special section each year to match the theme of the festival. Subscriptions and sales are crucial to running a successful journal. That’s why your help is appreciated. Tell your friends about us, visit our website, and watch us grow at <http://www.clemson.edu/caah/cedp/crow/>

Wayne K. Chapman
CEDP Director / CUDP Executive Editor



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