

## Texas State University NEH Seminar Syllabus Revised 8/27/17

**Seminar Title:** "Shakespeare Without Fear: Teaching the Plays."

**Dates:** June 25-29, 2018

**Director:**

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**Visiting Faculty:**

Toby Minor  
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**Seminar Venues:**

Flowers Hall 113; Texas State University; San Marcos, TX; 78666  
Curtain Theatre, 7400 Coldwater Canyon Dr., Austin, TX, 78730.

**Required Texts:**

Cohen, Ralph Alan. *ShakesFear and How To Cure It*. Clayton, Delaware: Prestwick House, 2006.

*Complete Works of Shakespeare*. Ed. David Bevington. Seventh Edition. New York: Pearson Longman, 2014. ISBN: 0321886518.

Falocco, Joe. "'This is too long': A Historically-Based Argument for Aggressively Editing Shakespeare in Performance." *Shakespeare Bulletin* 30 2 (2012): 119-43.

Hall, Peter. *Shakespeare's Advice to the Players*. London: Oberon Books, 2003.

*Shakespeare's Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*, eds. Christie Carson and Farah Karim Cooper. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

**Seminar Objective:** To familiarize participants with Shakespeare's language and the original theatrical conventions with which his plays were first staged in order that they may better teach Shakespeare to their students.

**Seminar Description:** This seminar will involve some lectures by the Director and demonstrations by the resident acting company and Visiting Faculty. As much as possible, however, seminarians will actively participate by paraphrasing, scanning, and rhetorically analyzing a piece of Shakespearean text and then presenting their analysis to the group; editing a Shakespearean scene and supervising its performance; and staging a different Shakespearean scene that poses specific challenges related to the architecture of the Elizabethan stage. A resident company of actors will demonstrate key aspects of early modern staging and allow themselves to be directed by seminar participants.

**Daily Schedule:****Day One: Flowers Hall; Texas State University**

11 am

Welcome and Reception (coffee, etc).

11:30 – 1:00 pm

Explanation of paraphrase, scansion, and rhetorical analysis, including discussion of Peter Hall's *Shakespeare's Advice to the Players*. All participants will be assigned 25-40 lines of text that they will paraphrase, scan, and analyze for rhetorical and poetic features. They will then prepare a fifteen-minute presentation summarizing their analysis, which will be presented to the group tomorrow. A detailed explanation of this assignment appears at the end of this syllabus.

1 pm – 2 pm Lunch

2 pm – 4 pm

Lecture on theatrical abridgement with reference to “‘This is too long’: A Historically-Based Argument for Aggressively Editing Shakespeare in Performance.” This will include evidence of abridgement with Jonson and Webster; the curious case of the “Bad Quartos;” the strengths and weaknesses of Alfred Hart’s work; and a case study that follows the history of the text of *Richard III* in performance. At the conclusion of this lecture, participants will be divided into four groups. Each group will be tasked with reducing the lovers’ quarrel from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (3.2.122-344), which runs approximately twelve minutes unabridged, to a running time of five-minutes.

4 pm – 6 pm

Participants work on paraphrase/text assignments with assistance from the Director as needed.

6 pm Wine and cheese reception for seminar participants.

**Day Two: Begins at Flowers Hall; Texas State University**

11 am – 1 pm

Participants will each deliver a seven-minute presentation (guided by the Director in the Socratic method) in which they will describe the paraphrase, scansion, and rhetorical analysis of their assigned text.

1 pm – 2 pm Lunch

2 pm – 3 pm Travel to Curtain

**From 3 pm onward, the Seminar will convene at the Curtain Theatre, 7400 Coldwater Canyon Dr., Austin, TX, 78730.**

3 pm – 3:30 Tour of Curtain

3:30 – 5 pm

Lecture/Demonstration on early modern staging, with reference to *Shakespeare's Globe: A Theatrical Experiment*. The acting company will present the following scenes to illustrate key architectural features of the Curtain:

- 1) Proscenium vs. Thrust Staging: *Macbeth* 5.8.7-34.
- 2) Using the Trap Door: *Hamlet* 5.1.
- 3) Using the Discovery Space: *The Winter's Tale* 5.3.
- 4) Using the Balcony: *Romeo and Juliet* 2.2

5 pm – 6 pm

Participants will work in groups to abridge their scenes with assistance from the Director as needed.

**Day Three: Curtain Theatre, 7400 Coldwater Canyon Dr., Austin, TX, 78730.**

11 am – 5:00 pm

Each group of seminarians will be teamed with a set of four actors who have previously memorized the full text of the lovers' quarrel from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (3.2.122-344). Participants will have until 3:30 to teach these actors their cuts and to stage their abridged versions. Each group will be given equal time on the stage (ninety minutes apiece). When not on stage, participants will rehearse with their actors elsewhere on the Curtain grounds (which are ample), and also eat lunch at a time of mutual convenience. All groups will work with the Stage Manager to coordinate their time on stage and will need to schedule their own lunch break some time when another group is on the stage.

5:00 – 6:30 pm

Each group will present their abridged version of the lovers' quarrel from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (3.2.122-344) for the viewing of all participants. At the conclusion of these showings, seminarians, actors, and directors will discuss the results.

6:30 pm – 7 pm

Each group of seminarians will be assigned one of the scenes below along with an appropriate number of actors (who will have learned the lines for this scene before the seminar begins – some longer speeches may be abridged):

*Julius Caesar* 5.3.1-50 (Cassius, Titinius, Pindarus)

*Othello* 4.1.47-180 (Othello, Cassio, Iago, Bianca)

*Richard II* 3.3.31-197 (Bolingbroke, Northumberland, York, Richard, Aumerle)

*Hamlet* 3.1.43-192 (Hamlet, Ophelia, Polonius, Claudius)

Seminarians should work together tonight to "block" this scene on paper so that they will be prepared to teach this staging to the actors the following day.

7 pm – 8 pm

Demonstration on Elizabethan Costuming

**Day Four: Curtain Theatre, 7400 Coldwater Canyon Dr., Austin, TX, 78730.**

11 am – 7 pm

Participants will have until 7 pm to stage their scenes. Each group will be given equal time on the stage (two hours apiece). When not on stage, participants will rehearse with their actors elsewhere on the Curtain grounds (which are ample), and also eat at a time of mutual convenience. All groups will work with the Stage Manager to coordinate their time on stage and will need to schedule their own meal break some time when another group is on the stage.

7 pm – 8 pm

Presentation on early modern stage combat by Toby Minor and assistants.

8 pm – 8:10 pm

As homework for the next day, participants will all be asked to prepare a ten-minute presentation that summarizes how they may be able to apply what they have learned this week and from their reading of *ShakesFear and How To Cure It* to the teaching of Shakespeare at their home institutions.

**Day Five: Curtain Theatre, 7400 Coldwater Canyon Dr., Austin, TX, 78730.**

11 am – 1 pm

Each group will perform its final-project scene for all participants to view. After the final scene, seminarians and the Director will discuss the challenges involved in staging these scenes and what was learned from the process.

1 pm – 2 pm

Lunch

2 pm – 4 pm

Seminarians each deliver a ten-minute presentation that summarizes how they may be able to apply what they have learned this week and from their reading of *ShakesFear and How To Cure It* to the teaching of Shakespeare at their home institutions.

4 pm

Seminar evaluations.

5 pm

Closing thoughts from the Director and final observations from participants.

### I Shakespeare Paraphrase Format:

The goal of the paraphrase exercise is to re-state your character's lines as you would say them. The idea is to state, in twenty-first-century language, the literal meaning of the sixteenth-century text. This is not about subtext or the search for hidden meanings beneath the lines. It is instead a tool to make sure that you genuinely understand what your character is literally saying. You should use the Shakespeare Lexicon or another Shakespeare Glossary to look up unfamiliar words.\* Misunderstandings of syntax are understandable, but you should be able to say what every word means according to these academic sources. Feel free to consult heavily annotated editions like the Arden or the Variorum\* to gain insight into obscure passages. See the Sample Paraphrase below for an indication of what your completed paraphrase assignment should look like.

\*The Director will make these books available on site.

#### Act IV Prologue *Henry V*

#### Paraphrase

Now entertain conjecture of a time	Picture, if you will, a world
When creeping murmur and the poring dark	full of darkness and muffled
Fills the wide vessel of the universe.	speech.
From camp to camp through the foul womb of night	Through the malignantly pregnant night,
The hum of either army stilly sounds,	the noise of each army passes to the
That the fixed sentinels almost receive	other so that those posted most forward
The secret whispers of each other's watch.	can almost understand the talk of their opponents.
Fire answers fire, and through their paly flames	The two campfires mirror each other, so that each
Each battle sees the other's umber'd face.	Side can see its obscured enemy.
Steed threatens steed, in high and boastful neighs, Piercing the night's dull ear; and from the tents	The French and English horses challenge each other in menacing sounds; and the armor-makers in
The armorers, accomplishing the knights,	their tents hurriedly put the finishing touches on
With busy hammers closing rivets up,	the knights' battle-suits, making sounds of deadly preparation.
Give dreadful note of preparation.	

Poring – “straining its eyes and yet seeing only the nearest things, purblind (i.e. pore-blind)”; Paley – “pale”;

Umbered – “embrowned, darkened”; Accomplish – “to make complete, to furnish what is wanting”

**II Textual Analysis Exercise Format (Students must answer all the following questions about their piece. If the piece is in verse, they must also scan the speech as in the example on page 9).**

1. Is your piece written in verse or prose (if prose, skip to question # 4)?
2. If verse, is it written in iambic pentameter or in another scheme (if another scheme, which one)?
3. If written in iambic pentameter, how regular is the verse of your piece? When and how does it employ feet other than iambs ( \_ x ), especially spondees ( x x ) and trochees ( x \_ )? Are there any short lines (less than ten syllables), eleven syllable lines (feminine ending or feminine caesura), twelve syllable lines (feminine ending plus feminine caesura or hexameter), or longer lines (over 12 syllables)? See the next page for examples of these verse lines. If piece is dialogue, are there any shared lines or stichomythia (alternating single lines of verse)?
4. Does your piece rhyme? If so, what is the rhyme scheme (couplets, ABAB, etc.)?
5. Does your piece employ long and/or short vowel and consonant sounds in a significant manner? Does it use alliteration or assonance (repetition of vowel sounds)?
6. State when and how your piece employs any of the following rhetorical devices:

Personification – representation of an object or abstraction in human form or as an imaginary being (“Now old desire doth in his death bed lie”).

Apostrophe – when someone absent or dead or something nonhuman is addressed as if it were alive and present and was able to reply (“Fortune, all men call thee fickle”).

Oxymoron - a figure of speech in which two contradictory words or phrases are combined to produce a rhetorical effect by means of a concise paradox (“O brawling love, O loving hate”).

Metonymy – figure of speech in which the name of one thing is used in place of something else with which it is associated (“The pen is mightier than the sword”). A subset is Synecdoche – in which a part signifies the whole or vice versa (“A fleet of twenty sail” – where “sail” stands in for “ship”; “Whither hast thou led me Egypt”).

Hendiadys – The use of two nouns (occasionally two adjectives or two verbs), joined by a conjunction, to express a single but complex idea: Examples: “full of sound and fury,” “within the book and volume of my brain,” “the cheer and comfort of our eye.” **Note: precise definitions of this figure vary.**

Metaphor – identification of one thing by another (Of the sun: “Approach thou beacon to this underglobe”).

Onomatopoeia – when sound conveys meaning (“Screech,” “Howl”).

Patterns of repeated words within and between lines. These all have technical names, which you are welcome to learn but not required to use (A list of definitions if posted on TRACS). Simply tell me how words are repeated: at the beginning of subsequent lines, at the end of subsequent lines, at the beginning and middle of a line, etc. See below how such patterns interact with antithesis.

Antithesis – When words are placed in opposition to each other to enhance their meaning. Antithesis is the most common verbal figure in Shakespeare. It occurs in virtually every speech. Every pattern of repetition will signal antithesis of either the repeated word(s) or (more commonly) of the word(s) not repeated. Example: In the phrase, “One woman is fair, yet I am well; another is wise, yet I am well; another virtuous, yet I am well,” the words placed in antithesis to each other are “fair,” “wise,” and “virtuous.”

Atanacsis – Pun on homonym (“To pray for you ever I cannot refuse,/ To prey upon you I should you much abuse”). Paronomasia – Pun on slight sound change (“A little more than kin and less than kind”).

#### Standard Line of Iambic Pentameter:

\_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x

Two households, both alike in dignity,

#### Feminine Ending:

\_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x \_

To be, or not to be, that is the question:

#### Feminine Caesura:

\_ x \_ x \_ x \_ \_ x \_ x

To serve in such a difference. What devil was't  
(see below for how this works with enjambment)

#### Feminine Ending plus Feminine Caesura:

\_ x \_ x \_ x \_ \_ x \_ x \_

To do obsequious sorrow. But to persever

#### Hexameter:

\_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x

That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound

**A highly regular speech of iambic pentameter**

Two households, both alike in dignity,  
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,  
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,  
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.  
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes  
A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life;  
Whose misadventured piteous overthrows  
Doth with their death bury their parents' strife.  
The fearful passage of their death-marked love,  
And the continuance of their parents' rage,  
Which, but their children's end, naught could remove,  
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;  
The which if you with patient ears attend,  
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

## Sample textual analysis

### Scansion

\_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x

1) Now entertain conjecture of a time

\_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x

2) When creeping murmur and the poring dark

x \_ x x \_ x \_ x \_ x

3) Fills the wide vessel of the universe.

\_ x \_ x x \_ x x \_ x

4) From camp to camp through the foul womb of night

\_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x

5) The hum of either army stilly sounds,

x \_ x x \_ x \_ x \_ x

6) That the fixed sentinels almost receive

\_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x

7) The secret whispers of each other's watch:

x x \_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x

8) Fire answers fire, and through their paly flames

\_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x

9) Each battle sees the other's umber'd face;

x x \_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x

10) Steed threatens steed, in high and boastful neighs

x \_ \_ x x x \_ x \_ x

11) Piercing the night's dull ear, and from the tents

\_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x

12) The armourers, accomplishing the knights,

\_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x

13) With busy hammers closing rivets up,

\_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x \_ x

14) Give dreadful note of preparation.

## Explanatory Notes

Lines 1 and 2 completely regular.

Lines 3, 4, and 6 contain a trochee followed by a spondee (parallel of “wide vessel” and “foul womb”)

Lines 8 and 10 begin with a spondee, which heightens the repetition and antithesis (see below)

Line 11 begins with a trochee and has a spondee in the third foot (calls attention to monosyllables)

Lines 12, 13, and 14 completely regular (supports onomatopoeia in line 13)

Onomatopoeia – “murmur,” “neighs,” “hum,” “whispers,” “busy hammers closing rivets up”

Repetition of words in rapid but not immediate succession (Ploche) – “From camp to camp,” “Fire answers fire,” “Steed threatens steed”

Antithesis – The repetitive phrases in lines 8 and 10 form antitheses to each other, building in intensity. Each word in each phrase (“fire,” “steed”) also forms the antithesis of the other.

Antanaclasis – “Poring dark” pore and pour.

Oxymoron – “foul womb”

Metaphor – “the wide vessel of the universe,” which supports the pun on pore/pour.