

ENGL 4220: Shakespeare's Americas

Fall Quarter, 2022 // CRN 4649

Wednesdays, 4:00 – 7:40 p.m.

Sturm Hall 380

Canvas, <https://canvas.du.edu/courses/147392>**W. Scott Howard**showard@du.edu

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<https://portfolio.du.edu/showard>

“Reading Shakespeare” by Lauren Mulkey.

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Course Description: How and why has Shakespeare’s legacy become entangled in our country’s national and international culture wars? We will investigate Shakespeare on the page, stage, and screen, connecting the plays and their source materials, their adaptations and performances to cultural criticism, history, and politics during Shakespeare’s times and ours. We will study five plays—*The Tempest*, *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *King Lear*—as we examine Shakespeare’s contested legacy from England to Africa, the Caribbean, South America, and the USA at the intersections of colonialism, postcolonialism, racial justice, gender and sexuality. Our work engages with an international and interdisciplinary/multimedia field from the early modern to the modern & postmodern eras, following routes of travel, translation, and trade. We will pay special attention to the role of the First Folio in transnational democracy and dissent, the archival interventions of artist books, and the agency of Shakespearean texts, performances, and adaptations across cultures encountered as forms of resistance against systemic violence. Students will work individually and collectively on research projects that combine creativity and critique. As with any transhistorical course, research and/or creative projects may determine the matching time period designations for our department’s graduate curriculum. (Because of the specialized methods and skills that will be integral to our work, this course may also count for the graduate school’s so-called tool requirement.)

Required Texts:

Césaire, Aimé. *A Tempest*. Trans. Richard Miller. New York: Theatre Communications, 2002. ISBN: 1559362103
 Gunderson, Lauren. *The Book of Will*. Dramatists Play Service, 2018. ISBN: 9780822237723
 Ronk, Martha. *why why not*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003. ISBN: 0520238117
 Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Ed. V. Vaughan & A. Vaughan. Bloomsbury, 2011. ISBN: 9781408133477
 ---. *Julius Caesar*. Ed. David Daniell. London: Bloomsbury, 1998. ISBN: 9781903436219
 ---. *Hamlet*. Ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor. London: Bloomsbury, 2006. ISBN: 9781472518385
 ---. *Macbeth*. Ed. Sandra Clark and Pamela Mason. London: Bloomsbury, 2015. ISBN: 9781904271413
 ---. *King Lear*. Ed. R.A. Foakes. London: Bloomsbury, 1997. ISBN: 9781903436592
 Shapiro, James. *Shakespeare in a Divided America*. New York: Penguin, 2021. ISBN: 9780525522317
 Taneja, Preti. *We That Are Young*. New York: Vintage, 2019. ISBN: 9780525563341

Fair-use excerpts from selected texts and electronic resources (to be freely provided): TBA



F2F, Canvas, E-mail, Zoom: Our meetings will be held as in-person (F2F) classes, Wednesdays, 4:00 – 7:40 p.m., in Sturm Hall 380. All students must follow DU’s public health protocols. In addition to our F2F meetings, we will be using Canvas and e-mail to facilitate our daily and weekly communications and workflow. It is your responsibility to follow our Announcements via Canvas that will provide detailed instructions for our work. Our F2F meetings will not be recorded on Zoom. However, should the university require that courses shift to online formats, then we will be prepared to conduct our meetings via Zoom, if necessary.

Course Policies: Our activities and assignments must be completed as noted for each class meeting; guidelines will be distributed in advance via Canvas. Your regular and punctual attendance and spirited engagement are required. During each class meeting, you are expected to participate in our work, to listen to your peers, and to respond respectfully. To facilitate our discussions, I will call on you, ask you to engage with the ideas of others, and will challenge all of our assertions in order to energize critical thinking at the center of our work. As part of our conversations, we may discuss details and events in Shakespeare’s plays and in related contextual materials that confront matters concerning race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, politics, religion, prejudice, and violence. It is imperative that you read all of our assigned materials and come to class with an open mind, knowing that while we are all welcome to our feelings, the point of exploring these felt responses in a classroom setting is to learn to think critically about them within and against the context(s) of the materials we are studying as well as with respect to our contemporary moment(s) in the 21st century. Several excellent articles in *The Atlantic* and *Psychology Today* discuss the importance of confronting difficult topics in the classroom.

Note on attendance: For each unexcused absence, your grade in the course will be diminished by -0.5.

Note on assignments: Assignments are due at the dates and times specified by guidelines that will be distributed at least two weeks in advance. Work submitted late will receive a deduction of -0.5 per day.

Invitations:

One Notebook	30%
Two Assemblages	20%
One Presentation	10%
One Project	40%

Notebook: A generative resource in which you engage consistently with our work, responding to prompts as well as following your own path through the course. Your Notebook may include a variety of modes and media (collage, visual art, audio & video, etc.) and may be assembled via a combination of manuscript, print, electronic, and/or various materials & methods (including conversations, readings & performances, bibliodérive, installations, and collaborative works, etc.) Prompts will be offered spontaneously during class meetings and/or announced via Canvas. Your Notebook may contribute to your Assemblages, Presentation, and Project. Your Notebook will be reviewed periodically during the quarter (as noted in the calendar, below). Approximately 350 words per response to each week’s prompt, or the equivalent depending upon media.

Assemblages: Guidelines will be provided in advance. Assemblages may be individual or collaborative.

Presentation: One Presentation (ten minutes + conversation with our class). Your Presentation should represent a part of your Project. Guidelines will be provided several weeks in advance. Presentations may be individual or collaborative. Presentations may take place during any of our regularly scheduled meetings, beginning Week 4.

Project: One Project involving research. Open topic, media, form and style. 17 – 21 pages or the equivalent, depending upon media. The Project should engage in some way with your selection of materials from our studies, and should also address contexts, methods, and works beyond that scope. Guidelines will be provided several weeks in advance. Project proposals will be required. Projects may be individual or collaborative.

Note on grading: *The Check System.* I'll be grading your Notebook and Assemblages with a check system that corresponds to the letter & point grading scale (noted below). The check system will follow these guidelines: a check plus on all your Notebook materials and/or your Assemblages will translate to a grade of 4.0/A for those respective percentages of your overall grade in the course; each check will reduce your grade for those respective components of your overall grade by -0.5; each check minus, by -1.0; each missing Notebook response and/or Assemblage, by -2.0. If you ever receive less than a check plus, you'll have the option to revise & resubmit your work for a higher grade. Those revisions will be due by the beginning of the next class meeting. I'll be grading your Presentation and Project according to the letter & point grading scale, thus: A (4.0-3.9); A- (3.8-3.5); B+ (3.4-3.2); B (3.1-2.9); B- (2.8-2.5); C+ (2.4-2.2); C (2.1-1.9); C- (1.8-1.5); D+ (1.4-1.2); D (1.1-0.9); D- (0.8-0.5); F (0.4-0).

Recommended additional Works (selected):

Books:

Aughterson, Kate, and Alisa Ferguson. *Shakespeare & Gender*.
 Bristol, Michael. *Shakespeare's America / America's Shakespeare*.
 Hall, Kim. *Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England*.
 Loftis, Sonya Freeman. *Shakespeare & Disability Studies*.
 Loomba, Ania. *Shakespeare, Race, & Colonialism*.
 Masten, Jeffrey. *Queer Philologies: Sex, Language, and Affect in Shakespeare's Time*.
 Shapiro, James. *A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare*.
 Thompson, Ayanna, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Race*.
 Zabus, Chantal J. *Tempests After Shakespeare*.

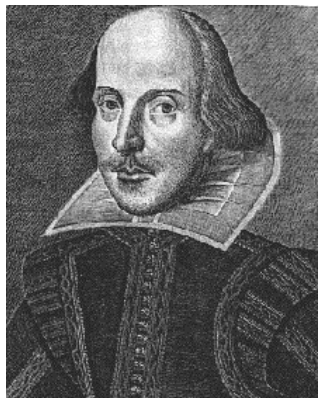
Web:

British Library / Shakespeare, <https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare>
 British Library / Shakespeare in Quarto,
<https://www.bl.uk/treasures/shakespeare/homepage.html>
 Folger Shakespeare Library: Shakespeare Unlimited,
<https://www.folger.edu/shakespeare-unlimited>
 Folger Shakespeare Library: First Folio, <https://www.folger.edu/shakespeare/first-folio>
 MIT Global Shakespeares: Video and Performance Archive,
<https://globalshakespeares.mit.edu/>
 MIT Shakespeare, <http://shakespeare.mit.edu/>
 Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, <https://www.shakespearesglobe.com/>

Databases @ University of Denver Libraries, <http://library.du.edu/>

Archives Unbound
 British Online Archives
 Colonial America
 Colonial Caribbean
 Confidential Print: Africa, 1834 – 1966
 Confidential Print: Middle East, 1839 – 1969
 Early English Books Online (EEBO)
 East India Company
 Editions and Adaptations of Shakespeare
 Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO)
 Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) Live
 Shakespeare in Performance
 Shakespeare's Globe on Screen (2008 – 2015)
 Shakespeare's Globe on Screen (2016 – 2018)





“To the Reader”

This Figure, that thou here seest put,
 It was for gentle Shakespeare cut,
 Wherein the Graver had a strife
 With Nature, to out-doo the life:
 O, could he but have drawne his wit
 As well in brasse, as he hath hit
 His face; the Print would then surpasse
 All, that was ever writ in brasse.
 But, since he cannot, Reader, looke
 Not on his Picture, but his Booke.

—Ben Jonson’s poem accompanying Martin Droeshout’s portrait of William Shakespeare in the 1623 *First Folio*

CALENDARS (subject to changes):

This syllabus provides a macro-calendar; micro-schedules (for our weekly meetings) will be posted via Canvas and will be updated following each class meeting.

Week 1: 9/14

Tempest

Week 2: 9/21

Tempest

Week 3: 9/28

Tempest / Julius Caesar

Visiting with Gustavo Fierros Torres, DU Spanish Language, Literary & Cultural Studies

9/30: Notebooks

Week 4: 10/5

Julius Caesar / Hamlet

10:7: First Assemblage

Week 5: 10/12

Julius Caesar / Hamlet / Macbeth

Week 6: 10/19

Hamlet / Macbeth

Visiting Special Collections

10/19: Project Proposals

Week 7: 10/26

No meeting / projects in-progress

Week 8: 11/2

Macbeth / Lear

11/4: Notebooks

Week 9: 11/9

Macbeth / Lear

Visiting with Anne Penner, DU Theatre

11/11: Second Assemblage



Week 10: 11/16

Lear / Macbeth / Hamlet / Julius Caesar / Tempest

Week 11:

11/18: last day of fall quarter classes

11/19: exams begin

11/22: exams conclude

11/22: Notebooks and Projects

