

University of Guelph

School of English and Theatre Studies

ENGL*6412

Topics in Medieval/Renaissance Literature

Fall 2024 Section 01

Credit Weight: 0.50

Monday 2:30-5:20

Instructor: Mark Fortier

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Office Hours: Online by appointment

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

An examination of the literature of Britain in the medieval and/or early modern periods. Topics may focus on a single author, a specific genre, or relationships between the literary and the cultural.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Shakespeare Today

Shakespeare has come to be thought of not only as a writer and a set of texts but as a vast nexus of activities continuing to be done in the name of Shakespeare: digital texts and performances, festivals, adaptations, secondary and post-secondary study, scholarship, etc., etc. In this course we will begin to examine and stake out the evolving place of Shakespeare in our time.

TEXTS

- Maggie O'Farrell, *Hamnet*
- Margaret Atwood, *Hag-Seed*
- Jani Lauzon & Kaitlyn Riordan, *1939*
<https://www.canadianplayoutlet.com/products/1939-by-jani-lauzon-and-kaitlyn-riordan>
<https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/content/productions/1939>
N.B.: Also on stage in Toronto this term
- Abigail Thorn, *The Prince*

Other texts are available digitally through internet, library, and courselink

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students should come away from the course with

- An awareness and understanding of the theory and particulars of Shakespeare as an ongoing cultural phenomenon;
- Enhanced research skills, especially concerning internet sources;
- Enhanced writing skills.

ASSIGNMENTS

- Participation: 25%
- Reports: 2 1200-word write ups plus oral presentation: $15\% \times 2 = 30\%$
- Research paper, 3600 words: 45%

Assignments must be submitted to dropbox by 11:59 pm on the due date. If you think you won't be able to submit an assignment on time, let me know as early as possible. If I agree that you have valid reasons for not meeting the deadline, we will agree on a new deadline. If the new deadline is not met, marks may be deducted. If this procedure is not followed for late assignments, marks may be deducted.

CLASS SCHEDULE (for readings and presentation material see Topics and Sources document on courselink)

Week 1: September 9: Introduction: The Shakespeare Industry; Cosmic Shakespeare; Google Ngram Viewer, "Shakespeare was there"

Week 2: September 16: What is Shakespeare today?

Christy Desmet *et al.*, eds, *Shakespeare / Not Shakespeare*, Introduction

<https://link-springer-com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/book/10.1007%2F978-3-319-63300-8>

Gary Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, Introduction (courselink content)

Graham Holderness, ed., *The Shakespeare Myth*, Preface (courselink content)

Hugh Grady and Terence Hawkes, eds., *Presentist Shakespeares*, Introduction (courselink content)

Douglas Lanier, "Shakespeare Rhizomatics," in *Shakespeare and the Ethics of Appropriation* (courselink content)

Week 3: September 23: Shakespeare in Education

Presentations on Hating Shakespeare; Shakespearean Quotations, Tiktok, memes, videogames

Week 4: September 30: *Macbeth* today: criticism and performance

Presentations on *Macbeth* in editions, criticism, conferences, performances, movies, popular culture

<https://tarragontheatre.com/plays/2024-2025/upcoming/goblinmacbeth/>

Week 5: October 7: *Coriolanus* today: criticism and performance

Presentations on festivals, productions, streaming

Week 6: October 21: *Julius Caesar* today: criticism and performance

Presentations on *Julius Caesar* in criticism, conferences, performances, popular culture, tourism, merchandise

Week 7: October 28: *Love's Labour's Lost*

Presentations on Shakespeare and women, incel Shakespeare (?)

Week 8: November 4: Adaptations 1: *Hamnet*

Presentation on biographies, authorship question, adaptations and adaptation theory

Week 9: November 11: Adaptations 2: *Hagseed*
Presentations on prison Shakespeare, Shakespeare and therapy

Week 10: November 18: Adaptations 3: *The Prince*:
Presentations on gender, Abigail Thorn, gender-blind and gender-conscious casting

Week 11: November 25: Adaptations 4: *1939*
<https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.subzero.lib.uoguelph.ca/content/productions/1939>
Presentations on race, indigeneity, international Shakespeare, Bollywood, colour-blind and colour-conscious casting

Week 12: November: more reports: YA, Graphic Novels, VR, podcasts; papers and festivities