

**Theater R1B.001 – Introduction to Dramatic Literature – Shakespeare’s Roman Plays:
Configurations of Time, Place and Performance**

Class Time: TuTh 3:30-5 in 89 Dwinelle Hall
Instructor: Todd Barnes (todd Barnes@berkeley.edu)
Office Hours: Th 1-2 at Free Speech Movement Café

Course Description

In Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*, Cassius asks: “How many ages hence/Shall this our lofty scene be acted over/In states unborn and accents yet unknown?” Cassius’ question highlights the complicated relationship between historical time (“ages hence”), geographic place (“states unborn”) and the work of repeated performance (“acted over”). Today, students and actors around the world read and perform Shakespeare’s plays in accents unknown to early modern English audiences. Similarly, Shakespeare’s company performed significant events in Roman history using the language and culture of early modern England, a state that, from the point of view of ancient Romans, had not yet been born.

In this course, we will look at how time, place and performance are configured within and in relation to Shakespeare’s four Roman plays (*Titus Andronicus*, *Julius Caesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Coriolanus*). Throughout the semester, we will focus our attention on three interrelated times and places: ancient Rome, early modern England, and our contemporary, globalized world. The course will revolve around three questions regarding these complex configurations of time, place and performance: How do contemporary performances engage with Shakespeare’s historical texts? How did Shakespeare and his contemporaries engage with Roman history? How might you, as students, engage with historical texts and performances in your own writing? In order to begin answering these questions, we will read a variety of historical texts treating ancient Roman and early modern history. We will also survey the afterlives of Shakespeare’s Roman plays by following their inheritors in the 17th-21st centuries as they labor to edit, publish, adapt, critique and perform each play’s multiple history on pages, stages, and screens. Most importantly, though, throughout the semester, we will read theoretical and practical texts that will help you develop your ability to think through and compose arguments about the relationship between history, textuality, and performance.

Required Texts:

- The Arden Edition of the following plays: *Julius Caesar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Coriolanus* and *Titus Andronicus*
- *Doing Shakespeare*, Simon Palfrey
- *Figures of Speech*, Arthur Quinn
- *Writing Analytically*, David Rosenwasser and Jill Stephen
- A course reader available at Replica Copy

Participation/Attendance

This class will not be possible without your participation. Unlike some courses, the success of this course depends on your contributions, your labor, and your perspective. In addition to the authors we read together, your work will form a central focus of the course.

Students are allowed two absences. Absences in excess of two will negatively affect student grades. Student with over four absences will automatically fail the course.

Papers (late/format)

No late papers will be accepted. Your essays need not be perfect, but I do expect them to be on time. Papers will be written, reviewed and returned in accordance with a shared schedule. Late papers threaten to jam what I hope will be the smooth machinery of the review process.

All papers are to be typed and formatted according to the most recent MLA guidelines.

Plagiarism

Those who engage in (or even flirt with the idea of) plagiarism will suffer the consequences set forth by the university. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, see one of the instructors or the university's guidelines at:

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/guides/citations.html#Plagiarism>

Today's technology makes it so much easier to plagiarize, but it also makes it that much easier to get caught.

Disabilities/Accommodations

If you feel you might need any accommodations in order to succeed in this course, please let me know privately as soon as possible. Also, you might contact the Disabled Students' Program, 260 César Chávez Center #4250, 510.642.0518 (voice) or 510.642.6376 (TTY).

Requirements/Grades

Your weighted grade in the course will be determined according to the following schema:

70% compositions/research journal
20% presentations/discussion/participation/blog/performance
10% peer review/short exercises/quizzes

Course Blog

The virtual component of this course is substantial. This semester, we will be utilizing **bspace** found at <http://bspace.berkeley.edu>. Students are required to regularly post comments and feedback through this site. Punctuality on bspace (because it operates cooperatively in "real" time) is key. Stay tuned for more information on how this will work.

Presentations:

In each class meeting, students will present on a variety of items. Simon Palfrey's *Doing Shakespeare* and Plutarch's *Lives* (of Caesar, Antony and Coriolanus) will be divided up to students to present in groups and pairs. Students will sign up to present in the first two weeks of class. You will also have a chance to perform.

Tentative Schedule

Week One: Figuring Shakespeare

- 1/19 Introduction; “Figuring Shakespeare” PowerPoint
1/21 Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (excerpt); Eagleton, “What is Literature?”; Bristol, “The Shakespeare Myth”

Week Two: Figuring Violence, Bodies and Speech in *Titus Andronicus*

- 1/26 *Titus Andronicus* (Acts I-II); *Figures of Speech* (pp. 1-47)
1/28 *Titus Andronicus* (Act III); *Figures of Speech* (pp. 48-98)

Week Three: *Titus Andronicus* and Classical Poetics

- 2/2 *Titus Andronicus* (Acts IV-V); Aristotle, *Poetics* (excerpt)
2/4 *Writing Analytically (WA)*, chapters 1-3

Week Four: Shakespearean Performativity

- 2/9 **Paper 1.1 Due**; *Titus Andronicus*; Austin (Lectures I-III);
Doing Shakespeare (DS) ch. 1
2/11 Barthes, “Death of the Author”; *DS* ch. 2

Week Five: Caesar’s Rome, Shakespeare’s Rome

- 2/16 Plutarch’s *Lives* “Caesar”; *WA* ch. 4
2/18 *Julius Caesar* (Act I-II); TBD

Week Six: Contemporary Caesars

- 2/23 *Julius Caesar* (Acts III-IV); Jorgens “Realising Shakespeare on Film”
2/25 *Julius Caesar* (Act V); *WA* ch. 5; Screening Mankiewicz’s *Julius Caesar* (excerpt); HBO’s *Rome* (excerpt); *DS* ch. 3

Week Seven: Doing Shakespeare

- 3/2 **Paper 1.2 Due**; *DS* ch. 4
3/4 Taylor, “Revising Shakespeare,”; *WA* ch. 6; Student Performances

Week Eight: Rome's Exotic Other

- 3/9 *Antony and Cleopatra* (Act I-II); Plutarch's *Lives* "Antony"
3/11 **Paper 2 Due**; *Antony and Cleopatra* (Act III); *DS* ch. 5

Week Nine: Gender, Costume and Custom

- 3/16 *Antony and Cleopatra* (Act III); **Peer Review Due**
3/18 *Antony and Cleopatra* (Act IV); Adler, "The Unlacing of Cleopatra,"
WA ch. 7; *DS* ch. 6

Spring Break

Week Ten: Performance, Repetition and History

- 3/30 *Antony and Cleopatra* (Act V); **Paper 2.2 Due**
4/1 *WA* ch. 8; *SD* ch. 7
Screening HBO's *Rome* & Mankiewicz's *Cleopatra*

Week Eleven: Masculine *Virtu*

- 4/6 *Coriolanus* (Act I); Plutarch's *Lives* "Martius Coriolanus"
4/8 *Coriolanus* (Act II); Rackin, "*Coriolanus*: Shakespeare's Anatomy of
'Virtus'"; *WA* ch. 9; **Final Paper Topics Due**

Week Twelve: Performing the Political

- 4/13 *Coriolanus* (Act III); *WA* ch. 11
4/15 *Coriolanus* (Act IV); Plotz, "*Coriolanus* and the Failure of the
Performative"

Week Thirteen: Research Methods

- 4/20 *Coriolanus* (Act V); *WA* ch. 12
4/22 *WA* ch. 13; **Prospectuses and Annotated Bibliographies Due**

Week Fourteen: Historiography

- 4/27 Writing Workshop; *WA* ch. 14, 15
4/29 Writing Workshop; *WA* ch. 16

RRR Week: Optional Presentations