First Aid:

Editions:

The recommended text of the complete works is the online Arden Edition (see below). However, it is also useful to have a complete printed edition; any of the Arden, or The Norton Shakespeare (2nd ed., 2008), or The Oxford Shakespeare (2nd ed., 2005), will be suitable. Remember to look to see whether the introductions and, more importantly, explanatory notes, supply your needs. For individual plays, it is always worth consulting a single-play edition. The Arden Series, now in its 3rd version, has the most comprehensive annotation; The Oxford Shakespeare (which uses different texts from the complete edition) is also mostly very good; the Cambridge series also contains some successes. The best edition depends on the play in question; we will discuss this in class.
**Online Shakespeare: The Shakespeare Collection:**

This extraordinary database is available through the Library’s Online Resources. It contains the Arden texts and notes complete for every play; a host of information about the original editions of the plays; and a large source of online scholarly articles.

**Online Historical Texts**

Folger Library First Folio and Second Folio: [http://www.folger.edu/template.cfm?cid=930](http://www.folger.edu/template.cfm?cid=930)

Shakespeare Quartos Archive: [http://www.quartos.org/](http://www.quartos.org/)

Shakespeare in Quarto: [http://www.bl.uk/treasures/shakespeare/homepage.html](http://www.bl.uk/treasures/shakespeare/homepage.html)

Database of Early English Playbooks: [http://deep.sas.upenn.edu/](http://deep.sas.upenn.edu/)

The Arden Shakespeare Online: [http://gale.cengage.co.uk/the-shakespeare-collection.aspx](http://gale.cengage.co.uk/the-shakespeare-collection.aspx)

**Companions:**


**Other guides:**

David Crystal, *Shakespeare’s Words* (2002), is a glossary for quick reference

Katherine Duncan-Jones, *Ungentle Shakespeare* (2001), is maybe the least unreliable Life

Samuel Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare’s Lives* (2nd ed., 1991), shows you why such lives are unreliable

G. Bullough, *Narrative & Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, 8 vols. (1957-75), indispensable

Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare’s Modern Collaborators* (2008), is the best short guide to textual matters

Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage* (3rd ed., 1992), the standard work on the original theatres

Stuart Gillespie, *Shakespeare’s Books* (2005), is a useful guide to Shakespeare’s reading and learning

**More and more books on Shakespeare:**

Try not to be overwhelmed. Use the library with discretion; if you find a book useless or foolish there will be another better one on the same topic. Often it is better to use scholarly journals to locate the latest work: *Shakespeare Quarterly* and *Shakespeare Survey* are the standard-bearers in scholarship in the field; the former contains an annual bibliography.
SEMINARS

WEEK 2. THE PUBLICATION OF SHAKESPEARE (HELEN SMITH)

We will start the course by thinking about who Shakespeare was at the moment his plays appeared on stage and in print, and by tackling critically the orthodoxy that Shakespeare was little concerned with questions of publication. We will consider how Shakespeare’s plays and poems present themselves to the reader, and what this means for questions of interpretation.

I will ask each of you to take a look at a single play; find out what you can about its early publication history; and look carefully at how the book’s paratexts shape our experience of reading. Key research tools will include the English Short-Title Catalogue (ESTC), the Stationers’ Company Registers, and facsimiles of the quartos and the first folio.

Secondary reading


M. J. Kidnie and Sonia Massai (eds), *Shakespeare and Textual Studies* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), part II.


Emma Smith (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare* (Cambridge University Press, 2016), chapters one to four.


In this seminar we will begin by looking at poetry from the court of Henry VIII, exploring especially poems – including some by Thomas Wyatt – found in the Devonshire Manuscript, and we will think about the involvement of women in the compilation and transmission of this verse. We will be working largely with photocopies which will be distributed in the previous seminar, but it would be helpful to read some poems in advance: Wyatt’s ‘Whoso list to hunte’ and ‘They flee from me’, and, from the Devonshire MS, ‘Take heed be tyme leste ye be spyede’, and ‘Suffryng in sorow’; the latter can be found here:

file:///C:/Users/user/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/Temporary%20Internet%20Files/Content.IE5/DNXNDBRX/46.pdf

We shall pause briefly to look also at a couple of Shakespeare sonnets (2 and 29), and Donne’s ‘Valediction Forbidding Mourning’, before moving on to explore some poems from the beginning of the seventeenth century by Anne Southwell, and from the end of that century by Jane Barker; copies of all these will be provided.

Background Reading

Seth Lerer, Courtly Letters in the Age of Henry VIII: Literary Culture and the Arts of Deceit (1997)


Gillian Wright, Producing Women’s Poetry, 1600-1730; Text and Paratext, Manuscript and Print (2013)


WEEK 4. KING LEAR AND ITS TEXTUAL HISTORY (RICHARD ROWLAND)

King Lear appeared for the first time in print in a quarto published in 1608, some two years after the play’s first performances. A second quarto – essentially a reprint of the first but with a few significant variants – appeared in 1619. In 1623 the play appeared for a third time, when it was included in the Folio, which is effectively the first complete works of Shakespeare, a volume compiled by his fellow actors and friends in the King’s Men. In this seminar we shall begin to explore the origins of these distinct texts. How did they come to bear the shape that they possess? What factors might have generated the differences between them? Bearing in mind the fact that serious scholarship on the significance of the divergence between the quarto and Folio texts is a relatively recent phenomenon – pioneering work by, amongst others, P. W. K Stone and Steven Urkowitz in the early 1980s generated the unprecedented decision to publish both versions of the play in the Oxford Complete Works in 1988 – we shall consider the implications of what we have learnt about the composition and evolution of play-texts. We shall also think about what, if any, part censorship – either in terms of interference by the state, or the restraints that the playwright and/or his company might have imposed on themselves – played in the evolution of the texts. What evidence is there that Shakespeare revised his own work, and if such evidence does exist, can we begin to understand how, why and even when that process occurred? We shall also think about the ways in which a number of issues – including the significance of land, territory and maps, the radicalism of the play’s politics, and the staging of violence – might be interpreted differently in each of the texts. Finally, we shall explore further the implications of the play’s different versions, particularly in terms of performance. Some of our most distinguished directors and actors have become fully conversant with the significance of the distinctions between the quarto and Folio texts, and, with reference to productions such as Richard Eyre’s with Ian Holm in the title role, Jonathan Kent’s with Oliver Ford Davies, and Trevor Nunn’s with Ian McKellen, we shall think about the very different performance options that that this awareness has generated.

Background Reading:

We will be working with photofacsimiles of the quarto and Folio texts, but you will also need to work with an edition of the play in which the variants between the two texts are clearly indicated; the Arden (Foakes) or the Cambridge (Halio) are probably the best choices.

Gary Taylor and Michael Warren (eds.), The Division of the Kingdoms (1983)

Grace Ioppolo, Revising Shakespeare (1991)

John Jones, Shakespeare at Work (1995)

James Ogden and Arthur H. Scouten (eds.), Lear: from Study to Stage (1997)

Oliver Ford Davies, Playing Lear (2003)

Lynne Bradley, Adapting King Lear for the Stage (2010)

James Marino, Owning William Shakespeare: The King’s Men and their Intellectual Property (2011)
WEEK 5. ‘WHAT’S SHAKESPEARE TO HIM?’ TATE’S LEAR 
AND RESTORATION DRAMA (CAMILLA TEMPLE)

This session will look at Nahum Tate’s renowned 1681 adaptation of King Lear, which famously reworks Shakespeare’s tragedy to include a happy ending. Restoration adaptations such as Tate’s Lear ask us to interrogate what constitutes the significance of Shakespearean drama to different audiences across history. In relation to this we will consider issues of literary taste and the way that the expectations of canonical genres like tragedy are not static but change over time. We will also try to understand the impulses, both personal and political, that led to Tate’s rewriting of King Lear and the broader response to Shakespeare in this period.

*Primary Reading*

Nahum Tate, *The History of King Lear* (1681) [available on Early English Books Online via the library catalogue]

Shakespeare’s *King Lear*

*Secondary Reading*


*Selected Further Reading*


Massai, Sonia, ‘Nahum’s Tate’s Revision of Shakespeare’s King Lears’, *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 40 (2000), 435-450


Womack, Peter, ‘Secularizing *King Lear*: Shakespeare, Tate, and the Sacred’, *Shakespeare Survey*, 55 (2002), 96-105

**WEEK 6. READING WEEK**

**WEEK 7. SHAKESPEARE & CHRONICLE HISTORY (RICHARD ROWLAND)**

In this seminar we shall be exploring the relationship between the writing of chronicle history in the sixteenth century, and the emergence, at the end of the 1580s, of plays that use – and distort – those histories. We will also be thinking about the crisis in historical representation at the close of the century, and the demise of the chronicle plays.

Primary texts: *1 and 2 Henry IV, Henry V*

The most important task for this seminar (and the next) is to read the plays themselves, preferably in a single-volume scholarly edition; we don’t specify which ones, but this usually means either the Oxford, Cambridge or Arden (third series), although I should perhaps warn that the Oxford *Henry V* has proved controversial.

If you wish to explore some secondary reading, I would suggest a dip into some of the following:

Phyllis Rackin, *Stages of History: Shakespeare’s English Chronicles* (1990)


*Shakespeare Survey*, 63 (2010); a special issue on the history plays. Be warned, the Library catalogues and shelves this as a book, rather than as a journal: shelfmark is MA 102.79 SHA


**WEEK 8. SHAKESPEARE & TRAGICOMEDY (RICHARD ROWLAND)**

In this seminar we will be thinking about the recent invention, at the very end of the sixteenth century, of a new theatrical genre, with its own rules of engagement, and even a prototype play to illustrate the theories of its creator, Giovanni Battista Guarini. Shakespeare and his fellow players knew about the new genre from the moment that it arrived in England (via a translation of Guarini’s play, *Il Pastor Fido*, and via word of mouth from English
dramatists who knew the Italian playwright), but to what extent and in what ways did Shakespeare’s own writing reflect its influence?

Primary texts: Measure for Measure, The Winter's Tale; Guarini’s Compendium of Tragicomic Poetry.

As with the history plays, you would do well to read the Shakespeare in single-volume scholarly editions. I will distribute copies of the Guarini in the previous class.

Some secondary reading you might wish to investigate:

Roger Warren, Staging Shakespeare’s Late Plays (1990)
Verna A. Foster, The Name and Nature of Tragicomedy (2003)
Russ McDonald, Shakespeare's Late Style (2006)
Jason Lawrence, ‘Who the devil taught thee so much Italian?’: Italian Language Learning and Literary Imitation in Early Modern England (2006)
Christopher J. Cobb, The Staging of Romance in Late Shakespeare: Text and Theatrical Technique (2007)

WEEK 9.  SHAKESPEARE’S ROME (JANE RAISCH)

In this session, we’ll explore Shakespeare’s relationship to classical material in two, interrelated ways: through his adaptation of classical texts like Plutarch’s Lives and through his representation of classical spaces, like Rome, on the English stage. We’ll approach this topic by reading perhaps the quintessential Roman play of Shakespeare, Julius Caesar, alongside a far more unorthodox example, his early play, Titus Andronicus. While Julius Caesar clearly draws on Plutarch’s life of Caesar (which we’ll read in North’s translation), Titus Andronicus has no one, single classical source, but seems instead to be stitched together from a number of ancient narratives, myths, and motifs. With both these divergent examples of Shakespeare’s classicism in mind, we’ll consider what “Rome” signified for Shakespeare in two plays that depict its fragility – threatened from within in Julius Caesar and threatened from without, by the Goths, in Titus. We’ll examine too how we might connect the status of Rome as a cultural and ethical marker to the cultural and aesthetic work of theatrical adaptation in late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries (keeping mind that ancient Roman culture itself was in many ways defined by acts of cultural adaptation and that Plutarch was Greek). In different ways, each play puts its indebtedness to the classical tradition on display and we’ll explore the various strategies (irony, metatheater, oratory, “special effects”, etc.) that constitute Shakespeare’s reconstruction of ancient texts and worlds.

Required Reading:

Julius Caesar and Titus Andronicus

Plutarch, from *The lives of the noble Grecians and Romanes, compared together by that grave learned philosopher and historiographer, Plutarke of Cheronea: translated out of Greeke into French by Iames Amyot, Abbot of Bellozane, Bishop of Ancerre, one of the Kings privy counsel, and great Amner of Francon, and out of French into Englishe, by Thomas North* (1579): the life of Julius Caesar (available in different editions in the library and via EEBO).

**Recommended Further Reading:**

Students are encouraged to watch even just parts of Julie Taymor’s *Titus* (1999).


**WEEK 10. SHAKESPEARE AND RELIGION (HELEN SMITH)**

In this final session, we’ll think about questions of religion and conversion in Shakespeare’s plays. We will address questions of who converts, when, and how convincingly in *Othello* and *The Merchant of Venice*. Which characters use the language of religion? What distinctions are drawn between faith groups? How seriously is the language of religious constancy used?

Please also use the *OED* to trace the varying definitions of ‘conversion’ and of ‘peripeteia’ in this period.

**Secondary reading:**


