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ENGL 332-01, Topics in Shakespeare Studies, Spring 2001

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Eng 332
Spring 2001
O hour: T, Th 1:00-2:30
3:00
210 Palmer

Dr. Cynthia Marshall
316 Palmer, x3980
Office hours: M, W 1:30-
T, Th 2:30-3:30 & by appt.

Topics in Shakespeare Studies: Bad Shakespeare

Purposes: If Shakespeare is our greatest author, how can any of his work be bad? In exploring this question, the class has three goals. First, we will discuss issues of authorial reputation and the various determinants of literary and dramatic quality. Second, we will read and discuss some of the bard's works that are infrequently read but often extremely interesting. Third, we will engage with works of literary criticism representing a range of different approaches.

Texts: *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt et al. (Norton, 1997).
Course packet of secondary readings, on sale in the bookstore.

Evaluation:

- 30% Seven response papers (2 pages). These should be thoughtful engagements with the assigned reading for the day. Structure may be informal, but papers must be typed. You should turn in one paper on each work we study except *Henry VIII*.
- 15% Team report. Students, working in teams, will present a 15 to 20 minute report to the class; a written copy of the work should also be submitted. A list of topics will be circulated. I can provide suggested readings; teams will decide how to prepare and present their work.
- 40% Two essays (7 to 8 pages, typed). Ideally these will develop ideas you have begun to pursue in response papers. You should consult with me about your choice of topics.
- 15% Participation. Since the class is a seminar, each member's participation is vital to the overall disposition and accomplishment of the group. The participation grade will be based on the regularity and quality of both attendance and contributions to discussion. Comments that help to advance discussion and that enable all class members to contribute are highly valued.

Please refer to the statement of Expectations and Policies of the Department of English for other relevant guidelines.

Schedule:

Unless I instruct you otherwise, you are expected to complete your first reading of a play or poem by the first day on which we discuss it. You are also expected to read the introductory essay in the *Norton Shakespeare* for each work. In addition, you should read the "General

Introduction” in the *Norton Shakespeare* (pp. 1-76) during the first three weeks of class. It provides valuable background information.

- 1/11 Introduction: how can Shakespeare be bad? Let me count the ways.
- 1/16 *The Most Lamentable Tragedy of Titus Andronicus* (1592)
- 1/18 Eugene Waith, “The Metamorphosis of Violence in *TA*”
- 1/23 *Titus*
- 1/25 *Venus and Adonis* (1593)
C. S. Lewis, excerpt from *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama*
Team report: the audience of *Venus and Adonis*
- 1/30 Catherine Belsey, “Love as Trompe-l’oeil: Taxonomies of Desire in *VA*”
- 2/1 *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594)
Team report: the story of Lucrece through the ages
- 2/6 Katharine Maus, “Taking Tropes Seriously: Language and Violence in *S*’s *RL*”
- 2/8 *All’s Well That Ends Well* (1604-6)
- 2/13 *AWTEW*
Team report: masculinity in *AWTEW*
- 2/15 Janet Adelman, “Bed Tricks: On Marriage as the End of Comedy in *AWTEW* and *MM*”
- 2/20 First essay due
- 2/22 *The Life of Timon of Athens* (1606)
- 2/27 William Empson, “Timon’s Dog”
- 3/1 *Timon*
Team report: can misanthropy be fun?
- 3/6 Spring break
- 3/8 Spring break
- 3/13 *The Tragedy of Coriolanus* (1608)
- 3/15 *Cor*
Team report: Coriolanus and his mother
- 3/20 Kenneth Burke, “*Cor* -- and the Delights of Faction”
Team report: issues in staging *Coriolanus*
- 3/22 *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* (1607-8)
Team report: incest as threat and theme in *Pericles*
- 3/27 Steven Mullaney, “‘All That Monarchs Do’: The Obscured Stages of Authority in *Per*”
- 3/29 Prepared reading of *Pericles*

- 4/3 *Cymbeline, King of Britain* (1609-10)
4/5 Meredith Skura, "Interpreting Posthumus' Dream from Above and Below: Families, Psychoanalysis, and Literary Critics"
- 4/10 *Cym*
Team report: problems of staging *Cymbeline*
4/12 Easter break
- 4/17 *Henry VIII / All Is True* (1613)
4/19 *Henry VIII*
Team report: the problem of Anne Boleyn
- 4/24 Peter Rudnytsky, "*H8* and the Deconstruction of History"
4/26 Second essay due

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Topics for Team Reports

- 1/25 The audience of *Venus and Adonis*

- 2/1 The story of Lucrece through the ages

- 2/13 Masculinity in *All's Well That Ends Well*

- 3/1 Can misanthropy be fun? (*Timon of Athens*)

- 3/15 Coriolanus and his mother

- 3/20 Issues in staging *Coriolanus*

- 3/22 Incest as threat and theme in *Pericles*

- 4/10 Problems of staging *Cymbeline*

- 4/19 The problem of Anne Boleyn (*Henry VIII*)