



Shakespeare's very words: language, texts and contexts

Credit / award	Non-accredited		
Start date	7 November 2019	End date	5 December 2019
Day and time	Thursdays, 18:00 – 19:30	No of meetings	5
Venue	Madingley Hall		
Tutor	Dr Stephen Logan	Course code	1920NWR004

Director ISP and LL Sarah Ormrod

For further information on this course, please contact Head of Academic Centre Administration, Zara Kuckelhaus zara.kuckelhaus@ice.cam.ac.uk or 01223 764637

To book See: www.ice.cam.ac.uk or telephone 01223 746262

Tutor biography

Steve Logan is a musician and poet who works also as a psychotherapist and lecturer in English. As lecturer, he has held senior appointments in Oxford, Cardiff and Cambridge, where he is currently Principal Supervisor in English at Clare College. Previously he was Director of Studies in English at Selwyn and St Edmund's. His BA and DPhil are from St John's College, Oxford. He has written several books of poetry, a scholarly book on Wordsworth, several book chapters on C S Lewis and has co-edited Peter Lomas, *Natural Psychotherapy*. He has published widely in the national press. In the last five years he has released five solo albums and has featured in a TV documentary about his music (www.stevelogan.co.uk.)

Course syllabus

Aims

Back in 1962, a Polish scholar called Jan Kott published a once-famous book called *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*. Its main premise is that Shakespeare is of interest because of the relevance of his plays to current cultural concerns. Clearly, the basis of our interest in Shakespeare must be that his concerns are profoundly akin to our own. But arguing this often entails a disregard for the many crucial respects in which he diverges from us. This course will begin with an account of Shakespeare's language, of how the texts of his plays have been transmitted to us, of the theatrical conditions they would have been performed under and the conventions which govern their forms and the climate of early Modern religious opinion. Forewarned of these divergences we will then examine closely four plays in detail, though many others will of course be alluded to.

Content

Session 1: What Shakespeare learned from Kyd and Marlowe

Session 2: Richard III

Session 3: Hamlet

Session 4: Coriolanus

Session 5: Cymbeline

Presentation of the course:

The aim in each class is guided free discussion. I will begin with a statement of what seem to me the main issues to discuss (given the limited time) and will then encourage students to focus on a number of specific passages in the play set for classes 2-5.

Aims

As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

1. See Shakespeare's plays in the context of the early Modern theatre.
2. Recognise that Shakespeare's language is less like our own than it seems
3. Demonstrate a knowledge of early Modern rhetorical conventions
4. Read the plays with a stronger sense of the problems involved in reading them

Outcomes

1. Students will acquire some understanding both of what unites us with and of what divides us from Shakespeare
2. They will recognise that the word 'Shakespeare' symbolises an idea of the historical Shakespeare which has accumulated many subsequent layers of meaning
3. They will, above all, come to see that Shakespeare's plots are mostly borrowed (however ingeniously modified) and that his supreme distinction is as a poet.

Reading and resources list

Listed below are texts that might be of interest should you wish to supplement your learning on the course. Any essential reading is marked with an asterisk *

Author	Title	Publisher and date
*Stephen Greenblatt et al,	<i>The Norton Shakespeare</i> , 3 rd edn	Norton, 2015
Thomas Kyd,	<i>The Spanish Tragedy</i> , ed. David Bevington	Manchester UP, 1996
Christopher Marlowe	<i>Tamburlaine Part II</i> , ed. Cunningham	Manchester UP, 1998
Andrew Gurr,	<i>The Shakespearean Stage, 1574-1642</i>	CUP, 1992
Frank Kermode,	<i>Shakespeare's Language</i>	Penguin, 2001
Harold Bloom	<i>Shakespeare and the Invention of the Human</i>	Longman, 2001
Emma Smith	<i>This is Shakespeare</i>	Penguin 2019

NB: Students should bring a copy of the Norton Shakespeare to every class. It is *always* helpful to consult the two main scholarly editions of the individual plays. These are the Arden Shakespeare (currently in its 3rd revision, so look for 'series 3' if in doubt) and the Cambridge Shakespeare. For reasons which it will be our business to study, it is a mistake to think that any edition is much the same as another.

Note Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

Information correct as of: 09 October 2019