

Shakespeare at the Intersection of Performance and Print

Rebecca Wiseman

When we open the Norton edition of *The Tempest*, the text we encounter cannot be said to be Shakespeare's alone. Instead, that modern edition was *invented* over centuries of editorial practice and controversy, with actors, directors, printers, and reviewers all playing a part. This course will explore how Shakespeare's plays were invented and transformed over and over by diverse groups of "authors," and how these continual re-inventions affect our interpretation of the works. What role did early modern rehearsal and performance practice play in the evolution of the plays we recognize today? How did the rise of print affect the reception and legacy of Shakespeare's works – and how does modern editorial practice continue to shape our idea of Shakespeare? Which of the multitude of versions of *The Tempest* or *Hamlet* is the "real" *Tempest*, the "real" *Hamlet*? Can a single, authentic version of each play be said to exist?

As we explore these questions, we will read not only modern versions of the plays, but also early printed editions and prompt-copies (marked-up versions of the play-text used in performance), and we will watch live performances recorded on video or DVD. Critical readings will address questions about authorship, textual authenticity, the history of print, and performance theory.

Required Texts

The Norton Shakespeare

Michel Foucault, "What is the Author?" in *The Foucault Reader*

Jorge Luis Borges, "Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote" in *Ficciones*

D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and Sociology of Texts*

Peter Brook, *The Empty Space*

Patrice Pavis, *Analyzing Performance*

Tiffany Stern, *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England*

Douglas Brooks, *From Playhouse to Printing House*

Course Requirements

Response Papers (25%): You will be responsible for turning in a response paper each week in which you will perform a brief (1-2 page) close reading of a scene from the week's assigned play and address a few of the performance or editorial questions or controversies raised by the scene.

Midterm Paper (20%): In this paper, 7-8 pages in length, you will analyze one of the assigned critical texts and craft your own argument in reply, tying that argument together with evidence from one or more plays of your choice.

Final Paper (30%): The final paper should be approximately 15 pages in length. I will circulate suggested paper topics near the end of the semester but you are free to choose your own. The final paper should investigate a textual or performance crux in one of the assigned plays, and should incorporate independent research.

Class Participation (25%)