

Carla Mazzio
Shakespeare and the Renaissance Sensorium (Eng 610)
Graduate Seminar, Spring 2009-01-13
Tuesdays 12:30-3:10, 538 Clemens Hall

Description: This course will examine Shakespeare and the history of the senses with a focus on the visual cultures of the Renaissance. We will explore aspects of knowledge and sensation in Shakespearean drama with regard to Reformation iconoclasm and the image on stage, Renaissance skepticism and the problem of perception; scientific practice and the status of observation; cultural issues integral to the arts of gesture, ekphrasis, and anamorphosis, the physiology of looking in medicine and poetry; visual dimensions of memory, emotion, and intellection; and the status of looking in terms of historical conditions of the theater, the book, and print culture.

Texts: *The Norton Shakespeare, 2nd Edition*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (now at Talking Leaves Bookstore on Main Street). All other materials will be provided by me (as class handouts, course packs, emailed documents, or links posted on our course website, under construction at <http://www.acsu.buffalo.edu/~cjmazzio/renaissance.html>). In addition, I have ordered a number of books for your perusal, including recent approaches to the history of embodiment and sensory perception: *The Empire of the Senses: Sensual Culture Reader*; *The Acoustical World of Early Modern England*; *The Auditory Culture Reader*; *Sensible Flesh: On Touch in Early Modern Culture*; *The Body in Parts*.

Archive/Research Component: Each seminar member will decide, in the first two weeks of class, upon a play and a research topic to focus in on. While vision and visual culture will be our starting point, members may decide to pursue projects related to various aspects of the senses and the sensorium. Importantly, each member will then construct an "archive" of research materials (containing excerpts from 6 primary and 4 secondary readings that are especially relevant to your project), pre-circulate the archive to the entire class one week before delivering a class presentation, and submit a substantial research paper at the end of term. This seminar structure is designed to enable participants to develop a substantial research paper (25 pages) over the course of the term, to get substantial feedback from class members (who will have read your archive in advance of your presentation), and to give serious thought to issues of archival research, historical contextualization, and the construction of an original argument

Requirements: In addition to participation in our class discussions, requirements include archival research, a 20 minute class presentation of research topic and argument, and a final research paper. Each seminar member will also initiate discussion once during the semester by circulating, at the beginning of class, 3-4 typed discussion questions for all to read and follow — with questions linking the various secondary readings to the play of the week. The works on the syllabus in the final month of class will vary according to seminar member plays and archives.

My office hours are every Thursday, from 11 to 12 (or by appointment). My office is located in Clemens Hall, #513, and my email is cjmazzio@buffalo.edu. Please email me in advance to set up office hour times or other appointment times.

PRELIMINARY SYLLABUS

Week One: Shakespeare & The Senses

Tu 13th January: Introduction.

Backgrounds: Greenblatt, Gurr (selections).

Food for Thought: [Gil Harris: "The Smell of Macbeth," *Shakespeare Quarterly* \(2007\)](#)

Week Two: Seeing Double: Optics, Spectatorship, Misrecognition

Tu 20th Jan: *Comedy of Errors*

Required: Freedman, "Displacing a Spectator Consciousness" and "Reading Errantly:

Misrecognition and the Uncanny in *The Comedy of Errors*" *Staging the Gaze*; and Tomkis, *Lingua or the Combat of the Tongue and the Five Senses for Superiority* (c.

1602, printed 1607), 1-4. Optional: Jenks, "The Centrality of the Eye in Western Culture," *Visual Culture* (1995).

Week Three: Speaking Pictures? Ekphrasis and its Discontents

Tu 27th Jan: *The Rape of Lucrece*, and Sonnets, 1-18, 20, 24, 45, 53, 55.

Required: ["Making Pictures Speak: Renaissance Art, Elizabethan Literature, Modern Scholarship," *Renaissance Quarterly* \(1995\)](#); [Wells, "To Find a Face where All Distress Is Stell'd: Enargeia, Ekphrasis, and Mourning in *The Rape of Lucrece* and the *Aeneid*," *Comparative Literature* \(2002\)](#). Optional: [Dundas, "Mocking the Mind: The Role of Art in Shakespeare's Rape of Lucrece," *Sixteenth Century Journal* \(1983\)](#).

Week Four: Sonnets, Visualism, Print Culture

Tu 3rd Feb: *Love's Labour's Lost*

Required: [Vickers, "Diana Described: Scattered Woman and Scattered Rhyme," *Critical Inquiry* \(1981\)](#); Wall, "Prefatorial Disclosures: 'Violent Enlargement and the Voyeuristic Text,'" from *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the Renaissance* (1992); Fumerton, "Secret Arts: Elizabethan Miniatures and Sonnets," from *Cultural Aesthetics, Renaissance Literature and the Practice of Social Ornament* (1991). Optional: Mazzio "Acting in the Passive Voice," *The Inarticulate Renaissance* (2009).

Week Five: Introduction to Research Methods, Special Collections, Book History

Tu 10th Feb: Cormack and Mazzio, *Book Use, Book Theory: 1500-1700* (2005)

We will meet this day at 12:30 in the Special Collections Library. Bring Readings.

Week Six: The Eye of the Beholder: Physiologies of Looking

Tu 17th Feb *Romeo and Juliet*

Required: Clark, "Species: Vision and Values," *Vanities of the Eye: Vision in Early Modern European Culture* (2007); [Wilder, "Toward a Shakespearean 'Memory Theater':](#)

[Romeo, the Apothecary, and the Performance of Memory,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* \(2005\)](#); Snow, “Language and Sexual Difference in *Romeo and Juliet*,” *Shakespeare’s Rough Magic* (1985). Optional: Lobanov-Rostovsky, “Taming the Basilisk” in *The Body in Parts* (1997); Dolar, “At First Sight” *The Gaze and Voice as Love Objects* (1996); Donaldson-Evans, “The Aggressive Eye Topos,” *Love’s Fatal Glance* (1980).

Week Seven: Love Juice: Aesthetics, Anamorphic Desire, Visual Impairment

Tu 3rd March: *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*

Required: [Grady, “Shakespeare and Impure Aesthetics: The Case of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* \(2008\)](#); [Calderwood, “A Midsummer Night’s Dream: Anamorphism and Theseus’s Dream,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* \(1991\)](#). Optional: [David Marshall, “Exchanging Visions,” *English Literary History* \(1982\)](#).

Week Eight: Power in Perspective

Tu 24th Feb: *Richard II*

Required: [Pye, “Betrayal of the Gaze: Theatricality and Power in Shakespeare’s *Richard II*,” *ELH* \(1988\)](#); [McMillin, “*Richard II*: Eyes of Sorrow, Eyes of Desire,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* \(1984\)](#). Optional but strongly recommended: [“Woolf,” “From Hystories to the Historical: Five Transitions in Thinking about the Past, 1500-1700,” *Huntington Library Journal* \(2005\)](#); and, on reserve, Gilman, “The Albertian Perspective and the Curious Perspective” and “*Richard II* and the Perspectives of History,” in *Curious Perspective* (1978).

Spring Break March 9th -13th

Week Nine: Theatre and Iconoclasm: The Reformation of the Image

Tu 17th March: *Hamlet*

Required: Collinson, *From Iconoclasm to Iconophobia: The Cultural Impact of the Second Reformation* (1986); Witmore, “*Hamlet* Interrupted,” *Culture of Accidents* (2001); Thorne, “*Hamlet* and the Art of Looking Diversely on the Self,” *Vision and Rhetoric in Shakespeare* (2000); O’Connell, “Shakespeare & Jonson,” *The Idolatrous Eye* (2000). Optional: Diehl, “Censoring the Imaginary: The Wittenberg Tragedies,” *Staging Reform, Reforming the Stage* (1997); Greenblatt, “Staging Ghosts,” *Hamlet in Purgatory* (2001). (*All materials for this week precirculated in course packet*).

Week Ten: Acoustic Worlds and Sensory Chaos

Tu 24th March: *Hamlet*

Required: Smith, “Hearing Green,” *Reading the Early Modern Passions* (2002) and “Tuning into London, c. 1600,” *The Auditory Culture Reader* (2003); [Werhrs, “Moral Physiology, Ethical Prototypes, and the Denaturing of Sense in Shakespearean Tragedy,” *College Literature* \(2006\)](#); [Tribble, “Distribution Cognition in the Globe,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* \(2005\)](#). Optional: [Hutson, “Rethinking the ‘Spectacle of the Scaffold: Juridical](#)

[Epistemologies and English Revenge Tragedy,” *Representations* \(2005\)](#); [Acheson, “Hamlet, Synecdoche, History” \(2004\)](#). Recommended further reading: [Stallybrass, et al., “Hamlet’s Tables and the Technologies of Writing in Renaissance England, *Shakespeare Quarterly* \(2004\)](#); Marcus, “Bad Taste and Bad Hamlet,” *Unediting the Renaissance* (1996); Kottman “Sharing Vision, Interrupting Speech: Hamlet’s Spectacular Community,” *Shakespeare Studies* (1998); Cummings, “Hearing in *Hamlet*: Poisoned Ears and the Psychopathology of Flawed Audition,” *Shakespeare Yearbook* (1990).

Week Eleven: Crushing Distance: Science, Skepticism, Sensation

Tu 31st March: *King Lear*

Required: Traub, “The Nature of Norms in Early Modern England: Anatomy, Cartography, *King Lear*” (forthcoming, *Shakespeare & Science*, 2009); [Brayton, “Angling in the Lake of Darkness: Possession, Dispossession and the Politics of Discovery in *King Lear*,” *ELH* \(2003\)](#); Flahiff, “Lear’s Map,” *Cahiers Elisabethians* (1986); [Anderson, “The Conspiracy of Realism,” *Studies in Philology* \(1987\)](#).
Optional: Dundas, “‘To See Feelingly’: The Language of the Senses and the Language of the Heart,” *Comparative Drama* (1985). Recommended further reading: Armstrong, “Spheres of Influence: Cartography and the Gaze in Shakespearean Tragedy and History,” *Shakespeare Studies* (1995); Murray, “Psychoanalysis and the Epistemology of Shakespearean Tragedy,” *Drama/Trauma* (1997); Gillies, “Of Voyages and Exploration: Geography: Maps” and “Theaters of the World,” *Shakespeare and the Geography of Difference* (1994); Helgerson, “The Land Speaks,” *Forms of Nationhood* (1992).

ARCHIVAL PRESENTATIONS BEGIN

Week Twelve: Race, Visualism and the Science of Knowing

Tu 7th April: *Othello*

Required: Howard Marchitello, “Shakespeare’s *Othello* and Vesalius’ *Fabrica* and the Narrative Production of Meaning,” *Narrative and Meaning in Early Modern England* (1998).

Presentations 1 and 2 (plays and archival readings TBA)

Week Thirteen: Seeing Things: Material Imaginations and the Physics of *Macbeth*

Tu 14th April: *Macbeth*

Presentations 3 and 4 (plays and archival readings TBA)

Week Fourteen: Still Life

Tu 21st April: *Winter’s Tale*

Required: [Barkan, “The Beholder’s Tale: Ancient Sculpture, Renaissance Narratives,” *Representations* \(1993\)](#) and [“Living Sculptures’: Ovid, Michelangelo, and *The Winter’s*](#)

Tale *ELH* (1981). Optional: [Meek, "Ekphrasis in 'The Rape of Lucrece' and 'The Winter's Tale,'" *SEL* \(2006\)](#); Sokol, "Aesthetic Codes and Renaissance Concepts" and "The Statue's Tale: Metamorphic Art," *Art and Illusion in The Winter's Tale* (1994).

Presentations 5 and 6 (plays and archival readings TBA)

Reading Week: Presentations 7 and 8 (plays and archival readings TBA)