

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Shakespeare

-- Marjorie Garber's *Shakespeare After All* (2005) offers insightful discussions of Shakespeare's plays by a well-known Harvard professor.

Several of Dr. Garber's engaging lectures can also be viewed on YouTube.

-- For historical background on Shakespeare and his plays, see *The Bedford Companion to Shakespeare*, edited by Russ McDonald (second edition, 2001).

--For information about the source material for Shakespeare's plays, including *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the introductory material in *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 2nd edition (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1997) is especially thorough.

--Editions: I do not usually recommend *The Riverside Shakespeare* for elementary, high school, or even college undergraduates, for many reasons. I prefer *The New Folger Shakespeare Library* editions, edited by Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine (New York: Simon & Schuster),

and available in single paperback copies; or the David Bevington editions (published in single paperback copies by Bantam). I also recommend the Bevington *Complete Works*, 7th edition, for undergraduates and anyone else wishing to purchase a *Complete Works*. For a recent shout-out to the Folger editions in the New York Times on 6/7/20, see

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/02/magazine/how-shakespeare-paperbacks-made-me-want-to-be-a-writer.html?searchResultPosition=4>

--For teachers and more advanced students wishing to learn more about Shakespeare's biography in relation to his plays, as well as reflections on how Shakespeare's plays continue to feel topical and relevant today, I recommend Stephen Greenblatt's *Will in the World* (Anniversary edition, 2016) and *Tyrant* (2018) and recent works by James Shapiro.

--For a discussion of performance traditions around *MND*, see Gary Jay Williams, *Our Moonlight Revels: A Midsummer Night's Dream in the Theatre* (1997). For a discussion of the use of children in productions of the play, see Miranda Johnson-Haddad, "Childhood Dreams and Nightmares: Children in Productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in *Acts of Criticism: Performance Matters in Shakespeare and His Contemporaries; Essays in Honor of James P. Lusardi*" edited by Paul Nelsen and June Schlueter (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2006).

--*How to Teach Your Children Shakespeare* (2013), by distinguished playwright Ken Ludwig, contains many helpful suggestions and resources. It's not a scholarly book (nor does the author claim that it is), and it contains some errors, but overall the book makes up in enthusiasm for its occasional lapses in accuracy.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES – *MND* in Film and TV

There are numerous film and television versions that are readily available. Some representative highlights: The 1935 film by Max Reinhardt stars Olivia de Havilland as Hermia, James Cagney as Bottom, and Mickey Rooney as Puck. This film, though enormously popular at the time, will seem like ancient history to most young people today, but it offers an interesting illustration of how views have changed regarding how Shakespeare “should” be performed. Moreover, it includes some of the Mendelssohn music and is completely kid-friendly; younger children may really enjoy this version. The 1981 BBC version (part of the BBC Shakespeare series, 1978-1985) features Helen Mirren as Titania and Hugh Quarshie (whom young people may recognize from the 2018 movie *Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald*) as Philostrate. Like all the BBC Shakespeare productions, this one is uneven. The 1996 Royal Shakespeare Company production directed by Adrian Noble boasts an impressive cast, all of whom are accomplished Shakespearean performers, as one would expect from the RSC; this is

an engaging, highly original production. The 1999 film features a star-studded cast that includes Kevin Kline, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Christian Bale, among many others. Though visually beautiful and often funny, the film features an unfortunate subplot about Bottom that is not in the text. The 2019 production by The National Theatre in London featured Gwendoline Christie (familiar to young people from *Game of Thrones* and the most recent *Star Wars* trilogy) as Titania in a gender-bending production with a decidedly feminist twist that was well-reviewed and may become available for online viewing. NOTE: teachers of young people should know that an IMDB search of “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” produces a lengthy list of film and tv versions that ultimately includes some pornographic adaptations. (Don’t ask, because I haven’t watched them, and no, I can’t imagine them either.)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES – Re-imaginings of Shakespeare’s Plays

--The Hogarth Shakespeare Series, which is ongoing, consists of novelistic retellings of Shakespeare’s plays by well-known contemporary authors. See www.HogarthShakespeare.com. NOTE: Sexually explicit language and situations.

--For a reimagining of *Hamlet* see the YA novel *Ophelia* by Lisa Klein (2007), which was also made into a film (2019) starring Daisy Ridley and Naomi Watts. There are also video games that reimagine *Hamlet* from Ophelia’s point of view.

--For a reimagining of *The Winter’s Tale*, see E.K. Johnston’s YA novel *Exit, Pursued by a Bear* (2016). NOTE: Disturbing themes, including a “date-rape drug” rape that results in a pregnancy that the young heroine chooses to terminate. Teachers may also wish to know that the heroine’s loyal best friend enters into a same-sex romantic relationship with another girl that is mentioned but not described in any detail. For another reimagining of *The Winter’s Tale*, see Helen Oyeyemi, *Gingerbread* (2019). NOTE: Disturbing themes, including

what initially appears to be a suicide attempt by the young heroine (although she survives and explains that her intention was not to commit suicide, but that she was, in fact, tricked).

--For a brilliant and provocative reimagining of *Pericles*, see *The Porpoise* (2019) by Mark Haddon, author of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*. NOTE: This one is *really* only for mature readers, 18 (at a minimum) and up; some adults may need to skip this one, and all teachers will definitely need to add a trigger warning. The novel contains many extremely disturbing scenes, including a horrifying fatal plane crash; extended sexual abuse by a father of his daughter; family violence; abuse of a corpse; and detailed descriptions of the general nastiness of life in seventeenth-century London. If you're still reading at this point, you may be wondering why I'm recommending this at all, so let me affirm that it's well worth the effort, and it's not gratuitously violent. The author is making several broader points, most notably about women and girls, and how they are often mis-treated by

men -- and by male authors. Not an easy read, though, and a quick refresher on *Pericles* is strongly encouraged.

--For Shakespearean echoes in the first four *Harry Potter* books (through *Goblet of Fire*), including a discussion of the significance of Hermione Granger's name, see Miranda Johnson-Haddad, "Harry Potter and the Shakespearean Allusion," in *Reimagining Shakespeare for Children and Young Adults*, ed. Naomi J. Miller (New York: Routledge, 2003). This volume contains many useful essays that propose various strategies for integrating Shakespeare's works into classrooms, from pre-school through high school.

--Ian McEwan's *Nutshell* (2017) is a pre-quel of sorts to *Hamlet* that is told from the point of view of Hamlet as a fetus, during Gertrude's pregnancy. Margaret Atwood's short story "Gertrude Speaks," in *Good Bones and Simple Murders* (1991) tells the story of *Hamlet* from Gertrude's POV.

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Send me a friend request on Facebook and a follow request on Instagram (Miranda Johnson-Haddad, for both)!

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS

Folger Shakespeare Library, www.folger.edu. Includes an extensive section for teachers of all levels with newly updated ideas for teaching virtually. The section for Kids' Activities also contains good ideas for teachers.

The Education section on www.anoisewithin.org contains many wonderful resources for teachers, also with a new section for online learning.

For a detailed interactive map of early modern London, see <https://mapoflondon.uvic.ca/index.htm>. This is a fascinating website, but be warned: you're likely to spend hours on this site without even realizing that time is passing.

For a digitalized copy of Shakespeare's First Folio (1623), see among other websites <https://firstfolio.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/> and the Folger Shakespeare Library website.

<https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare> is the Shakespeare-specific site on the British Library's website. This site contains a great deal of well-researched, reliable information about Shakespeare, his plays, and his life and times.

For contemporary film versions of Shakespeare's plays, and for filmed versions of several recent stage productions, including from the Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare's Globe, and The National Theatre, see www.youtube.com, where many

theater companies are currently streaming past productions. Be aware that most of these productions are available for a limited time period only.

I also recommend the 2016 series “Shakespeare Lives!” These short films (most are less than 5 minutes long) are imaginative adaptations and extensions of, and reflections upon, several Shakespeare plays. The series was commissioned by the British Arts Council as part of a year-long commemoration of Shakespeare on the 400th anniversary year of his death (in 1616). The one on *Othello*, entitled “Dear Mr. Shakespeare,” is particularly effective (this is my favorite) and provides some excellent paths forward into the conversation about racism in Shakespeare’s plays. All are available on YouTube.

The Royal Shakespeare Company is streaming several of its past productions on the BBC website, through June 23. Currently they are only accessible in the UK, but this may change. For more information, I include below the link to the 2015 production of “Othello,” but the culture-in-quarantine tag will get you to other productions available on this website. (This production was the first by the RSC to cast a black actor, Lucian Msamati, as Iago. Young people may recognize Msamati from the 2019 BBC/HBO tv series “The Golden Compass”; they may also recognize Hugh Quarshie, who plays Othello, from the 2018 film “Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald.”)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p089zj52/culture-in-quarantine-shakespeare-othello>

--I must give a shout-out to Katherine Powers's fun webseries entitled "Shakespeare Sings!" which is part of Los Angeles Opera's new learn-at-home programming. Full disclosure: episode 2 features me. Episode 3, about *MND*, features ANW Resident Artist Angela Gulner. www.laopera.org (Click on Opera at Home)

--And another shout-out to the 30-minute instructional videos on A Noise Within's Facebook Page. Full disclosure: there's one by me about *MND* and an amazing one by ANW Resident Artist Jeremy Rabb on scansion.

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