

## ENGL 715.61 SHAKESPEARE'S QUEER WOMEN

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MW 6:00p–7:53p

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### OVERVIEW:

- At the end of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, the Duke attempts to establish Mariana's social status as he asks in succession, "What, are you married? ... Are you a maid? ... A widow, then?" (5.1.177–180). Mariana responds each time in the negative, leaving the Duke to question, "Why you are nothing then, neither maid, widow, nor wife?" (5.1.183). Lucio suggests that perhaps Mariana is "a punk" (5.1.184), but the Duke quickly dismisses the comment. Though secretly the Duke understands Mariana's complicated position within the world of the play, his public bewilderment at the notion that a woman can exist beyond the categories traditionally assigned to her—daughter, wife, or widow—highlights the pervasive cultural acceptance of these categories within early modern drama. Throughout this course, then, we will focus on female characters in Shakespeare's plays that trouble the social divisions of daughters, wives, and widows. In reading *Measure for Measure*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*, we will encounter women who often heed Judith Butler's warning that "perhaps we make a mistake if we take the definitions of who we are, legally, to be adequate descriptions of what we are about" (*Undoing Gender* 20). These queer women attempt to negotiate for their own autonomies and identities—often in messy and unsuccessful ways—during a time that would rather discount or discredit their existence and their struggle, or relegate them to a recognizable category based on their relationship to a masculine authority.
- Requirements: class participation, short written responses, in-class presentation, attend RSC's production of *The Winter's Tale*, research project.

### REQUIRED TEXTS (available at the Hunter Bookstore and Shakespeare & Co.):

- *Measure for Measure* ISBN: 9780199535842
- *All's Well That Ends Well* ISBN: 9780199537129
- *Two Noble Kinsmen* ISBN: 9780199537457
- *The Winter's Tale* ISBN: 9780199535910
- *Antony and Cleopatra* ISBN: 9780199535781
- A packet of various secondary readings that I will provide

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

#### Attendance

- **Regular attendance is required.** If you miss a class, you miss a lot. **After one absence your grade will suffer; excessive absences will result in you failing the course.** I expect you to be in class on time and ready to participate.

#### Class Participation

- **Active participation is required.** Come to class prepared and ready to participate. If you are unprepared or do not have the necessary materials (your book, handouts, response papers, etc.), you may be asked to leave. You will be respectful of your fellow classmates. Disruptive behavior—

rudeness, talking while others are speaking, cell phones, or texting during class—may result in me asking you to leave.

### Reading

- You will notice that the reading for this course is heavy and our time together is short. Please familiarize yourself with the syllabus and the readings (both the plays and the secondary sources) and budget your time accordingly.

### Short Responses

- You will be required to hand in a typed response to each play covered. You may choose to write on the play itself, or respond to one of the secondary readings assigned with the play. For *The Winter's Tale* response, you may write a *critical* review of the RSC production we attend. Your write-ups should be approximately 300–600 words (1–2 pages typed double-space). These responses are not intended to prove that you read the assigned reading and, therefore, should not include a plot summary, or an article summary. When responding to a play, I suggest that you focus on a particular detail or question from the reading. Likewise, if you are responding to a historical document or a scholarly article, you might discuss what was useful about the reading, or how it helps further your understanding of the play. In considering the scholarly articles, you may consider what worked (or did not work), or how you might read a character/theme/passage different from the view put forth in the article. These responses are an excellent opportunity to test ideas for your longer paper, or work on critiquing and incorporating the theories of other scholars' work in your own writing.

### Presentation

- The first day of class you will select one secondary source from the reading packet on which to lead a discussion. The presentation will consist of two parts: a written response to the article, chapter, or historical document (~2 pages) that you will read aloud during class; after you have read your response, you will have time to lead a discussion on the reading, which may include questions or other ideas that you wish to raise with your classmates. Like with your response papers, I recommend that you choose a facet of the text, versus trying to cover the work in its entirety. Concentrate on a short critique, relating the article to that week's reading, or even previous readings we have done. Remember that your classmates have read the text; no summary is necessary. As you move to the discussion phase of the presentation, you may want to ask specific questions regarding your classmates' responses to the work or you may want to suggest how it helps us think about a specific moment, or theme, in the play. But focus more on the article than the play of the week so that we get a solid discussion of the article. Let your classmates also ask you questions, and respond to your ideas. Ideally, this discussion should last ~20 minutes (including your reading of your written response). **A copy of your presentation will be handed in and will count as your response paper for that play.**

### Research Paper

- This course requires either a research paper (10–15 pages) or an annotated bibliography. A brief research proposal will be due **Monday, August 8th**. These options will be explained fully in a separate handout. Your final project will be due **by midnight, Friday, August 19th**. Your paper must be emailed to me by that date and time. No late papers will be accepted.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

### Format of Written Work

- All work must be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point font (preferably Times New Roman font), with one-inch margins on all sides.

### Plagiarism

- The Hunter College Senate requires that the following statement be included on all syllabi: “Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.”
- ***Plagiarism is a serious offence.*** Plagiarism includes any representation of another’s ideas or work as your own, including the ideas of another student, articles, books, or information from the internet. I take instances of plagiarism seriously. **If you are caught plagiarizing, you will fail the assignment and be reported to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Official.**
- If you find yourself stuck during the writing process, come and see me. If you have any questions about how to properly cite sources, I’m more than happy to help. Also, the Reading/Writing Center has several handouts, including ones on MLA style and how to cite sources properly: <http://rwc.hunter.cuny.edu/reading-writing/on-line.html>

### Academic Accommodation

- In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical and/or Learning) consult the Office of ACCESSability located in Room 1124 East to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance please call (212-772-4857)/ TTY (212-650-3230).

*Please note that the syllabus is subject to change.*

### GRADES:

- Class Participation: 20%
- Short Responses: 25%
- Presentation: 15%
- Research Project: 40%

Date	Play	Readings
7/18 M	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	<p>Acts 1–3</p> <p>Rackin, Phyllis. <i>Shakespeare and Women</i>. New York: Oxford UP, 2005. [Chapter 1 “A Usable History” and Chapter 2 “The Place(s) of Women in Shakespeare’s World: Historical Fact and Feminist Interpretation,” pgs 7–47]</p>
7/20 W	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	<p>Acts 4–5</p> <p>Hadfield, Andrew. “Shakespeare’s <i>Measure for Measure</i>.” <i>Explicator</i> 61.2 (2003 Winter): 71–73.</p> <p>Kamps, Ivo and Karen Raber, eds. <i>Measure for Measure: Texts and Contexts</i>. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2004. [Chapter 2 “Marriage, Sex, and Society,” pgs 181–228]</p> <p>Butler, Judith. <i>Undoing Gender</i>. New York: Routledge, 2004. [Introduction “Acting in Concert,” pgs 1–16]</p>
7/25 M	<i>All’s Well That Ends Well</i>	<p>Acts 1–3</p> <p>Traister, Barbara Howard. “‘Doctor She’: Healing and Sex in <i>All’s Well That Ends Well</i>.” <i>A Companion to Shakespeare’s Works: The Poems, Problem Comedies, Late Plays</i>. Eds. Richard Dutton and Jean E. Howard. 333–347.</p> <p>Crawford, Julie. “<i>All’s Well That Ends Well</i> Or, Is Marriage Already Always Heterosexual?” <i>Shakespeareer: A Queer Companion the Complete Works of Shakespeare</i>. Ed. Madhavi Menon. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2011. 39–47.</p>
7/27 W	<i>All’s Well That Ends Well</i>	<p>Acts 4–5</p> <p>Mukherji, Subha. “Consummation, custom and law in <i>All’s Well That Ends Well</i>.” <i>Shakespeare and Sexuality</i>. Eds. Catherine M. S. Alexander and Stanley Wells. New York: Cambridge UP, 2001. 116–145.</p> <p>Jankowski, Theodora A. “Hymeneal Blood, Interchangeable Women, and the Early Modern Marriage Economy in <i>Measure for Measure</i> and <i>All’s Well That Ends Well</i>.” <i>A Companion to Shakespeare’s Works: The Poems, Problem Comedies, Late Plays</i>. Eds. Richard Dutton and Jean E. Howard. 89–105.</p>
8/1 M	<i>The Winter’s Tale</i>	<p>Acts 1–5</p> <p>DiGangi, Mario. <i>The Winter’s Tale: Texts and Contexts</i>. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2008. [Chapter 2 “Gender, Sexuality, and the Family,” pgs 174–186]</p> <p>Excerpt from Shakespeare’s and Fletcher’s <i>Henry VIII</i> [2.4 and 3.1].</p>
8/3 W	No Class	<p><b>RSC’s <i>The Winter’s Tale</i> at Park Avenue Armory (entrance on Park between 66th and 67th); meet at the entrance at 1:00pm</b></p>

Date	Play	Readings
8/8 M	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>	Discuss RSC Production DiGangi, Mario. <i>The Winter's Tale: Texts and Contexts</i> . Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2008. [Chapter 3 "Authority and Resistance" pgs 234–243, 261–299]
	<i>The Two Noble Kinsmen</i> <i>*research proposal due</i>	Acts 1–3 Butler, Judith. <i>Undoing Gender</i> . New York: Routledge, 2004. [Chapter 1 "Besides Oneself: On the Limits of Sexual Autonomy," pgs 17–39]
8/10 W	<i>The Two Noble Kinsmen</i>	Acts 4–5 Sinfield, Alan. <i>Shakespeare, Authority, Sexuality: Unfinished business in cultural materialism</i> . New York: Routledge, 2006. [Chapter 5 "Intertextuality and the Limits of Queer Reading in A <i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i> and <i>The Two Noble Kinsmen</i> ," pgs 68–84] Neely, Carol Thomas. <i>Distracted Subjects: Madness and Gender in Shakespeare and Early Modern Culture</i> . Ithaca, NY: Cornell, UP, 2004. [Chapter 3 "Diagnosing Women's Melancholy: Case Histories and the Jailer's Daughter's Cure in <i>The Two Noble Kinsmen</i> ," pgs 69–98]
8/15 M	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	Acts 1–3 Butler, Judith. <i>Undoing Gender</i> . New York: Routledge, 2004. [Chapter 2 "Gender Regulations," pgs 40–56] Smith-Howard, Alycia. "'I' th' posture of a whore': Shakespeare and the Female Hero." <i>Women's Studies: An Interdisciplinary Anthology</i> . Ed. Roberta Rosenberg. New York: Peter Lang, 2001. 221–232.
8/17 W	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	Acts 4–5 Hanson, Ellis. "Antony and Cleopatra Aught an Eunuch Has." <i>Shakespeare: A Queer Companion the Complete Works of Shakespeare</i> . Ed. Madhavi Menon. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2011. 48–54. Cook, Carol. "The Fatal Cleopatra." <i>Shakespearean Tragedy and Gender</i> . Eds. Shirley Nelson Garner and Madelon Sprengnether. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1996. 241–267.