

ENGLISH 495, SEC 2
SHAKESPEARE GOES TO THE MOVIES:
THE SHAKESPEARE ON FILM WORKSHOP

Fall 2001

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Grades

The workshop requires two papers. The first is a performance review of one of the films we view (your choice). The other paper will require a team or group effort and will require some research. The group will view a film of choice and discuss it; the group will formulate several questions or topics that need responses. The group will then divide the work among individuals (or students may work in pairs). The group will meet at least once to discuss progress and share research results and ideas before the due date.

The workshop also requires ATTENDANCE. Perfect attendance and "A's" or "B's" on the two papers (plus cooperation on the group effort) will earn a final grade of "A." Perfect attendance and "C's" on the papers will earn a final grade of "B." Perfect attendance and unsatisfactory papers or lack of cooperation on the group effort will yield a final "C."

Two unexcused absences will lower your grade by one letter. Three or more unexcused absences result in failure of the course.

Schedule

The workshop meets ten Tuesday evenings, 7:00 PM - 9:50 PM on the following dates:

Aug 21, #1

Introduction to the course; Brief Primer on film theory; History of Shakespeare on Film and Video; "Tickling Commodity"; Shakespeare Derivatives; Tips on Viewing

Sep 4, #2

Trevor Nunn's Twelfth Night (1996-Bonham Carter): Showing and Telling, or Showing and Not Telling: The Directorial Dilemma

Sep 11, #3

Kenneth Branagh's Much Ado about Nothing (1993-Branagh, Emma Thompson): Branagh and Popular Film Culture

Sep 18, #4

Mankiewicz's Julius Caesar (1953-Marlon Brando, John Gielgud) or 3 Romeo and Juliets (Cukor, 1936-Norma Shearer, Leslie Howard; Zeffirelli (1968Olivia Hussey, Leonard Whiting), and Luhrmann (1996-DiCaprio, Danes): Screenplays vs. Texts and Adaptations

Oct 2, #5

Welles' Chimes at Midnight (1966): American Shakespeare Speaks at the Cinema

Oct 9, #6

Branagh's Henry V (1989): Popular Shakespeare Explodes on Film in the Nineties

Oct 16, #7

Hamlet, version yet to be selected: "Who's There?", or Shakespeare on Film Explores the Big One

Oct 23, #8

More of the Same:: Hamlet by Olivier (1948); Richardson (1969); Messina (1980); Zeffirelli (1990); Branagh (1996)

Nov 6, #9

Othello by Parker (1995): Shakespeare in the Open Market, PC, Accessible , and Realistic

Nov 27: #10

Three Othellos: Welles (1952); Burge (1965); Miller (1981): Exploring Other Versions of Shakespeare's Moor

Each evening session will begin with a brief lecture on the film (or films) to be viewed. Then the film will be shown, with clips from other versions worked in. The remaining time will be used for questions and discussion. The whole experience will be informal and relaxed and as pleasurable as I can make it. The purpose of the course is to help you to enjoy Shakespeare on film, and therefore Shakespeare in performance and Shakespeare on the page, and to help you become a more informed viewer of Shakespeare on film, and therefore of film generally.

I reserve the right to alter the selections after the Sep 19 session.

The "performance review" will be at least three pages long, but not more than five. It will involve a minimal amount of research: You will need to seek out two or three reviews of films and/or critical essays in books and journals on the subject of Shakespeare on film or film theory or on the play you are writing about. It will be a brief formal exercise designed to help you become a more critical, informed viewer.

You may also choose to keep a journal of your viewing experiences: I would welcome a record of your responses as an index of your interest in and commitment to the course.