ENG 115D: SHAKESPEARE, LANGUAGE, CONTEXTS (Seminar Format)

Tuesdays + Thursdays 3:00 - 4:50 pm (Bldg. 460 - Room 334)
Patricia Parker (parker@stanford.edu): Office hours Tues+Thurs 5-6 pm (460-338) and by appt. All Contextual Readings provided by instructor except for S. Orgel book.

Course Goals: To provide significant experience in interpreting major plays of Shakespeare, through consideration of the language and exposure to weekly readings on important historical and cultural contexts for each play. Starting in Week 2, students should come with the assigned play read in full by each Tuesday class; and with at least 5 questions or comments on the assigned Contextual Readings to each Thursday class, for use as the basis for seminar discussions. Essay topics will be suggested by the instructor and worked out in consultation with each student, so as to fulfill the goals of the course.

1. WEEK 1 (Tues. March 29): Introduction
   (Thurs. March 31): A Midsummer Night’s Dream

2. WEEK 2 (April 5+7): A Midsummer Night’s Dream

Contextual Reading (for Thurs. April 7):

3. WEEK 3 (April 12+14) -- Twelfth Night

Contextual Reading (for Thurs. April 14):
Patricia Parker, “Was Illyria as Mysterious and Foreign as We Think?”

4. WEEK 4 (April 19+21) -- As You Like It

Contextual Reading (for Thurs. April 21):
All of Stephen Orgel’s book Impersonations (available at the bookstore for this course)

5. WEEK 5 (April 26+28) -- The Merchant of Venice

Contextual Reading (for Thurs. April 28): Excerpt from James Shapiro, Shakespeare and the Jews
6. WEEK 6 (May 3+5) – Henry V


7. WEEK 7 (May 10+12) -- Othello

Contextual Reading (for Thurs. May 12):


8. WEEK 8 (May 17+19) -- Antony and Cleopatra

Contextual Reading (for Thurs. May 19):

(a) Kim F. Hall on Cleopatra and Blackness (from Hall, Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England, 1995)

(b) OPTIONAL READING on Egypt, Renegades and the Barbary Coast (to be provided)

9. WEEK 9 (May 24+26) -- The Tempest

Contextual Reading (for Thurs. May 26):


10. WEEK 10 (Tues. May 31) – No class (special office hours during class time)

GRADE = 30% seminar participation; 70% written work

WRITING REQUIREMENT: Either one 12-page double-spaced essay or two shorter essays totaling 12 pages, including 2 plays and 2 Contextual Readings from the course. Written work may be handed in for comment any time from Week 6 on, but the FINAL DEADLINE (NO EXTENSIONS) is by email attachment to parker@stanford.edu by no later than 11:59 pm on THURSDAY JUNE 2.
Students with Documented Disabilities
Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (phone: 723-1066, URL: http://studentaffairs.stanford.edu/oae).

Honor Code
The Honor Code is the University’s statement on academic integrity written by students in 1921. It articulates University expectations of students and faculty in establishing and maintaining the highest standards in academic work:

The Honor Code is an undertaking of the students, individually and collectively:

1. that they will not give or receive aid in examinations; that they will not give or receive unpermitted aid in class work, in the preparation of reports, or in any other work that is to be used by the instructor as the basis of grading.
2. that they will do their share and take an active part in seeing to it that others as well as themselves uphold the spirit and letter of the Honor Code.
3. The faculty on its part manifests its confidence in the honor of its students by refraining from proctoring examinations and from taking unusual and unreasonable precautions to prevent the forms of dishonesty mentioned above. The faculty will also avoid, as far as practicable, academic procedures that create temptations to violate the Honor Code.
4. While the faculty alone has the right and obligation to set academic requirements, the students and faculty will work together to establish optimal conditions for honorable academic work.