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The Role of Film and Television in American Shakespeare Studies: 1940s to 1990s

by

Jonah Kent Richards

A Dissertation

Submitted to the University at Albany, State University of New York

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the Requirements for the Degree of
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ABSTRACT

The rise of Shakespeare film and television transformed American Shakespeare studies over the period from the 1940s to the 1990s. The birth of Shakespeare film scholarship was only possible in the United States where the expanding postwar economy and academy provided a film market and student population large enough to fuel the subsequent film booms. The five chapters focus on the following: Laurence Olivier's 1944 *Henry V*, John Barton's 1982 *Playing Shakespeare*, the BBC's 1978-1985 *The Shakespeare Plays*, Kenneth Branagh's 1989 *Henry V* and 1993 *Much Ado About Nothing*, S4C's 1992 *Shakespeare: The Animated Tales*, Ellen Hovde and Muffie Meyer's 1992 *Behind the Scenes*, and Al Pacino's 1996 *Looking for Richard*. All were widely viewed in America and led to the development of a symbiotic relationship among American Shakespeare studies, the British film industry, professional theatre companies, and television companies. As scholars watched and taught these films and series, American Shakespeare studies began to shift from an emphasis on literary criticism to scholarship invested in performance. Pedagogy and teaching were an important part of the developing nexus and commercial study guides designed to accompany the films and series indicate that education was changing. Scholars adapted Shakespeare studies to the new digital media. The efforts of twentieth-century American Shakespeare scholars can serve as a guide for contemporary scholars as they work to preserve Shakespeare's relevance for future generations.

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Introduction

The rise of Shakespeare on film and television during the second half of the twentieth century is an American story. The screen adaptations were fueled by the expanding American economy and academy. The genre transformed American Shakespeare studies from a discipline primarily based on literary criticism into one equally invested in performance. My dissertation traces the evolution of the genre and scholarship from the 1940s to the 1990s. I chose the 1940s as my starting because it was when the postwar Shakespeare film boom first alerted American Shakespeare scholars to the artistic potential of Shakespeare film. I end my project in the 1990s because of the second film boom and the subsequent increased interest in teaching Shakespeare film in the classroom. The first chapter starts with the enthusiastic American response to Laurence Olivier's 1944 *Henry V*. The film's critical and economic success inspired a new generation of American scholars to publish a series of articles and books that would become the basis for the subdiscipline of Shakespeare film scholarship. The second chapter looks at the way the Royal Shakespeare Company's educational outreach programs and the 1982 *Playing Shakespeare* television series introduced a performance-based pedagogy to American teachers and students. The third chapter examines the way the forces of film, theatre, television, technology, pedagogy, and marketing came together in the form of the 1978 to 1985 *The Shakespeare Plays* television series. The fourth chapter investigates the way Kenneth Branagh's 1989 *Henry V* established the model for future films during the 1990s Film Boom. The fifth chapter examines the 1992-1994 *Shakespeare: The Animated Tales* television series, the 1992 *Behind the Scenes* television documentary series, and Al Pacino's 1996 docudrama *Looking for Richard* as part of a broader infiltration of Shakespeare into mainstream American consumer culture. Many people benefited, from the movie studios to the theatre companies, but I am

primarily interested in the emergence of the current multidisciplinary form of Shakespeare scholarship. Shakespeare scholars used the new form to secure their position in the academy. While each chapter centers on one or two particular screen adaptations, the dissertation itself focuses on Shakespeare scholarship, pedagogy, and the reception to the films. The dissertation will illustrate the growing awareness and collaboration between the British film and television media and the American academy. British media tailored their work towards their American academic audiences while the audiences recognized the media as legitimate authorities on Shakespeare.

Chapter 1

Olivier's *Henry V* and the Rise of Shakespeare Film Scholarship in the U.S.

While commissioned by the British government as a propaganda film to rally the moral of the British public during the Second World War, Laurence Olivier's 1944 film adaptation of *Henry V* was designed equally to appeal to American audiences. Everything from the film's veteran Hollywood cast, fairytale like French medieval setting and costumes, reduced screenplay, and epic battle scenes spoke to American tastes. The film's producers worked closely with their American distributors to ensure the film was widely screened throughout the country. As a result, the film's U.S. release was a bigger critical and financial success than its original in the U.K. The film's enthusiastic reception by American audiences led a postwar generation of American scholars to develop a Shakespeare film scholarship during the 50s, 60s, and 70s. Shakespeare film scholarship was the product of a combination of factors only present in the U.S. during these formative decades. At a time when the U.K. was rebuilding itself from the war, the American economy and academy were expanding. The average American worker had the disposable income and education to enjoy Shakespeare film and television. American scholars could write about the newest Shakespeare films in the newly established academic journals on film and television. It was in this environment that Robert Hamilton Ball, Roger Manvell, and Jack Jorgens published the first three academic books on Shakespeare film that laid the foundation for what would become the sub discipline of Shakespeare film scholarship in the U.S. during the 1980s.

The origins of Shakespeare film scholarship can be traced back to the blockbuster 1946 American debut of Olivier's 1944 *Henry V*. Traditionally, Olivier's *Henry V* has been portrayed entirely as a wartime propaganda project by the British screen industry designed specifically for

the British public. And indeed, the film's production narrative appears to support this reading. The brainchild of BBC Television producer Dallas Bower, the film was originally conceived in 1938 as a teleplay for BBC Television. Between 1937 and 1939, the service released close to twenty-four Shakespeare teleplays (Rothwell 96). Bower himself had produced and or directed the 1938 *Henry IV*, 1938 *Julius Caesar*, 1939 *Twelfth Night*, and 1939 *Tempest*. When BBC Television was temporarily shut down at the outbreak of the Second World War, Bower was hired as an Executive Producer for the Film Division of the Ministry of Information. At the MOI, Bower rewrote his teleplay as a wartime propaganda film. When Bower's division director Jack Beddington rejected his proposal to produce the film, Bower sold his screenplay to Italian expatriate television producer Fillipo Del Giudice's film company Two Cities Films (McFarlane 45).¹

Bower and Del Giudice were able to convince Olivier to play King Henry and to lead the production of the film. A renowned, classically trained Shakespeare stage actor, Olivier had played the role of King Henry in Tyrone Guthrie's 1937 stage production of *Henry V*. He also had portrayed the character of Orlando in Paul Czinner's 1936 film adaptation of *As You Like It* and performed King Henry's "Once more unto the breach" and "St. Crispin's day" speeches for the May 1942 BBC Radio broadcast, *Into Battle* (Curry 103). These experiences of performing Shakespeare on stage, film, and radio enabled Olivier to successfully adapt the story from one media to another. Olivier later commented that he was able to "think of the play sideways, upwards, and outwards" while also in the cinematic language of "panorama shots, tracking shots, dolly shots, medium shot, close-ups, and the movement and prying of the camera" (Olivier *On Acting*, 269). Upon accepting the directorship of the film, Olivier assumed total artistic control of the project. He shot the film in Technicolor in England and Ireland with an all-star cast of British

stage and screen actors. He was also able to call upon some of the U.K.'s most gifted production talent including Paul Sheriff and Carmen Dillon as the art directors, Roger K. Furse as the costume designer, and William Walton as the musical score composer. Sheriff, Dillon, and Walton all earned nominations for their work during the 1946 Academy Award ceremony.

When the film's original main financial backer dropped out, Del Giudice convinced British industrialist Joseph Arthur Rank to invest four hundred and seventy-five thousand pounds in exchange for the Rank Organization receiving partial ownership of the film and *Two Cities* film (Barker 248). Olivier capitalized on the successful allied invasion of Normandy coast of France in July 1944 with a dedication to the British commando and airborne troops who had participated in the operation. "To the commandoes and airborne troops of Great Britain, the spirit whose ancestors it has been humbly attempted to recapture in some ensuing scenes, this film is dedicated" (Ewert 117). The dedication created a visible connection between 1415 and 1944. The connection is also illustrated in a special 1944 poster that portrays the chorus in front of the Globe theatre in London, King Henry in front of the port of Southampton, and Pistol in front of the English war camp at Agincourt. All three characters are positioned under archways labeled May 1600, November 1944, and October 1415 (Canon Haymarket). The film's November 22nd 1944 premier at the Carlton theatre in London was organized to support benevolent funds for the troops to which the film was dedicated (Curry 107). While the film initially received a timid reception from London audiences, it quickly turned into a blockbuster (Barker 256). Olivier recounts seeing queues of London cinemagoers in 1944, "Servicemen on leave, and ordinary housewives from the Home Front, queued outside the Empire, Leicester Square, for eleven months" (Olivier *On Acting*, 283). From this British perspective, the film successfully fulfilled its role as a wartime propaganda piece.

Despite Olivier's *Henry V*'s British origins, it's clear that the film's production team also had American audiences in mind when they produced and marketed the film. With a budget of approximately \$2,000,000 (£475,708), Olivier's *Henry V* was the most expensive film in the history of the British film industry at the time (Hall 169). While Del Giudice predicted that the film would earn enough in the U.K. to pay for its production costs, he stated that they would have to depend on earnings from the U.S. and other foreign markets to generate a profit (Agee 58).

Fortunately for the film's financial backers, when Olivier took the helm, he would have the Hollywood cinematic style and its intended American audience in the back of his mind. As a director, Olivier was as much a product of Hollywood as he was of the British professional theatre companies. Olivier first traveled to Hollywood in 1930 in search of acting work after the outbreak of the Great Depression in 1929. The depression had reduced the size of the British theatre and screen market. He writes, "When I went to Hollywood in 1930, aged twenty-three, I was very snooty about moving pictures. I went for the money—it was the Depression—and the chance of fame: to have a go at something different, rewarding or not. More likely not" (Olivier *On Acting*, 251). By 1941, Olivier had acted in Victor Schertzinger's 1931 *Friends and Lovers*, Raoul Walsh's 1931 *The Yellow Ticket*, Robert Milton's 1932 *Westward Passage*, Cyril Gardner's 1933 *Perfect Understanding*, Anthony Asquith's 1935 *I Stand Condemned*, William Wyler's 1939 *Wuthering Heights*, Alfred Hitchcock's 1940 *Rebecca*, and Robert Z. Leonard's 1940 *Pride and Prejudice* (Filmography-Laurence Olivier, IMDb). Olivier's experience in Wyler's *Wuthering Heights* in particular helped him develop his signature cinematic approach. Olivier states that it was Wyler who convinced him to have another go at Shakespeare on film. Olivier recounts Wyler saying, "Don't sneer at that *As You Like It* Shakespeare film. Shakespeare

can be done as anybody can be done if you just think out how.” Olivier credits him for teaching him the “tricks of the trade” (Olivier *On Acting*, 260-261).²

In everything from the casting to the setting, Olivier designed the film in a manner that would appeal to American audiences. While Olivier assembled an all-British cast of stage and screen actors, he was careful to cast actors like Leslie Banks, Felix Aylmer, and Robert Newton who had also appeared in Hollywood films or films produced by a British subsidiary of Hollywood companies. By casting Hollywood veteran Banks in the role of the chorus, Olivier ensured that he had an actor who could engage American film audiences in a manner that they could understand. Similarly, Olivier’s choice of English Renaissance and French medieval costumes and sceneries gave the film a fairytale style.³ Likewise, Olivier worked with his screenwriter Alan Dent to rewrite Bower’s original screenplay. Knowing from his experience in Hollywood that American audiences were accustomed to films that ran no longer than three hundred and sixty minutes, Olivier cut Shakespeare’s text from three thousand to fifteen hundred lines to make sure the film was three hundred sixty-seven minutes. These cuts ensured that American audiences would appreciate the poetry of Shakespeare’s language without being overwhelmed by it (Olivier *Confessions of an Actor*, 136). Olivier also had American audiences in mind when he choreographed his film’s epic final battle scene at Agincourt. Conscious of the success of historical war films in the U.S., Olivier modeled the battle sequence closely after the battle scenes in Sergei Eisenstein’s 1938 *Alexander Nevsky* and D.W. Griffith’s 1915 *Birth of a Nation* (Olivier *On Acting*, 276). Rather than just having the chorus describe the battle as Shakespeare does in the text of the play, Olivier developed a visual action sequence that would thrust his American audiences into the battle as they had become accustomed to in Hollywood films.

A close analysis of a series of scenes from Olivier's *Henry V* reveals the American-targeted elements in the film. In the opening sequence of the film, Olivier presents his adaptation as a "play-within-a-film." Olivier opens the film with a pan shot across a model of Elizabethan London. The pan shot starts in front of the Tower of London in the borough of Tower Hamlets before panning across the Thames River and London Bridge to the borough of Southwark to the Bear Garden theatre before zooming in on the Globe theatre (Olivier *Henry V*, 00:01:04-00:02:58). In addition to raising the spirits of war weary British audiences, the shot also acts as an establishing shot for American audiences. The pan shot deliberately targeted London landmarks that the average American would recognize. By doing so, Olivier transformed London in the minds of his American audience from a foreign city into a familiar stomping ground.

In a similar sequence in the Globe theatre, Olivier familiarizes his American audience with the tradition of the Elizabethan theatre. Olivier explains that by "play[ing] the first few scenes on the Globe stage in a highly, absolutely deliberate, theatrical style," he was able to "get the film audience used to the language" (Olivier *On Acting*, 187). Thus when the chorus, played by stage actor Leslie Banks, enters the stage and delivers the lines from the opening prologue, "Or may we cram / Within this wooden O the very casques / That did affright the air at Agincourt" as he gestures with his arm to the surrounding circular space, the film audience is able to understand that the chorus is making a metatheatrical reference to the Globe playhouse itself (Olivier *Henry V*, 00:05:59-00:06:06). Olivier's combined use of camerawork and theatrical acting showed American audiences that they could appreciate Shakespeare's plays (Olivier *On Acting*, 159).

During the chorus' prologue, we also witness the way Olivier carefully orchestrated synchronization between the movement of the camera and the performance of Shakespeare's

words in order to engage American audiences. Olivier states in *On Acting* that he “always looked to the text of the play to give [him] the movements of the camera” (Olivier *On Acting*, 192). By doing so, he appears to be faithfully following the narrative in his Shakespearean source text. However, Olivier would sometimes alter the narrative by cutting or rearranging segments of the text. In the second half of the prologue in Shakespeare’s text, the chorus humbly requests, “Oh, pardon, since a crooked figured may / Attest in little place a million, / And let us ciphers to this great account, / On your imaginary forces work” (*Henry V*, Prologue.15-18). In his film, Olivier cuts the lines, “Oh, pardon, since a crooked figure may / Attest in little place a million, / And let us, ciphers to this great account,” and instead has the chorus silently walk up to the camera as it zooms in to meet him before quietly delivering the lines, “On your imaginary forces work” directly into the camera (Olivier *Henry V*, 00:06:14-00:06:15). By cutting the earlier lines, Olivier turns the chorus’ request to the audience to let the actors work their imaginations into a command that the audience work their own imaginations. Olivier’s insertion of the five-second silent gap creates a dramatic pause, which gives the lines an extra bit of power. Similarly, Olivier’s instructions to the chorus to advance forward while the camera zooms into a close up creates a transition period in which the actor goes from speaking to the audience members in the Globe to the viewers watching the film in the cinema. Olivier has the chorus return his attention back to the audience in the Globe by having the camera zoom out as the chorus begins to speak to the playhouse with his grand theatrical voice and arm gestures.

In Act 1 Scene 1 of the opening scene, Olivier uses the dialogue between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Ely to direct his American audiences to the interaction that occurred between Elizabethan actors and audiences. During the scene, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Ely, played by Felix Aylmer and Robert Helpmann, discuss the

reformation of King Henry. When Canterbury mentions the name, “Sir John Falstaff,” the audience erupts into cheers. The actors turn away from each other in surprise before the camera cuts to a shot revealing everyone from the gentlemen sitting on the stage to the groundlings standing in the yard laughing. The Bishops respond to the audience’s cheers by becoming very indignant. Canterbury proceeds to deliver the lines, “Sir John Falstaff and all his company along with him, he banished.” Immediately, the audience starts booing. Canterbury is forced to raise his voice as he says, “And on pain of death / not to come near his person / by ten miles” (Olivier *Henry V*, 00:07:35-00:09:40). The exchange disabuses film audiences of any illusions that Elizabethan theatre audiences were passive spectators. Reduced Shakespeare Company Managing Partner Austin Tichenor writes in his 2018 article “Elizabethan theatre etiquette and audience expectations today” for the Folger Shakespeare Library Shakespeare & Beyond Blog that “Elizabethan audiences clapped and booed whenever they felt like it” (Tichenor). Thus, American audiences learn that Elizabethan actors had to be able to adapt their performances to respond to the inevitable outburst from the audience.

In the film’s portrayal of the French Court in Act 2 Scene 4, Olivier uses French medieval paintings to give the scene a fairytale look that appealed to American audiences. The sequence begins with a shot of a painted image of the French Castle in Rouen surrounded by fog. Olivier prefaces the scene with the lines, “The French, advised by good intelligence / of this most dreadful preparation, / Shake in their fear, and with pale policy / Seek to divert the English purposes” from the Chorus’ second soliloquy (Olivier *Henry V*, 00:39:50-00:40:01 and *Henry V*.Act 2.Prologue.12-15). As the chorus speaks, the camera fades into a shot of the Court. Olivier based his settings on illustrations from *Les Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry* by the brothers Limbourg and *Les Chroniques* by Jean Froissart. Unlike the English Court where everyone

appeared alert and ready for action, the French courtiers appear half asleep. King Charles sits on the floor without his crown, the Dauphin stares out a window, and the guard lies on the floor asleep. Even when the French king tries to rally his courtiers with the lines, “Thus comes the English with full power upon us,” he comes off sounding old and feeble (Olivier *Henry V*, 00:40:02-00:40:40). Jack J. Jorgens cites Harry Geduld’s description of the scene as “a succession of separate, beautifully, composed pictures” (Jorgens 124).

In designing the film’s battle sequence, Olivier drew from similar scenes in earlier historical war films. Olivier writes in *On Acting* that he studied the battle scenes from D.W. Griffith’s 1915 film *The Birth of a Nation* and Sergei M. Eisenstein’s 1938 film *Alexander Nevsky* for guidance. But he claims that it was “Shakespeare’s spirit and the spirit of his drama and characters” that ultimately evoked “the stirring images and unique pattern, rhythm and movement” for the battle sequence. Olivier explains that he designed the battle sequence to follow “the typical Shakespearean twists of high seriousness and low comedy” (191). In this way, Olivier created a sequence of action packed visuals embodying the themes and rhythms of Shakespeare’s play. Olivier starts the first action sequence of the battle with a series of tracking shots of the French knights charging the English lines. Olivier explains that he “invented the charge of the French cavalry to convey its pace, rhythm and conflict” (191). Framing the French cavalry charge with the musical score, Olivier would cut back and forth from between shots of the charging French cavalry led by the Duke of Bourbon and the defending English archers led by King Henry. At one moment, Olivier cuts to a close-up shot of a stoic looking King Henry in full battle armor on horseback, sword in hand, before a fluttering banner of the Cross of St. George. Olivier arranges the musical score to convey the speed and intensity of the French knights as they increased the speed of their attack and the English archers prepare to fire. The

result was a heightening of the dramatic tension of the sequence until the climax when King Henry signaled his archers to fire.

In addition to Olivier's Americanized production design, Del Giudice organized a special marketing campaign with the film's American distributing company, United Artists, for the film's 1946 U.S. release. Del Giudice states that initially a number of the American chief executives expressed their concerns over whether American audiences would understand the film. He recounts one of the American executives saying that steel workers in Pittsburgh would find King Henry's proposal to Princess Katherine too long. "They are accustomed to make their own proposals," he said, "in two words or none at all." Ultimately Del Giudice was able to convince them to proceed on the project (Barker 257).

In marketing the film, United Artist tailored their campaign to target the two groups that they believed were most likely to go see a Shakespeare film, theatergoers and scholars. United Artist hired a press agent from the theatre industry to promote the film as if it were a touring theatrical stage production. American theatergoers would leap at the chance to see Olivier's play within a film. In addition to these theatrical screenings in the major American cities, United Artist also organized special screenings of the film in college towns across the country. These low cost twice-daily screenings were designed to appeal to scholars and students who studied the play (Hall 169). These screenings demonstrate that the American and British film industries were beginning to identify the American education system as a potential market for Shakespeare on film.

The film's 1946 U.S. release was an even bigger success than its original 1944 launch in the U.K. The film ran for eight months in Boston and eleven months in New York City (Baxter 295). Over the course of two years, the film grossed over three million dollars in the U.S. (Hall

169). Equally as important as the film's box office success was the enthusiastic reception it received from American film critics. In the film review for the June 18th 1946 issue of *The New York Times*, Bosley Crowther praised Olivier and his production team for having "concocted a stunningly brilliant and intriguing screen spectacle, rich in theatrical invention, in heroic imagery and also gracefully regardful of the conventions of the Elizabethan stage" (Crowther 0). Crowther highlights a number of Olivier's production design elements for American audiences. Crowther applauded the reduced screenplay, Olivier and Beck's performances, the epic battle scenes, and costumes (Crowther 0). The only two aspects of the film that Crowther didn't believe would appeal to American audiences were Olivier's insertion of the Falstaff scene from *Henry IV Part 2* and Olivier's focus on the comic characters and their accents. Despite these minor critiques, Crowther concluded by commending Olivier for his contribution to the genre (Crowther 0). As one of America's most respected film critics, Crowther's review was evidence that Olivier had produced a Shakespeare film that spoke to American audiences.

Olivier's *Henry V* received even greater praise from American film critic James Agee. In the opening lines of his special cover article "Masterpiece" for the April 8th 1946 issue of *Time* magazine, Agee solemnly announced, "the movies have produced one of their rare great works of art."⁴ Agee echoes many Crowther's compliments on screenplay, performances, battles, and costumes. Beyond analyzing the film, Agee's review also explores the impact of Olivier's experiences as a stage and screen actor on his journey to making the film. Agee also cites Olivier's experience with working with Wyler in Hollywood as the moment when he realized film's true potential (4). It is as if Agee adopted Olivier and his film as members of the American film industry. Anticipating Hollywood's future demand for more Shakespeare films, Agee ended the article by reporting Olivier's desire to produce film adaptations of *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, and

Othello (5). Agee and the rest of the staff at *Time* appeared to see that Olivier's *Henry V* was going to become a force in American popular culture.

Agee's prediction proved accurate. During the 1946 Academy Award, the Board of Governors of the Academy honored Olivier with a "special award" for "his outstanding achievement as actor, producer and director in bringing *Henry V* to screen" (Oscars). It was an honor that placed Olivier amongst the ranks of American Hollywood legends like Darryl F. Zanuck, Charles Chaplain, Walt Disney, and D.W. Griffith. Olivier himself stated that the award brought him a new level of prestige that would enable him to direct his 1948 film adaptation of *Hamlet* (Olivier *On Acting*, 283). All of these honors and awards can be seen as a pronouncement by American cultural elites that Olivier had succeeded in turning Shakespeare on film into a legitimate art. This acknowledgement might have helped convince American stage and screen director Orson Welles of the market for Shakespeare film. In 1948, Welles released his film adaptation of *Macbeth* during the same year that Olivier released his eagerly anticipated film version of *Hamlet*. The success of their films led to the British and American actor-directors emergence as the great film Shakespeareans. Future Shakespeare film directors like Kenneth Branagh would model their Shakespeare films upon their cinematic styles. As Olivier's *Henry V* glimmered in the spotlight of American popular culture, American scholars followed the film and its successors with great interest.

Olivier's U.S. release coincided with the expansion of the American Academy. American Higher Education scholar Roger Geiger explains in his 2019 book *American Higher Education Since World War II* that the rising postwar American middle-class generated a greater demand for higher education. American Colleges and Universities saw rising student enrolment, faculty hiring, and infrastructure development. He writes, "higher education too became an

integral component of the American way of life” (41). The new generations of postwar college students came from a diverse range of socioeconomic backgrounds. One of these students was classicist Allan Bloom. In his 1987 book *The Closing of the American Mind*, Bloom recounts the transformation of the student body at America’s elite schools. He writes that the top schools began to abandon their preferences for the children of the elite while they opened up to children from previously excluded groups (81). These students brought a new set of interests and perspectives.

During this expansion period, a new generation of academic journals was founded. One such journal was *Hollywood Quarterly*. Founded in 1945 by the University of California Press, the journal offered a respectable vehicle for young scholars to engage in dialogue on the nature of film, television, and radio with insiders from the industry (University of California Press). In 1946, James E. Phillips published his article “Adapted from a Play by W. Shakespeare” on Olivier’s *Henry V* for the journal. An assistant professor at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), Phillips was exactly the type of young scholar likely to be interested in modern film adaptations of Shakespeare’s plays. In his article, Phillips explores why a film based on a play for Elizabethan English stage audiences appealed to American film audiences. Phillips argues that the film’s success stems from Olivier’s cinematic interpretation of King Henry as the ideal modern military leader. He writes that the character “demonstrates in practically all respects the qualities attributed to the ideal officer” (82). At a time when Americans still recalled following the military exploits of charismatic and brilliant generals like George Patton, Phillips argues that Olivier’s version of the King Henry is both “completely recognizable and completely understandable” (86). Having studied Shakespeare’s adaptation of elements from the Greco-Roman plays, Phillips could appreciate the way Olivier has detached King Henry from the values

of the Elizabethan England to append those of the twentieth century U.S. (87). Indeed, American audiences' passionate responses to the film suggest that Olivier succeeded in his goal of getting them to see King Henry as one of their own.

In his 1947 article "Accidental Judgments, Casual Slaughters and Purpose Mistook" for *The Shakespeare Association Bulletin*, Paul A. Jorgensen compares general audiences' and scholars' reactions to Olivier's portrayal of King Henry. A professor of English at the University of California at Davis, Jorgensen observes that mainstream viewers tend to admire the king while scholars were more critical. He writes, "the popular success of Lawrence Olivier's recent film version of *Henry V* and the admiration accorded the personality of its hero suggest that dislike for the king might be confined to poets, scholars, and other intellectuals who have not witnessed or conceived the play as a dynamic spectacle." Jorgensen speculates that mainstream audiences are able to more fully enjoy the film because they do not share their intellectual counterparts bias against the film's low comedic elements (59-60). Surprisingly, Jorgensen doesn't mention Olivier's edits to Shakespeare's original texts. One might have expected some scholars to protest Olivier's decision to cut all of the moments that portray King Henry in a morally ambiguous and even Machiavellian manner. Olivier's King Henry comes across as a smaller version of the warlike Harry that scholars had come to know and love. Still, Jorgensen seems content that Olivier's edits better fit his wartime propaganda film. The film's popular success led scholars to reevaluate their own approach to the plays.

In a move that anticipated the Folger Shakespeare Library's decades-later project of making Shakespeare widely accessible, *The Shakespeare Association Bulletin* published an article on Olivier's 1948 *Hamlet*.⁵ The 1949 article "The Laurence Olivier Hamlet" by the Folger Shakespeare Library literary consultant James G. McManaway can be interpreted as an

enthusiastic endorsement of the film. The last film *The Shakespeare Association Bulletin* had endorsed was Sam Taylor's 1929 *The Taming of the Shrew*.⁶ In his article, McManaway praises everything from the actors' performances to the cinematography. But what appears to appeal to McManaway the most is the film's potential to endear the play to millions of people across the country. He argues that film will help those who have only read the text experience the full performative power of the play. He writes, "the picture will give form and substance to passages that have previously been known only for their poetic beauty and to scenes, that, without stage business and passionate action, may have seemed 'words, words, words.'" McManaway is careful to note that the growing popularity of film won't stop people from reading the text. He writes, "people who have not read Hamlet since school or college days are going to take the play off the shelf and read it again, with keener more informed pleasure" (4-5). Similarly, McManaway speculates that, "teachers of the play will profit from the opportunity afforded them to build on the nation-wide familiarity with the picture" (10). McManaway clearly sees a future role for Shakespeare film in Shakespeare Studies.

Perhaps the most important American scholar to write about the film was an assistant professor of English at Queens College, Robert Hamilton Ball. In his 1947 article "If We Shadows Have Offended" for *The Pacific Spectator*, Ball states that success of Olivier's *Henry V* was forcing scholars to rethink their long held perception that Shakespeare's works are unsuitable material for adaptation into film. He writes, "Mr. Olivier's fine achievement in the production of his film, *Henry V*, brings to mind the countless times it has been dinned into us that literature, more especially dramatic literature, is not suitable material for the screen, and that Shakespeare of all his literature is least translatable to film" (97). Ball says that the time has come for scholars to correct their misconceptions about the history of Shakespeare on film. The

first step towards completing this goal would be the publication of a complete history of Shakespeare on film. While Ball freely admitted that the early Shakespeare films were artistically poor, he argues that their study is essential in order to understand the forces that eventually led to the production of Olivier's film (97). Ball's article can be seen as the first call for the development of a formal Shakespeare film scholarship. It is significant that Ball chose to make this statement in one of the new postwar journals on the west coast. It indicates that Ball foresaw that young postwar scholars like Phillips and Jorgensen would drive Shakespeare film scholarship. They were interested in the new media and had access to the film industry in California.

Over the course of the 1950s, Ball developed his own approach towards Shakespeare on silent film. In his 1952 article "The Shakespeare Film as Record: Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree" for *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Ball argues that theatre historians can use Shakespeare silent films as primary sources of late nineteenth and early twentieth century Shakespearean theatre. Ball acknowledges the films' technical limitations. He says that the filmmakers failed to take advantage of the new medium. However Ball argues that despite their failings, the films offer stage historians a valuable source of information. He explains that the adaptations "are photographs of stage productions" (228). Ball's decision to treat Shakespeare silent films as recordings of Shakespeare theatre is a significant rhetorical move because it reframes Shakespeare on film as a part of the Shakespeare theatrical tradition. The move also serves to encourage more theatre academics to enter into the dialogue on Shakespeare film.

The following year, Ball published his 1953 article "Shakespeare in One Reel" for *The Quarterly of Film Radio and Television*. In his article, Ball observes the growing interest expressed in a number of journals and production books about Olivier's 1944 *Henry V* and 1948

Hamlet, Welles' 1948 *Macbeth* and 1951 *Othello*, and Joseph Mankiewicz's 1953 *Julius Caesar*.⁷ Ball asserts that there still has been relatively little written about the single reel silent Shakespeare films (139). In an attempt to address this knowledge gap, Ball presents his research on the subject. First and foremost, he identifies Walter Pfeffer Dando and William K. L. Dickson's 1899 *King John* as the first Shakespeare film adaptation (139-140). Arguably one of the most important findings in the history of Shakespeare film scholarship, the discovery of the film gives Ball a point in time from which he can establish a timeline for his history. In addition to setting a chronology, Ball identifies those countries where the genre first developed. While Ball covers the expected western European countries of the U.K., France, and Italy, he also names the U.S. as a key industry and market for the genre (143). Ball's study of American silent Shakespeare film can be interpreted as an important step in establishing an American Shakespeare film scholarship.

In 1968, the wave of momentum that had been building for a little over two decades in Shakespeare film scholarship in the U.S. came to a head with Ball's publication of the first true academic book on Shakespeare film, *Shakespeare on Silent Film: A Strange Eventful History*. Originally conceived of as the first half of a two-volume collection of the history of Shakespeare film, the book surveys the rise of the genre of Shakespeare silent film from the late 1890s to the early 1920s. While published in two separate editions in the U.K. and U.S., the book is an entirely American enterprise. Ball was able to fund his research trips to the many film archives and libraries across Europe with a fellowship and a grant from the John Simon Guggenheim and the Rockefeller foundations. In the U.S., Ball worked with directors and curators at prestigious research institutions such as Museum of Modern Art, the New York Public Library, and the Folger Shakespeare Library. Ball also received support from Hollywood

insiders like Arthur H. DeBra at the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America (MPPDA) and John Gassner at the Columbia Pictures Corporation (Ball *Shakespeare on Silent Film*, 18). The level of support that Ball received from so many individuals in so many different organizations speaks to the popular and academic interest in Shakespeare on film in the U.S. at the time. Ball's book can be seen as another example of the growing network amongst the film industry, professional theatre companies, and the American academy.

Knowing that the majority of any interest in his book would come from the U.S., Ball devotes two whole chapters entirely to the rise of the American Shakespeare silent film industry. In the book, Ball portrays the U.S. as being at the vanguard of Shakespeare silent film. In the second chapter, Ball examines American film companies' first foray into Shakespeare during the first decade of the 1900s. He explains that the filmmakers were drawn to Shakespeare's plays both for their cultural capital and the fact that they lacked copyright protections (Ball *Shakespeare on Silent Film*, 38-39). Ball chronicles the experience of the largest American producer of silent Shakespeare film, the Vitagraph Company. Drawn to Shakespeare plays as a means to distinguish themselves from their competitors, the company hired American stage actor William V. Ranous to star in and direct a series of film adaptations of the plays (Ball *Shakespeare on Silent Film*, 39-40). Ball uses the company's first film of James Stuart Blackton's 1908 *Macbeth* as an example of the company's cinematic style. He cites a review of the film by British film trade newspaper *Kinematograph and Lantern* that praised the Vitagraph Company for "the masterly way in which they have staged Shakespeare's tragedy" (Ball *Shakespeare on Silent Film*, 41-42). Ball's chapter gives his readers a sense of pride in the knowledge that American film companies were producing films that could compete with the British.

In the third chapter, Ball explores D.W. Griffith's 1908 *The Taming of the Shrew* as another example of early American cinema's passion for Shakespeare. By citing the participation of one of the country's pioneering filmmakers, Ball provides the genre with a greater level of artistic integrity in the minds of its readers. While Ball freely admits that the film didn't offer any new views into the play, he argues that film still represents an important step in Griffith's artistic development as a filmmaker (Ball *Shakespeare on Silent Film*, 62). By extension of Griffith's influence, Ball's statement implies that the film and the silent Shakespeare film genre in general represent an important step in the maturation of American cinema. Ball's book can be interpreted as a call to American scholars to explore the genre that has played such a critical role in their cinema and popular culture. Ball's call would strike accord among a number of young scholars across the country.

One of the many scholars inspired by Ball's book was Professor of Film at Boston University, Roger Manvell. In 1971, Manvell published the second scholarly Shakespeare film book, *Shakespeare and the Film*. Picking up where Ball left off, the book covers twenty-six of the major Shakespeare sound film adaptations from around the world. In his third and fourth chapters, Manvell illustrates the way the 1930s Hollywood Shakespeare talkies served as a model for Olivier to develop the innovative cinematic techniques that made his 1944 *Henry V* a success. Manvell argues that 1930s Hollywood filmmakers were unable to produce effective Shakespeare sound films because they were still figuring out how to coordinate the films' audio and visual elements. He also asserts that the filmmakers were stifled by the star system instituted by Hollywood to finance the expensive new sound films. Directors Sam Taylor, Max Reinhardt, and George Cukor cast their film with Hollywood stars and shot them in a manner that emphasized their performance. As a result, Manvell asserts that "Shakespeare's dramatic

intention” and “the very nature of the plays” were overwhelmed by Hollywood’s conception of “production value” (Manvell 36). Manvell argues 1940s Shakespeare film directors like Olivier were able to learn from failures of the Hollywood 1930s films to produce a nearly three decade long international Shakespeare film boom. Manvell shared a 1955 interview with Olivier in which Olivier explained how by studying the unsuccessful traditional cinematic and acting techniques in Cukor’s 1936 *Romeo and Juliet*, Olivier was able to develop his own hybrid cinematic and acting techniques for his *Henry V*. Manvell cites Olivier’s performance of the tennis ball speech when Olivier went against theatrical and cinematic norms by theatrically raising his voice as the camera zoomed out away from him (Manvell 37-38). As a former British film industry insider, Manvell brought a perspective that his fellow academics lacked.

Throughout the book, Manvell attempts to convince his American readers about the important role Shakespeare films will play in the future. He writes that film and television represent the “greatest transformation” that the plays have ever experienced. He likewise points out that the media have offered “audiences of millions” access to performances of Shakespeare’s plays by some of the greatest actors and actresses of the time. Manvell cites the statistic that more people witnessed Olivier’s *Richard III* film during a single night’s television transmission in the U.S. in 1955 than all of the people who “had ever seen it in the theatres of England since the time it was first performed” (Manvell 2-3).⁸ Echoing the claims of academics like Phillips, Manvell argues that the film and television adaptations reveal new insights into the texts. Even more compellingly for his market driven American, Manvell asserts that the media will attract millions of people to the plays who the theatre has never been able to reach (Manvell 154). Manvell’s book is important because it provides American Shakespeare films scholars with a

rationale for their projects at a time when American Shakespeare Studies was firmly controlled by anti-film traditionalist scholars.

There had been a long running anti-film bias in the Anglo-American academies. This bias is best articulated in Allardyce Nicoll's 1936 book *Film and Theatre*. Nicoll explains that scholars see film as a crass popular commercial enterprise. They argued since the projects had no real artistic value that they were unworthy of further study (Nicoll 5). Nicoll cites New Roxy Theatre director Howard S. Cullman's comparison of a scholar analyzing a film to a shoe buyer looking over the upcoming fall fashion line (Nicoll 7). The conflict between pro-film and anti-film scholars came to a head with the publication of the 1977 book *Shakespeare on Film* by American Shakespeare scholar Jack J. Jorgens. An assistant professor of English for the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Jorgens had published his 1973 article "Image and Meaning in the Kozintsev Hamlet" for *Literature and Film Quarterly*. In the introduction of his book, Jorgens defines his goal as to show how film adaptations can be used to reveal new insights into Shakespeare's plays and to challenge the anti-film prejudice that existed in the American academy. Jorgens argues that it is these sorts of biases that prevent American scholars from appreciating Shakespeare on film (ix). Jorgens asserts part of the problem stems from a tendency among American scholarly disciplines to isolate themselves from one another. He states that the isolation amongst literature, theatre, and film scholars has been particularly damaging for Shakespeare film. He argues that any future film scholarship will require a method of analysis that draws from all three disciplines (3). Jorgens points out all the different ways Shakespeare scholars from different disciplines might benefit from working with one another. He states Shakespeare literary scholars would learn to approach Shakespeare's plays as performances while Shakespeare theatre and film scholars would learn to appreciate the

similarities between the two media (3-5). Jorgens points to the famed European theatre and film theorists Sergei Eisenstein and Andre Bazin as examples of scholars who were already successfully bridging the divide between the two media (251).

Equally importantly, Jorgens calls upon scholars and teachers to adopt Shakespeare films in their classes. He writes, “Shakespeareans ought to benefit much more from the fruitful confusion which results from dealing with Shakespeare in performance, and certainly it is time that teachers put films to creative use in the classroom” (Jorgens 251). It is a subject with which Jorgens is very familiar. In November 1973, Jorgens published his article “A Course in Shakespeare on Film” for *The Shakespeare Newsletter*. In the article, Jorgens describes his experience teaching a Shakespeare on Film course for the English department of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst during the Fall Semester of 1972.⁹ He designed it as both a course in film and Shakespeare. Jorgens states it both illuminated the theatrical nature of the plays and the cinematic nature of the films (43). Jorgens’ course serves as model for other Shakespeare film scholars. He can already foresee the key role education would play in the establishment of Shakespeare film scholarship.

In their three books, Ball, Manvell, and Jorgens lay the foundations for what would become the sub-discipline Shakespeare film scholarship during the late 1980s in the U.S. Collectively, these books established some of the defining characteristics of the sub-discipline. First and foremost, Shakespeare film scholarship needed to be interdisciplinary in nature. This was important because it ensured that Shakespeare film scholars mastered the necessary ideas, language, and methods from the different Shakespeare media to perform meaningful criticism. It also opened the door to future dialogues between individuals in the theatre and film industries. The second characteristic was their advocacy for the increased use of Shakespeare films and

television adaptations in the classroom. It would ensure that future generations of Americans would come to know Shakespeare through the film and television screen as much as through the page.

The history of Olivier's *Henry V* is as much a story about postwar America as it is about wartime Britain. Released in the U.S. at a moment when the economy and academy were expanding, the film sparked a Shakespeare film boom and the formation of a Shakespeare film scholarship. The discussions generated by Shakespeare film scholars about the connections between film and theatre helped generate interest amongst American Shakespeare scholars for a new Shakespeare performance style developed by a new generation of British directors and actors at the Royal Shakespeare Company in the U.K.

Chapter 2:

The RSC and Performance Based Pedagogy

While American Shakespeare scholars during the 1960s and 70s were developing Shakespeare film scholarship, a generational conflict across the Atlantic was building amongst the professional British theatre companies. A new postwar generation of university-educated British Shakespeare theatre directors and actors at the Royal Shakespeare Company were transforming the style and function of British theatre. Founded in 1962 by directors Peter Hall and John Barton, the RSC developed a performance and verse style that spoke to twentieth century issues and was approachable to the general public. In addition to their role as entertainers, the company saw themselves as active participants in Shakespeare scholarship and education. In 1965, the RSC began to send small troupes of actors to community centers and educational institutions across the U.K. to demonstrate their unique performance and verse style. During the 1970s and 80s, the RSC partnered with American research foundations to send troupes to educational institutions across the U.S. The troupes had the teachers and students take up the roles of actors and directors and put on performances of scenes from the plays. A number of American teachers wrote enthusiastically about their experience with the RSC troupes during the 1980s in scholarly journals like *Shakespeare Quarterly*.

At the same time the RSC was launching its American educational outreach programs, the London Weekend Television company partnered with the RSC to produce the 1982 television series *Playing Shakespeare*. Led by John Barton, the series modeled the performance-based pedagogies that the company had circulated through their educational outreach programs. First broadcast in the U.K. in 1984, the series was released that same year in the U.S. on videocassette where it received an enthusiastic reception from a couple of American scholars and

high school teachers in scholarly journals. It is the contention of this chapter that the RSC's educational outreach programs and television series transformed the way American teachers and their students approached Shakespeare's plays. Adopting the performance pedagogies modeled by the RSC, American teachers began to approach the plays as performances. In addition to organizing staged readings, teachers also began to show clips of the scenes from film and television adaptations on videocassette. These screenings were occurring at the same time BBC Television was marketing their series of Shakespeare television adaptations to U.S. educational institutions.

The 1961 founding of the RSC was the result of a generational transformation within the professional British theater companies. During the 1960s, the theater companies were still in the midst of a decades long leadership transition from the actor manager to the non-acting professional theater director. The change in leadership resulted in the companies shifting their productions' focus from the single performance of the leading actor to the collective performance of their entire company. At the same time, a new postwar generation of university trained actors and directors were joining the companies. They included future stage and screen stars Judi Dench, Ian McKellen, and Patrick Stewart. Theatre critic Kenneth Tyrone stated that they entered the profession with the belief that they had an agency in their society (Olivier *On Acting*, 238). Collectively, these two shifts transformed the style and social function of the companies.

It was the college educated director Peter Hall who founded the RSC. Drawn to a career in the theater by his childhood memories watching the great actors John Gielgud, Peggy Ashcroft, Ralph Richardson, and Olivier perform on stage during the 1940s, Hall states in the segment "I want to be a director" of his 2006 interview with John Goodwin for the internet site

Web of Stories that he knew from the beginning that he wanted to be a director (“I want to be a director”). In 1950, Hall went to St. Catharine’s College at the University of Cambridge where he studied English (“Sir Peter Hall, 1930-2017”). At Cambridge, Hall absorbed ideas and methods from scholars Frank Ryland Leavis and George Ryland. Most importantly, Hall was able to join the Cambridge University Amateur Dramatic Club (CUADC) where he directed productions of Jean Anouilh’s *Eurydice* also known in English as *Point of Departure*, Anton Chekhov’s *Uncle Vanya*, Shakespeare’s *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, John Barton’s *Winterlude*, and John Whiting’s *Saint’s Day*. Hall claims his directorial experiences the CUADC working with actors helped establish his self-confidence as a director. The productions also earned him his first reviews from visiting London theatre critics. Hall states in the segment “Extraordinary Times at Cambridge” of his *Web of Stories* interview, “So by the time I left Cambridge, I had a wodge of notices saying I could direct” (“Extraordinary Times at Cambridge”). Hall’s Cambridge degree combined with his London reviewed stage credits helped him earn his first professional directing jobs that would eventually draw the attention of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon.

In 1955, SMT directors invited Hall to direct for the theatre. Following the success of his 1956 production of *Love’s Labour’s Lost* and 1957 production of *Cymbeline*, Hall was appointed in 1958 as the director of the SMT. In appointing Hall, the SMT chose a modernizer to revamp the SMT’s unsustainable structure as a privately funded festival theatre with a star led cast (Chambers 5-6). Hall’s solution was to expand the SMT by opening a second theatre in London while also transforming the SMT into a publically funded permanent theatre company that performed both early modern and modern productions (Chambers 9). Hall argued that the creation of such a company “would provide the conditions for an unprecedented examination of

the plays of Shakespeare” (Chambers 13). In addition to these structural changes, Hall sent a formal request to Queen Elizabeth for permission to change the name to the “Royal Shakespeare Theatre.” The name would eventually become “the Royal Shakespeare Company” (Chambers 233).

For Hall, the success of the RSC depended on the establishment of a unified company verse and performance style. He complained that when he first directed at the SMT in 1956, he encountered a cast of actors speaking in a variety of conflicting styles and accents. He states in the segment “Trying to Create a Company” of his Web of Stories interview that his challenge as a director was to take these conflicting individuals and to merge them “into a Shakespearean company who at least sounded as if they were on the same planet” (Trying to Create a Company).¹⁰ Hall brought in fellow Cambridge alum John Barton to run a series of classes on verse speaking. These classes produced a consistent style of verse that was “light, swift, and witty” and allowed the actors to creatively illuminate the meaning of the language both individually and collectively. The style emphasized breathing, phrasing, and line structure. While outside actors originally found the RSC verse style to be bizarre, it would become the future standard for Shakespeare stage and screen productions (Chambers 142).

The RSC’s ensemble performance and verse speaking style quickly captured the attention of scholars across the U.K. and the U.S. Academic journals like *Shakespeare Survey* sent scholars to Stratford to review the productions. Collectively, these articles embody the general scholarly response towards the RSC and the new style of performance being developed there. In general, scholars wrote approvingly of the RSC style. In a 1968 article on Hall’s years at the RSC for *The Drama Review*, Simon Trussler credits Hall with revitalizing British theatre companies. He writes that prior to the RSC, “institutional theatre in this country had long been

[...] muddling along from bard to verse” (169). Trussler praises Hall for breaking with the SMT tradition of filling his cast list with star actors in order to attract audiences, but alternatively to nurture a new generation of ensemble style actors. He goes on to argue that Hall and Barton’s emphasis on line structure, rhythm, counter-rhythm, and imagery has resulted in the natural evolution of a new style of verse speaking. Trussler’s biggest complaint about the RSC performance style is that its “determination to elucidate meaning has sometimes served to obscure it” (171). In the 1964 article on Shakespeare productions in Britain for *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Robert Speaight also positively characterizes “the Stratford Style.” He writes, “My first impression is that every moment of every play is squeezed for the last ounce of meaning it contains.” Speaight states that this belief has resulted in a number of unexpected pleasantly powerful moments from scenes that are generally dismissed as uninteresting (388). Both Trussler and Speaight see the development of the RSC performance style as a major step forward for the British theatre companies.

In the mid 1960s, the RSC reestablished its educational outreach programs. In 1965, the RSC Club sponsored a team of four Stratford based RSC actors called Actor Commandos to tour the local halls and canteens of Stratford. They put on a series of thirty-minute performances of excerpts from plays by Shakespeare and other playwrights followed by a conversation with the audience. The program was designed to reach out to those members of the public who for whatever reason avoided going to the theatre, by bringing performances from the theatre to them in the comfort and familiarity of their own community spaces (Chambers 41-42). The program quickly grew both in size and complexity and expanded to London where in 1965 it was renamed Theatreground (TGR). In 1966, Hall began to promote TGR to educational authorities as a potential resource. That same year, TGR launched a series of outreach trips to local schools in a

double-decker bus that transported a fit up stage (Chambers 42). TGR concentrated their efforts in the West Midlands region of England where they established a working relationship with the educational community. At the schools, TGR put on special educational productions of plays (Howard 11). They also began to teach courses for teachers where they provided special educational packets on the plays that the teachers could later use in class (Chambers 42). These TGR outreach programs would serve as models for the 1982 television series, *Playing Shakespeare*.

In 1976, the newly appointed development officer Maurice Daniels reorganized the RSC's educational outreach program. Daniels continued sending the RSC's touring companies to various educational institutions across the U.K. The RSC began to hold workshop, seminars, and lectures where members of the company ranging from the actors to the directors participated in order to help bridge the gap between those individuals in the theatre who present Shakespeare on stage and the teachers and students who engage Shakespeare in the classroom (Chambers 173). As the RSC was expanding its educational outreach programs domestically, they found a partner in American educational institutions and research foundations. During the 1970s, the RSC partnered with the Center for Theatre, Education, and Research at the University of California at Santa Barbara to send touring companies to American colleges and universities across the country. By the 1980s, other American Research institutions and foundations like the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Folger Shakespeare Library had begun to partner with RSC to send scholars and high school teachers to Stratford for seminars on different ways to implement performance into their pedagogies (Chambers 4-5).

American scholars and high school teachers wrote about the RSC American outreach programs in the academic journals like *Shakespeare Quarterly* during the 1980s. One of the

earlier examples was the 1984 article “The Value of Actors in the Classroom” by Associate Professor of Interpretation Studies at the University of Arizona in Phoenix Mary Z. Maher for a special issue of *Shakespeare Quarterly* dedicated to Teaching Shakespeare. She opens her article with the statement she “like many another Shakespeare teacher” are beginning “to appreciate the pedagogical value of using professionally trained actors in the classroom.” Maher describes her experiences in the fall of 1982 when a troupe of five actors from the RSC visited the University of Arizona in order to give a week of master classes and public performance through the Alliance for Creative Theatre, Education, and Research (ACTER) at the University of California at Santa Barbara (616). Maher argues that the actors at the RSC are uniquely suited to teaching students and teachers about Shakespeare. She writes, “the kind of training provided by the RSC has produced a generation of actor-scholars who not only carry vast stores of Shakespeare in their heads but also bring to their experience with verse-speaking, comparative language analysis, and performance technique” (616-617). Maher’s statements are significant because she is describing the RSC actors as being a type of scholar. Maher’s descriptions suggest that she sees the RSC actors as her equals in terms of their knowledge and insights into the texts. Indeed in some cases, Maher even appears to admit that the actors may be superior.

Maher cites a literature class where one of the actors led the class in a rehearsal of the trial scene from *The Merchant of Venice*. The actor had some of the students serve as actors while the remaining members of the class acted as directors (Maher 617). Maher states that one of the primary benefits of this approach was that it revealed to the students the long process that is required for actors to develop their performances of the texts. Maher cites a fellow scholar who summarized the process as, “one first has to make sense of the words, and to decide how to best speak those words.” She argues that the RSC performance-oriented teaching style helps

students overcome their view of the plays as undecipherable poetry, but instead shows them that they are really about the human interaction that occurs between life-like personalities as they face various real world challenges. Maher explains that in performing Shakespeare's language, the students are "learning something about how to embody the conventional gestures of human experience" (Maher 619). Maher claims the RSC visit to the University of Arizona was a great success that resulted in a new relationship between teachers and students while engaging the text (Maher 620). Maher's article represents a call to other American educators to adopt the RSC performance based teaching style into their pedagogy.

In the 1984 article "Playing Out the Play: Actors, Teachers, and Students in the Classroom" for the same special teaching edition of *Shakespeare Quarterly*, American scholars Barbara C. Millard, Georgianna Ziegler, and Geraldine R. Custer analyzes the RSC's 1983 trip to La Salle College and their 1984 visit to the University of Pennsylvania through ACTER.¹¹ The scholars write that the teachers and students of the two schools "found themselves acting with, directed by, and even directing actors from the Royal Shakespeare Company." Millard, Ziegler, and Custer state that at both schools the RSC actors worked with English and theatre classes, gave performances, and offered workshops for local high school teachers (Millard et al 609). During the University of Pennsylvania trip, RSC actors Trevor Baxter, Patrick Godfrey, David Gwillim, Domini Blythe, and Louise Jameson performed a production of *Twelfth Night*. The performance was followed by a discussion with the students. Millard, Ziegler, and Custer assert these discussions helped the students as everyday people like themselves who are attempting to make sense of the plays (Millard et al 610-611). Millard, Ziegler, and Custer saw these sorts of personal connections made amongst the actors, teachers, and students as one of the outreaches' greatest accomplishments.

Millard, Ziegler, and Custer are equally interested in the high school teacher workshop at La Salle College. The workshops were each led by one RSC actor with the assistance of one or two college professors who specialized in Shakespeare. The actors taught the teachers a variety of warm-up exercises along with different ways to approach the text through oral readings. The workshops culminated in a performance of a section of one of the scenes from the plays (Millard et al 613-614). Millard, Ziegler, and Custer commented that the scholars encouraged the teachers to approach the stage readings with their students as directors. Similarly, the actors helped teachers “experience classroom situations as their students do” (Millard et al 614). Millard, Ziegler, and Custer ended the article with the statement, “at times we may find it better to involve our students in performance-oriented exploration than to give them a ‘correct’ interpretation of the text” (Millard et al 615). This approach can be traced directly back to the performance that Nunn and Barton first promoted at the RSC during the 1960s.

In addition to the outreach programs, Nunn also initiated a series of dialogues with scholars. Samuel Crowl reports in his 1992 book *Shakespeare Observed* that the RSC invited American and British Shakespeare scholars to Stratford in order to observe RSC rehearsals and to utilize the resources at the Shakespeare Centre and Shakespeare Institute. Crowl writes, “Stratford became not just a center for the historical study of Shakespearean performances there but a site where academic scholars and theatre professionals could, however uneasily, begin to engage in dialogue” (4-5). It was the formation of these dialogues on Shakespeare performance amongst the RSC, scholars, and teachers that first drew the attention of individuals in British television companies.

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, the dialogue on Shakespearean performance expanded to the medium of television. In 1976, the BBC Television producer Cedric Messina

proposed the production of the first complete series of Shakespeare television adaptations known as *The Shakespeare Plays*. Produced entirely in the U.K. by the BBC, the series was partially funded by the American media company Time-Life with grants from Exxon Corporation, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, and the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York. The corporations organized a nationwide marketing campaign to sell the series to American educational institutions. Broadcast in the U.S. from 1979 to 1985 and later sold on videocassette, the series was widely adopted by educational institutions across the country.¹²

The success of *The Shakespeare Plays* had helped renew interests amongst British television companies in Shakespeare. In 1979, London Weekend Television (LWT) approached the RSC about the creation of a two-part program on speaking Shakespearean verse for the popular British Art and Pop Culture television series *The South Banks Show*. Designed as a type of master class, the two part program known as “Word of Mouth” were led by RSC directors Trevor Nunn, John Barton, Terry Hands along with actors Ian McKellen, Michael Pennington, Jane Lapotaire, Patrick Stewart, David Suchet, and Alan Howard in front of a live studio audience. In an opening statement, the host Melvyn Bragg explains that the program chose to work with the RSC, “We invited them because they have a longer tradition than anyone else of performing the plays and we thought the way they approached the problem would lend itself to the production we had in mind” (00:00:36-00:01: 53).¹³ Nunn compares the sessions to the demonstration lectures that they had given during their educational outreach programs (Nunn viii). The success of “Word of Mouth” led the LWT to propose the creation of a complete series.

In 1982, Barton led the production of the *Playing Shakespeare* series. Organized to resemble a series of informal conversations amongst Barton and a group of his actors from the RSC on tips for aspiring Shakespearean actors, *Playing Shakespeare* is a performance

demonstration for professors and teachers to illustrate the various ways they can use RSC performance techniques to teach their students to critically read and interpret the different elements that make up Shakespeare's plays.¹⁴ Drawing upon his experiences as both an RSC director and a Dean at King's College at the University of Cambridge, Barton plays the part of the teaching-director who instructs his actors on a point before directing them to act them out in short performances. The series offered the RSC a means to expand their educational outreach and public profile at the global level. Broadcast to the general public in the U.K. in 1984, *Playing Shakespeare* was released on videocassette that same year in the U.S. by Films for the Humanities where it was primarily marketed to colleges and universities.

From the beginning of "Episode 1: The Two Traditions," Barton gives his viewers the impression that they are a part of university class with Barton and his actors. The episode is shot in what appears to be a television studio filled with an assortment of props. On the studio floor, Barton sits on a chair in front of his actors on benches in a manner that resembles a university classroom. Barton skillfully travels back and forth between his actors and the camera. Sporting wild salt-and-pepper hair and dressed in a cardigan with a matching shirt and tie, Barton is the spitting image of a university professor and stage director. Likewise the actors, dressed mostly in short-sleeved button downs and jeans while casually smoking cigarettes, exude the youthful charisma of university students and budding screen stars. This dichotomy forges a parallel between the processes of performing Shakespeare's plays on stage and studying his texts in the classroom.

A close study of Barton's organization of the subject matter of the nine episodes reveals the logic behind the pedagogy of the series. In "Episode 1: The Two Traditions," Barton explores the problem of how to get a group of modern actors to perform an Elizabethan text. He argues

the answer lies in the actors marrying the naturalistic and character-driven acting of the modern tradition with the heightened language of the Elizabethan tradition. Barton explains that this marriage is possible because the modern acting tradition actually derives from Shakespeare's plays. He claims that once an actor begins to understand how Shakespeare's plays work, they will be able to identify the naturalistic and character elements to guide their performance (Walker "Episode 1: The Two Traditions," 00:06:15-00:24:18). It initially seems strange that a hands-on director like Barton would spend his first episode on abstract concepts like the two traditions instead of going directly to Shakespeare's text. But as a former professor, Barton understands that he needs to define the two traditions for his students before they can recognize elements from them in Shakespeare's verse and use them in their analysis.

After spending "Episode 1" calling upon his viewers to use modern RSC inspired performance-based pedagogies to analyze the heightened language of Shakespeare's plays, Barton devotes "Episode 2: Using the Verse" to teaching his viewers about the mechanics of blank verse in order to show them that they can use the verse to identify hidden directions from Shakespeare to the actor in the language (Carlaw "Episode 2: Using the Verse," 00:01:15-00:02:10). Barton defines blank verse as "alternating light and strong stresses." He gives the example of the iambic pentameter rhythm of "de dum, de dum, de dum, de dum, de dum." As he delivers the lines to the camera, the lines appear beneath him with scansion marks as subtitles (Carlaw "Episode 2: Using the Verse," 00:03:32-00:09:37). Barton explains that Shakespeare uses blank verse to establish a basic norm that he will then break by adding extra stresses in order to create a dramatic effect in the scene (Carlaw "Episode 2: Using the Verse," 00:08:11-00:10:35). In order to demonstrate this, Barton instructs RSC actor Michael Williams perform King Henry V's "Once more unto the breach" speech from Act 3 Scene 1 of *Henry V*. As

Williams is delivering the speech, Barton cuts to a sequence of four red intertitles containing a portion of the dialogue of the speech with scansion marks. The viewers are able to visually follow the various patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables in the verse as they hear William's deliver the lines through voiceover with guiding commentary from Barton. At the end of William's reading of each line, Barton identifies the type of ending it represents (Carlaw "Episode 2: Using the Verse," 00:03:33-00:09:37). The demonstration serves as a clear model to any instructors viewing the episode on a potential way they could teach their students to scan and interpret the metrics of Shakespeare's language. Once students are armed with these skills, they will be able to explore the relationship between language and character.

In "Episode 3: Language and Character," Barton considers the different ways Shakespeare uses the words that make up his language to portray his characters. Barton has Patrick Stewart perform Lord Grandpre's description of the English army in Act 4 Scene 2 of *Henry V* to illustrate the different ways an actor can draw their portrayal of character directly from Shakespeare's language. Stewart claims Shakespeare "clothes the character in such rich text that the actor can find a variety of characters if he looks carefully enough." Expanding on Stewart's claim, Barton states, "the text is the character" (Carlaw "Episode 3: Language and Character," 00:34:48-00:36:47). Barton is willing to spend an entire episode establishing the relationship between language and character in order to demonstrate the different ways Shakespeare's shapes his characters through his of language. Barton is preparing his viewers to analyze how actors develop their portrayal of characters.

In "Episode 4: Exploring a Character," Barton has Patrick Stewart and David Suchet perform their portrayals of Shylock from *The Merchant of Venice* to demonstrate to viewers the way that two individuals can form radically different interpretations of character from

Shakespeare's language. Stewart explains that he based his portrayal of Shylock as the assimilating foreigner trying to downplay his Jewish identity, on Shylock's unique rich and curious use of language in the Laban speech in Act 1 Scene 3. Suchet on the other hand based his portrayal of Shylock in a manner that emphasized his Jewish identity and the pride he took in it from the way Shylock exploits his Jewish identity in that very same speech. Barton comments that he found both of their interpretations as being "totally consistent with the text." He reminds his viewers that "there is never one answer" to how to interpret Shakespeare's characters from his language (Carlaw "Episode 4: Exploring a Character," 00:07:15-00:11:55). By showing master actors Stewart and Suchet perform the same speeches with such different approaches, Barton is empowering his viewers to pursue their own interpretations of the characters.

After spending "Episodes 5-7" analyzing the language elements in individual speeches, Barton appears to believe his viewers are finally ready to analyze a complete scene. In "Episode 8: Rehearsing the Text," Barton leads Judi Dench, Richard Pasco as Duke Orsino, Norman Rodway, and Michael Williams in an unblocked rehearsal of Act 2 Scene 4 of *Twelfth Night*. Barton tells his viewers that they will utilize many of the strategies from the earlier episodes in order to analyze the verse in the dialogue (Carlaw "Episode 8: Rehearsing the Text," 00:00:58-00:01:52). Barton begins the rehearsal by having Pasco performing Duke Orsino's opening "Give me some music" speech. After Pasco's performance, Barton scans the metrics of the lines. He observes that in writing the line, Shakespeare goes against his usual "de-dum" meter and replaces the first unstressed syllable with a stressed one, "dum-dum." After identifying two more such lines, Barton tells Pasco to think of the stresses as a hint from Shakespeare about the level eagerness and energy that the character is demonstrating at this moment in the scene (Carlaw "Episode 8: Rehearsing the Text," 00:01:53-00:03:02). In another passage of the scene, Barton

has Pasco and Dench contemplate their choices regarding where to quick cue or pause based on Shakespeare's use of short verse-lines in the dialogue about Feste's love song. After stressing that there is no single correct answer, Barton let Pasco and Dench experiment with whether to insert a quick cue or a pause before or after the short verse lines (Carlaw "Episode 8: Rehearsing the Text," 00:07:20-00:11:00). Barton appears to offer the rehearsal as a model for potential group exercises for instructors to use to help their students explore different ways to interpret scenes from the play.

In "Episode 9: Poetry and Hidden Poetry," Barton concludes the series by exploring the hidden poetry in Shakespeare's un-heightened language like his monosyllabic lines. Barton complains that modern theatre productions tend to overlook the poetic moments in these lines in favor of the more overt poetry in Shakespeare's heightened language. In order to demonstrate the potential power of this hidden poetry when fully realized, Barton has Ian McKellen once again perform Antonio's opening line from Act 1 Scene 1 of *The Merchant of Venice*, "In sooth I know not why I am so sad." Coming full circle to the moment in "Episode 1" when Barton first had McKellen perform the line, Barton explains that while the line appears to be purely naturalistic on the surface that it also has a powerful poetic resonance that stirs the emotions of the audience (Carlaw "Episode 9: Poetry and Hidden Poetry," 00:06:40-00:07:33).¹⁵

For Barton, it is these moments that make reading and hearing Shakespeare's plays such a memorable experience and thus he encourages his viewers to seek them out amongst the text. At the end of the episode, Barton summarizes some of his main claims from the series into a set of rules to guide his viewers in their studies of Shakespeare's plays. First and foremost, he urges his audience to use the verse to figure out what is going on in the text. For Barton this means identifying all of the different language elements and figuring out how they are functioning in

the play. He warns his viewers not to ignore a single aspect of the text until they have carefully examined it. Lastly, Barton reminds his readers that the verse is there to help them (Carlaw “Episode 9: Poetry and Hidden Poetry,” 00:46:26-00:47:14). By providing his viewers with a poetic vocabulary and strategies for employing scansion and recognizing rhythmic patterns, Barton is showing them a way to come to an understanding of Shakespeare’s texts by approaching them as oral performances.

Barton’s *Playing Shakespeare* captured the attention of Shakespeare scholars and high school teachers. They critiqued the film and its subsequent printed textual version in American academic journals like *Theatre Journal* and *Shakespeare Quarterly*. In his review of the 1984 book version of *Playing Shakespeare* for *Theatre Journal*, Theatre Professor Roger Gross at the University of Arkansas praised the series as “fascinating and useful.” He remarked that the “exceptional demonstrations by Barton and several fine actors from the RSC” gave Barton’s claim an added “meaning and power.” Interestingly when it comes to the book, Gross is much more critical. He characterizes the book as “a strange mixture of the wise and the foolish, the frustrating and the inspirational.” Gross argues that the series fails to serve as the basic text on Shakespearean acting for the inexperienced Shakespearean actors that Barton had originally claimed to write the book for (241). Gross rejects Barton’s technical explanations of the metrics of Shakespearean verse and Elizabethan pronunciation as “simply wrong.” He writes at the end of his article by claiming that what is needed is “a basic actor’s guide to Shakespeare which systematically and thoroughly examines the problems and provides the necessary technical information” (242). Gross’s unspoken implication is that such a book could only be written by a scholar.

The only contemporary review of the series that I could find came from high school teacher Louisa Foulke Newlin for *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Newlin immediately recognized the pedagogical value of the series both for higher and secondary education (Newlin 597). As Newlin was writing the article, she was witnessing a pedagogical revolution amongst American Shakespeare high school teachers in their portrayal of Shakespeare as a playwright.¹⁶ Newlin writes, “John Barton’s new series confirms that letting students in on the secret is an idea whose time has come” (Newlin 597-598). She sees the series as legitimizing the position of performance-based education advocates like herself. For Newlin, the strength of the series lies as much in its delivery as in its contents. She praises Barton for not presenting his thesis in the standard academic medium of a lecture, but instead for dramatizing it through a series of vignettes (Newlin 598). As a veteran teacher, she recognized the way Barton used the dramatizations to capture and hold the attention of his viewers in much the same way he instructed his actors to make their audiences listen to the language of the plays. Similarly, Newlin applauds the series’ informal mood and Socratic dialogue (Newlin 598-599).¹⁷ The series portrays Barton and his actors exploring the texts together as if they were rehearsing for a production. While Barton guides the actors in their inquiry into the texts, the actors are equal participants in a conversation. Newlin writes, “at times the actors ‘interrupt’ the director to disagree or to raise questions” (Newlin 599). These debates allow the group to explore a wide spectrum of interpretive choices that Shakespeare presents his actors in his texts.

Newlin claims that the series’ greatest pedagogical values lies in its illustration of the decision making process in Shakespearean acting. She argues that when students begin to realize that actors are allowed to make choices when dealing with choices that they will feel empowered to make interpretative choices of their own. She claims this realization will lead students to

rethink their conception of Shakespeare's plays as some artifact from the past, but as blueprints for living performances. Newlin argues that Barton and his series should serve as a model for American Shakespeare teachers. She writes, "Watching him and his troupe encourages us to get our own students on their feet to find out first hand who Macbeth and Viola and Hotspur are." Newlin goes on to state that once the students "are on their feet, they will experience a kind of learning for which even the best of educational films is an inadequate substitute" (Newlin 600). While I can't make any broad conclusions about how the majority of high school teachers felt about the series from a single enthusiastic review, I can say that the series was widely available in colleges, universities, and public libraries across the country.

During the course of its first three decades of existence, the RSC redefined the style and social function of the British theatre companies. The company's educational outreach programs and television series transformed the way Shakespeare's plays were taught in the U.S. Implementing pedagogies first developed by RSC actors, American scholars and high school teachers began to approach Shakespeare's plays as actors tackling performances. In addition to organizing staged readings of the scenes amongst their students, American scholars and high school teachers also began to show clips of scenes from Shakespeare film and television adaptation. The growing American demand for Shakespeare on screen fueled the BBC television production of *The Shakespeare Plays*.

Chapter 3

The Shakespeare Plays and the American Educational System

The forces of film, theatre, television, technology, pedagogy, and marketing came together in the form of the BBC *The Shakespeare Plays*. Broadcast from 1978 to 1985, the series was the first complete television series of all thirty-seven of Shakespeare's plays. The BBC and Time-Life funded the series with support from major American corporations. While the series founder Cedric Messina claims that the series is intended primarily as a form of entertainment, everything from its screenplay to its marketing campaign appear targeted to the American educational market. Script Editor Alan Shallcross based his screenplay on Peter Alexander's renowned 1951 *Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. The screenplay bought the series legitimacy in the eyes of American scholars and teachers. The American corporate partners stipulated that the productions be designed as 2 ½ hour historical dramas that fit on videocassette. At the same time, the BBC published a series of single-play text editions. The printed editions and the television productions effectively function as a single complete works. The BBC harnessed the latest video technologies to provide students a combined reading/watching/listening experience that appealed to a new generation of American scholars and teachers.

Over a period of six years, the three producers Messina, Jonathan Miller, and Shaun Sutton oversaw the productions along with hiring sixteen different directors. Each producer and director came to the productions with various levels of experience with televised Shakespeare and different artistic approaches. As a result, the series lacked a common unifying interpretive style. In order to illustrate the range of styles from the different producers and directors, this chapter will discuss key scenes from Messina and David Giles' 1978 *Richard II*, Miller's 1980

The Taming of the Shrew, Miller and John Gorrie's 1980 *Twelfth Night*, and Shaun Sutton and Jane Howell's 1985 *Titus Andronicus*.

The American corporate partners funded and organized a series of educational outreach programs to advocate for the use of the programs in American secondary schools and institutions of higher education. They assembled a group of American Shakespeare scholars, high school teachers, parent-teacher-association leaders, educational television producers, and theatre producers to form what became known as the National Advisory Committee to supervise the production of educational materials such as *The Shakespeare Kit* and *The Study Guide*. The American educational outreach effort was a monumental logistical achievement that succeeded in convincing educational institutions across the country to utilize the series. In this chapter, I will show that the BBC series represents a convergence in Shakespeare on screen, technology, marketing, scholarship, and pedagogy.

From the series' conception in the fall of 1975, the BBC targeted the Anglo-American education market. The BBC granted American Shakespeare Scholar Susan Willis permission to observe the production of the series in the U.K. The BBC also permitted her to interview the series' producers, directors, and other key members of the crew. Five years after the release of the final season, Willis used her research to write her 1991 book *The BBC Shakespeare Plays*. To this day, the book remains the preeminent history of the series. Willis reports that when Messina first proposed his idea for the series to the BBC Drama Group, he and Shallcross identified American students as a potentially fertile market (4). Messina hired renowned Shakespeare scholar John Wilders as the series' literary advisor. A Professor of Humanities at Middlebury College and a Fellow at Worcester College of the University of Oxford, Wilders helped ensure the series would pass muster with scholarly critics and also to make it be useful for teachers

using it in the classroom. One of Wilder's most important contributions was to recommend that the series adapt Alexander's 1951 *Complete Works of William Shakespeare* as the basis for their screenplay. The Alexander edition was considered to be the British national standard at the time and thus would have already been familiar to teachers using the series (13). While Shallcross would sometimes cut dialogue or re-sequence scenes, the series generally strictly followed the Alexander edition.

As soon as the BBC approved Messina's proposal in 1976, he travelled to the U.S. to drum up interest in the series. Messina reported that he discovered a lot of interest in the project amongst American academic circles (Andrews 134). On May 21st of that year, American Television critic Les Brown published an article for *The New York Times* announcing the creation of the series. Like an advertisement, Brown's article states that the BBC was in search for an American production partner. As if trying to generate competitive interest, Brown explains that a number of American companies were already in negotiations with the BBC. Brown advertises the BBC's long history of producing Shakespeare on screen. Brown makes it clear however that the BBC series won't be a rehash of older productions, but an entirely new series produced in a television series by Messina. Perhaps the most important point that Brown makes is the academic nature of the series. He writes that the BBC planned to produce the series "with a view toward creating a recorded library for future educational use" (Brown). It is clear from Brown's article that the BBC was selling its series to Americans as educational productions.

Messina was able to organize a co-production deal with Time-Life. A major American media company, Time-Life would have been attracted by the opportunity to record the series on the newly emerging Video Home System (VHS) videocassette. Introduced in the U.S. in 1977 by

the Victor Company of Japan (JVC), the VHS videocassette were capable of storing two hours worth of content and VHS based videocassette recorders (VCR) were cheap enough to ensure the system would be quickly adopted by the general public (Ganapati). Time-Life presumably foresaw that the VHS system would lead to a growing demand among secondary schools and colleges for high quality educational content. *The Shakespeare Plays* offered Time-Life an attractive product to enter into the new education video market. It is possible that without the advent of VHS and VCR technology, the BBC and Time-Life wouldn't have the financial motivation to produce the series. The development of late 20th-century technologies like the VHS and VCR system helped reinvigorate the Shakespeare screen industry.

The production deal between the BBC and Time-Life was financed with grants from the Exxon Corporation, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, and the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York (Willis 8). The series' corporate underwriters' decision to fund the project appears to have been motivated out of desire to fund a major public arts project. Willis explains that Exxon had a long history of funding public art projects in the U.S. while MetLife and Morgan were eager to also establish themselves as patrons of the arts. The corporations were also motivated to fund the series out of a desire to associate themselves with the cultural image of quality connected with Shakespeare (Willis 10). It is important to note that the corporations did not offer their funding without preconditions. They stipulated each production be set during Shakespeare's own lifetime or during the historical period around the events of the play. They also required that the plays be no longer than two and half hours long and be as accessible to as wide an audience as possible. Some of these conditions, like the time limits, were instituted to ensure that the BBC teleplays would fit onto American videocassette and television transmission time slots (Willis 11-12). Others of these conditions appear designed to appeal to American

cultural sensibilities. The series' historical settings and costumes ensured that they resembled the BBC historical dramas that had enjoyed commercial success in the U.S. They resulted in a more conservative Shakespeare adaptation that didn't stray far from Shakespeare's original texts.

While scholars and critics might bemoan these lackluster productions, the American corporations could sleep easy knowing that the BBC had created a series that American teachers would find easy to use and that school boards would not object to.

During the course of seven seasons, the series had three producers and sixteen directors. Messina produced the first two seasons. Messina joined the BBC in 1947 as a newsreader and transferred to BBC television in 1963 as a director. He produced and directed a number of Shakespeare television including eight productions for the 1965-1983 BBC *Play of the Month* series. Messina would cite the series as proof that the BBC was capable of producing *The Shakespeare Plays* (Willis 7). Coming from television, Messina approached the plays as television productions. The eight directors that he hired for seasons one and two all came from television. They included Alvin Rakoff, Giles, Basil Coleman, Herbert Wise, Desmond Davis, Kevin Billington, Gorrie, and Rodney Bennett. They all shared Messina's belief that television was an inherently realistic medium and they avoided extreme stylization in their adaptations (Willis 18). Messina casts his production with British stage and screen stars like John Gielgud, Derek Jacobi, and Helen Mirren. These star-studded cast lists were designed to draw viewers and to add to the artistic legitimacy of the project.

Perhaps the strongest production from Messina's two seasons was Giles' 1978 *Richard II*. The production was taped between the 12th and 17th of April 1978. It was first transmitted in the U.K. on December 10th 1978 and in the U.S. on March 28th 1979 (Willis 319-320). Giles came to the series with a strong background in television Shakespeare. He directed the 1970

BBC teleplay *Hamlet* and the 1976 *Twelfth Night*. As stipulated by the American corporate underwriters, Giles' teleplay was set in 14th-century England with the actors dressed in period clothing (Willis 11).¹⁸ Giles films the production in the studio recreations of the fields and castles that make up the world of the play. The television production's greatest strength is its all-star multi-generation cast. It included Jacobi as Richard II, Gielgud as John of Gaunt, and Wendy Hiller as the Duchess of York. The majority of the cast members were established Shakespearean stage actors, but they also had experience playing him on screen. These were British actors even young American students might recognize from film and television. Shallcross adapts the screenplay to follow the Alexander edition of the play as closely as possible. All of the actors' words and movements are strictly guided by the text. While Shallcross does cut a few passages of text for length, he appears determined that a student watching the play in a classroom would be able to follow along in their printed editions.

Even though Messina's productions tended to be traditional and adhered closely to the texts, they sometimes contained potentially controversial interpretive choices. In Act 1 Scene 4, Giles sets Richard's meeting with his sycophant courtiers in the royal bathhouse. The camera reveals a close up shot of William Bagot bathing in a wooden tub while a shirtless Henry Green massages Richard, clothed in a bathrobe. The three men are laughing as if just having made a joke and are slightly tipsy from all the wine they are drinking (Giles *Richard II*, 00:34:24-00:34:30). The setting and the erotic tone of the scene speak to stereotypes in the U.K. and the U.S. about gay men gathering in bathhouses for sexual encounters. The shot of the men is especially distasteful after the closing shot of the last scene where the audience watched Bolingbroke's sorrowful farewell to his father John of Gaunt. Thus when Richard laughingly asks the Duke of Aumerle to describe Bolingbroke's departure, Richard appears even more

morally corrupt then he does in the text (Giles *Richard II*, 00:34:31-00:35:18). The scene connects Richard's irresponsibility and selfishness with his sexuality. It is worth noting that Jacobi was already openly gay at the time. Homosexuality had only been decriminalized in the U.K. eleven years ago in 1967 (Schraer and D'Urso). Giles' homoerotic bathhouse scene sets his production apart from the productions of Messina's other seasons that avoided making contemporary political commentary. The scene speaks to the 1970s U.K.'s evolving, but still conflicted attitudes towards homosexuality. While British society was loosening legal restriction against Gay British citizens, they were still subject to police raids and homophobic attacks (Shariatmadari). Considering the controversy, it is incredible that the BBC approved Messina and Giles' decision to include the scene in the production.

In the production, Giles takes advantage of the acting powers of his all-star cast from the professional British theatre companies. In Act 2 Scene 1, Giles pits Jacobi's Richard up against Gielgud's John of Gaunt. The two actors came from two different generations of the professional British theatre companies. The 39-year-old Jacobi came from the same postwar generation of university educated professional British theatre actors as Peter Hall while the 74-year-old Gielgud was a member of the prewar trio of knighted theatre actors with Laurence Olivier and Ralph Richardson. Giles played up the age gap between the two men and their differing acting styles. Jacobi's youthful appearance and quick speaking style perfectly captured the arrogant young Richard while Gielgud's aged face and low bellow matched Gaunt's image as a dying old lion. For a student who had never seen a professional Shakespeare performance, the experience of watching these first-class Shakespearean actors perform would have shown them the full power of Shakespeare's language. Giles starts the standoff with Richard and his entourage's entrance into Gaunt's chamber. When Richard asks, "What comfort, man? How is't with aged

Gaunt?” the camera cuts to a close up shot of Gaunt as he defiantly responds with a pun that he has grown gaunt from Richard’s decision to banish Bolingbroke (Giles *Richard II*, 00:41:54-00:42:36).

The scene quickly turns into a verbal fencing match as the camera cuts back and forth between the two characters. When Richard asks, “Should dying men flatter with those that live?” Bolingbroke replies, “No, no, men living flatter those that die.” Richard attacks, “Thou now a-dying sayest thou flatterest me.” Gaunt comes back, “Oh no, thou diest, thou I the sicker be” (Giles *Richard II*, 00:42:48-00:42:56). Both characters and their actors prove themselves equals in their verse speaking. Ultimately, it’s Gielgud’s Gaunt who wins the confrontation. Richard angrily shouts, “Wert thou not brother to great Edward’s son / This tongue that runs so roundly in thy head / Should run thy unreverent shoulders” before the camera tracks him walking away. The camera cuts back to Gaunt as he follows Richard saying, “Oh spare me not, my brother Edward’s son, / For that I was his father Edward’s son” (Giles *Richard II*, 00:44:28-00:44:49). Breathing heavily, Gaunt condemns Richard for killing Gloucester. Gaunt is shown nearly collapsing before being caught by the Duke of York. The camera cuts to a stone-faced Richard as Gaunt curses him. “Live in thy shame, but die not shame with thee. / These words hereafter thy tormenter be.” Looking at Richard once more, Gaunt delivers his final lines. “Convey me to my bed, then to my grave. / Love they to live that love and honor.” A pain and grief stricken Gaunt is then led away by some of his fellow noblemen where he will die off stage (Giles *Richard II*, 00:44:50-00:46:07). Gielgud’s Gaunt’s exit can be seen to represent his generation’s yielding of the stage to Jacobi’s generation of actors who like their characters will have to take over for their elders.

In Act 4 Scene 1, Giles shows Richard handing over his crown to his cousin Bolingbroke. Set in the throne room, Giles portrays Richard outsmarting Bolingbroke's attempt to scapegoat him by staging the performance of his own dethronement. From his entrance on set, Richard portrays himself as Jesus being tried by Pontius Pilate in the bible. Richard physically resembles Christ in his simple tan robes. Richard compares the way his former subjects have abandoned him for Bolingbroke to the way Judas betrayed Jesus. Knowing that students might struggle to understand Richard's long monologue, Giles has Richard physically uncrown himself before he hands over his crown and scepter to Bolingbroke. Students can tell from Richard's pained facial expressions and cracking voice how conflicted he feels about his abdication. He clearly doesn't want to give up his crown, but if he has to then he is determined to do so on his own terms. When the Duke of Northumberland tries to regain control of the ceremony by ordering Richard to confess to a list of crimes against the state, Richard parries by accusing Northumberland and other courtiers of treason. We see Richard break off from Northumberland and walk amongst the courtiers as if to condemn each of them individually. When Richard reaches the Duke of York, we see the former king stop and say to the duke directly, "Though some of you, with Pilate, wash your hands, / Showing an outward pity—yet you Pilates / Have here deliver'd me to my sour cross, / And water cannot wash away your sin" (Giles *Richard II*, 1:53:54-1:54:11). Richard continues to play upon his Jesus analogy when he compares the Duke of York to the Roman governor Pontius Pilate who unwillingly ordered Jesus to be crucified (Matt. 27:11-26 KJV). It is as if Richard sees the Duke of York as a reluctant accomplice to his usurpation. Bolingbroke may be the superior soldier and politician, but Giles portrays Richard as the master actor.

In Act 5 Scene 1, Giles portrays Richard's final meeting with his queen. Set on a street leading towards the Tower of London, we find the Queen played by Janet Maw with her ladies

awaiting Richard's arrival. When the Queen initially greets Richard, he seems distant and is reluctant to look her in the eye. After Richard tells the Queen to return to France and cloister herself in a religious house, he tries to walk away. A flabbergasted Queen follows Richard as she asks, "What, is my Richard both in shape and mind / Transform'd and weak'ned?". When she delivers her next line "Hath Bolingbroke depos'd / Thine intellect?", the Queen grabs Richard by the shoulder and forces him to look her in the eye. We see the camera zoom in on the couple as the Queen asks Richard whether he plans to mildly submit to Bolingbroke or whether he will go out fighting like a dying lion (Giles *Richard II*, 2:01:07-2:03:30). The physical performances by the two actors are meant to show that Richard has lost his confidence and his queen is trying to reenergize his spirit. The scene contrasts starkly with Act 1 Scene 3 and Act 2 Scene 1 where the Queen stood by silently beside her husband. Giles seems to argue that the Queen's encounter with the gardener in Act 3 Scene 4 has helped her to discover her own voice (Giles *Richard II*, 1:38:10-1:43:24). The newly empowered Queen gives her final farewell to Richard in Act 5 Scene 1 an added level of emotional depth. The couple is no longer just a political symbol, but a husband and wife about to be separated from each other.

The BBC replaced Messina with British theatre director Jonathan Miller as the producer for the third and fourth season. A graduate of St. John's College at Cambridge University, Miller was a part of the university-educated post-war professional British theatre. He directed productions for the Edinburgh Festival, the Nottingham Playhouse, Greenwich Theatre, and the National Theatre at the Old Vic (Willis 25). Miller also came to the series with a strong background in television. He directed a number of television series and productions including a 1975 teleplay production of King Lear for *The BBC Play of the Month* series (Filmography-Jonathan Miller, IMDb). In contrast to Messina's naturalism and strict textual fidelity, Miller

strove for a more interpretive style that took advantage of the power of Shakespeare's language and the historicity of his plays (Willis 25). Miller directed three productions and he hired Jack Gold, Elijah Moshinsky, and Jane Howell to direct others. All three directors shared Miller's penchant for innovative and adventurous interpretations of the plays. Willis argues that one of the most important characteristics that defined Miller as a producer and a director was his approach towards the plays from Shakespeare's perspective as an English Renaissance playwright (Willis 17). Miller's historically minded approach sometimes put him at odds with his contemporaries.

A strong example of Miller's third and fourth seasons was his 1980 production of *The Taming of the Shrew*. The production was filmed between the 18th and 24th of June 1980. It was first transmitted in the U.K. on October 23rd 1980 and in the U.S. on January 26th 1981 (Willis 321). Perhaps the most striking element of the production was its preservation of Shakespeare's original defense of the patriarchy. This is striking because ever since Sam Taylor's 1929 film adaptation of the play, directors have striven to soften the more misogynistic elements of the play and to create a more egalitarian relationship between Petruchio and Katherine. Miller argues that some contemporary productions have misunderstood Shakespeare's original portrayal of the family in the play. He explains in an interview with American Shakespeare scholar Tim Hallinan for *Shakespeare Quarterly* that Elizabethans believed that the family required a strong sovereign who could preserve the peace through inflicting punishments on disobedient subjects. Miller states that Shakespeare uses the play to "extoll the virtues of the obedient wife." While Miller acknowledges that contemporary viewers might find these patriarchal views as problematic, he argues that doesn't mean that they shouldn't portray these plays in this style. He writes, "If we wish to make all plays from the past confirm to our ideals and what we think the state or the

family ought to be like, then we're simply rewriting all plays and turning them into modern ones" (140). Miller's production can be interpreted as a bold traditionalist response to a series of modernist adaptations.

Surprisingly, it's not always the unorthodox directorial interpretation that is the boldest one. Miller's *Taming of the Shrew* makes the point that sometimes the conservative rendition can be the most radical. Like his predecessors, Miller followed the BBC's production stipulations by setting *Taming of the Shrew* in Renaissance Italy and dressing its actors in period costumes. Miller states that the designs of the interiors of the houses were inspired by the paintings of 17th-century Dutch artist Johannes Vermeer. Miller argues Vermeer's focus on middle-class domestic life echoes the themes of Shakespeare's play (Hallinan 138). Miller assembles a strong cast of British television actors including John Cleese as Petruchio and Sarah Badel as Katherine (Full Cast & Crew-The Taming of the Shrew 1980, IMDb). Cleese was an especially interesting choice for the teleplay's starring role as Petruchio. Best known for his work in the 1970s British comedy shows *Monty Python Flying Circus* and *Fawlty Towers*, Cleese was not an obvious choice. American Television critic John J. O'Connor observes that Cleese shuns the dashing cavalier image of the character for a depiction of a soft spoken, but intelligent man who feigns outrageous behavior in order to win over the woman that he admires. O'Connor notes that while Cleese's verse lacks the mellifluous cadences of a professional Shakespearean actor, he more than makes up for it with his clarity (O'Connor). O'Connor praises Badel's transformation from shrew to obedient wife which he describes as being "hilarious and touching" (O'Connor). But in many ways, what O'Connor likes about the ending seemed out of place in the 1970s and 80s.

The first scene worth examining is Petruchio and Katherine's first meeting in Act 2 Scene 1. The power of the scene comes from the dynamic dialogue between Cleese's Petruchio and

Badel's Katherine. The scene really takes off when Katherine enters the room. The shot shows Petruchio sitting in a chair turning to look at Katherine who leans defiantly on the doorway. She is dressed in a brown dress with white sleeves. Her costume mirrors Petruchio's. Miller has his characters deliver their lines slowly and clearly. Every pause is intentionally drawn out to give the viewer time to reflect on the meaning of each line. When Petruchio opens the dialogue by calling Katherine "Kate," we see her face tighten with indignation. It is clear that Petruchio is intentionally trying to make Katherine angry (Miller *Taming of the Shrew*, 00:33:25-00:33:23). Another example is when Katherine calls Petruchio a crab. Petruchio says, "Then show it me" and Katherine responds, "Had I a glass, I would." Petruchio snaps his fingers in realization, "What, you mean my face?". Katherine replies in a scornfully ironic tone, "Well aimed for such a young one" (Miller *Taming of the Shrew*, 00:37:06-00:37:16). The actors' verbal and physical performances indicate to the viewers that Katherine has been subtly comparing Petruchio's face to a crab apple and he has just caught on to the insult. Taylor also uses the scene to hint at the potential sexual chemistry between the two characters. When Katherine comments that Petruchio is wise enough to keep himself warm, we see Petruchio come up behind Katherine and touch her on the shoulders as he says seductively, "Marry, so I mean, sweet Katherine, in thy bed." Katherine doesn't react angrily, but instead looks at Petruchio's hand as if asking herself whether Petruchio meant what he said (Miller *Taming of the Shrew*, 00:39:06-00:39:20). Cleese and Badel's performance highlights the burgeoning romantic bond between the two characters. Miller appears to be modeling Petruchio and Kate on the odd couples from 1970 American romantic comedies like Alvy Singer and Annie Hall in Woody Allen's 1974 *Annie Hall*.

Another useful moment to examine was the wedding scene in Act 3 Scene 2 of the television production. In the beginning of the scene, we see the arrival of Petruchio and Grumio

as they enter the scene dressed in a hodgepodge of different clothes. He is bare breasted in an old jacket, pants, and a feathered hat. Signior Baptista and Tranio initially try to convince Petruchio to go change his clothes, but he refuses. Petruchio says directly to Signior Baptista, “To me she’s married, not unto my clothes.” He then says in a more discreet tone, “Could I repair what she will wear in me / As I can change these poor accouterments, / ’Twere well for me and better for my Kate” (Miller *Taming of the Shrew*, 00:53:34-00:58:08). The first line reflects what Miller sees as the period’s Calvinist ideology. He explains that we are all “naked before the eye of God, and that that is the way you come before the eyes of your partner.” Miller argues that Petruchio is making a broader point about how outward decorations don’t matter (Hallinan 139). For Miller, the bizarrely dressed Petruchio is being more sincere in his self-presentation than his fellow wedding-goers.

Miller’s concluding Act 5 Scene 1 stands out in comparison to earlier screen adaptations of the play. In contrast to Sam Taylor’s 1929 film where Katherine undermines her defense of the patriarchy by winking to Bianca to indicate that she is merely playing to Petruchio’s ego, Miller’s Katherine genuinely submits to Petruchio as her husband. Miller’s scene also comes across as more serious than Franco Zeffirelli’s 1967 film where Katherine comically drags Bianca and the widow to the window as she gives her defense of patriarchy speech. Taylor sets his scene in the dining room of Baptista’s house where the newly married young lovers are dining together in celebration. Perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of the scene is Katherine’s visible transformation. The shrewish maid has been replaced with a beautiful lady. Miller visually portrays the Elizabethan English social view that the submissive woman is more beautiful than the shrew. During the scene, we see the group at the table waiting to see if Katherine will return after Bianca and Hortensio’s widow refused. Baptista rises up in shock to

say, “Now, by my holidame, here comes Katherina.” The camera cuts to a close up shot of Katherine who enters the doorway looking more beautiful than ever softly asking him how she can serve him. When Petruchio commands her to retrieve Bianca and the widow for their husbands. The camera cuts back to Katherine who silently and smilingly obeys (Miller *Taming of the Shrew*, 01:56:14-01:56:43). She is the perfect chaste, silent, and obedient wife.

Miller places particular emphasis on Baptista’s awed reaction to his daughter’s submission. We see Baptista rise in astonishment when Petruchio calls Katherine back. After Katherine obeys Petruchio’s commands, he offers to pay Petruchio another twenty thousand crowns. He explains the money represents “Another dowry to another daughter, / For she is changed as she had never been” (Miller *Taming of the Shrew*, 1:56:03-1:57:28). Baptista appears delighted by Katherine’s transformation. Miller reinforces this point at the end of the scene when the group sings Psalm 128 and he has Baptista get up from his chair to stand behind Katherine. In a particular poignant moment, Baptista places his hand on her shoulder. Katherine lovingly embraces the gesture by covering his hand with her own and bringing it to her cheek (Miller *Taming of the Shrew*, 2:03:18 – 2:03:51). Katherine not only respects the authority of her father in a way that she never has before, but she shows him genuine affection. The physical embrace can thus be seen as representing the healing of the previously damaged relationship between the two characters. Perhaps even more noteworthy was Miller’s decision to bring everyone together to sing Psalm 128. A popular psalm for weddings, the song celebrates the rewards of a Christian life and its accompanying patriarchal family structure. The song identifies one such reward as, “Thy wife shall as a fruitful vine / By thy houses be found / Thy children like olive branches green / About thy table round.” A good Christian marriage in which the wife submits to the will of her husband will be a fruitful marriage that will result in many children. The song echoes the

play's focus on the importance of maintaining the patriarchal family structure in order to promote the health of the country's families.

Another play worth examining from Miller's seasons was John Gorrie's 1980 *Twelfth Night*. A veteran television director, Gorrie came to the series with experience working with Shakespeare on screen. He directed a 1970 *BBC Play of the Month* version of *Macbeth* where he worked with Messina who was producing the series. Gorrie's directorial style was characterized by his commitment to a telecinematic style of realism (Willis 18). Michèle Willems writes in a 1986 article for *Shakespeare Survey* no. 39 that Gorrie endeavored "to present the viewer with a universe which [they] can accept as an authentic representation of the world of the play" (Willems 96). Gorrie cast the production with stage and screen actors Felicity Kendal as Viola, Sinead Cusack as Olivia, Clive Arrindell as Orsino, and Alec McCowen as Malvolio. Gorrie sets the play in Caroline English country houses with elaborate gardens (Wiggins). Gorrie carefully orchestrates the camerawork and editing to give viewers the sensation that they are travelling through Orsino and Olivia's estates.

The opening shot of Act 1 Scene 1 immediately establishes Orsino's country house setting. The camera tracks a group of servants with greyhounds as they walk across a richly decorated room past a quartet of musicians playing early modern music (Gorrie *Twelfth Night*, 00:00:28-00:01:00). Gorrie's elaborate setting visually illustrates Orsino's wealth and cosmopolitanism. The scene begins by tracking Clive Arrindell's Orsino as he enters the room delivering the first lines of the opening monologue, "If music be the food of love, play on" (Gorrie *Twelfth Night*, 00:01:02-00:01:08). Delivered in the context of the luxuriously decorated drawing room, Orsino's melancholic obsession with music and love can be seen as products of Orsino's life as a wealthy Duke. Orsino resembles an English nobleman from a portrait by Dutch

born English court painter Anthony van Dyck (Wiggins). Gorrie uses the camera and physical space to reveal Orsino's melancholic personality. Orsino sits down in his chair and leans his head in a thoughtful tilt as he says, "That strain again—it had a dying fall. / Oh, it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound / That breathes upon a bank of violets, Stealing and giving odor" (*Twelfth Night* 00:01:16 -00:01:28). Orsino looks like someone who spends most of his free time listening to music as he loses himself in his melancholy.

In Act 1 Scene 5 of the play, Gorrie uses the garden setting as a romantic backdrop for Viola's wooing of Olivia. Cross-dressed as Cesario in a black cavalier's outfit, Viola cuts the figure of a handsome knight. Gorrie cuts to a shot of a veiled Olivia in a black dress resembling a beautiful princess sitting between two of her gentlewomen beneath a tree. Many of the series viewers grew up reading and watching fairy tales like *Snow White* and *Sleeping Beauty* and they would have immediately picked up on the fairytale subtext. The parallel black costumes also illustrates that the two characters are foils for one another. Even their names are anagrams of each other. Gorrie uses his camerawork and the actors' physical performances to visually illustrate the way Viola's wooing causes Olivia to fall in love with her. Gorrie has Viola tell Olivia how if she loved Olivia like Orsino does, she wouldn't be able to accept Olivia's rejections. When Olivia curiously asks Viola what she would do in Orsino's place, Viola looks the countess dead in the eye and delivers a passionate response in which she describes all the different things that she would do. "Halloo your name to the reverberate hills / And make the babbling gossip of the air / Cry out, 'Olivia!' Oh you should not rest / Between the elements of air and earth / But you should pity me." The camera cuts back to a shocked looking Olivia who murmurs, "You might do much" (Gorrie *Twelfth Night*, 00:26:33-00:27:10). It is clear from Olivia's facial expression that she has been taken by Viola's words. Indeed after Olivia sends

Viola back to Orsino, Olivia reflects on her sudden infatuation with Viola. Olivia says to herself, “Methinks I feel this youth’s perfection / With an invisible and subtle stealth / To creep in at mine eye” (Gorrie *Twelfth Night*, 00:27:11-00:28:37).

Viewers watching the scene would instantly comprehend the meaning behind Olivia’s words as they just witnessed the emotional Viola’s emotion impact on Olivia by watching the physical reaction on Olivia’s face. Just as importantly, the scene shows the theatrical nature of the courtship ritual. Man and woman each come to the dance with a pre-assigned role, the man to woo and the woman to resist. Gorrie’s scene makes the point that these gender roles are social constructs. A skilled actress like Viola takes up the dress and role of the male suitor and Olivia responds exactly as if a man was successfully courting her.

In Act 2 Scene 5, Gorrie uses the play’s Caroline English setting to reinterpret the character of Malvolio. Drawing upon Shakespeare’s description of the character as a puritan, Gorrie dresses him in the plain white collared black outfit of an English puritan. Malvolio’s hostility towards aristocrats like Sir Toby and Sir Andrew Aguecheek can be interpreted as a part of the animosity that existed between the puritans and the aristocracy that would eventually erupt into the English civil war during the 1640s and 50s. This conflict occurred decades after Shakespeare wrote the play. Gorrie’s anachronistic political setting creates an interesting juxtaposition between Malvolio’s puritanism and his own personal ambition. Originating as a reformist movement against the perceived flaws of the Roman Catholic elements of the Anglican Church, puritans were characterized by their adherence to religion, strict moral behavior, and plain dress (OED 1473). Malvolio embodies everything that English society hated about puritans. John Wilders observes that he seems to possess a natural hostility towards enjoyment. He behaves antagonistically towards other characters (Wilder 11). Stephen Greenblatt notes that

even Malvolio's name is based off the Italian "*male voglio*" for "I wish ill" (Greenblatt "Introduction to *Twelfth Night*," 1909). Despite Malvolio's sanctimonious demeanor, he's revealed to be a hypocrite. Contrary to his puritan self-belief that he knows his place, Malvolio is actually a man of great social ambition. In the beginning of Act 2 Scene 5, Gorrie has Malvolio enter the garden of Olivia's country estate fantasizing about becoming a count by marrying Olivia. Malvolio haughtily describes how he will chastise Sir Toby. "Seven of my people with an obedient start make / out for him. I frown the while, and perchance wind up my / watch, or play with my—some rich jewel" (Gorrie *Twelfth Night*, 00:56:00-00:56:11). Delivered in the context of the historical period, Malvolio's hypocrisy becomes more apparent. Malvolio isn't just an uptight butler, but a member of a religious movement with a strict moral code.

Gorrie again uses this added allusion to puritanism to great effect in Act 5 Scene 1 when Malvolio confronts Olivia about his treatment. A distraught looking Malvolio shouts, "Madam, you have done me / wrong, / Notorious wrong." Gorrie zooms the camera in on Malvolio in a close up shot while Malvolio list the wrongs committed against him in a frantic tone with a pained expression. One could interpret Malvolio's agony as symbolizing working class puritan hostility to the upper class. Gorrie cuts to another shot of Olivia with Viola and Orsino in the background. They all look at Malvolio with a mixture of pity, shame, and even a little bit of fear. As Olivia attempts to calm Malvolio's anger, the camera cuts to another close up shot of Malvolio's face tightening up in a mixture of anger and pain. Malvolio angrily delivers his final lines, "I'll be revenged on the whole pack of you!" before exiting the garden (Gorrie *Twelfth Night*, 02:00:13-02:03:04). In Caroline England, Malvolio's threat carries a much greater weight. Puritans like Malvolio will get their revenge against aristocrats like Olivia and Orsino. While most American audiences probably wouldn't have recognized Gorrie's allusions to the period,

but they may very well have recognized Malvolio as puritan from references to puritans in American literature and history classes. In any event, Gorrie probably saw the allusions as the basis for classroom study on the subjects by American students.

The BBC replaced Miller with Shaun Sutton to produce the final fifth, sixth, and seventh season of the series. The son of the prominent British theatre critic Graham Sutton, he joined BBC in 1952. He was responsible for the production of the 1970 television series *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*, the 1972-1974 *Colditz*, and 1979 *Tinker, Taylor, Soldier, Spy* (Purser).¹⁹ Sutton retained the services of Miller's veterans Howell, Gold, Moshinsky, and Giles while hiring Don Taylor and James Cellan Jones, David Jones, and Stuart Burge as directors (Willis 29-30). Rather than oversee the entire production process, Sutton focused on the selection of "the script, the director, and the cast." He wanted directors who knew how to most effectively use television's multiple camera system to establish the pacing of the production (Willis 31). Once he had established the technical competence of his director, he was more than willing to give them the space to develop their interpretation of the series.

The best representative of the seventh season and the final teleplay of the series was Jane Howell's 1985 *Titus Andronicus*. The production was taped between the 10th and 17th of February 1985. It was transmitted in the U.K. on April 27th 1985 and in the U.S. on April 18th 1985 (Willis 321). A veteran of the British stage, Howell was hired by Jonathan Miller in 1980 to help impose a sense of theatricality to the BBC series. Howell shared Miller's belief that television is an unrealistic medium. Shakespeare scholar James C. Bullman states in his 1984 article "BBC Shakespeare And House Style" for the *Shakespeare Quarterly* that Howell argued that teleplays needed to "honor the original rules of stage performance" (573-574). Similarly Howell felt that the television set should resemble the Elizabethan theatre. She states in an

interview with Michael Billington for *The New York Times* that “what you need in television is a space which can be inside or outside and which leaves you free to create: once you start having all those palaces, it takes away from people’s imagination and ties it down.” Howell directed *The Winter’s Tale* (1981), *Henry VII Parts 1-3* (1983), and *Richard III* (1983) before she volunteered to direct *Titus Andronicus*. Howell explains that it was the moment in Act 3 Scene 2 when Marcus Andronicus kills a fly in the presence of Young Lucius that inspired her to present the play from the boy’s perspective. She explains that she wanted her viewers to constantly ask themselves, “What are we doing to the children?” (Willis 172). When it came to the depiction of violence, Howell opted for realism over stylization. She wanted her viewers to see the parallels to contemporary conflicts like the Troubles in Northern Ireland. In accordance to the BBC’s mandate for historical accuracy, Howell set the teleplay in ancient Rome (Willis 172). Howell was able to assemble a strong cast of stage actors including Trevor Peacock as Titus, Eileen Atkins as Tamora, Anna Calder-Marshall as Lavinia, and Hugh Quarshie as Aaron (Willis 292). Howell argues that in the unrealistic medium of television, “all that needs to be real is the actor’s performance” (Bulman 574). Similarly it is her actors’ performances that emotionally ground the teleplay in the viewers’ collective human experience.

Howell dramatically reorganizes Act 1 Scene 1 of the teleplay from Shakespeare’s original text. In the beginning of the scene, Howell inserts an opening sequence of fog covered close up shots of a human skull to the backdrop of a somber orchestral score. The sequence ends with a fading transition between a close up shot of the boy young Lucius and the skull in the background (Howell *Titus Andronicus*, 00:00:33-00:00:55). The image of the young boy is juxtaposed by the image of the skull as a symbol of death. Interestingly, Howell has young Lucius wear a pair of glasses. It is a fascinating costume choice because wearable eyeglasses

didn't exist in ancient Rome. Renaissance Scholar Vincent Ilardi explains in his 2007 book *Renaissance Vision from Spectacles to Telescopes* that Pisan craftsmen probably invented the first eyeglasses around 1286 (4). Aside from making young Lucius appear more modern, the eyeglasses also emphasize the character's boyish physical features. He looks like the boy you sometimes run into at the local public library rather than the future killer that he might grow up to be. Howell uses the opening sequence to introduce young Lucius as a sort of chorus from whose perspective her viewers will experience the story. Young Lucius isn't introduced in Shakespeare's original play until Act 3 Scene 2, but Howell chooses to incorporate the character beside his family in Act 1 Scene 1 and Act 2 Scene 2.

Perhaps the most powerful example of this can be found in Act 1 Scene 1 during Titus' argument with his brother and sons over the burial of Titus' other son Mutius. Marcus and his nephews drop to their knees as they beg Titus to allow them bury Mutius in the family tomb. It isn't until young Lucius drops to his knee that Titus finally gives them his permission. (Howell *Titus Andronicus*, 00:25:35-00:28:18). Howell seems to argue that it's young Lucius' innocence that finally softens Titus' hard heart. After Marcus and his nephews take the body away, the camera captures Titus noticing young Lucius picking up Mutius' white cloak and sword. Howard briefly inserts a split screen image of Titus with a close up shot of young Lucius' face (*Titus Andronicus* 00:28:20-00:28:43). The binary image seems to mirror the film's opening shot of the skull fading into young Lucius. Innocent youth vs. tainted maturity. The scene ends with Lucius walking up and embracing young Lucius in a hug as the boy breaks down in tears (Howell *Titus Andronicus*, 00:34:39-00:34:43). Mary Z. Maher writes in a 1986 article on the television production for *Shakespeare Bulletin* that the play becomes a story about young Lucius' reaction to the horrors of the play. She observes that the viewers watch the character lose his innocence,

but ultimately retain his sense of compassion and empathy (5). Howell uses young Lucius to guide the viewers through the chaotic events of the play and still retain their morality.

Perhaps the most powerful scene in the production was Act 2 Scene 4 when Titus' daughter Lavinia reemerges from her rape and mutilation by Tamora's sons Chiron and Demetrius. The scene begins with Tamora's sons Chiron and Demetrius pushing Lavinia forward. The scene references the rape of Philomel from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. We see a traumatized Lavinia standing between Chiron and Demetrius as they mock her for her rape and mutilation. Blank faced with bloody chin, Lavinia attempts to protect her modesty with a scarf with the bloody stumps that are all that remain of her hands. After the two brothers abandon her, we see Marcus enter the scene causing Lavinia to flee. Seeing Lavinia's bloody stumps, Marcus asks who cut off her hands. When Lavinia doesn't say anything, Marcus asks "Why dost not speak to me?", the camera zooms in on Lavinia who responds by drooling blood down her chest in order to indicate that she had her tongue cut out (Howell *Titus Andronicus*, 00:59:55-01:01:29). Howell uses the image of the silent and blood stained young woman to horrify her viewers.

Howell brings the play full circle from the funeral ceremonies of Act 1 Scene 1 to the funeral ceremonies in Act 5 Scene 3. Following the quadruple homicide of the first half the scene, the camera fades to a shot of the amphitheater where the bodies of Titus, Lavinia, Tamora, and Saturninus are on display surrounded by masked roman soldiers and courtiers. Young Lucius kneels beside the body of his grandfather and looks up tearfully to see his uncle Marcus and father Lucius describe what has happened to the Roman people. During the speech, Lucius presents Aaron and Tamora's baby alive in a box. "Behold the child. / Of this was Tamora delivered, / The issue of an irreligious Moor, / Chief architect and plotter of these woes." The

camera cuts to Young Lucius who looks up to see the baby. Young Lucius' face contains no signs of hate, but sadness. Later in the scene after Lucius has been crowned and summons his soldiers to bring in a shirtless Aaron, the camera shows young Lucius approaching the box containing the baby. After Lucius condemns Aaron to death by famishment and Aaron defiantly refuses to express any remorse for his actions, the camera shows the soldiers dragging Aaron away when they come upon young Lucius holding the box and silently looking at the baby. It is not clear from the shot whether or not the baby is dead or alive. Young Lucius and Aaron silently exchange glances before he is removed. The camera tracks Marcus as he walks up to young Lucius and closes the box containing the baby. The boy looks up grief stricken before the scene fades to a shot of skulls and smoke (Howell *Titus Andronicus*, 02:35:34-02:44:39). The shot of the grieving boy in the aftermath of the bloodshed beautifully visualizes Howell's argument that it is the children who are the true victims of war. Howell appears to be sending her young viewers a dire warning about the difficulty of breaking generational cycles of violence. Howell portrays young Lucius as being horrified by the actions of his kinsmen and he doesn't appear to harbor any desire for revenge. In the best-case scenario, young Lucius and other young people will be able to establish a new era of peace. However, it isn't clear whether young Lucius will be able to reject the influence of his elders who are committed to revenge. Indeed the image of Marcus closing the lid on young Lucius' empathy to Aaron's baby and the fading to images of skulls suggest that young Lucius will inevitably be caught up in the same cycle of violence.

Unlike in the television productions of *Richard II*, *Taming of the Shrew*, and *Twelfth Night* where the directors seem content to wrap up the plotline of their plays with a clear sense of finality, Howell's ending leaves the viewers with a sense of uncertainty in the outcome in the world of the play and the real world as a whole. Now, none of this is to say that Shakespeare

doesn't leave open endings. Indeed a number of Shakespeare's other plays have similarly ambiguous endings, but Howell plays up the ambiguity in a way that is distinct from the other directors. Likewise, Howell appears much more comfortable taking liberties with Shakespeare's text than Giles, Miller, and Gorrie. While the first three directors sometimes cut or rearrange scenes, they never inserted characters into others scenes. Stage and screen director Julie Taymor would be inspired by Howell's more liberal approach to the play. In her 1999 film adaptation of the play, Taymor follows Howell's example by centering the film on the young Lucius character. However, Taymor's final scene feels like the mirror opposite. Taymor has her young Lucius free the baby from his cage and then carry him off away from the violence into the sunrise (*Titus* 02:29:11-02:37:33). The scene speaks to Taymor's belief in the ability of young people to create a better future. One could argue that Howell's television production inspired 1990s screen directors like Taymor to develop a more personal style of Shakespearean filmmaking.

As the BBC was producing the series in the U.K., the American corporate backers were organizing an accompanying educational outreach program to advocate for the use of the series in American secondary schools and colleges. In a 1984 article for *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Michael Mullins explains that the corporate underwriters partnered with public organizations like the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), National Public Radio (NPR), and WNET/Thirteen in New York. This corporate public alliance assembled a group of American Shakespeare scholars, high school teachers, Parent Teacher Association leaders, professionals from educational television and theatre into a group that was known as the National Advisory Committee. The committee was commissioned to supervise the production of educational materials for the series in order to establish the material's credibility (584-585). The National Advisory Committee members also advocated for the series towards its target audiences.

One of the most influential members of the National Advisory Committee was *Shakespeare Quarterly* General Editor John F. Andrews. In a letter from the editor for the 1978 winter issue of *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Andrews states that the BBC series will have an enormously positive impact on Shakespeare studies. He predicts that the project won't only inspire future screen adaptations, but also more Shakespeare scholarly publications, Shakespeare courses, Shakespeare clubs, and just more Shakespeare in everyone's social and cultural lives. Andrews argues that this new surging Shakespeare economy offers a whole host of new possibilities for professional Shakespeareans to take advantage of. He says that they have a responsibility to ensure that Shakespeare's increased presence does not lead to vulgarization. Andrews states that the *Shakespeare Quarterly* will have to figure out how to overcome the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities of the 1980s. Andrews rhetorically asks whether the editors should consider redesigning the periodical to appeal to a wider readership (3). Andrew's letter is striking because it indicates that he sees Shakespeare studies as participating in an industry as much as it is in the scholarly study of one of the performing arts. He is already planning how professional Shakespeareans can carve a niche for themselves in the new economy. While it is impossible to calculate how many Shakespeareans decide to follow the series as a result of Andrew's article, one can imagine that it went a long way in drawing the attention of the periodical's many readers to the series and the accompanying outreach program.

Shakespeare Quarterly wasn't the only journal advocating for the series. *The Shakespeare Newsletter* announced the planned release of the series in their article "Survey: 37 Plays on TV" for the September 1977 issue. In addition to the release of the series, the article reports that Time-Life was conducting research in order to determine the demand for the series amongst American educational institutions. The article also communicated that Susan

Eenigenburg was sending out a twenty-two-item questionnaire in order to survey the demand for Shakespeare on screen (27). The next year, *The Shakespeare Newsletter* published the article “BBC Shakespeare Series: Controversy and Progress” for their February 1978 issue. Building on their previous report, the article announced the production of a range of supplementary material for each production in order to generate teacher and student interest in the series. It also reported the BBC’s plan to document the production process of the series in words and photographs so that students could use them in the classroom as they studied the productions (45).

The education outreach programs focused most of their attention on American secondary schools. This decision was based on their knowledge that most American students read Shakespeare for the first time during their junior or senior year (Willis 47). The corporate underwriters and their public organization partners hired the educational firm TelEd Inc. to produce packets of supplemental educational material on the plays for each season of the series that were later dubbed the “Shakespeare Kits” (Mullins 586).²⁰ Few Shakespeare Kits seem to have survived, but I was able to obtain a copy of the Shakespeare Kit on *Twelfth Night* from season two of the series from the Geisel Library at the University California San Diego. The Shakespeare Kits contains a teacher’s guide, a production poster, an audio recoding from the production, discussion questions, a record guide hand-out, and a viewing guide ditto-master with a synopsis. Perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of the Shakespeare kit is their pre-scripted and simplistic nature. The Shakespeare Kit should be viewed as a lesson plan. The Teachers’ Guide provided a six stage “suggested sequence of utilization” of the kit materials. The sequence itself is entirely unremarkable. It starts by having the students read a copy of the play, study a production poster, listen to a record of audio performances from the production, and a set of pre and post viewing questions (Teachers’ Guide).

An examination of the Shakespeare Kit's previewing questions and projects reveals the simplicity of their pedagogy. The first two questions focus on the theme of love. The first question asks the students to identify all of the different characters and their potential love interest while the second question asks them to identify the various forms of love described in the play other than romantic love. The fourth question asks the students to explore the different ways the plays reflect the revelry and masquerades of the Feast of Epiphany. While the fifth question encourages students to perform a transatlantic project by examining the parallels between Shakespeare's puritan character of Malvolio and the Puritan themes reflected in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (Questions and Projects for Before Viewing). The questions appear designed to familiarize the students with the basic plot, characters, and themes of the play so that they will be able to follow the television production. The six Discussion Questions for Use After Viewing appear designed to get the students to look at the television productions as adaptations.

The first question tells students to scrutinize Gorrie's focus on melancholy and its reflection in the production. Similarly the second question asks students to think about the effects of Gorrie relocating the play to seventeenth-century England. The fourth question calls back the romance theme of the previewing questions by exploring how the director emphasized the romance aspect of the play in the production. While the questions aren't particularly sophisticated, they serve their function in familiarizing the students with the plot of the play and to help the students to think about the choices the director and screenwriter made during the adaption process. Tel-Ed mailed more than 36,000 kits for season one of the series to the heads of English departments of secondary schools across the country and received somewhere between 18,000 and 19,000 responses (Willis 47). The Exxon Education Foundation stated in

their 1979 report *Dimensions 79* that the distribution of the Shakespeare Kits for the first season of the series “represented the largest free educational effort ever undertaken in connection with a U.S. television series” (19). In a review for the April 1979 issue of *The Shakespeare Newsletter*, North Shore High School teacher Norman Ross said the production and distribution was as “comprehensive an undertaking as the production” of the series itself. Indeed Ross argues that the first season of the series proved to be a disappointment after the successful build up by the Shakespeare Kits (4).

The design and grand scale of the Shakespeare Kits speak to the corporate nature of the American educational outreach effort. After the Shakespeare Kits, TeEd produced educational materials for other educational series like Ken Burns’ 1989 PBS *The Civil War* series (World Cat). The Shakespeare Kits can be seen as models for modern Shakespeare study guides like Norton’s 2007 *Shakespeare and Film* by Samuel Crowl and Pearson’s 2004 *Screening Shakespeare* by Michael Greer.

In addition to secondary schools, the educational outreach programs targeted American colleges and universities. The Shakespeare Advisory committee employed the Coast Community College district and the University of California at San Diego to produce a text known as *The Study Guides* for the use of college and university telecourses (Mullin 584). The Study Guides were essentially a how-to set of instructions for the course instructor (Mullin 585). The Study Guides contained an introduction to the play, a list of lesson assignments, a list of learning objectives, a synopsis of the play, an academic essay, an annotated bibliography, and a self-test for each play of that season (UC San Diego, iii-iv). The introduction for Gorrie’s *Twelfth Night* in The Study Guide for the second season lists the five primary assignments of the telecourse as reading the synopsis of the play, reading the text of *Twelfth Night* itself, reading the scholarly

essay by Gayle Greene, viewing the television production, and completing the self-test on both the play and the adaptation.

The introduction goes on to identify the six specific learning objectives behind the telecourse. First, to list the various plots of the play and to be able to describe how they relate to each other. Second, to rank the different characters according to foolishness and madness. Third, to identify the characters who grow and stagnate in the play and describe what lessons to take away from them. Fourth, to identify the different way characters portray and represent love. Fifth, to determine whether or not the play's main title and subtitle speak to its plots and themes. Sixth, to explore how the characters' lack of awareness shapes the play's comedic elements (UC San Diego, 3). In contrast to the Shakespeare Kit, The Study Guide asks the students to perform actual literary analysis. The difference between the two texts should come as no surprise as The Shakespeare Study Guide was designed by scholars at actual academic institutions as opposed to The Shakespeare Kit that was designed by a public relations firm. The Shakespeare Kit's primary function was to prepare students to view the series as opposed to actually analyzing the plays and television productions as complex literary texts. While it would have been nice to see The Shakespeare Kit adopt more basic literary analysis, it might not have been as well received as it was.

In the scholarly essay "'Are You Mad? Or What Are You?' Revelry and Revelation in Twelfth Night," Gayle Greene explores the plots, characters and themes of the play. She starts by identifying the four love plots and how they center on Viola's Cesario disguise (6-7). Greene states that Viola is the character with whom the audience identifies most closely. She argues that Viola's knowledge of her true identity gives her the greatest sense of awareness and clarity amongst the characters. She says this clarity and empathy allows her to draw out more self-

absorbed characters. Greene argues that Viola represents “what is best in her world.” As a cross dresser, Viola is able to draw upon the strengths of both sexes (12). Towards the end of the play, she explains that an analysis of the different characters reveals the values that Shakespeare appears to hold in high esteem such as wisdom and love. Greene goes on to point out that the type of love that Shakespeare holds most dearly is based “on self-knowledge and acceptance.” She cites Viola’s relationship with Orsino as an example of true love in contrast to Orsino’s obsessive infatuation with Olivia (14). Greene ends the essay by arguing that the play with its combination of comedy, love, and knowledge can be seen as transition from the comedies into the tragedies (15-16). She also includes an annotated bibliography on the play for students to supplement their readings (16-17). Her essay both provides the students with useful background information on the play, but also models the type of scholarly analysis expected from students at the university level.

The Study Guide includes a Self-Test on the play and the production. The first section of the test is composed of ten Multiple-choice questions on the different characters and the themes of love and family. For example, the first question asks, “Which character is in love for love’s sake?” The questions are based on information directly from the play and Greene’s essay. The test is careful to include the answers to the questions along with where in the play and essay to find the answers. The second section is made up of four “Short-answer essay questions” on the different characters and themes. The short essay requires students to critically analyze the characters and themes from the play using background information from Greene’s essays. The first question asks students to “Briefly explain why Feste can be termed the ‘shrewdest character in the play.’” Like it does for the multiple-choice questions, the test contains suggested answers for each question. The third section of the test is composed of four “questions for reflection.”

The questions don't focus on a single character or theme, but instead gets the students to compare and contrast the various characters, themes, and plots with each other. The first question instructs students to "describe the various attitudes toward love expressed or represented by the characters of the play" and then "compare that love with the type of love expressed or represented by the character with whom each character is coupled in Act V." The questions are designed to be open-ended and reflective nature. The test doesn't even include a suggested answer guide. It is clear the test designers are far more interested in seeing the students interpret the play rather than merely memorize facts about it.

Greene's essays models 1960s and 70s Anglo-American Shakespeare scholarship on genre and social custom. Greene echoes C.L. Barber's 1972 *Shakespeare Festive Comedy*, a study on the relationship between Shakespeare's romantic comedies and Elizabethan holidays. Greene encourages students to think of genres as being influenced by the cultures that they were written in. Greene also uses D.A. Traversi's 1969 essay on the play to demonstrate the different ways that students can examine the relation of Shakespeare's language to other dramatic elements like character, motive, and action (Greene 16-17). Greene attempts to give his students enough knowledge of English literary structure and historical cultural knowledge to guide their analysis, but also enough space to explore the complexity of the different characters. The Study Guide represents a positive step forward in the production of educational supplementary material for Shakespeare on screen. It demonstrates that when produced by actual scholars, they can offer actual pedagogical value. Scholars and educators who saw The Study Guide would be encouraged to continue work on Shakespeare on screen.

Besides The Shakespeare Kits and The Study Guides, WNET produced the accompanying 1986 PBS television series known as *The Shakespeare Hour*. WNET hired

Shakespeare scholars John F. Andrews, Frank Kermode, Edward Quinn, and Maurice Charney as their core consultants along with other members of the national advisory board. The series selected five productions from the BBC series around the themes of love, power, and revenge along with educational supplements. WNET deliberately designed the series not to feel like a classroom lecture (Charney 490). Rather than a Shakespeare scholar, WNET hired comedic actor Walter Matthau as host. They wanted someone who could raise questions without answering them and help the audiences explore the difficulties of the plays as an equal (Charney 491). The series also included four to fifteen minute mini-documentaries on different subjects like fools, heroines, very tragical mirth, and poetic illusion (Charney 493-494). In 1986, Signet published a printed edition of the series titled *The Shakespeare Hour: A Companion to the PBS-TV Series* edited by American Shakespeare scholar Edward Quinn. Despite the \$6500 investment, the series didn't survive past its first season (Willis 49). The series appeared unable to compete with the surfeit of accompanying educational material. By 1986, students were already familiar with the BBC series. Despite its premature death, *The Shakespeare Hour* represents an important attempt by American television companies and scholars to build on the success of *The Shakespeare Plays* and to create a new genre of Shakespeare educational television.

The Shakespeare Plays initially received mixed reviews from American scholars and critics. In a 1979 review for *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Jack Jorgens panned the productions of *Julius Caesar*, *As You Like It*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. He went as far to say that after all of the BBC's grandiose claims, the recent productions appeared to reaffirm students' suspicion that Shakespeare was a bore being forced upon them. Jorgens does admit that the productions of *Richard II* and *Measure for Measure* did redeem the season in his eyes (Jorgens 411). Jorgens finished the essay convinced that film was the superior medium to television when it came to

adapting Shakespeare's plays to screen (415). Despite these initial criticisms, the series proved a financial success. By 1982, the series had already paid off its production costs and was beginning to make a profit (Willis 8). In a 1984 article for *Shakespeare Quarterly*, James C. Bulman reports that the series was being purchased by more than one hundred colleges and universities across the country and being viewed by tens of thousands of students each year (Bulman 571). Later in a preface his 1988 book *Shakespeare on Television*, Bulman stated that a whole generation of students had come to know Shakespeare primarily through the lens of the screen (Bulman and Coursen, ix). It is the contention of this chapter that these students would go on to fuel the Shakespeare film boom of the 1990s.

The series also struck a cord among younger professors who were interested in Shakespearean performance (Mullin 587). They were a part of the same generation of educators that had been reading the early Shakespeare film scholars and viewing the RSC's educational outreach programs. These young scholars had already begun to address Shakespeare screen adaptations. They were eager to incorporate the series into their courses as they became available on videocassette (Mullin 588). Shakespeare scholars learned how to teach Shakespeare on screen through trial and error. They reported that when they first assigned their students to watch the series outside of the course without any sort writing assignment, the students either didn't watch the productions or they didn't gain anything from them. The scholars found they achieved much better results when they screened excerpts from the productions in class and then led the students in a discussion about elements like directors' choices and scene structure (Mullin 588). These early experimentations resulted in today's standard practices in Shakespeare screen pedagogy.

In light of the series' success amongst students and young scholars, Shakespeare studies began to reconsider its previous opposition to Shakespeare on screen. A clear example of this

growing interest was the growing number of seminars on Shakespeare screen adaptations being held at major academic conferences. Bernice W. Kliman led a seminar on “Using Film and TV to Teach Shakespeare in Nontraditional Ways to Nontraditional Students” during the 1981 Convention of the Modern Language Association of America. While the seminar wasn’t the first of its type, it generated interest in the subject across the discipline. The panel was made up of future prominent Shakespeare film scholars Kathleen M. Lesko, Michael Shapiro, Gerald Berkowitz, Marion Perret, and Kenneth S. Rothwell (PMLA 1016). The seminar garnered enough interest for Kliman to publish an article about it entitled “Teaching with Film and Television” for the February 1982 issue of *The Shakespeare Newsletter*. Kliman recounts using Shakespeare screen adaptation to teach a course on Shakespeare’s comedies during the fall of 1981 at Nassau Community College. She described showing clips from Peter Hall’s 1968 *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* while she would also show photographs from Max Reinhardt’s 1935 version. She explained that she needed to show two versions of the same play in order to disabuse students of their assumption that the film performances equate to the text themselves. Shakespeare scholars Penelope Scambly Schott, Rothwell, and Mullin discussed their experiences teaching the BBC telecourses. While the scholars agreed that the series could help make the plays more accessible to nontraditional students who had been conditioned into believing Shakespeare was overly difficult, they all agreed that the courses required strong guidance from the teacher to guide their readings and viewing (Kliman 2). Kliman’s article was popular enough that she was able to publish the follow up article “Suggestions for Teaching Shakespeare” in the fall 1982 issue (Kliman 25). Throughout the 80s, Kliman was invited to speak at Shakespeare conferences organized by colleges, universities, and theatre companies across the country (Kliman CV). Kliman helped publicize the work being done in Shakespeare

film scholarship around the country. In a 2013 obituary for *The Shakespeare Newsletter*, Laury Magnus credited her and Rothwell for “pioneer[ing] the study of Shakespeare on film” (77).

Shakespeare scholars both in the U.S. and around the world began to acknowledge the increasingly important role of Shakespeare on screen in both Shakespeare studies and popular culture. As stated in the previous chapters, Shakespeare film scholars were writing about Shakespeare on film long before the BBC series. Despite these earlier scholarly works, the BBC series still represented a turning point in Shakespeare screen scholarship. It is the success of the BBC series that finally seems to have convinced Shakespeare scholars to accept Shakespeare screen scholarship as a sub discipline. In 1986, Cambridge University Press dedicated a special issue of their *Shakespeare Survey* periodical to the subject of Shakespeare on screen. In his opening article “Shakespeare and the Media of Film, Radio and Television,” Anthony Davies declared to the profession that the telecommunication media of film, radio, and television were becoming the most likely vehicles to spread performances of Shakespeare’s plays around the world (1). The BBC series was deemed critical enough to the subdiscipline that the *Shakespeare Survey* editorial board decided to include two articles about the series in their special issue.

The Shakespeare Plays can be seen as the pivotal moment when Shakespeare, film, television, technology, pedagogy, and marketing came together to produce a Shakespeare Complete Works on screen for the American educational market. Equally important, the success of the series demonstrated to the film industry that there was still a fertile market for Shakespeare on screen in the U.S. The next chapter of my dissertation will explore this period of reignited interest in screen Shakespeare during which former RSC actor Kenneth Branagh directed his 1989 film adaptation of *Henry V*.

Chapter 4

Branagh's *Henry V* and the 1990s Shakespeare Film Boom

By the late 1980s, the U.S. was ripe for another Shakespeare film boom. The first such boom led to the development of Shakespeare film scholarship in America. The RSC's educational outreach programs led to the partnership between the professional British theatre companies and American educational institutions. The success of the BBC television series, *The Shakespeare Plays*, made American schools into a rich audience for Shakespeare on screen and transformed a generation of students into a potential market for future Shakespeare films. At the same time, Hollywood companies such as the Samuel Goldwyn Company and Miramax produced and distributed low budget art films to fill screens at American cineplexes.

Meanwhile, the British professional stage actor Kenneth Branagh directed and starred in his 1989 film adaptation of *Henry V*. A veteran of the RSC and a cofounder of the Renaissance Theatre Company, Branagh and his cast performed in a style comprehensible to general Anglo-American audiences. A lifelong lover of Hollywood film, Branagh modeled many of his cinematic sequences after scenes from major Hollywood movies. Branagh's *Henry V* came along at the intersection of the driving forces in the Anglo-American film industry, professional British theatre, British television companies, and American Shakespeare scholarship. His films established the model for future films during the 1990s Shakespeare Film Boom.

The events of the past fifty years had set the stage for this second cultural event. The first boom can be said to have begun in the 1940s and extended through the late 1970s. During the period, scholars published academic articles and eventually books that laid the foundation for the subdiscipline of Shakespeare film scholarship. By the late 1980s, a whole generation of students grew up watching Shakespeare films and the BBC television series at home and in the classroom.

These students were equally invested in performance as they were in literary analysis. Editor John F. Andrews asks rhetorically in a 1984 “From the Editor” article for *Shakespeare Quarterly* whether Shakespeare teachers were training their students to be theatre professionals, English professors, or just to be cultivated general audience members (516). Andrews’ words would prove prophetic. Upon graduating from school, this generation of young Americans would become one of the largest and most sophisticated general audiences for Shakespeare film in the history of the genre. They had strong opinions on what constituted a good Shakespeare film and they wouldn’t hesitate to reject a film that didn’t meet their standards. They ignored French New Wave director Jean-Luc Goddard’s 1987 film adaptation of *King Lear*. With the possible exception of Akira Kurosawa’s 1985 *Ran*, none of the Shakespeare films up until 1989 were able to capture the generation’s popular imagination. They wanted a style of film that was as innovative as the Laurence Olivier and Orson Welles’s films that they studied in school. Equally importantly, they wanted a performance style in the manner of the RSC that spoke to them and their particular historic moment. This opened the doorway to the American film market to professional stage actor Kenneth Branagh’s idea for a new film adaptation of *Henry V*.

Branagh’s 1989 *Henry V* was the product of his career in the professional British theatre and obsession with American movies. A graduate of the prestigious Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts (RADA), Branagh quickly established himself as an upcoming actor for his performance as Tommy Judd in the 1982 West End production of *Another Country*. During the 1982 Laurence Olivier Awards, Branagh won the “Most Promising Newcomer of the Year” award (The Society of London Theatre). In 1983, senior RSC directors Barry Kyle and Adrian Noble invited Branagh to join the RSC for the role of King Henry in Adrian Noble’s 1984 production of *Henry V*. It was dubbed by the British press as the “post-Falklands’ version of the play;” Branagh

explained that he and Noble strove to explore the complexity surrounding the character of King Henry and the morality of his war effort (Branagh *Beginning*, 136-139). Branagh describes the role of mud in the production's aesthetic. He recounted the RSC director Ron Daniels describing how the company wanted to come at the play from an "earthy, filthy approach" (Branagh *Beginning*, 133). Noble's production quickly proved a critical and financial success. In a 1985 review for the June 26th 1985 issue of *The New York Times*, Frank Rich praised the production as "easily the best of the RSC Shakespeares" that season (Rich 17). In accordance with the RSC's core mission, the production proved accessible to all elements of British society. Branagh famously recalls his working-class parents attending the same performance as the Prince and Princess of Wales (Branagh *Beginning*, 151). The success of the production led the RSC to transfer it from the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford to the Barbican theatre in London where it eventually ran a total of 139 performances (Branagh *Beginning*, 163). It was clear to everyone on both of the sides of the Atlantic that the production had resonated with contemporary audiences. The production would serve as the model for his 1989 film adaptation of the play.

Branagh states that during his rehearsal for Noble's stage production, he was already envisioning a film adaptation of the play. He recounts his initial concept "of abandoning large theatre projection and allowing close-ups and low-level dialogue to draw the audience deep into the human side of the distant medieval world." He believed this cinematic approach to the play combined "with the strong visual possibilities of the siege of Harfleur and the battle of Agincourt" had the potential to "produce an extraordinary modern film." Branagh states that by the time he left the RSC in 1985, he was already mentally producing a storyboard for the film (Branagh *Henry V*, 9-10). The idea for the film remained with him as he established the

Renaissance Theatre Company. He saw the film as a natural extension of the company's mission to share their style of intimate Shakespearean acting with as large an audience as possible (Branagh *Beginning*, 205). In 1987, he presented his idea for the film to London stockbroker and patron of the arts Stephan Evans. Branagh sold the project as a popular film that wouldn't contain any declamatory acting and that the pacing and the excitement of the plot would be structured to elicit the upmost clarity and immediacy. He states, "It was a story that would make you laugh, make you cry, and be utterly accessible to anyone of whatever age or background" (Branagh *Henry V*, XIV). In January 1988, Branagh wrote a screenplay from which Evans calculated a film budget of £4.5 million or \$9 million (Branagh *Beginning*, 203-207). As was the case for the earlier Shakespeare screen adaptations, Branagh and his crew immediately turned to the U.S. for funding and as a potential market. They found a willing partner in Samuel Goldwyn Jr.'s the Samuel Goldwyn Company. An established Hollywood art film distributor with connections to the British film industry, Goldwyn Jr. recognized the potential in Branagh's film in the developing American Shakespeare screen market (Colker).²¹ British scholar Emma French explains in her 2006 book *Selling Shakespeare to Hollywood* that Samuel Goldwyn Company strove "to provide an image of a medieval English king that would be appealing to a contemporary American audience, employing familiar film codes such as the horror and heroism of war" (73). The company designed their posters and trailers to portray Branagh's RSC theatrically based film in a manner that imitated the Hollywood action adventure films with which American general audiences were already familiar. The company portrayed the character of King Henry in a chivalrous manner that went against Branagh's Realpolitik interpretation of the character. Once they came to the film, Goldwyn Jr. was confident that Branagh would win over American general audiences just as he had in the British theatre.

From the very beginning of the film, Branagh attempted to establish the tonal difference between his and Olivier's 1944 film adaptation. In contrast to the bright and cheery image of Olivier's playbill floating across Elizabethan London to the upbeat Renaissance instrumental score, the opening credit sequence was shot on a black screen with red inter titles to William Doyle's somber orchestral score. The sequence quickly establishes Branagh's grim version of the play. Branagh is careful to quickly identify the film as his film adaptation of the play. "Adapted for the Screen by Kenneth Branagh." He understood that Shakespeare scholars and critics would chastise him if he attempted to falsely pass his film off as the text projected on screen. Branagh proceeded to highlight his all-star cast of British professional theatre and screen actors. The sequence proceeds to identify key members of the production team with Branagh as director (Branagh *Henry V*, 00:00:23-00:02:04). By the end of the opening credits, Branagh wanted his American audiences to understand that they weren't watching a second rate adaptation, but a serious British artistic film project being carried out by some of Britain's greatest acting and production talent.

In the opening prologue scene of the film, Branagh frames his adaptation as a film within a film. The scene begins with the striking of a match that reveals a close up shot of the Chorus played by Derek Jacobi (Branagh *Henry V*, 00:02:04-00:02:08). Jacobi is dressed in a modern collared shirt covered in a dark brown scarf and wool overcoat. The scene was ambiguous about the identity of Jacobi. While Shakespeare fans would recognize him as a modern Shakespearean actor other viewers might interpret the character as an academic guiding the viewers in a documentary. Looking directly into the lens of the camera while holding up the lit match, Jacobi delivered the opening lines, "O, for a muse of fire, that would ascend / The brightest heaven of invention" (Branagh *Henry V*, 00:02:08-00:02:19). The lit match represents the muse of fire that

chorus is trying to summon. The camera tracks Jacobi as he descends down a stairway and stops to turn on the lights to what is revealed to be an abandoned film studio (Branagh *Henry V*, 00:02:20-00:02:40). The setting serves as a meta-cinematic reminder to the viewers that they are watching a film rather than a play. As he walks across the set littered with production equipment and stage props, Jacobi pleads for pardon from his audience for the physical limitations of his stage. Spoken in the context of the film set, Jacobi's lines take on an ironic new meaning. While Shakespeare's Elizabethan stage did not have the resources to fully portray his vision of the play, Branagh's film company could "bring forth / So great an object" (Branagh *Henry V*, 00:02:41-00:03:34). Branagh ends the sequence by having the chorus lead the camera to a pair of giant wooden doors embossed with the English lion and the French fleur-de-lis. When Jacobi delivers his final lines, "Admit me Chorus to this history; / Who prologue-like your humble patience pray, / Gently to hear, kindly to judge, our ... / ... Play!", he pauses before the word play. Just before the pause, he pushes the door open and rushes into the darkness (Branagh *Henry V*, 00:03:34-00:04:11). The doors can be interpreted as a metacinematic gateway between the real world and the world of the film. The chorus can be seen as leading the audience into the world of the film.

In Act 1 Scenes 1 and 2 of the film, Branagh uses cinematic techniques to establish the Realpolitik behind King Henry's war effort. Branagh opens the scenes in the dark backrooms of the court where the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Ely played by Charles Kay and Alec McCowen are discussing the English parliament's bill to seize church land (Branagh *Henry V*, 00:04:11-00:05:33). Unlike Olivier's treatment of the scene, there is nothing lighthearted or comical about this scene. These are calculating church officials hidden away in the dark rooms of power trying to lobby away a potential government action to seize church land. Olivier used the

comedy to acclimatize the viewers to Shakespeare's verse. But Branagh wants his viewers to understand the political motives behind King Henry's war efforts. In Act 1 Scene 2, Branagh has the camera zoom in on King Henry as he sits on his throne with the bishops at both ears as they encourage King Henry to retake his French dukedoms in exchange for Church financial support. Like a vice figure from the English morality plays, the archbishop is tempting King Henry into launching the country into a legally dubious war against another member of the Christendom. The viewers can see the wheels turning metaphorically in King Henry's eyes as the Archbishop's words implant themselves in his head (Branagh *Henry V*, 00:10:12-00:10:42). Branagh's scene cleverly highlights Shakespeare's original point about King Henry's war being the result of English domestic politics rather than a nationalistic response to the Dauphin of France's insults against King Henry.

Like Olivier, Branagh inserts the character of Sir John Falstaff from *Henry IV Parts 1 and 2*. But while Olivier is content to merely show a gaunt looking Falstaff rise up in bed, Branagh creates an amalgamated flashback scene between Falstaff and Prince Harry from *Henry IV Parts 1 and 2*. Falstaff delivers an adapted version of his famous self-defense speech from Act 2 Scene 5 of *Henry IV Part 1*. Falstaff urges Prince Harry to banish all of their companions except himself. At the end of the speech, the camera cuts back to the now frowning Prince Harry's face. Branagh has Prince Harry respond in a voiceover, "I do. I will." The camera cuts to Falstaff whose face responds in shock as if he heard the Prince's words (Branagh *Henry V*, 00:18:43-00:21:10). Falstaff's reaction is noteworthy because traditionally voiceovers are meant to represent the character's private internal thoughts separate from what they say physically publically. Branagh however is breaking down these walls by allowing Falstaff to hear Prince Harry's voiceover. In response to Prince Henry's voiceover, Branagh has Falstaff whisper his

famous “But we have heard the chimes at midnight” speech from Act 3 Scene 2 of *Henry IV Part 2*. Branagh then has Falstaff whisper Justice Robert Shallow’s lines, “Jesus. The days that we have seen.” The camera cuts back to Prince Harry as he delivers another voice over speech from Act 5 Scene 5 from the same play, “I know thee not, old man.” The camera cuts back to Falstaff who backs away in shocked response to Prince Harry’s words (Branagh *Henry V*, 00:21:11-00:21:46). Branagh’s flashback offers invaluable background information on King Henry’s past for any audience members who are unfamiliar with Shakespeare’s *Henriad*. We see how King Henry makes the choice to sacrifice his friendships from his previous life as the playboy prince when he ascends to the throne as king.

In Act 2 Scene 2 of the film, Branagh portrays King Henry as the ruthlessly pragmatic warlord. Branagh’s decision to include the scene was another way to distinguish his film from Olivier’s film. Olivier chose to cut the scene because it portrayed infighting amongst the English nobility. In the scene, King Henry invites his noblemen, Lord Scrope of Masham, the Earl of Cambridge, and Sir Thomas Grey, to his war council. After King Henry confronts the three noblemen with their plot to assassinate him for the King of France, the camera tracks King Henry as he speaks to Scrope. King Henry grabs Scrope and slams him down with his back to the table. The camera cuts to a close up profile shoot of King Henry on top of Scrope as if they were two lovers. The camera cuts to a close up shot looking up into King Henry’s face as he says, “May it be possible that foreign hire / Could out of thee extract one spark of evil / That might annoy my finger?” During the speech, the camera cuts to a shot looking down at Scrope. The camera returns to another shot of King Henry atop Scrope as he says, “I will weep for thee. / For this revolt of thine, methinks, is like / Another fall of man” before King Henry angrily throws him aside (Branagh *Henry V*, 00:23:46-00:28:43). Branagh illustrates the complex

emotional response to the treachery of his nobleman. On the one hand, he must assume the role of merciless strongman in order to frighten away any other potential traitors. On the other hand, King Henry clearly still cares for Scrope as a former friend. Few critics say much about this scene, but I think Branagh models the scene after the iconic “I know it was you Fredo” scene from Francis Ford Coppola’s 1974 *Godfather Part 2* when Mafia Don Michael Corleone hugs and kisses his brother as he confronts him for betraying him to his enemies. As one of the most iconic moments in Hollywood film, Branagh hoped American general audiences would recognize the parallel between the two scenes and hopefully begin to think of King Henry in the context of the Hollywood anti-hero.

In Act 3 Scenes 1-3 of the film, Branagh creates his epic cinematic vision of the siege of Harfleur. Branagh starts the scene at the end Act 2 Scene 4 with a voice over from the chorus delivering the opening lines of his speech. “Thus with imagined wing our swift scene flies / In motion of no less celerity / Than that of thought” (Branagh *Henry V*, 00:42:52-00:42:59). The shot fades to black before fading to a night shot of the city walls of Harfleur under bombardment from English canons. The scene’s nighttime setting and artillery bombardment alludes to the night battles of the Falklands War that were still fresh in the public memory. The camera proceeds to cut to a close up of shot of a bedraggled looking Jacobi crouched down on the battlefield like a BBC war correspondent. The chorus describes the failed negotiations between King Henry and King Charles. After delivering the lines, Jacobi crouches down and runs away as the camera cuts to a series of shots of King Henry and his army fleeing from a burning gap in the city wall. The camera cuts to a shot of a silhouette of King Henry on his reared horse with a raised sword in hand in front of the flaming hole. From his horse, King Henry proceeds to deliver his rallying cry to his downcast soldiers, “Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once

more, / Or close the wall up with our English dead.” King Henry rides in front of his soldiers as he attempts to rouse their battle spirits. King Henry points to one of the soldiers in the group as he says, “And you, good yeoman, / Whose limbs were made in England” (Branagh *Henry V*, 00:42:59-00:44:47). The camera cuts to a shot of the soldier in question who eagerly pulls out his sword. “[S]how us here / The mettle of your pasture; let us swear / That you are worth your breeding—which I doubt not! For there is none of you so mean and base / That hath not noble luster in your eyes!” (Branagh *Henry V*, 00:44:48-00:44:58). Branagh skillfully uses the reaction shots of the soldiers to show how King Henry’s words succeeded in rallying them to rejoin the battle. General audience members who were unfamiliar with Shakespeare’s language would still be able to follow the meaning behind King Henry’s words based on the soldier’s reaction.

At the end of Act 4 Scene 8, Branagh inserts a long take of King Henry carrying the body of the boy across the Agincourt battlefield. The sequence begins with “King Henry sitting beside his mud and blood soaked men after reading their casualty reports” and delivering his final speech of the scene (Branagh *Henry V Screenplay*, 112). “Do we all holy rights. / Let there be sung Non nobis, and Te deum, / The dead with charity enclosed in clay, / And then to Calais, and to England then, / Where ne’er from France arrived more happy men” (Branagh *Henry V*, 01:51:39-01:54:54). The camera cuts to a shot of an English soldier played by the film’s composer Patrick Doyle singing Non nobis. As the soldier sings the lines, “Non nobis Domine, Domine / Non nobis Domine / Sed nomine, Sed nomine / Tuo da gloriam”, the camera follows King Henry as he carries the body of the boy on his back across the battlefield. Branagh merges the soldier’s singing with a chorus of off-stage voices giving the audience the impression they are listening to a hymn being performed at catholic mass. While many of the film’s non-Catholic audience members wouldn’t understand the literal meaning of the words, they would

nevertheless recognize the lyrics as a somber expression of gratitude to God.²² The lyrics are juxtaposed by the tracking shot of King Henry walking amongst the bloody and muddy battlefield littered with the English and French dead. As King Henry walks, Branagh adds an orchestral soundtrack to the chorus of voices further heightening the dramatic power of the sequence. At one moment during a pause in the singing, Branagh shows a group of grieving French women attempting to attack King Henry before being blocked by the French herald Montjoy. It is a powerful reminder of King Henry's image amongst the French people as a foreign invader and occupier. The singing recommences when King Henry finally reaches a wagon where he lovingly lays down the boy's body surrounded by his soldiers (Branagh *Henry V*, 01:55:09-01:59:06). The shot ironically mirrors the shot of King Henry delivering his Saint Crispin's day speech. Branagh ends the sequence by cutting to a close up shot of King Henry looking down upon the dead as if weighing the true cost of his war effort.

Like Olivier's *Henry V*, Branagh's *Henry V* proved to be a financial and critical success in the U.S. The film grossed \$10,161,099 more than covering its original \$9,000,000 production budget (Box Office/Business-Henry V 1989, IMDb). American critics praised the film and its relatively unknown director. In the January 8th 1989 pre U.S. profile article "A 'New Olivier' is taking on Henry V on the Screen" for *The New York Times*, celebrated British theatre critic Michael Billington introduces Branagh to American audiences as "the new Olivier." He works to establish Branagh's expertise on the play, but also popular culture. He repeats Branagh's stated intention of making a popular film that will appeal to the highbrow Shakespearean scholar and general audiences alike. Aware of Branagh's reputation in Britain by some as an egotistical young upstart, Billington repeats Branagh's self deprecating response when asked what Olivier thought about him challenging his classic version. "If Olivier even knows about this film, I

suspect he thinks ‘cheeky bastard.’ But the point is that, if a previous ‘Henry V’ film had existed it certainly wouldn’t have stopped Olivier” (Billington). Billington’s review served as Branagh’s recommendation letter to Hollywood.

The film quickly drew the attention of the Hollywood establishment. During the 62nd annual Academy Awards in 1989, the film earned nominations for Best Actor in a Leading Role and Best Director for Branagh. The film won Best Costume Design for Phyllis Dalton (Oscars). During the 2nd annual Chicago Film Critic Association Awards in 1989, the film was nominated for Best Actor, Most Promising Actor, and for Best Director along with a win for the film for Best Foreign Film (Awards – Henry V 1989, IMDb). During the 55th Annual New York Film Critics Circle Award, the film won for Best Director. During the 61st National Board of Reviews in 1989, the film won for Best Director. The film’s top showing at four of the country’s most prestigious award ceremonies indicated that the film had made a major impact on the industry.

The film’s financial and critical success quickly caught the attention of American Shakespeare scholars. After writing reviews for eight seasons of *The Shakespeare Plays*, Shakespeare scholars seemed eager to cement the reputations that they had garnered as film critics. Like the critics, they established a parallel relationship between Branagh and Olivier. It is noteworthy that the cover of the December 1989 issue of *The Shakespeare on Film Newsletter* contained Bernice W. Kliman’s review “Branagh’s Henry V: Allusion and Illusion” and Kenneth S. Rothwell’s obituary article “In Memoriam Laurence Olivier 1907-87” (1). The cover can be seen as the passing of the Shakespeare film torch from one generation to another. In her review, Kliman approaches Branagh’s *Henry V* through the lens of earlier Shakespeare screen adaptations like Olivier’s *Henry V* and Orson Welles’ *Chimes at Midnight*. Kliman argues that Branagh himself understands the cherished place that these earlier Shakespeare screen

adaptations hold in the memories of their audiences. She points to the various cinematic allusions in his film. She amusingly comments that they are simultaneously “impish and respectful.” Kliman’s article encourages scholars and teachers to analyze the film with a cross comparative approach. Kliman is careful to acknowledge that Branagh’s film is its own text. She writes that it “creates its own meanings, through mise-en-scene, film technique, and characterization” (1). Kliman argues that Branagh alternatively brings a level of “sentiment, seriousness, and naturalism” that makes his Henry come across “more like a gamin than a king.” By the end of the review, Kliman compliments the film as “a welcome addition” (10). While she clearly doesn’t see it as the greatest of the *Henry V* adaptations, she sees it as being particularly well suited for their contemporary moment. She looks at it as a useful comparative tool that has the potential to illuminate Shakespeare’s original texts and earlier stage productions and screen adaptations (10). As one of the leading scholars in Shakespeare film pedagogy, Kliman’s favorable review may have gone a long way to encouraging teachers to incorporate the film into their syllabi.

The Folger Shakespeare Library dedicated the spring 1991 issue of *Shakespeare Quarterly* to the subject of *Henry V* and the rest of the Henriad. The Folger’s editorial decision indicated that a popular Shakespeare film could generate scholarly interest in the play beyond the film. The issue featured Shakespeare film scholar Peter S. Donaldson’s article “Taking on Shakespeare: Kenneth Branagh’s *Henry V*.” In his article, Donaldson praises Branagh’s *Henry V* as a “vital, intelligent, and psychologically rich film adaptation” (60). Like Kliman, he compares Branagh’s *Henry V* to Olivier’s film. However he goes beyond merely comparing the two films. He argues that the film can be better understood through the lens of Branagh’s relationship to Olivier as a student and a rival director. Donaldson sees Branagh’s portrayal of King Henry’s

battle against the traditionalist King Charles as embodying Branagh's challenge against Olivier's generation. Donaldson shows that Olivier isn't the only mentor that Branagh has imitated. He points out that Branagh's doubts can be traced back to Shakespeare scholars Norman Rabkin and Stephen Greenblatt (61). Donaldson's article seems to argue that Branagh's film is as much a product of Shakespeare scholarship as it is Shakespeare film and theatre.

One of the first major academic books to address the film was Samuel Crowl's 1992 *Shakespeare Observed: Studies in Performance on Stage and Screen*. A professor of English at Ohio University, Crowl had been researching and teaching Shakespeare on film and stage since the 1970s. I will extensively refer to Crowl's works throughout the chapter. While Crowl focuses the majority of *Shakespeare Observed* on earlier Shakespeare stage productions and film adaptations, he dedicates the tenth and final chapter to "Fathers and Sons: Kenneth Branagh's Henry V." Crowl sees the success of Branagh's film and of Franco Zeffirelli's 1990 *Hamlet* as a sign that they might be experiencing another Shakespeare film boom (165-166). Like his predecessors, Crowl explores the relationship between Branagh's film and Olivier's 1944 film. Moreover, Crowl considers Branagh's experiences in the postwar professional British theatres led by university-educated directors like Hall and Nunn. As Shakespeare portrays Falstaff as father figure to King Henry V, Crowl argues that Olivier and Noble can be treated as surrogate fathers to Branagh. Crowl writes, "Branagh must, like the character he plays, both acknowledge and transcend and do so through a brazen, youthful gamble" (167). Towards the end of the chapter, Crowl asserts Branagh's film is the product of a three-decade long dialogue among screen, stage, and Shakespeare scholarship (173-174). Crowl is one of the first scholars to recognize the symbiotic relationships amongst Shakespeare on screen and stage.

The successful American reception of Branagh's *Henry V* inspired Branagh's 1993 *Much Ado About Nothing*. Like his previous film based on Adrian Noble's 1984 RSC play, Branagh's *Much Ado* was influenced by Judi Dench's 1987 Renaissance Theatre Company's stage production of the play where Branagh played the role of Benedick. In order to make the film more appealing to American general audiences, Branagh hired an Anglo-American multi-racial cast. The cast included British stage and film stars Branagh as Benedick, Emma Thompson as Beatrice, and Richard Brier as Leonato along with American film stars like Keanu Reeves as Don John, Denzel Washington as Don Pedro, and Michael Keaton as Dogberry. The American film actors brought their own unique approach to their characters.²³ The three American film actors' styles contrasted nicely with their British stage-acting counterparts. Beyond the casting, Branagh drew inspiration from Hollywood film. The best example can be found in the film's opening sequence. Straight out of a Hollywood Western, the camera shows the returning veterans Don Pedro, Count Claudio, Seignior Benedict, Balthazar, Don John, Borachio, and Conrad riding on horseback with their arms up in triumph up the dirt road to Governor Leonato's Messina estate to an iconic orchestral score (Branagh *Much Ado About Nothing*, 00:05:25-00:05:53). The romantic scenes involving the young lovers appeared modeled after contemporary romantic comedies such as Rob Reiner's 1989 *When Harry Met Sally* and Gary Marshall's 1990 *Pretty Woman*. These casting and stylistic choices can be seen as reflecting Branagh's love of Hollywood and his desire to encourage American participation in what was quickly being recognized as another Shakespeare film boom.

Perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of Branagh's *Much Ado About Nothing* was its focus on the "Sigh no more" song. In the beginning of the opening sequence, we see the lyrics posted on the screen as we hear a voice over of Beatrice reciting the song as a sonnet. "Sigh no more,

ladies, / Sigh no more, / Men were deceivers ever, / One foot in sea, / And one on shore, / To one thing constant never, / Then sigh not so, / But let them go, / And be you blithe and bonny, / Converting all your sound of woe, / Into hey nonny nonny!” (Branagh *Much Ado About Nothing*, 00:00:28 – 00:01:23). The shot fades to a painting of Leonato’s estate and the camera pans over the men of women of Leonato’s estate relaxing idly in the grass. The camera finally reaches Beatrice sitting in a tree as she reads the song to the group. The image of the sun kissed men and women in revealing clothing set in a Renaissance estate in Tuscany helps the audience understand the song’s lyrics about the capricious nature of love between men and women. You might even argue that the themes of the song can be related to the film as a whole. Branagh explains that “it is very lusty and it seemed to me that there is something about the mating dance element of this group of women and group of men coming together. On the one level idyllic. You have this fairy tale setting and within it very passionate hot blooded things going on” (Branagh “Making Ado About Nothing,” 00:00:30-00:00:45).

In Act 1 Scene 3, we find a shirtless Don John being given an oil massage by his companion Conrad. The scene can be seen as an allusion to Reeves’ performance as the street hustler (male prostitute) Scott Favor in Gus Van Sant’s 1991 *My Own Private Idaho*. Scholars and critics describe the film as an appropriation of *Henry IV Part 1*, *Henry IV Part 2*, and *Henry V*. Branagh seems to have cast Reeves as much for his brooding demeanor as for his physical sexuality. As Conrad tenderly massages the shirtless Don John, he asks why his sadness is out of measure and Don John grumbles that since there is no measure for his sadness, his sadness is without limits. When Conrad chuckles, “You should hear reason.” These words trigger something in Don John who gets up and says, “And when I have heard it, what blessing brings it? / I cannot hide / what I am. I must be sad when I have cause, and / smile at no man’s jest; eat

when I have stomach, / and wait for no man's leisure; sleep when I am / drowsy, and tend on no man's business; laugh when / I am merry, and claw no man in his humor" (Branagh *Much Ado About Nothing*, 00:17:20-00:18:12). By stripping Don John of his uniform, Branagh metaphorically reveals Don John's hostility towards his brother Don Pedro and his companions. Conrad reminds Don John that he is currently living at the mercy of his brother and that he must act accordingly. Don John angrily responds, "I would rather be a canker in a hedge than / a rose in his grace. / In this, though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man, it must not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villain. / If I had my mouth, I would bite. If I had my liberty, would do my liking." We see Don John approach Conrad and grab him by the side of the head and look him dead in the eye as he says, "In the meantime, let me be that I am and seek not to alter me." (Branagh *Much Ado About Nothing*, 00:18:13-00:19:00). Reeve's sexy and brooding version of Don John captures Shakespeare's character, but also reflects the cinematic tastes of 1990s general audiences.

In Act 2 Scene 1, Branagh shows Don Pedro organizing his plot to set Benedick and Beatrice up with each other. After Beatrice exits the scene, we see Don Pedro say, "By my troth, a pleasant-spirited lady." Don Pedro joins Claudio, Hero, Leonato, Antonio, Margaret, and Ursula who are laughing about Beatrice's refusal to marry. Don Pedro says in all seriousness, "she were an excellent wife for Benedick." A laughing Leonato responds that if the couple were married for a week, they would drive each other mad. After learning that Claudio and Hero will be married the following Monday, Don Pedro comes up with the following plot. "I will in the interim undertake one of Hercules' labors, / which is to bring Signor Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection, / the one with the other. / I would fain have it a match, and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you would but minister such assistance as I shall give you

direction.” Leonato, Claudio, and Hero quickly agree to participate in Don Pedro’s plot. Surrounded by the group, Don Pedro says, “If we can do this, / Cupid is no longer an archer. / His glory shall be ours, / For we are the only love gods” (Branagh *Much Ado About Nothing*, 00:34:30-00:36:03). Branagh’s scene does a great job of portraying Don Pedro and his friends attempting to put together a plot to play matchmaker to bring Benedick and Beatrice together.

In Act 4 Scene 2, we see the constables Dogberry and Verges enter the scene in order to inspect their troop of watchmen. In a clear allusion to Terry Gilliam and Terry Jones’ 1975 *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, Branagh has the two constables pretend to be riding horses as they mumble a fake bugle call. While Dogberry’s faux equestrian entrance is primarily played for laughs, Branagh uses it to offer a unique insight into his character. Dogberry clearly wants to ride a horse like a nobleman, but due to his lack of wealth and social status, he can only comically mimic them.

Branagh’s Dogberry’s physical appearance is styled after Keaton’s poltergeist character in Tim Burton’s 1988 comedy *Beetlejuice*. Unlike the nobles and their servants, Dogberry comes across as dirty and unkempt. As a comedic actor, Keaton perfectly captures Dogberry’s malapropisms. After Dogberry and Verges “dismount,” Dogberry proceeds to issue confidently the following command, “Being chosen for the Prince’s watch, / This is your charge. / You are to bid any man stand, / In the Prince’s name.” When one of the watchmen asks what to do if the man in question refuses to stand, Dogberry freezes in thought before responding, “Why, then, take no note of him, but let him go.” When the watchmen glance at each other in confusion at Dogberry’s bizarre answer, Verges explains that “If he will not stand when he is bidden, / He is none of the Prince’s subjects.” Dogberry kisses Verges in gratitude for bailing him out of the potentially humiliating situation. Dogberry responds, “And they are to meddle with none but the

prince's subjects" (Branagh *Much Ado About Nothing*, 00:51:29-00:52:39). It is clear that despite Dogberry's arrogant bravado, he is in over his head. In order to play up Dogberry's incompetence, Branagh has Dogberry drift to sleep before he wakes himself up with his own fart before he and Verges depart the scene (Branagh *Much Ado About Nothing*, 00:53:43-00:54:11). The moment is a classic example of low comedy that has long been a part of western literature. What is most astonishing is the way Branagh is able to seamlessly fuse Shakespeare's romantic comedy with allusions to these modern Anglo-American comedic films. By mating these two cultural strands, Branagh illustrates Shakespeare's influence on contemporary comedy. Branagh is showing his viewers that they don't need to learn how to understand Shakespeare's humor because they already share it.

The final cinematic sequence of the film brings the play full circle. At the end of Act 5 Scene 4 after Benedick tells Don Pedro not to think about Don John until the following day and instead calls upon the pipers to play in celebration of all the new marriages. Benedick then takes Don Pedro by the hand as the group erupts into singing "Sigh no more" and start dancing. We see most of the men and women pair off with each other as they dance jubilantly across Leonato's estate. The only character that chooses not to join the dancing is Don Pedro. He is the odd bachelor out and he has to deal with his brother Don John. While Shakespeare's original text doesn't use "Sigh no more" in the scene, it is an ideal choice for the film. The song's lyrics reflect the play's themes of overcoming fickle men and learning to celebrate all of life's bounty (Branagh *Much Ado About Nothing*, 01:44:38-01:47:17). As Branagh starts the film with Beatrice individually reciting the song as a sonnet to the group, the film ends with the group singing the song collectively. Indeed one could argue that song can serve as a metaphor for the play and the genre of comedy as a whole.

Branagh's approach won over American audiences grossing \$22,551,000 in the U.S. (Box Office/Business-Much Ado About Nothing 1993, IMDb). During the 51st Golden Globes Award, the film was nominated for Best Film-Musical or Comedy (Awards-Much Ado About Nothing 1993, IMDb). In his film review "A House Party of Beatrice, Benedick, and Friends" for the May 7th 1993 issue of *The New York Times*, Vincent Canby states Branagh "has done it again." He argues that Branagh's second Shakespearean cinematic success is as equally impressive as his *Henry V* because Shakespeare's romantic comedies "usually turns to mush on screens." He explains that contemporary film favors a sort of meta-realism. He writes that the film camera tends to undermine Shakespearean comedy conventions like "disguises, gender reversals, garrulous country bumpkins, and the notion that someone is not hiding in hedges where his feet are clearly visible." Canby argues that Branagh's film succeeds because it "celebrates the artifice of the play and finds the humanity within it." He writes that "Branagh sidesteps the whole notion of reality" by relocating "to a sunlit country estate, which is removed from the ordinary world in spirit as it is in place." Canby seems equally impressed by Branagh's decision to cast American actors in major roles. Canby praises Washington and Reeves for their performances as half brothers Don Pedro and Don John. Canby seems especially fascinated by Keaton's Dogberry. He doesn't find Keaton's especially funny, but the actor's performance fascinates him nonetheless. Canby's article is an unequivocal positive endorsement for the film. He ends the article with the statement that the film was "ravishing entertainment" (Canby). In many ways, Canby's review for Branagh's *Much Ado About Nothing* is more important than his review for his *Henry V*. Canby's second review proves that Branagh isn't just another one hit wonder, but a legitimate Shakespeare film director. He had succeeded where Olivier failed in successfully adapting a Shakespeare film comedy.²⁴

Shakespeare scholars greeted Branagh's second film even more enthusiastically than critics. In 1992, *Shakespeare Bulletin* incorporated *The Shakespeare Film Newsletter* into their periodical. When Branagh released his *Much Ado About Nothing* in 1993, *Shakespeare Bulletin* dedicated their Vol. 11, No. 3, Summer 1993 issue to the film. The periodical printed a picture of Branagh's Benedick and Thompson's Beatrice lovingly holding hands on the cover. The opening article of the issue was an interview with RSC director Adrian Noble conducted by Paul Nelsen. Noble had directed Branagh in the 1984 RSC stage production of *Henry V*. During the interview, they briefly discussed Branagh's rising star status and Noble's decision to cast Branagh in the starring role of Noble's 1992 RSC stage production of *Hamlet*. Noble states, "Branagh has made a strong impact on the world of theatre and film" (Nelsen 7-8). It is quite fitting that the periodical would publish an interview with the director whose stage production led Branagh down his Shakespearean cinematic adventure.

In the issue's cover article, Crowl gives Branagh's film another rave review. He argues that Branagh draws much of his inspiration from the film's romantic Mediterranean setting at the Villa Vignamaggio in Tuscany as well as from Hollywood films like John Sturges' 1960 *The Magnificent Seven*, Victor Fleming's 1939 *Gone with the Wind*, and Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly's 1952 *Singing in the Rain*. Crowl writes, Branagh "wants to make Shakespeare's comedy come alive on the screen rich with romance and humor in order to appeal to young international audiences" (Crowl "Much Ado," 39). Crowl is impressed by Branagh's cinematic sequences especially the opening one. Crowl ends the article with the argument that the film itself can be seen as a marriage between Shakespeare and comedy. Crowl writes, "Branagh gives us the most successful translation we have of a Shakespearean comedy onto film and converts all our potential critical sounds of woe 'Into Hey nonny, nonny'" (Crowl *Much Ado About Nothing*, 39).

Not every scholar was as enthusiastic about the film as Crowl. In her 1994 article “Your Answer, Sir, Is Cinematical” for *Shakespeare Bulletin*, Ellen Edgerton explores what she describes as the pitfalls of Branagh’s attempts to popularize Shakespeare on film (42). She sees Branagh’s second film as overly ambitious. She asks whether Branagh can achieve his goal of adding a comedy to the Shakespeare film canon, play up the humor for general audiences, casting the film with popular American actors to attract audiences, preserving its fidelity to the text, all the while ensuring that he doesn’t overly sentimentalize or simplify the film in order to make it accessible to general audiences. Edgerton grants that Branagh succeeds in the humor, but she says that it comes at the expense of much of the play’s nuance. She complains that Branagh cut too much of Shakespeare’s original text (43). Edgerton also sees Branagh as struggling to achieve a balance between the theatrical and the cinematic. She observes the way Branagh tries to replicate the intimacy of the theatrical experience through close up camera shots. While Edgerton applauds Branagh’s attempt, she argues that his film hasn’t entirely succeeded “as a comic-dramatic production of the play” (44). Edgerton seems to harbor traditionalist doubts about the artistic and academic value of Branagh’s popular Shakespeare film. Edgerton isn’t the only scholar to express their doubts over the film’s limitations. In his 1997 article “Sleepless in Messina” for *Shakespeare Bulletin*, Shakespeare scholar Michael J. Collins compares Branagh’s film to Nora Ephron’s 1993 romantic comedy *Sleepless in Seattle*. Collin writes, “Branagh seems to have decided to suppress the play’s uneasiness about the roles that gender imposes upon both men and women and makes his *Much Ado* resemble, as far as possible, one of Hollywood’s most popular romantic comedies.” Collins argues that Branagh’s 90s rom-com style approach reduces Shakespeare’s original complex and sometimes disquieting portrayal of gender roles into a simpler, but more enjoyable set of Hollywood conventions (39). Edgerton and Collin’s articles

can be seen as part of traditionalist scholars' response to Branagh's popular style films. While both scholars acknowledge Branagh's accomplishments, they also raise concerns about Branagh's impulse to popularize the plays through film adaptation.

It is clear from the reviews by both his supporters and critics that Branagh has earned the respect of Shakespeare scholars. Branagh is quick to capitalize on the cultural capital that he was amassing. In a 1994 interview between Crowl and Branagh for *Shakespeare Bulletin*, Crowl asks Branagh if he is thinking about making a film adaptation of *Hamlet* and Branagh quickly answers in the affirmative. "Of course, I would love to. I'd like to set it in the Renaissance and use it as a way of teaching the public about the nature of Shakespeare's theatre. It all rather depends on the commercial success of *Much Ado About Nothing*. If I can't make a Shakespeare for a broad audience with all the Hollywood that got packed in the film, then I doubt I will be able to raise the financing for a Hamlet film" (Crowl "Hamlet 'Most Royall,'" 8). Knowing the journal's readership amongst American Shakespeare scholars and educators, Branagh seems to be deliberately trying to convince Americans and their educational institutions to buy and rent videocassettes of his *Much Ado About Nothing* in order to convince Hollywood to invest in his film. Branagh's plot would prove successful as the American film company Castle Rock would agree to produce his 1996 film adaptation of *Hamlet*. It was clear to all that the U.S. was in the midst of another Shakespeare film boom. My fifth chapter will explore how Shakespeare on film re-entered the American pop cultural spotlight and the emergence of a new generation of multidisciplinary Shakespeare scholar.

Chapter 5

Shakespeare on Screen and the Future of Shakespeare Studies

The 1990s Shakespeare film boom included a series of experimental screen adaptations of the author's works. The Welsh language channel *Sianel Pedwar Cymru (S4C)* partnered with Soviet animation studios, British theatre companies, and American television companies to produce and distribute the 1992-1994 *Shakespeare: The Animated Tales*. Also in 1992, the *Behind the Scenes* television documentary series produced their episode on Julie Taymor's stage production of *The Tempest*. A few years later in the 1996 docudrama *Looking for Richard*, American actor Al Pacino led a cast of American filmmakers and actors to perform a series of scenes from *Richard III*. The two television series and Pacino's docudrama can all be seen as part of a broader infiltration of Shakespeare into mainstream American consumer culture. American journalists tried to explain the phenomena in mainstream news magazines and newspapers like *Newsweek* and *The New York Times*.

At the same time, Shakespeare became a pawn between traditionalist scholars and scholars from underrepresented groups in disputes about the canon in a series of debates. There were some who used Shakespeare screen scholarship as a way to attract students and secure their own positions in English studies. The decade witnessed a surge in publications of journals and collections of essays on teaching Shakespeare. These articles often highlighted Shakespeare performance and Shakespeare screen scholarship and their newly cemented positions in Shakespeare studies. Building off the work of scholars from the 1980s, articles such as "Text, Eyes, and Videotape" by Stephen M. Buhler and "Versions of Henry V: Laurence Olivier versus Kenneth Branagh," by Harry Brent described the way film and television adaptations were becoming part of their lesson plans. These articles appeared in periodicals like *Shakespeare*

Quarterly and *Teaching Shakespeare Today*. Some of the articles encouraged scholars to experiment networking, researching, and teaching online. They were especially interested in multimedia editions of the plays on CD-ROM and other forms of digital media. More than twenty-years later, much of their vision has come to fruition. The third edition of *The Norton Shakespeare* comes with a digital edition of the text that allow users to simultaneously play recordings of spoken word performances of that particular passage. It is the contention of this chapter that the contemporary form of Shakespeare studies with its emphasis on Shakespeare screen scholarship and expansion into the digital sphere can be seen as the result of a relationship that developed over fifty years amongst Shakespeare studies, film, television, and theatre.

S4C producer Christopher Grace came up with the idea for *Shakespeare: The Animated Tales* on Boxing Day (Lambert 17). The success of Branagh's film helped convince Davies that an animated Shakespeare adaptation was possible. He saw animation both as a way to draw new meaning from the plays and to generate interest amongst young people (Waite C11). In May 1990, Grace hired renowned British children's author Leon Garfield to adapt the plays into screenplays (Lambert 17). In July 1990, Grace and series director Dave Edwards travelled to Moscow to negotiate a partnership with the Soviet state animation studio *Soyuzmultfilm* and the Soviet private studio Christmas Films (Waite C11). Grace chose the Soviet Studios due to their low cost and their distinctly non-Disneyesque animation styles. He says, "Their animators' work was rarely seen in the West outside of film festivals. They were entirely impervious to the Disney tradition and the view of childhood that inspired it." After successfully negotiating a production deal with the Soviet studios, Grace was able to raise the £500,000 production budget for each episode from BBC Wales, *S4C*, HIT Entertainment, HBO, and Fujisankei

Communications (Lambert 17). After the success of *The Shakespeare Plays*, the animated series was an easy sell to investors. The series was composed of twelve different twenty-five-minute episodes. Edwards oversaw production of the series overall, but nine Soviet directors directed the individual films.²⁵ The episodes were produced in variations of cell, paint on glass, and stop motion puppet animation styles. The range of directorial strategies and animations ensured that each episode constituted an independent work.

S4C intended to market the series towards children and educational institutions. While the episode's twenty-five-minute length was partially due to budget restrictions, the segment timings were a manageable length for children. After seeing the Soviet artwork, Garfield realized that he could convey much of the plays visually. As he did so, he preserved as much of the play's original mood and structure as possible. While the episodes' narratives are wholly from Shakespeare, additional narration is added for dramatic conflict and plot continuity. Garfield states, "I tried to use the famous lines where I could as long as it didn't get in the way of narrative" (Waite C11). In order to ensure that the children understood the language, *S4C* hired actors from the RSC and the National theatre.

S4C also hired Shakespeare scholar Stanley Wells as an academic advisor to ensure the academic integrity of the adaptation. By the early 90s, Wells had become a fixture in Shakespeare studies with editorials such as *The Oxford Shakespeare*. Teachers who might initially dismiss the series out of concern for its authenticity would, give the presence of Wells, give the plays a second thought. In support for the project, Wells said that episodes had "their own artistic validity and capacity to stimulate the imaginations of those who see [saw] them." To help market the films to educational institutions, *S4C* commissioned the British publisher Heinemann Young Books and the American publisher Random House to publish the screenplays

as printed editions (Waite C16). Like the BBC editions, these printed screenplays can be seen as functioning as hybrid editions with the television series.

S4C negotiated a distribution deal with the American pay television network, the Home Box Office (HBO). *S4C*'s decision to partner with HBO rather than with the nonprofit Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) stations indicates that they were targeting a smaller, but wealthier and more cosmopolitan viewership. HBO tried to attract viewers with the American comedic actor Robin Williams who performed two-minute introductions to each episode (Waite C11). Williams had been beloved by children and their parents for his performances in Steven Spielberg's 1991 *Hook*. Williams combined his dramatic acting training from The Juilliard School with his background as a standup comedian.²⁶ Dressed in period Renaissance clothing, Williams played a chorus figure to guide the audience into the world of the play. A 1992 commercial prominently features Williams. The narrator states, "In this world lives monsters and fairies and host Robin Williams" (MSND Commercial). In the two-minute introduction, HBO presents Robin Williams as a Robin Goodfellow chorus figure. Besides sharing the same first name, the two characters sport similar personalities.²⁷ Both have boundless energy, a zany sense of humor, and a love of pranks. The introduction begins with Williams entering the scene in Renaissance clothing wearing a donkey head as he asks, "Wilbur? Wilbur? Where are you?" (Introduced by Robin Williams).²⁸ Nor was Williams the only major American celebrity promoting Shakespeare on stage and screen.

In 1992, the *Behind the Scenes* television documentary series hired American comedian magicians Penn and Teller to introduce and narrate their episode on Julie Taymor's stage production of *The Tempest* for the New 42 Street Victory Theater in New York City. Like *Shakespeare: The Animated Tales*, *Behind the Scenes* was geared for people unfamiliar with

Shakespeare's plays. Famous for their comedic magical routines on Broadway and television, Penn and Teller were the perfect hosts for the episode on *The Tempest*. In the introduction, Penn explains to the audience that they are watching a television show on the theatre. In order to demonstrate this, Teller claps his hands to make an elephant appear. Penn describes the allusion as "a cheap television trick." In order to show an example of the theatre, Penn and Teller race outside their television studio onto the streets of New York where they assemble a group of New Yorkers for a spontaneous magic show. Penn and Teller make a mouse appear out of nowhere to the delight of their audience. Penn says, "Now imagine you are this guy and we were doing it right in your face. That's live theater" (Horde and Miller, 00:00:00-00:02:49). Penn and Teller illustrate for the audience the difference between the two media. Television is an edited recording of a performance while the theatre is a live performance between actors and their audience. During the episode itself, Penn and Teller introduce the different characters and explain their plotlines. They give such an introduction as the audience watches the character on stage. "This guy's name is Prospero, he used to be a duke. But twelve years ago, his brother cheated him out of his dukedom and put him out to sea in a small boat to die. Instead, he ended up on this island" (Horde and Miller *Behind the Scenes*, 00:05:25-00:05:39). Penn's plainspoken explanations provide the audience the necessary background information to follow the plot of the play. Taymor talks about designing the sandy island set and the different masks for Ariel, Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo. The episode often cuts to shots of kids from the local school districts laughing as they watched the production. The episode appears to make the argument that a strong theatrical production can capture the attention of a young people as well as any film or television adaptation. At the end of the episode, Penn and Teller reappear in their television studio in front of their elephant. They conclude with the statement that what the audience just

witnessed was an example of live theatre. They remind the audience that what they are watching is television. To reinforce the point, the elephant teases Penn with her trunk. Penn makes the elephant disappear as he says, “Television is no big deal. Television is a snap” (Horde and Miller *Behind the Scenes*, 00:26:40-00:26:54). Penn’s lines echo traditionalist beliefs that television and film are crass commercial media. Penn never says so explicitly, but he seems to insinuate that theatre is the true artistic media.

Six years later in 1996, the 1990s Shakespeare film boom came to a head with the release of four Shakespeare films. Trevor Nunn’s *Twelfth Night*, Baz Luhrmann’s *Romeo + Juliet*, Kenneth Branagh’s *Hamlet*, and Al Pacino’s *Looking for Richard*. Of the four films, Pacino’s *Looking for Richard* is easily the most experimental. Rather than shooting a straight film adaptation as was typical of the decade, Pacino designed his film as a docudrama. The hybrid genre combined the elements the nonfictional elements of a documentary with the fictional elements of a drama (Lipkin 1). Primarily set in New York City, Pacino portrays himself and his friend Frederic Kimball “peddling” Shakespeare to the masses. Pacino conducts documentary style interviews with random New Yorkers on the street. Such informal interviews are common convention in documentary films that film audiences would quickly recognize. They provide information and a sense of authenticity to the project (Harvard Kennedy School Communication Program). Simultaneously, Pacino leads a cast of American screen actors in a performance of a series of scenes from *Richard III*. Pacino explains that they have “provided this kind of docudrama type thing to inform some of the scenes so you know where you are” (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 00:08:00-00:08:06). The documentary interviews and the dramatic performances are meant to work together in order to give the viewer a greater comprehension of the play. In an interview with Pacino for the 1996 article “Looking for Al” for *Playboy*

magazine, American journalist Lawrence Grobel comments on his own difficulty in classifying the film. He asks, “How do you define it?” Pacino expresses his reluctance to define the film as either a documentary or a docudrama over fear of alienating his viewers. He claims the film is a form of entertainment (136). Pacino’s film draws attentions to the intersections of scholarship, performance, and popular culture.

In his docudrama, Pacino investigates the love and anxiety that many Americans experience when encountering Shakespeare’s works. At the end of the film’s opening sequence, Pacino shoots himself walking out onto a theater stage with Shakespeare alone in the audience. The camera cuts back and forth between the two auteurs before Pacino nervously mutters, “Fuck” (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:50:27-01:49:47). In a voice over monologue, Pacino describes his lifelong dream to convey what Shakespeare has personally meant to him. He details his objective of putting on a production of *Richard III*. He expresses his hope that by analyzing the text and physically performing the scenes in costumes that he and his team will be able to convey a Shakespeare that speaks to the logic and feeling of the contemporary American experience (Pacino *Looking for Richard* 01:46:02-01:45:14). Pacino is convinced that once audiences get the feel of the text, they will be won over by the play as previous generations before them.

In the docudrama, Pacino interviews a number of different subjects from a wide range of backgrounds. From the African American panhandler on the streets of New York to the British stage actors on the London stage, Pacino assembles a chorus of different voices. The combination of different accents is reminiscent of the film’s cosmopolitan New York City setting. Pacino portrays the average New Yorker on the street as being either indifferent or outright hostile towards Shakespeare. When Pacino asked a young woman about a production of

Hamlet she saw, she responded bluntly, “It sucked” (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:48:05-01:47:59). When Pacino asks another young man, “Is there anything you can think of Shakespeare that makes you think it’s not close to you or connected to you in anyway?” The young man responded, “Yeah, it’s boring” (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:47:56-01:47:49). Instead of condemning their opinions, Pacino acknowledges the validity of their views. He plays clips from a series of interviews with Branagh and American actor Kevin Kline. These record the director and actor’s initial negative encounters with Shakespeare. Kline recalls being sent by his high school English teacher to go see a local college production of *King Lear* with his girlfriend. He describes how after spending ten minutes unable to decipher the play, he “tuned right out” and spent the rest of the first half of the play making out with his girlfriend before leaving at intermission (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:47:19-01:46:56). Similarly, Branagh recounts reading Shakespeare at school for the first time and being unable to make any sense of it due to its lack of any connection to his life. (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:46:57-01:46:44). Pacino uses the two actors’ experiences to illustrate how actors and teachers need to portray the plays in a dynamic manner to engage their audiences and students. Pacino reinforces this point by showing clips from interview with American actor James Earl Jones who describes his initial positive encounter with Shakespeare from a riveting performance of Antony’s funeral oration speech by a Michigan farm hand. In the process it becomes clear that a farm hand performing Shakespeare with passion can teach Shakespeare more effectively than trained professionals in the classroom.

In addition to his British and American actors, Pacino consults British scholars Emry Jones and Barbara Everett. Distinguished Fellows, and Tutors at the University of Oxford, the husband and wife are the embodiment of Shakespeare scholarship. They had published

Shakespeare scholarship since the 1970s. They were a part of an earlier generation of British scholars. Jones and Everett are careful to avoid making any overly scholarly commentary. They understand Pacino's docudrama is directed towards American general audiences. Consequently, they break down their explanations into the simplest terms. They help Pacino guide the audiences through the more difficult sections of the play. When Pacino asks Jones about Richard's "Now is the winter of our discontent" soliloquy, Jones explains the lines refer to the York participation in the War of the Roses (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 00:12:00-00:13:38). In a separate interview, Everett tells Pacino that traditionally during peacetime young men transitioned from military to romantic pursuits. She says that due to Richard's physical deformities, he is unable to find a wife and settle down like the rest of his kinsmen (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 00:14:07-00:15:00). Pacino's discussions with Jones and Everett help him gain new insights into Richard's character and his motivations. Pacino continues to consult the couple throughout the docudrama. In another interview, Everett describes Shakespeare's career as the greatest period in the history of the British arts. She points to the way Shakespeare thinks about human beings as actors on a stage and how he recognizes imagination as a bit of life (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 00:35:55-00:36:10). Everett helps Pacino as he traces Richard and Buckingham character arcs. When Buckingham expresses reluctance to kill the two princes, Everett explains that Richard has pushed his partner in crime to the point where he can go no further (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:22:15- 01:23:50). Pacino's interviews illustrate the ways actors can benefit from the guidance of scholars.

Pacino's relationship with scholars creates a certain amount of resentment amongst his fellow actors. During one scene, Kimble complains that Pacino is turning to scholars to interpret the meaning of the encounter between Richard and Lady Anne rather than trust his instincts as an

actor. Kimble tells Pacino, “you know more about *Richard III* than any fucking scholar at Columbia or Harvard!” He argues that actors are the true authorities on Shakespeare (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 00:40:40-00:41:20). As comical as Kimble’s rant comes across, it does give voice to tensions between actors and scholars over their cultural authority. Pacino diffuses the situation by reframing the argument. He tells Kimble that it isn’t a matter of one side being right or wrong, but a matter of opinion. He argues that a scholar is as entitled to his or her opinion as any actor. Pacino establishes a sense of equality between the two groups. Later when he and Kimble asks Jones why Richard married Lady Anne, the scholar admits that he doesn’t know (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 00:41:30-00:42:10). The scene reinforces Pacino’s point that neither scholars nor actors can claim absolute authority on Shakespeare. Rather, the two should continue to work together.

The docudrama goes on to show how Shakespeare’s plays can be presented to modern audiences through Pacino’s production of *Richard III*. From the beginning, Pacino acknowledges that *Richard III* is a difficult play. Producer Michael Hadge comments, “No wonder. It’s a tough play to get. The relationships between all those characters. Who can keep it straight?” (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:44:18-01:44:13). Pacino makes it the priority of his production to ensure that the audience has a basic understanding of the play’s plot. He has, he asserts, designed the film as docudrama to “inform some the scenes so you know where you are” (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:44:12-01:43:51). To demonstrate this, Pacino performs the first two lines of Richard’s opening soliloquy to a group of students. “Now is the winter of our discontent / Made glorious summer by this son of York.” When Pacino asks the students if they knew what these lines meant, none of them respond (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:40:00-01:39:37). Pacino proceeds to explain that prior to events of the play, England had undergone a brutal civil war

known as the War of the Roses in which Richard's house of York overthrew the previously reigning house of Lancaster. Pacino cuts to a clip from an interview with British Theatre Director Peter Brook who identifies "discontent" as being the key word to the speech (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:39:38-01:38:44). Pacino states, "So Richard in the very opening scene of the play tells us just how badly he feels about the peacetime world he finds himself in and what he intends to do about it" (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:38:44-01:38:33). Now when Pacino performs the soliloquy again, the speech comes to life because the viewers are able to contextualize Richard's words (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:38:31-01:34:13). Pacino's model illustrates the audience's need for guidance as they approach the plays for the first time.

Pacino departs New York for London where he visits the construction site for the recreation of Shakespeare's Globe. The exiled American filmmaker Sam Wanamaker conceived and organized the over two-decades long construction project (Meyer 8). Shakespeare's Globe opened to the public in 1997 and it has been open to the public ever since (Shakespeare's Globe). Singing the spiritual "He's Got the Whole World in His Hand" as he spins the camera around the wooden O, Pacino treats the theatre as Shakespeare's world. The moment is highly reminiscent of Olivier's 1944 *Henry V*. Pacino appears to find more inspiration in the Globe than he does at Shakespeare's birthplace in Stratford. The scene reinforces Pacino's view that the theatre lies at the center of any understanding of Shakespeare.

Helping his audience understand Shakespeare's language, Pacino encourages his audience to focus less on the words' literal meaning and more on their emotional tone. Pacino interviews one American young man on the street who comments that Shakespeare's diction is confusing for contemporary readers and audiences. Indeed, even Pacino's producer complains, "Shakespeare used a lot of fancy words." Pacino rejects this view and responds that Shakespeare

is writing in poetry. He compares Shakespeare's verse to contemporary rap, arguing that some rap slang is difficult for listeners to understand until their ears adjust to it. Audiences need to "tune up" their ears to Shakespeare's language: that is, readers and audience do not need to understand every word as long as they "get the gist of what's going on." He encourages them to trust the language and reassures them that they will eventually grasp it (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:27:07-01:26:37).

In one of the more comic scenes of the film, Pacino attempts to explain iambic pentameter. Pacino complains iambic pentameter is a term constantly being associated with Shakespeare that everybody knows, but nobody can clearly define. In stark contrast to John Barton's formal academic explanation in *Playing Shakespeare*, Pacino stitches together a series of definitions and explanations from his American and British acting colleagues. Producer James Bulleit starts by giving the technical definition of the term as a line of verse consisting of five metric beats. Branagh and Rosemary Harris count out the five iambs. They all deliver a variation of "da-DUM, da-DUM, da-DUM, da-DUM, da-DUM." Kimble even compares it an anteater with a high back and short front legs to which Pacino turns to the camera with a look of total exasperation. The amalgamation is meant to confuse the audience rather than elucidate. Pacino finally turns to Vanessa Redgrave who offers an explanation that he finds satisfactory. Redgrave states Shakespeare's iambs "floated and descended through the pentameter of the soul." She says Shakespeare metrics follows the joys and sufferings of his very real and complex characters. She argues that if an actor is able to discover that reality than all of the iambs will take care of themselves (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 00:20:25-00:21:53). Redgrave's explanation echoes Pacino's beliefs that actors, audiences, and readers should focus on the emotion of Shakespeare's emotions as much as on the language itself.

Pacino stresses the emotional subtext of Shakespeare's language. He is as interested in his characters' motivations as he is in their actions themselves. Pacino famously said, "I am not so interested in how Hamlet speaks to his father now that he is a ghost. I'm more interested in how he spoke to his father before he became a ghost" (Webber). A number of British actors appear to endorse Pacino's approach. Brook states in an interview with Pacino that American actors have become too obsessed with the British approach towards the text. He argues that their goal should be to penetrate the text to its psychological meaning. (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 00:41:49-00:41:29). Ironically the strongest argument in favor of Pacino's focus on emotion comes not from an actor, but a panhandler. He is someone who film audiences would likely look down upon. The panhandler argues that we should continue to read and teach Shakespeare in order to develop a sense of empathy for one another. He explains that it is this lack of empathy that allows people to kill each other. When Pacino asks the panhandler if he thought Shakespeare could help such individuals, the panhandler responded, "He did more than help us, he instructed us" (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:48:5-01:48:31). The panhandler later goes on to say, "If we think words and things, and we have no feelings in our words, then we say things to each other that don't mean anything. But if we felt what we said, we'd say less and mean more" (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:17:56-01:17:45). The panhandler's response represents Pacino's understanding of Shakespeare's language. During a time when Americans are growing increasingly distant with each other, Pacino sees Shakespeare as means to help Americans rediscover the power of language to convey their emotions. It is Pacino's hope that an individual who has the words to convey his frustrations is less likely to turn to crime and violence.

In an early scene, Pacino and Kimble visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Cloisters in Washington Heights in Manhattan where they rehearse the opening part of Act 1 Scene 1.

Constructed during the 1930s, the Cloisters incorporated elements from medieval European monasteries, churches, castles, and other buildings (“Journey to the Middle Ages,” *The Met Cloisters*). Pacino explains that they chose the museum because of its “medieval setting.” The atmosphere of the space allows Pacino to get into the spirit of the play. We see them reposition a bench to lay King Edward IV’s sleeping body as Richard delivers his “Now is the winter of our discontent” soliloquy. In one comic moment, Pacino and Kimble are interrupted by a group of museum visitors (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 00:10:15-00:10:58). The Cloister also gives Pacino an opportunity to show off New York City’s rich artistic cultural heritage and is considered a “world-class collection of medieval art and architecture” (Husband). Pacino appears to be declaring to the world that New York’s artistic institutions are as rich as any located in the great cities of Europe.

In the film, Pacino and his cast of actors conduct a table reading of Act 1 Scene 3 of *Richard III* in order to depict the group analysis that actors perform on the text. When Kimble condemns the Lord Rivers and Grey and the Marquess Dorset as weak characters trying to sooth their hysterical matriarch Queen Elizabeth, Penelope Allen retaliates and argues that by making these characters weak they undermine Richard’s achievement. She claims that that the noblemen realize their dire situation. As they try to comfort her, she refuses to let them deny their vulnerable position (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 00:26:55-00:27:15). Through this debate, the actors establish the tone and the motivation for the characters participating in the scene’s dialogue. Pacino’s table read scene offers a useful model for teachers and students to use in interpreting the scene. Pacino encourages his viewers to understand it in different ways and then debate their interpretations. Pacino’s approach helps his viewers own the text for themselves.

In one of the fascinating moments of the docudrama, Pacino and American actor Kevin Spacey portray Richard and Buckingham as pair gangsters / corrupt politicians. It is a brilliant interpretive move that draws upon Pacino's background playing Don Michael Corleone Francis Ford Coppola's *Godfather* series. It also resonated with a post Watergate and Iran-Contra America. In an interview with Pacino, Spacey compares Buckingham to one of the Iran-Contra guys who went off and did all the dirty work to prop up the king (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:04:39-01:04:45). Spacey shows that the quest for political power hasn't fundamentally changed since Shakespeare's day. Jones echoes Pacino and Spacey's interpretation of Richard and Buckingham as criminals. "Shakespeare saw Richard Gloucester and Buckingham as gangsters. They were thugs. High-class, upper-class thugs" (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:04:50-01:04:58). Pacino and Spacey portray Richard and Buckingham ruthlessly eliminating the Lord Hastings in a mafia style sitdown. They proceed to delegitimize the young princes in a political smear campaign in order for Richard to claim the crown (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:12:48-01:18:52). Pacino and Spacey are able to effectively translate the political intrigues of the English court into a lens that Americans could understand. Seventeen years later, Spacey would draw upon this reading of the play for Sam Mendes' 2012 stage production and the 2013 Netflix series *House of Cards*.

In Act 5 Scene 3 of the film, Pacino compares and contrast the characters of the Earl of Richmond to Richard. Pacino starts with the Earl of Richmond (played by American actor Aidan Quinn) bedside prayer before cutting to a shot of himself playing Richard delivering his rallying cry speech to his army. The difference between the style and the subject matter of the two speeches are striking. As in the Tudor histories, on which Shakespeare based his play, Richmond is the virtuous Christian king quietly praying to God to aid his men in battle while Richard is the

wicked tyrant who is loudly calling upon his men's disdain for the French soldiers that make up much of Richmond's army. Pacino cuts back to his shot of Richmond who is still earnestly appealing to God. "Make us thy ministers of chastisement." Pacino cuts back to Richard. "You, sleeping safe, they bring you to unrest, / You having lands, and blest with beauteous wives, / They would restrain the one, distain the other. / And who doth lead them but a paltry fellow." Richmond is asking God to let him and his men be the agents of his justice while Richmond is trying to scare his men into fighting for him out of fear of what Richmond's soldiers will do to their wives and daughters. Pacino cuts back once more to Richmond who finishes his prayer with the line, "Oh, defend me still." When the camera cuts back to Richard. "Let's whip these stragglers o'er the seas again!" As Richard continues his speech, the camera cuts back to Richmond silently finishing his prayer before preparing to go to sleep (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 1:38:40-01:40:34). While Richard continues to desperately appeal to his men's hate and fears, Richmond has placed his faith in God and can sleep with a clear conscious. It is clear from the sequence which of the two men is God's true representative on earth.

In Act 5 Scenes 4 through 5 of the docudrama, Pacino portrays Richard's defeat at the Battle of Bosworth field. Modeling Olivier's 1955 film, Pacino shoots the battle on location in the green fields with a cast of actors all outfitted in period armor and weapons. During the sequence, Pacino cuts back to an interview with Everett where she discusses Richard's death. She explains that despite Richard's cleverness that he has degenerated into his sigil of the boar. The boar is the emblem on Richard's coat of arms and he is repeatedly referred to as the boar by his enemies in the play. She states that his enemies consequently hunt him down and kill him (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:42:50-01:43:10). Pacino incorporates these hunting elements in his performance. Richmond and his army track Richard like a hunter and his dogs chasing a wild

boar. They corner him before Richmond delivers the killing blow (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:43:30-01:45:44). Pacino cuts Richmond's final speech establishing the House of Tudor. For Pacino, the sequence is all about Richard.

After his cinematic battle sequence, Pacino concludes his docudrama in the spirit of the theatre. Pacino cuts to an interview between him and John Gielgud where Pacino comments, "Whatever I'm saying, I know Shakespeare said it" (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:46:05-01:46:35). Spoken by the middle aged American film actor to the elder British theatre actor, the line can be read as an admission of Hollywood's debt to Shakespeare and the British theatre. Pacino ends the docudrama with a sequence of shots to a voiceover performance of the "Our revels now are ended" speech from Act 4 Scene 1 of *The Tempest*. As the narrator describes the actors being "melted into air," Pacino cuts to a series of shots of his actors on set and at the different table readings. Pacino continues on this thread when the narrator states that all the different building "shall dissolve" as the camera goes from a shots of Westminster Abbey and the actors to one of Pacino reading a Folger Shakespeare Library Edition of the play. The sequence serves as a reminder to viewers that theatrical performances are a temporary moment in time. The actors depart and the sets are taken down. The printed text serves as the only permanent remnant of the production. As he did in the docudrama's opening sequence, Pacino cuts back and forth from Westminster Abbey and Victoria Tower Garden in London to an outdoor basketball court in New York City (Pacino *Looking for Richard*, 01:46:17-01:47:30). The back and forth illustrates the universality of Shakespeare. Pacino understands Shakespeare in the 1990s is equally set in the U.S. as the U.K.

While Pacino's *Looking for Richard* was not a blockbuster, it generated positive feedback amongst critics and scholars. During the 1996 Annual Director Guild of America's Award

ceremony, Pacino won the Documentary Award (Directors Guild of America). In her 1997 *Performing Arts Journal* article “Shakespeare to the People,” Emily C. Bartels focuses on the film’s mission to bring Shakespeare to the masses in a way that connects Shakespeare’s dialogue to modern feelings. She writes that Pacino “positions himself as the mediator between the play, its unwieldy historical and theatrical baggage, and us.” She observes that Pacino isn’t afraid to consult with British actors and scholars who, she claims, represent a British Shakespeare establishment. Bartels however notes that in casting his adaptation of *Richard III*, Pacino primarily hires non-classically trained American actors and eschews the stages of London for New York. She points out that the British edition of *The Complete Works* is abandoned for a *Folger Shakespeare Library edition* (1).

Further acknowledging the film’s flaws, Bartels points out how by changing the letter G to C in King Edward IV’s dream, Pacino cuts the dream’s reference to Richard. She also critiques Pacino for ignoring the fact that British and American theater and film companies “have been producing a culturally engaged Shakespeare at least since the 1980s” (2). Like many film critics, Bartels praises the way Pacino transforms himself into Richard (2). The hybrid nature of the project, she asserts, allows it to show drama at work. She ends the article, “The unique triumph of *Looking for Richard* is that it presents the play not as a *fait accompli*, but as a volatile, ever-evolving work-in-progress that will continually keep us looking” (2). She sees the strength of Pacino’s film as illustrating how actors and scholars are continuing the tradition of keeping Shakespeare’s plays alive and relevant to present day American life.

In the 1998/1999 *Journal of Film and Video* review, American scholar Andrew Quicke applauds the film. He describes the film as “a plain man’s guide to appreciating Shakespearean tragedy”. He argues that the key to the film’s success as an educational guide is the way it

interprets the play. He states the film's fusion of performance, group script reading, and interviews with scholars and actors demystify the text and ultimately make them more accessible. He says this hybrid approach serves as useful model for teachers working with students. Quicke comments that while the film primarily targets general audiences, it also has more educated academic and theatrical audiences in mind. He observes that as the film progresses it "focuses more tightly on the text itself and how it should be played" (64). Quicke observes how throughout the film Pacino portrays actors taking the lead role in making Shakespeare more comprehensible to the masses. Quicke states that the process of watching film actors like Alec Baldwin, Kevin Spacey, Penelope Allen, and Winona Ryder rehearse, discuss, and perform their roles leaves Pacino's viewers more enlightened and inspired. At the end of the article, he argues that both the actors and the viewers are united in their common journey to comprehend Shakespeare (65). Quicke heartedly endorses Pacino's film as model for engaging mass audience's interest in the art of acting and Shakespeare.

In a review for the October 25th 1996 issue of the *Chicago Sun-Times*, American film critic Roger Ebert depicts the film as both a guide to staging Shakespeare and a documentary about the day in the life of an actor. Ebert applauds Pacino and his fellow actors' honesty about Shakespeare's being "an acquired taste" that can be initially overwhelming. Ebert notes Pacino's overall message that with a little experience with Shakespeare on stage and screen that anyone can learn to appreciate Shakespeare. Ebert states, "The point is that the appreciation of Shakespeare is an ongoing project for any literate person" (Ebert). Ebert sees Pacino's docudrama as an educational project to help familiarize his viewers with Shakespeare's works as performances. It is Ebert's hope that after seeing the docudrama, viewers will share Pacino's love of Shakespeare.

While Shakespeare had always been a part of American culture, the mid 1990s Shakespeare films made him hip in a way that he hadn't been before. One of the strongest examples was Baz Luhrmann's 1996 *Romeo + Juliet*. Like Franco Zeffirelli's 1968 adaptation, the film was designed for and marketed to teenagers, twenty, and thirty year olds. It was set in the fictional North American city of Verona Beach with a young multiracial cast of film and television actors led by Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes as the young lovers. The film was shot in an MTV-esque style to an eclectic mix of rock, pop, and R&B. The film producers advertised the film on MTV with commercials, sponsorships, and a thirty-minute special on the film. The producers held a screen test for the film at the University of California, Berkeley specifically for viewers who were thirty-nine years old or younger (Boose and Burt 17-18). Despite mixed critical reviews, the film proved to be a blockbuster. American film critic Bernard Weinraub reported in his 1996 review for *The New York Times* that teenage audiences appeared to have pushed the film to the No. 1 on its opening weekend. Branagh commented, "I went to the movies on Saturday night and saw lines of teenagers waiting to see 'Romeo and Juliet' and thought it was fantastic" (Weinraub C13). During the 1997 MTV Movie Awards, the film earned five nominations and it won "Best Female Performance" (Awards-Romeo + Juliet, IMDb).²⁹ With a worldwide gross of \$147.6 million dollars, the film was one of the highest grossing Shakespeare films of all times (Adamczyk). With movie posters gracing the walls of teenage bedrooms and university cafes across the country, no one could deny Shakespeare was cool.

Journalists attempted to explain the phenomena in weekly newsmagazines like *Newsweek*. With a circulation of over three million readers, the newsmagazine was the second largest in the country (Reed 431). One such piece was "It's the '90s, So the Bard is Back" by David Ansen for the November 3rd 1996 issue. A Senior Editor for *Newsweek* at the time, he had

been a film critic for the newsmagazine from 1971 to 2008. He declares, “The Bard is hot in Hollywood” (Ansen 73). He cites the string of recent Shakespeare films. In attempting to offer an explanation for the occurrence of another Shakespeare film boom, Ansen cites Luhrmann’s argument that booms occur during periods of great change. Luhrmann explains that artists and scholars reinterpret the works of canonical writers like Shakespeare as a means of reorienting themselves. Ansen points out that the two previous Shakespeare booms during the 40s and 60s both occurred during transitional historic moments (Ansen 73). He sees Shakespeare film adaptations performing a crucial cultural function by allowing Americans to reconnect with their literary traditions as a means for preparing themselves for the future.

Other journalists made much starker political interpretations. In her article “Hollywood Adopts the Canon” for the November 10th 1996 issue of *The New York Times*, Dinita Smith argues that 90s Shakespeare film boom can be seen as a part of a broader demand for the return of the canon. Smith observes that the period was experiencing a boom in cinematic adaptations of classical writers like Henry James and Jane Austen. She argues that this boom stemmed from a demand from educated American audiences. Smith claims these audience members feel overwhelmed by a Hollywood dominated by action movies and seek to escape into what she describes as “the universal themes of love and family, ambition and power” that they associate with classics (Smith). Both Ansen and Smith’s articles can be seen as an attempt by public commentators on both the left and the right to use Shakespeare to talk about the country’s changing values.

During the late 1980s and 90s, American Shakespeare studies and the humanities in general participated in an internal debate over the role of the canon known as the canon wars.

Perhaps the best-known figure in the conflict was professor of English at Yale University, Harold Bloom. In his 1994 book *The Western Canon*, Bloom lists the twenty-six authors whose texts he believes most clearly define the canon. He asserts that Shakespeare is “the central figure of the western canon” (2). Shakespeare occupies this position because he outshines “all the other Western writers in cognitive acuity, linguistic energy, and power of invention” (46).

Bloom claims that multiculturalists see Shakespeare’s canonical status as a conspiracy to preserve the U.K.’s political and economic interests. They accuse Americans of using Shakespeare to maintain European cultural authority over other cultural groups (53).³⁰ Equally important for Bloom is Shakespeare’s influence on other canonical writers. Bloom explores Shakespeare’s complicated relationship with Goethe, Hegel, Joyce, Beckett, Emerson, and Kafka (Harold Bloom 69-75). Bloom sees Shakespeare’s influence on such a wide spectrum of national writers as proof of Shakespeare’s universality.

Despite the chaos of the canon wars, American Shakespeare scholars continued to find and fill courses in English departments across the country. In an address entitled “Shakespeare the Survivor” presented at the Shakespeare and the Politics of the Curriculum Session of the 26th Annual Meeting of the SAA in 1998, Shakespeare Scholar Martha Rozett investigates the reasons behind Shakespeare’s survival during the canon wars and curricular reforms of the 1980s and 90s (21).³¹ She explains much of Shakespeare’s success can be attributed to the surfeit of cinematic and theatrical productions of the plays. She said, “I would argue that Shakespeare has surpassed other writers as a subject of academic study partly because the plays are available in live and filmed performances that appeal to large and heterogeneous audiences” (23). She says that Shakespeare scholars have been able to attract students to their courses because their students have already come to know his works through the various offshoots, appropriations, and

parodies. Rozett built her own career writing and teaching about these sorts of “talk backs” (25). Nor was Rozett the only one to write about the subject. The decade saw an explosion in the publication of articles in periodicals and anthologies on teaching Shakespeare.

During the period, *Shakespeare Quarterly* dedicated the summer 1990 and 1995 issues of their periodicals to be devoted to teaching Shakespeare. The issues were only the third and fourth in the history of the periodical to be devoted to teaching. The first two teaching issues had been released ten years apart in 1974 and 1984. In the “From the Editor” article in the 1990 issue, editor Ralph Alan Cohen recalls that he predicted that the majority of submissions to the issue would focus on performance pedagogy like the 1984 issue. He was surprised to discover only a few submissions on the subject. Cohen interpreted the lack of submissions as a sign of the methodology’s success. In the 1990s, Shakespeare scholars took performance pedagogy for granted. Cohen observed instead that submissions focused on addressing the needs of specific groups of students from a wide range of backgrounds (iii). He also looks at the way Shakespeare pedagogy has evolved in response to new criticisms by literary theory. He says Shakespeare scholars taught a “problematized Shakespeare” while they also “de-authorized” their own position as instructors (Cohen iii-iv). Cohen argues the study of teaching Shakespeare was crucial in order to understand the current conception of the playwright. He writes, “To study the teaching of Shakespeare—its history, its forms, its relation to theatre and to criticism—is to understand not only how we received our Shakespeare but also how we will shape the Shakespeare[s] we pass on.” Cohen urges graduate courses, publications, and conferences to continue to make the connection between teaching Shakespeare and the subject itself (iv). Cohen’s article can be seen as a call for a discipline wide conversation.

In the article “That’s a Certain Text,” Sharon A Beehler investigates the increased focus on pedagogy in Shakespeare studies. She is especially interested in the effects of the new forms of critical theory on teaching and the decreased authority placed on the instructor. She uses the essay “to seek the tools and strategies for critical thinking useful to students of Shakespeare at the secondary level and to examine the consequences of instructional practices that de-authorize the teacher” (195). Beehler argues that despite all of the attention placed on Shakespeare in secondary education that students and teachers appear to dread Shakespeare (195-196). She is critical of pedagogy that merely asks students to memorize and regurgitate basic information about the plays (196). Beehler laments that the new theoretically based pedagogies being used in colleges and universities hadn’t made it down to the secondary level yet. She says that Shakespeare’s cultural hegemony amongst school districts makes his works the ideal vehicles for teachers to propose more radical ideas (198). She writes, “[students] need to be able to examine the cultural conditioning that has placed Shakespeare in the seat of greatness.” Beehler argues this new pedagogy will lead to productive discussions on interpretation, performance, and communication (198-199). Beehler sees these three elements as the foundation for any future pedagogy. She argues that it is essential for students to develop the confidence to fashion their own interpretations (199-200). Students can then understand and analyze the interpretive choices being made by directors and actors in their performances of the plays. Students must then learn to overcome the inevitable obstacles of communicating these interpretations (200-201). Beehler offers exercises teachers can use to help their students develop these skills during their readings of the plays (201-204). For Beehler it is absolutely crucial to implement these pedagogies into the secondary level in order to stimulate the kind of love for Shakespeare amongst students that scholars dreamed of.

Five years later, the second summer 1995 Teaching Issue of *Shakespeare Quarterly* appeared. In the “From the Editor” article, Cohen observes that a number of conferences and periodicals were answering his call to make the connection between teaching Shakespeare and Shakespeare. Despite these positive developments, Cohen laments that undergraduate Shakespeare pedagogy lagged behind teaching at the high school level. He cites Shakespeare performance on stage and screen as a specific example. Cohen observes that summer programs like the Teaching Shakespeare Institute at the Folger Shakespeare Library were training high school teachers in performance pedagogy. As a result, he says that Shakespeare scholars find themselves facing students who already saw the texts as screenplays (iii). Cohen argues Shakespeare scholars need to familiarize themselves with the pedagogies of their high school teachers in order to determine the knowledge base of their students. In contrast to the more theoretical 1990 issue, the 1995 issue focuses on concrete techniques that Shakespeare scholars could incorporate into their curriculum (iv).

Despite the near universal acceptance of Shakespeare film, the *Shakespeare Quarterly* staff still felt the need to offer pedagogical guidance on the most effective ways to utilize film and television adaptations in their 1995 teaching issue. In the article “Text, Eyes, and Videotape,” Stephen M. Buhler offers specific tips for screening Shakespeare film and television on videotape. Buhler argues one of the biggest risks a teacher takes is that their students will mistake a single production as the right one. He suggests scholars screen clips from different versions of the plays. He also recommends teachers assign published screenplays. He argues that by going back and forth between the screen adaptations and the screenplays allows students to explore the full range of interpretive options open to directors (237). Buhler cites his experiences teaching Olivier and Branagh’s film adaptations of *Henry V* and their published

screenplays. He acknowledges also referencing the growing body of Shakespeare scholarship (237-238). Buhler starts by comparing the campfire scene between King Henry and his soldiers between the two film adaptations. He recommends the teachers break up students into small groups and have them focus on two of the eight areas of design, casting, sound, texts, camera, character, movement, and overall impression (238-239). Buhler recounts one group of his students whose analysis of the scenes challenges traditional pro and anti war readings of the films. He notes the way that students used the printed screenplay to identify that Olivier gave “the latter day” speech to the young English soldier Alexander Court rather than the older Michael Williams. The students argued the image of the young Court trying to prepare himself for the possibility of dying in battle spoke to Olivier’s concerns over the war’s growing cost in human lives (239-240). At the end of the article, Buhler expresses his belief that his style of pedagogy offers infinite possibilities for students to develop their own unique interpretations of the films and the texts (244). Like the rest of the articles from the two teaching issues of *Shakespeare Quarterly*, the article offers Shakespeare professors and high school teachers a new style of Shakespeare pedagogy that reflected the current changes in American Shakespeare studies.

Shakespeare Quarterly wasn’t the only publication advocating for reform in Shakespeare education. In 1993, Ohio University Professors of English James E. Davis and Ronald E. Salomone partnered to edit the collection of essays *Teaching Shakespeare Today*. In the “preface,” Davis and Salomone explain the collection was a response to what they perceived as a need “for accessible pedagogical commentary” for students and teachers at the lower level (xi). They assembled a team of thirty-seven veteran professors and high school teachers to write essays to facilitate the process of teaching and studying about Shakespeare (ix). It is striking that

the two editors chose to begin the collection essay with the introduction essay on “Shakespeare in the American Landscape” by Samuel Crowl.³² The essay attempts to answer the question of why we study Shakespeare today. Crowl explains that Shakespeare has been an inherent part of American culture since before the birth of the republic (xiv). He argues that Americans have traditionally come to know Shakespeare by studying him in the classroom or through viewing performances of his plays on stage and screen (xvii). Crowl observes that the same innovative American cultural assimilation of Shakespearean performance has also been applied to the teaching of Shakespeare in the classroom. He looks at the incorporation of performance pedagogy into the modern curriculum (xxi-xxii). Crowl offers a series of example exercises for potential in-class staged performances and screen clip analysis (xxiii-xxv). Crowl’s essay frames these pedagogies as part of an over two hundred year American Shakespeare tradition.

Davis and Salomone dedicated the third section “III: Extratextual Resources” to Shakespeare on film, television, and theatre. Shakespeare film scholars Michael J. Collins, Harry Brent, and James Hirsh offered specific pedagogical strategies to help teachers to most effectively utilize Shakespeare on screen. In the article “Versions of Henry V: Laurence Olivier versus Kenneth Branagh,” Brent recounts the different ways that he used Olivier and Branagh’s film adaptations to teach *Henry V*. Brent says that he always starts the comparative film pedagogy by establishing the basic differences between the films. He explains that the Olivier film was meant to celebrate the dedication of the British public during wartime. By contrast the Branagh film focuses on the coming of age of King Henry into manhood. Using these differences as a guidepost, Brent proceeded to have his students watch the two films (132-133). He then spent two class periods coming up with essay topics and outlying trial drafts. On other days, Brent held workshops where his students broke up into groups to discuss their topics and drafts.

The workshops helped the students refine their topics and begin to develop their arguments. He cites a series of examples from his students' essays to demonstrate the effectiveness of the assignment (135-138). Brent's essay offers his readers a step-by-step guide for performing rigorous college level film analysis. Brent sees the study of Shakespeare screen adaptation as a means of developing their own interpretations and sense of ownership of the plays.

Four years after the release of their first collection, Salomone and Davis reunited to publish the 1997 *Teaching Shakespeare into the Twenty-First Century*. While the new edition shared its predecessor mission of helping introductory students and teachers to Shakespeare plays, it also reflected the latest changes in American education. Of particular importance was the rise of the new digital media (xi). Salomone and Davis dedicate the entire sixth section, "Into the Future," on the subject. In his essay "Beyond the Gee Whiz Stage," Roy Flannigan looks at the potential uses of the computer and the Internet for Shakespeare scholars and educators. He recounts his experience looking up Oliver Parker's 1995 *Othello* on the Netscape web browser where he is able to find everything from film publicity to the Shakespeare homepage at MIT. Flannigan offers a series of different ways Shakespeare scholars and Shakespeare lovers can use the Internet productively (262-263). He identifies online communities like SHAKSPER as a space where Shakespeare scholars can interact and collaborate with one other. He then points to English departments on university websites as a source for model course materials like syllabi, lecture notes, quizzes, and exams. He recommends scholars and teachers take advantage of the various databases. He cites the Bodleian Library and the Shakespeare homepage on the MIT website as examples of full text databases and scholarly journal databases like *ELH* (264-265). Flannigan can already foresee that the scholars in the future will conduct much of their discourse and research in the virtual space as in the physical spaces of the university.

Flannigan observes the advent of digital Shakespeare multimedia material on CD-ROMS. Multimedia companies like Film for the Humanities, MacMillan, Simon & Schuster, and Cambridge University Press partnered with scholars to produce the Shakespeare CD-ROMS. Like the BBC and TIME-Life during the 1970s and 80s, the publishing companies used the new digital media as another product to sell on the American educational market. Flannigan reviews a series of different Shakespeare CD-ROMS for use by his readers. In terms of quality, the Shakespeare CD-ROMS represent a mixed lot. Flannigan dismisses the Film in the Humanities' 1995 *Shakespeare: His Life, Times, Works, and Sources* as a toy. He complains about the visual quality of the nearly five thousand sixteenth and seventeenth manuscripts and printed documents. He was equally disappointed that the CD-ROM didn't record *The First Folio* or Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (267). By contrast, Flannigan was much more impressed by Cambridge University Press' 1996 *The World Shakespeare Bibliography, 1990-1993, on CD-ROM*. Flannigan saw the product as a functional tool for teachers, scholars, and students working on the subject. He states the CD-ROM has the best amalgamation of text, software, encoding, and graphic user interface of any product that he has seen so far (Flannigan 268). Flannigan ends the article by describing his vision for the ideal Shakespeare CD-ROM. He writes the product will combine the printed document and the visual performance. He explains the system needs to be dynamic enough so users can go back and forth between looking at visual images to hearing vocal performances. He also wants users to be able to pause the performance in order to look up the meaning of the words (Flannigan 269). Flannigan's Shakespeare CD-ROM would be an interactive multimedia version of the text that users could use to replicate the experience of studying Shakespeare in the classroom.

In the concluding essay “The High-Tech Classroom,” Professor of English James Saeger offers different strategies for adapting traditional methods to incorporate the new digital technologies into Shakespeare education curriculum. He starts by looking at the MIT Classroom Presentation System that links searchable digital Shakespeare texts to various screen adaptations of the plays. He explains the system allows users to highlight a passage of a dialogue or monologue and then connect to a clip from a performance of the passage. The program even has a note-taking feature so users can record their observations on the passage and even to write papers and presentations (272). He argues for teachers the system allows teachers to seamlessly transition between clips from different performances without getting bogged down in the technology (274). Like Flannigan, Saeger identifies electronic discussion lists, newsgroups, and chat rooms as a type of virtual Shakespeare classroom. He says discussion lists and newsgroups like SHAKSPER serve as a space where scholars and teachers can network with one another. More importantly, he argues the groups serve as model for course email lists on college and university website (278). Lastly, Saeger encourages his readers to create their own course website. He states websites are hyper texts that allow teachers to arrange various texts, images, sounds, and videos while also establishing links to other websites. Teachers can post their syllabus, course assignments, and other relevant material (280). While some of the specific products that Flannigan and Saeger failed to catch on, many of the concepts they describe have since become a standard part of the twenty-first century American classroom. Scholars conduct much of their research on online databases like JSTOR, Project MUSE, and the Internet Archive. Teachers use online video-sharing platforms like YouTube and online streaming services like Netflix, Amazon, and Alexander Street to screen clips from different screen adaptations and recordings of the plays. During the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, teachers conducted their courses

synchronously and asynchronously online through course management systems like Blackboard and teleconferencing services like Zoom.

The increased focus on screen adaptations and the rise of digital technologies can also be seen in modern teaching editions of the plays. The second edition of *The Norton Shakespeare* lists the screen adaptations in their introductions to the plays. The anthology's general bibliography includes a list of some of the major books of Shakespeare film scholarship. The interest in Shakespeare on screen has led scholars to approach the text primarily through the lens of performance. As a result, Shakespeare scholars are conditioned to think like actors and directors. Modern Shakespeare scholars are open to the ideas and methods from the professional Shakespeare theatre and film companies. The second edition's general bibliography includes some of the major works of Shakespeare film scholarship and performance.³³

The third edition of *The Norton Shakespeare* has a digital supplement that contains an ebook version of the plays with links to recordings of performances of songs and spoken-word audios on the margins of the text. In Act 2 Scene 1 lines 1-72 of *Much Ado About Nothing*, the user can click on the link to play a recording of a spoken-word audio of humorous dialogue amongst Beatrice, Leonato, Anthony, Innogen, Ursula, Margaret, and a kinsman on Don John the bastard and other potential partners for Beatrice (Digital Edition of *Much Ado*.2.1. Spoken-Word Audio 1-72). Users can visually follow the dialogue on the text as they listen to the language. Performed by actors from the prestigious London Stage Company, the users can easily pick up on the comedy of the scene from the actors' gleeful tones. Later in the same scene when Beatrice tells Don Pedro about her past relationship with Benedict, the user can click on a link to a performance comment. It explains the various interpretive choices that directors have made when approaching these lines. It states that while sometimes directors have their Beatrice rapidly with

a tone of pride in order to preserve Beatrice's light hearted tone of the previous scenes, however other directors chose to deliver the lines in a reflecting tone so that the audience can see that Beatrice is still in pain after the break up and that she still has lingering feelings for Benedick (Digital Edition of Much Ado.2.1.Performance Comment 2). The combination of the spoken-word recording and the performance commentary marginalia helps the user imagine the play as a performance while they are reading the text. Students can hear the correct pronunciation of the characters' names and get a sense of their personalities. The Third edition also has the Norton Shakespeare YouTube Channel that contains clips from Shakespeare stage productions from all over the world (Norton Shakespeare YouTube Channel). The Norton digital supplement can be thought of as the natural evolution of the BBC printed editions and the MIT Classroom Presentation System. It is a multimedia hybrid that combines the printed text with recordings of performances and other commentary in an electronic frame.

While it has been over two decades since the Shakespeare film boom of the 1990s, the buzz generated by recent works like Justin Kurzel's 2015 *Macbeth*, Branagh's 2018 *All is True*, and David Michôd's 2019 *The King* indicate that Hollywood is still interested in the Bard. If what's past is prologue, Shakespeare studies will continue to watch, teach, and write about the new generation of Shakespeare screen adaptations and stage productions. The discipline will continue to invest in multimedia platforms. The pandemic forced American Shakespeare studies to temporarily hold the majority of their courses and conferences online. It seems likely that after the pandemic ends, American educational institutions and research institutions will continue to conduct more of their affairs online. The history of the rise of Shakespeare film and television adaptations can serve as a guide to the future. We will need to be as open to the new trends in

popular in popular culture and as innovative in our approaches as we develop methods and texts that bind our performance pedagogies to the new digital media.

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Notes

¹ In the 1994 article “Dallas Bower: The Man Behind Olivier’s *Henry V*” by Brian McFarlane for Vol. 12, No. 1 of *Shakespeare Bulletin*, Dallas Bower recounts the story of his quest to produce the film. “I did a TV script after Munich with a view to the possibility of Ralph Richardson’s playing *Henry V*, but I put it to one side. After I was fished out of the army to go to the Ministry of Information as Executive Producer of the Film Division, I thought in terms of making it into a film script, which I did. That was the basis of the script which was used for the Olivier film” (McFarlane 45).

² Olivier chronicles a conversation with William Wyler in his 1986 book *On Acting*. “‘I want you to be patient about this,’ he’d say. ‘But you’re quite wrong to take up this despising attitude. I believe with my heart and soul this is the greatest medium ever invented in the field of expression. There’s nothing in literature, Greek drama, in anything you like, be it the most primitive, which is beyond it. If you put your mind to it. Don’t sneer at that *As You Like It* Shakespeare film. Shakespeare can be done as anybody can be done if you just think out how. Just think and keep thinking. Do it right, and anything can be done on film. Don’t worry about your personality, just get on with getting on with your medium, and acting. Regard the camera as another actor, if you like, who shows the audience your subtlest reasons. And don’t bring in your personal problems to the set.’” (Olivier *On Acting*, 260-261)

³ Olivier explains his costume and scenery choices in *On Acting*. “I decided to base the costumes and scenery very meticulously on medieval illustrations in storybooks, especially those of the Limbourg brothers, with their bright and pastel colors, pettiness, odd perspectives and sometimes, no perspective at all. I wanted the characters to spring out from the beautiful, stylized, almost cutout scenery, alive and kicking and speaking in a vigorous and varied

language; the actors to dominate, to fell confident and sometimes to dwarf the scenery” (Olivier *On Acting*, 273-274).

⁴ The April 8th 1946 issue of *Time* magazine honored Olivier’s *Henry V* by printing a painted image of Olivier in front of an English knight on horseback for its cover. It is an honor that the magazine reserves for those events and individuals whom they believe have made or have the potential to make an impact on American society.

⁵ *The Shakespeare Association Bulletin* was the academic journal published by the Shakespeare Association of America from 1924 to 1949. In 1950, the SAA reorganized the journal into the *Shakespeare Quarterly*. In 1972, the journal was transferred from the defunct SAA to the Folger Shakespeare Library (Andrews “From the Editor: Thirty Years or More,” 451-452).

⁶ The last Shakespeare film *The Shakespeare Association Bulletin* had endorsed was Sam Taylor’s 1929 *The Taming of the Shrew*. In the Editor’s note section of the October 1929 issue of the journal, Paul Kaufman stated, “the greatest possibilities for reaching a large public with the visible production of the Shakespearean drama rest with the moving (and talking) picture.” Knowing that some of their readers would question the journal’s decision to endorse a film, Kaufman argues that the film “will notably serve the cause which the Shakespeare Association is organized to promote” (Kaufman 117). The issue also contained the cover article “Shakespeare on the Screen” by Julian Arthur and Barnes Hutchinson on the film (Arthur and Hutchinson 97-103).

⁷ Unfortunately, Ball doesn’t name any of the journals that he mentions in his article. However, he does list the following film production books. Max J. Herzberg’s 1936 *Romeo and Juliet: A Motion Picture Edition*, C. Clayton Hutton’s 1944 *The Making of Henry V*, Brenda

Cross' 1948 *The Film Hamlet: A Record of Its Production*, Alan Dent's 1948 *Hamlet, the Film and the Play*, and Michael Liammoir's 1952 *Put Money in Thy Purse* (Ball "Shakespeare in One Reel, 139").

⁸ Manvell's use American television viewership statistics serves as a reminder to his American readers that they, not the British, are the great consumer market of Shakespeare.

⁹ In the course, Jorgens taught Renato Castellani's 1954 *Romeo and Juliet*, George Cukor's 1936 *Romeo and Juliet*, Peter Hall's 1968 *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, William Dieterle and Max Reinhardt's 1935 *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Grigori Kozintsev's 1964 *Hamlet*, Olivier's 1948 *Hamlet*, Joseph L. Mankiewicz's 1953 *Julius Caesar*, Dimitri Buchowetzki's 1922 *Othello*, Stuart Burge's 1965 *Othello*, Welles' 1948 *Macbeth*, and Akira Kurosawa's 1957 *Throne of Blood* (Jorgens 43).

¹⁰ In a 2006 interview, Hall recounts identifying three types of actors at Stratford during his 1956 production of *Love's Labour's Lost*. The first type he claims, "were the old guard who were very Irvingesque and very rotund and round and slowly spoken and musical." The second type, Hall says, "were the fellows who's been brought up" reading playwrights like Noël Coward and Terrence Rattigan. He states, "they threw it all away and didn't want to say a line of poetry, so it sounded like a line of poetry." The third type, Hall says "were the new lot coming out of drama school in droves, saying, 'I'm from Manchester and I don't care who knows it and that's the way I'm going to speak.'" Hall states his challenge as director was "to take these three people [...] make them coalesce into a Shakespearean company who at least sounded as if they were on the same planet." Hall commented wryly, "it was almost impossible" (*Trying to Make a Company*).

¹¹ At the time “Playing Out the Play” was published by *Shakespeare Quarterly* in 1984, Barbara C. Millard was a professor of English at LaSalle University, Georgianna Zeigler was the curator of the Furness Shakespeare Library at the University of Pennsylvania, and Geraldine R. Custer was a literary consultant to the Annenberg Center at the University of Pennsylvania (Millard et al 610).

¹² I will examine *The Shakespeare Plays* in greater detail in the third chapter of my dissertation.

¹³ Host Melvyn Bragg states, “Over the last few hundred years, the work of no playwright has been performed as widely or consistently as that of Shakespeare and today he commands more stages than ever. This evening the BBC resumed its massive project to televise all of Shakespeare’s plays. Earlier this year, Thames Television broadcast the Royal Shakespeare’s Company’s production of *Macbeth*. At the moment in London alone, there are five Shakespeare plays to choose from. In Moscow, he’s performed as much as their national playwrights. And in New York, an enormous new theatre complex in Brooklyn is opening which will base its repertoire on Shakespeare’s plays. And up in down the country in schools, halls, and reps, Shakespeare is put on weekend, week-out. But there is very little agreement among critics and audiences and directors and even actors as to how Shakespeare’s English should be tackled. What actually constitutes good verse speaking? This prompted us to ask the Royal Shakespeare Company to develop, specifically for television, what is in fact a master-class on Shakespeare’s verse. We’ve been working with them on this project for the last six months and this will take up two editions in these studios the South Bank Show. Neither we ourselves, nor the Royal Shakespeare Company, would claim there’s just one way of performing Shakespeare. We invited them because they have a longer tradition than anyone else of performing the plays and we

thought the way they approached the problem would lend itself to the production we had in mind” (Bragg Word of Mouth, 00:00:36 - 00:01:53).

¹⁴ *The Playing Shakespeare* series cast was made up of RSC veteran actors David Suchet, Lisa Harrow, Alan Howard, Ben Kingsley, Michael Pennington, Patrick Stewart, Susan Fleetwood, Shelia Hancock, Tony Church, Sinéad Cusak, Mike Gwilym, Jane Lapotaire, Ian McKellen, Richard Pasco, Donald Sinden, Michael Williams, Judi Dench, Barbara Leigh-Hunt, Norman Rodway, Peggy Ashcroft, Stephen Fry, Hugh Laurie, and Roger Rees.

¹⁵ In “Episode 9: Poetry and Hidden Poetry,” Barton states, “Now what Ian caught then and what I didn’t point out at the time because we were looing at other things was that aside being a naturalistic line on the surface, it also has a poetic ring. Uneasy, haunting, and resonant though it is hard to put into words of quite what” (Carlaw “Episode 9: Poetry and Hidden Poetry,” 00:07:13-00:07:33).

¹⁶ Newlin writes in her article, “we must remember that the academic’s community’s discovery that Shakespeare wrote plays is startlingly recent. Having served this past summer as one of the instructors for an NEH-funded institute on teaching Shakespeare which brought 50 high-school teachers from the imagined four corners of the United States to the Folger Library for a month, I am happy to report that the good news about Shakespeare as a dramatist is now trickling down to secondary school teachers” (Newlin 598).

¹⁷ Newlin writes, “One comes away with the agreeable impression of having watched an attractive collection of people, loosely led by a shaggy and genial guide, arrive at consensus” (Newlin 598-599).

¹⁸ In her book *The BBC Shakespeare Plays*, Susan Willis writes that the television production of *Richard II* was set “around 1400” (Willis 11). Since *Richard II* dies in 1400, I will say that the production was set in 14th-century England.

¹⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2004/may/19/broadcasting.guardianobituaries1>

²⁰ TeEd Inc. was the educational subsidiary for the public relation firm Stone Associates (Mullin 584). In 1975, the firm produced accompanying educational recording for *IBM Presents Scrooge* (WorldCat).

²¹ I learned about Samuel Goldwyn Jr.’s experiences in Hollywood from American journalist David Colker’s obituary “Samuel Goldwyn Jr., Second – Generation Producer, Dies at 88” for the January 15th 2015 issue of *The Washington Post*.

²² The hymn *Non nobis domine* is based on Psalm 115:1 of the Old Testament. “Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth’s sake” King James Version.

²³ Branagh stated in the documentary “Making Ado About Nothing” that he admired American actors for their “emotional fearlessness” and that their “sort of blood and guts full blooded acting” was the way he felt that Shakespeare should be approached. Thompson echoed Branagh’s sentiment when she said, “I think Ken wanted to prove there’s no particular virtue in having a British accent [...] and that this language works for anybody” (Making Ado About Nothing, 00:02:25-00:02:52).

²⁴ Laurence Olivier never directed a film adaptation of any of Shakespeare’s comedies. He did play the role of Orlando in Paul Czinner’s 1936 *As You Like It* and the role of Shylock in John Sichel’s 1973 ATV / National Theatre television film production of *Merchant of Venice*,

but neither adaptation achieved anywhere near the level of success as Kenneth Branagh's 1993 *Much Ado About Nothing*.

²⁵ The nine directors of *Shakespeare: The Animated Tales* included Robert Sahakyants' *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Stanislav Sokolov's *The Tempest* and *The Winter's Tale*, Nikolay Serebryakov's *Macbeth* and *Othello*, Efim Gamburg's *Romeo and Juliet*, Natalya Orlova's *Hamlet* and *Richard III*, Mariya Muat's *Twelfth Night*, Aida Zyablikova's *Taming of the Shrew*, Aleksey Karaev's *As You Like It*, Yuri Kulakov's *Julius Caesar* (Full Cast & Crew-Shakespeare the Animated Tales 1992-1994, IMDb).

²⁶ Robin Williams performed stand up versions of Shakespeare on a May 16th 1979 episode of *The Dick Cavett Show* and on a January 10th 1991 episode of *The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson*.

²⁷ I was able to find a copy of the introduction by Robin Williams for *A Midsummer Night Dream* of an educational recording of the first season of *Shakespeare: The Animated Tale* from 1992. Since it was a videocassette recording, I was unable to determine the exact timing of the scene.

²⁸ Robin Williams is referencing Sidney Sheldon's 1960 sitcom *I Dream of Jeannie*. The series tells the story of an American astronaut Major Anthony Nelson who discovers a genie named Jeannie who becomes his personal genie. Jeannie would grant wishes by crossing her arms across her shoulders and blinking.

²⁹ During the 1996 MTV Movie Awards, Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet* earned nominations for Best Movie, Best Male Performance, Best On-Screen Duo, Best Movie Song, and Best Kiss. It won Best Female Performance (Awards-Romeo +Juliet 1996, IMDb).

³⁰ Bloom's allegations ring hollow as many underrepresented intellectuals and writers like Aimee Césaire, Maya Angelou, and Robert Fernandez Retamar call Shakespeare a friend and incorporate his plays into their works.

³¹ Rozett published her conference paper under the title "Shakespeare the Survivor: Or, Shakespeare and the Politics of the Curriculum" for volume xviii of *The Upstart Crow* in 1998.

³² Crowl published the essay under the title "Where the Wild Things Are: Shakespeare in the American Landscape" for the 1993 *Teaching Shakespeare Today*.

³³ The Student version of the second edition of *The Norton Shakespeare* comes with a supplemental CD-ROM. I was unable to locate a copy to examine for myself.