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Shakespeare and the Poetics and Politics of Relevance

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CHAPTER 10

Shakespeare Across the Disciplines

Jeffrey R. Wilson

In the second half of the twentieth century, the keyword was "interdisciplinarity" (see Fig. 10.1). Shakespeare was recognized as complex enough to require a prismatic interpretive apparatus pulling from multiple disciplines. For Julie Thompson Klein, interdisciplinary studies promised "a unified science, general knowledge, synthesis and the integration of knowledge."[1] In 2002, Joe Moran wrote that "interdisciplinary approaches … can challenge traditional, outmoded systems of thought which are kept in place by institutional power structures."[2] More recently, Laura Estill has addressed Shakespeare and disciplinarity without the "inter." Writing in Valerie M. Fazel and Louise Geddes's collection *The Shakespeare User*, Estill asks how academics who aren't Shakespeare scholars use Shakespeare, identifying four models:

[1] Julie Thompson Klein, *Interdisciplinarity: History, Theory, and Practice*, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1990, 19.
[2] Joe Moran, *Interdisciplinarity*, London, Routledge, 2002, 182.

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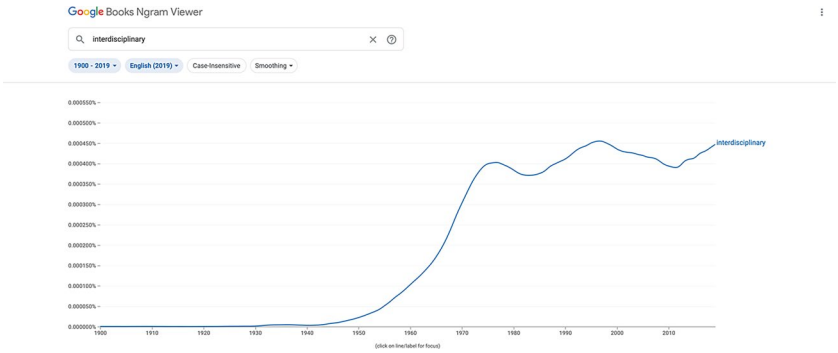

Fig. 10.1 Google Ngram for "Interdisciplinary" showing the rise of the term in the twentieth century. (Google Books Ngram Viewer)

(1) referencing and citing Shakespeare as a lingua franca that is accessible to readers across the disciplines

(2) quoting Shakespeare as a way to perform cultural capital

(3) engaging Shakespeare's text as a means to offer insight into concepts beyond Shakespeare,

and (4) analyzing Shakespearean texts from different disciplinary lenses as a form of scholarly criticism.[3]

We can group the first two models together and the second two models together. One distinction to draw for Shakespeare Across the Disciplines is between *decorative* and *substantive* uses. Decorative appropriations draw upon familiar lines and characters to enliven an academic's articulation of their disciplinary knowledge. That knowledge was arrived at and is coherent without Shakespeare. Decorative appropriation is a rhetorical move. The substantive model is a different story.

Far beyond interdisciplinary appropriations of quotable quotes, Shakespeare Across the Disciplines involves the playwright being both the receptor and the generator of new knowledge from outside literary studies. When substantive, Shakespeare Across the Disciplines involves what

[3] Laura Estill, "Shakespeare and Disciplinarity," in *The Shakespeare User: Critical and Creative Appropriations in a Networked Culture*, eds. Valerie M. Fazel and Louise Geddes, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, 169.

Terrence Hawkes calls "meaning by Shakespeare," what Julia Lupton calls "thinking with Shakespeare," and what Estill describes as "reading through Shakespeare."[4]

1

Substantive forms of Shakespeare Across the Disciplines call to mind Writing Across the Curriculum, sometimes called Writing in the Disciplines.[5] Often the foundation for first-year college writing programs, Writing Across the Curriculum emphasizes aspects of academic writing that span all disciplines and shows how different disciplines do things differently—thesis versus hypothesis, quantitative and qualitative analysis, different methods of interpretation, different styles of citation, and so forth.

To build a vocabulary for Shakespeare Across the Disciplines, I want to use some terms and examples from a first-year writing course I teach called *Why Shakespeare?*[6] We define a *text* as "the thing being interpreted." Not all sources in an essay are texts: if *Hamlet* is your text, history or theory or criticism might help you interpret the play, but those are contextual sources. Your text is the thing you're interpreting.

We write three essays: (1) a single-source paper, (2) a multi-source paper, and (3) a research paper. For the first, students write about *Hamlet* without using any other sources. Two approaches emerge based on what happens in the essay's conclusion. There's a *close reading*, where a writer remains with *Hamlet* to ask how their argument enhances our understanding of the play as a whole. For instance, Eliza identified a motif of ears being attacked in *Hamlet* and in her conclusion argued that the play equates verbal violence with physical violence. In contrast, there's a *theorization*, where the writer mobilizes an argument about *Hamlet* to interpret life beyond the play. Narayan pointed out that, in *Hamlet*, misogyny grows not from hatred of women (as the etymology of the term suggests) but from claims of love and protection; his conclusion used that reading to gloss modern misogyny from US senators and Taliban fundamentalists.

[4] Terence Hawkes, *Meaning by Shakespeare*, London, Routledge, 1992; Julia Reinhard Lupton, *Thinking with Shakespeare: Essays on Politics and Life*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2011; and Estill, "Shakespeare and Disciplinarity," 178.

[5] See David R. Russell, *Writing in the Academic Disciplines: A Curricular History*, 2nd ed., Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 2002.

[6] Jeffrey R. Wilson, "Why Shakespeare?" Harvard University, 2014–2022.

For Eliza, *Hamlet* was the text, the thing interpreted. She was working in the discipline of literary studies. Narayan's text was ultimately not *Hamlet* but the concept of misogyny. He used *Hamlet* to develop a theory of misogyny—used literary studies to do gender studies.

The theorization introduces the crucial concept of the *lens*, where you use one source to interpret another, leading to our second assignment. Students get four sources: (1) a Shakespearean play, (2) one of its sources, (3) a modern adaptation, and (4) a social-scientific theory. Clusters have included: *Richard III* with Thomas More's *History of King Richard the Third*, Netflix's *House of Cards*, and Imogen Tyler's *Stigma: The Machinery of Inequality*;[7] *Romeo and Juliet* with Arthur Brooke's *Romeus and Juliet*, the Royal Shakespeare Company's *Such Tweet Sorrow*, and Robert J. Steinberg's "A Triangular Theory of Love";[8] *Macbeth* with Holinshed's *Chronicles*, Whitney White's *Macbeth in Stride*, and Rachel Bridge's *Ambition: Why It's Good to Want More and How to Get It*.[9]

Essays tend to take one of three forms. First, the *historicization* considers a text in light of its influences. Sarah saw The Show Must Go Online's 2021 production of *Cymbeline* as a refraction of three ages of political oppression: American nationalism in the twenty-first century, English colonialism in the Elizabethan age, and earlier Roman imperialism. In terms of the discipline she was working in, Sarah was doing history. Second, a *comparison* identifies a key similarity or difference between two texts from different contexts to consider its significance. Marissa contrasted Shakespeare's Orientalizing use of magic in *Othello* with Toni Morrison's magical realism in *Desdemona* to reflect on the positionality of each author in relation to their characters. Marissa was doing comparative literature. Third, the *lens essay* uses a theoretical source to interpret a

[7] Thomas More, *The History of King Richard the Thirde* (1513), in *Workes*, ed. William Rastall, London, John Cawod, John Waly, and Richarde Tottell, 1557; Beau Willimon, *House of Cards*, Netflix, 2013–2018; and Imogen Tyler, *Stigma: The Machinery of Inequality*, London, Bloomsbury, 2020.

[8] Arthur Brooke, *Romeus and Juliet*, London, Richardi Tottelli, 1562; Royal Shakespeare Company, *Such Tweet Sorrow* (2013), available at http://www.bleysmaynard.net/suchtweet/; and Robert J. Steinberg, "A Triangular Theory of Love," *Psychological Review* 93.2 (1986), 119–35.

[9] Raphael Holinshed, *The Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande*, London, Henry Bynneman, 1577, 1.243; Whitney White, *Macbeth in Stride* at American Reperatory Theater (2021); and Rachel Bridge, *Ambition: Why It's Good to Want More and How to Get It*, Mankato, Capstone, 2016.

literary text. Maddie used Jeffrey Hall's *The Five Flirting Styles* to argue that Benedick and Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing* start out as "playful flirts" but evolve into "sincere flirts." Maddie was using communication studies to do literary studies.

In our third paper, the text—the thing being interpreted—is not one of Shakespeare's works but his manifestation in some later culture or setting.[10] These papers combine literary studies with cultural studies to do reception history. A major source of Shakespeare Across the Disciplines comes from scholars, like our students, accounting for the playwright's afterlives throughout time, around the world, and, yes, across the academic disciplines.

2

Aristotle separated intellectual thought into three parts: (1) the theoretical sciences included physics, metaphysics, and mathematics; (2) the practical sciences included ethics and politics; and (3) the productive sciences included agriculture, medicine, and art.[11] Ancient Greek and Roman universities were organized around the idea of liberal education, which late antiquity systematized into the seven liberal arts, the fields of knowledge needed for a life of learning: logic, grammar, rhetoric, arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy.[12] In medieval European universities, the liberal arts were categorized into the trivium and the quadrivium. The trivium included logic, grammar, and rhetoric. The quadrivium was arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy. Students proceeded sequentially through these fields—starting with the trivium, moving to the quadrivium—because the skills of thinking, reading, writing, and speaking in the trivium were (and still are) foundational.

Thus, in Elizabethan England, there were grammar schools—like the one Shakespeare attended—that focused on logic, grammar, and rhetoric, and then there were universities—where Shakespeare didn't go—that

[10] For more on this assignment, see Jeffrey R. Wilson, "Shakestats: Writing About Shakespeare Between the Humanities and the Social Sciences," *Early Modern Literary Studies* 20.2 (2018), https://extra.shu.ac.uk/emls/journal/index.php/emls/article/view/395

[11] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, ed. Jonathan Barnes, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2014, 1025b.

[12] See Bruce A. Kimball, *The Liberal Arts Tradition: A Documentary History*, Lanham, University Press of America, 2010.

went deeper into math, science, law, theology, and medicine.[13] In his *Apology for Poetry*, Philip Sidney sees poetry as an inter-discipline that pairs the particularity of history with the conceptuality of philosophy.[14] Francis Bacon similarly separated human learning into history, philosophy, and poetry, but the taxonomies specifying sub-types of sub-types in his *Advancement of Learning* are worlds away from Shakespeare's plays (see Fig. 10.2).[15] They are closer to Christopher Marlowe who, at the start of *Doctor Faustus*, asks audiences "to see Faustus against a backdrop of university disciplines," as R.W. Ingram writes.[16] When Faustus "sound[s] the depth of that [he] wilt profess," he first considers logic—"Sweet Analytics"—but wants "a greater subject."[17] He "bid[s] *On kai me on* farewell" and says he might "be a physician" (1.11–12). He turns to "the subject of the institute, / And universal body of the law" (1.31–32) but decides "divinity is best" (1.37) then settles on "metaphysics of magicians, / And necromantic books" (1.51–52). Faustus and Marlowe were both university men—from Wittenberg and Cambridge—and this soliloquy is sensitive to the precise disciplinary differentiations that occur in universities. Faustus's course catalogue is extensive, detailed, and hierarchical, moving through the disciplines to arrive at the height of knowledge.

Contrast that with the start of *The Taming of the Shrew*, where Lucentio arrives in Padua to "institute / A course of learning and ingenious studies."[18] He sets out to study "virtue," and the lines that follow feel at first like an ordering of academic disciplines: "that part of philosophy / Will I apply that treats of happiness / By virtue specially to be achieved" (1.1.18–20). The keyword is "apply." Shakespeare was less interested in dissecting the sub-fields of knowledge than he was in the idea that scholastic learning should have practical applications. That's why Tranio, in *The Taming of the Shrew*, characterizes philosophy as a "moral discipline":

[13] See Lynn Enterline, *Shakespeare's Schoolroom: Rhetoric, Discipline, Emotion* , Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012; Mark Curtis, *Oxford and Cambridge in Transition, 1558–1642*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1959.

[14] Philip Sidney, *The Defence of Poesie*, London, William Ponsonby, 1595.

[15] Francis Bacon, *Of the Proficience and Advancement of Learning*, London, Henrie Tomes, 1605.

[16] R.W. Ingram, "'Pride in Learning goeth before a fall': Dr. Faustus' Opening Soliloquy," *Mosaic* 13.1 (1979), 73.

[17] Christopher Marlowe, *Dr. Faustus*, in *The Complete Plays*, eds. Frank Romany and Robert Lindsey, Oxford, Clarendon, 1990, 1.2–10.

[18] *The Taming of the Shrew*, 1.1.8–9. References to Shakespeare's works are to *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt, 3rd ed., New York, Norton, 2016.

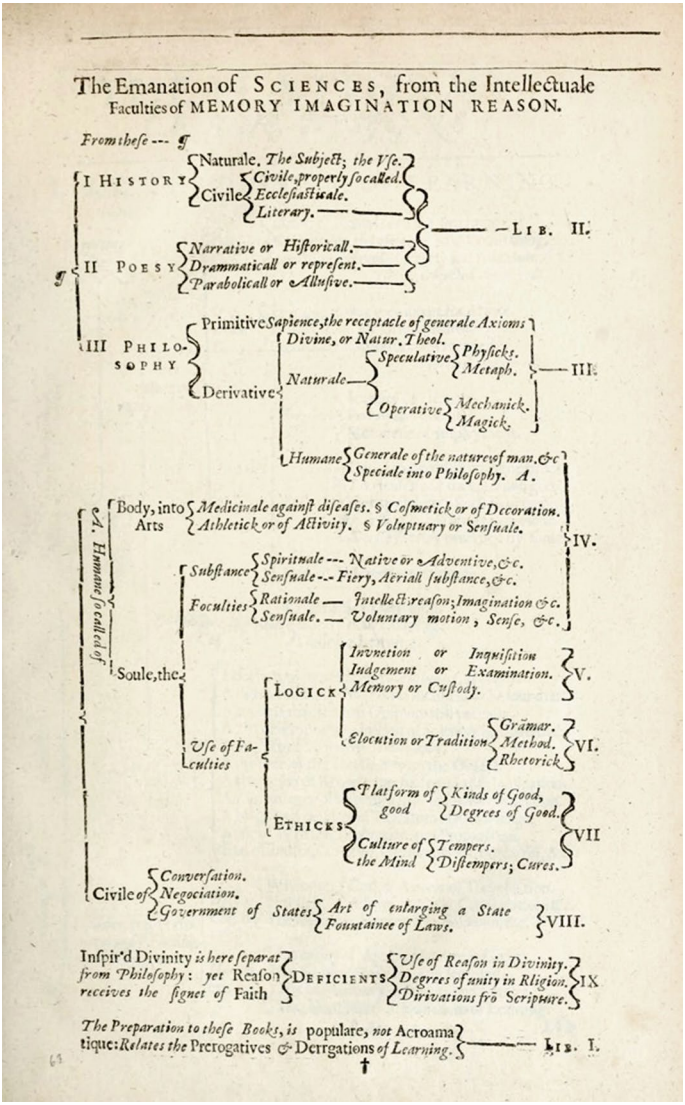

Fig. 10.2 "The Emanation of Sciences," in Francis Bacon, *Of the Advancement and Proficiencie of Learning: or the Partitions of Sciences*, London, Sowerby, 1674, 41 (© Folger Shakespeare Library)

> Only, good master, while we do admire
> This virtue and this moral discipline,
> Let's be no stoics nor no stocks, I pray,
> Or so devote to Aristotle's checks
> As Ovid be an outcast quite abjured.
> Balk logic with acquaintance that you have,
> And practice rhetoric in your common talk.
> Music and poesy use to quicken you.
> The mathematics and the metaphysics,
> Fall to them as you find your stomach serves you.
> (1.1.29–38)

The passage is alert to disciplinarity, but the point isn't to posit distinctions. It's about the larger line between learning in school and living out in the world. "Disciplinarity" comes across rather poorly in the play, whether it is this distinguishing of academic disciplines at the start of the play or the domestic discipline Petruchio tries to give Katherine. In this light, Shakespeare was anti-disciplinary. Or, better yet, Shakespeare was pre-disciplinary. As someone who attended grammar school but not university, he had more personal experience with the practical notion that education should be valuable for life than with theoretical concerns about how knowledge should be divided up. *Love's Labour's Lost* involves not distinctions among disciplines but the separation of the scholarly world from mainstream society: "Our court shall be a little academe, / Still and contemplative in living art" (1.1.13–14). *The Tempest* emphasizes not Prospero's academic specialization but his reputation "for the liberal arts / Without a parallel" (1.2.73–74) and how his "secret studies" made him a stranger to his state responsibilities (1.2.77).

3

One origin of Shakespeare Across the Disciplines is the breadth and complexity of the object under study—Shakespeare's art. First, understanding Shakespeare's sources requires, at least, the disciplines of classics, history, medieval studies, and book studies. Second, the content of Shakespeare's upwards of 40 texts implicates a diversity of disciplines: literary studies, linguistics, philosophy (aesthetics, ethics, metaphysics), psychology, law, economics, religious studies, political theory, gender, race, class, sexuality, disability, medicine, biology, chemistry, botany, astronomy, physics, metallurgy, culinary arts, military sciences—I could go on. Third, the material

form of Shakespeare's art—written manuscripts that became live performances professionally acted over centuries as well as printed books repeatedly re-edited—requires media studies, print history, theater studies, business administration, music, dance, architecture, archeology, and sociology for starters. This implicit interdisciplinarity is not unique to Shakespeare, but Shakespeare Across the Disciplines is the scholarly approach best suited to the object of study. If your text is Shakespeare, your method better be interdisciplinary.

Interdisciplinary Shakespeare studies often comes from card-carrying Shakespeare scholars whose research interests take them into other disciplines. There are exceptions, and lines can blur, but this paradigm raises questions about how the professional training and affiliation of an academic affects the way they do Shakespeare Across the Disciplines: a Shakespearean who goes interdisciplinary works differently than a disciplinary specialist who goes Shakespearean.

4

Simon Forman started at Oxford University in 1573, leaving a year later before receiving his degree, eventually becoming an astrologer and healer in London. His 1611 manuscript "Bocke of Plaies and Notes Therof" is the most extensive account of seeing Shakespeare's plays in this period. He saw *Macbeth*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *Cymbeline*, plus a *Richard II* that wasn't Shakespeare's version. His "Notes thereof" summarize plots and emphasize moments to remember but are "for Common Pollicie," drawing moral lessons on human conduct from literature that can be applied to life in general. His note on *Richard II* begins:

> Remember therin howe Iack strawe by his overmuch boldnes not beinge pollitick nor suspecting Anye thinge. was Soddenly at Smithfeld Bars stabbed by Walworth the maior of London soe he and his wholle Army was overthrowen Therefore in such a case or the like, never admit any party without a bar betwen for A man Cannot be to wise, nor kepe him selfe to safe.[19]

[19] Simon Forman, "The Bocke of Plaies and Notes therof per forman for Common Pollicie" (1611), at the Bodleian Library, Oxford University, MS Ashmole 208, fol. 200–207v, quoted from *Shakespeare Documented*, https://shakespearedocumented.folger.edu.

After describing Autolycus in *The Winter's Tale*, Forman writes, "Beware of trustinge feined beggars or fawninge fellonse." In his notes, Forman does some interpretation of the artwork, then uses that interpretation to think about life, as folks often do when they see a play. Shakespeare starts out as the text—the thing being interpreted—but that interpretation then becomes a lens "for common policie."

Contrast that with literary studies of the period that treat Shakespeare as the end-all, be-all of interpretation. Shakespeare is the text—the thing interpreted—in Ben Jonson's eulogy "To the Memory of My Beloved, the Author Mr. William Shakespeare," an early example of literary criticism aiming to assess the meaning and significance of Shakespeare's art.[20] That form of literary studies is different from the textual studies of John Heminges and Henry Condell, who co-edited the first folio, released in 1623.[21] They looked at Shakespeare's actual words and works more than their meanings, but Shakespeare was still their text, the thing they were interpreting. And that is different still from the theatrical studies of someone like John Dryden, who addressed performance, but all three forms take Shakespeare as their text.[22] All three are doing literary studies. It's just that literary criticism, textual studies, and theatrical studies focus on different aspects of Shakespeare.

John Milton wasn't doing literary studies in *Eikonoklestes* when he used Shakespeare's *Richard III* to critique England's King Charles I. Milton was using Shakespeare to do politics. "The deepest policy of a Tyrant hath bin ever to counterfet Religious," Milton wrote:

> I shall not instance an abstruse Author, wherein the King might be less conversant, but one whom wee well know was the Closet Companion of these his solitudes, William Shakespeare; who introduces the Person of Richard the third, speaking in as high a strain of pietie, and mortification, as is utterd in any passage of this Book; and sometimes to the same sense and purpose with some words in this place, I intended, saith he, not onely to oblige my Friends but mine enemies.[23]

[20] Ben Jonson, "To the Memory of My Beloved, the Author Mr. William Shakespeare" (ca. 1616), in *Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies*, London, Isaac Iaggard, and Ed. Blount, 1623.

[21] John Heminges and Henry Condell, "To the Great Variety of Readers" (1623), in *Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies.*

[22] John Dryden, *Of Dramatick Poesie*, London, Henry Herringman, 1668.

[23] John Milton, *Eikonoklastes*, Amsterdam, 1649.

Like Forman, Milton was using Shakespeare as a lens—though, unlike Forman, not as a lens for life in general. There's a more precise disciplinary specificity with Milton. He's working in the field of politics, pointing forward to some modern academic forms of Shakespeare Across the Disciplines.

In literary studies—whether textual, theatrical, or critical—Shakespeare is the text, the object of interpretation, in contrast to two alternate modes. *Shakespeare outside the disciplines* is pre-disciplinary, as non-academic literary engagement often is, using Shakespeare as a lens for interpreting life in general, echoing Shakespeare's own pre-disciplinary position in relation to the academia of his age. *Shakespeare in the disciplines* uses the plays as a lens for field-specific thought, positioning Shakespeare as an analyst of human behavior whose ideas can help explain things in specialized discussions.

5

Then began ShakesCreep, a term I'm using not in the sense of that dude who won't stop emailing you his conspiracy theories about the authorship of the plays but in the sense of Shakespeare's infusion into more and more settings as the centuries passed: *Hamlet* in Indonesia in 1619, the funerary monument, Dutch translations, the first folio, Restoration adaptations, women on English stages, coffee houses in London, amateur performances in America, Hogarth's paintings, Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey, the first Shakespeare Jubilee in Stratford-upon-Avon, the Bluestocking Society, colonial education, the African Grove Theater in New York, and on and on. Beyond the sources, content, and form of the plays, each new cultural manifestation of Shakespeare implicates a later interdisciplinary academic investigation of it. Area studies, identity studies, cultural studies, adaptation studies, and new media studies all become necessary to understand Shakespeare because of his wayward afterlives. Studying Shakespeare in music is not the same as studying music in Shakespeare.

Two points. First, culture comes before academia. Shakespeare Across the Disciplines reflects Shakespeare across cultures. Second, however, when academics are not studying how Shakespeare has surfaced in culture but, instead, actively adapting Shakespeare for new scholarly ideas across the academic disciplines, they are acting more like the cultural agents of ShakesCreep than the scholars who study them.

6

Historically, lots of literary studies took Shakespeare as their object of interpretation. Criticism considering meaning and significance came in Margaret Cavendish's "Letter CXXIII" (1664) and Nicolas Rowe's biographical sketch "Some Account of the Life &c. of Mr. William Shakespear" (1709).[24] Textual scholarship appeared in the eighteenth-century editions running from Rowe through Johnson to Malone.[25] Theater studies showed up in David Garrick's *An Essay on Acting* (1744).[26] But there was something new in Charlotte Lennox's *Shakespeare Illustrated, Or The Novels and Histories on which the Plays of Shakespeare are Founded*, published in three volumes in 1753–1754.[27] It's the first book-length historicist analysis. There was also something new in Voltaire's writings on Shakespeare, a sustained lens analysis using neo-classical standards to interpret Shakespeare.[28] And there's something new in Elizabeth Montagu's response, *An Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespear, compared with the Greek and French Dramatic Poets* (1769).[29] It's a book-length comparative analysis.

When Johann Gottfried von Herder wrote his essay "Shakespeare" (1773), he was, like Voltaire, a university-educated continental philosopher who took Shakespeare as his text, applying the motives, assumptions, and methods of philosophical inquiry to a subject more commonly addressed under the banner of literary studies.[30] Then came William Richardson's *Philosophical Analysis and Illustration of Some of Shakespeare's Remarkable Characters* (1774) and Elizabeth Griffith's *The Morality of*

[24] Margaret Cavendish, *CCXI. Sociable Letters*, London, William Wilson, 1664, Letter CXXIII; Nicolas Rowe, "Some Account of the Life &c. of Mr. William Shakespear," in vol. 1 of *The Works of Mr. William Shakespear*, ed. Nicholas Rowe, London, Jacob Tonson, 1709, I–XL.

[25] *Works*, ed. Rowe (1709); *The Plays of William Shakespeare*, ed. Samuel Johnson, London, J. and R. Tonson, et al., 1765; *The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare*, ed. Edmond Malone, London, H. Baldwin for J. Rivington and Sons, et al., 1790.

[26] David Garrick, *An Essay on Acting*, London, W. Bickerton, 1744.

[27] Charlotte Lennox, *Shakespeare Illustrated, Or The Novels and Histories on which the Plays of Shakespeare are Founded*, London, A. Millar, 1753–1754.

[28] Voltaire, *Voltaire on Shakespeare*, ed. Theodore Besterman, Geneva, Institut et Musée Voltaire, 1967.

[29] Elizabeth Montagu, *An Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespear, compared with the Greek and French Dramatic Poets*, London, J. Dodsley, 1769.

[30] Johann Gottfried von Herder, *Shakespeare* (1773), trans. Gregory Moore, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2008.

Shakespeare's Drama illustrated (1775), writers more clearly grounded in English literary culture who pressed their Shakespeare studies into philosophical terrain.[31] Voltaire and Herder went Shakespearean, while Richardson and Griffith went interdisciplinary—and all of this before we even get to any Schlegels or Hegels.[32]

7

The Scientific Revolution brought the first discipline-specific academic journals from the British and French royal scientific societies. Early in the eighteenth century, the ascendancy of science and mathematics led the Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico to call for broad education in the "human sciences."[33] But the Industrial Revolution brought increased division of labor. Employers wanted content experts; universities started doing more specialized education. Secular, state-controlled, research-oriented universities emerged in Germany early in the nineteenth century. The modern PhD based on a research dissertation originated at Humboldt University in Berlin, founded in 1810.[34] In America, Yale adopted the doctorate system in 1861.[35] Harvard adopted the major and electives system in 1869.[36] Academic disciplines were growing more and more specialized.

[31] William Richardson, *Philosophical Analysis and Illustration of Some of Shakespeare's Remarkable Characters*, London, J. Murray, 1774; Elizabeth Griffith, *The Morality of Shakespeare's Drama illustrated*, London, T. Caddell, 1775.

[32] Friedrich Schlegel, *Philosophical Fragments* (1798–1800), trans. Peter Firchow, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991; August Wilhelm Schlegel, *A Course of Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature* (1801–1804), trans. John Black, Philadelphia, Hogan and Thompson, 1833, especially Lectures XXII–XXVII; G.W.F. Hegel, "Dramatic Poetry," in *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art* (1818–1829), trans T.M. Knox, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1975, esp. 1192–1237.

[33] See Isaiah Berlin, "The Divorce Between the Sciences and the Humanities," in *Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2001, 80–110.

[34] See Johan Östling, *Humboldt and the Modern German University: An Intellectual History*, trans. Lena Olsson, Lund, Lund University Press, 2018.

[35] See Ralph P. Rosenberg, "The First American Doctor of Philosophy Degree: A Centennial Salute to Yale, 1861–1961," *The Journal of Higher Education* 32.7 (1961), 387–94.

[36] Robert W. Elliott and Valerie Osland Paton, "U.S. Higher Education Reform: Origins and Impact of Student Curricular Choice," *International Journal of Educational Development* 61 (2018), 1–4.

Robert Patterson went to grammar school at Belfast Academical Institution, where he wrote a prize-winning essay on Lough Neagh, a large lake in Northern Ireland.[37] At age 19, he was one of seven people who met on June 5, 1821 to form the Belfast Natural History Society. Ten years later, the group opened a museum. They held what they called "Public Nights" at which the speaker "abandons, in great degree, the technicalities of science for 'metal more attractive.'"[38] Patterson published several papers from their Public Nights in 1838 as *Letters on the Natural History of the Insects Mentioned in Shakespeare's Plays*. He says Prince Hamlet may have been a man "of mental powers sufficient to descant upon 'this goodly frame the earth'" (29), but Hamlet got his entomology wrong when he said that "the sun breed[s] maggots in a dead dog" (*Hamlet*, 2.2.179). Five years later, Patterson published "Notes Upon the Reptiles Mentioned in Shakespeare's Plays" in the first issue of *The Zoologist*.[39] That inspired T. Worthington Barlow to write, in the fourth volume of the journal, "Notes on Some of the Birds Mentioned in Shakespeare's Plays."[40] But Barlow—a lawyer—came across as amateurish to James Edmund Harding, who in 1871 authored *The Ornithology of Shakespeare*.[41]

In 1859, John Campbell became Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain. That same year, he published *Shakespeare's Legal Acquirements*: "Were an issue tried before me as Chief Justice at the Warwick assizes, 'whether William Shakespeare, late of Stratford-upon-Avon, gentleman, ever was clerk in an attorney's office in Stratford- upon-Avon aforesaid,' I should hold that there is evidence to go to the jury in support of the affirmative."[42] That book inspired John Charles Bucknill to publish *The Medical Knowledge of Shakespeare* (1860).[43]

[37] Brian Maye, "Natural History – Brian Maye on Pioneering Zoologist Robert Patterson," *Irish Times* (Jan. 31, 2022).

[38] Robert Patterson, *Letters on the Natural History of the Insects Mentioned in Shakespeare's Plays*, London, W.S. Orr & Co., 1838, v.

[39] Robert Patterson, "Notes Upon the Reptiles Mentioned in Shakespeare's Plays," *The Zoologist* 1 (1843), 249–53.

[40] T. Worthington Barlow, "Notes on Some of the Birds Mentioned in Shakespeare's Plays," *The Zoologist* 4 (1846), 1539–45.

[41] James Edmund Harding, *The Ornithology of Shakespeare*, London, James Van Voorst, 1871.

[42] John Campbell, *Shakespeare's Legal Acquirements Considered*, London, John Murray, 1859, 11.

[43] John Charles Bucknill, *The Medical Knowledge of Shakespeare*, London, Longman & Co., 1860.

Lawyers say Shakespeare was secretly a lawyer, doctors say Shakespeare was secretly a doctor, philosophers say Shakespeare was a philosopher, astronomers say he was an astronomer, economists say economist, meteorologists say… geologists say…. But credit goes to one G. Henslow in 1864: "Whether Shakespeare was a botanist or not, we will not undertake to say."[44]

8

Karl Marx, Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Leo Tolstoy, and Virginia Woolf offer different versions of Shakespeare Across the Disciplines—letters, essays, speeches, and books on Shakespeare from figures who later became central to new academic fields.[45] These writers drew upon a cultural familiarity with Shakespeare fostered by the bardolatry that peaked in the second half of the nineteenth century, especially in Germany.

Field-defining texts like Sigmund Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899) are filled with Shakespearean allusions, as when *Hamlet* helps Freud theorize the Oedipus complex.[46] The discussion starts with clinical case studies, such as the man who at seven years old wanted to kill his father. Freud theorizes these examples into the idea that "the chief part in the mental lives of all children who later become psycho-neurotics is played by their parents".[47] He claims "this discovery is confirmed by a legend that has come down to us from classical antiquity … the legend of King Oedipus".[48] His use of *Oedipus Rex* is ultimately decorative—it helps

[44] G. Henslow, "The Wild Flowers of Shakespeare," *The Leisure Hour* 13 (1864), 229.

[45] Karl Marx, "Money" (1844), in *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, in *Early Writings*, ed. L. Colletti, trans. Rodney Livingstone and Gregor Benton, London, Penguin, 1975, 375–79; Abraham Lincoln, "Letter to James H. Hackett" (August 17, 1863), in *Speeches and Writings: 1859–1865*, New York, Library of America, 1989, 493; Frederick Douglass, "The American Constitution and the Slave," in *The Speeches of Frederick Douglass*, eds. John R. McKivigan, Julie Husband, and Heather L. Kaufman, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2018, 176; Leo Tolstoy, *Tolstoy on Shakespeare*, trans. V. Tcherkoff, New York, Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1906; Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*, London, Hogarth Press, 1929.

[46] Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899), in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. James Strachey, vol. 4, London, Hogarth, 1958, 264.

[47] Ibid., 260.

[48] Ibid., 261.

him communicate an idea he already had—in contrast to his turn to *Hamlet*, which is more substantive—actually helping him build ideas. His reading of *Hamlet*—which started out as a footnote in the first edition but was elevated into the chapter starting in 1914—provides Freud with an example in which the "the child's wishful phantasy … remains repressed; and—just as in the case of a neurosis—we only learn of its existence from its inhibiting consequences" (264). Freud's text—the object of his interpretation—is dreams. Shakespeare is his lens.

In contrast, Ernest Jones's follow-up study, "The Oedipus-Complex as an Explanation of Hamlet's Mystery: A Study in Motive" (1910), takes *Hamlet* as its text, using Freudian psychoanalysis as a lens.[49] Freud used Shakespeare to interpret life; Jones used psychology to interpret Shakespeare. Freud was doing a theorization, Jones a lens analysis.

Freud himself did lens analysis in "The Theme of the Three Caskets" (1913), where psychoanalytic observations help him explain two scenes from Shakespeare, the three caskets in *The Merchant of Venice* and the three daughters in *King Lear*.[50] Freud's essay "Some Character-Types Met with in Psycho-Analytic Work" (1916)—beyond using formal terminology from literary studies ("character types") to do disciplinary work—contains two additional approaches.[51]

The first section, "The Exceptions," puts clinical case studies in conversation with *Richard III* to create a category for those who "have renounced enough and suffered enough, and have a claim to be spared any further demands; they will submit no longer to any disagreeable necessity, for they are *exceptions* and, moreover, intend to remain so" (312). There is not a directionality of interpretation in this argument that might allow us to label it as a lens analysis (using psychology to do literary studies) or a theorization (using literary studies to do psychology). The argument is a comparative analysis giving equal weight to two spheres of evidence. Freud's text is "exceptionality": his patients and Shakespeare's Richard III are different manifestations of it.

The second section, "Those Wrecked By Success," is a goofy essay. It looks like it's going to be a comparative analysis using both clinical and literary examples to consider people who "fall ill precisely when a deeply-rooted

[49] Ernest Jones, "The Oedipus-Complex as an Explanation of Hamlet's Mystery: a Study in Motive," *American Journal of Psychology* 21.1 (1910), 72–113.

[50] Sigmund Freud, "The Theme of the Three Caskets" (1913), in *Standard Edition*, vol. 12, 289–302.

[51] Sigmund Freud, "Some Character-Types Met with in Psycho-Analytic Work" (1916), in *Standard Edition*, vol. 14, 309–33.

and long-cherished wish has come to fulfilment." One is an academic who, upon being promoted to full professor, "fell into a melancholia which unfitted him for all activity for some years" (317). The other is Lady Macbeth. But Freud's essay falls apart into a rambling discussion of Shakespeare's sources for *Macbeth*. It's not a good one, but it's a historicization.

9

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, Latin American authors used Ariel and Caliban from *The Tempest* as a lens for post-coloniality. In 1898, Nicaraguan poet Ruben Dario titled his takedown of US culture and imperialism "The Triumph of Caliban": "Red-faced, corpulent, gross, they make their way down their streets pushing and shoving one another, brushing against one another like animals, on a hunt for the mighty dollar. The ideals of these Calibans are none but the stock market and the factory."[52] The Uruguayan writer Jose Enrique Rodo's *Ariel* (1900) says the character "represents, in the symbolism of Shakespeare, the noble part—the spirit with wings," while Caliban is the "symbol of sensuality and stupidity."[53] But there's a twist here. Dario and Rodo's engagement with *The Tempest* was mediated by French philosopher Ernest Renan's *Caliban: A Philosophical Drama Continuing 'The Tempest' of William Shakespeare* (1878).[54] Art and culture come before academia to the extent that, if we want to know where Shakespeare is going to surface across the disciplines in the future, we can look at creative adaptations and appropriations happening today. There is also a distinction to draw between using Shakespeare as a lens for life and the less bardolatrous use of Shakespeare's afterlives as a lens.

Consider Laura Bohannan's often-anthologized 1966 essay "Shakespeare in the Bush: An American Anthropologist Set Out to Study the Tiv of West Africa and was Taught the True Meaning of Hamlet."[55] Bohannan didn't really care about the true meaning of *Hamlet*. Her whole point—which became influential in cultural anthropology—was that there

[52] Ruben Dario, "The Triumph of Caliban" (1898), in *Selected Writings*, ed. Ilan Stavans, trans. Andrew Hurley, Greg Simon, and Steven F. White, London, Penguin, 2005, 507–12.

[53] Jose Enrique Rodo, *Ariel* (1900), tans. F.J. Stimson, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1922.

[54] Ernest Renan, *Caliban: A Philosophical Drama Continuing 'The Tempest' of William Shakespeare* (1878), trans. Eleanor Grant Vickery, New York, The Shakespeare Press, 1896.

[55] Laura Bohannan, "Shakespeare in the Bush: An American Anthropologist Set Out to Study the Tiv of West Africa and was Taught the True Meaning of Hamlet," *Natural History* 75 (1966), 28–33.

isn't a true meaning, only the different meanings made by socially situated acts of interpretation. She wasn't using Shakespeare as a lens for life. She was using Shakespeare's reception as a lens for thinking about anthropology.

10

The emergence of the social sciences in the late nineteenth century led to the formation of the humanities in the early twentieth.[56] In 1933, L.C. Knights asked *How Many Children Had Lady Macbeth?*[57] In 1947, Sister Miriam Joseph showed *Shakespeare's Use of the Arts of Language*.[58] Both took Shakespeare as their text, but where Knights theorized his point about Lady Macbeth into a methodology for literary studies, Joseph historicized Shakespeare's language in the context that produced it.

In the 1960s, the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development's Center for Educational Research and Innovation published its first study of interdisciplinarity.[59] By 1975, Michel Foucault was arguing that academic disciplines are a way of regulating human conduct.[60] Calls for more holistic education brought about "studies" disciplines that pulled from any content area needed to explain a subject—women's studies, cultural studies, and ethnic studies, later gender studies, disability studies, postcolonial studies, race studies, queer studies, and many more (see Fig. 10.3). Steeped in tradition, hierarchy, and gatekeeping, disciplinarity had failed to sufficiently respond to problems identified through social movements. Interdisciplinarity came to stand for problem-based, practical, solution-oriented education in contrast to old knowledge for old knowledge's sake.

Jan Kott called Shakespeare "our contemporary" in 1963, an act of comparative literature responsive to political currents.[61] In 1964, James

[56] See *The Making of the Humanities*, vol. 3, *The Modern Humanities*, eds. Rens Bod, Jaap Maat, and Thijs Weststeijn, Chicago, Amsterdam Press, 2014, esp. Part I, 27–78.

[57] L.C. Knights, *How Many Children Had Lady Macbeth? An Essay in the Theory and Practice of Shakespeare Criticism*, Cambridge, Minority Press, 1933.

[58] Sister Miriam Joseph, *Shakespeare's Use of the Arts of Language*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1947.

[59] Center for Educational Research and Innovation, *Interdisciplinarity: Problems of Teaching and Research in Universities*, Paris, Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, 1972.

[60] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975), trans. Alan Sheridan, New York, Random House, 1977.

[61] Jan Kott, *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*, trans. Boleslaw Taborski, New York, Methuen, 1963.

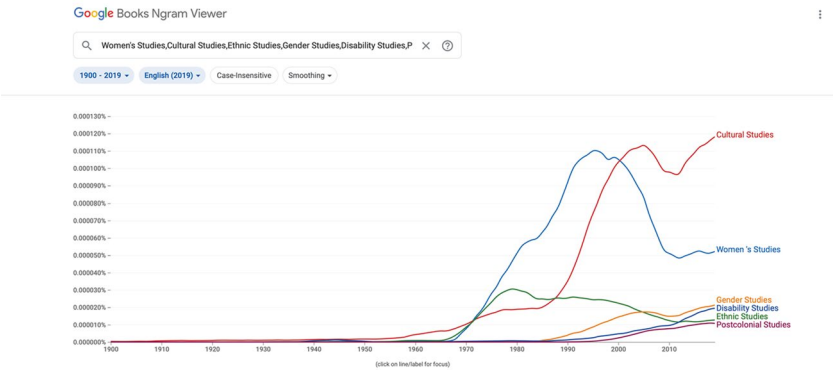

Fig. 10.3 Google Ngram for "Studies" Disciplines, showing their rise in the twentieth century, Google Books Ngram Viewer

Baldwin wrote about "Why [He] Stopped Hating Shakespeare," a lens essay from the vantage of African American studies.[62] The coming years brought Eldred Jones's *Othello's Countrymen: The African in English Renaissance Drama* (1965), Juliet Dusinberre's *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women* (1975), Alan Bray's *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* (1982), Ania Loomba's *Gender, Race, Renaissance Drama* (1989), and Jean Howard's *The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England* (1993)—all historicizing in Shakespeare and his contemporaries' texts and times social identities related to race, gender, sexuality, and class that had become political issues in their own era.[63] Some Shakespeare scholars developed a name for this new historicism. They called it "new historicism."[64]

[62] James Baldwin, "Why I Stopped Hating Shakespeare," *The Observer* (April 19, 1964), 21.

[63] Eldred Jones, *Othello's Countrymen: The African in English Renaissance Drama*, London, Oxford University Press, 1965; Juliet Dusinberre, *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women*, London, Macmillan, 1975; Alan Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*, London, Gay Men's Press, 1982; Ania Loomba, *Gender, Race, Renaissance Drama*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1989; and Jean Howard, *The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England*, London, Routledge, 1993.

[64] Stephen Greenblatt, "Introduction" to "The Forms of Power and the Power of Forms in the Renaissance," *Genre* 15 (1982), 3–6.

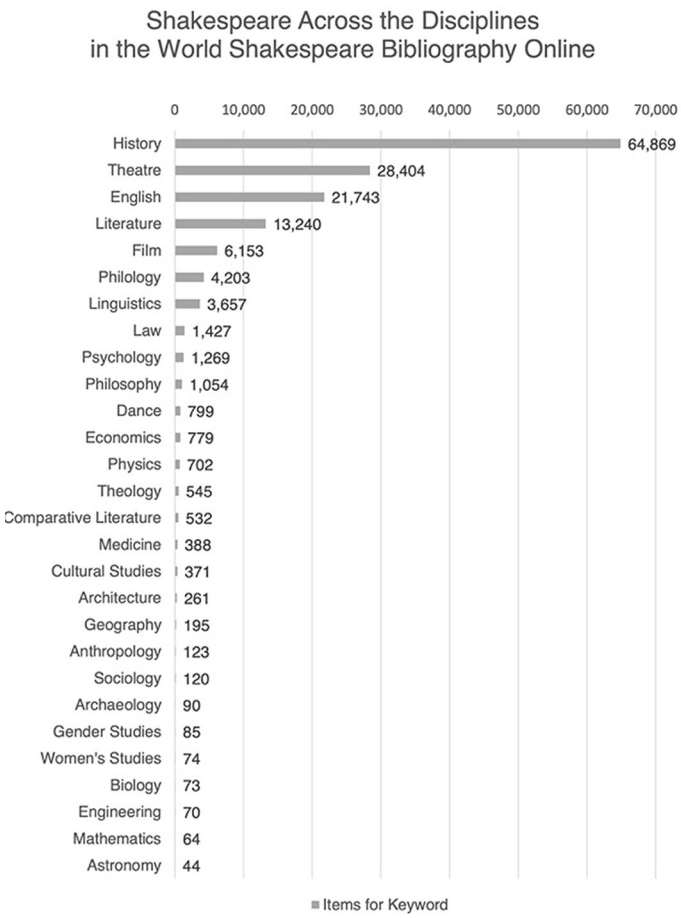

Fig. 10.4 Shakespeare Across the Disciplines in the World Shakespeare Bibliography Online, showing the total number of items returned for a "basic search" for each discipline (as of May 2022)

History is by far the most prominent discipline represented in the World Shakespeare Bibliography—even more than theater, English, and literature (see Fig. 10.4). There are some limitations to these data, so take this chart as illustrative rather than dispositive, but it suggests that Shakespeare studies cares about history above all.

11

In 1972, three psychologists went Shakespearean to theorize "The Romeo and Juliet Effect," which holds that "parental interference in a love relationship intensifies the feelings of romantic love between members of the couple."[65] Starting with a hypothesis "derived from classical literature," they designed an empirical study. They had 140 couples complete a questionnaire about their relationships and their surrounding circumstances, including "perceived interference from the couple's parents".[66] The couples completed the questionnaire again six to 10 months later. Results revealed that parental opposition didn't cause people to break up. It caused people to fall deeper in love.

But the Romeo and Juliet effect had a replication problem. In 2014, a group of researchers ran the experiment again.[67] This time, data showed that "higher interference was consistently linked with lower relationship quality" (172). The group found "no evidence for the Romeo and Juliet effect" (174). A rejoinder from one of the original researchers emphasized an important element of the theory:

> The heightened feelings of love may last several weeks or even several months, but do not continue over longer spans of time and are not a promising basis for a sound marriage. In the original *Romeo and Juliet* play, the intense feelings lasted a mere five days, and would hardly have been the basis for a happy ever after continuation. Imagine Romeo and Juliet outside the walls of Verona, had they lived, now without their familiar privileges, changing diapers, and taking menial jobs to scrape by.[68]

This replication frustration also appeared with the "Macbeth effect," in which "a threat to one's moral purity induces the need to cleanse oneself."[69] In a series of four experiments from 2006, research subjects who had their

[65] R. Driscoll, K.E. Davis, and M.E. Lipetz, "Parental Interference and Romantic Love: The Romeo & Juliet Effect," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 24 (1972), 1.

[66] Ibid., 4.

[67] H. Colleen Sinclair, Kristina B. Hood, and Brittany L. Wright, "Revisiting the Romeo and Juliet Effect, Driscoll, Davis, & Lipetz, 1972: Reexamining the Links Between Social Network Opinions and Romantic Relationship Outcomes," *Social Psychology* 45.3 (2014), 170–78.

[68] Richard Driscoll, "Commentary and Rejoinder on Sinclair, Hood, and Wright (2014): Romeo and Juliet Through a Narrow Window," *Social Psychology* 45.4 (2014), 312.

[69] Chen-Bo Zhong and Katie Liljenquist, "Washing Away Your Sins: Threatened Morality and Physical Cleansing," *Science* 313.5792 (2006), 1451–52.

moral purity threatened showed (1) a preference for words like "wash" and "soap"; (2) a desire for cleaning products like disinfectant; (3) a tendency to use antiseptic cleaning wipes; and (4) decreased anxiety after washing their hands. Attempts to replicate these results were unsuccessful, although the Macbeth effect was endorsed by a 2013 meta-analysis titled "Things Rank and Gross in Nature: A Review and Synthesis of Moral Disgust."[70]

12

Is Shakespeare the text or the lens? Is the writer a Shakespearean or from another discipline? Are Shakespeare's works or his cultural afterlives at hand? Twenty-first-century Shakespeare Across the Disciplines tends to sift into six categories (see Fig. 10.5).

First, Shakespeare is the text, the discipline the lens, and the writer is a Shakespearean, as in Kate Chedgzoy's book *Shakespeare's Queer Children* (1995), Simon C. Estok's article "Shakespeare and Ecocriticism" (2005), or Allison P. Hobgood and David Houston Wood's *Disabled Shakespeares*, a 2009 special issue of *Disability Studies Quarterly*.[71] This model tends to involve Shakespeare scholars who know his texts well noticing something in them that requires disciplinary theory to understand and explain.

Second, Shakespeare is the text and the discipline the lens, but the writer becomes a scholar from a discipline other than literary studies. Consider criminologist Victoria M. Time reading crime and justice in Shakespeare's plays, or archaeologist Chris Thomas discovering the remains of the Curtain Theatre.[72] Here the scholar brings technical,

[70] Brian D. Earp, Jim A. C. Everett, Elizabeth N. Madva, and J. Kiley Hamlin, "Out, Damned Spot: Can the 'Macbeth Effect' Be Replicated?" *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 36 (2014), 91–98; Hanah A. Chapman and Adam K Anderson, "Things Rank and Gross in Nature: A Review and Synthesis of Moral Disgust," *Psychological Bulletin* 139.2 (2013), 300–27.

[71] Kate Chedgzoy, *Shakespeare's Queer Children: Sexual Politics and Contemporary Culture*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1995; Simon C. Estok, "Shakespeare and Ecocriticism: An Analysis of Home and Power in *King Lear*," *AUMLA: Journal of the Australasian Universities Modern Language Association* 103 (May 2005), 15–41; Allison P. Hobgood, and David Houston Wood, *Disabled Shakespeares*, eds. Allison P. Hobgood and David Houston Wood, *Disability Studies Quarterly* 29.4 (2009).

[72] Victoria M. Time, *Shakespeare's Criminals: Criminology, Fiction, and Drama*, Westport, CT, 1999; Carly Hilts, "Raising the Curtain: Shakespeare's Theatre Discovered," *Current Archeology* 23.269 (2012), 10–13.

Fig. 10.5 Shakespeare Across the Disciplines: Six Models

discipline-specific methods and tools of interpretation to gloss Shakespeare in ways that close reading can't. In 2003, evolutionary psychologists mapped who talks to whom in Shakespeare's plays to show that his *dramatis personae* of 30–40 characters tend to congregate into groups of no more than four, mirroring human social networks all the way back to hunter-gatherer days.[73] In 2012, chemists showing how crime scene investigators would respond to the end of *Romeo and Juliet* revealed that, based on Friar Laurence's description, Juliet is likely to have been poisoned by *atropa belladonna*.[74] In 2013, neuroscientists used MRI technology to show that Shakespeare's frequent use of "functional shifts" in word

[73] James Stiller, Daniel Nettle, and Robin I. M. Dunbar, "The Small World of Shakespeare's Plays," *Human Nature* 14.4 (Dec. 2003), 397–408.

[74] Amanda S. Harper-Leatherman and John R. Miecznikowski, "O True Apothecary: How Forensic Science Helps Solve a Classic Crime," *Journal of Chemical Education* 89 (2012), 629–35.

forms—using nouns as verbs, for example—sends our brains into overdrive as we try to understand the meaning of what is being said.[75]

Third, it is not Shakespeare but one of his cultural afterlives that is the text, a discipline providing a lens for a Shakespeare scholar. It might be Sarah Olive looking at Shakespeare in England's educational curriculum or Patricia A. Cahill and Kim Hall co-editing *Shakespeare and Black America*, a 2020 special issue of the *Journal of American Studies*.[76] Here ShakesCreep into new cultural spaces calls for an interdisciplinary interpretive apparatus, as when Edmund King writes about soldiers reading Shakespeare in World War I, Miles Grier studies a Cherokee *Othello*, or Gina Bloom looks at Shakespeare videogames.[77]

Fourth, one of Shakespeare's afterlives is the text, but the writer now comes from the discipline that provides the lens. When economist James H. Gapinski writes "The Economics of Performing Shakespeare" for the *American Economic Review*—filled with long equations, the Cobb–Douglas production function, and profit-maximizing demand points for arts patronage at the Royal Shakespeare Company—it works very differently than when a Shakespeare scholar like Douglas Lanier addresses appropriations of Shakespeare for corporate team-building events.[78]

Fifth, Shakespeare can be the lens that writers from other disciplines use to interpret their texts. In contrast to Gapinski and Lanier, who were both analyzing the business of Shakespeare, Warren G. Bennis was actively appropriating Shakespeare to do business in "The Seven Ages of the Leader."[79] Larry Zaroff used Shakespeare to teach his medical students

[75] James L. Keidel, et al., "How Shakespeare Tempests the Brain: Neuroimaging Insights," *Cortex* 49 (2013), 913–19.

[76] Sarah Olive, *Shakespeare Valued: Education Policy and Pedagogy 1989–2009*, Bristol, Intellect, 2015; *Shakespeare and Black America*, eds. Patricia A. Cahill and Kim Hall, *Journal of American Studies* 54.1 (2020), 1–104.

[77] Edmund G.C. King, "'A Priceless Book to Have out Here': Soldiers Reading Shakespeare in the First World War," *Shakespeare* 10.3 (2014), 230–44; Miles P. Grier, "Staging the Cherokee *Othello*: An Imperial Economy of Indian Watching," *William and Mary Quarterly* 73.1 (2016), 73–106; Gina Bloom, "Videogame Shakespeare: Enskilling Audiences through Theater-Making Games," *Shakespeare Studies* 43.1 (2015), 114–27.

[78] James H. Gapinski, "The Economics of Performing Shakespeare," *The American Economic Review* 74.3 (1984), 458–66; Douglas Lanier, "Shakescorp Noir," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 53.2 (2002), 157–80.

[79] Warren G. Bennis, "The Seven Ages of the Leader," *Harvard Business Review* 82.1 (2004), 46–53.

better bedside manner.[80] Mai Al-Nakib used *Coriolanus* to do cultural studies in "I Banish You: Reflections on Kuwait."[81]

Sixth, Shakespeare is the lens and the discipline provides the text, but the writer is now a Shakespearean. Consider Stephen Greenblatt's "Shakespeare Explains the 2016 Election" or Ian Smith's "We are Othello," which used a reading of Shakespeare's character and his encounter with white privilege in Venice as an analogy for the experience of Black Shakespeare scholars in the predominantly White field of Shakespeare studies.[82]

13

The first computer-aided Shakespeare study shows the dangers of interdisciplinary amateurism. In 1998, Donald W. Foster announced that "new computer-based methodologies" revealed that "A Funeral Elegy" was written by Shakespeare.[83] In 2002, Foster conceded that the computer had gotten it wrong.[84]

The dangers of dilettantism in Shakespeare Across the Disciplines make collaborations an especially exciting prospect. Multiple scholars, each bringing fully informed discipline-specific expertise, can in conversation generate knowledge about, through, and beyond Shakespeare. The collection *Shakespeare and the Law* grew from a seminar taught at the University of Chicago by philosopher Martha C. Nussbaum, legal scholar Richard Possner, and literature scholar Richard Strier.[85] In 2013, education scholar Laura Turchi and Shakespeare scholar Ayanna Thompson collaborated to call Shakespeare's codification in the common core state standards "an

[80] Larry Z. Zaroff, "Drowning in Science … Saved by Shakespeare: Teaching Literature to Premedical Students," *The Pharos of Alpha Omega Alpha-Honor Medical Society* 73.2 (2010), 13–15.

[81] Mai Al-Nakib, "I Banish You: Reflections on Kuwait," *Los Angeles Review of Books* (Aug. 6, 2020).

[82] Stephen Greenblatt, "Shakespeare Explains the 2016 Election," *New York Times* (Oct. 8, 2016).

[83] Donald W. Foster, "A Funeral Elegy: W[illiam] S[hakespeare]'s 'Best-speaking witnesses,'" *PMLA* 111 (1996), 1080–105.

[84] See William S. Niederkorn, "A Scholar Recants on His 'Shakespeare' Discovery," *New York Times* (June 20, 2002).

[85] *Shakespeare and the Law: A Conversation among Disciplines and Professions*, eds. Bradin Cormack, Martha C. Nussbaum, and Richard Strier, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2013.

opportunity to reboot."[86] In 2015, Laura Estill, co-editor of the World Shakespeare Bibliography, partnered with data scientists Kate Bridal and Dominic Klyve to produce "A Statistical Analysis of Writing about Shakespeare, 1960–2010."[87]

On the other end of the spectrum, sometimes an individual possesses multiple proficiencies, including both expertise not conveyed by a PhD and social identities that produce positional knowledge. Two years after serving as the Administrator of the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs in the Obama administration, Cass Sustein wrote about the "Bacon is Shakespeare" myth in his book *On Rumors: How Falsehoods Spread, Why We Believe Them, and What Can Be Done* (2014).[88] Margo Hendricks's *Race and Romance: Coloring the Past* (2022) blends her scholarly expertise in early-modern studies, her professional expertise as a writer of romance novels, and her lived experience as a Black woman.[89] Hendricks pointedly avoids Shakespeare but also points toward Shakespeare Across the Disciplines with, to quote Ambereen Dadabhoy, "skin in the game."[90] When Alfredo Michel Modenessi writes about "'Meaning by Shakespeare' South of the Border" (2005) and Colby Gordon writes about "Trans Technogenesis in Sonnet 20," they pair positional knowledge with academic expertise to create especially compelling moments of Shakespeare Across the Disciplines.[91]

[86] Laura Turchi and Ayanna Thompson, "Shakespeare and the Common Core: An Opportunity to Reboot," *Phi Delta Kappan* 95.1 (Sept., 2013), 32–36.

[87] Laura Estill, Dominic Klyve, and Kate Bridal. "'Spare your arithmetic, never count the turns': A Statistical Analysis of Writing about Shakespeare, 1960–2010," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 66.1 (2015), 1–28.

[88] Cass R. Sunstein, "Bacon is Shakespeare," in *On Rumors: How Falsehoods Spread, Why We Believe Them, and What Can Be Done*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2014, 91–100.

[89] Margo Hendrick, *Race and Romance: Coloring the Past*, Chicago, ACMRS Press, 2022.

[90] Ambereen Dadabhoy, "Skin in the Game: Teaching Race in Early Modern Literature," *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Teaching* 27.2 (2020), 97–111.

[91] Alfredo Michel Modenessi, "'Meaning by Shakespeare' South of the Border," in *World-Wide Shakespeares: Local Appropriations in Film and Performance*, ed. Sonia Massai, London, Routledge, 2005, 104–11; Colby Gordon, "A Woman's Prick: Trans Technogenesis in Sonnet 20," in *Shakespeare/Sex: Contemporary Readings in Gender and Sexuality*, ed. Jennifer Drouin, London, Bloomsbury, 2020, 268–89.

14

I'll conclude with a quirk and three questions.

The quirk is that engineering is one discipline largely untouched by Shakespeare. Yet I can think of nothing cooler than a room full of engineers—who think all day long about the technical steps needed to build things that achieve a desired outcome—asking how Shakespeare created his art, how there was a certain social need for something to be built, how Shakespeare used certain techniques to strategize and build his art, how people have engaged with what he built, how the gears and circuits of ShakesWorld work, and what happens when they break down—in short, how Shakespeare engineered his art, and how audiences engineer their experiences with it.

First question: *Is Shakespeare a discipline?* My answer is no but, anecdotally, I have seen since 2015 or so a marked increase of students arriving to college having taken a class on Shakespeare—not on Renaissance literature or early-modern drama but entirely on Shakespeare. You can get a PhD in Shakespeare Studies from the Shakespeare Institute at the University of Birmingham, but most schools do not have Departments of Shakespeare.

Second question: *Given the scope of all that's included in "Shakespeare," what does it mean to be a Shakespearean?* There are three models to consider. First is the scholar who identifies as a specialist in Renaissance literature or early-modern drama, Shakespeare falling under that scope. Second is the one who identifies as a Shakespeare scholar who specializes in a narrow aspect—text, race, or adaptation, for example—with that hyperspecialty being one part that makes up a corporate body of interdisciplinary Shakespeare studies. The third type is perhaps the most uncommon—the scholar who aims to be fully responsive to the totality of "Shakespeare" in all its interdisciplinary valences and manifestations.

Third: *What do we do with journalism?* Thinking about, with, and against Shakespeare and his ongoing cultural manifestations in newspapers, magazines, and online venues falls somewhere between academic writing and creative appropriation. It often brushes up against the world of academia but keeps in mind a more general, non-specialist audience. There's a sense in which it is pre-disciplinary, taking us back to Simon Forman, Shakespeare before him, and their belief that literature can be a lens for life.

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