

Shakespeare and the American South:
Ten Years After
Shakespeare Association of America
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Christy Desmet and Robert Sawyer

1. Darlena Ciraulo (University of Central Missouri)

ABSTRACT
“Outlaw Shakespeare: Frank and Jesse James”

Frank and Jesse James are without doubt two of the most infamous outlaws of the mythic American Wild West. Raised in Kearney, Missouri, an area of the state once referred to as “Little Dixie,” the two pro-Confederate bandit brothers are alleged to have participated in over 50 crimes, including bank robberies, train hold ups, and stagecoach raids. Although dime novels of the late nineteenth century would popularize the James pair as rugged, gun-slinging desperadoes, the brothers--especially Jesse--sought to cultivate an image of courtly civility during their thieving escapades, publically fashioning themselves as swashbuckling champions of justice. For Frank James, this image of gangster civility included showcasing a love and knowledge of Shakespeare. In this essay, I analyze Frank James’s interest in Shakespeare, arguing that the Bard becomes a symbol of outlaw justice, including retribution, for the lawless James Gang. Moreover, Frank’s reading of Shakespeare as a symbol of “right” ultimately sheds light on his notorious participation in Missouri’s guerilla warfare during the Civil War.

Bibliographic Entries:

Teague, Frances. *Shakespeare and the American Popular Stage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

This book examines how American culture has shaped Shakespeare, emphasizing the role of popular entertainment as a screen for social and political thought. Examining the use of Shakespeare in colonial and post-revolutionary America, during the nineteenth century, and in twentieth-century Broadway musicals, Teague argues that Americans have transformed Shakespeare into a cultural figure that both reveals and conceals values and anxieties of national and regional concern.

Vaughn, Alden T. and Virginia Mason Vaughn. *Shakespeare in America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

This book looks chronologically at the influence of Shakespeare in American (United States) life, analyzing the Bard’s importance at important junctures in the nation’s history. The authors argue that early Americans--from colonial settlers to nineteenth-century industrialist--used Shakespeare pragmatically, turning to the great poet for moral edification and ethical guidance. Later readers--from the nineteenth century to the present--study Shakespeare to explore and debate questions of political and/or social significance.

Interest in Seminar:

My interest in the seminar “Shakespeare and the South: Ten Years After” stems from previous research that I have conducted on the use of Shakespeare in Margaret Mitchell’s *Gone with the Wind*. In fact, I

participated in the seminar “Shakespeare and the South” in New Orleans (SAA 2004), presenting my work on Mitchell’s novel to that seminar group. Furthermore, as a doctoral student at the University of Georgia, I lived in the South for over a decade and had the privilege to teach Shakespeare to undergraduates. This experience afforded me the opportunity to consider the way in which regional concerns influence how students interact with Shakespeare’s work, as well as shape perceptions of culture. Presently, I teach Shakespeare and early modern literature at the University of Central Missouri. Most of my students self-identify as Midwesterners, but Missouri has/had a strong identification with the South both geographically and politically. My interest in Missouri’s identification with the South led me to explore the role Shakespeare has played in shaping the state’s identity. Frank and Jesse James are an integral part of Missouri’s cultural heritage (their birth home, for instance, is a state property and tourist site, as well as banks the James Gang robbed and other places of “outlaw” interest—the home where Jesse was shot by Robert Ford, etc.). I’m interested in pursuing the complicated nexus between identity formation and appropriations of Shakespeare.

2. Ann Jennalie Cook (Vanderbilt University)

Abstract

“Shakespeare at the Ryman”

While the legendary Ryman Auditorium has long been identified with the Grand Ole Opry, there was a time when Nashvillians could see Shakespeare performed on its stage. Built by riverboat captain Thomas Ryman (1843-1904) after he got religion instead of heckling revivalist Samuel Porter Jones, who set out to close all the bars in town (including his), he intended to provide a place where worshipers could gather in a better place than a tent.

However, from the beginning the doors opened to many other kinds of events, most notably the 1897 reunion of Confederate veterans, which required a balcony that increased the hall’s capacity to 6,000. The availability of such a space led to its christening as “The Carnegie Hall of the South.” Most sources note the appearances of W. C. Fields, Will Rogers, Charlie Chaplin, Bob Hope, Harry Houdini, and John Philip Sousa, as well as Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft. Yet few mention Shakespeare, despite the fact that Edwin Booth and a host of other great actors offered their productions on this stage.

My paper will draft a comprehensive list of all these performances, drawing upon the archives of the Ryman, which now reside in the rare books division of the Nashville Public Library. Along with this source, I will consult the local reviews of the plays, as well as posters that advertized the productions. A sampling of the critics shows both the acting style and the direction of the time. In *Romeo and Juliet*, for example:

Miss Mather. . . divests the part of the sensuality and amorous offensiveness with which some are wont to clothe it, and gives a pure, clean-cut rendering that is delightful to dwell upon. Among surprises for the audience was when she had taken the drug to produce the limited inanition, she rolled from a window down a stairway with thumps that would seem to jolt the lift [sic] out of her.

Imagine a modern reviewer using a word like “inanition,” much less stripping Juliet of her sexuality or rolling her out of a window and down a staircase! In any case, I look forward to exploring Shakespeare at the Ryman.

3. Richard Finklestein (University of Mary Washington)

ABSTRACT
“Jefferson and Shakespeare”

From his early years, Thomas Jefferson commented on Shakespeare in his commonplace book and throughout his career he mentioned Shakespeare in a variety of contexts, including his legal cases, letters, and essays. It is also likely that Jefferson saw some Shakespearean performances while in Williamsburg. In Virginia, Jefferson still occupies the most reverential position among its prominent citizens, including both founding fathers and confederate heroes. However, relatively few Virginians are aware of Jefferson's high secularism, including the fact well known to scholars that the Jeffersonian bible edited out most references to miracles. I will argue in this essay that Jefferson interpreted Shakespeare much as he did the bible: obviously for moral truths, as can be quickly seen, but also to gain a sense of received humanist authority; to gain a secular means for understanding the events of daily life; to make sense of character; and to provide a frame for understanding political and social interactions. Perhaps not surprisingly, he showed little interest in issues of theology, race, or economics, matters he might choose to avoid for personal reasons.

Bibliographic Entries:

Arnold Aronson, “Shakespeare in Virginia, 1751-1863” in Philip Kolin, *Shakespeare in the South* (Jackson: U Southern Mississippi, 1983), 21-45.

Provides a general discussion of locations, theatres, companies, and actors involved with Shakespearean performance.

Paul Boller, Jr., The American Presidents and Shakespeare. <http://www.whitehousehistory.org/the-american-presidents-and-Shakespeare>.

This is a synthetic narrative which primarily describes in very general terms what in Shakespeare drew the attention of various presidents.

4. Jess Hamlet (Mary Baldwin College)

ABSTRACT

When scholars discuss Shakespeare and the Civil War, they tend to focus on Abraham Lincoln's relationship with the Bard. While the president's deep familiarity with the poet is fascinating, scholars have neglected the relationship of soldiers and civilians, particularly those in the capital of the Confederacy, with the plays of Shakespeare. This paper investigates how citizens of Richmond, Virginia, processed the trauma and complexities of the war through Shakespeare's plays and in so doing “performed” their relationships with their political and military leaders. Specifically, Virginians used the themes of regicide, tyrannicide, and family discord in *Macbeth* and *Richard III* to articulate their vitriol toward Lincoln, the Union, and the dissolution of family and public life in the South. By investigating the ways that Virginians used Shakespeare to “stage” the Civil War, both onstage and in their own minds, we can achieve a fuller, more complex understanding of both Civil War culture and theatre history, and in particular Shakespeare's important role in the fabric of Virginian society.

Bibliographic Entries:

Southern Illustrated News, 1862-1864

The *Southern Illustrated News* magazine, published in Richmond, Virginia, during the Civil War, often ran reviews of Richmond's theatricals and offered commentary on the players and managers. Some issues, particularly those from February 1863, offer exceptionally detailed accounts of the New Richmond Theatre's grand opening extravaganza, which featured Shakespeare in both preliminary activities and the evening's capstone entertainment.

Southern Punch, 1862-1864

The *Southern Punch* magazine, published in Richmond during the Civil War, was one of the theatres' staunchest supporters. The *Punch* leapt to the defense of players and managers alike time and again during the war, always excusing the actors for not enlisting in the army and pardoning the theatre management for keeping the playhouses open even with fighting taking place in and around the city.

Bundy, Penny. "The Performance of Trauma." *The Applied Theatre Reader*. Ed. Tim Prentki and Sheila Preston. New York: Routledge, 2009. 233-40.

Bundy writes about her experience using theatrical practices to help adult survivors of abuse confront their pasts and create opportunities for reflection. By using rehearsal and performance practices to encourage survivors to reassess and challenge their experiences, Bundy activates the ways in which theatre can be therapeutic.

Faust, Drew Gilpin. *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*. New York: Random House, 2008.

Faust notes that some soldiers took pleasure in the act of killing, but only after redefining their relationship to the act. Faust details "instances of soldiers playing at being Indians" to help distance their true selves from the violence they committed in battle: "By replacing their own identities with those of men they regarded as savages, they redefined their relationship both to violence and to their prewar selves" (38). Faust's use of theatrical language here—the "playing" at a different character—provides an idea about putting on a new character or becoming an actor to help the soldier aestheticize the violence and death in his routine of war.

Harwell, Richard Barksdale. "Brief Candle: The Confederate Theatre." *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 81.1 (1971): 41-160.

Harwell's exhaustive survey of Richmond's wartime theatricals provides a complete data set illustrating exactly which plays Richmond's theatres performed, how often, and when the theatres could not avoid closure. This article contains nearly all the performances of Shakespeare's plays in Richmond during the war years.

Interest in Seminar:

This paper stems from my desire to combine my love of Shakespeare with my love of the American Civil War. My home in Staunton, Virginia, is located halfway between Richmond, Virginia, and Washington, DC, which puts me in an excellent position to access both the federal and state archives necessary for this project's success. Archival materials like newspapers, letters, diaries, playbooks, and broadsides are instrumental in forming the foundation of research upon which this project is based. I am particularly interested in examining

the ways Shakespeare's wartime uses contributed to both a national identity for the Confederate States of America and a method of mental and emotional self-care accessible to soldiers and civilians alike.

5. Natalie Loper (University of Alabama)

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on Shakespearean possibility in the South: the multiple opportunities students, faculty, and community members have to experience him in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, home to The University of Alabama. While many universities have cut programs and funding as enrollments dropped in the wake of the great recession, UA has seen an opposite trend. Since 2005, student enrollment has grown from 18,982 to 37,100, with over 50% of students now coming from out of state. Thanks in large part to The Hudson Strode Program in Renaissance Studies and the Department of English, opportunities to experience Shakespeare have grown as well. These include not only Shakespeare classes taught as part of the curriculum and theater productions from the Department of Theatre and Dance, but also guest lectures, symposia, a film series, staged and roundtable readings, and summer outdoor productions. Some of these events are arranged by faculty; others belong to student and/or community groups, and most are a combined effort of faculty and students and sometimes members of the community. Nearly all of the events are free and open to the public, which means that virtually anyone who wants to can experience Shakespeare at multiple venues in Tuscaloosa each month. But despite ample opportunities, audiences for most of these events are largely the same: faculty from humanities departments, graduate students in English, undergraduates, and perhaps a handful of community members. This paper will examine how these various sites for Shakespeare interpret his works and reach audiences, as well as the function Shakespeare plays in different Southern venues.

Bibliographic Entries:

Dobson, Michael. *Shakespeare and Amateur Performance: A Cultural History*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011.

This book focuses on non-professional productions of Shakespeare's plays, which Dobson argues have been overlooked far too often despite their importance in the history of Shakespearean performance and production. The introduction examines notions of "professional" versus "amateur" dating back to Shakespeare's time, and the book attempts to understand the reach and impact of amateur performances of Shakespeare throughout the past 400 years. Chapters focus on domestic performances, amateur dramatic societies, expatriate performances, and outdoor performances. Notably, Dobson does not focus on school or university productions of Shakespeare, which he says have been covered extensively elsewhere. Although the book does not focus on the American South, it will allow me to place the various approaches to Shakespeare in Tuscaloosa within a socio-historical context.

Hartley, Andrew James, ed. *Shakespeare on the University Stage*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2015.

Despite Dobson's claim that college and university productions of Shakespeare have been explored in depth elsewhere, this book claims that on the contrary, these productions deserve more attention, including what makes them different from both professional and amateur models. The productions discussed here include "shows mounted by student groups, those staged by theater/drama departments and other productions involving faculty oversight" (2). The collection includes essays about productions throughout the U.S. (including "Queering Shakespeare in the American South" by one of our seminar participants, Chad Allen Thomas) and also worldwide, including the UK, China, Greece, Australia,

Malaysia, and Germany. One of the most useful aspects of this book is its diversity: the essays look at how students and faculty approach Shakespeare in multiple contexts outside of the classroom, and they ask useful questions (and offer ideas) about how university Shakespeare relates to various audiences, cultural concerns, and other facets of Shakespeare's role in society.

Interest in Seminar:

I am interested in Shakespeare in the South because I have lived and taught in Tuscaloosa since 2003. I have witnessed a tremendous transformation of this town, the university, and the English department during that time. When I first moved here, I encountered Shakespeare in the classroom, at guest lectures, and in an occasional theatre production at UA; otherwise, I had to travel to the Alabama Shakespeare Festival in Montgomery, or to Atlanta or other cities, to see Shakespeare performed. Still, this is more encounter than I had growing up in a small town in the Midwest, where I read Shakespeare in school and went to one or two productions at the local college, but never saw any other professional or amateur productions. The rise in amateur productions and film screenings are not new in terms of Shakespeare studies, but they are to me, and I am interested in how these new possibilities might expand Shakespeare's reach and what they say about his place in our communities—particularly in one Southern town.

6. Paul Menzer (Mary Baldwin College)

Abstract: *The Pocahontas Exception*

This essay uses an obscure play performed upon the 300th anniversary of the Jamestown settlement in 1904 to mediate upon Shakespeare's complex role in the founding of Virginia. The pageant by George Frederick Viett – called, *Pocahontas, the Virginia Nonpareil* – enlists Shakespeare in the cause of Victorian racialism, itself founded upon fake genealogies of Anglo-Saxon purity and thus adumbrates the latticework of colonialism, racism, genocide, tobacco, Anglo-Saxon triumphalism, and William Shakespeare that underwrites Virginia's English settlement.

Bibliographic Entries:

Lupton, Julia Reinhard. "Birth Places: Shakespeare's Beliefs / Believing in Shakespeare." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 65 (2014): 399-420.

Schneider, Rebecca. *Performing Remains: Art and War in Times of Theatrical Reenactment*. New York: Routledge, 2011.

Roach, Joseph. *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

Interest in Seminar:

I recently completed a book called *Making Histories: The American Shakespeare Center and Permanent Revolution* for Arden and undertook, in the course of its writing, to understand the swarm of histories and temporalities that eddy around the new Blackfriars Playhouse in Staunton, Virginia. In so doing, I worked to understand the meanings the Blackfriars mobilizes from its local history. Perhaps nothing serves as a better emblem for the way Staunton's Blackfriars gathers force and meaning not just from English theatre history but

those of the American South than the fact that the Blackfriars stands between the Stonewall Jackson Hotel and the Dixie Movie Theatre.

7. Elizabeth Rivlin (Clemson University)

ABSTRACT

I had never spent time in the South until I accepted a job at Clemson in South Carolina. I've been there now for eleven years, a little longer than the "ten years after" that Robert and Christy have asked us to consider in our seminar on Shakespeare and the South. During my early years at Clemson, I learned about the strong traditions of Shakespeare performance and scholarship in the South as I directed a Shakespeare festival on that theme and then edited a corresponding special issue of *The Upstart Crow*, the journal for which I served as editor. The emphasis then, for me at least, was on understanding the historical role of Shakespeare in the region. Over time, I began to think more about Shakespeare in the Clemson classroom and to wonder how—if at all—Shakespeare might be used to help our students reflect critically and consciously on the South and on themselves as Southerners. I began to teach Shakespeare adaptations, including the one I discuss in this paper, that had some basis in the South, and to discover cultural resonances, like the concept of the gentleman in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, that were fruitful in our specific cultural contexts.

Recently this task of regional interrogation has gained new momentum and urgency. Events around the country, especially the horrific Charleston massacre earlier this year and the eventual removal of the Confederate flag from the statehouse grounds in Columbia (as well as the subsequent rise in Confederate flags on pickup trucks and elsewhere in the state), have led to more public discussion about race and diversity than I had witnessed in all the past years at Clemson combined. On our campus, there has been a concerted push to rename Tillman Hall, a building that currently commemorates one of the most virulent racists and segregationists in South Carolina history, and our students and faculty of color, though they are still too few in number, are speaking up, joined by some white allies, to push for meaningful changes. Clemson is not alone: the South, along with the nation as a whole, is confronting the unfulfilled promises of the civil rights movement, and it's an opportune moment to study how Shakespeare might be participating or could participate in the vital conversations occurring across the region. In some ways, history—or at least, a fuller, more unstinting version of history—is much more visible in the South than it was ten years ago, joined now to an activist goal of affecting the present to shape the future.

In my paper for the seminar, I am interested in how Ron Rash, a white Appalachian writer who is not exactly known as an activist, might nevertheless re-imagine Southern regionalism through Shakespeare in a way that argues for connections between the regional and much broader cultural contexts. His *Serena* (2008) is an adaptation of *Macbeth* that translates the Macbeths into the Pembertons, depression-era timber magnates who brutally exploit both the natural resources of western North Carolina and the poverty-stricken highlanders whom they employ. Reiterating the Macbeths' attempt to control temporality, the Pembertons advance their oppressive agenda by stifling memory. By novel's end, however, manifestations of the past overtake their willful forgetting. The novel's treatment of memory and history helps Rash to depict the dystopian consequences of denying place-based and culturally rooted memories—what he has referred to in interviews as "blood memory," a term more often used by Native American and African American writers. In *Serena*, Rash attempts to reintroduce a regionally specific historical consciousness that aims, like today's conversations, to shape the future. Toward this end, the novel creates a quiet, almost subliminal, conversation with Shakespeare that is both intercultural and trans-historical. It is a move that I argue allows *Serena* to raise questions about contemporary refusals of, and awakening to, the South's suppressed, constitutive histories.

Bibliographic Entries:

Karem, Jeff. *The Romance of Authenticity: The Cultural Politics of Regional and Ethnic Literatures*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2004.

Massai, Sonia. *World-Wide Shakespeares: Local Appropriations in Film and Performance*. London and New York: Routledge, 2005.

Powell, Douglas Reichert. *Critical Regionalism: Connecting Politics and Culture in the American Landscape*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.

8. Chad Allen Thomas (University of Alabama at Huntsville)

ABSTRACT

I'm interested in the development of a (southern) Shakespeare aesthetic as articulated by Rocket City Shakespeare (hereafter, RCS), a new theater company based in Huntsville, AL. In particular, I'm interested in the ways RCS functions in relation to other companies, and will offer a case study of a production of *Macbeth* that will open in six weeks. With the exception of educational theater, RCS provides the only regular productions of Shakespeare in northern Alabama, but the house style of the company seems to challenge some traditional expectations of what Shakespeare should be in production; for example, it frequently uses cross-gender casting, but with no regard for original practices, and in ways that disrupt traditional gender expectations. Some of the questions I anticipate asking are: how are geography and cultural expectations challenged and/or reinforced by RCS? What are the predominant discourses circulating around RCS productions? What is "Shakespeare" in the context of a fairly conservative community at large? And, if one posits a connection between theatrical production and the community that produces it, what does RCS say about Huntsville, AL? In full disclosure, I've been involved in several RCS productions in a variety of capacities, and will play *Macbeth* in the production that grounds this case study. A caveat about the RCS proposal: if this doesn't pan out, I will write an essay about directing a production of *The Tempest* in a southern geographical setting; however, I'm more interested in the possibility afforded by RCS (a company founded by a southern woman for southern audiences) rather than my own attempts to direct a play with a southern perspective.

Bibliographic Entries:

Reynolds, Paige. "Death and Desire in *Othello*," *The Hare*, April 2014.

Reynolds discusses playing Desdemona at Arkansas Shakespeare from a historicist and performative perspective. In addition to a comprehensive study of what it means to "play dead" on the Shakespearean stage, this includes anecdotes about audience reaction to actors playing dead (including a drunk disrupting a performance of *Hamlet* with loud whispering in a southern accent, "I see you, Laertes! You ain't dead! Ah see you breathin'!")

<http://shakespeareontheroad.com/>

Paul Prescott decided he wanted to spend a summer travelling to different festivals to gain insight into why Shakespeare matters to the people of North America. Four scholars spent 60 days traveling to

10,000 miles to see 38 productions at 14 festivals. These include interviews from Virginia, Tennessee, and Louisiana.

Interest in Seminar:

The genesis of my interest in Southern Shakespeare coincides with getting a tenure-track job teaching English and directing theater productions at The University of Alabama in Huntsville. When I came to Huntsville, I thought the community would be too conservative for me to stage queer Shakespeare, which was the topic of my dissertation research. I have been consistently and pleasantly surprised that this is not the case, as I recount in my article “Queering Shakespeare in the American South” in *Shakespeare on the Campus Stage: College and University Performance*, ed. Andrew James Hartley (Cambridge University Press, 2014). This is my previous foray into southern Shakespeare—and arose from a previous SAA seminar. In it, I recount the dramaturgical and artistic choices I made to situate a production of *The Comedy of Errors* in a southern setting (think New Orleans during Mardi Gras) as a way to both connect to the American South and to challenge traditional thinking about Shakespeare needs to be (or can be, or even should be...) In this piece, I clarify how and why I attempted to queer *The Comedy of Errors*, and why I think it’s worthwhile to continue to queer southern Shakespeare.

9. Kimberly R. West (Cumberland School of Law)

ABSTRACT

To test the presumed relevance of Shakespearean performance studies to legal trial advocacy, I research citations to Shakespeare’s works in written decisions of the federal courts for the 4th, 5th, 6th and 11th Circuits, and southern state courts, including Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee. I hope through doing so to demonstrate a tradition of judicial recognition of the importance of Shakespearean texts and themes. I will report on the pros and cons of Shakespearean performance pedagogy as applied to the legal pedagogy for trial skills, including student research and reactions. The similarities and differences between Shakespearean and legal texts will be addressed. The intersection between courtroom drama and theatrical drama in Shakespeare ties the disciplines together, I have found it to be an exciting new area of study pioneered by Southern colleges.

Bibliographic Entries:

Cormack, Brandin, Martha C. Nussbaum, Richard Strier. *Shakespeare and the Law: A Conversation Among Disciplines and Professions*. Chicago: UP, 2013. Print.

Raffield, Paul and Gary Watt. *Shakespeare and the Law*. Oxford: Hart, 2008. Print.

Interest in Seminar:

My interest is in the impact of Shakespearean performance studies on legal pedagogy, specifically as to trial practice. My thesis is that the oratorical tradition of Southern lawyering draws from and adds to the insights available from performance studies. In examining this thesis, I plan to survey the current offerings of Shakespearean performance studies in the South, focusing on Mary Baldwin College’s unique BA/MLitt program. On the legal side, I intend to describe historical methodology in general and for trial advocacy in particular for law school students and continuing legal education classes for practicing lawyers at the Cumberland Law School. The genesis of my interest was my master’s program performance based Shakespeare class at the University of the South.

SEMINAR LEADERS

10. Christy Desmet (University of Georgia)

ABSTRACT

“Feminism, Shakespeare, and Slavery: The Case of Fanny Kemble”

In the early 1830s, the rising English actress Fanny Kemble, celebrated for her debut role as Shakespeare's Juliet, embarked on an American tour with her father Charles in attempt to raise money to support Covent Garden Theatre, which the Kemble family managed and which was a major drain on their finances. While there, she became engaged to and married Pierce Butler of Philadelphia. When Butler went to Georgia to manage his family's plantation – on what is now St. Simon's Island – Fanny, along with their two girls, reluctantly accompanied him. This trip was the spur for Kemble's *Journal of a Residence on a Georgian Plantation in 1838-1839*. The journal, when published, became an important document in the Anglo-American abolitionist movement and, subsequently, a major issue between husband and wife that resulted in a messy, public divorce and Fanny's loss of her children. This essay will focus on several documents that together, outline Kemble's evolving experience of marriage and/as slavery: the *Journal* itself; documents pertinent to the Kemble-Butler divorce proceedings that are housed in the University of Pennsylvania's Furness Collection; and the notes made by Kemble on *Othello* and its source in rare materials held at the Russell Rare Books Library at the University of Georgia and the Folger Shakespeare Library.

Bibliographic Entries:

"Shakespeare in the American South." *Borrowers and Lenders: The Journal of Shakespeare and Appropriation* 1.1 (Spring/Summer 2005).

Interest in Seminar:

In 2004, Robert and I conducted a seminar on Shakespeare and the American South for the SAA annual meeting in New Orleans. Some of those essays, in combination with essays from a plenary session on Shakespeare and Jazz organized by Terence Hawkes, were the foundation of the inaugural issue of *Borrowers and Lenders: The Journal of Shakespeare and Appropriation*. Soon after, Elizabeth Rivlin invited me to be part of a symposium at Clemson University on Shakespeare and the American South (“Southern Shrews: Marriage and Slavery in American Appropriations of Shakespeare.” *Upstart Crow* 26 [2006-2007]: 6-28).

11. Robert Sawyer (East Tennessee State University)

ABSTRACT

The daily log sign in sheet at the Folger Library for 5 April 1938 bears the name of a “Mr. C. Brooks.” While no biographers record this detail, it seems certain that it was Cleanth Brooks who was visiting, the same scholar who would eventually become the most well-known proponent of a U.S.-based literary criticism birthed between the World Wars.

At the close of the nineteenth century as Howard Furness and Henry Clay Folger competed for rare Shakespeare-related treasures, John Crowe Ransom was born in Pulaski, Tennessee, about as far away culturally, religiously, and politically from Philadelphia and Washington D. C. as one can imagine. But Ransom's effect on Shakespeare studies was in many ways equally as prominent as any holdings of Folger and Furness; this was certainly so during the interwar period, as the libraries were just being opened. Ransom's critical and creative work with, first, the Fugitive movement, and later with the Agrarians coalesced most fully in the New Critical movement just before the outbreak of World War II. The movement, however, seemed to strengthen during the war years, and it became even more embedded in U.S. universities after 1945, serving the conservatism of the cold years quite well. Indeed, until the 1960s, New Criticism was rarely challenged as it became the de facto method of literary study across the country. While their engagement with Shakespeare is paradoxical at best, it is worth retracing some of the steps of this movement to see how Shakespeare was used, if not abused, by proponents of New Criticism between the World Wars and how this bears on the institutionalization of Shakespeare in the South at the same time.

Bibliographic Entries:

Sawyer, Robert. "From Fugitives to Agrarians to New Critics: The Institutionalized Paradox of Shakespeare in the South." *South Atlantic Review* 77.3-4 (2014): 26-47.

Shapiro, James. *Shakespeare in America: An Anthology*, Library of America Press, 2013

Interest in Seminar:

As Christy notes above, in 2004, we conducted a seminar on Shakespeare and the American South for the SAA annual meeting in New Orleans. Some of those essays, in combination with essays from a plenary session on Shakespeare and Jazz organized by Terence Hawkes, were the foundation of the inaugural issue of *Borrowers and Lenders: The Journal of Shakespeare and Appropriation*. More recently I have been working on an ms. focusing on "Shakespeare between the World Wars" to be published by Palgrave in late 2016. This abstract comes from material in Chapter 2 entitled, "The Institutionalization of Shakespeare in the United States, 1920-1940."