

ACS Mellon Foundation Faculty Renewal Grants Final Report

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Name of Project: “Green Shakespeare”: A Symposium/Workshop for ACS Faculty on Environmental and Literary Studies

Date of Project: February/March 2010
Amount awarded: \$4,967

The following paragraph might serve as a summary of the grant to be included on the ACS Faculty Renewal website: *Renaissance scholars have increasingly been turning to “green” or “ecocritical” approaches in interpreting literature. This workshop provided a series of exchanges to prepare ACS scholars to introduce environmental criticism into their Shakespeare classrooms. Via an online reading group in February 2010, participants discussed and debated recent scholarship on “Green Shakespeare”; they then participated in an international symposium on the topic held in March 2010 at Rhodes College, exploring the intersection of environmental and literary studies.*

The original proposal requested funding from the ACS Mellon Faculty Renewal Program to help support professional development for faculty from ACS campuses collaborating on the topic of “Green Shakespeare,” or the convergence of environmental studies with literary studies. The objective was to encourage ACS colleagues to reflect upon and incorporate ecocritical approaches in their Shakespeare courses. The workshop was deliberately timed to coincide with a internally-funded symposium on the topic at Rhodes College (March 26, 2010), providing ACS participants a unique opportunity to converse with leading scholars in this emerging field, and thereby enhance their pedagogy as well as scholarship at their home ACS institutions.

Goals and objectives did not change substantially over the course of the project. One minor revision was in terms of participation: a scholar from the University of the South was unable to attend, but fortunately this permitted another scholar from Centre College to join the group. Due to careful fiscal planning, we were also able to purchase multiple copies of Robert Watson’s book for distribution to over twenty five Rhodes faculty. While this was not an initially budgeted item, prudent use of ACS funds permitted us to extend the conversation well beyond the six ACS participants to some two dozen professors at Rhodes.

Prior to attending the March 26, 2010 workshop at Rhodes College, six ACS faculty read two recent books about “Green Shakespeare,” by Gabriel Egan and Robert Watson (the latter being the symposium’s keynote speaker). These six faculty were myself, Scott Newstok (Rhodes College), Nick Radel (Furman), Mark Rasmussen (Centre), Michael Saenger (Southwestern), Willis Salomon (Trinity), and Philip White (Centre). We corresponded via email with one another during the weeks preceding the workshop, discussing our appreciation for and reservations about “ecocriticism.” During the workshop in Memphis, ACS participants took advantage of numerous formal and informal opportunities to discuss these topics with one another in person as well as with the five scholars speaking at the “Green Shakespeare” symposium: Daniel Brayton (Middlebury College); Simon Estok (Sungkyunkwan University, Republic of Korea); Sharon O’Dair (University of Alabama-Tuscaloosa); Karen Raber (University of Mississippi); and Robert Watson (UCLA). While the symposium itself was rewarding, ACS participants were particularly pleased by the conversation that unfolded over lunch with the symposium speakers, where a thought-provoking, personal exchange took place about the topic, both in terms of professional and pedagogical practice. ACS faculty also met with students currently enrolled in Newstok’s “Green Shakespeare” seminar, permitting them to visit a course-in-progress and converse with liberal arts students engaged with this topic.

In addition to informal positive feedback received from all participants, ACS faculty members submitted their own evaluation of the workshop. These are attached as an Appendix to this document, and range from drafted syllabuses and course units on ecocriticism to more personal reflections on the shaping influence the workshop has already had on their teaching in their home ACS institutions.

The workshop exceeded its high expectations: all ACS participants came prepared and eager to engage with these materials, and as a result they created genuine interactions with one another and with the symposium speakers. The only thing I might imagine redesigning would be the timing—that is to say, we had comparatively little time between the announcement of the ACS funding and the workshop itself to digest Watson and Egan’s books. But this has less to do with “design” per se than with external constraints (namely, the already-determined date of the Rhodes symposium and the separate calendar for ACS funding).

As noted above, ACS funding provided copies of Watson’s book to over two dozen Rhodes faculty members, many of whom attended a reading group or luncheon with Watson, and most of whom attended the symposium itself. These Rhodes faculty—including colleagues from the Social and Natural Sciences as well as Humanities—took advantage of the chance to speak with fellow ACS faculty members at various venues, thereby enriching the conversation across disciplines as well as institutions. The Appendix details the impact on individual ACS participants,

from personal reflections on their pedagogy to concrete proposals for course units/syllabuses.

The “Green Shakespeare” symposium was planned to help shape the curriculum at Rhodes in a timely fashion, as it was attended by some two dozen faculty interested in the subject. Rhodes’ interdisciplinary Environmental Studies program is strong yet comparatively new, having been launched just the prior academic year (2008–09). As Rhodes has been building this program, the college has been particularly eager to encourage students and faculty beyond the hard sciences to work in this field. The wide participation in the symposium—with over 120 people in the audience—made this a signature event for the Environmental Studies program this year, and helped galvanize interest in sustainability across the curriculum.

17 students from the Rhodes College “Green Shakespeare” seminar enjoyed the rare opportunity of conversing individually with ACS faculty about their final work-in-progress; all were grateful for this chance to speak with a Shakespeare professor beyond the confines of our course, and expressed as much in grateful emails to the ACS participants. Over 50 additional Rhodes students attended the symposium on March 26, and many of them had informal exchanges with ACS faculty afterwards. In the long term, the audience for this workshop will ultimately also include students from at least four other ACS institutions (Centre, Furman, Southwestern, and Trinity), who will benefit from ACS faculty renewed by conversations initiated at this gathering.

We plan to share ACS participants’ drafted pedagogical materials online via the Shakespeare at Rhodes website:

<http://www.rhodes.edu/shakespeare/>

Sharing this material online would provide faculty (in the ACS and beyond) interested in modifying their Shakespeare courses with some models for how they might proceed. The website will include one full syllabus devoted exclusively to the topic as well as course “unit”’s addressing particular plays. Thus our work together has helped produce something tangible—namely, pedagogical materials—that we will all take back to our respective institutions as well as share more widely. Furthermore, as a result of the symposium, Newstok has been invited to propose a chapter on teaching “Green Shakespeare” for a collection of essays on ecocriticism and pedagogy. A transcript from the symposium’s roundtable is under consideration for publication in a Shakespeare journal.

Perhaps the most lasting yet indirect result of the ACS workshop is a list-serv initiated by Michael Saenger, which is intended to draw together Shakespearean scholars across the South, with particular attention to those teaching at ACS member institutions. Dr. Saenger’s invitation read:

A couple of months ago, Scott Newstok organized a conference at Rhodes College, and a number of Renaissance specialists from the Southeast states converged there. We found we had a lot of common interests and many of us felt it would be useful if we had a listserv of our own. I've created a listserv for this purpose. My thinking is that there are already a number of topically-based listservs out there (e.g SHAKSPER), and I have no desire to overlap with their function. However, there may frequently be events of interest in the area to Renaissance / Shakespeare specialists that don't get adequate publicity. My hope is that a listserv of this nature could alert us to performances of plays, conferences, and similar activities, so we can attend and/or send students to attend. I will moderate the list and only forward postings that fall into this function of the list. If you'd like to join the listserv, please visit: <http://www.southwestern.edu/mailman/listinfo/su-renshak>

The Green Shakespeare workshop was produced within a few dollars of our proposed budget (**\$4,967**):

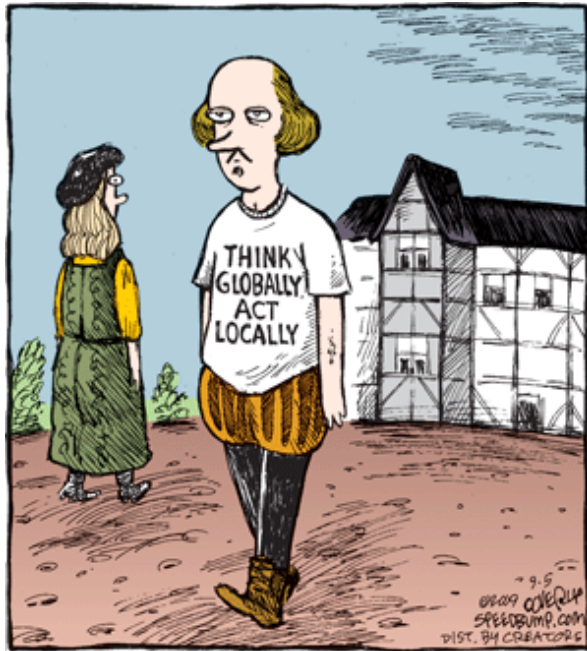
Travel	\$1,681.09
<i>airline travel for Willis Salomon</i>	\$394.90
<i>airline travel for Nicholas Radel</i>	\$114.90
<i>airline travel for Michael Saenger</i>	\$547.90
<i>van rental (Enterprise)</i>	\$179.98
<i>van rental gas (Exxon)</i>	\$26.41
<i>mileage reimbursement for Mark Rasmussen</i>	\$417
Lodging—Courtyard Marriott Memphis	\$1,633.04
<i>Nicholas Radel</i>	\$322.34
<i>Willis Salomon</i>	\$322.34
<i>Mark Rasmussen</i>	\$352.34
<i>Philip White</i>	\$322.34
<i>Michael Saenger</i>	\$343.68
Food/beverage	\$742.46
<i>Coffee—Starbucks</i>	\$4.04
<i>Lunch—Aramark</i>	\$155.00
<i>Dinner—Fuel Cafe</i>	\$300.22
<i>Dinner—DeJa Vu</i>	\$283.20
Supplies/books	\$863.50
<i>Rhodes College faculty (25 copies of Watson's book)</i>	\$530.00
<i>Willis Salomon (Watson & Egan books)</i>	\$65.76
<i>Nicholas Radel (Watson & Egan books)</i>	\$65.76
<i>Mark Rasmussen/Philip White (Watson & Egan books)</i>	\$136.22
<i>Michael Saenger (Watson & Egan books)</i>	\$65.76
Misc.	\$30.00
<i>Tickets, Julius Caesar performance (6x\$5)</i>	\$30.00
Total	\$4,980.09

APPENDIX—DRAFTED PEDAGOGICAL MATERIALS/REFLECTIONS

Scott L. Newstok

Rhodes College

Revised syllabus from ACS “Green Shakespeare” workshop



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Course description

This seminar explores Shakespeare’s plays through a “green,” environmental studies lens. In response to this emerging critical practice, we will consider to what extent Shakespeare’s poems and plays are conducive to being interpreted “eco-critically,” with special attention to topics such as: the pastoral mode, and fantasies of retreat from the city and court; early modern ecological ruination; the idea of “nature”; notions of “grafting”/manipulation of genetic stock; and relations between humans and animals.

Throughout the course, we will also seek to question our own desire for a “green Shakespeare.” Readings will concentrate on the late Romances in particular, but we will also survey other plays and sonnets, as well as literature and history by Shakespeare’s Renaissance contemporaries.

As an advanced seminar in the English department, students will be expected to evaluate scholarly resources on a regular basis; write brief but regular critical reflections on primary and secondary reading; and complete a substantial (12-15-page single-spaced) final research project that argues for their own interpretation in dialogue with the critical tradition within this field.

Schedule—subject to revision, per class interest and instructor’s discretion**INTRODUCTION**

Thursday	Jan. 14	Reading through a “green” lens; Sonnet 15
Tuesday	Jan. 19	Garrard, <i>Ecocriticism</i>
Thursday	Jan. 21	“Graft” as a green keyword
Tuesday	Jan. 26	Keith Thomas
Thursday	Jan. 28	“State of the Green”—Raber/O’Dair

THE HUMAN AND THE ANIMAL

Tuesday	Feb. 2	<i>A Midsummer Night’s Dream</i>
Thursday	Feb. 4	<i>A Midsummer Night’s Dream</i> —Burke/Rambuss

GARDENS

Tuesday	Feb. 9	<i>Richard II</i>
Thursday	Feb. 11	<i>Richard II</i> ; Jones

PASTORAL RETREAT

Tuesday	Feb. 16	<i>As You Like It</i>
Thursday	Feb. 18	<i>As You Like It</i> ; Watson

MINING THE EARTH

Tuesday	Feb. 23	<i>Timon of Athens</i>
Thursday	Feb. 25	<i>Timon of Athens</i> ; Waage

SUPERNATURAL WEATHER

Tuesday	Mar. 2	<i>King Lear</i>
Thursday	Mar. 4	<i>King Lear</i> ; Egan

WASTELANDS

Tuesday	Mar. 9	<i>Winter’s Tale</i>
Thursday	Mar. 11	<i>Winter’s Tale</i> ; Estok

[March 15-19—Spring Recess—no class, but note *Hattiloo* begins March 11, TSC “Julius Caesar” March 26]

'BLUE' ECOCRITICISM

Tuesday	Mar. 23	<i>The Tempest</i>
Thursday	Mar. 25	<i>The Tempest</i> ; Brayton
Friday	Mar. 26	GREEN SHAKESPEARE SYMPOSIUM

SYMPOSIUM REFLECTIONS

Tuesday	Mar. 30	<i>Roundtable discussion about the Symposium</i>
Thursday	Apr. 1	No class—Easter Break

RESEARCH AND WRITING FINAL PROJECTS

Monday	Apr. 5	PROPOSAL DUE
Tuesday	Apr. 6	Peer feedback on Proposal
Thursday	Apr. 8	Library research session—meet in Barrett
Monday	Apr. 12	ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE
Tuesday	Apr. 13	Research & consultation with Professor Newstok
Thursday	Apr. 15	Research & consultation with Professor Newstok
Monday	Apr. 19	FIRST DRAFT DUE
Tuesday	Apr. 20	Peer feedback on draft
Thursday	Apr. 22	Presentations on work-in-progress
Monday	Apr. 19	REVISED DRAFT DUE
Tuesday	Apr. 27	Presentations on work-in-progress, continued
Thursday	Apr. 29	Final reflections
Friday	Apr. 30	URCAS
Monday	May 2	REVISED FINAL PAPER DUE

Required Texts

- *The Norton Shakespeare Anthology*, ed. Greenblatt et. al—**always bring this to class as our core textbook**
- Greg Garrard, *Ecocriticism: The New Critical Idiom*
- J. A. Cuddon, *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory* (for reference—previously purchased for ENG-285/385)

Recommended bookmarks on your computer

- *Shakespeare at Rhodes*: <http://www.rhodes.edu/shakespeare>
- *The Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*: <http://www.oed.com/>
- *Early English Books Online (EEBO)*: <http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>
- *The Dictionary of National Biography (DNB)*: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/>
- *Association for the Study of Literature & Env.*: <http://www.asle.org/>

Nick Radel

Furman University

“As You Like It: Metaphorizing/Metamorphosing Nature”

Draft Course Unit Outline for ACS “Green Shakespeare” Workshop

Readings

- Gabriel Egan, “Food and Biological Nature: As You Like It,” Chapter 3 of *Green Shakespeare: From Ecopolitics to Ecocriticism*.
- Greg Garrard, “Classical Pastoral,” from *Ecocriticism*.
- Ben Jonson, “To Penshurst”
- Anne McClintock, “Mapping the ‘Virgin’ Land and the Crisis of Origins,” from *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*.
- Robert Watson, “As You Liken It: Simile in the Forest,” Chapter 3 of *Back to Nature: The Green and the Real in the Late Renaissance*.

Objective

In this unit, I intend to explore a particular paradox in Shakespeare’s *As You Like It* that has implications for contemporary Ecocriticism and politics. The paradox is summed up in Duke Senior’s famous lines about life in the forest of Arden that, although it is “exempt from public haunt,” nevertheless finds “tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, / Sermons in stones, and good in every thing” (2.1.16-17). If nature is, like the speaker of a homily or sermon, an eloquent advocate for moral rectitude in the exiled inhabitants of the forest, it is also a book that must be read and valued, it’s meaning discovered in or imposed upon the trees, brooks and stones. Nature thus becomes, paradoxically, a reflection of the Duke’s and his men’s own natures. The question to be addressed, then, is how metaphor, the notion of similitude, shapes particular versions of nature in Shakespeare’s day (and, implicitly, in our own).

Outline of Readings

To help students begin thinking about this problem, I propose asking them to begin reading several critical works that provide models for understanding the ways nature is shaped through metaphor. Although limited by my own only introductory knowledge of Ecocriticism, I think these readings provide several concrete models of particular metaphors that may be relevant to *As You Like It* and that will end with consideration of the complex argument about epistemology and Ecocriticism to be found in Robert Watson’s recent book.

I. In the first place, I might ask students to consider an argument proposed by Greg Garrard, who claims that “the classical English pastorals influenced by Theocritus. .

.present a vision of rural life so removed from the processes of labour and natural growth that they constitute a persistent mystification of human ecology” (38). To illustrate Garrard’s point, I might ask students briefly to consider a poem such as Jonson’s “To Penshurst” in which fishes leap from the water almost into the frying pan. In what ways is this a “mystification” of processes of rural labor? How does such an idea relate to *As You Like It*, which, despite its justly celebrated (if fleeting) attention to the plight of English shepherds threatened by the selling off of grazing land by absentee landowners or Jacques’ celebrated lament over the slaughtered deer, nevertheless participates in a classical tradition of romanticizing the forest landscape as a source of easy abundance?

II. Second, I might briefly introduce some of the issues of gendering landscapes along with the need of early European explorers to claim, name, and domesticate the geographies of foreign lands that they discover. The issue of subduing native lands as described by McClintock (among many others) is not immediately relevant to *As You Like It*. But the issue of naming, finding words that express and metaphors that master, alien landscapes is relevant to this play which, after all, does not finally evoke a real place but a pastiche of landscapes reclaimed from a long literary history.

III. Third, I turn specifically to Eagan’s reading of *As You Like It* for, among its other virtues, it provides concrete evidence of the ways particular boundaries (between court and city, animal and human, for instance) are crossed in the play. More to the point, it raises questions of the domination of animals and, consequently, nature and how living in nature impacts this sense of domination. Although Eagan raises questions of domination that will have been introduced by McClintock, he also provides a utopian reading of the encounter with nature that useful contrasts her argument.

IV. Finally, then, I would use this unit to help student work through the philosophically dense argument of Robert Watson as a means of better understanding the role of metaphor in *As You Like It*. What does Watson mean when he argues that “the most sophisticated Renaissance pastorals recognize the real or first world as...selectively perceived...necessarily simplified” (87)? What does he mean when he writes “[r]epresentation is a symptom, not a cure, of otherness” (91)? The object of this part of the unit, then, would be to help students understand more complexly how responses to nature in *As You Like It* are wholly negotiated through language that “others” and, consequently, to explore what this insight leads us to understand about our own speaking about nature?

As a writing assignment, I might ask students to find a piece of writing about nature from our present-day experience (a piece of literature, or contemporary journalism,

etc.) and to identify in it various (often obscure) metaphors that negotiate its reality. Then, I would ask them to make an argument for some of the ways Shakespearean insights help us negotiate the complexities of “truth” or our access to the “real” in this particular piece of writing. How do we change nature even as we write about it? How can we perceive through or beneath this tendency? Or, if we cannot, how do we turn our “misperceptions” toward significant use in the struggle to create a more just environmental ethic?

Mark Rasmussen

Centre College

Reflections on “Green Shakespeare” workshop

The symposium at Rhodes College this spring on “Green Shakespeare” extended my thinking in ways that have already begun to affect my teaching. Nature and art are a huge binary, perhaps the huge binary, in Renaissance literature, and a number of speakers at the conference encouraged us to explore that binary in terms of current thinking about the environment. So, in teaching *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* to my sections of first-year Humanities this spring, just a few days after the conference, I was able to extend consideration of such long-standard topics as the two worlds of the play and the relations between its human and non-human characters (the fairies, the metamorphosed Bottom as half-human, half-animal) into discussions of more contemporary issues. How does Shakespeare’s representation of Athens and the forest relate to thinking today about the relation of human beings to their natural environment? Is the device of the love-juice (“love-in-idleness”) merely a comic trick, or does it have something to tell us about the physical nature of human motivation? And how does this, in turn, affect our understanding of what it means to be a person? By connecting these long-recognized elements of the play to our contemporary debates, both my students and I were able to see more in the work than we would otherwise have done, thanks to the intellectual stimulation provided by the symposium. And I expect that my future teaching of Renaissance topics will be enhanced along similar lines, as I expand the range of questions that I ask of the works that I teach. As an additional way of following up on the symposium, I plan to add a new unit on ecocriticism to my regular course on literary theory, which I’ll be teaching again next winter. Both of the books that we read for the symposium, Robert Watson’s *Back to Nature* and Gabriel Egan’s *Green Shakespeare*, contain numerous examples of practical criticism performed according to ecocritical principles, and I’ll probably base the unit on a passage from one of these books, perhaps Watson’s consideration of *As You Like It*. Based on my experience of the conference and my interaction with the scholars there, I should be able to guide my students in considering not just the issues raised by that particular reading assignment,

but also those that face ecocriticism as an emerging mode of critical practice within literary studies today and how those issues both resemble and differ from those faced by such other critical schools as feminist literary criticism and new historicism when they first emerged in the 1980s. In talking with the scholars at the conference I gained a vivid sense of the current state of play within the field, both in terms of how ecocritics make their case to their audiences and in terms of key internal debates among the method's practitioners, and this rich and informal interaction gave me a far fuller sense of the method and its practices than I could have ever acquired from simply reading the material on my own. I'm grateful to the ACS for supporting my participation in an experience that was so productive for me as a teacher/scholar.

Michael Saenger
Southwestern University
Course Unit Theme: Politicizing Shakespeare

In this unit, lasting about four weeks, we will study *The Taming of the Shrew (TOS)* and *As You Like It (AYLI)*. Our emphasis will be in understanding how Feminism, with respect to *TOS*, and Ecocriticism, with respect to *AYLI*, distorts, clarifies, enlivens or estranges the plays in question. At the core of the discussion will be such questions as these:

TOS:

- Was Shakespeare “proto-feminist” or anti-feminist?
- Does the play force us to adopt a certain ideology? How?
- How has gender conflict changed from then to now?

AYLI:

- Was Shakespeare an advocate for nature, or for man's free use of it?
- Does “nature” mean anything in this play that makes sense in our world?
- What might be the current gains and losses of reading the play “greenly”?
- How does an anxiety over humanities' irrelevance color our conversation?

And over both:

- Do we need to posit Shakespeare's intention in order to have political criticism?
- Is it morally sound to study literature if doing so has no impact on the “real world”?
- Have humanities abandoned their objectivity? If so, is that a good thing? Is objectivity accessible?
- Do these plays contain and/or allow for a real divergence of viewpoints, either in their scenes or in the classroom?

- Both feminism and the green movement have sought to change real behavior, urgently. Does this happen in the plays? Should this happen in the classroom?
- How can performances “falsify” the meaning of a text? Is that good or bad?
- How can criticism “falsify” the meaning of a text? Is that good or bad?

Willis Salomon

Trinity University

***Draft Course Unit Outline for ACS “Green Shakespeare” Workshop
“Nature, Labor, and the Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism”***

As a direct result of the revitalizing reading and discussion at the ACS-sponsored Rhodes “Green Shakespeare” symposium, I have formed a pedagogical unit for inclusion in one of my future Early Modern literature classes. A sketch of this unit is as follows:

The concept of “nature” has an ambiguous status in the late 16th and earlier 17th centuries in England. On one hand, nature continues to function as the prominent place of the symbolic conjuncture of civic and divine authority, a symbolic register underwriting the justification of monarchy and its attendant political and class relations. On the other hand, nature comes in this period to be seen as a kind of raw material for the pursuit of knowledge and for the contestation of political and social interests, including those interests involved in the emergence of individual authorial voices. This pedagogical unit intends to encourage discussions of texts in which a static, late-feudal conception of nature as a metonymy for hierarchical authority runs up against the factionalizing agency of appropriations of “nature” as the projected space of individualism and as a transcendent place of value dynamically separable from static class hierarchy. I hope, too, that these discussions will lead to ways in which contemporary discussions in ecocriticism and environmental studies keep coming up against the question of whether engagements with nature, especially in the form of pre-industrial idealizations of a natural world, can avoid the anthropocentric imperative to make nature serve humanity.

I have the following texts in mind:

1. Jonson, “To Penshurst” and Lanyer, “Description of Cookham.” Two Country house poems that both justify and either explicitly or implicitly question class hierarchy and oppose it to “natural” value, and in gendered terms.
2. Marvell, Mower poems. These poems focus on pathos of loss as a stance toward the idea of nature.

3. Bacon, Selected “Aphorisms” from *The New Organon* (1620) and Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (“Rent of land”). These texts disparately present issues related to the pursuit of natural knowledge as both vitalizing and alienating labor.

4. Watson, *Back to Nature: The Green and the Real in the Late Renaissance* (“Shades of Green: Marvell’s Garden and the Mowers”). This is an excellent and usable discussion of the pathos of alienation from nature in Marvell’s Mower poems.

Philip White

Centre College

Reflections on “Green Shakespeare” workshop

I have nothing but good to say about the workshop. It was well-conceived, with major figures from the field, and well-planned. I liked the variety of formats for discussion, from lunches and dinners with all the participants to the formal keynote address and panel. I also thought it was great that so many people from different programs at your school were also prepared and contributing to the discussion. The workshop was also run with amazing organization and efficiency.

For me the most useful part of the workshop was talking with participants informally, especially at the lunch. That gave me a lot of insight into the contributors and their positions and personalities, and it also allowed for me to think through what the main points of the workshop were and how they might relate or not to what I do or might want to do in my own work in the classroom and as a scholar. I'm not sure that the workshop will change what I do in large ways, but it will surely enrich what I do in many classes that I teach in more subtle ways. I don't think I'm going to create a class or even a unit that will focus specifically on ecocritical concerns, but the ideas and information in Egan's and Watson's (and the others') written work, along with Watson's address and the informal conversations, will without a doubt help me frame and shape what I do with three or four plays in my Shakespeare and humanities classes, in which I already do a lot with sixteenth and seventeenth century views of nature. So, while I have reservations about the ecocritical approach to Shakespeare, parts of what I learned about it and from it at the workshop will enrich my classes and provide topics for discussion about the relevance of the plays to current issues.