

Translating and Producing Modern Language Shakespeare

Renewal Proposal for Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program Summer 2016

College of Fine Arts

Sample

Statement of Research Topic

The University of Utah and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (the largest regional theatre in the U.S.) have collaborated to create and then produce a modern-language adaptation of the John Fletcher's and William Shakespeare's play *Two Noble Kinsmen*. The Oregon Shakespeare Festival very rarely partners with educational institutions to create new works. The Oregon Shakespeare Festival is a not-for-profit professional theatre founded in 1935 with a season that runs from February through early November with 11 plays that include 3-4 by Shakespeare and seven by other classic writers, as well as modern and contemporary work and world premieres. They are also, monetarily, the largest theatre in the U.S., boasting a \$32 million (USD) budget annually. Therefore, the artistic and educational opportunities that exist for students, like myself, at the University of Utah as a result of this partnership is unprecedented. The Oregon Shakespeare Festival is one of the largest employers of theatre practitioners in the United States, and this partnership will forge a relationship that will create numerous benefits to help the University of Utah's current, and future, students have a national professional organization as part of their artistic network.

The translation will be written by Associate Professor of Theatre, [REDACTED] and dramaturged by Assistant Professor, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] has offered me the incredibly honorable position as her assistant dramaturg during this process. The type of research I would be doing is extensive. As an aspiring dramaturge, not only will I aid [REDACTED] in historical and literary research of William Shakespeare and his plays, I will be actively aiding the adaptation and writing of this new and updated play. By translating Shakespearian texts into modern English, this project offers a new perspective into Renaissance literature and gives readers and younger audiences a more accessible approach to the Bard's texts.

Relevant Background/Literature Review

Flatter, Richard. *Shakespeare's Producing Hand ; a Study of His Marks of Expression to Be*

Found in the First Folio. N.p.: New York : Greenwood, 1969. Print.

Fletcher, John, William Shakespeare, and Harold Littledale. *Two Noble Kinsmen : 1634*

Quarto. N.p.: Vaduz : Kraus Reprint, 1965. Print.

Freeman, Neil. *Shakespeare's First Texts*. N.p.: Vancouver : Folio Scripts, 1994. Print.

Power, Andrew J., and Rory Loughnane. *Late Shakespeare, 1608-1613*. N.p.: Cambridge :

Cambridge UP, 2013. Print.

Shapiro, James. *Contested Will : Who Wrote Shakespeare?* N.p.: New York : Simon &

Schuster, 2010. Print.

Underwood, Richard Allen. *The Two Noble Kinsmen and Its Beginnings*. N.p.: New York:

Edwin Mellen Press, 1993. Print.

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Specific Activities to be Undertaken and a Timetable Allotted for Each Activity (And Accomplishments thus far in the Project)

I will be responsible for:

1) Helping Professor [REDACTED] create a side-by-side of several versions of text and the version that Professor [REDACTED] creates in order to help distinguish what changes Professor [REDACTED] made to the existing text. Since January, I have created the side-by-side workbook and learned how to use OCR systems. I will later be adding the new, translated version of Dr. [REDACTED] script to the current workbook.

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2) Aiding Professor [REDACTED] in determining if the text that Professor [REDACTED] creates adheres to the “rules” of the translation project as determined by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

This will be an on-going process beginning with the first submitted draft of the project by Professor [REDACTED] to Professor [REDACTED]. My mentor and I will be proofreading and editing the first submitted draft of the script by [REDACTED] in our New Play Workshop class on the 22nd of March. From there, we will spend the rest of the semester editing and helping revise subsequent drafts of the script. During the stage of script-reading, we expect there will also be many changes and edits to the script to which we will also help revise, edit, and discuss the changes.

3) Aid Professor [REDACTED] in the grant-writing process for the project. This will begin in March of 2016 and continue through the end of the semester. [REDACTED] has already taught me how to construct and develop an outline of a grant budget. I still need to fully learn and understand the process of writing a grant, including but not limited to utilizing the correct academic language for a grant proposal; successfully estimating and dividing proper amounts of needed funding; organizing a grant-proposal paper; and the ability to navigate through and research which institutions / departments have grant opportunities for specific needs of the theatre.

4) Aid Professor [REDACTED] in any historical research associated with the project. This will be on-going through the Summer of 2016. Although I have read many books and articles concerning the historical background and modern theory of this play, there is still so much to learn. The fact that there is no current evidence or information for early production history has intrigued me, and I have set about the task of creating and publishing a timeline of Fletcher and Shakespeare’s life to attempt to pinpoint when and if an early production of *TTNK* may have

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happened in the playwrights' lifetimes. I have also created a website that will be published in late March concerning the topic of this research project, the historical background of the play, lists of publication / production histories, and more.

5) [REDACTED] and I have submitted our article documenting the script-writing process for publication to the University of Alabama Press' *Theatre History Studies* journal and are waiting on their response. If accepted, we will make any necessary edits or changes in the article asked of us. We also began documenting articles concerning the OSF project, transcribed interviews with head directors of the Festival, and will be documenting the New Play Workshop class once we present the translated *TTNK* script.

Relationship of the Proposed Work to the Expertise of the Faculty Mentor

[REDACTED] has earned her M.F.A. in Theatre and Drama from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI in December of 2010. She received her M.A. in Theatre History and Criticism (with a concentration on Dramaturgy) from the Catholic University of America, Washington DC, in May of 2004. Her teaching experience at the University of Utah alone include Script Analysis, History of Theatre I and II, Dramaturgy, and Race and Gender in African American Theatre. Other courses taught were English Renaissance Theatre at Kenyon College 2008-09 and Theatre Theory at Sam Houston State University in Spring 2012. [REDACTED] has worked extensively with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in the field of dramaturgy in ten different shows. She has also worked with Utah's very own theatres, dramaturging over fifteen shows locally, and many more nationwide. She has numerous publication and editorial services, including an article published in *The Routledge Companion to Dramaturgy*. If there is anyone qualified enough for this specific job, it is [REDACTED]. Her impressive history of

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dramaturgy and teaching are, no doubt, key reasons to why the Oregon Shakespeare Festival requested her for this task. I was honored and ecstatic to have been asked by someone of her prestige to assist and accompany her for the task of adapting a Shakespearian text.

Relationship of the Proposed Work to the Student's Future Goals

I have been obsessed with Shakespeare's texts and plays from a young age. I have a passion for literature and a passion for dramaturgy that only grows with time and education experience. I believe dramaturgy is more than simply understanding a text. It goes much deeper. To be a dramaturg, one has to have a passion for language, a vast knowledge of both theory and history, and have a strong relationship with the playwright. As a student, especially one who is in training to be a dramaturge and renaissance literature graduate, I see this project as a huge opportunity to explore new and creative ways of understanding classical texts. This project gives me a chance to bury myself deeply into the content, context, and time period of Shakespeare's stage while reviving it with a modern twist. Through texts, translations, and adaptations, we—as artists—begin to understand history through art. This type of modern adaptation dares to raise questions and challenge tradition in order to explore new possibilities with literature. A dramaturge's purpose is to create.

I've been studying the art and practice of theatre since I was eight years old. In fact, I cannot remember a year when I was not avidly studying some facet of theatre or participating in plays. When I started my Undergraduate degree at the University of Utah, I found myself drifting between two worlds that I loved: 1) my English major, which consisted of the playwrights, directors, and lovers of literature and 2) my Theatre minor, which consisted of performing/performances, visual art, and appreciation for spoken word. I met [REDACTED] in my second year and she introduced me to the bridge between both worlds I had been, for years,

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searching avidly for: dramaturgy. Within the realm and practice of dramaturgy, I was able to combine both my loves: research and performance. It was a perfect bridge that I was determined to stay on, and since then I've been working towards my Master's degree in theatre studies.

I have dramaturged two Shakespearean shows at the University of Utah, such as *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* and *Romeo and Juliet*. I was the first dramaturge at the Utah Children's Theatre for Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and helped adapt multiple complex Shakespearean monologues into language for children and young adults. I received a scholarship award in the Theatre department for dramaturgy as well. However, nothing will quite help me in my ambition to work in the professional theatre world quite so much as this opportunity I've presented. Working with Oregon Shakespeare Festival has been a dream of mine for four years, and now I have been presented with the opportunity to work with a professional theatre company, my mentors, and my favorite playwright on his least documented texts. A project like this will not only amplify my dreams of going to graduate school; this project could quite possibly set up my future career with Oregon Shakespeare Festival. I do not believe there has ever been a greater, more crucial moment in my life. This project will allow me to say that I, as an undergraduate, have succeeded in starting my career. It will allow me to say I have worked diligently on a project that very few, select individuals were invited to be a part of. And it will allow me to have the confidence and knowledge required to apply as a dramaturg to any professional theatre.