

HUMANITIES SEMINARS PROGRAM

Shakespeare's History Plays: The Second Tetralogy

Summer 2018

Fridays 9:00 a.m. to noon
Dorothy Rubel Room, Poetry Center

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TEXTS: *The Riverside Shakespeare*, edited by G. Blakemore Evans, 2nd ed. (Houghton Mifflin, 1997), is the standard complete works and the one I use. But any annotated edition—or individual editions of single plays—will do. The Signet or Penguin Classic paperback editions are reliable, inexpensive, and readily available on Amazon.

PROCEDURE: We shall read the plays together—that is, go through principal sections of the texts and discuss their significance. Since we shall focus on the texts and examine specific passages, lines, and even words, seminarians should bring the texts to class; otherwise, discussion will be hard to follow and make little sense. We shall supplement textual analysis with video clips of various productions of the plays under consideration.

We shall proceed on the assumption that seminarians have read (or reread) the plays before class. In most cases, reading each play should require three to four hours.

Do not hesitate to raise questions about particular or technical questions during discussion—for example, 'What is it that you mean by *anaphora*' or 'What exactly was 'The King's Men'? More general or open-ended questions—for example, 'Isn't Richard II just an irresponsible, self-absorbed narcissist' or 'Isn't Hal unforgivably cruel in his rejection of Falstaff—I should be happy to discuss and would especially welcome to have them written out before (or after) class.

COURSE CALENDAR:

July 20: Introduction
July 27: *Richard II*
August 3: *Henry IV, Part 1*
August 10: *Henry IV, Part 2*
August 17: *Henry V.*