

ADAM RZEPKA

rzepkaa@montclair.edu

English Department • Dickson Hall 309 • Montclair State University
1 Normal Avenue • Montclair, NJ 07043

EDUCATION

Ph.D. English Language and Literature, University of Chicago, 2011

B.A. English and Philosophy, Harvard University, 1999

FACULTY APPOINTMENT

Montclair State University, Montclair, NJ. Associate Professor of English. 2013—present.

PUBLICATIONS

“‘The airy scale’: Cosmic Feeling and Kinesthetic Play at the Dover Cliffs,” in *Shakespeare and Scale*, edited by Jennifer Waldron and Caro Pirri. Forthcoming from Edinburgh University Press.

Introduction to *Experiential & Experimental Knowledge on the Early Modern Stage*, with Pavneet Aulakh and James Kearney (eds.) Forthcoming from Edinburgh University Press, 2026.

“Sad experience”: Jaques, Polonius, Gloucester.” Forthcoming in *Experiential & Experimental Knowledge on the Early Modern Stage*, 2026.

“‘Sailing in this salt flood’: The Fluid Dynamics of Affect in Shakespeare’s Public Theaters.” *Renaissance Drama* (special issue on Affective Ecologies), 2023.

“‘That dim monument’: The Fantasy of the Crypt in *Romeo and Juliet* and *Antigone*.” In *Cool Reason and Seething Brains: New Psychoanalytic Readings of Shakespeare*. James Newlin and James W. Stone, eds. Routledge, 2023.

Review of *Phantasmatic Shakespeare: Imagination in the Age of Early Modern Science*. *Modern Philology*, 2019.

“‘How like a god’: Shakespeare and Early Modern Apprehension.” *Shakespeare Studies*, 2018.

“The Social Network of Early English Drama: A Lesson Plan.” *The Emerging Learning Design Journal*. Special Issue: Digital Humanities. Summer 2017.

“Chamber, Tomb, and Theater: Life in *Romeo and Juliet*’s Spaces of the Dead.” In *Romeo and Juliet: Critical Insights*. Robert C. Evans, ed. Salem Press, 2017.

“‘How easy is a bush supposed a bear?’: Differentiating Imaginative Production in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*.” *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Fall 2015.

Review of *Shakespearean Sensations: Experiencing Literature in Early Modern England*.
Modern Philology, Spring 2015

“‘Direct Ideas’: The Quotidian Imagination in John Willis’s 1618 Memory Theater.” In *Knowing Nature in Early Modern Europe*. David Beck, ed. Routledge, 2015.

“Discourse ex nihilo: Lucretius in England to 1605.” In *Dynamic Reading: Studies in the Reception of Epicureanism*. Wilson Shearin and Brooke Holmes, eds. Oxford U P, 2012.

“‘Rich eyes and poor hands’: Theaters of Early Modern Experience.” In *Shakespeare and the Senses*. Lowell Gallagher and Shankar Raman, eds. Palgrave, 2010.

Book projects

Making Experience: Shakespeare and the Art of Immediacy.

Anima: The Soul in Motion on Shakespeare’s Stage

Public-facing

“The Eternal Synergy of the Spotless Mind.” *Academe*, November 2025.

“The Real Gaza Death Toll is Impossible to Know Today, But the Minimum Isn’t.”
Counterpunch, August 2025

Quoted in

[*The Chronicle of Higher Education*](#)

[*The Intercept*](#)

[*The New York Times*](#)

[*The Guardian*](#)

[*China Daily News*](#)

Policy documents

United States Educators’ Conscientious Objection Pledge to End Complicity in Apartheid and Genocide (co-author)

New Jersey Mutual Academic Defense Compact (co-author)

Joint Resolution of the Modern Language Association and American Historical Society
 Opposing Attacks on Core Principles of Education (co-author)

PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

Early modern literature and culture

"Adapting (to) Political Spectacle in Antony and Cleopatra (1607) and Antony and Cleopatra (2022)" (with Lucia Scheckner), Shakespeare Association of America annual conference, San Francisco, March 2026.

"Archival Intelligence: AI Ethics and the History of Ideas," Montclair State AI Showcase, February 2026.

- “Shakespeare’s Drives,” Renaissance Society of America Annual Conference (RSA), San Francisco, February 2026.
- “‘An inward wish’: The homuncular fantasy from *Lingua* to Inside Out.” Afterlives: Reinvention, Reproduction, and Reception (Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies), Long Beach, California, November 2025.
- “‘This under Globe’: Proprioceptive Worldmaking in Shakespeare’s Public Theatres.” Scientiae: Disciplines of Knowing in the Early Modern World, Istanbul, September 2025.
- “‘All the tuned spheres’: Cosmic Feeling in Shakespeare’s Public Theaters.” Renaissance Society of America (RSA), Boston, March 2025.
- “Early Modern Scale: Form, Technology, Performance.” Shakespeare Association of America (SAA), Boston, March 2025.
- “Sad experience”: Knowledge and spectatorship in *As You Like It*, *Hamlet*, and *King Lear*. Scientiae: Disciplines of Knowing in the Early Modern World, Brussels, June 2024
- “‘The airy scale’: Weightless perspective at the Dover Cliffs.” SAA, Portland, Oregon, April 2024.
- “‘What hath he in his boxe?’: Encryptions and Decryptions of the Early Modern Stage.” RSA, Chicago, April 2024.
- “Shakespeare’s Drives.” MLA, Philadelphia, January 2024.
- “‘Aught but gossamer, feathers, air’: Proprioception and Grace in Shakespeare’s Theaters.” RSA, San Juan, March 2023.
- “‘Sailing in this salt flood’: The fluid dynamics of affect in Shakespeare’s public theaters.” SAA, Jacksonville, Florida, March 2022.
- “The Weight of Memory and the Art of Oblivion in Early Modern *Ars memoriae*.” RSA, Dublin, March 2022.
- Twentieth Annual Jankofsky Lecture: “Listening in the New Atlantic.” With Toby Rzepka, luthier and archaic instrument specialist. University of Minnesota, March 2022.
- “Impossible Knowledge: *Cymbeline* and the Soteriology of Experience.” RSA, online, April 2021.
- “John Willis’s *Art of Memory* and the Theater of Everyday Life.” The Total Library: Aspirations for Complete Knowledge in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, Barnard College, December 2020.
- “‘Encryptions of the early modern stage.’” Scientiae, Belfast, 2019.
- Chair, “The Science of an Enchanted World.” Scientiae, Belfast, 2019.
- “The Longing for Experience” (invited paper). RSA, Toronto, March 2019.
- “Listening in the New Atlantic.” Workshop with Toby Rzepka. Scientiae, Minneapolis, March 2018.
- Panel organizer, “Making Early Modern Experience.” American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA) annual conference, Los Angeles, March 2018. Paper: “‘From companie exiled’: Dislocating experiential knowledge in *Cymbeline* and *As You Like It*.”
- “Virtual Knowledge in *Hamlet*.” MLA annual conference, New York City, January 2018.
- “‘Nursery of arts’: Coming to Know in Padua in *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Merchant of Venice*.” Scientiae, Padua, Italy, April 2017.
- “‘That dim monument’: *Romeo and Juliet*’s Memorial Enclosures.” SAA, Atlanta, April 2017
- “‘Free...from that tyrannous Loadstone’: The Redemptive Kinetics of Early Modern Space Travel.” RSA, Chicago, 2017.
- “‘Within a foot / Of the extreme verge’: Littorals of theatrical imagination in Shakespeare.” RSA, Boston, March 2016.

- “‘How like a god’: Apprehensive Shakespeare.” Columbia Shakespeare Seminar, New York, December 2015. Invited lecture.
- “‘We loose it like Lightening’: Early Modern Apprehension.” *Scientiae*, Toronto, May 2015.
- “Shakespeare and Performance in the Present.” British Studies Center, Ramapo College, New Jersey, April 2015. Invited talk.
- “Feeling Fate: Romeo and Juliet ‘already dead.’” RSA, Berlin, March 2015.
- “Staging the Imagination in John Willis’s Art of Memory.” *Scientiae*, Vienna, May 2014.
- “‘As right as a line his heart I have hit’: Trajectories of Affect in *Cambises*.” SAA, St. Louis, 2014.
- “A lamentable tragedy mixed ful of pleasant mirth”: Chaotic passions in *Cambises*.” RSA, New York, March 2014.
- “Re-placing synchronous classrooms at Stanford’s Online High School.” MLA, Chicago, January 2014.
- “Approved...confirmed...and dayly tried”: The Rise of Experience in Sixteenth-century English Instructional Writing. *Scientiae*, Warwick, April 2013.
- “Toward a Lucretian Poetics of Early Modern Performance.” *Scientiae*, Vancouver, April 2012.

Politics, pedagogy, and critical theory

- “‘Never Again’ and the Politics of Memory: Analogy, Repetition, and Uniqueness in Crisis,” Memory Studies Association annual conference, Buenos Aires, July 2026
- “Lagos and the Re-ontology of the Value Form,” Marxist Literary Group—Institute on Culture and Society, Berkeley, June 2026.
- “Imperial Priorities: The Crackdown on Free Expression in the American University,” Law and Society Association (LSA) annual conference, San Francisco, May 2026.
- “Rhetorics of Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism,” LSA, San Francisco, May 2026.
- “Private Equity and Anti-genocide Speech on Campus,” “Roots of War & Fascism: A Political Education Webinar,” Coalition for Action in Higher Education and & MLA Radical Caucus, April 2026.
- “Soylent Green World: Vibrant Matter and Bare Life in End-Stage Capitalism,” “Green World” series, Center for Research on Interdisciplinary Global Studies, Montclair State University, March 2026.
- “Organizing Against the Dismantling of Higher Education,” Modern Language Association Annual Conference (MLA), Toronto, January 2026.
- “The ‘wastel-bowse’: Teaching with AI Slop,” A.I. and D.H. for/in the Classroom, Seton Hall University, May 2025.
- “Can We Mean What We Say?” Faculty Showcase, Montclair State University, May 2025.
- “The Social Network of Early English Drama: A Digital Humanities Lesson Plan.” Online Learning Consortium, Montclair State, June 2017.
- “Leading Synchronous Discussions Online.” Teaching and Learning Showcase, Research Academy for University Learning, Montclair State, May 2017.
- “Student-Created, Network-Driven Editions.” Folger Shakespeare Library, “Beyond Access: Early Modern Digital Texts in the Classroom,” Washington D.C., June 2016.

TEACHING

Montclair State University

Graduate Seminar in Literary Research (ENGL 605)

Theoretical Approaches to Literature (ENGL 514)
 Shakespeare: The Tragedies (ENGL 508)
 Seminar: Affect and the Limits of Thought (ENLT 502)
 Seminar: Marx / Now (ENGL 501)
 Seminar in English Literature: Text and Image (ENGL 494)
 Shakespeare: Tragedies and Romances (ENGL 354)
 Shakespeare: Comedies and Histories (ENGL 353)
 English Drama: Beginnings to 1642 (ENGL 352)
 Renaissance Literature (ENGL 348)
 Pursuits of English: Building Readers (ENGL 300)
 Shakespeare in Performance (ENGL 250)
 Writing in the Major: Utopias and Dystopias (ENWR 220)
 Graphic Narratives (ENGL 115)
 Utopias and Dystopias (ENGL 114)
 The Academic Essay: Poetry of Transformation (ENGL 110)
 First-Year Writing (ENWR 105)
 Transformations: The Poetics of Radical Change (HONP 108)
 Great Books and Ideas II (Honors Program 101)

Bard Prison Initiative and Bard Microcollege (2020-present)

Second-Year Writing Intensive (Microcollege)
 The Poetry of Transformation (Prison)
 Shakespeare in the Postcolonies (Prison)
 Senior Thesis Supervisor (Prison)

Princeton University Prison Teaching Initiative (2020-2022)

Introduction to Poetry (ENGL-226)
 Academic Writing (ENGL 060)

Rhizome Learning Cooperative

Writing about Literature: An Introduction
 Shakespeare: Foundations for Literary Analysis
 Artificial Intelligence and Analytic Insight

Stanford University Online High School and Stanford OHSx (2010-2013)

Advanced Topics in Literature: Xtopias (Eng. 026)
 Textual Analysis and Argumentation: The World in America (Eng. 010)
 A.P. English Literature and Language (Eng. 021)
 A Cultural History of Monsters (X046)
 Literary Salon: How to Read Poetry, and Why

Prison University Project (now Mount Tamalpais College), San Quentin State Prison (2010-2013)

Introduction to Critical Writing: Modernist Revolutions (Eng. 101A)
 Interdisciplinary Research and Writing (Eng. 204)
 Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking (Eng. 101B)

University of California, Berkeley (2010-2011)

The Art of Psychoanalysis (Hist. of Art R1B)
 Flights Out of Time: Utopias and Dystopias (Comp. Lit. R1B)
 Post-Marxist Aesthetics and Politics (Rhet. 103B)

Shakespeare (with Robert Haas; Eng. 117B)
 Milton (with Joanna Picciotto); Eng. 118)

University of Chicago (2005-2006)

Spenser and Shakespeare: Memory and Imagination in Renaissance England (ENG 162)
 Utopia / Dystopia: An Introduction (ENG 229)

RECENT SERVICE

Montclair State University

Founding Co-convenor, Montclair State University Medieval and Early Modern Seminar
 Founding Convenor, English Research Colloquium
 English Graduate Director
 English Advisement Coordinator
 English Department Personnel Advisory Committee (Chair)
 English Department Five-Year Assessment Committee
 English Department Visiting Writers Committee
 English Department Committee on Standards for Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion
 Coordinator, Six-Year Department External Review
 Founding Member, Faculty Assembly (Temporary Steering Committee)
 Founding Advisor, Student Union
 University Senate, At-large seat
 Recommendation on Collaborative Defense of Higher Education (co-author)
 Resolution Opposing the Trump Administration “Compact for Academic Excellence in
 Higher Education” (author)
 Resolution to join the New Jersey-Mutual Academic Defense Compact (author)
 Resolution for Chair-led Departments (co-author)
 Founding Chair, University Senate Committee on Freedom of Expression
 Founding Member, Senate Committee on Generative Artificial Intelligence
 University Senate Academic Affairs Council
 University Academic Policy Committee
 Office for Faculty Excellence Advisory Board
 University Research Committee
 CHSS Research Committee (Chair)
 Graduate Curriculum Committee, College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS)
 Faculty Advisory Committee, CHSS Center for Digital Humanities
 Digital Humanities MA Task Force
 University Academic Information Technology Committee
 University Graduate Council
 University Graduate Curriculum Committee

Higher education advocacy

New Jersey Mutual Academic Defense Coalition (co-founder)
 National Rapid Action Switchboard (founder)
 National Mutual Academic Defense Coalition
 Stand Together for Higher Education (Montclair chapter Founder)
 Coalition for Action in Higher Education (Anti-Fascism and Palestine Caucuses)
 Genocide and Holocaust Studies Crisis Network
 Faculty and Staff for Justice in Palestine (Montclair State chapter Co-founder)

Manuscript reviewer

Shakespeare Quarterly
 Northwestern Univ. Press
 Routledge
 Bloomsbury
 Palgrave Macmillan

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Renaissance Society of America
 Shakespeare Association of America
 Marxist Literary Group
 Memory Studies Association
 Law and Society Association
 Modern Language Association (Radical Caucus)
 American Historical Association (Historians for Peace and Democracy)
 American Comparative Literature Association
 Academia Scientiae
 Columbia Shakespeare Seminar (Associate Member)
 Folger Shakespeare Library (Reader)
 Online Learning Consortium
 National Lawyers Guild
 Genocide and Holocaust Studies Crisis Network

AWARDS AND GRANTS

Funded sabbatical leave, 2026-2027
 Funded Folger Shakespeare Library Seminar, Early Modern Paleography
 2023 Development Award: Bodleian and British Libraries Research
 2021 Innovative Article Award, Shakespeare Association of America
 NEH-funded faculty seminar, "Rediscovering American Democracy"
 Funded sabbatical leave, 2019-2020
 Dean's Recognition Award for Teaching, 2017
 NEH funding for Folger Shakespeare Library Seminar: "Beyond Access: Early Modern Digital Texts in the Classroom," 2016
 Distinguished Teacher, Harvard Club, 2015
 Winner, Annual Paper Competition, Shakespeare Association of America, 2007
 Mellon Dissertation Fellowship, 2006-2008
 Century Fellowship, U Chicago, 2002-2005