

SHAKESPEARE VALUED:
POLICY, PEDAGOGY AND PRACTICE IN
ENGLISH EDUCATION, 1989-2009

By SARAH ELIZABETH OLIVE

A thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

The Shakespeare Institute
School of English
College of Arts and Law
University of Birmingham
January 2011

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

University of Birmingham Research Archive

e-theses repository

This unpublished thesis/dissertation is copyright of the author and/or third parties. The intellectual property rights of the author or third parties in respect of this work are as defined by The Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988 or as modified by any successor legislation.

Any use made of information contained in this thesis/dissertation must be in accordance with that legislation and must be properly acknowledged. Further distribution or reproduction in any format is prohibited without the permission of the copyright holder.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the value of Shakespeare in the domains of policy, pedagogy and practice in English education from 1989 to 2009. Rather than seeking to evaluate his worth, it focuses, in particular, on the processes, institutions and discourses through which his value is constructed. The early chapters establish a lack of existing, critical, interdisciplinary research into Shakespeare in education; offer an overview of the historic context leading up to the playwright's establishment in the National Curriculum for English as its only compulsory author; and review his place in the education policy of Conservative and Labour governments during the past two decades. Later chapters investigate the value of Shakespeare as constructed in three distinct pedagogies (literary-critical, active methods, and contextual); the inter-relation of his value as constructed in the curriculum, theatre and heritage education departments, popular culture, and academia. It argues that Shakespeare's tenacity in holding onto a premier position in English education derives largely from the diverse, dispersed, yet interconnected, representations of his value.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In writing this thesis, I have been enabled by the help and support of many people. First and foremost, my thanks go to my family (old and new), friends and partner. Elaine, Michael, John and Ruth Olive must be writ large. This document seems too small a return for their enduring love.

Kate McLuskie had me writing from my first supervision onwards: this was only one of many sensible pieces of advice and encouragement which she gave me. Kate also led the AHRC 'Interrogating Cultural Value project' to which my work belongs, and by which I was supported financially. Kate Rumbold, a research fellow on the project, offered boundless motivation and has read several chapters of this thesis in various forms. Emily Linnemann, a fellow PhD student on the project, shared reading matter and beans on toast with me at our first meeting, setting the trend for future collaborations academic and social. I have welcomed the input of the project's advisory board members, in particular that of Diana Owen, Sharon O'Dair and Paul Yachnin. Juliet Creese, Rebecca White and Natalie Bell have offered unstinting administrative support.

I have benefited from countless acts of kindness during my doctoral study. I cannot name them all here, but all are named in my heart. Those mentioned below relate specifically to my research. Catherine Alexander always enquired about my progress, occasionally suggested reading and led a very helpful upgrade meeting. Kelley Costigan kindly equipped me with a copy of the *The Supersizers Go Elizabethan*. Cait Fanin Peel supplied me with copies of educational resources for school groups visiting the SBT houses, before I knew I

needed them. Lisa Houghton-Reed generously offered me a front row ticket to the Shakespeare Regional Celebration in 2009. Heather Kerr set me onto all things Early Modern ten years ago and never ceases to inspire and encourage. Her copy of *Shakespeare in the Changing Curriculum* has been among my most treasured possessions over the last three years. Lizz Ketterer showed me how to screw my courage to the sticking point. The Rev'd Stuart Langshaw enlightened me on the scriptural origins of the often-appropriated, modern expression 'Jesus Lives!' Jami Rogers explained to me recent trends in and hallmarks of RSC productions. James Stredder and Alison Stewart generated valuable discussion of my research seminar paper in 2009. Martin Wiggins gave incisive feedback on my research seminars, with his customary eye for detail. Chelsea Avard, Karen Ashton, Cat Clifford, Christine Knight, Michelle Morton, Beccy Roberts and Erin Sullivan are among those who frequently asked after my thesis and never got a short answer.

The Open University were terrific employers for the duration of my studies. The thirst for education displayed by their students, often in the face of adversity, reminded me not to take my own opportunities for granted. The education department at the University of York has welcomed me over the past four months and made research Mondays in the Shakespeare Institute library possible. At the library, Karin Brown and Kate Welch have always been ready with the big stapler.

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----|
| 1. SHAKESPEARE VALUED: RESEARCHING THE AUTHOR IN EDUCATION AND BEYOND | 1 |
| 1.1 Narratives of multiplicity and change: defining key terms | 3 |
| 1.2 The enduring influence of early twentieth-century cultural criticism | 12 |
| 1.3 Reviewing histories of English, politicised critique, and cultural studies | 18 |
| 1.4 Reviewing writing on education, from trade books to teaching resources | 27 |
| 1.5 Research methodologies for exploring the value of Shakespeare | 31 |
| 1.6 Four domains: policy, pedagogy, practice and popular culture | 35 |
| 1.7 The context leading up to the National Curriculum | 38 |
| 1.8 Enshrining the value of Shakespeare in the 1989 National Curriculum | 45 |
| 2. SHAKESPEARE IN POLICY: AGENDAS FOR SKILLS, STANDARDS AND INCLUSION | 53 |
| 2.1 Improving skills: bending educational policy to economic success | 56 |
| 2.2 Raising standards: applying a business paradigm to education | 63 |
| 2.3 Valuing English as a vehicle for moral education | 73 |
| 2.4 Using English to promote social inclusion | 78 |
| 2.5 Relating Shakespeare in education policy to macro-political agendas | 86 |
| 3. SHAKESPEARE IN ENGLISH SUBJECT PEDAGOGY: VALUES, INFLUENCE AND CRITICISM | 104 |
| 3.1 The abiding presence of literary-critical approaches | 112 |
| 3.2 Criticisms of literary-critical approaches | 116 |
| 3.3 Active methods approaches to Shakespeare in schools | 120 |
| 3.4 Theatrical, educational and theoretical influences on active methods | 128 |
| 3.5 Criticisms of active methods | 131 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| 3.6 Contextual approaches to Shakespeare in schools | 137 |
| 3.7 Theoretical, political and pragmatic influences on contextual approaches | 143 |
| 3.8 Criticisms of contextual approaches | 146 |
| 3.9 Common influences on pedagogy for teaching Shakespeare in schools | 148 |
| 4. SHAKESPEARE IN THEATRE AND HERITAGE: THREE EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS | 153 |
| 4.1 The value of Shakespeare at the SBT: constructions of a physical proximity | 157 |
| 4.2 The value of Shakespeare at the Globe: an ethos of play and community | 164 |
| 4.3 The value of Shakespeare at the RSC: the resources of the acting company | 170 |
| 4.4 The Royal Shakespeare Company as ‘cultural chemist’ | 178 |
| 4.5 The Regional Schools Celebration: setting the scene | 182 |
| 4.6 Determining the value of Shakespeare as theatre: the RSC’s agency | 184 |
| 4.7 Defining the value of Shakespeare through RSC pedagogies and productions | 188 |
| 4.8 The cultural chemist in context: the RSC and government policy | 193 |
| 5. SHAKESPEARE ON TELEVISION: EDUCATIONALLY SATURATED CULTURE | 197 |
| 5.1 The value of education and entertainment in English broadcasting | 201 |
| 5.2 Public service Shakespeare: the bard on the Beeb | 206 |
| 5.3 <i>The Supersizers Go Elizabethan</i> and <i>The Shakespeare Code</i> | 210 |
| 5.4 Shakespeare as father, and skilful user of, the English language | 216 |
| 5.5 Shakespeare’s universality | 224 |
| 5.6 Shakespeare as an authority | 229 |
| 5.7 Shakespeare as a genius | 234 |
| 5.8 Shakespeare as the epitome of national culture | 242 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| 6. CONCLUSIONS ON THE VALUE OF SHAKESPEARE IN EDUCATION | 249 |
| 6.1 Loose beginnings: tying up this project and envisaging further research | 252 |
| 6.2 Drawing strength from splinters, blurring and contradictions | 257 |
| 6.3 Pushing the boundaries of knowledge into a boundless bard | 262 |
| APPENDIX 1 Table of selected education-related programmes on English television | 269 |
| WORKS CITED | 270 |
| Great British policy documents cited | 288 |

TABLES

| | |
|--|-----|
| Table 1: National Curriculum requirements for drama across the key stages | 107 |
| Table 2: National Curriculum requirements for drama activities across the key stages | 108 |

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---------|--|
| A2 | Advanced [level] 2 |
| A-level | Advanced level |
| AO | Attainment Order |
| AQA | Assessment and Qualifications Alliance |
| AS | Advanced Subsidiary [level] |
| BBC | British Broadcasting Corporation |
| CBBC | Children's BBC |
| DCMS | Department for Culture, Media and Sport |
| DCSF | Department for Children, Schools and Families |
| DES | Department of Education and Science |
| DFE | Department for Education |
| DfEE | Department for Education and Employment |
| DfES | Department for Education and Skills |
| EMA | Education Maintenance Allowance |
| GCSE | General Certificate of Secondary Education |
| HM | Her Majesty's |
| HMSO | Her Majesty's Stationery Office |
| IMDb | Internet Movie Database |
| INSET | In-service training |
| ITV | Independent Television |
| KS | Key Stage |
| NATE | National Association for the Teaching of English |

| | |
|------------|--|
| <i>OED</i> | <i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> |
| para. | Paragraph |
| PSHE | Personal, Social and Health Education |
| QCA | Qualifications and Curriculum Authority |
| QCDA | Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency |
| RSC | Royal Shakespeare Company |
| SAA | Shakespeare Association of America |
| SATs | Standardised Attainment Tests |
| SBT | Shakespeare Birthplace Trust |
| TARDIS | Time and Relative Dimensions in Space [machine] |
| TGAT | Task Group on Assessment and Testing |
| TSO | The Stationery Office |
| USP | Unique Selling Point |

1. SHAKESPEARE VALUED: RESEARCHING THE AUTHOR IN EDUCATION AND BEYOND

Shakespeare has inhabited an unrivalled position in the National Curriculum for English as the only compulsory author since 1989. This piece of education policy is a prime example of the immense value that was assigned to Shakespeare by policy-makers, in formal English education, in the late 1980s: specifically, for a Shakespeare that could be taught, examined and legislated. That examination of his value was witnessed further by the amount of pedagogic literature on Shakespeare produced in the immediate aftermath of (and much of it in opposition to) the introduction of the National Curriculum. His value in theatre, heritage and tourism is attested to by organisations such as the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and Shakespeare's Globe – each of which also acknowledge his place in the curriculum through their substantial education departments. Beyond education, representations of Shakespeare's value in popular culture exist in diverse mediums from television to commonplace statements that declare him 'the greatest writer in the English language' and 'the greatest playwright of all time' (see 5.7).

Statements such as these usefully highlight Shakespeare's unique status and widely-constructed, high cultural value. As conclusions in themselves they are, however, reductive: they elide the processes of negotiation and contestation that have gone in to creating his value; the tensions that exist around it; as well as the multiple definitions and everyday practices which help construct it. The more interesting concern of this thesis, and one which builds on these issues, is to complicate and problematise existing understandings of Shakespeare's continuing value in education. Extending over the twenty years following the inception of National Curriculum Shakespeare, this thesis goes beyond asking what the value of Shakespeare is, to explore *how* it is constructed in schools and in the education

departments of the aforementioned Shakespeare organisations. In the penultimate chapter, this research will trace these values through two television programmes featuring Shakespeare.

In doing so, this thesis juxtaposes his value in four different sectors, linked to varying extents by their educational agendas: education policy, pedagogic literature, theatre/heritage institutions and public-service broadcasting. In conducting this research, I have worked with an epistemological assumption which understands Shakespeare's value as being constructed, sometimes deliberately and sometimes unwittingly, in the texts (and the language of those texts) through which Shakespeare is experienced. Since I am also concerned with the dynamic processes through which Shakespeare's value is constructed, there is an emphasis throughout this thesis on the historical situations of these texts and the constructions of value which they manifest. Existing areas of literature including cultural criticism; writing from English studies (ranging from literary criticism to cultural studies); and educational research have provided the academic background to this study of the value of Shakespeare. Additionally, they have offered a spur to further research since they are limited to varying extents by a disregard for popular culture, a lack of interdisciplinary dialogue, and an overreliance on anecdotes reporting positive experiences of Shakespeare.

Further inspiration has been provided by prominent discussions of public and cultural value, including the AHRC 'Interrogating Cultural Value: the case of Shakespeare' project at The Shakespeare Institute (2006–2010), which contributed funding and collegiality to my research. I worked alongside three other researchers with distinct but related concerns (the value of Shakespeare in publicly funded theatre, literary heritage, and the Shakespeare industry). This research has been given further significance by events which suggest that

Shakespeare's value is of ongoing interest and subject to constant debate. These include changes in education policy and national campaigns aiming to proliferate Shakespeare's value organised by the RSC¹.

The topic also marks an extension of my personal research interests, having previously studied the impact of the national curriculum on teachers' choice and use of Shakespeare editions in the classroom (Olive). Additionally, this research has been shaped to a great extent by my own interdisciplinary experiences: applying literary critical techniques to diverse texts, ranging from menus in a study of Australian national identity to life-history recordings in a project on families and food. Incorporating an interdisciplinary element endows this research project with the potential to reach beyond the field of Shakespeare in education: its methodologies and some of the literature discussed may be transferable to the study of other English literary icons taught in schools. This project could have some use value as a model for other interdisciplinary research undertaken in the humanities and social sciences. It may even speak, by way of offering a parallel case, to research concerning the privileging of certain areas in the curriculum for other subjects. In this way, my question about the value of Shakespeare in education, 'a specifically educational' question, 'merge[s] into considerations of political, economic and social systems' (Peim 9).

1.1 Narratives of multiplicity and change: defining key terms

Having established the subject of this thesis, this section acknowledges the plural and dynamic meanings of key terms such as 'Shakespeare', 'value', 'culture' and 'education'. In addition, the way in which they will be deployed in this thesis will be outlined. The meaning of these words is all too often assumed in writing on Shakespeare, rather than used as a spur

¹ I will return to problematise the effects of their campaigns in 4.4.

to analysis. Many authors take for granted that the definitions of such terms are universally established, homogenous and will, as such, be shared by their readers. To do this, however, unhelpfully elides change, fragmentation in and dissent from their use. It will become apparent below that I have taken very broad definitions of these terms. I have most often used their commonplace, rather than any technical or subject-specific, meaning, with the aim of enabling this thesis to consider the widest range of thoughts, actions, and items that might constitute 'Shakespeare', 'education' and so forth.

Up to this point, I have frequently placed 'Shakespeare' inside inverted commas to suggest several things: the way in which he is often-cited, announced almost as a brand-name or endorsement, and the multiple meanings to which the word refers. A non-exhaustive list might include: 'Shakespeare' the person; 'Shakespeare' the body of works; 'Shakespeare' the quasi-discipline taking root from English and Drama (witness the growth in academia of 'Shakespeare studies', with masters degrees dedicated to the subject); and 'Shakespeare' the theatrical, heritage or tourist phenomenon. Each of these might propagate sub-categories. 'Shakespeare' the person, for instance, could be broken down into the child, the grammar school student, lover, husband, father, actor, writer, businessman, Londoner and Stratfordian. Douglas Lanier summarises these Shakespeares succinctly and poetically as: 'The Shakespeare of the London stage, The Shakespeare of the printed page, The rural Shakespeare of Stratford' (147). Michael Bristol, demonstrating the 'complex semantics and patterns of usage' associated with the name 'Shakespeare', adds further categories still, broadening out from the more objective definitions to include the negative connotations the word might carry for some users: Shakespeare is 'a system of cultural institutions, and, by extension, a set of attitudes and dispositions. It defines taste communities and cultural

positioning...it may also signify privilege, exclusion and cultural pretension' (ix). Where Bristol shows Shakespeare to be a loaded term for a certain audience, Lanier ends his list with a definition which illustrates how the term is deliberately invested with meaning by certain groups: 'The increasingly mythic 'Shakespeare' praised by critics and nationalists – and the specific interests they serve' (147). Unless specified otherwise, from now on, it is these multiple and messy meanings which I want to evoke when Shakespeare appears in this thesis².

These overlapping but not identical definitions of 'Shakespeare' illustrate Terry Hawkes' contention that the playwright 'operates simultaneously on a number of levels' in English culture (*Alternative Shakespeares* 1). Chapter six expands on this comment, arguing that Shakespeare's multiplicity within and between a variety of arenas constitutes a form of 'strength in numbers' for his legacy. Hawkes particularly focuses in on the way in which Shakespeare straddles academia and popular culture:

Its 'popular' dimension manages at the same time to be both at odds and at home with the more arcane perceptions of an academic word in which the works have a striking centrality. Shakespeare appears world-wide on T-shirts, postage stamps and credit cards as well as in the titles of learned monographs and Ph.D. dissertations. His name is as familiar in bars and restaurants as it is in classrooms and lecture-halls.

(1)

I will further evidence the way in which, to some extent, definitions of Shakespeare's value overlap between academia and popular culture in chapters three and five. Here Shakespeare's incarnation of these different forms is presented by Hawkes as effortless, yet phrases such as 'that's not Shakespeare' or 'that's not really Shakespeare', which I have

² I do, however, tend to focus on Shakespeare's plays rather than poems, since only they are mandated by the National Curriculum.

heard in the theatre, the living room or on the streets of Stratford are reminders of the fraught and contested nature of his value. I will highlight instances of this throughout the thesis.

To summarise the use of 'value' in this thesis, I am not concerned with an understanding of the term which seeks to quantify the worth of objects (the value of a 1623 folio) or experiences (a trip to the Globe's production of *Titus*) – an endeavour which relates to 'value' defined as 'that amount of some commodity, medium of exchange, etc., which is considered to be an equivalent for something else' (*OED*). Indeed, other than giving general indications as to whether the value of Shakespeare is considered to be high or low by individuals, institutions, documents and so on, this thesis does not seek to measure or quantify his value, monetary or otherwise. In this way, this thesis rejects the now deeply-unfashionable, Leavisite, evaluative function of cultural criticism, an activity which involved determining, studying, and recommending 'good' literature, art and music. This decision is informed by an epistemological belief in the difficulty of such an endeavour; its potentially reductive nature; and the disciplinary nature of this research, which draws on the humanities and education studies rather than economics.

Instead, understanding value as 'the relative status of a thing, or the estimate in which it is held' (*OED*)³, this thesis explores the dynamic socio-cultural and educational processes by which the value of Shakespeare is produced and ascribed. These mechanisms might include requiring children to study his works, developing materials and methods for classroom practice, programmes for INSET, and quoting his works in a script for television. I will discuss

³ Interestingly, these two usages of value are dated by the *OED* as first appearing within eighty years of each other, the former in 1303 and the later in 1380. This discovery destroys any potential endeavour (my first impulse) to describe one meaning as ancient, the other as modern.

these throughout the thesis. Further research might consider studying the effect of giving Shakespeare shelf space in public libraries and commercial bookstores, and knighting scholars who have made significant contributions to the field of Shakespeare studies. This thesis also seeks to describe and then analyse (the nature of) that value – particularly by looking at the way in which it is constructed through discourse employed around the playwright and rationales for his place in education and society. For instance, the value of Shakespeare for students’ ‘personal growth’ can be understood through the discourses of liberal humanism, and later, progressive education, as well as the Romantic emphasis on the individual’s experience. In the tradition of Raymond Williams and the New Left, this research sees cultural criticism as providing opportunities for critiquing the socio-cultural construction of value.

A more recent context for my work on value is provided by the vigorous debates of ‘public value’ which dominated discussions of culture from the 1990s onwards. I outline these, especially in relation to the fields of policy-making, the cultural industries and the arts below. In the majority of literature from this period, value is not explicitly conceived of as an *evaluative* task of establishing a ‘great tradition’ by tracing the inherent value of a work or object: although terms such as ‘quality’ of provision and comparisons of the arts with popular culture activities (which imply the superiority of the former) demonstrate that this Leavisite lineage is not altogether lost. Nor is the definition confined to a monetary sense of value – although under New Labour a judgement of whether an organisation could be seen to offer value was still ostensibly used to determine the allocation of funding. In terms of the party’s definition of good value, the buzzwords of their policy-making included public access, participation, accountability and affordability.

Exploration of value and its implementation in relation to cultural policy was actively encouraged by those in government. The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Tessa Jowell published the essay *Government and the Value of Culture* in 2004. The document opens with the assertion that engagement with culture has a key role to play in alleviating the 'poverty of aspiration' the Labour government then perceived as contributing to a social and economic malaise (4). Defining culture against passive entertainment, as art which 'makes demands not only on the maker or performers but on those to whom the work of art or performance is directed', Jowell simultaneously claimed the government would overcome perceptions of the arts' elitism (4). She argued that culture is at the centre of a happy and healthy society and that, as such, governments must subsidise the arts and offer support through an increased emphasis on the arts in school education. In turn, arts providers must widen participation and provide 'quality' products. The essay concluded with Jowell urging the cultural sector that they are duty-bound to take up the debate (39).

Critics, such as John Holden (working with the think-tank DEMOS), who did so, urging the government towards 'a wholesale reshaping of the way in which public funding of culture is undertaken' (*Capturing Cultural Value* 9) and arguing that cultural policy needs a democratic mandate (*Cultural Value and the Crisis of Legitimacy*). Holden additionally suggested a 'value triangle' model which classifies constructions of value as inherent (or intrinsic: residing *in* an object or artwork), instrumental (the use of culture to accomplish a certain outcome) or institutional (culture as created by the actions of cultural organisation) (*Crisis of Legitimacy* 15).

The government-funded Arts Council – whose 'arts debate' constituted 'their first ever public value enquiry' (Bunting 4) – also rose to Jowell's challenge. They have contributed

significantly to the debate in recent years, leading publications on the value of the arts, with documents such as *Call it a Tenner: The role of pricing in the arts*. The media – notably the publicly funded British Broadcasting Corporation with its public service remit (discussed in detail in chapter five) – has also been active in engaging the public imagination with issues of cultural value. Such broadcasts include the Radio 4 series *National Treasures*, described on its BBC website as ‘the programme that attempts to put a price on culture’, and the BBC2 series *Restoration*, where viewers vote to choose from a selection of buildings needing to be saved. It is with these various and plural senses of value as socially- and interactively-determined, inherent, instrumental and institutional that I will work throughout this thesis. Most significantly, my sense of the definition and evolution of ‘value’ has been shaped through participation in the ‘Interrogating Cultural Value’ project, led by Kate McLuskie at the Shakespeare Institute. In part, the project surveyed different historical and disciplinary trends in cultural value research. These included changes in discourse, the varying scopes of and outcomes for existing work: from the development of alternative frameworks for evaluation and measurement to the use of the term to explore anxieties around the value and application of literary or cultural criticism. The project’s focus emerged as a concern with cultural value as a process of ascription, whereby individuals, institutions, and sectors (public, private, educational, political) play various roles in managing competing claims for the value of particular content. The project’s emphasis on process inflects the thinking of this thesis with value described variously throughout as ‘flowing’, ‘saturating’ and ‘constructed’. It is also manifested in a concern with agency. That is, it asks, ‘who is constructing what, for whom?’ The value of Shakespeare in education, and the discourse used to express it, for instance, must also be considered in relation to its audience and

producers. Audiences for (and in turn producers of) the value of Shakespeare in education are diverse, including parents, students, teachers, schools, policy-makers, theatres, heritage organisations, politicians and the (voting) public. As related to my consideration of popular culture and education, theatre-goers, tourists, and consumers of Shakespearean products (from paperback plays to *YouTube* sketches) also feature in my non-exhaustive list of the audience for and producers of Shakespeare's value.

The definition of two other terms – 'culture' and 'education' – can be discussed more briefly here. Not because they are less complex – indeed Williams describes 'culture' as one of the most complicated words in the English language (87) – but because they feature in this thesis in specific and pragmatic ways which delimit their meaning. As with my understanding of the terms 'Shakespeare' and 'value', the following chapters discuss a range of authors' uses and conceptions of the term 'culture'.

Culture, for instance, is conceived of by some as an end, by others as a means. In terms of the former, the word has been used for several centuries to refer to exclusively 'high' or 'elite' culture: art forms such as theatre, literature, painting and music. It has been described as seen as 'the work and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity' (Williams 90). Such a definition of culture was and, all too frequently, *is still* defined against entertainment, 'mass' pursuits or 'popular' pastimes, as already illustrated by Tessa Jowell's usage of the term. This continuity suggests that the critique of the New Left (delineated later in this chapter) wholly/permanently failed to realise its aim of rethinking and reconstructing the term. In this sense 'culture' is connected directly to education. It is objectified as a group of items, or experiences, exposure to which will lead, through the mystified processes of cultivation and education, to a concrete outcome (being educated, being cultured).

Yet, 'culture', in its more egalitarian, anthropological sense of 'the society we live in', can also be figured as a *means* of education. For progressive educationalists such as Ivan Illich and A.S. Neill, as well as the psychologist Jerome Bruner, education is culturally saturated: not only do we learn informally from our everyday existence and participation in society but our education systems operate within those of our wider culture (ix). Bruner, for example, points to the way in which cultural expectations of what children should achieve drive educational provision: 'How one conceives of education, we have finally come to recognize, is a function of how one conceives of the culture and its aims, professed and otherwise' (x). Where I use the term 'culture' myself, as opposed to citing or analysing others' usage, it is this anthropological meaning of 'a particular way of life' for a nation or a tribe, the objects and activities of a people, group or time which I wish to invoke (Williams 92). While such usage has a homogenising tendency, it has the merit of treating even the most mundane objects and activities as important – in contrast to the evaluative and hierarchical use of 'culture'.

Similarly, 'education', as used in this thesis, generally refers not to (the judgement of) a condition of being (educatedness), but practically, to a state-run activity in schools: specifically, secondary school education. I have made this the focus of my research since many available resources and publications are concerned with students from ages eleven to sixteen, an age range during which students are most likely to be taught Shakespeare. However, I also recognise that it is an activity sometimes undertaken by other agents (state-funded or commercial): for example, the education departments of the RSC, Shakespeare's Globe and the SBT. The way in which these organisations link their provision to educational requirements in schools will be the subject of my research in chapter four. State-conceived

notions of education inflect popular culture too, through the public service remit of the BBC. Education is also a resource drawn on in commercial, popular cultural forms such as advertising⁴.

Due to the limited scope available in this thesis, I consider further philosophical and psychological issues around education (i.e. What constitutes education? How do people learn?) in the following chapters only where they impact on the value of Shakespeare in education. Excellent, often radical, and sometimes polemic considerations of the nature of education as a whole can be found in the existing literature such as Neill's *Summerhill*, Illich's *Deschooling Society*, and Frank Furedi's *Wasted: Why Education Isn't Educating* to name only a few examples. Having touched on the existence of this body of literature, it is appropriate in the following sections to offer a consideration of the achievements and limitations of writing on Shakespeare in education as well as the impetus they give to new research on the subject.

1.2 The enduring influence of early twentieth-century cultural criticism

There is a small but significant body of literature – mainly cultural criticism, histories of the English discipline and writing on education – which informs current understandings of the value of Shakespeare in education and which this thesis builds on. I will outline the most significant works in these areas, in terms of their influence on this thesis, in 1.3. In the following sections, in addition to showing how this literature can be expanded, I will explain *why* its expansion is necessary: I will argue that the study of Shakespeare in education has been, and continues to be, relatively neglected by the Shakespeare academy. Furthermore, I

⁴ I will illustrate this with reference to specific examples in chapter five.

will demonstrate that new developments around school Shakespeare call for a re-examination of the topic.

I want to start, however, with an in-depth discussion of the early-twentieth century work of F.R. Leavis. His continuing impact on education today provides an invaluable case study with which to demonstrate further the importance of engaging with cultural criticism from the inception of universal education onwards; responses to this criticism during the last century; and both their contributions to shaping values for Shakespeare within the English curriculum. It is his controversial attempt to delineate the value of specific literary genres and authors – demonstrated throughout his work but especially prominent in titles such as *The Great Tradition* and ‘Valuation in Criticism’ – as well as to fix the value of education and culture (rather than Shakespeare), which earns him a prominent place in this literature review. Although Leavis wrote three Shakespearean essays included in the collection *The Common Pursuit* and used speeches from *Macbeth* to evolve his close reading methods (Storer 182), his study of the novel in *The Great Tradition* is among his best-remembered literary criticism. Leavis is frequently reviled today, yet I will argue that his influence is still strongly discernable in the English classroom and, as such, is worthy of consideration.

Leavis is one of the figures of the first-half of the twentieth century, who attracts a weight of criticism for his apparently elitist attitudes towards literature. John Carey has argued that many modernist authors, such as T.S. Eliot, H.G. Wells and Virginia Woolf, also subscribed to such attitudes. In works such as *Mass Civilization, Minority Culture*, Leavis appoints a select group as the guardians of ‘culture’ – a term which he defined against the mass-produced, the commercial and the popular as involving, among other things, morality, tradition and

literature⁵. Elsewhere he expressed his desire to teach only those ‘positively intelligent’ students and resisted the extension of the university system to include polytechnics (Johnson 110-111). Leavis is further scorned for his ‘embattled stance’; the ‘outlaw’ narrative which he created for his own, and Q.D. Leavis’, career as well as for the reception of their work; his tendency to mythologize history and society in his work⁶; as well as his over-insistent, hostile, and ‘polemical’ tone (Mulhern 317).

Recent critics have argued that in striving to be authoritative, Leavis became authoritarian since although he seems to invite dialogue, with his trademark question ‘this is so, isn’t it?’ (‘Valuation in Criticism’ 277), he crosses the ‘rather fine line between, on the one hand, *aiming at* a shared perception of the human world and, on the other, simply arriving at your own view of it and requiring the rest of the world to accept that’ (Storer 18). Leavis has also been considered authoritarian in his imposition of a discourse whose terms (‘Life’, ‘value’ etc.) he resisted defining until the end of his career. To give but one example, in *The Great Tradition*, Leavis forgoes any positive definition of ‘value’ instead relying on its relative meanings (288). In doing so, he excluded from any real sense of dialogue readers who lacked the appropriate, and specifically Leavisite, cultural and intellectual capital or literary critical education. A further consensus exists that Leavis’ criticism represents a ‘substitute politics’ (Storer 121), even the ‘repression’ and ‘categorical dissolution’ of politics (Mulhern 311). Moreover, Leavis’ values have been contested using critical theories which argue that he ignores gender (feminism); fails to engage with issues of class and politics (Marxism, cultural

⁵ A binary of high(brow) and low(brow) culture is often used to refer to such elitist cultural views, although it is erroneous to identify Leavis as their originator or even as someone who frequently used them.

⁶ For further discussion of this see Williams (‘Culture’) and Baldick (183).

materialism); and stresses the importance of English literature and ‘Shakespearean qualities’ in a way that disadvantages the literature and culture of other nations (post-colonialism)⁷.

The volume of this criticism sits uneasily with the extent to which Leavisite views of the value of literature, education and culture are still prevalent in schools today (see 2.2 and 3.1). Furthermore, left-wing authors have found it concerning that these values continue to exist outside of the classroom, in convictions about the relative worth of various pastimes.

These include strongly held but poorly-evidenced and under-interrogated beliefs that ‘Shakespeare *is* better than Super-Nintendo’ or that ‘school bus trips to the local [Shakespeare] festival might save...children from the seductions of rock videos’ (Bristol 109).

The criteria for Shakespeare’s superiority in these statements draw on, and prioritise, a hidden moral and educational agenda which is imposed on these children (whose primary objective in undertaking these pastimes is probably entertainment). There is a clear strength of feeling, demonstrated in left-wing academic movements such as cultural studies that these prejudices are outdated and unacceptable⁸. In statements such as Bristol’s and Jowell’s (see 1.1), Leavis’ abiding influence on the teaching of English is evident in the dismissal of popular cultural forms and the tastes and experience of the masses. In returning to Leavis’ influence at various points throughout this thesis, I will demonstrate the way in which cultural criticism from past eras continues to have an enduring impact on the subject of English and the construction of its value, which consequently affects students’ experience of Shakespeare, among others. In chapter two, I will demonstrate that the legacy of his

⁷ In fact, Peim suggests that this devaluing of the cultural experiences of many students of English has characterised the subject as whole, extending beyond the work of one man (5).

⁸ A comparable elitism is, however, discernable in other academic disciplines. Jerome de Groot, for example, looks at ways in which academic historians have consistently neglected popular forms of history, which they view as a debasement of the subject. He also argues that, like Leavis, ‘academic history sees its mission as to protect the public from “the threats of consumer society”’ (5).

views on English for personal and moral growth is evident in successive governments' educational policy with detailed reference to his own writing and the National Curriculum document. In chapter three, I will show the continuing influence of his literary critical methods, especially close reading, on pedagogies for teaching Shakespeare.

Immediately, however, I want to reflect on Leavis' attitude towards his own legacy and survey the critical consensus on whether he achieved it. I will argue that his intention and foresight, as well as his choice of education 'as the appropriate terrain of resistance to the established system' (Baldick 169), relates directly to his longevity. It is notable that Leavis was explicitly aware of the potential for, and actively sought to have, an enduring influence on the discipline of English and, beyond that, literary culture more widely. Working under the influence of critical forbears, such as Matthew Arnold, and responding to a growing body of early-twentieth century education policy, including the 1921 document, *The Teaching of English in England* (known as the *Newbolt Report*), Leavis engaged confidently and self-reflexively in (re)defining the role and responsibility of the critic as bringing direct influence to bear on educational thought, practice and pedagogy. All this was done, however, without engaging in government policy-making, since Leavis resolutely eschewed the political establishment. Nonetheless, the importance of education-specific, cultural criticism was outlined in the very first issue of *Scrutiny*: 'To say that the life of a country is determined by its educational ideals is a commonplace' (Knights and Culver 6). Moreover, the epitaph inscribed on Leavis' tombstone is suggestive of his priorities: 'teacher and critic'.

One of Leavis' students, inspired by this engagement with educational issues, was C.B. Cox. Cox would later become co-editor of *The Black Papers on Education* and *Critical Quarterly*, as well as the author of the National Curriculum for English. This relationship establishes a

direct link between Leavis' tuition and the contents of the curriculum document. That traces of Leavisite belief in literature as self-improving, as differentiated from other texts, and as a lynchpin of English culture and a cure for social ills, to name a few, are clearly visible in the curriculum to this day will be demonstrated in chapters two and three.

In addition to his teaching at Cambridge, achievements attributed to Leavis' intervention in education through his criticism include identifying the purpose of English at a time when it 'was an expanding subject in schools and the academy but had no clear rationale' (Bergonzi 56). He constructed English as a defence against the 'more alluring "education" on offer from newspapers and advertisements'; as 'education against the environment' of mass culture (Baldick 187); and as giving command of 'the art of living' (Leavis and Thompson 108). Leavis also resisted demands for English (and education more broadly) to serve the nation's economy – a subject tackled in relation to education generally by George Sampson. His success in this area is attested to by Cox's emphasis in the National Curriculum on the personal and moral value of a literary education (explored further in chapter two).

Leavis can be further credited with the professionalization of the subject, ensuring that English made the transition from 'the profession of letters' to the academy (Bergonzi 56). He stretched the boundaries of criticism to include teacher training as part of the critic's scope. Publications such as his collaboration on the textbook-style *Culture and Environment* with the teacher Denys Thompson in order 'to educate the educator' (107) have led to his appraisal as 'that most potent of educators, a teacher of teachers' (Bergonzi 47). Having adopted teachers as 'his chosen agency of cultural resistance' (178), Leavis attempted to reach out to them through his editorship of the journal *Scrutiny*, which discussed educational topics of the day including the psychological needs and behaviours of children;

the writings of Piaget and Dewey; progressive schools such as Summerhill; and reviewed text books and other resources for secondary education. His influence spread rapidly through the founding of teaching associations, such as the National Association of Teaching English (co-founded by Thompson), which in turn began to produce its own *Scrutiny*-inflected journal, *The Use of English*, still issued today. Thereby Leavis achieved what Baldick refers to as ‘his projection into the school curriculum of the *Scrutiny* critique of contemporary civilization’ (187).

There is widespread agreement among writers on Leavis that through his deliberate and strategic engagement with English in education, he was, in his own time, and continues to be, a ‘visible presence’ in university English and education departments, on teacher training courses, in teaching journals and books (Mulhern 108, Bergonzi 54). Leavis then is a particularly forceful example of the influence of the values of cultural critics in determining, or provoking lively debate around, the value of literature in education long after their ideas have been superseded in academia.

1.3 Reviewing histories of English, politicised critique, and cultural studies

Apart from the cultural criticism of those, like Leavis, who played a role in determining the value of Shakespeare in twentieth-century English education, literature on the playwright’s value is dominated by three significant trends in criticism. The first of these is constituted by cultural histories of the development of English as a subject; the second by the highly politicised critiques of the 1970s onwards; and the third by the turn to cultural studies (both of which in a way depend on Leavis, in as much as they overwhelmingly represent a backlash against his values and, to a lesser extent, methods). To begin this overview of cultural histories where my consideration of cultural criticism ended, Francis Mulhern’s *The Moment*

of Scrutiny contextualises the particular influence of Leavis and the journal which he edited within the growth of English as a subject, English culture and 'taste' more generally. Others such as Chris Baldick's *The Social Mission of English Criticism*, and William St.Clair's *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*, reach back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. They construct narratives of how mass literacy and access to literature was won against the wishes of the cultural elites – and on what terms: what should those outside the ruling classes have access to, when, and for what purpose? St.Clair, for example, describes the way in which literacy was eventually offered to the public by the ruling elite to forestall revolution. Similarly, Baldick highlights other paternalistic rationales for the widespread teaching of English: that of literature as a civilizing influence and as a source of moral fortitude, especially against the allegedly corrupting influence of mass culture (thereby exposing the origins of Leavis' thinking in a nostalgic moment that was already, in some ways, past and irreversible even as Leavis was writing). Useful as these works are for relating narratives of the evolution of values which inform my analysis of the present National Curriculum, they are overwhelmingly characterised by a concern with history. They are not energetically engaged in an activist struggle, for example, to liberate the present and future from the still-felt implications of these values for literature.

Peter Widdowson's edited collection of essays, *Re-reading English*, then stands out among other cultural histories of the discipline in its explicit sense of activism, possibly reactionism – since it was written in response to the Cambridge crisis in English of 1981. Its context and contents both render it part of the tradition of heavily-politicised (left-wing), English literary and cultural criticism from the period, reacting against the Thatcher government and its Conservative values for the arts, humanities, education and society. It combines the

description of what English has been in the past, both ideally and in actuality, with impassioned yet well-reasoned suggestions of directions in which the subject might develop – what we now identify as new historicism, cultural materialism and interdisciplinarity. Foreshadowing Hawkes' writing in *Alternative Shakespeares: Volume 2*, Widdowson is adamant that 'English is necessarily a site on which social meanings are constructed' (14), and a tool with which they must be deconstructed. Moreover, he asserts that these social meanings (or cultural values) represent legitimate material for study in the discipline. This theoretically-informed recognition of education as a political activity by Widdowson and his contributors has been essential in establishing the rationale for and theoretical framework of this project. His type of critique has made it possible to sustain a discussion of meta- and micro- government policy on the value of Shakespeare, as well as the consideration of partisan and enduring values around the author, as part of a research project in English (see chapter two).

Widdowson's overtly politicised account of the growth of English as a subject is indicative of a burgeoning body of literature in the late eighties and mid-nineties which relates the condition of culture, literature and education to the then prevailing political conditions: those of the Thatcher, and later Major, governments. For instance, an anthology of essays edited by John Joughin, *Shakespeare and National Culture*, illustrates the grounding of Shakespeare's cultural value in concepts of nationalism, exploring the 'powerful collusion of Shakespeare and education to shape a national culture' (4). It depicts, with concern, the cultivation of these forces, towards the satisfaction of various social agendas, by these two successive Conservative governments. As such, it is part of the body of work in British cultural criticism from 1970s onwards, also including Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield's

Political Shakespeare, which combines explicit criticism of specific governments with Marxist and other left-wing critical theory, to examine the value of Shakespeare in education.

Other works in this vein include, in the year the National Curriculum came into force, Isobel Armstrong's 'Thatcher's Shakespeare?' This article correlates the proliferation of radical strains of Shakespeare performance and criticism with historical periods where Britain had been governed by parties on the political right⁹. Published within a few months of Armstrong, Ann Thompson's article for a dedicated education issue of *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 'King Lear and the politics of teaching Shakespeare', built on her predecessors' work by elucidating the way in which the rise of a self-consciously political Shakespeare criticism was interested not just 'in the political "content" of the plays but in the political implications and ramifications of the construction of "Shakespeare" in contemporary twentieth-century British culture' (140).

Nick Peim's *Critical Theory and the English Teacher*, published amid vigorous discussion of the Major government's revisions to the National Curriculum, constitutes a call for those working in English to acknowledge the political elements of its rhetoric, assumptions and beliefs through the use of theory (6). Theory is defined in a way which demystifies it for teachers as 'the process of questioning and making explicit fundamental principles' and as helping to achieve 'a more consciously and self-consciously aware practice', although specific critical theories including discourse theory, semiotics, psychoanalysis and deconstruction are embraced throughout (6). He takes a strong stand, if not in terms of national party politics, then certainly in terms of the politics of the subject. Peim declares himself 'against English – against its current practices and the values they represent' and in

⁹ Whether the election of a Conservative/Liberal Democrat government in 2010 will provoke a similarly politically-aware critical/theatrical response remains to be seen.

favour of deconstructing its 'ideologically loaded nature' (4-5). The book conveys a clear activist objective – the hope that teachers will apply theory in their teaching practice (including that of *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello* and *The Tempest*, among many non-Shakespearean examples) and thereby change the nature of English, from the grassroots up. Beyond this, Peim desires that teachers will posit the question 'in whose interests is English – in its present forms – maintained?' (8). Moreover, that they will abandon a traditional model of the subject founded on a myth of the 'natural order of things', which masks the educational establishment's elitist tastes, processes of social distinction, and limiting visions of the roles of language and literature¹⁰. In its place, they will 'reconfigure English so that it addresses language and textual practices in general – in the media, in institutions, in everyday social exchanges' (8). This is something which the Cox Report and successive National Curriculums had already gestured towards in requiring the teaching of both literary and non-literary texts, however this agenda may have appeared threatened by Major's neoconservative emphasis on a back-to-basics education policy (DfEE/QCA 36, see also 3.1). Such works represent a peak in politically-radical literary critique in English that has since abated. Despite thirteen years in power before its demise at the general election in May 2010, few accounts exist of the impact of New Labour's education policies on English as a whole, or Shakespeare specifically, exist¹¹. In dedicating chapter two to a comparison of Conservative and New Labour agendas and education policy as they affect the value of

¹⁰ See, for instance, Kingman's assertion that, 'The rhythms of our daily speech and writing are haunted not only by the rhythms of our nursery rhymes, but also by the rhythms of Shakespeare, Blake, Edward Lear, Lewis Carroll, the Authorised Version of the Bible' (2.21) discussed in 2.4 and 5.8.

¹¹ Although some do exist of education policy under New Labour: see Pring ('Labour Government Policy') and Whitty ('Twenty Years of Progress?').

Shakespeare, I hope to build on the approaches of the aforementioned research to redress this lack.

While Michael Bristol, in *Big-time Shakespeare*, traces the role of Thatcherite policy in commercialising the playwright he also conveys the way in which the 'phenomenon' of Shakespeare is collectively 'generated out of the innumerable small-time accomplishments of actors and directors, advertising copy-writers, public relations specialists, as well as scholars, editors, and educators' (6). Using models from economics (such as 'supply' and 'demand'), Bristol delineates how and why Shakespeare continues to have cultural currency in British society with reference to examples from modern popular culture throughout. In this way, his book is emblematic of another genre of work on the value of Shakespeare which is concerned not with old ruling elites, or recent politics, but with his worth as constructed by present mundane, cultural and commercial practices. In doing so, it draws on the growth of cultural studies in academia during the second half of the twentieth century.

Other interdisciplinarity (or multidisciplinary) are evidenced in such work by the influence of cultural economics, media studies, anthropology and sociology. Gary Taylor, for example, in *Cultural Selection*, explores how and why certain cultural objects or memories survive and prevail while others perish. Where Bristol confines himself to Britain, Taylor employs a global frame of reference. To compare further Bristol's and Taylor's approaches, Bristol's discourse is predominantly that of cultural economics, deploying vocabulary such as 'the Shakespeare industry', cultural 'product' and 'market', where literary critics have traditionally written of Shakespeare and his audiences. In contrast, Taylor uses the mechanisms of individual memory and psychology to illustrate his discussion. Meanwhile, two of Taylor's other works, *Reinventing Shakespeare* and 'The Incredible Shrinking Bard',

deal more specifically with Shakespeare's fate in print, in theatre, higher education and popular culture with the latter title suggesting, quite uniquely among the criticism, that Shakespeare's cultural lifespan is finite (see also 6.2).

Christie Desmet's 'Paying attention in Shakespeare parody: from Tom Stoppard to *YouTube*' studies a more recent addition to the range of possible texts on which Cultural Studies might draw. Through her analysis of user-generated videos on this website, she usefully complicates Taylor's work by suggesting that while Shakespeare's cultural authority may be waning, his cultural availability is on the rise through new cultural and technological mediums¹². Her evidence consists of the growing number of Shakespeare parodies posted on the website *YouTube*. One of the issues which both she and Taylor raise is whether such proliferation is meaningful. This question contributes to exploring the themes of this thesis in its insistence that Shakespeare must not only exist but have value. In the same issue of *Shakespeare Survey*, Olwen Terris adds to the minority discussion of Shakespeare's lack of cultural currency. The article demonstrates with reference to viewing figures and audience feedback that Shakespeare was never truly 'popular' on television, from the medium's nascence through to recent years ('Shakespeare and British Television'). Furthermore, she argues that the viewing of televised Shakespeare plays was always restricted to a limited audience due to the reception technology as well as competition from other forms of televised entertainment, and increasingly, other channels.

Desmet's focus is largely on schoolchildren's contributions to proliferating Shakespearean parody in the United States, while Terris is concerned with the screening and reception of televised Shakespeare plays. Such trends in Shakespearean research, influenced by the work

¹² At least where cultural authority is defined by the unilateral depositing of knowledge about Shakespeare from intellectual to the masses.

of cultural studies, has informed my own consideration of the intersection of the value of Shakespeare in education and popular culture (see chapter five). My addition to this sector of Shakespearean criticism also contributes towards consolidating the use of such methodologies and sources. My research differs from Desmet's in its focus on England and on institutional implementations of Shakespeare rather than children's response to such experiences. It is distinct from that of Terris in eschewing a focus on the broadcasting of plays to look instead at the way in which Shakespeare on television is now dominated by adaptation, quotation, and biography.

Another recent critical trend, whose methods and ideas I develop in this thesis, is represented by the critiques of Shakespeare tourism in the writing of Douglas Lanier and Barbara Hodgdon. Lanier's *Shakespeare and Popular Modern Culture*, describes how different understandings of Shakespeare (from the 'Shakespeare of rural Warwickshire' to the universally great playwright) are tied to different geographical locations from Mary Arden's house to the Shakespeare Festivals of North America. His work reinforces notions of Shakespeare's multiplicity and fragmentation, specifically as connected to a sense of place. Hodgdon's concluding chapter in *The Shakespeare Trade* also approaches a cultural criticism of Shakespeare through geography, reading Stratford through its preoccupation with Shakespeare and the tourist trade. She traces Shakespeare's omnipresence in the town and his simultaneous absence – even from the sites most associated with his life. Writing four years before Lanier, she demonstrates the value of Shakespeare created by the tourist trade: as a national icon, as something that can be possessed and transported globally through the Shakespeare industry. Both Lanier's and Hodgdon's critiques elucidate the relationship between tourism and education at these sites, demonstrating the way that these sectors

triangulate with the product or brand that is Shakespeare to perpetuate cultural value both for themselves and for him. The influence of their critiques on other scholars was evidenced in the seminar on 'Stratford' at the Shakespeare Association of America congress in 2011. It was described by its convenor, Katherine Scheil, as considering:

the location of Shakespeare's birth and death and its many manifestations in literature, art, theatre history, tourism and Bardolatry: how is 'Stratford' constructed in various times and places, and for what ends? Papers might explore Stratford in biographies of Shakespeare; its influence on Shakespeare as a playwright; its absence from his works; as a site of literary pilgrimage...; non-Warwickshire Stratfords as extensions of English domesticity and nationalistic ideology.

Thus Scheil demonstrates the growing emphasis on the value of place to author and vice versa, suggesting the growing influence of new critical theories like ecocriticism.

Without adopting that particular evolving critical tradition, this thesis nonetheless includes a reflection on the educational experiences offered to visitors to the SBT houses (as well as students visiting the education departments of Shakespeare's Globe and the RSC). Reconsiderations of Shakespeare, place and value are also necessitated by the ephemeral nature of sources for such research: many of the exhibitions Hodgdon analyses have been overhauled and other attractions in the town closed, reflecting changing cultural and economic values in the intervening decade between her publication and this thesis. Another way in which such a focus pushes the boundaries of research traditions in English and education is in redressing the lack of attention to learning outside the classroom. It enables this thesis to acknowledge in chapters four and five that not all children's learning about the value of Shakespeare occurs in formal educational settings. Rather, it is also impacted on through school trips to the Shakespeare houses or by the 'facts' of Shakespeare's life represented on television

1.4 Reviewing writing on education, from trade books to teaching resources

Writing on education, from literature on the curriculum at large to the state school system as a whole, has enabled me to locate Shakespeare within larger debates about the value of education (especially in chapter two). It includes a body of educational criticism which devalues education today. The existence of a national narrative or myth of perpetual decline regarding a wide range of English preoccupations from the national economy to families eating together has been noted by Hewison (*Culture and Consensus* 305) and by Jackson, Smith and Olive ('Myths of the Family Meal' 2009). This sense of a growing and unclosable gap between real and ideal experience, represented as a collective feeling of failure, also applies to education. It is evidenced by many of the programmes in appendix one – several of which frame their content within the context of missed government targets e.g. for literacy¹³. Such a narrative is also testified to by the wealth of literature which tackles public perceptions of flaws in the education system, from Cox and Dyson's *Black Papers* to Peter Abbs' *Living Powers: The Arts in Education* and most recently Furedi's *Wasted*. These attack the negative influence of progressivism, the lack of arts education and authority in schools respectively. They assume (moreover, seek to prove) that the failings of education are both produced by, and further jeopardise, culture in England. Without subscribing to their arguments, such literature is essential educational context for my research: it establishes a precedent for thinking about the two-way relationship between education and culture which will dominate this thesis.

¹³ More rarely do these programmes explain how over-active target setting may exacerbate or even create failure in the education system.

The publication of these books which aim for a readership among the general public and teaching profession, perhaps to a greater extent than aspiring to an academic audience, are part of a trend which Stephen Ball identifies as the overall growth of education as a major political issue since the mid-twentieth century. He relates this to an increase in hyperactivism in education policy over the last three decades with reference to statistics about the number of policy documents written and revised within limited time spans. His argument that change is visible at a surface level without resulting in radical alterations to education is supported by the research of Richard Pring and Geoff Whitty ('Twenty Years of Progress?'). Pring and Whitty arrive at similar conclusions, in different publications, about the consensus underlying party politics. They argue that the Conservative and Labour governments from 1978-2010 articulated identical values distinguished only by different discourses ('spin'). Consensus between these parties on education negates the possibility of deep transformation. Hyperactivism, in such a context, is suggestive of a situation where successive governments target resources and policy ineffectually at the same stubborn 'problems'. The implications of this for Shakespeare in education, including his construction as a problem area within English, will be reflected on throughout the thesis.

Shifting the emphasis from policy to pedagogy, I want to conclude this section by considering the body of literature constituted by responses to Shakespeare in education policy aimed at teachers of English, such as Lesley Aers and Nigel Wheale's *Shakespeare in the Changing Curriculum*, Martin Blockside's *Shakespeare in Education* and Jon Davison and John Moss' *Issues in English Teaching*. The three collections of essays and articles relate the changing demands of the curriculum and A-level syllabi to ways to meet, and sometimes resist them, through classroom practice. As with Cox's writing and some of the cultural criticism explored

above, this literature gives a strong sense of reaction to the curriculum at various critical points in history. The quantity of this literature means that it still dominates research on Shakespeare in education: this is evidenced in results for a search for 'Shakespeare' and 'education' on *JStor* or any other such database. In terms of quality, much of it is forthright in offering immediate solutions to particular policy interventions in teaching.

These features, which constitute a strength for their intended audience of educators, render them, however, quickly outdated (by further policy changes) and limited for other audiences in their concern with specific pedagogic exercises. Furthermore, the tradition, once prevalent in criticism of the Thatcher period, of connecting pedagogic specificities to meta-questions of politics, education and culture seems to have been emaciated in the intervening years. In part, this can be explained by the change of government to the ostensibly more teacher-friendly Labour leadership in 1997. Additionally, a long-term effect of the National Curriculum – a document characterised by a prescriptivism – may have been to spread its narrow concerns to writing on classroom English, limiting its focus.

Educational research on Shakespeare is characterised by the local, anecdotal, under-theorised and unreflexive. In the course of my research, I have encountered many reports from projects which researchers have undertaken with a single group of students (for instance, Coles 'Testing Shakespeare to the limit' and Leach 'Student teachers and the experience of English'). Potentially worthwhile because of the depth and focus such a project allows, this kind of research becomes problematic when used (as it often is) to generalise about the value of Shakespeare on students' education and welfare; or to boast of students' engagement in lessons on the Bard, without taking into consideration the effect of the enthusiastic researcher's presence or the novelty of the activities which differ from

the mundane, average classroom. Such research adds value to Shakespeare: it rarely asks *why* Shakespeare is valuable.

This research with all its limitations, however, ameliorates the general lack of engagement with Shakespeare in education shown by much of the Shakespeare academy. Despite formal education being the most common way in which the population encounters his work, and hence formative of their attitudes towards it, education is under-examined in 'scholarly' Shakespearean publications and international conferences. Happily there are some exceptions which prove the rule. The Capital Centre at the University of Warwick is engaged in ongoing collaborative research with the RSC. Furthermore, the British Shakespeare Association conference has shown a commitment to airing educational issues. When education-specific slots are scheduled, however, they are preoccupied with individual accounts of teaching practice or with workshops on specific techniques for the school classroom (which, in turn, discourages many academics from attending). They are well attended by school teachers and drama lecturers but only to a negligible extent by those who drive the direction of Shakespeare studies, who establish Shakespeare's texts and contexts, his staging and adaptation, through research. Andrew Murphy's *Shakespeare for the People* offers a detailed account of the author's working-class readership during the nineteenth-century, both inside the classroom and at home. However, publications on Shakespeare in education such as this, which go beyond describing and recommending classroom practice to deal with theoretical or political issues, are rarely forthcoming. This is especially conspicuous in comparison to the volume of titles on performance history, literary criticism and the textual study of Shakespeare. With almost every child nationally experiencing Shakespeare in the classroom, there is room for much more detailed research

in this area. This thesis aims to go some way towards redressing this imbalance. It also constitutes an appeal for more re-evaluations of Shakespeare in education which ask, not 'how to', but 'why' teach Shakespeare?

Furthermore, significant recent events have contributed to the impetus for new research on Shakespeare in education. They include the RSC's 'Study Shakespeare: time for change' and 'Stand up for Shakespeare' campaigns in 2006 and 2008; the introduction of a humanities diploma award for school students (as an alternative to existing academic or vocational awards, forecast to commence 2011); the abandonment of the (SATs) testing of Shakespeare at key stage 3 in 2008; the 2009 party conference speeches, ahead of what proved to be a dramatic general election the following year; and the extension and updating of the Cambridge School Shakespeare series to include, for example, James Stredder's *The North Face of Shakespeare*. Building on the strengths of this educational research and determined to fill some of the fissures in the existing literature, the following section elaborates suitable methodological tools and sources for addressing the key issues of this thesis.

1.5 Research methodologies for exploring the value of Shakespeare

The aim of this research, as stated above, is to explore how Shakespeare is valued in education. Taking the epistemological stance that his value is constructed through numerous mundane as well as academic texts, I have collected data from a wide range of sources. These include policy documents (representing government constructions of his value); anthologies of pedagogic resources and teaching journals (representing teachers' constructions of his value); the websites, pamphlets, programmes, and events produced by heritage organisations and theatres; and televisual material from documentaries to commercials representing his value as conceived by public service broadcasters and

marketing professionals. The spread of my sources across various educational and cultural domains has been essential to my concern to demonstrate the way in which values for Shakespeare are generated from and sustained by a two-way exchange between formal educational settings and wider society.

Much of the construction of Shakespeare's value is achieved through the use of language – often in combination with pictures and moving images – which renders a method of close reading particularly suitable. The type of close reading practiced in this thesis is more than a little informed by the constructionist rationale of discourse analysis and the shift in that discipline to include the written text – especially mundane, non-literary, in everyday and popular culture as an object of study alongside the spoken word. Discourse analysis includes both an older, Foucauldian tradition of identifying different types of discourse in a given text as well as a more recent orientation which (like this thesis) is concerned with language as dynamic rather than fixed. Eschewing an analysis of language as free-standing, it instead sees it as embedded in broader social practices and institutional identities (Hepburn and Potter 180, 185). Moreover, discourse analysis views language as 'constructed' in that it is built out of individual, institutional and cultural resources (words, categories, ideas and worldviews). Yet it is also 'constructive' in that it helps to build and stabilize these resources, practices, identities and institutions (185).

Discourse analysis has aided me in writing about the value of Shakespeare in education since it facilitates the exploration of questions about *how* a text is assembled to offer a particular version of values, or facts. Its practitioners ask, for example, how a text fits within a particular practice or set of practices (writing policy or lesson plans or the script for a television show) or institution (academia, government, tourism); and how a text permits

certain readings and resists others. Such a methodology has allowed me to draw out the multiple, layered, contradictory, intentional, unwitting, explicit and implicit values which cohere in any one text – and to understand them through their social and institutional *context*.

My sources include a vast quantity of under-used research which already exists into teaching Shakespeare in the secondary school classroom in teaching journals and other publications for the profession. The re-use of data is an efficient way to conduct research¹⁴. It is a practice increasingly endorsed in the social sciences by, for example, the ESRC and now frequently applied to qualitative as well as quantitative data sets (Jackson et al. 'Families remembering food' 2). Caveats for the re-use of data include the need to ensure their relevance and to address the fit between the objectives of the original and new research (7). Having taken this into consideration in selecting sources, I have been able to use records of classroom practice available in pedagogic literature to achieve a longitudinal perspective – spanning at least twenty years (and in places, almost a century). This is crucial to developing my argument that Shakespeare's value results from continuous processes, such as policy-making and the classroom teaching of his works, whether they involve accretion or contestation. Such an aim could never have been entirely realised through the collection of new empirical research.

Other reasons for not undertaking empirical research in this thesis, beyond the observation of several RSC education events, include several (im)practicalities: the need to identify and attend the few sessions each year where Shakespeare is taught, as well as the constraints of gaining access to school environments. Neither of these is insurmountable, as much

¹⁴ The lack of a large time-span between the original publication of the data and its re-use negates some of the concerns that such material must be extensively re-contextualised in successive research (Jackson et al 3).

educational research shows. However, having conducted previous empirical research on Shakespeare and the National Curriculum in schools, I was not convinced that attitudes or practices had changed sufficiently to warrant undertaking a similar study again. Rather, my vicarious experience of the classroom through reading pedagogic literature dating from the 1950s onwards suggested a degree of circularity in the issues around Shakespeare confronting students and teachers (for instance, the barrier to learning posed by the historical language), despite technological and pedagogical change. One criticism of using such resources is that they are written by teachers, academics, and education officers – even though some of them report student behaviour or even directly quote students, there is a lack of student perspective. That this is characteristic of the thesis itself relates partly to choices made in response to the constraints of time but also to the sense in which students are still overwhelmingly figured as recipients rather than producers of Shakespeare's value. Research projects which follow the rise of user-generated content on Shakespeare, from *YouTube* to *Twitter*, offer a useful antidote to this (Desmet, Linnemann).

The topicality of this research is on the one hand its strength, and on the other a weakness. Its vulnerability to change – the ephemeral nature of its sources and the hyperactivism in education policy which it seeks to describe mean that its content may be rapidly outdated. However, this negative aspect must be balanced with the strength that such data and foci lend the research in terms of the opportunity to examine critically a particular moment in Shakespeare's cultural and educational afterlife. The overall fitness for purpose of these frameworks, sources and methodologies will be demonstrated in the ensuing analysis. I will return to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of my research design in the conclusion

(6.3). Meanwhile, the following section outlines in brief the content of the remaining chapters.

1.6 Four domains: policy, pedagogy, practice and popular culture

This chapter has so far established the research questions of this thesis, defined its key terms, reviewed the literature for its strengths and weaknesses, and outlined the methodology by which this thesis will make an original contribution to research. The final section (1.7) provides a brief historical context for this thesis, ranging from Shakespeare's place in nineteenth-century state schooling to the lead up to Shakespeare becoming the only compulsory author in the National Curriculum for English. The remaining thesis chapters then expand the focus to encompass the heritage, theatre and popular cultural sectors. This structure enables me to discuss the interplay of the value of Shakespeare inside and outside the classroom, establishing the entwined relationship of education and culture in establishing value.

Chapter two locates Shakespeare within the meta-narratives of wider government policy over the last twenty years dominated first by the Conservative government; and, later, by New Labour. The chapter argues that National Curriculum Shakespeare is affected by and impacts on these governments' broader agendas for raising skills, standards and social inclusion – objectives which are perennial and demonstrate considerable overlap in the policies of these parties, in spite of their different ideological backgrounds. Analysis of historical evidence demonstrates the way in which the first two of these agendas is rooted in historically-enduring, non-partisan values which represent Shakespeare as contributing to economic, moral and personal growth. In this way, they represent an English consensus on his value (though not necessarily how that value should translate into the details of

pedagogy or assessment), which has outlasted the disintegration of the post-war political consensus on other matters during the late twentieth-century. The attitudes of these parties to the value of Shakespeare concerning social inclusion is, however, shown to differ. Finally, the chapter suggests that policy is experienced as both enabling and constraining – with important implications for the value of mandatory Shakespeare.

Chapter three again takes up the concern of over-prescribed Shakespeare, this time relating it to pedagogy rather than policy. It asks whether the National Curriculum endorses any particular pedagogy for teaching Shakespeare over others, for instance, drama, personal response or creative writing approaches. The chapter then explores literary critical, active methods and contextual pedagogies for teaching Shakespeare in policy documents, such as the non-statutory National Strategy entitled *Shakespeare for all ages and stages* (DCSF), as well as a range of pedagogic literature; reports of classroom practice; and school editions of the plays. Manifestations of the three pedagogies in contemporary educational resources, as well as criticism of them, are read through their use of discourse. This foregrounds the way in which these pedagogies are located within wider ideologies, including progressivism and humanism, as well as the way in which they are influenced by the pragmatic demands of the curriculum and classroom.

Looking at the language and content of websites, pamphlets and education events (i.e. the RSC Regional Festival, Young People's Shakespeare and Youth Ensemble), chapter four analyses the provision of educational Shakespeare experiences to students outside the classroom. It looks at the education programmes of key theatres (including the RSC and the Globe) and heritage sites (such as the SBT). The chapter demonstrates that these organisations share constructions of Shakespeare as inherently valuable. They also manifest

common ideas about the instrumental value of education departments in cultural institutions. These include making Shakespeare accessible and inclusive as well as rendering their educational provision accountable to the public and of a good quality. These commonalities, however, can be seen to present the organisations with the challenge of differentiating their products from each other. Having examined some of the strategies and discourses which achieve this, the chapter closes by arguing that, in the attempt to brand their organisations, the value of Shakespeare is sometimes occluded by the value of their own institutional ethos.

Chapter five acknowledges that students experience Shakespeare beyond formal education, through the consumption of goods and experiences such as films, TV programmes, books and websites. It analyses a BBC 'House' documentary, *The Supersizers Go Elizabethan*; an episode of the drama/Sci-Fi series *Dr Who*, *The Shakespeare Code*; and other examples of mundane Shakespeare to demonstrate ways in which references to Shakespeare in popular culture share a role with overtly educational settings in the confirmation, construction, and often parody, of his value. Acknowledging existing constructions of the cultural saturation of education, this chapter advances existing scholarship by matching the value of Shakespeare as presented in recent television programming to his value in policy, pedagogic literature and Shakespearean criticism. These include Shakespeare as father and skilful user of the English language, universal, an authority, the epitome of national culture and a genius. The chapter argues that culture is educationally saturated – at least where compulsory Shakespeare is concerned.

The conclusion, chapter six, extends the arguments encountered in the thesis with a discussion of its cross-cutting themes: the importance of individuals and institutions in

determining the value of Shakespeare; the enduring nature of paradigms in education and criticism; metaphors for the author's status; and his multitudinous nature. It also outlines the way in which this thesis has moved existing discussion of the value of Shakespeare along and contributed to evolving methodologies for interdisciplinary research in English and education. It considers the limitations of this thesis and offers ways in which they provide potential for future research.

1.7 The context leading up to the National Curriculum

A final and distinctive part of this chapter, the following overview will survey the historical context of Shakespeare in English education to establish a context for the research questions of this thesis. Beyond that, the discussion will be oriented around Shakespeare in recent policy, pedagogy and popular culture, maintaining a historical perspective where it is relevant to the evolution of a current value or situation. This enables me, across the chapters, to observe the policy imperatives of successive governments; the accretion or deletion of values over time; as well as their dynamism or constancy as they undergo various shaping processes.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Margaret Thatcher's Conservative leadership introduced England's first National Curriculum. The Curriculum's implementation was motivated by the government's objectives for improving standards (by establishing a consensus on good practice for teachers) and uniformity across the school education sector (so as not to disadvantage pupils moving between schools, for example). To achieve this it was proposed that all students would be taught an almost identical body of knowledge, skills etc. at each level, the content of which would be delineated in programmes of study published within the curriculum document. Gestures towards a nationalised, centrally-controlled curriculum

had been made since the 1870 Education Act established modern state education. The testing of Shakespeare was already widespread in examinations such as the Eleven Plus (in counties which retained grammar schools), GCSEs and A-levels. However, the greater number of children across all levels and schools affected in 1989 and the detail of the legislation established the National Curriculum's status as unprecedented.

In terms of the teaching of English, the outcome most relevant to this thesis is that which, based largely on the suggestions of the Cox Report of 1989, saw Shakespeare placed in an unparalleled position as the only author whom all children would be guaranteed (or compelled) to read before ceasing compulsory education at age sixteen; the only author the study of whom is enforceable by law (*Hawkes Alternative Shakespeares 2*). Revisions have been made to the document by successive governments, but twenty years later the import of the legislation remains remarkably intact, despite changes to its structure and wording. Fleshing out this brief narrative in further detail, with reference to its historical context, the remainder of this chapter argues that Shakespeare's value as a gold standard of English education had already been *established*, to some extent, by early state interventions into education. However, an overview of the process which the National Curriculum underwent in its formation, which takes into account the key players and their (often clashing) ideologies, will demonstrate that this valuation of Shakespeare was dramatically *reinforced* as he was made uniquely mandatory.

Shakespeare had featured increasingly in British school education from the early eighteenth century onwards. That period, for example, established the tradition of staging Shakespeare plays in schools which continues today. The evolution of a system of state schooling in England from the late-nineteenth century on, however, saw Shakespeare increasingly

identified not only as a necessary component of schoolchildren's education rather than an extra-curricular, dramatic activity, but as representing a gold standard of education. However, as the following account suggests, Shakespeare as an object of the academic study of literature on school syllabi is a yet more recent phenomenon.

In the early nineteenth-century, church societies' education programmes and schools played an important role in raising the literacy rate among working class children. They were run by organisations such as the Sunday School Society, the British and Foreign School Society, and the National Society for the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church¹⁵. While the main texts read by children at these schools were biblical, Andrew Murphy argues that many working class readers applied their literacy skills to the enthusiastic pursuit of other literary diets, including Shakespeare, outside the classroom (*Shakespeare for the People* 51). Similarly, Richard Halpern describes the reading of literature, such as Shakespeare's plays, as constituting 'a broadly popular form of entertainment' during the period (65). Evidencing such claims can be problematic: Murphy, for example, uses the autobiographies of Victorian working-class readers – a group which is somewhat self-selecting in its literacy capabilities and literary interests. However, the engagement in reading Shakespeare among the working-class suggested by these autobiographies is triangulated with Murphy's incontrovertible evidence that multiple, affordable editions of Shakespeare, aimed such a market, were published during the nineteenth-century.

¹⁵ Around the same time, working men's and philanthropic organisations, such as the Mechanics Institute, Working Men's College and the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, provided forerunners of adult and university-extension education (see Murphy 111 and St.Clair 260).

Also clearly demonstrable, through reference to early education policy documents, is evidence that the teaching of Shakespeare in British schools expanded alongside the development of a state education system through legislation such as the Revised Code (1862) and the Education Act (1870). The state became more involved in issues of educational rigour, standards and accountability as its responsibilities for the funding and regulation of education increased. The Revised Code of 1862 introduced a payment per results system as a supposedly efficient way to fund schools. The system – a recommendation of the 1861 Newcastle Commission – rewarded schools whose pupils obtained good marks. It also led to the development of national Standards for each skill (reading, writing, arithmetic) or, later, subject, against which pupils could be measured. These set out the requirements across six levels of achievement – later amended to seven in 1882. The revision of the Standards in this year saw Shakespeare named alongside other authors and genres in the requirements for the first time. Thus, as the state rather than the church assumed primary responsibility for the school sector, increasingly ‘English literature entered the educational and imaginative space which had traditionally been occupied by the Bible’ (St. Clair 11).

Early versions of the Standards focussed on students’ ability to read aloud from books specially designed for learners as well as ‘modern narratives’ from everyday resources such as newspapers. In the revised version, however, Shakespeare became associated, very literally, with a gold standard of literacy: that is to say the best or highest standard; something which, like a gold card, gains its owner an uncommon and preferential range of benefits. The penultimate standard, Standard VI, demanded that students ‘read a passage from one of Shakespeare’s historical plays or from some other standard author, or from a

history of England'. Standard VII, slightly broader in scope, asked that they 'read a passage from Shakespeare or Milton, or from some other standard author, or from a history of England' (Ellis 177). Thus Shakespeare had been incorporated into a curriculum of sorts. It was, however, far from a universal experience for children since only a minority of pupils stayed in school long enough to attain the highest levels. Nonetheless, Gladstone's government's endorsement of Shakespeare's place in the education system would initiate a century of attempts to make the provision of his study as universal to pupils as education itself, regardless of class, wealth or merit. Moreover, the acceptance of Shakespeare as a necessary element of education *for all* itself marks a huge degree of progress from the disputes of the eighteenth-century over whether the mass population should be educated, whether they should have access to literature, and whether that access would appease or provoke revolution¹⁶.

Nonetheless, these early attempts at education policy cannot be regarded as unreservedly positive advances for the value of Shakespeare in education. Placing Shakespeare at the pinnacle of attainment also constituted an early message reinforcing views about his difficulty and unsuitability for younger readers. Another limitation of Shakespeare as a feature of schooling at this time was his use as a narrow measure of students' literacy rather than as a springboard to creative or critical writing (a role which is prominent today). Thus in these Victorian policy documents, major ideas about the value and nature of Shakespeare in education are being established which still dominate discussion over a century later.

¹⁶ See St. Clair, Baldick and Murphy for an extended discussion of this.

In the twentieth-century, the place of Shakespeare in school was cemented by the *Newbolt Report*. Its author, Henry Newbolt, fought against media accusations of elitism in the content of state education declaring that, 'Writers in the press are apt to assume that school lessons in literature are confined to the study of elaborately annotated texts of Shakespeare, and that school essays chiefly revolve upon vague and abstract themes like Patriotism and Moral Courage, with occasional but doubtful relief in the form of an essay on Football' (103). However, in the report, the Bible and Shakespeare compete for the highest amount of type space given to a single text or author. Discussion of teaching the Bible occupies five pages, to Shakespeare's three. This is evidence not only of successive policy documents constructing Shakespeare in a premier position to other authors. It also testifies to policy-makers' continued commitment to expanding *access* to this gold standard of English literature.

Rather more ambiguously as regards his value in early twentieth-century education, Shakespeare was simultaneously acknowledged by Newbolt as *inaccessible* to schoolchildren; as becoming increasingly 'an unfamiliar tongue'. The obstacle of Shakespeare's difficulty was assuaged, wrote Newbolt, only 'by his wonderful power of re-telling a story in dramatic form, and his equally wonderful power of characterization, and, we may add, his incomparable mastery of word-music' (313). As this quotation from Newbolt illustrates, the value of Shakespeare in education *per se* was widely agreed on at this time; as were some of the elements which jeopardised his value. Yet the report also engages with values for methods of teaching Shakespeare which were then, and remain even now, less securely established. It explores to a greater degree than its Victorian predecessors, the seven Standards, the importance of pedagogy in adding value to (or detracting value from) a particular subject or, in this case, author. Newbolt foreshadows

later exponents of active methods in his recommendations to treat Shakespeare as drama, as a script, and as enhanced by performance and other dramatic methods¹⁷.

Rising standards in education generally; long-running campaigns for the universal right to a *liberal*, rather than purely vocational, education; and the evolution of English as a discipline in the universities of the early twentieth century created further changes to the expectations of teachers' provision and students' experience of Shakespeare. For example, I.A. Richards' and Leavis' work on the interpretation of texts through close reading exercises at the University of Cambridge, after the First World War, resulted in this technique's naturalisation as part of the teaching of literature at school, replacing the mere ability to declaim Shakespeare as a marker of skill and knowledge. Instead of declaiming or acting Shakespeare's texts, students were increasingly required to synthesise from their teachers and the play texts (or anthologised excerpts from the texts) an understanding of character, theme, plot and the craftsmanship of Shakespearean language. This would then be demonstrated in and assessed by their production of essays and other written work. Although enduring throughout the last century, such approaches have been widely criticised in the past two decades for fostering passivity in students. Another widespread criticism asserts that such pedagogy reinforced the treatment of Shakespeare within schools as literature, over drama (see 3.2).

However, for now, it is important merely to note from the examples above that pedagogy is one site where the value of Shakespeare is complicated: most teachers and most policy-makers have agreed that it is important for schoolchildren to have some experience of Shakespeare: what they find difficult to agree on is the relative value of various methods for

¹⁷ I explore constructions of the value of Shakespeare in active methods pedagogies in detail in chapter three.

experiencing his texts. Early education reports, such as Newbolt exemplified this. They made very little statutory, except for the minimum leaving age and some components of religious education. Reports had otherwise offered advice, moderation and plurality rather than prescription. This policy trend persisted for several decades with major education legislation, such as the 1944 *Education Act* (based on the *Butler Report*), being overwhelmingly concerned with centralising the structure, rather than teachers' pedagogic delivery, of the state education system.

1.8 Enshrining the value of Shakespeare in the 1989 National Curriculum

In contrast to the aforementioned reports, the National Curriculum of 1989 engaged in a very specific way with the substance of what children would be taught. The document can be seen as the conscious creation by the Thatcher government of a state-wide repository of all that had, and should continue to have, educational and cultural value. Dwelling on questions of educational value as it undertook to build a National Curriculum, the teaching of English became the focus of previously unprecedented concern for the Thatcher government in the late 1980s: to the extent that it commissioned two reports into the subject in as many years. Long-held preoccupations with the value of education as making a positive impact on individuals' personal growth; cohesive national identity; and even economic prosperity (values which I will discuss further in chapter two) clearly motivated the government's attempts to fix a set of prescriptions for the subject in the forthcoming National Curriculum. This involved obtaining testimony, preferably in support of their right-wing preconceptions on the subject, from the reporting committees, as the experience of the two committee chairs demonstrates.

The first Committee, led by Sir John Kingman (a mathematician and then Vice-Chancellor of Bristol University), was appointed by the Secretary of State, Kenneth Baker in 1987. Its remit was to propose a model of English language training for students and teaching professionals in response to popular alarm, among parents, lecturers and employers, about young adults' ability to use grammar ('Reluctant Grammarians'). The *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Teaching of English Language* (known as the *Kingman Report*), submitted the following year, eschewed an emphasis on Latinate grammar to the dismay of the government. Its proposals failed to find favour with Thatcher, then Prime Minister (Cox *Cox on Cox* 3). In reaction to her disapproval, Baker swiftly convened another committee with a very similar responsibility to prepare a model of English to be implemented in the National Curriculum. Its scope was broadened slightly in that its work was to take account of both language and literature, as well as the influence of drama, media studies and information technology. The recommendations were to arrive in two stages, with attainment targets for primary schools due by the end of September 1988 and those for secondary schools due in late April 1989.

The committee was led by C.B. Cox, a Professor of English at the University of Manchester and member of the previous Kingman Committee, who appealed to the right-wing leadership of the Conservative government because of his editorship of *The Black Papers on Education* in the 1960s and 1970s. These publications had decried a perceived decline in education and educational standards, which the authors identified as due to the influence of progressivism. Cox and Dyson had criticised this educational movement, especially its extreme implementation, as characterised by an unchecked emphasis on self-expression and

the harbouring of anti-authoritarian attitudes¹⁸. Unknown to those in power, over the decades, Cox's public emphasis on education had shifted. He had, for example, led a campaign to make creative writing central to the English curriculum.

Rather than evidence of a linear progression from conservative to radical, this uneasy combination of interests and beliefs testifies to the way in which Cox had balanced elements in his life and work from both ends of the political spectrum from his student days onwards. Taught by Leavis at Cambridge, he was part of a then-widespread cultural conservative tradition, founding the journal *Critical Quarterly* with A.C. Dyson, as a successor to his mentor's *Scrutiny*¹⁹. Like Leavis, he also positioned himself as caught in a fight for education against the establishment (although Cox's battle was more explicitly political, involving various governments). Yet Cox also voted Labour and demonstrated a consistent concern for liberal issues (equality of sexual orientation, for example) (Hewison *Culture and Consensus* 168). Moreover, unlike some cultural conservatives discussed earlier in my introduction, he was committed in an Arnoldian way to making the best writing available to all (Cox *The Great Betrayal* 150).

The naivety of the government's appointment of Cox to the position on the basis of decades-old writing which they took as evidence of fixed ideological and political views was not an isolated example. Like Cox, his fellow committee members were chosen on the basis of work which supposedly gelled with a right-wing, traditionalist education agenda. Yet, many of them held radical ideas on the teaching of language or were concerned to promote multi-

¹⁸ Robert Hewison has argued that Cox fails to acknowledge that the consequence of the *The Black Papers* breaking 'the left-liberal consensus on state education' was to liberate 'a repressed ideology which eventually was to play a part in making Margaret Thatcher Prime Minister in 1979' (*Culture and Consensus* 170).

¹⁹ Cox also inherited an interest in Joseph Conrad from Leavis, publishing several monographs on his writing (which his tutor had claimed was part of 'the great tradition' in his own work).

cultural attitudes towards language and literature which were in opposition to the government's stance on these matters (see Cox for a fuller, if adversarial, account of this process and his committee, *Cox on Cox* 5).

In developing attainment targets, the group had to follow a framework common to all National Curriculum subjects which stipulated that targets should be set for knowledge, skills and understanding, to be tested and reported on at the end of four key stages (ages seven, eleven, fourteen, and sixteen); that each target should be divided into seven levels of attainment; that assessment would be conducted through a combination of national Standard Assessment Tasks and tasks set by individual teachers; and finally, that assessment would be used both formatively, to improve teaching and children's progress, and summatively to inform parents of their child's and school's progress (for instance, through the publication of league tables). The Cox Committee made the further decision to divide English into three basic components: speaking and listening, reading, and writing. These divisions had been identified decades earlier by the Dartmouth Conference of 1967 on the teaching of English, which were published in an account of proceedings, *Growth Through English*.

In spite of following these rigid frameworks and structures, the committee's radical and progressive elements did find expression enough in the content of their recommendations to upset leading Conservative politicians. The committee's submissions on English in primary schools were criticised by the government and much of the media alike for a perceived lack of attention to grammar and Standard English ('English standards') and for being originally 'too woolly' (Baker quoted in Tytler). Meanwhile left-leaning educators decried an over-emphasis on the same areas. Nonetheless, the National Curriculum English Working group

presented the government with its slightly-delayed final report in May 1989. The final report did not find favour with senior Conservative politicians, who criticised the lack of emphasis on spelling, grammar, punctuation and traditional pedagogies such as rote-learning. Thatcher also objected to its failure to prescribe the use of Standard English, although a compromise was reached whereby the curriculum required its use except 'where non-standard forms are needed for literary purposes' (Cox *Cox on Cox* 12). Nonetheless, the programmes of study were implemented in English and Welsh classrooms by 1990 with minimal changes.

Perhaps because the report was not warmly embraced by the government, free copies were provided only to schools, not made available to parents and the wider public. Even then, Kenneth Baker insisted that the final chapters of the report (fifteen to seventeen) be printed at the front. The originally preceding chapters, one to fourteen, containing the committee's rationale for the curriculum, were relegated to the status of appendices. The attainment targets and programmes of study alone were published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Thus, chapters one to fourteen were only made publicly available when Cox's account of the process of forming his report was published in 1991.

Having given an overview of the evolution of the National Curriculum for English, I want to focus for the remainder of this section on how and why Shakespeare came to occupy a pre-eminent place within it. Much of the debate around the document at the time was concerned with the teaching of the English language: spelling, grammar, and Standard English. This may have derived from the dedication of three chapters of the *Cox Report* itself to language, in comparison to one on literature. However, the elevation of Shakespeare to an unparalleled position of prominence in schools was also a prominent and popular feature

of narratives around the curriculum decision-making process, especially in the media. Lists of essential literary texts for schoolchildren were debated in newspapers, although the largest share of attention was reserved for measures concerning grammar, correct usage, and dialect (Wilby, Bissell). The volume and nature of this discussion influenced Cox's decision to omit a list of authors from the final report (*Cox on Cox* 68). The committee instead opted to prescribe only Shakespeare and to include a paragraph on the importance of English cultural heritage which named a few more optional, exemplar authors to inform teachers' own choices: these included Dickens, Wordsworth and the Authorised Bible. The passage requiring Shakespeare in the 1990 curriculum publication, evolved from Cox, stipulates that 'pupils should be introduced to...some of the works of Shakespeare' (DES/Welsh Office 30). Over the years, it has evolved to incorporate slightly more detail and quantification: the 1995 and 1999 versions require 'two plays by Shakespeare', one of which should be taught at key stage 3 (DfE/Welsh Office 20, DfEE/QCA 35).

Cox saw the brevity of his list of authors as a strength which would allow teachers freedom to choose texts (as long as they included Shakespeare and some pre-twentieth century authors). He also argued that a shorter list would prevent the curriculum rapidly outdated as various authors came in and out of fashion. However, others criticised its exclusive masculinity and emphasis on the past (*Cox on Cox* 69). In response to the first criticism, Jane Austen and the Brontes were added to the list of recommended authors in the programmes after the *Cox Report* was submitted, in preparation for the government's publication of the curriculum. Cox responded to allegations that the National Curriculum was too nationalistic and too pluralist, as well as too focussed on Leavisite ideas about developing moral sensitivity and 'great literature' in *Cox on Cox* (70-83). He also reveals here the direct

influence on his committee of the *Kingman Report*, which had made these authors (besides more of the same ilk) a priority. His autobiography, meanwhile, is explicit about the influence of Arnoldian thought on his own belief that 'great books possessed an absolute and inalienable value, and we believed that any culture or class of society to which they were irrelevant must be miserably impoverished' (Cox *The Great Betrayal* 150). It is interesting that Cox does not dwell on an alternative route he could have taken to naming select authors, that of producing a list of criteria which suitable texts for the classroom should meet. This path may have seem equally fraught given criticism of Leavis' attempts to delineate the value of various authors in works like *The Great Tradition*. The time constraints placed on the committee may also have seemed to eliminate such a route.

Despite feeling the need to explain, even justify, the decisions reached by his committee about literature in the curriculum to a wide audience – to the extent that Cox produced three books on the subject in five years – the final recommendations pertaining to the range of literature were (in contrast to much of the report) well received by government. Whether their support suggests that the government actively desired such outcomes or was indifferent to the specific choice of literature is difficult to evidence²⁰.

Nonetheless, it is possible to ascertain that Thatcher was uninterested in such particularities – along with the arts in general (Hewison *Culture and Consensus* 171, 213) – at least in comparison to her preoccupation with language and 'skills' (Cox *Cox on Cox* 12)²¹. It would not be unreasonable to suggest that Thatcher's interest in the value of literature in the

²⁰ At least in the time allowed for this thesis. Future research could work through unofficial, and at present unavailable, accounts of the curriculum's evolution in party documents and correspondence between the key figures.

²¹ Hewison suggests that Thatcher's indifference to the arts was contrasted by the interest which her successor John Major had in them (1995 296).

curriculum was limited, unless it could be demonstrated that it would help achieve the government's agendas of, and methods for attaining, economic growth and social cohesion. The way in which the value of Shakespeare has become inextricably linked with such instrumental values in more recent policy decisions will be further discussed in the next chapter. For now, it is enough to emphasise that Shakespeare came to be mandated in the curriculum somewhat against the odds: despite Cox's declared reluctance to prescribe authors and texts; despite literature being a lesser priority of the Thatcher government; and despite public debates in the media.

2. SHAKESPEARE IN POLICY: AGENDAS FOR SKILLS, STANDARDS AND INCLUSION

The last chapter took the inception of the National Curriculum for English under the Conservative government of the late 1980s as a starting point for examining the value of Shakespeare in education over the past two decades. It also elucidated the historical context of Shakespeare in schools leading up to the moment where his plays were made mandatory by the legislation. This chapter shifts the emphasis onto a comparison of these Conservative education policies with those of the Labour government from 1997-2009. An account centered on the two main political parties highlights the way in which attention to policy matters has been concentrated on a relatively small number of issues. Like the Conservative Thatcher and Major governments, the education policies of the Labour leaders Tony Blair and Gordon Brown were driven by agendas for social inclusion, skills, and standards (both educational and moral). Such continuities suggest a circularity to policy-making between parties in spite of their origins in distinct (even opposing) political ideologies. Many of Labour's policies demonstrably continued Conservative ones. They were, however, made palatable to a left-leaning electorate and compatible with left-wing ideology through the manipulation of discourse, popularly termed 'spin'. The final section considers the implications of policy in each of these agenda areas for the value of Shakespeare and, thus, his place on the curriculum under Labour.

Due to the time frame of this thesis, I have been unable to consider at any length the impact of the emergence of a Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition following the general election in 2010 and the impact that this might have in changing a political scene long dominated by two-party politics. Instead, I refer to the few indications of changing education policy made before the Parliamentary summer recess in 2010 where relevant. The focus of

this chapter on the policies of two major opposing parties, to the exclusion of the Liberal Democrats, is in itself a reminder of the potential for rapid (even if only surface) transformation in politics. Research in this area is thus often, if not rapidly outdated, strongly bounded by specific historic and political contexts. Nonetheless, working within a time frame limited from 1989 to 2009 is inherently rewarding as the National Curriculum (and subsequent revisions to it) marks a peaking of education as a major political issue, subject to 'policy overload' or 'hyperactivism'. Stephen J. Ball demonstrates this with reference to the number of education policy documents produced. For instance, he alerts readers to the fact that in July 2000 the DfEE list of publications totalled 106 items, 39 of which were statutory instruments (3). Moreover, I will suggest, the past twenty years are distinct from other periods of education policy-making because of an explicit concern with, even micro-management of, the content of the curriculum (see documents such as the DCSF National Strategy *Shakespeare for all ages and stages*, discussed further in chapter three).

Comparing these governments' education policies necessarily involves further the problematisation of notions such as past and present as well as regression, stability and progress. Education policy is marketed to the voting population as educational reform, as being 'about doing things differently, about change and improvement' (Ball 7). This view of policy as a salvation, elaborates the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman, is dependent on the use of a political rhetoric which devalues the present, rendering it 'ugly, abhorrent and unendurable' (*Modernity and Ambivalence* 11). Bauman's writing, in books such as *Modernity and Ambivalence* and *Liquid Modernity*, is concerned with the age we live in as one defined by constant change, fragmentation, uncertainty and the questioning of the conventional. He argues that society has been persuaded that change is positive and that

citizens are primed to be ready and willing to accept constant alteration. Thus hyperactivism, however superficial or meaningless, will be largely accepted as progress.

Further contradicting this ideal of policy as 'an enlightenment concept', which is about progress in the sense of 'moving from the inadequacies of the present to some future perfection', Ball points to the ironic reality of policy (7). Concerned with the sociology of education, he explains how policy actually works 'by accretion and sedimentation, new policies add to and overlay old ones, with the effect that new principles and innovations are merged and conflated with older rationales and previous practices' (55). This process leaves practitioners, in this case teachers, with a legacy of 'inconsistencies and contradictions that they must solve' (55). I explore such tensions within and between curriculum documents throughout this chapter: how teachers *do* solve them will be discussed in chapter three. Moreover, the sheer volume of policy initiatives addressing issues such as skilling the workforce for a successful economy, raising standards and social inclusion suggests the failure, perhaps impossibility, of legislating education to achieve the desired outcomes expected by politicians and the public.

Apart from encouraging a dialectic understanding of Shakespeare in education as constituted by the Thatcher and Blair-Brown governments, this chapter deals with two contrasting levels of policy literature. It relates meta-education policy (policy which addresses governments' overarching concerns with, for example, skills, standards and inclusion) to micro-policy concerning Shakespeare. Although they represent opposite scales of policy, both can be characterised by Ball's definition of policy as 'something constructed in government...“formal” and usually legislated policy' (7). Moreover, both are subject to the dynamic nature of policy. That is to say, they are constantly 'reproduced and reworked' both

formally and in implementation by individuals and institutions. In juxtaposing larger policy concerns with Shakespeare-specific policy, I hope to go some way towards compensating for a lack of dialogue between studies of broader policy often found in, for example, education research and the consideration of smaller, discipline-specific policies which dominate writing about Shakespeare in education, especially in teaching journals. I contend that work which treats these two areas as distinct has failed to foreground the impact and inter-relation of general education policy on discrete legislation concerning, for instance, Shakespeare in SATs and attainment orders. This chapter asks ‘what values can be seen in both general and Shakespeare-related education policy?’ It explores whether they have been subject to historical and political change or continuity. Foremost, it will posit explanations of the ways in which macro- and micro-policy shape each other: how has broader education policy affected Shakespeare in the curriculum? How does Shakespeare in the curriculum address governments’ larger policy priorities?

2.1 Improving skills: bending educational policy to economic success

The Labour governments of 1997-2009 followed the prevalent tradition of political leaderships from the beginnings of state education to Thatcher in emphasising the value of education as a key to economic success. Tony Blair declared that education is ‘our best economic policy’ while Gordon Brown ‘signalled...the increasingly close-knit relationship between the processes of education and requirements of the economy’ (Ball 2008 3). Re-encountering such statements retrospectively, in the middle of a recession, places in question the success of both Labour’s educational and economic policy. Nonetheless, such a pronouncement encapsulates the way in which skilling the nation’s workforce to produce an internationally competitive economy has been a major driving force (or, viewed cynically, a

key rhetorical justification) for successive governments. Indeed, it has been termed an internationally-recognised 'prerequisite of economic modernization' (Whitty 'Education, Economy and National Culture' 270). The importance of education in producing a skilled workforce to meet the demands of employers and industry (whether heavy, manufacturing, or services) has been further articulated in economics as 'human capital theory' (Becker). In sociology, 'correspondence theory' contends that education replicates the structures and relationships of the workplace, constituting a 'hidden curriculum', to prepare students for their future role in the national economy (Bowles and Gintis).

That skills-based education rivals (if not outstrips) a traditional liberal-humanist orientation around knowledge is evidenced in the sub-section headings of the *National Curriculum for English* document which sets out objectives for 'knowledge, skills and understanding', and under the key areas of speaking and listening, reading and writing at each level. Skills, along with processes and matters, also constitute the definition of programme of study in the 1996 *Education Act* (353b). This emphasis on skills in the curriculum is not only evidence of the work of the Cox committee, but also of the Thatcher government's commitment to stemming a perceived decline in skills. Cox writes of the pressure that ministers and civil servants put on the committee to focus the teaching of English around the use of language: grammar, spelling, punctuation, and Standard English (*Cox on Cox* 12). Along with John Major's later agenda for going 'Back to Basics' – that is to say, concentrating teaching on the 'three Rs', upheld in nineteenth-century classrooms: reading, writing and arithmetic. Thatcher's education policy indicates the generally nostalgic or retrogressive value system of past Conservative parties, characterised by a New Victorianism. It also represents a backlash from the Conservative government against left-wing educational theories, which their

politicians consistently dismissed as mere (even passing) trends. That these attitudes still exist in the party is evident in the use of the phrase 'faddy ideologies' in public speeches on education (Gove 2009). For these Conservatives, skills were valued as 'real knowledge' as opposed to the supposedly ephemeral stuff of the 'ideological curriculum' (Ball 2), a term for progressivism which denies the existence of ideology in their party's own preferred methods.

However, it is noticeable that not all skills were equally valued, and therefore, not equally present in the National Curriculum. In terms of the National Curriculum for English, critical literacy was not foregrounded, although it has been embraced by Commonwealth countries including Canada and Australia (Monaghan and Mayer 155-171). Critical literacy skills students in deconstructing the political nature of texts; in understanding how they are positioned by texts (their subjectivity); and in participating and intervening in society through critical engagement with texts and their meaning. However, the version of the curriculum produced from Cox's report, against his own wishes, instead shored up a literary canon designed to be received by teachers and students as unquestionably great.

Outwardly shunning such emphases, the Labour governments of Blair and Brown nonetheless pursued, to some extent, the practice of emphasising a narrow set of skills. Their strong values for literacy were realised materially in the implementation of a National Literacy Strategy, which included prescriptive advice on how to teach reading (through phonetics) and for how long (one hour a day, the 'Literacy Hour'). In addition to focussing on improving basic skills from an early age, Labour built on Conservative gestures towards extending education to a higher age group. In 1988 the Youth Training Guarantee stated the aim for all sixteen and seventeen year olds to be in education, training or employment, while

Labour envisaged, from 2007 onwards, raising this to seventeen by 2013, then eighteen by 2015.

Criticism that government policy has developed a narrow utilitarian set of values for education has been continually ignored over the last century. Educators have petitioned for policy to institute a wider valuing of education as empowering life rather than just work. In the early twentieth century, George Sampson insisted that 'elementary education must not be vocational, it is the purpose of education not to prepare children for their occupations, but to prepare children against their occupations' (viii). Leavis was horrified by the pressure put on education, in the era of Newbolt, to cater to the needs mass production. *Scrutiny*-collaborator Denys Thompson declared that English 'is not really a subject at all. It is a condition of existence' (380). Moreover, at A.S. Neill's Summerhill School, founded in the same year as Newbolt's Report and Sampson's *English for the English*, individual children chose what to learn and when. These educators perceived an inability, even unwillingness, of governments across the political spectrum to implement a system of education less tied to the instrumental values which industry holds for it. Their conclusion has been that the value of education as 'a preparation for successful "life" in material terms' proves intractable in a state-run education system (Leach 'Student teachers and the experience of English' 153), especially in capitalist countries where the value of education will always be coupled to the imperative of a healthy (preferably growing) economy.

Nonetheless, some change from Conservative to Labour policy was evident in the skills and attributes through which economic growth was to be attained. Although the Blair government maintained the strong place of skills in the curriculum, 'New' Labour realised early on during its term in office that a narrow set of skills alone was not sufficient to boost

economic growth. This led to an emphasis on nurturing various values in education derived from the world of business. Failure to embed ‘appropriate’ values such as ‘enterprise’, ‘entrepreneurship’ and ‘creativity’ from the corporate world into the nation’s wider culture has often been identified as a cause of stagnation English industry (Whitty ‘Education, Economy and National Culture’ 282). In the education policy devised under Blair, ‘creativity’ was not limited to the production of artistic works but extended to include new and original ways of thinking in all arenas – something akin to creative problem solving. Drawing on advice from economists and educationalists, such as Ball, creativity was championed by New Labour and treated as the vanguard of economic competitiveness:

[W]ith increased mobility of information through information technology (IT) systems and a global workforce, knowledge and expertise can be transported instantaneously around the world, and any advantage gained by one company can be eliminated by competitive improvements overnight. The only comparative advantage a company or more generally a nation can attain will be its processes of innovation – combining market and technology know-how with the creative talents of knowledge workers to solve a constant stream of competitive problems – and its ability to derive value from information. (19)

In this extract, Ball makes explicit the need to foster ‘the creative talents of knowledge workers’ as essential to growing the nation’s role and success in the world economy, transformed by globalisation and the continuous advent of new information and communications technology. ‘Creativity’ here is narrowly redefined in a way which ties it to economic, instrumental values: the ability to think and innovate in a way that is beneficial to industry. Creativity was also frequently cast in the education policy of the Labour government as beneficial for the individual and the amorphously-imagined wider community. Thus ‘enterprise’, in its new guise as ‘creativity’ was superficially dissociated from notions of corporate greed and became ‘the new educational virtue’ (Pring 74).

Labour recognised the danger of Tory policy, expressed in legislation such as the National Curriculum, which reified teaching a homogenous content based on the anticipation of a fixed set of skills required for economic growth. To counter it, Labour reformed education policy to diversify the skills students were being trained in. They sought to offer a range of diverse educational pathways, which, in order to convince voters would be beneficial, they argued would be equally valued by employers and higher education institutions²².

New Labour attempted to improve the status of vocational education. This included enhancing the range and status of qualifications which skill students for specific careers – through policy documents such as the 1997 National Traineeships scheme, the 2002 *14-19: Extending opportunities, raising standards* Green Paper, and the 2005 *14-19: Skills and Education* White Paper (both DES). All of these, however, built on existing policy initiatives of the previous Conservative government, such as the 1995 Modern Apprenticeships scheme. Beyond this, they made concerted efforts to remove the stigma from vocational education by establishing equivalence in, for example, the quality of provision: to have vocational qualifications recognised as rigorous and comparable to other forms of qualification at the same level, and thereby to enable students to move between advanced-level qualifications (whether vocation or academic) (Pring 73-81). Secondly, they inaugurated diploma qualifications for secondary school students which were designed to offer traditional academic content via a more modular structure with the potential for ‘integrated codes’. This involves the weakening of traditional strong subject boundaries, which have been occasionally been identified as contributing to the poor performance of the English

²² Media suggestions that the Russell Group of universities use a secret list of banned ‘soft’ A-level subjects (mainly offered by comprehensives) in their admissions procedures, however, implies that attempts at parity have not been universally successful (Shepherd 2010).

education system. It was also designed to appeal to students by delivering greater flexibility in terms of what they could study as well as giving the content of education a more 'real world' focus, by potentially uniting diverse subject knowledges (e.g. science, geography, and citizenship) under themes such as 'climate change'.

The rationale behind the pluralised provision of education is that students have diverse interests and aspirations which can be channelled into diverse learning outcomes: an academic qualification, a technical qualification, or something in between. These heterogeneously qualified students will, it has been proposed, benefit diverse sectors of the economy (industry, services and so on). However, such educational provision assumes that state education's failings, and ultimately those of the economy, stem from a lack of choice of educational pathways. It does not recognise or address external impacts on the economy, the complexity of reasons for non-participation or lack of social mobility. That these limitations are acknowledged by governments is suggested by simultaneous attempts to target improvements in education through standards and social inclusion, which I will discuss in 2.2 and 2.4.

To summarise the above discussion: there has been a shift in value from basic skills to a wider skills base, sometimes informed by the business sector; and from the uniformity to the diversity of skills, under Labour. In addition, the focus of education policy has changed from one which is concerned primarily with what is taught (with outlining a National Curriculum) to the operation of the state school system more widely (educational pathways, for example). Continuity in value between the Labour government and its Conservative predecessors include the belief in education as key to economic success and an emphasis on skills (rather than knowledge-based education), especially in political rhetoric.

Despite all these measures, which further testify to the hyperactivity identified in the introduction to this chapter, Labour's education policy alone has not been enough to guarantee economic success: just as similar policies did not help the Conservative government to avoid severe economic crises during the early 1990s. This problematises the value placed on education in securing a growing economy, especially that centred around the value of skills, over other factors in the health of the economy (many of them global, some of them to do with structures outside education and within the banking sector). A consequence of overselling the power of education is that when state schooling 'fails' to produce continuous economic growth, the existing national narrative of an education and economy in decline (identified in the first chapter) is immediately reinforced. Subsequently, the efforts and achievements of producers of education (teachers, schools, local and national governments) and students are devalued, perpetuating a cycle of demotivation and negativity.

2.2 Raising standards: applying a business paradigm to education

In the previous section, the high value that successive governments have placed on skills was shown to be geared towards the goal of economic success (for the nation and individuals). Regarding the agenda for raising standards, I will demonstrate that business is used and valued as a paradigm on which to model a successful education system during the past twenty years. This business paradigm permeates both the language of education policy as well as specific policy measures addressing standards. It represents a continuation of policy from the Thatcher government to New Labour. The implicit discontinuity with old Labour policy was, however, reconciled to traditional Labour ideology (and its supporters) by stressing that modelling education on business can achieve the party's agendas for a strong

state system of education and, through that, social justice (e.g. equality of opportunity) more widely.

Successive governments have identified low standards in schools' performances as a problem to be tackled with educational policy reform. Like fitting young people to make a future contribution to the national economy, it is another abiding point for concern and policy action. Anxiety that England is performing poorly against competitor nations is perennially expressed by the media, apparently supported in the evidence of international research. This research is in turn cited by opposition politicians to articulate their disparagement of the government. Michael Gove, then shadow Education Secretary, used such statistics at the Conservative Party conference in 2009 to criticise Labour's (alleged lack of) achievement in this area: 'We have dropped from fourth in the world for science standards to fourteenth. From seventh in the world for literacy to seventeenth. And from eighth in the world for mathematics to twenty-fourth'. The wielding of such comparisons by the media and politicians exploits the public's sense of national identity and national pride, particularly, a fear among the electorate of being outstripped by economic and cultural rivals. For political parties, to be seen to be committed to or, better still, working at improving standards in the performance of the education system is identified as a certain way of gaining votes. Moreover, for those assuming or maintaining power, targeting standards is a way of gaining a mandate which might allow for the exploration of other, more contentious, agendas.

The response from governments, on both side of the political spectrum, over the past twenty years aimed at improving standards has included attempts to reform the whole school system from both the Conservatives and Labour. The 1988 *Education Reform Act*

prepared the way for a National Curriculum, which, as discussed in chapter one, aimed to improve students' performance by delivering an education with a uniform content. Other Conservative reforms, including the formation by Kenneth Baker of a Task Group on Assessment and Testing (TGAT) in 1988, the 1992 *Education (Schools) Act*, and the rolling out of SATs during the early nineties, focussed on testing, inspection and the subsequent publication of results and reports.

Introduced from 1993 onwards by the Major government, the latter involved examining students on Shakespeare at key stage three as part of a wider scheme of nationally standardised testing. These tests were at their inception heavily resisted by schools and teaching unions, who argued that their rapid implementation put undue pressure on students, teachers and the education system more widely. In addition, the measures were opposed on the grounds that league tables, based on schools' performance in SATs and published in the media, would adversely affect teachers' morale and student enrolments (especially at 'under-performing' schools). Other fears surrounding SATs, more specific to Shakespeare than to the system itself, were that the plays would be taught to the test; that teaching of the plays would be limited to desk-bound, literary-critical methods; and that the choice of plays was limited (teachers had to choose one of three set plays prescribed by the state each year). These trepidations and criticisms were openly discussed in teaching journals. They were also addressed by Rex Gibson's Cambridge Shakespeare and Schools project, and a glut of monographs on the political, pedagogical and social implications of the new system. Having never gained widespread popularity, key stage 3 SATs were finally abandoned by the Labour government in October 2008 after a fiasco with the marking of

Key Stage 2 and 3 papers which made national headlines (Mansell, Brocklehurst). Examining Shakespeare at this level is now optional for schools.

Despite the scepticism of their critics, such policy moves aimed to improve performance by increasing the points at which schools would be assessed, their performance quantified and the results published. That is to say, these measures proliferated the opportunities at which the government could hold schools accountable for their performances. The volume of reform to the whole school system had conceivably peaked under the Conservatives, with, Labour and other critics have argued, minimum positive effect and maximum demoralisation of the teaching profession.

Such criticism perhaps explains why Labour's early attempts to improve standards in schools isolated certain areas of performance. Teachers' performance, and the recruitment of high quality graduates to the profession, was targeted with financial incentives such as better remuneration. By 2009, the then Secretary of State for Education Ed Balls felt able to claim at the party conference that Labour measures had made teachers 'the best paid in our history'. To add another example, illiteracy was tackled through the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy in 1997 (DfEE) and in the 1999 document *A Fresh Start – improving literacy and numeracy*, which endorsed the idea of a long-term national strategy (Moser). Attempts to alter the system holistically, which I will discuss below, were left until later in Labour's term of office.

The responses to students' and schools' alleged poor performance above, utilising target-setting, accountability and motivation through pay incentives, only hint at the embrace of ideas from the corporate world within state education by both ruling parties during the last twenty years. In fact, it can be demonstrated that efforts to raise performance in education

were characterised by governments' urgings to be more businesslike (see Gove's party conference speech 2009). Such a model, which takes big business as an exemplar of effectiveness and efficiency, is typically associated with Conservative policy. Its adoption by the New Labour government marks a break with traditional socialist-inflected party ideology. Throughout the discussion below it is worth monitoring the language of education policy for jargon from the world of business: it resounds with terms such as 'partnerships', 'sponsors', even 'behaviour contracts'. The latter is a formal written agreement between students, parents and schools, which delineates acceptable behaviour agreed between the parties as well as the consequences of breaking the agreement. Labour proposed that the contracts would become compulsory in the 2008 *Youth Crime Action Plan* (HM Government). Such discourse alone suggests, if only on a surface level, that the values of education are contiguous with those of business. At the least, it demonstrates the way in which business has become for Labour a prominent paradigm for education.

To trace how New Labour has continued Conservative values for business as a model for education, I will offer here a resume of the latter party's previous policy directions. The Thatcher government's attitude towards teachers has already been discussed in relation to *The Black Papers on Education* in chapter one. It is sufficient to recapitulate here that they criticised the *unprofessionalism* of teachers, especially in adopting progressive pedagogies. The invocation of notions of 'professionalism' is crucial to the construction of the business paradigm I have proposed as dominating policy reform. Other examples of past Conservative education policy constructed the education system as benefitting from the application of market-like forces, such as competition and choice. This was despite the fact that the majority of schools continued (and continue today) to be overwhelmingly funded by the

state and centrally controlled by the state through the National Curriculum and other such legislation.

Competition between state schools was encouraged through the much-criticised Voucher Scheme, which would have allowed parents to take the funding the state gives their child to a school of their choosing. Furthermore, parents were increasingly presented with a choice of school for their child as the Conservatives shifted priorities away from the comprehensive model of education encouraged by Labour during the mid-twentieth century. Instead, their education policy signalled a desire to return, if not quite to the tripartite system (grammar schools, secondary moderns and technical schools), then to a system of diversified schools. Within this system, parents would be able to choose from schools differentiated by faith or by their emphasis on particular curriculum areas such as languages (specialist schools). Meanwhile, increased competition between the state and independent school sectors – and in some sense a move towards the privization of schooling (for certain types of students e.g. the academically ‘gifted’) – was indicated through policy such as the Assisted Places Scheme. Established in the 1980 *Education Act*, and later abolished by Labour, the scheme made government funding available for pupils excelling in the state system to attend independent schools (in addition to long-running scholarship schemes offered and administered by independent schools themselves).

Decentralisation of government control was suggested by measures that shifted power from the Local Educational Authorities to individual schools. However, education markets, quasi-markets, ‘are not in any simple sense free markets’ and the stripping of powers from certain bodies coincided with an increase in the centralized control of the outcomes schools were expected to achieve (Ball 45) with schools’ funding made increasingly conditional on their

performance against government targets (Pring 84, Whitty 'Twenty Years of Progress?' 174). Thus decentralisation offers an example of Conservative inability to render the education sector truly marketised. That these represent enduring Conservative strategies, up to twenty years later (and despite thirteen years in opposition), was confirmed by Gove's 2009 party conference speech. He promised that, should the Conservative party gain office, it would 'drastically reduce the intrusive regulation which holds back good teachers', give parents 'control over the money which is spent on their children's education' and the power to 'demand the precise, personalised, education your children need' through the creation of new schools including academies, and by rendering schools and teachers accountable to parents rather than 'central...bureaucracy' or local authorities. This last policy is built on constructions of parents and students as consumers and of their consumer sovereignty – again, a concept borrowed from the free-market economics.

Labour energetically pursued these Tory policies from 1997 to 2010. The party developed further the quasi-privatization of the education sector initiated by the Conservatives: the school system was to be 'more like business' while the private sector was 'to have an increasing role in the management and delivery of public services' (Ball 18). This included the government incentivising schools to form partnerships with 'employers, the Regional Development Agencies, the (occupational) Sector Skills Councils and the local Learning and Skills Councils' (Pring 74) – even other local schools, with whom they were in competition for pupil enrolments, and hence, funding. In part, these partnerships were to be economic, with schools involved in the Academies programme asked to obtain financial 'sponsors': individuals, businesses, charities, universities, and religious groups. The implausibility of such unions being strictly monetary, without any influence on the ethos or ideology of the schools

was widely observed. However, funding for schools from all sectors has dried up in the recent economic climate, meaning that successive governments have intervened to fund a scheme which was originally conceived to be largely privately financed.

Apart from encouraging input from beyond the state into funding schools, Labour sought to remove some pressure on education budgets while improving standards by effectively outsourcing certain areas of responsibility. Other schemes such as the Co-op Trusts and National Challenge Trusts focussed on raising standards through the sharing of good practice between organisations; with reference to the above schemes, between co-operative businesses and schools or between strongly performing schools and those demonstrating low levels of achievement. The 2005 document 'Children, Young People and the Arts', for instance, demonstrates the way in which arts provision has been largely devolved to organisations such as the Arts' Council and the arts providers it funds, using notions of 'collective responsibility' (a notion which has manifested its recent popularity in business as Corporate Social Responsibility). Through schemes such as Creative Partnerships, schools were encouraged to connect with theatres, museums and other creative workers so that every child would gain experience of the arts. Hence, the pursuit of these Conservative-style policies was made palatable to Labour voters by framing them 'explicitly in terms of furthering social justice through a modernised public sector' (Whitty 'Twenty Years of Progress?' 166).

It is evident from the above that Labour sought to solve the problem of standards by encouraging schools, on the one hand, to be more business-like and on the other hand for businesses to be more publicly-minded. Simultaneously, their policy-makers and politicians adopted Conservative strategies in encouraging parents and students to see themselves as

valued customers or consumers with a role to play in determining provision. New Labour placed an unusually strong value on personalisation (given that a rhetoric of individualism has long been associated with Conservatism): addressing issues at a personal level such as students' (and parents') aspirations, and barriers to achievement for individuals such as poverty, learning and behavioural difficulties. Exemplifying this approach, the 2005 White Paper, *Higher standards, better schools for all*, 'emphasized the tailoring of education around the needs of each child, including catch-up provision for those who need it' (Whitty 'Twenty Years of Progress?' 174). With regards to arts education, the tailoring of arts provision for individual students was central to the Arts Council's strategy for 'Children, Young People and the Arts'. Furthermore, Ed Ball's speech at the 2009 Labour Party conference promised one-to-one tuition for students who 'fall behind'.

These promises are directly comparable with those of the Conservatives' electioneering. Gove's party conference speech, for example, invited parents to imagine 'a small school – where the headteacher knows every child's name with smaller class sizes – and personal support for your child'. Such policies are redolent of the economic theory of consumer sovereignty even as they are part of Labour's more socialist agenda to 'tackle disadvantage by focusing additional resources on pupils who need greater support' (Whitty 'Twenty Years of Progress? 166-67).

One desired effect of this business-like revaluation has been to place more pressure on the producers of education – although Labour tended to focus on the failings of administrators and managers, rather than teachers. Indeed, some of the above innovations have explicitly disempowered producers in favour of consumers. It is, however, difficult to isolate the effect of this paradigm shift within education policy in order to identify the nature and size of its

effect: negative or positive, profound or negligible. However, the past few years have seen important alterations to the context in which a model for schools as businesses exists. These include, on the one hand, the change of government at Westminster to a Conservative-Liberal coalition – which might be expected to strengthen this valuing of education, given the popular perception of the former party as allied with leaders of business and industry. On the other hand, the nation has been gripped by a severe recession, the cause of which has been widely identified as stemming from the common, bad practices of business – especially the banking industry. It is foreseeable that widespread disenchantment with the world of (big) business, markets and economic forces could force the new government to reassess how it values education, or at least, the discourse it uses to do so.

Intriguingly, during the few months in which the Conservative-Liberal coalition has been in power one of the policy ideas to make the most headlines has been David Cameron's notion of a 'Big Society', whose connotations of social participation and inclusiveness seem to have been borrowed from (especially old) Labour rhetoric. However it is unlikely to represent an about-face from Thatcher's declaration that 'there is no such thing as society' since the concept, in its nascence, eschews state responsibility for several areas of improvement in society. It seems set to involve work which is currently government-funded being largely replaced by contributions from philanthropists and the voluntary sector.

While I have suggested above that New Labour overwhelmingly continued to target perceived problems with standards in education by using or building on old Conservative policies, it appears that an inversion of rhetoric (rather than values), in the area of standards at least, between the Conservatives and Labour has occurred. It could be argued that in adopting Conservative discourse the Labour party unintentionally prepared the ground for

its own defeat, by lessening the gap between itself and the opposition, making the Conservative party appear a less radical alternative for disgruntled Labour voters. For the Conservative party, their adoption of a more Labourite discourse may have been partly responsible for their stronger-than-previous performance. I will continue to trace these convergences between the policies of the two parties in the following section on moral education.

2.3 Valuing English as a vehicle for moral education

In addition to improving standards of performance within schools, both past and recent governments have demonstrated their concern to raise moral standards through education. That the responsibility for maintaining standards of morality in society is often attributed, along with families, to state education is evidenced by publications from *The Black Papers on Education* to Frank Furedi's *Wasted*, both of which trace social ills to a lack of authority in the school system. As with concern for the nation's economic and educational performance overall, the combination of mass media outrage; public condemnation; government (re)action; and solutions from researchers in education, psychology, and other such fields, contributes to a narrative of morality on the wane. It also perpetuates policy hyperactivism, with governments trying one solution after another to solve identified 'problems', which may instead represent a moral panic rather than constitute substantial threats to society²³. As I write, for example, the singer Lady Gaga is the subject of debate over whether live music concerts containing sexual or violent scenes should be subject to classification identifying the suitability of their content for children in the same way as films ('Parents Slam Lady

²³ Chapter five highlights the way in which rather than solely challenging educational values, popular culture frequently adheres to and positively reinforce them. It thereby problematises views of popular culture as a cause for moral panic.

GaGa'). This type of panic is not new, nor is it exclusive to the popular music industry: other cultural forms to be identified as a threat to the moral values instilled through education include video games and rock culture (Bristol 93).

Since its evolution in colleges and universities during the early twentieth century, English has been identified along with religious education, and more recently personal, social and health education (PSHE) as the site where moral education takes place in the curriculum. In terms of instruction in the English language, moral value has been identified as residing in the correct use of English. The Board of English proclaimed a hundred years ago that 'Pure English is not merely an accomplishment, but an index to and a formative influence over character' (para. 2). Alongside the economic imperative outlined in 1.8 and 2.1, this moral argument seems to have influenced, senior Conservative politicians' thinking on the weighting that should be given to language in the National Curriculum document as well as their emphasis on the importance of Standard English. Nonetheless, earlier publications, such as *Growth Through English* (Dixon) and indeed Cox's own report, had attempted to overturn these beliefs, reclaiming the worth of dialect (which constitutes only one element of language) as central to individuals' identity-making and integration into the school system: 'Dialect is personal and valuable, not an incorrect version of the standard' (Dixon 17).

Ultimately, the view of English as a site for moral education entered the 1989 curriculum more powerfully through notions of *literature* as a springboard for exploring ethical issues than through a connection between *language* and morality. Historically, cultural critics such as Arnold and Leavis had constructed literary canons out of moral criteria, including that the texts included should be 'the best that has been thought and said' (Arnold 70), which spread

'sweetness and light' among humanity (43), and which did not 'do dirt on life' (Leavis *The Great Tradition* 60-61). That is to say, texts which represent the 'peak of the divine nature of humankind, the virtues, duty and citizenship' (Davison 251). That Arnold's influence on education policy extended well into the next century can be clearly seen in the findings of the *Newbolt Report* which attempts to summarise moral attitudes to be aspired to: 'the three main motives which actuate the human spirit are the love of goodness, the love of truth and the love of beauty' (9). These, it argues, can be promoted through the study of literature. It also formulates literary study as a pathway to vicarious moral experience: 'The most valuable for all purposes are those experiences of human relations which are gained by contact with human beings', but they can also be garnered through 'the personal records of action and experience known to us under the form of literature' (8). Such an idea is striking to modern educators who might question the extent to which a piece of fiction constitutes a 'personal record of action and experience' and the realist view of character which it assumes.

For Leavis, who drew deeply on Arnold and the *Newbolt Report* in his writing, those authors identified as part of his *Great Tradition* possessed an unmatched 'moral intensity' which imbued their writing with the capacity to stimulate moral, emotional and psychological growth. For him, stimulating moral growth is a case of an intellectual minority choosing right and desirable texts for widespread study. Readers of these texts will be directly imbued with their moral power, especially when discovered through a 'process of close, attentive reading' (Bergonzi 52). This process 'involves the reader in choices and discrimination and judgements akin to those we continually make in our day-to-day living, and so strengthens and refines our capacity for them' (52).

In the National Curriculum, Cox is more loosely concerned with the way in which any given literary text can provide an impetus towards the simulation of action, thought and feeling (i.e. empathy) than with the careful selection of a canon of suitable texts. However, the influence of his teacher is still traceable in the *Cox Report's* assertion that English provides opportunities to promote spiritual development (defined as one's inner life); moral development; social development (practicing collaboration, thinking about audience and effect, different registers of language for different social contexts); and cultural development. He summarises the aims of his committee for the curriculum as: 'We would...hope that by the end of their school careers as many pupils as possible will have been able to "grow" through literature – both emotionally and aesthetically, both morally and socially' (*Cox on Cox* 76). For many educators in this field, such statements have come to *define* the value of English rather than merely constitute it.

Writing for the National Association for the Teaching of English (NATE), one of the most vocal bodies for English teachers, Gunther Kress has identified English as 'the only site in the curriculum which can deal with questions of individuality and responsibility in a *moral*, ethical, public, and social sense'. These include 'the examination of issues around notions of the individual: of social structures and of destinies, of notions of citizenship; of humans as having social responsibilities and socially produced characteristics as persons' (32). For Kress, the value of English as a route towards moral development continues to secure its position at the very core of the curriculum.

On the surface, this value of the moral power of English has remained constant from the late nineteenth-century. I have shown that its presence can be traced from Arnold, to Leavis (who read Arnold's works), to Cox (who was taught by Leavis), to a new generation of

educators who work under his National Curriculum for English. However, such a summary disregards shifts in the detail of how these authors construct the process and end of moral education. For early proponents of English, moral education was connected to the careful choice of literary texts which would convey suitable moral messages, whereas Cox embraces the potential of both fiction and non-fiction. Older generations of policy-makers also suggest that moral instruction and improvement is the desired outcome. This assumes a hierarchy where policy-makers, teachers and their chosen authors possess knowledge of what is morally right and wrong, which they hand on to their readers and students as part of their moral training. However, contemporary educators are situated in a post-modern age and reside in a multi-faith nation, with an education system which has increasingly embraced progressive attitudes towards the collaborative nature of classroom knowledge. For many of them, a transmission-style, unilateral teaching of moral absolutes, based on old interpretations of a Protestant religious tradition, is unpalatable today. Cox used the term moral 'development', a compromise which emphasises an ongoing, unquantifiable process rather than finite end point. Similarly, Gibson wrote of the capacity for the study of Shakespeare to boost 'students' moral *understanding*' (*Teaching Shakespeare* 5). More radically, Kress writes of *examining* constructed notions, structures and responsibilities. Such teaching reflects more student-centred notions of learning and incorporates the potential for critiquing received moral values.

Written across a period which spans the time of decreasing Conservative power, and New Labour's rise to power, these visions for English could be understood as representing part of a lengthy transition from Tory New Victorianism, with its certain moral values, to a more pluralist model under Labour – which has traditionally been cast as morally authoritarian in

terms of its high regard for 'responsibility, community and social capital' (Ball 98). However, with the possible exception of Kress, these authors are also engaged in continuing to obscure the mediated nature of reading literature for moral education in any school context, blurring the distinctiveness between Thatcher and New Labour policy in spite of the different ideologies they present.

2.4 Using English to promote social inclusion

In addition to their enduring responsibility for the nation's moral education, successive governments have been explicitly concerned to promote the value of education as promoting social inclusion through their policies. Social inclusion is an agenda which is, on the whole, addressed separately from moral issues, despite its arguable intersections with religious ideals of hospitality and friendship. This is perhaps because it has evolved as an agenda largely in response to two specific and heavily politicized issues: class and race. The approaches taken to achieve social inclusion by recent Conservative and Labour leaderships are noticeably separated by their distinctive values: the former espousing a common cultural heritage and the latter cultural pluralism. I want to start this section, however, by considering the way in which the Labour government of 1997-2010 attended reflexively to the 'role of education in positioning human subjects in relation to the prevailing social order' (Whitty 'Education, Economy and National Culture' 269). It will be argued that although Labour's rhetoric expresses the value it places on social (class) equality, deployed in a swathe of policy documents, their commitment to social justice has been underscored by the similarity of some of their policies to those of the two preceding Conservative governments. Meanwhile, the Conservatives' failure to separate themselves from a nationalist vision of cultural cohesion, which pre-dates even the Thatcher government,

undercuts the party's conscious cultivation of a new, Labour-like social ideology under Cameron's leadership.

Labour's emphasis on education's 'role in building a new social order, via notions of progress, perfectibility, and empowerment' (Whitty 'Education, Economy and National Culture' 269) can be interpreted as an attempt to refute the negative connotations of sociologists who have criticised the way in which education is always driven by other agendas of the state. These include the sociologist Emile Durkheim, who argues that 'far from having as its unique or principal object the individual and his interest, [education] is above all the means by which society perpetually recreates the conditions of its very existence' (123). Louis Althusser reiterates, in an overtly left-wing way, that education is centrally concerned with the 'reproduction of submission to the ruling ideology for workers, and a reproduction of the ability to manipulate the ruling ideology correctly for the agents of exploitation and repression' (128). With varying degrees of politicisation, the correspondence theory of Bowles and Gintis, Raymond Williams' notion of a 'selective tradition', and Pierre Bourdieu's 'cultural capital' all make contentions about the way in which children are educated into social traditions and economic models, inside and away from the classroom. Not denying that these mechanisms exist, but challenging the sinister aspect cast on them by the writers above, Labour instead attempted to harness as a positive force for change the social traditions and economic models with which its education system would imbue children. It advertised its traditions and models as based on the equality (of opportunity, participation and access) of all ethnicities, genders, sexualities, abilities and economic statuses.

Labour's concern to be seen to use this normative and conformational power of education to advance social inclusion, rather than for economic gain or to perpetuate a society based on unequal social, racial and other hierarchies, can be seen throughout the policy directives they produced while in office. Their equalising intentions are expressed in their use of the word 'entitlement' to promise 'a clear, full and statutory entitlement to learning for all pupils' in the foreword added to the revised *National Curriculum* by then Secretary for State, David Blunkett and the QCA chairman, Sir William Stubbs (DfEE/QCA 3). Labour explicitly acknowledged that 'equality of opportunity is one of a broad set of common values and purposes which underpin the school curriculum' (4) and, as such, is a precursor to gaining one's entitlement. Other preconditions for achieving inclusiveness in education included raising aspiration towards an entitlement and the quality of products or experience which constitute those rights.

As Culture Secretary, Tessa Jowell argued that as well as increasing chances for material wealth and fulfilment, addressing the 'poverty of aspiration' was 'also necessary to build a society of fairness and opportunity' (14-15). Additionally, she emphasised the need for 'excellence' in terms of the 'quality' of provision, criteria applied beyond arts education by Labour in their pursuit to raise standards across various endeavours (10). Schools were advised to make provision of an arts entitlement for all in government recommendations on prospectuses for primary and secondary schools (DfEE, *Circular 7/98* and *8/98*). These documents offer proof of Labour's policy for inclusion being put into action, or, at least, communicated to schools. Throughout such documents, organisations were warned that this should not equate to elitism of content or provision, as they jeopardise accessibility (another government target for education).

The ability to demonstrate adherence to the government-endorsed values became a requirement for many publicly funded organisations early in the new millennium, with a particular focus on the arts and arts education. Thus, in *From Policy to Partnership: developing the arts in schools*, the QCA and the Arts Council include a section on ‘ensuring entitlement’; profess the ‘right’ to ‘high quality arts experience for every pupil, whatever their background or ability’ and the role of the community in strengthening and broadening arts provision in school (4). This led to heated debates in the arts sector about whether culture should ‘become a tool of government policy’, as a quotation on the front of John Holden’s *Capturing Cultural Value* describes it. Moreover, he questioned the ‘degree to which cultural organisations should be obliged to use instrumental arguments to justify their public funding’ (9). In doing so, he raises the possibility that the government’s values for arts education and culture were only superficially shared by some organisations in order to access the financial incentives on offer. The government’s counter-argument to this accusation that it was ensuring the public value of these bodies’ use of tax-payers’ funds sparked further debate about cultural value and public-funding in these areas.

Looking beyond the discourse and measures wielded by Labour’s policy-makers in attempting to reform arts education, it is evident that the party’s reign produced a glut of legislation to promote equality. One of their first education initiatives on gaining office in 1997 was the inclusion of children with special needs, where possible, into mainstream schooling, through the *Excellence for All Children* Green Paper. Other initiatives that year, countering the perceived lack of careers guidance, information and advice, are outlined in the documents *The Learning Age* (DfEE) and *Learning to Succeed* (DfEE) as well as the establishment of the nationwide Connexions employment service. Exclusion stemming from

poverty and a lack of resources for urban working class youth was acknowledged by the 1998 *Disaffected Children* report (Education and Employment Committee); the creation of Education Action Zones and the Excellence in Cities schemes; as well as the Educational Maintenance Allowance, a scheme first piloted in 1999, then implemented more fully in 2004, following the publication of the 2002 *14-19: Opportunity and Excellence* document²⁴. These policy interventions aimed to keep children at the highest risk of dropping out in education or training for longer using economic incentives (such as the Allowance) and by strategically channelling more resources into urban areas.

Further into their time in power, Labour vigorously pursued policies designed to appeal to the range of students' educational interests and aspirations. The Curriculum 2000 reforms to study beyond the age of sixteen stressed the benefits of modular rather than linear course structure for secondary education. Through promoting modularisation it aimed to encourage a wider range of subjects to be taken post-16 (including those seen to be previously unappealing to university admissions bodies) by facilitating greater choice, flexibility and parity between subjects²⁵. In this way, the party approached the reform of education policy to extend inclusivity with a broad range of policies.

Evaluating the impact of these policies using primary data is beyond the scope of this thesis. It is possible, however, to gain a critical perspective on Labour's achievements and failures in implementing its values through the literature of educational research. New Labour has been criticised for treating social justice issues as peripheral (Ball 150) – the very opposite of its intentions in addressing the concerns of sociologists; for multiplying different and

²⁴ The coalition government's plans to scrap the EMA led to public protests by secondary school students in December 2010.

²⁵ It established, on paper, the parity of vocational education with academic routes through the 2002 Green Paper *14-19: Extending opportunities, raising standards* (DfES).

unequal outcomes for students through proliferating different qualification pathways and school types; and for taking too long to focus additional resources on disadvantaged pupils and therefore failing to reduce significantly the gap between them and children from advantaged backgrounds (Whitty 'Twenty Years of Progress?' 166-67). These criticisms are obviously inflected with the belief that New Labour has not pursued the party's traditional and distinctive social justice agenda with enough force. This concern is fanned by analysis which suggests that one gap certainly closed during this period was between Labour values and rhetoric and that of Cameron's 'compassionate Conservatism', with both parties moving towards a political centre ground: I will problematise this later in discussing Conservative values for social inclusion. In undertaking a weighty comparison of Conservative and Labour education policy during the past twenty-years, Whitty, however, also acknowledges the limitations to his criticism of Labour. He asserts that a new admissions code, plans for free school transport and 'choice advisers' to open up the choice of schools to less advantaged families 'is a welcome, if belated, recognition of the impact of structural and cultural factors on the capacity of different groups to exercise choice meaningfully in a diverse system of schooling' ('Twenty Years of Progress? 178). These policies represent moves to ameliorate those structural and cultural factors which I earlier identified Labour as determined to reappropriate from negative narratives as part of their campaign for the social good. This suggests at least some degree of synergy between their values for education (especially social inclusion) and the impact of the policy designed to realise them.

While social inclusion is a central concern for both parties, they each envision distinct ways of achieving it (which in turn affect its definition): Labour by promoting equality, pluralism, and parity within all facets of education policy and the Conservatives through assimilating

those excluded to dominant values, structures and practices as, for example, part of an English cultural heritage. Such an agenda was evident in their development of the National Curriculum as a vehicle for delivering this British 'national culture' to all students which, protected from market forces, would also elide the previous varied content and delivery of 'trendy teachers' who were perceived to be 'subverting traditional moral values and selling the nation short' (Whitty 'Education, Economy and National Culture' 301, also Ball 110). The influence of such ideas, espousing the assimilation of the British population into a common cultural heritage and thereby supposedly contributing to the nation's stability, is traceable in the National Curriculum for English which states that 'cultural development can be achieved by 'introducing pupils to *the* English literary heritage' (DfEE/QCA 8, my emphasis). The use of the definite article is significant in indicating the underlying assumption of a fixed and unified literary heritage, based arguably on nostalgia for the past and a belief in a fantastical homogenous British culture. This clause demonstrates an immediate continuity of thought with the *Kingman Report's* declaration that:

Our modern language and our modern writing have grown out of the language and literature of the past. The rhythms of our daily speech and writing are haunted not only by the rhythms of our nursery rhymes, but also by the rhythms of Shakespeare, Blake, Edward Lear, Lewis Carroll, the Authorised Version of the Bible. We do not completely know what modern writing is unless we know what lies behind it.

(Kingman 2:21)

Delving deeper into history, such sentiments are comparable with Leavis' desire for a 'national conscience' founded on literature and literary language to 'breach the continuity' between the past and present caused by rapid social and technological change ('Valuation in Criticism' 279); the place of English in the *Newbolt Report* as 'the only possible basis for a national education', since national self-understanding is to be gained through the

(re)discovery of England's literary past (14); and the Romantics' belief that literary works caught 'the essence, or some of the historical essence, of the historical context from which they emanated' (St. Clair 2). This persistent longing for the past, as a way of securing the future, is a hallmark of both culturally conservative and politically Conservative attitudes to national identity.

This ancient 'restorationist agenda', Ball adds, was most pronounced in the 'rearticulations' of subjects in the National Curriculum such as history, geography, English and music.

Through the reworking of curricula for these subjects Britain is depicted

at the centre, a benign and progressive influence on the world, bearer of justice and civilization, as part of a curriculum seeking to eschew relevance and the present, concentrating on 'heritage' and 'the canon'. It is a fantasy curriculum founded on Victorian myths about and inventions of ethnic Englishness and an assertion of tradition, of morality and literary history in the face of 'declining standards', cultural heterogeneity and a fragmented modernity. (Ball 83)

If it is fantasy, it is an enduring one. Michael Gove's speech to the 2009 Conservative Party Conference took the omission of Winston Churchill from a QCDA history syllabus as evidence of the distortion of educational values under Labour, as well as of 'the extent of waste in the budgets of educational bureaucracies' in consulting on such matters.

There is no better way of building a modern, inclusive, patriotism than by teaching all British citizens to take pride in this country's historic achievements. Which is why the next Conservative Government will ensure the curriculum teaches the proper narrative of British History – so that every Briton can take pride in this nation. (Gove 2009)

His language and rhetoric strongly resemble the excerpts from neo-Conservative Hillgate Group, influential to government policy in the late 1980s, who claimed that nothing was more important than to 'reconcile our minorities, to integrate them into our national culture, and to ensure a common political loyalty, independent of race, creed or colour'

(pamphlet cited in Whitty 'Education, Economy and National Culture' 299). It demonstrates that Gove (and by implication today's Conservative party) is far closer in ideology (i.e. values) and policy to Thatcher than the adoption of Labour discourse, promises of reformed Conservatism ('compassionate' or 'new'), and the ensuing blurring of partisan identities, would have voters infer. At the time of writing this thesis, however, all signs are that economic macro-policy will continue to dominate reforms to education policy, as it did for Labour²⁶.

2.5 Relating Shakespeare in education policy to macro-political agendas

Shakespeare exists in education policy variously because of, and sometimes despite, the larger agendas of the Conservative and Labour party during the past twenty years. There is a degree of implied continuity between the two parties' valuing of Shakespeare, since Labour made few alterations to Shakespeare-specific policy: this resonates with the intersections between Conservative and Labour macro-policy and discourse traced above. I will also explore below the way in which although Shakespeare is present in an overarching way – as the only compulsory author for English students from key stages one to four – he is also absent from much of the curriculum, existing only in the statement that the range of literature at key stages three and four should include 'two plays by Shakespeare, one of which should be studied in key stage 3' (DfEE/QCA 35). Other stipulations from the Curriculum document which might strengthen the choice of Shakespeare as the sole mandatory author include the teaching of 'drama by major playwrights'; a certain number of works of fiction and poetry before and after 1914 (lists of authors to select from are included

²⁶ Activity in the education policy arena since the coalition government came to power has focussed on academies, enabling free schools, abandoning the EMA, and implementing further tuition fees for university students.

in the document); 'recent and contemporary drama, fiction and poetry written for young people and adults'; and 'drama, fiction and poetry by major writers from different cultures and traditions' (examples of suitable writers are given but not prescribed) (DFEE/QCA 36).

In spite of this network of requirements which lend themselves to the study of Shakespearean texts, Shakespeare's presence in the National Curriculum is undercut by a series of gaps. Reasons why Shakespeare might be the most fitting author to make compulsory go unwritten in the document. Yet several explanations could have been integrated. For instance, Shakespeare's large body of work offers students and teachers the chance for variety in terms of texts and genres studied from year to year. Meanwhile, the material prepared and learnt on the theatrical context of the plays, Shakespeare's biography, his use of language and craftsmanship (themes, imagery, stylistics etc.) can remain reasonably stable across the plays. Shakespeare is also potentially useful to teachers (although not alone among earlier playwrights) in rendering the plays in both prose and poetry. Thus study of his works speaks to multiple requirements of the curriculum.

On an even more practical level, one legacy of Shakespeare's use over several centuries is the existence of an industry of editions and teaching resources which are not available for other authors, and therefore facilitate and perpetuate his status. Importantly for state schools, which are perpetually represented as operating on tight budgets for teaching resources, Shakespeare also exists largely as a free resource: plenty of out of copyright material exists which can be duplicated or downloaded from the internet, and there is no fee to be paid to an estate for permission to stage productions (as with work by most modern playwrights).

There is also a marked lack of attention to pedagogies and outcomes for teaching Shakespeare's plays. Since the statement requiring Shakespeare to be taught falls under the programme of study for reading, it could be inferred that textual pedagogies are to be preferred over performance approaches (implications which I will tease out further in chapter three). Nor does the legislation itself give any indication of why those implementing the National Curriculum or successive governments believed that Shakespeare would be particularly fitting to growing national and individual wealth; to preparing students for their contribution to the economy; to imbuing them with functional skills; or to encouraging the values of enterprise, entrepreneurship and creativity – despite these being a pressing educational agenda. One critical strain has cast Shakespeare himself in the figure of canny businessman – the criticism of Edward Dowden, for example (Murphy 'Shakespeare and the Cultural Trajectories of Victorian Ireland') – but this is nowhere referred to explicitly in the statutes. Similarly, Shakespeare's own creativity is affirmed by almost every publication on the subject – whether honouring his originality or skill in adapting old plots (Bate *The Genius of Shakespeare*, Bloom) – but not mentioned in the Curriculum.

This paucity of explanation is partly explained by the functional nature of the document, which is to state requirements for teaching clearly rather than entering into debate. However, apart from media coverage of the emerging curriculum, there was a marked time lag between its publication and the process of decision-making becoming publicly available. As discussed in chapter one, the Curriculum's author, Cox published his committee's rationale in a separate volume because he felt it had been sidelined by the Thatcher government (*Cox on Cox*). Furthermore, although Labour added its own foreword to the revised National Curriculum in 1999, this addresses its general policy agendas for social

inclusion, raising standards and skilling a workforce. It is not subject specific, let alone does it mention Shakespeare's unusual place in English (DfEE/QCA 3-4).

Nonetheless, reading between the lines of the National Curriculum document, certain requirements for particular skills would seem to lend themselves to a study of Shakespeare. These include pupils being taught 'to imagine, explore and entertain' by drawing 'on their experience of good fiction, of different poetic forms and of reading, watching and performing in plays' (DfEE/QCA 37). Moreover, being taught 'how language varies', specifically 'the development of English, including changes over time, borrowings from other languages, origins of words' (32), might well draw on Shakespeare – given his contribution to the evolution of our vocabulary. However, I contend that these needs could be met by use of other playwrights and other authors from the Early Modern period onwards²⁷. These few points above, however, represent the extent to which Shakespeare specifically is necessary to skilling the work force – even then, it is debatable whether it is an essential skill for the entire work force to know how the English language has evolved historically or to be able to write imaginative and entertaining pieces. All the other requirements of the English curriculum could be fulfilled by the use of a combination of other authors.

While Shakespeare in the National Curriculum can be seen to address the provision of a few specific skills – required for further study of English or Drama at university, or for careers involving a knowledge of etymology or the ability to write creatively – Shakespeare could be constructed as having been placed on (and survived in) the National Curriculum *in spite* of a heavy emphasis from both the Conservatives and Labour on skills. A more cynical account

²⁷ I have identified the Early Modern period since vast amounts of earlier texts would require a teaching of old or middle English, not to mention obscure dialect forms, which are beyond any realistic or achievable remit of English at primary and secondary school level.

would say that skills have been invented or ‘spun’ initially to secure, and later to justify, Shakespeare’s continued status in the curriculum. Hence, it falls to other authors – for example, Cox writing on the process of devising a National Curriculum for English (*Cox on Cox, Cox on the Battle*) – and other government agendas, such as standards and social inclusion, to explain Shakespeare’s unique position in education policy.

I want to consider below how various Conservative and Labour agendas for raising standards – both in terms of performance and moral standards within society – affect Shakespeare in the National Curriculum. Within that, policies of target-setting, deploying a paradigm of schools as businesses, offered as a solution to poor performance will be discussed in depth. Conversely, how might the delivery of Shakespeare address these strategies and concerns? Just as the current version of the curriculum makes a bland assumption about its role in developing standards – stating that ‘the National Curriculum lies at the heart of our policies to raise standards’ (DFEE/QCA 3), Conservative policy-makers in 1989 assumed that putting Shakespeare at the heart of the English curriculum at key stages three and four would raise standards. Labour did little to challenge this as a value of Shakespeare in education or to explicate the mechanisms by which this process of improvement might occur.

The curriculum is also elliptical in explaining what should be achieved through the study of Shakespeare. Standards to which students should aspire in their work are defined across English rather than in relation to Shakespeare: the skills, and increasing standards with which they are to be performed, are articulated over four key stages through phrases such as students should ‘listen, understand and respond to others’ at key stage one (DFEE/QCA 16), ‘listen, understand and respond *appropriately* to others’ at key stage two (22, my emphasis) and ‘listen, understand and respond *critically* to others’ at key stages three and

four (31, my emphasis). Thus Shakespeare occupies an unrivalled position as the only compulsory author in the National Curriculum for English – without any explanation as to why²⁸. The rationale for his presence is instead diffused through discussion of the statutes in the writings of Cox and supporting strategies, such as *Shakespeare for all ages and stages* (DCSF). The latter proposes that Shakespeare should be studied on the grounds that his work ‘has lasted’, is universal in appeal, challenging, and extending (in terms of developing our own linguistic and creative competencies) (6).

Rather than providing a rationale for his place in the curriculum, both its Conservative authors and revisers under Labour appear to have relied on existing narratives of Shakespeare as a ‘gold standard’ author: the best playwright; the best poet; a genius (Bate *The Genius of Shakespeare*). He continues to be co-opted into the curriculum as an Arnoldian example of ‘the best’ that has been written to encourage equally skilled thinking and writing in students and as a ‘cultural catalyst’ (the theme of the 2010 International Shakespeare Conference) who inspires those who experience his works to generate further greatness. Another of the ways in which Shakespeare is supposed to raise standards through his incarnation in the curriculum, unstated but implicit in the very concept of the National Curriculum, is by being part of every child’s learning regardless of ability or background. Implemented by the Conservative government through his unparalleled place in the curriculum, Labour were understandably reluctant to alter such inclusive policy substantially when social justice, as demonstrated above, is one of their core agendas.

However, the Conservatives’ establishment of Shakespeare at the centre of a National Curriculum for English designed to boost standards by stipulating and facilitating regular and

²⁸ This is true of earlier versions of the curriculum, which, as I suggested in chapter one, contain even less detail on Shakespeare’s place in it.

standardised target-setting and assessment can be seen as in tension with more liberal humanist values around the delivery of arts and humanities subjects. Pring, writing of the teaching of History, notes a mismatch between traditional pedagogies for these subjects and performance targets: 'Highly disciplined discussion was at the centre of the learning experience, lacking therefore precise targets to be attained. For who can set precise targets to a well informed and vigorous conversation?' (84). The question might also be articulated in relation to Shakespeare as: 'for who can set precise targets to a lively role play? An innovative performance of some scenes? A poem inspired by one of his characters?' The problem of assessing students on their experience of Shakespeare through a severely limited and delineated set of questions may have contributed to Labour's decision to end the testing of Shakespeare through key stage three SATs.

In ending SATs testing at key stage three, Labour has implied that the value of Shakespeare to raising standards in education resides decreasingly in the ability to perform set tasks on an examination paper. Rather, Shakespeare has been shown to fit well into their emphasis on improving the sector through partnerships, part of their larger paradigm of education as business. Although not explicitly a provision for the teaching of Shakespeare, the statement that the National Curriculum for English 'provides a framework within which all partners in education can support young people on the road to further learning' (DFEE/QCA 3) is an invitation to collaborate with schools which has been taken up by the education departments of organisations such as the Globe, RSC and SBT. These organisations have pledged to support young people in their learning of Shakespeare through writing education programmes for teachers and students which explicitly refer to the National Curriculum programmes of study, attainment targets and assessment objectives. As I will demonstrate

further in chapter four, they have also proved to be a spur to policy change and improving the experience of Shakespeare for all children – and, in turn, they claim, children’s academic performance – lobbying the government through campaigns such as ‘Stand up for Shakespeare’.

Shakespeare’s place in the curriculum can be understood through another pseudo-market concept: protectionism. It is ironic but representative of Conservative policy that the party should espouse free market economics yet arrive at a culturally protectionist policy that insulates Shakespeare from change and challenge. The National Curriculum, incidentally Cox claims (see chapter one), had the effect of protecting Shakespeare, ‘our national poet’, from competition with international authors and modern literature: other authors are only recommended, to be selected from lists of major playwrights, major writers of fiction, major poets and so on. Much of this extension of the canon was added by the Labour government as non-statutory annotations to the revised curriculum (DfEE/QCA 12). These authors are not insulated to the same extent as Shakespeare against trends in consumption: that is to say, from fluctuating demand for knowledge of them from students, parents, teachers and employers.

Indeed, the very act of making Shakespeare uniquely compulsory suggests a possibility that if left to consumers (students, parents) and producers (teachers, schools) Shakespeare might not be taught. Putting Shakespeare on the curriculum represents one of the ways in which

at the end of the twentieth century Shakespeare enthusiasts (or more pertinently, politicians and policy makers) assume, for perhaps the first time since the end of the eighteenth century, that Shakespeare needs defending, that his genius is not universally appreciated, that his supremacy is contested.

(Taylor ‘Afterword’ 199)

Elaborating his contention, Taylor argues that such education policy is only one of the proofs that Shakespeare is not inherently universal but heavily 'marketed'. To exemplify this Taylor cites the example of the film industry and blockbuster productions such as Baz Luhrmann's *Romeo + Juliet*, which sold well to teenagers by relocating the story in 1990s America, using a pop soundtrack, and casting 'heartthrob' actors in the lead roles ('Afterword' 202).

Returning to protectionism in the curriculum, from Taylor's evidence of its necessity, it is arguable that, not only is Shakespeare placed under threat from the quality of other authors' work but also from his own quality. What makes Shakespeare 'great' and special can also make him less attractive. Many other authors' works are easier to teach because they are shorter in length, written in Modern English, and therefore consume less time in class. Taylor forces us to ask,

If Shakespeare were not so massively supported by corporate capital and government subsidy, if he were not forced upon schoolchildren, would he still loom so large in our culture? Or would he collapse to the status of Chaucer? A great writer admired by specialists, but paid little attention by the larger world. (205)

While Taylor is predominantly concerned with the corporate culture of America, instances of corporate sponsored Shakespeare in the United Kingdom range from the financial backing of Globe projects by Deutsche Bank to, on a smaller scale, the sale of advertising space in programmes for community and regional theatre. Taylor's critique thus articulates the fears of the Conservative/conservationist authors of the National Curriculum, and those who have upheld it in subsequent years, about Shakespeare's threatened status (although he himself professes indifference to this fate).

Since both the Thatcher and New Labour governments encouraged elements of market forces within the education system, such as competition, elements of privatization and

consumer sovereignty. Shakespeare's sheltered place on the curriculum is here demonstrably at odds with education policy more widely. The Labour governments of 1997-2009 could be seen to have challenged Shakespeare's protected status by increasing competition to traditional academic routes through extending vocational and diploma qualifications. However, these reforms remain concentrated on the post-sixteen sector, where English is not compulsory – lessening their impact on Shakespeare. Hence, the legislation that enshrines the playwright as the only compulsory author in students' experience of English at school is an example of successive governments' inability to be fully marketised; to relinquish regulation of the education market; to trust the interaction of market forces to produce education of a high standard.

If New Labour was ambivalent about whether their policy interventions with regards to Shakespeare could produce high standards in education, were they confident that Shakespeare in the National Curriculum could have a positive effect on moral standards? Especially given that, as demonstrated earlier, there is evidence in both parties' education policy which demonstrated uncertainty about what constitutes desirable morality. Moreover, the moral rectitude of Shakespeare's plays is contested. Historically, Shakespeare has had different moral connotations during different periods. Shakespeare, as part of the theatre world, was branded immoral and banished from the stage by Puritan leaders. In the eighteenth-century his writing was expurgated by editors such as Henrietta and Thomas Bowdler, who deemed it unsuitable for women and children – it was subsequently infantilized further by the Lambs' retellings. At the end of the last century, Shakespeare was heavily criticized by critical theorists for his literary representations of women and other minorities. Yet, he remains at the centre of a curriculum which aspires to nurturing students'

moral understanding. The recognised difficulty and ambiguous desirability for policy-makers of elucidating a fixed moral code which authors and students should adhere to, even promote, in their writing and lives might explain a shift in the emphasis on moral education which I will trace below.

Increasingly, government documents have shifted from the use of the word 'moral', evident throughout the *Newbolt Report*, to the Progressivist-inflected 'personal' growth. The terms are not quite synonymous. The latter is broader in scope, including the potential for students to develop empathy, imagination, creativity, confidence, self-esteem, self-expression, as well as a sense of ethical judgement and responsibility (Gibson *Teaching Shakespeare* 4-5, Cox *Cox on Cox* 20, 86). However, the concept is similarly predicated on the benefits gained from the potential for vicarious experience which the reading of literature affords; of identifying with characters and situations; as well as through the assumed 'delight' or 'pleasure' taken in the process of reading. Despite this, fragmentary evidence that 'old-fashioned' moral instruction continues to operate through Shakespeare in everyday teaching can be found in government-endorsed tasks that encourage students to rank the 'villains' of his plays from the 'complex' and 'flawed' to 'likeable rogues' (DCSF 34). Thus old values for Shakespeare in education as promoting moral awareness, if not instruction, linger across the years and across the political divide.

The most striking differences between Conservative and Labour values for Shakespeare in education *should* be visible in their treatments of the relationship between Shakespeare and wider society. As discussed previously, this is perhaps *the* education agenda on which the two parties are still most discernibly differentiated in accordance with their traditional ideologies. However, Labour's minimal changes to policy concerning Shakespeare in the

National Curriculum make them vulnerable to the criticism that they perpetuated Tory values for literary education in the curriculum. I will examine here the ideologies for social justice and the practicalities surrounding policy-making which affected these parties' treatments of Shakespeare.

For Conservative education policy in the late 1980s, the *Cox Report's* suggestion that Shakespeare become the only required author in the National Curriculum for English offered a solution to the perception that education was failing to preserve a British tradition. Such thinking builds on two much older beliefs. Firstly, it represents a conviction in the power of literary studies to promulgate a 'common culture'. Secondly, it reconfirms established ideas about the value of Shakespeare specifically as father of the modern English language (see Kingman above); and as universal – in the sense of speaking to all – rendering Shakespeare a key entity around which to build a common curriculum, even a common culture²⁹.

Another reason that the Conservatives had for rendering Shakespeare central to the English curriculum was their conception of inclusion, derived from Arnold, as a matter of 'raising up' or assimilating people into 'the best that has been thought and said'. This included facilitating access to a culturally (and perhaps also politically) conservative literary canon. While not synonymous with the aims of the Cox committee, who were keen to broaden children's range of reading to include non-fiction, children's fiction and writing from other cultures in the curriculum, the party's aim was supported by the curriculum content (Cox *on Cox*). The first National Curriculum document, for instance, stipulated that key stage two pupils' 'taste in reading' is to be developed 'with guidance from the teacher' and that by key stages three and four

²⁹ Twenty years later, Gove's emphasis on the importance of Churchill to the history curriculum suggests a continued role for iconic British figures in their vision of the National Curriculum.

Pupils should be introduced to:

- the richness of contemporary writing;
- pre-20th century literature;
- some of the works which have been most influential in shaping and refining the English language and its literature, e.g. *the Authorised Version of the Bible, Wordsworth's poems, or the novels of Austen, the Brontës or Dickens*;
- some of the works of Shakespeare.

(DES/Welsh Office 30, *Cox Cox on Cox* 193)

The authors italicised here are non-statutory. They are, however, part of an elite canon of English (both nation and language) literature recognised as such by, among others, the Kingman committee on which Cox had served, only a year previously, and Leavis (Cox's tutor), four decades earlier. Leavis had included Austen, and later Dickens, in his canon-building work *The Great Tradition*. In the curriculum document, the status of these authors is reinforced by the physical space they occupy on the page. Contemporary writing, for example, is quickly passed over – it merits the label 'rich' but not 'influential' (a later version of the curriculum felt it necessary to specify that contemporary authors should have 'well established critical reputations', presumably to ensure the quality of literature taught) (DfE/Welsh Office 20). Additionally, the 1995 revisions state that 'within a broad programme of reading' pupils 'should be given opportunities to' 'appreciate the significance of texts whose language and ideas have been influential eg *Greek myths, the Authorised Version of the Bible, Arthurian legends*' (DfE/Welsh Office 21). Again, the italics indicate non-statutory material. In the 1999 revisions, under the Labour government, the requirement was reiterated as part of the 'knowledge, skills and understanding' subheading for reading at key stages 3 and 4:

2 Pupils should be taught:

- a how and why texts have been influential and significant [for example, the influence of Greek myths, the Authorised Version of the Bible, the Arthurian legends]
- b the characteristics of texts that are considered to be of high quality
- c the appeal and importance of these texts over time.

(DfEE/QCA 34)

It is important to note that, again, the bracketed material is non-statutory and, as such appears in grey font in this edition. The examples given of Greek myths and the Bible (the text of a Judeo-Christian tradition, translated from Hebrew and Greek) as primary literatures in an English literary tradition obviously draws on a (nostalgic) model of premium education from the independent and grammar schools that those revising the *Cox Report* may themselves have attended in the mid-twentieth century. In setting these examples, they may have recalled the strong bent towards the Classics, Middle English (partially from French sources, in the case of Malory's *Le Morte D'Arthur*), early modern and religious studies in their own formative educational experiences. However, the foreign provenance of at least two of the texts listed also offers some curious and ironic potential for deconstructing the blatant and latent nationalism in the curriculum. The Labour-initiated version of the statute could thus potentially empower students to question actively rather than passively receive the canon, by teaching them how texts are constructed as canonical and about the assumptions that underlie distinctions between literary and non-literary texts, 'high quality' works and 'pulp fiction'. Yet, its radical promise is overwhelmed by hangovers from the older prescriptions and their elitist assumptions about the nature of English, which conceives the subject as being about introducing students to '*the English literary heritage*', the 'best' texts,

and teaching them to 'appreciate' those texts as, it is supposed, their forbearers have done (DfEE/QCA 8, my italics). Thus Shakespeare delivered through the National Curriculum, as part of a once-exclusive, now mass-prescribed, canon fits Conservative constructions of social justice as offering access for all to an elite pre-determined set (canon or curriculum) of writers, texts, knowledges, and experiences³⁰. In their last revision, the curriculum manifests New Labour's inability (or perhaps disinclination) to overhaul statutes inherited from their Conservative predecessors to reflect their different ideology. This in turn may stem from similarities in the education policies of the opposing parties as well as the inherent messiness of policy-making.

The foreword to the 1999 version of the National Curriculum confirms Labour's commitment to the National Curriculum as a vehicle for delivering a 'statutory entitlement to learning for all pupils', as part of the Labour government's social justice agenda (DfEE/QCA 3). Their revisions to the document also left the clause which makes Shakespeare the only compulsory author untouched, while the testing of Shakespeare (and other subjects) at key stage three was only abolished as recently as 2009. Explanations for this move could include a change in Labour's attitude to Shakespeare in the curriculum more widely; different pedagogic values; the unpopularity of tests with teachers; and the difficulty of administering a massive examination system. The axing of SATs at stage three, alone, does not suggest an attempt on Labour's behalf to differentiate their own position on social inclusion from that of the Conservatives (since the abandoned tests also affected subjects other than English).

The revisions instead suggest that Labour was prepared to accommodate Shakespeare's

³⁰ It is also worth noting that, in terms of offering access to all to the curriculum, the National Curriculum included detailed pages on 'Inclusion: providing effective learning opportunities for all pupils' including provisions for English as an Additional Language pupils and pupils with disabilities or special educational needs (DfEE/QCA 42-50).

status as the only compulsory author into an agenda for equality which could be defined by access for all, to all elements of culture and education (almost indistinguishable, in terms of outcome, from traditional Conservative notions of assimilation). The adoption of a more radically left-wing position of treating all culture, and all knowledges, as equal through abolishing existing hierarchies within the curriculum was incontrovertibly eschewed. Nonetheless, some evidence of Labour's commitment to a pluralist project can be seen in their efforts to give voice, through dedicated time, space and money, to a plethora of literary traditions, voices, and cultures. Half a page of the revised Curriculum is filled with (mostly non-statutory) suggestions of post-1914 poets, recent and contemporary drama and fiction and writing by authors from 'different cultures and traditions' (DfEE/QCA 36). Hence, the revised curriculum offers evidence that during their time in power, Labour developed a catholic literary tradition in English education which nevertheless maintained Shakespeare at its head.

Given his associations with elite 'ruling' culture, made prominent in literary criticism over past the few decades, Shakespeare never offered a solution for New Labour's agenda for social inclusion, as he did for the Conservative's social project for assimilation. Nevertheless, the party was presumably disinclined to depose Shakespeare lest it be accused of depriving those disadvantaged citizens it is supposed to represent the chance to experience the literary 'greats'. Having diversified the profile of its voters, New Labour was particularly sensitive to 'the dual and contradictory policy imperatives that derive from the aspirations and fears of the middle classes, on the one hand and the limited participation and underachievement of various sections of the working class, on the other' (Ball 97). On a practical level, a further imperative to retain the Conservative's curriculum in a reasonably

intact form was provided by a reluctance to engage in years of upheaval within the school system, upsetting teachers and trade unions, which so poisoned Conservative educational reform (see Cox's later titles: *Cox on the Battle for the English Curriculum* and *The Great Betrayal*).

Whether in spite, or because, of Labour's politics, Shakespeare's continuing presence on the National Curriculum demonstrates the way in which he now exists as part of a naturalised, 'dominant ideology' for education policy which transcends party politics (Hawkes *Alternative Shakespeares* 43). This is increasingly so as ever greater numbers of the English population experience Shakespeare as a part of the National Curriculum, enter the voting population and fill roles as policy-makers, civil servants, politicians and educators. Shakespeare's supreme position does not mean that his role is always unquestioned – although, as I will suggest in the following chapter, the value of various pedagogies is more often at the centre of debate, rather than the value of Shakespeare *per se*. Rather, such questions constitute exceptions to the rule and are often treated as scandalous, radical or deluded – see Gary Taylor on the treatment of Shakespeare's critics (*Reinventing Shakespeare* 399-400). I will discuss the important role that popular culture plays in sustaining this hegemony, often in a tongue-in-cheek way, in chapter five.

To conclude this chapter, the above exploration of education policy, relating the main parties' policy agendas and overall ideological values to Shakespeare, has served to highlight the circularities in education policy; the way in which policy overwhelmingly continues across changes of government, with little absolute rupture or revolution (despite variations between and within party agendas); and the persisting legacy of early policy-makers and cultural critics. In seeking to explain this, it is worth returning to Ball's assertion that policy

'works by accretion and sedimentation, new policies add to and overlay old ones, with the effect that new principles and innovations are merged and conflated with older rationales and previous practices' (255). True reform of education is hampered by the accreted weight of education policy and legislation, which, although intended to offer a solution to perceived problems, may be experienced as constraint. The implications of this for the take up and endurance of three pedagogies for Shakespeare will be examined in the next chapter.

3. SHAKESPEARE IN ENGLISH SUBJECT PEDAGOGY: VALUES, INFLUENCE AND CRITICISM

Having explored the way in which the value of Shakespeare is constructed through (and sometimes in spite of) education policy, this chapter begins by analysing the relationship between policy and pedagogy in the National Curriculum. It then considers the values that inform different pedagogies for teaching his works and traces the influences behind them. It also captures the contested nature of these values, looking at criticisms of each pedagogy. The chapter works with a deliberately broad definition of pedagogy which includes philosophies and theories of education alongside particular methods (techniques and activities) informed by those philosophies and theories.

The National Curriculum for English ignited vigorous debate not only about *what* Shakespeare should be taught (which works? Whole plays or excerpts?) and to *whom*. It also raised the question of *how* he should be taught – partly because this question is answered only elliptically in the curriculum document itself. Under the last Labour government the existing legislation was supplemented with a non-statutory National Strategy entitled *Shakespeare for all ages and stages*, which guides teachers towards, rather than mandating, preferred pedagogies. It thereby attempted to display inclusive attitudes towards teachers' methods. Relatively unchanged by three successive governments and their party politics, the Curriculum itself currently legislates that each student should encounter, in the English classroom, 'two plays by Shakespeare, one of which should be studied in key stage three' (DfEE/QCA 35). After compulsory education ends (currently at the age of 16), Shakespeare also forms part of the requirements for English at A-level – although these are determined by a group of awarding bodies (formerly known as examination boards) rather than the DCSF (or its historical equivalents). The prescription of the quantity of Shakespeare to be studied

is well-defined as are the stipulations for assessing and reporting students' academic performance in the subject (3). Assessment included, in the past, being examined on one of three set Shakespeare plays at key stage three for SATS. While these tests were abandoned after 2008, Shakespeare coursework continues to be a component of GCSE English (the end of key stage four).

At a glance, the curriculum neither prescribes nor proscribes particular pedagogies as long as students can display a range of skills, knowledges and understandings, outlined by the curriculum, when they come to be assessed. The following paragraphs will argue, however, that reading through the curriculum document itself, it is possible to discern pedagogies for teaching the subject which are either necessitated by the content of the programme of study or implicitly recommended to teachers. These include drama, ICT, media studies and creative writing approaches – all of which, with their emphasis on self-expression, subjectivity and communication, could claim a progressivist heritage in spite of the often-alleged traditionalism of the curriculum.

Long advocated by teachers such as Henry Caldwell Cook in *The Play Way* and arts practitioners including the RSC's Cicely Berry, the growth in the popularity of drama methods for teaching Shakespeare is attested to by coverage of the subject in leading academic journals and monograph publications during the 1980s and 1990s. The editor of the international journal *Shakespeare Quarterly* wrote in an issue dedicated to teaching Shakespeare in 1984 that 'performance consciousness' has transformed the teaching of the plays, so that 'virtually everybody acknowledges the need to approach Shakespeare's plays as dramatic rather than literary works' (Andrews 515-516). While his statement reflected the contents of that particular edition of *Shakespeare Quarterly*, I will suggest, in this chapter,

that he may have overstated the case, especially in terms of English secondary schooling during the period (rather than American higher education, for instance). In another issue dedicated to teaching Shakespeare (from 1990), Ann Thompson argues that 'performance consciousness' has not 'been forgotten or entirely superseded'. Rather, it has been politicized and has broadened out to include video technology (141). Other articles in the same issue explore revisions to performance-centered criticism (Rocklin); ask how we can learn from the staging and theatricality of the plays (Freedman); consider the way in which the plays dramatize paradox (Hirsch); juxtapose performance-oriented pedagogy with 'older' methods of lecture and discussion (Ozark Holmer); and posit that performance should become as naturalised a classroom practice as communication or interpretation (Beehler). Braham Murray, writing in *Teaching Shakespeare*, explains how he tries to bring 'the theatre into his classroom and his classroom to the theatre' (56) – as does Peter Reynolds, who addresses the issues of casting, silent characters, and stage properties in school productions ('Active Reading'). In the same volume, Neil King considers how younger students might be introduced to Shakespeare through playing out cut-down versions or isolated scenes (57-76). This catalogue of publications on drama methods in the Shakespeare classroom offers a reminder that the two elements were united in some English classrooms long before the National Curriculum's requirements.

Dramatic approaches to texts were made mandatory, however, in the National Curriculum for English in 1989. The document features 'Drama' as a subheading under the requirements for 'speaking and listening' at each of the key stages, along with 'group discussion and interaction', 'standard English', and 'language variation'. In addition, drama as a pedagogy is represented through a set of discrete activities featured in the curriculum's programme of

study. They include improvising, role-playing, script-writing, performing and reviewing. The following table allows easy comparison of the way in which drama is expected to be employed and developed over the various key stages in English teaching³¹.

Table 1: National Curriculum requirements for drama across the key stages

| Key stage | Requirements for drama |
|---------------------------|---|
| Key stage 1 | To participate in a range of drama activities, pupils should be taught to: a use language and actions to explore and convey situations, characters and emotions b create and sustain roles individually and when working with others c comment constructively on drama they have watched or in which they have taken part (DfEE/QCA 16). |
| Key stage 2 | To participate in a wide range of drama activities and to evaluate their own and other's contributions , pupils should be taught to: a create, adapt and sustain different roles, individually and in groups b use character, action and narrative to convey story, themes, emotions, ideas in plays they devise and script c use dramatic techniques to explore characters and issues d evaluate how they and others have contributed to the overall effectiveness of performances (23). |
| Key stages 3&4 | To participate in a range of drama activities and to evaluate their own and other's contributions, pupils should be taught to: a use a variety of dramatic techniques to explore ideas, issues, texts and meanings b use different ways to convey action, character, atmosphere and tension when they are scripting and performing in plays c appreciate how the structure and organisation of scenes and plays contribute to dramatic effect d evaluate critically performances of dramas that they have watched or in which they have taken part (32). |

From this collation of the curriculum requirements, it is evident that drama pedagogies have been envisaged as a means towards a certain set of skills. These include to evaluate, communicate, convey, appreciate, use, create, sustain, participate, comment, and adapt. Furthermore, these skills are evidently to be practised in relation to a set of techniques and

³¹ I have used bold font to indicate new and additional requirements or different phrasing from one key stage to another (key stages 3 and 4 are grouped together by the curriculum).

concepts from drama and literary studies: language, action, situation, character, narrative, story, theme, emotion, meaning, text, atmosphere, tension, structure and organisation. Development between the key stages is indicated by the increasingly wide range of activities to be undertaken or the higher standard of performance expected to be attained. For example, the requirement for ‘constructive comment’ on performances becomes ‘evaluation’ and finally ‘critical evaluation’.

The curriculum instructs teachers on the range of drama activities that should be included in English lessons under the heading ‘breadth of study’:

Table 2: National Curriculum requirements for drama activities across the key stages

| Key stage | Requirements for drama activities |
|------------------|--|
| Key stage 1 | a working in role b presenting drama and stories to others c responding to performances (DfEE/QCA 17). |
| Key stage 2 | a improvisation and working in role b scripting and performing in plays c responding to performances (24). |
| Key stages 3 & 4 | a improvisation and working in role b devising , scripting and performing in plays c discussing and reviewing their own and others’ performances (33). |

From the above, it is evident that drama as a pedagogy is represented in the National Curriculum through a set of activities (improvising, role-playing, script-writing, performing and reviewing), which are designed to impart a set of skills. These skills are only part of the requirements for speaking and listening, which, along with reading and writing, constitute the programme of study for English. Thus, the structure of the curriculum, as well as its language, does little to communicate a sense of drama as a holistic, self-contained and self-sufficient pedagogy, relating to a set of dramatic techniques, texts and performances. Rather, it appears as a pedagogy from which elements can be borrowed to enrich the study

of language and literature that dominated (and continues to be at the core of) the subject of English for much of the twentieth century. Moreover, Jonathan Neelands argues, drama in the National Curriculum reflects the Thatcher government's reductive focus on drama as a set of skills 'that will prepare young people for their economic roles after schooling' rather than as a means of fostering imagination or as a 'shared cultural activity' (*Learning through Imagined Experience* 7, 4). His complaint noticeably echoes George Sampson's much older warning against the vocational bent of education, in *English for the English*: 'elementary education must not be vocational, it is the purpose of education, not to prepare children *for* their occupations, but to prepare children *against* their occupations' (viii). By invoking this classic piece of liberal humanist literature, Neelands casts the Conservative government of the early 1990s as denying all schoolchildren the equal right to a liberal education; that is to say, the right to a broad range of knowledges and experiences, for their own sake and for personal enrichment. In this way, he identifies the government as implementing a retrogressive educational policy. This old-fashioned English curriculum, Neelands maintains, offers a (mis)representation of drama. Yet, in spite of his protests, it is a representation of drama which is *as* enshrined by the curriculum as the teaching of Shakespeare itself.

Although the requirement to teach Shakespeare is nowhere in the curriculum document explicitly linked to the requirements for drama, the National Strategy *Shakespeare for all ages and stages*, designed to engage primary students onwards in the study of his plays, champions drama activities in its 'suggested teaching approaches'. In addition, the fitness for purpose of the pedagogy (with its emphasis on character, plot etc.) to Shakespeare's plays,

as well as the pressure on teachers to forge cross-curricular links with relevant subjects, has resulted in the two becoming inseparable in much reported classroom practice³².

ICT and media studies approaches are also required by the legislation. At key stages three and four, the requirements for reading state that teaching should develop students 'reading of print and ICT-based information texts' as well as demanding the analysis of 'media and moving image texts' (35). Throughout the curriculum teachers are encouraged to use film, radio, television and computer technology 'to support [classroom] study of literary texts' (8). 'ICT opportunity' annotations, which are non-statutory, also appear in the margins of the main curriculum text (26, 33). Evidence that these prescriptions have been taken up in teaching occupy the pages of teaching journals, including Gibson's *Shakespeare in Schools* magazine (see, for example, issues 9 and 23), while Aers and Wheale's *Shakespeare in the Curriculum* includes two chapters with suggestions for using film versions in the classroom and 'video-teaching' the bard, through making films. Four out of seven chapters in the anthology *Shakespeare in Education* refer to the use of film in teaching Shakespeare; two discuss the use of the internet as a classroom resource. Teachers in three contrastingly achieving Cambridgeshire schools, whom I observed for a previous project, demonstrated their use of the computer programme Car2ouche, as well as audio-visual and Smart Board technology in their Shakespeare lessons (Olive). Most recently, the DCSF document *Shakespeare for all ages and stages* includes suggestions for using film and PowerPoint in the classroom (32, 34). This suggests that although policy directives concerning ICT and media studies pedagogies have been embraced in Shakespeare lessons nationwide for some

³² See Yandell and Thomas (1994) whose articles on teaching Shakespeare through drama represent a fraction of the overwhelming presence of the pedagogy in English teaching journals.

time now, the government still perceives the need to reinforce teachers' awareness of such methods and technologies.

In terms of personal response techniques and creative writing, John Saunders' 1985 article on creative writing responses to the plays in O-level exams again provides evidence that methods endorsed by the National Curriculum mark a continuity with, rather than revolution of, the teaching of Shakespeare in schools (97-117). Although these approaches to Shakespeare were evident in (possibly innovative) classroom practice prior to the legislation, under the National Curriculum, teachers are required by the curriculum to give students opportunities to 'respond imaginatively in different ways to what they read' (DfEE/QCA 19). Even the youngest students are obliged to 'express preferences, giving reasons' for the fiction, poetry and drama they have encountered (19). Moreover, the curriculum document reproduces sample images of students' poems and short stories as inspirational examples for teachers' own work (14-15).

The take up of these activities in classrooms is attested to by an increase in features dedicated to personal response and creative writing in *Shakespeare and Schools* newsletters after the curriculum's introduction. Issue 12 deals with how to meet examiners' expectations for high quality personal responses, while issues 15 and 22 report classroom teaching of Shakespeare involving creative responses to the plays: writing poems on *King Lear*, scripting a play about 'Living with Lady Macbeth', and creating storyboards. A decade later, in *Shakespeare in Education*, Sue Gregory suggests getting students to keep a *Romeo and Juliet* scrapbook containing personal responses, creative writing, and love songs (28).

None of the approaches above – drama, personal response, creative writing, ICT or media studies – is explicitly linked to Shakespeare in the National Curriculum document itself. Yet,

the publications and resources cited above show that there is concern within and beyond the teaching profession about how these requirements may be fulfilled through studying Shakespeare. They evidence the idea that pedagogies for teaching Shakespeare are an evolving but continuously insistent concern. Three pedagogies in particular deserve detailed discussion: literary critical, active and contextual approaches.

The remainder of this chapter considers how these three pedagogies are underpinned by various conceptions of the value of Shakespeare, relating to the influences which are evident in their discourses. These include progressivism, humanism and critical theory, to name a few. It will also trace the extent to which these 'Shakespearean' pedagogies are concerned with features inherent in (or specific to) his works or represent the influence of larger trends and organisations in education, especially in English academia. The contested value of the pedagogies themselves will be indicated through overviews of the key criticisms of each.

3.1 The abiding presence of literary-critical approaches

From the early twentieth-century, literary-critical approaches to Shakespeare have dominated English pedagogy in schools. At its most limited and old-fashioned, the literary-critical approach in schools is characterised, almost caricatured, by Richard Adams as 'reading round, explaining obscure textual references or preparing potted character-sketches' (14). In this approach, Shakespeare is valued principally as Literature: that is to say, as a text to be read rather than as a script for performance. Moreover, at school level, the texts are generally treated as 'literary *objects*' (1); that is to say, in the main, single, fixed representations of plays on pages – 'almost no reference is made to the diverse forms which the play has taken and may take' (Sinfield 138-9). The processes involved in 'making' a play, beyond the playwright's individual craftsmanship, are also largely ignored: consideration of

printing, publishing, revising and editing are left for study at university-level, where textual studies will also explore the unstable, plural and fragmented nature of Shakespeare's works. Hence, literary criticism of Shakespeare for school students, at least, remains an altogether more positivist task, one which constructs value in students 'discovering' inherent 'truths' hidden in Shakespeare's language, structure, and imagery; which aims to enable them 'to sift through and reflect on the printed words, to pause where [they] will or move back and forth making new connections and *realising new truths*' (Adams 12 my emphasis). These last two phrases, 'making new connections' and 'realising new truths' especially indicate a way of studying Shakespeare which remains incomplete without the close reading activities espoused in I.A. Richards' and Leavis' literary criticism. For these critics, only such meticulous techniques can truly value Shakespeare (or any other writer) as a craftsman – 'no haphazard worker': what Ben Jonson termed his 'well-turned and true-filed lines' are seen as 'the product of judgement, not luck' (Adams 13). Richard Adams' discourse here draws strongly on Leavis and Thompson's analogy between the truly great writer/critic and the artisan wheelwright (56-57). Additionally, Adams' declaration that 'the danger of insufficient attention to textual study is that we may be dazzled into responding quickly to the vitality of the lines, but fail to discover their more *profound secrets*' (13) strikingly echoes Leavis' emphasis on close reading as a way of resisting the seductive temptations and 'mindless' pleasures of reading. Leavis conceptualised close reading as involving 'the closest and fullest working attention, the most acutely perceptive, the most delicately discriminating responsiveness' ('Eliot's "Axe to Grind"' 90).

Such an approach to literature as a matter of getting at the buried meaning of words is manifest in L.C. Knights' appeal to readers to remind themselves that the plays' 'end is to

communicate a rich and controlled experience by means of words – words used in a way to which, without some training, we are no longer accustomed to respond’ (in Hudson 4). Similarly, Wilson Knight refers in his work to the plays as extended metaphors and characters as symbols to be identified through sustained reading. For A.C. Bradley, meaning could be unlocked, at least in Shakespeare’s tragedies, by the identification and recognition of a character’s tragic flaw. In paraphrasing such writing, Adams’ statements are indisputably reflective of the tenacious grip of early twentieth century criticism on the teaching profession of the mid-nineteen-eighties, and, to some extent, beyond.

These critical influences in schools prove enduring. For instance, John Salway writes of his empirical observation of Wilson Knight’s continued presence in the *Shakespeare and Schools* magazine (8). More recently, Joseph Francis, describing his teaching practice at Eton, rejects critical theory approaches to Shakespeare in favour of devoting time to close reading (92). Writing in 2009, John Haddon asserts in *Teaching Reading Shakespeare* that studying the plays involves ‘a *discovery* of language which simply says more, which suddenly engages with, articulates or brings into existence our sense of something’ (180-81 my emphasis): a statement which, yet again, presents a mystical account of studying Shakespeare as a discovery of ‘something’ more.

The endurance of literary-critical approaches as pedagogies to be deployed with older children (14-16 year olds) preparing for coursework or examinations is reinforced in examinations and coursework questions which demand that students respond to questions on character or Shakespeare’s use of literary and linguistic techniques, with *close* textual reference (see DCSF 33). Its influence is also apparent in Curriculum 2000’s demand that A-level students should be acquainted with and be able to deploy multiple interpretations of

texts by other (implicitly scholarly) readers: 'Candidates should be able to articulate independent opinions and judgments, informed by different interpretations of literary texts by other readers' (AO4, McEvoy 99).

In more junior classrooms, literary critical approaches have tended to place an emphasis on (what are constructed as) the inherent and intrinsic properties of the plays: especially language, plot, and character. Recent literary-critical approaches suggested in *Shakespeare for all ages and stages* involve developing a brief for a BBC *Shakespeare ReTold* episode and drawing up a continuum of Shakespeare villains from the 'complex' and 'flawed' to 'likeable rogues' (DCSF 34). Such exercises can be considered as practice for later, more extended writing in the form of answers to traditional literary-critical essay questions. They also demonstrate a continued resort to essentialist notions of characters as real individuals with a psychological integrity, prominent in previous decades, evident in activities such as 'with your partner, discuss how Macbeth felt when the dagger was tempting him' and 'pick out three lines that Macbeth says during [Act 3 Scene 1]. For each one decide what he is really thinking' (O'Connor 248, 249).

Literary-critical approaches still dominate editions aimed at the school market, which generally include explorations of genre, character and language – rhythm, rhyme and imagery, for instance; and examples of the editor's or other critics' close reading of the play in an introduction or critical essays. This introduction is often broken down into sections dealing with the themes of the play as evidenced by the close reading of key quotations or scenes. Recently (re)issued editions of *Hamlet*, for example, deal with the following topics: 'delay and revenge', 'God and man', 'the individual and the state' (Spencer 2005) as well as 'Hamlet's questions' and 'conscience and revolution' (Bate and Rasmussen 2008). Editions

such as T.J.B. Spencer's Penguin *Hamlet*, first published in 1980, contribute to the continuing prevalence of old literary-critical pedagogies in schools by reprinting old scholarship reflecting past critical trends (even if they add a revised 'further reading' list). My own year twelve Shakespeare edition, the New Swan Shakespeare Advanced Series *Hamlet*, was first published in 1968 and had reached its thirtieth impression when I bought it in 1999 (Lott). Ironically, given its age, its introduction, by C.S. Lewis, opens with a subsection entitled 'The significance of Hamlet today' (ix). It is indicative of the role of school editions (and, to some extent, the teachers who choose them) in maintaining old textual approaches to the plays that the bibliography suggesting further reading includes Bradley's *Shakespearean Tragedy* (1904); G. Wilson Knight's *The Wheel of Fire* (1930); and W. Raleigh's *Shakespeare* (1907). The most recent work listed is H.M. Hulme's 1962 *Explorations in Shakespeare's Language*. Many of these works still appear on the bibliography of the recent RSC *Hamlet* edition: although here they are juxtaposed with recent criticism by Stephen Greenblatt and Fintan O'Toole. Thus the older material in this edition is at least contextualised for readers as 'classic' or historically 'great' literary criticism alongside contemporary thought. In addition to the persistent publication of editions based on out-dated scholarship, due to the expense of buying a set of class texts, many teachers are forced to continue using older editions. These exemplify older literary-criticism, long after newer books, with newer interpretations and activities, have entered the educational publishing market.

3.2 Criticisms of literary-critical approaches

The use of traditional literary-critical pedagogies currently exists alongside alternative methods largely manifested from the 1950s onwards. Part of forging these newer approaches has involved a critique of their predecessors – especially their underlying values.

Teaching Shakespeare through literary criticism has been condemned by some educators as a remnant of philological and linguistic approaches to texts, carried over from Classics departments to the study of English in the early twentieth century. Writing in the 1950s, Hudson decries the

attempt to carry over into the study of English literature the methods which were traditionally thought to be appropriate to the study of classical texts. The *Iliad* was held to be great literature and therefore to demand word by word treatment...Shakespeare, so the argument ran, is great literature and therefore the method which does justice to the *Iliad* must also be appropriate to a Shakespearean play. (11)

In addition to this criticism of close reading techniques as ignoring the specifically dramatic form of Shakespeare's plays, Hudson also singles out for censure the way in which much literary criticism of his time, and earlier, treats Shakespeare's plays 'as dramatic poems rather than human documents' (4). This statement displays his own assumptions around the differences of the two genres – for example, that poems are not 'human documents' and, by implication, that drama is a realistic documentation of human experience.

Apart from its tendency to elide the dramatic nature of some texts, a further weakness of literary-critical approaches has been identified as the potential for students to succeed in the subject by uncritically receiving and recycling their understanding of the plays from teachers and existing literary criticism. The 'construe method', where a teacher leads a class through a word by word translation, glossing or interpretation of a passage, is criticised for producing 'passive understanding' (Hudson 10). Similar criticisms of traditional pedagogies have been expressed in recent years by Jon Davison: 'the learner is passive – the individual is neither empowered nor invited to engage in the construction of knowledge, nor to debate it. The individual simply learns to conform to a defined set of rules; to regurgitate a

predetermined set of attitudes about a prescribed body of texts; to appreciate rather than to critique; and to acquire rather than to actively generate knowledge' (251). Furthermore, left-wing critics such as Sinfield have argued that students' literary-critical interpretations are also limited to a 'prescribed range of possibilities', i.e. that they are encouraged to arrive at a set of fixed, mystified meanings through the mechanisms of examination and assessment (139). However, this can be partially explained as a limitation of the implementation of the approach in schools rather than as an intrinsic feature of literary-criticism, given Leavis' ideal of the fully-engaged student and AO4's exhortation that their criticism should be 'independent' (McEvoy 99).

If one criticism of literary critical pedagogies is that students' critical thinking on a play is too much filtered through the influence of teachers, examination boards and so on, another is that the approach effaces the very mechanisms or 'learnt procedures' through which it operates. Detractors from literary-critical pedagogy posit that the conclusions which it aids students towards are frequently presented as the result of unmediated interaction between the critic and the text (rather than as a social practice where experience of Shakespeare is filtered through schools, teachers and editions). Again, it is over-simplifying to see this as an inherent flaw of the approach itself – literary criticism has for the last half-century been increasingly concerned with reflexivity and the influence of readers' subjectivities (this is manifested for example in reader-response theory). Nonetheless, beyond setting questions on female characters or non-White characters for assessment, little recognition or discussion of the radical possibilities for criticism, offered by revolutions in critical theory from the 1950s onwards, from semiotics to post-colonialism, can be traced in pedagogies at school level.

In terms of the pedagogic literature in teaching journals, the embrace of new theories and practices differs depending on editorial policy and identity. While journals such as *English in Education* (affiliated with NATE) have explored multimodal texts and World Text Theory in recent issues (Dymoke), *The Use of English* continues to accept traditional literary-critical essays on, for example, Bradley's *Shakespearean Tragedy* (Douglas-Fairhurst 126-137); or exemplar close readings that are close successors to Leavis. This is in spite of AO4's demand that students' work should demonstrate awareness of a range of external interpretations of the plays – presumably not confined to those emanating from the first half of the twentieth century.

Contrary to the general trend, however, the influence of new historicist and cultural materialist theories can be seen in the expansion of contextual pedagogies for teaching Shakespeare. These are becoming increasingly widespread, even required by statute, as I demonstrate in a later section of this chapter (see 3.6). Many of the above criticisms of literary-critical pedagogies originate from the exponents of these critical theories, who place an epistemological emphasis on knowing Shakespeare through his historical context (for example, Early modern theatre practice) rather than a direct communion between the author's writing and reader.

A different strand of criticism, rooted in progressive education, takes issue with the impact of literary-critical approaches on students' capacity to achieve personal growth through the study of Shakespeare. Rex Gibson was most vocal in critiquing the dominance of literary criticism in schools, claiming that it 'is part of a tradition that is deeply suspicious of enjoyment, that it finds it hard to accept that pleasure and learning can go hand in hand. It sees literature as "serious" and "work", and drama as merely "play"' (*Teaching Shakespeare*

7). This criticism prepared the ground for Gibson's own pioneering work on active methods for school Shakespeare, which took students' enjoyment of Shakespeare as a prerequisite for successful learning of the plays, discussed in the next section.

3.3 Active methods approaches to Shakespeare in schools

'Active methods' is a pedagogy popularised by Gibson, through his leadership of the Cambridge School Shakespeare project, to describe approaches to Shakespeare which avoid older models of a seated, whole class read through of the plays. Active methods is distinct from the carefully delimited requirements for drama in the curriculum discussed earlier, which exist in that document as a set of mandated skills foregrounded over any theoretical or philosophical context – although their techniques do overlap and Cox was inspired to include drama in the curriculum by Gibson's project. As Gibson himself indicates, 'active methods' is an umbrella term under which categories such as 'practical work' and 'dramatic work', with their slightly more specialised denotations, also fall (Stredder xv). For the sake of simplicity and clarity, I will use Gibson's term, as defined below, throughout this chapter:

Active methods comprise a wide range of expressive, creative and physical activities. They recognise that Shakespeare wrote his plays for performance, and that his scripts are completed by enactment of some kind. This dramatic context demands classroom practices that are the antithesis of methods in which students sit passively, without intellectual or emotional engagement. (xii)

Immediately, Gibson's definition of active methods establishes it as a critique of and in tension with the literary-critical pedagogies for Shakespeare discussed above. It places the emphasis on Shakespeare as a process rather than a product – multiple, dynamic and constructed rather than single, unified and received; something which individuals can

‘possess’ and enjoy, but which is also ideally collaborative (Gibson *Secondary School Shakespeare* 3, *Teaching Shakespeare* 17, Reynolds *Practical Approaches* 4)³³.

The collective nature of the approach is also connected to its Shakespearean authenticity by Gibson. He likens active methods to ‘Shakespeare’s own working conditions as he and his colleague at the Globe rehearsed together to produce a performance...Like actors in rehearsal, students work together on the script helping each other to understand a scene and to find dramatically effective ways of presenting it’ (*Teaching Shakespeare* 12). Gibson likens his pedagogy to a vision of Shakespeare’s working practices – presumably based on his knowledge of Early Modern theatre practices in general – given the paucity of Shakespeare-specific evidence. For Stredder, active methods also derives value from claims that such collaboration is still current in modern theatre practice: ‘working in this way is similar to the way that actors and theatre practitioners work in education’ (xii)³⁴. For Adams, the value of active methods is more generic, offering much-needed connection to the realm of theatre: he describes one of two main barriers to students’ understanding and enjoyment of Shakespeare as ‘a lack of familiarity with the medium in which he worked’ (1).

A related characteristic of the approach is that active methods figures Shakespeare as script rather than text, drama rather than literature. Gibson argues that ‘Shakespeare was essentially a man of the theatre who intended his words to be spoken and acted out on stage. It is in that context of dramatic realisation that the plays are most appropriately understood and experienced’ (*Teaching Shakespeare* xii). For Gibson, valuing, and correspondingly treating, Shakespeare’s plays as scripts is part of his wider aim to reclaim

³³ I critique the extent to which these ideals are able to become realities in practice, in chapter four.

³⁴ I will expand in chapter four on the way in which his rationale for active methods is embraced by theatre education departments since it casts them among the best placed providers of Shakespeare teaching.

them as a dramatic, rather than literary, form and to 'rescue' them for school students from 'the procedures and apparatus of university scholarship' which he views as inappropriate for younger learners (8). This attitude has been translated almost directly into government documents such as *Shakespeare for all ages and stages*, which advises teachers 'to understand that the text is a script which is brought to life in performance' (DCSF 9).

Influenced by the rise in status of school drama and the theatre world, the value of the playwright's work as a series of scripts is also connected by Gibson to his value for Shakespeares, over Shakespeare. He argues that treating Shakespeare as a script suggests an uncertainty, 'provisionality and incompleteness' – rather than the 'authority, reverence and certainty' that accompany treatments of Shakespeare as text – which invites multiple and varied enactments and interpretations to complete them (*Teaching Shakespeare* 7). Consequently, for Gibson, valuing Shakespeare in this way enables students to turn away from traditional ideas 'that studying Shakespeare involves the pursuit of a "right answer"' (7) – exploring instead 'the vast range of possibilities for meaning' (Reynolds *Practical Approaches* 8).

Gibson was demonstrably aware of developments in literary criticism, from the post-modernist embrace of plurality to critical theory's determination to reveal the social constructedness of 'great' works and 'right' answers, which have produced critical titles such as *Alternative Shakespeares* and *Philosophical Shakespeares*. He featured reviews of key works in the *Shakespeare and Schools* newsletter. That he chose to ignore these developments in writing against the negative effects literary criticism suggests that, to some extent, his criticisms are aimed at the prevalent use of older literary-critical pedagogies in

schools: approaches which he declares 'unsuited' to the school classroom (*Teaching Shakespeare* 8).

In active methods, there is an emphasis on both intellect and emotion, as well as an impetus to render Shakespeare approachable and accessible rather than a remote literary monument. Its exponents argue that active methods are most likely to enable students to 'stake a claim to the text that is personal, and not simply that of their teacher' (Reynolds *Practical Approaches* 9) or to 'enjoy the sense of power and control that comes from animating words that, on the printed page, had seemed flat and remote' (7). These quotations from Reynolds illustrate the way in which active methods has harnessed a discourse of empowerment and ownership around its methods and their outcomes. In the following chapter I will demonstrate how this has been adopted by the RSC's education department.

Feelings of enjoyment which students are said to experience through active methods approaches to Shakespeare are foregrounded not only as an end in themselves, but also as a means to learning. Directly rebutting Leavis, Gibson argues that enjoyment 'goes hand in hand with insight and understanding' (*Teaching Shakespeare* 25, *Secondary School Shakespeare* 1). The value of Shakespeare as an enjoyable experience is proliferated today in documents such as *Shakespeare for all ages and stages*, with its dual focus on the instrumental value of skills and the supposedly intrinsic 'pleasure' of experiencing Shakespeare's work (DCSF 1,5). The very existence of such documents, however, seems simultaneously to undercut claims that Shakespeare's work is innately and immediately rewarding: their publication suggests that unmediated experience of the plays (if such a thing is possible) rarely results in their enjoyment by young readers.

The spread of active methods can be largely attributed to the galvanising efforts of Gibson, who provided formidable impetus to, and became a point of nexus for, the pedagogy. Many current advocates of and writers on active methods were teachers trained by Gibson through the summer schools which colleagues on his project ran at the Shakespeare Institute, in Stratford-on-Avon. Others, including Peter Thomas, Jane Coles and Ros King, contributed first publications to the *Shakespeare and Schools* 'newsletter' or edited a play for the CSS series before developing successful academic careers and publication records. Susan Leach wrote about workshops for the CSS project in 1992, the same year that she published *Shakespeare in the Classroom: What's the matter?* Perry Mills, working at the King Edward VI School in Stratford, has applied Gibson's methods to his teaching of the Thomas Middleton's plays through performance.

Gibson's work on active methods for teaching Shakespeare is a prime example of action or participant research, in that data were collected through interaction with teachers in order that the research would offer a point of intervention for improvement in their practice. Furthermore, it had an emancipatory research agenda: to empower teachers with the knowledge and skills to tackle Shakespeare in their classes without fear of ignorance or inability. It is also important to note that the research was promoted on local, regional and national levels – a then unprecedented scale for qualitative, empirical research on Shakespeare in education. This attention to the desires and needs of teachers country-wide, its immediacy in engaging with teachers and encouraging bonding between them, constitutes one of the reasons why active methods pedagogies have achieved such a pronounced take-up in schools and beyond.

Gibson's own power to mobilise his colleagues and teachers towards a pedagogy *en masse* resembles his fellow Cantabrian Leavis' successful endeavour to shape the nature and methods of English teaching, discussed in the introduction (chapter one). Beyond his work with teachers, the expansion of active methods was secured by the way in which Gibson pulled together influential people from theatres, heritage organisations and higher education. The *Shakespeare and Schools* newsletter features lengthy interviews with heads of theatre education departments as well as senior figures in the International Shakespeare Globe Centre, the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and Folger Shakespeare Library. Directors, arts practitioners and actors were also interviewed. This network of exponents, many nurtured through, and all united at some stage under, the Cambridge Shakespeare and Schools project, goes much of the way to explaining the strength, success and endurance of active methods as a pedagogy for teaching Shakespeare. For example, Reynolds writes of the importance of rekindling 'the enthusiasm of teachers for teaching Shakespeare' (*Practical Approaches* 4), while Stredder addresses the issue of maintaining teacher autonomy in the face of a National Curriculum (xvi), and Gilmour insists on the importance of in-service education and training for teachers (INSET) (2) – all issues important to and addressed by Gibson. Since his death in 2005, his lobbying activities have been continued by such followers as well as organisations such as the RSC.

Thus, teaching Shakespeare through active methods pedagogy as defined by Gibson has become significantly established in pedagogic literature and, as shown earlier, drama methods are a required element of the English curriculum. Indeed, the active methods at the centre of Gibson's project were embraced at the inception of the National Curriculum in the *Cox Report*:

The project has demonstrated that the once traditional method where desk-bound pupils read the text has been advantageously replaced by exciting, enjoyable approaches that are social, imaginative and physical. This can also be achieved by: use of film and video recordings, visits to live theatre performances, participation in songs and dances, dramatic improvisations, activities in which Shakespeare's language is used by pupils interacting with each other. Pupils exposed to this type of participatory, exploratory approach to literature can acquire a firm foundation to proceed to more formal literary responses should they subsequently choose to do so.

(Cox on Cox 83)

This paragraph gives some idea of the particular strategies active methods might involve. Additionally, it conveys a sense of the value of Shakespeare as a body of work to enjoy – an element at the centre of Cox's personal vision for the curriculum. However it does also suggest, contrary to most exponents of active methods, that it is a preliminary approach to Shakespeare to be superseded as students mature with textual approaches³⁵. This attitude has been occasionally reflected in the writing of some of the most vocal advocates of active methods. Peter Reynolds, for example, writes that the practical approach to Shakespeare is not 'intended to be a replacement for more formal 'desk-bound' modes of study. It is an additional input' (*Practical Approaches* 5).

Notwithstanding the limitations that Reynolds, Cox and traditionally dominant, literary-critical approaches place on active methods, teaching Shakespeare through active methods has become increasingly well established in pedagogic literature and education policy since Gibson's CSS project. The instrumental value of Shakespeare is often highlighted in this pedagogy in terms of its capacity to build students' team work and expressive abilities, 'Drama is skills-based', writes James Stredder (xvi). This element of the pedagogy made it popular with the Blair and Brown Labour governments (1997-2007 and 2007-2010). These

³⁵ Yet James Stredder, for instance, writes strongly in support of continuing with the use of active methods pedagogy in Higher Education settings.

governments simultaneously emphasised tangible, transferable skills as a means to creating employable citizens and a stronger economy while embracing the arts as a way to achieve this end. Recognition of Shakespeare's plays as belonging to the medium of theatre is evident in government documents from the period, such as *Shakespeare for all ages and stages*. This National Strategy advises teachers 'to understand that the text is a script which is brought to life in performance' (DCSF 9), to enable children to work with 'actors and arts educators', to experience 'some learning outside of the classroom', and to see 'a professional production' at key stages two and three (8).

It also contains appendices on 'Working with a theatre practitioner in schools' produced by the Globe and 'Preparing pupils for a theatre visit' by the RSC (DCSF 40-44). Teachers are urged to enable children to work with 'actors and arts educators', to experience 'some learning outside of the classroom', and to see 'a professional production' at key stages two and three in *Shakespeare for all ages and stages* (DCSF 8). The theatre sector has been endorsed, and frequently funded, by recent Labour governments in an attempt to convey the progressive nature of their educational ideals and credentials (although chapter two has suggested that the tangible – if not ideological – difference between the governments' education policies was underwhelming). This contrasts with the hostility experienced by the arts sector during Thatcher's premiership, although the recommendations above remain non-statutory.

In terms of available resources for teachers, the pedagogy has spread from the occasional monograph in the early twentieth-century (Caldwell Cook's *The Play Way*, Hudson's *Shakespeare and the Classroom*) to dominate the output of books and resources on teaching Shakespeare. These include, during the past twenty years, Gibson's *Teaching Shakespeare*,

Secondary School Shakespeare, and the CSS editions, Peter Reynolds' *Practical Approaches to Teaching Shakespeare*, Maurice Gilmour's two *Shakespeare for all* volumes, the RSC *Shakespeare Toolkit for Teachers* and James Stredder's *The North Face of Shakespeare*. In addition there are the twenty-four issues of the *Shakespeare and Schools* magazine, which ran for eight years from the start of the project. Teaching journals such as *English in Education* continue to publish articles on active methods approaches to Shakespeare (and other authors) suggesting its enduring impact, although active methods competes for attention in recent issues with reports on the use of blogging and interactive whiteboards in English classrooms³⁶. Active methods have also impacted on the content and layout of some editions of the plays aimed at school students. The CSS series incorporates classroom activities on a page opposite the play-text, as does the New Longman Shakespeare (Gibson *Macbeth*, O'Connor). RSC and Globe education programmes for teachers and students also seek to meet the demand for active approaches to the plays which can be adapted to the classroom and which meet curriculum requirements (I will expand on this at length in chapter four).

3.4 Theatrical, educational and theoretical influences on active methods

The pedagogy draws strongly on traditions from the theatre and drama (as demonstrated above) as well as progressive educational theory. Some of it even makes use of the tenets of literary criticism, whose dominance it seeks to challenge, as I will demonstrate below. In championing the contribution of the theatre world to Shakespeare in schools, most writing on active methods invokes a debt to theatre practitioners such as Charles Marowitz, Cicely

³⁶ See issues 41.1 and 42.2. Indeed, in the latter, Coles actually critiques the pedagogy. I return to her article in the section on criticisms of active methods ('Testing Shakespeare').

Berry, Augusto Boal and Keith Johnstone. While drawing on key figures, techniques and language from theatre and drama, proponents of active methods such as Gibson and Stredder carefully address teachers' concerns about the objective of theatres being to produce a full-scale production: they stress instead that the techniques can be fruitfully applied to individual scenes, even lines. Further, they acknowledge that most English teachers are not trained theatre practitioners. While foremost emphasising the accessibility of their approach (to teachers and students of all experience levels, abilities and backgrounds), they also urge teachers to participate in training offered by theatre companies, to take their classes to see a live production, or to take advantage of Theatre In Education visits to schools.

The influence of progressivism is particularly evident in the derision of 'force-feeding', 'teacher-centred' and 'desk-bound' learning, terms which can be found throughout the active methods literature. The authors of active methods favour the language and tenets of 'child-' or 'learner-centred' approaches – with the implied 'shift from school and adult values to those held by pupils' and from 'traditional disciplines...to everyday experience' (Adams 6-7); 'child development', in a sense that treats creativity and emotional intelligence on a par with academic excellence; and shared learning with the teacher as 'facilitator' (Stredder xi, xvi, 4, 7). Although Gibson's work has been accused of conservatism (a criticism which I will elucidate in the following section), he also exposes more progressive influences in his critical writing. He frequently quotes the philosopher and educationalist Rudolph Steiner, in addition to more subtly appropriating his discourse. Examples of this include Gibson asking Steiner's 'abiding question', 'how do we know that an education that makes us weep for Cordelia also makes us hear the cry in the street?' (*Secondary School Shakespeare* 8) and

repeating his pronouncement that 'If the child is left empty of texts, in the fullest sense of that term, he will suffer an early death of the heart and of the imagination' (*Real Presences* 191, in Gibson *Secondary School Shakespeare*). In using these quotations Gibson is asking to be identified with a movement which demands, of education, attention to children's moral, emotional and creative growth on an equal, if not greater level, than the acquisition of skills and knowledge. In doing so, he defines the value of Shakespeare as the value of his works experienced through progressivism.

Several active methods authors write of the impact literary criticism has had on developing their pedagogies. This suggests the pervasive influence of such theory, even when trying to revolutionise practice. For instance, James Stredder declares that his book 'aims to demonstrate the continuity of practice with theory, its dependency on theory, even' (xiv). Although he rejects the sedentary nature of Richards' and Leavis' Practical Criticism, Stredder acknowledges that his practical work shares their ethos of 'highly engaged and alert critical analysis' (xv). Indeed, Stredder argues that before teaching the plays 'one must first read them critically' (xiii). Gibson's writing also explicitly encourages teachers to read some of the corpus of radical critical theory, which 'makes lively reading and yields a host of ideas' (*Shakespeare and Schools* 5). In accordance with this, the *Shakespeare and Schools* magazine featured excerpts from overwhelmingly left-wing literary criticism by Terry Eagleton, Terry Hawkes, Graham Holderness, Alan Sinfield, Lawrence Levine and Germaine Greer. Put into the service of active methods to provide it with a theoretical underpinning, literary criticism is perceived by Gibson and Stredder to add value to Shakespeare in education, whereas, these same authors criticised its potential to detract from the study of his plays when used alone in school pedagogy.

Thus writing on active methods is strategically inflected with discourses from other disciplines and institutions, including literary criticism. Moreover, its authors share a common vocabulary, including phrases such as ‘rehearsal room technique’ and referring to students’ ‘self-expression’. This shared and spreading discourse, which implodes the boundaries between active methods in schools, other disciplines and institutions, is an indication of the way in which active methods has ceased to be a mere pedagogy. Among its adherents, it has instead become an epistemology for Shakespeare.

3.5 Criticisms of active methods

Criticisms of active methods have focussed largely on the treatment of character by many of its exponents, specifically the accusation that it has been carried over from older literary-critical traditions. There is a demonstrable tendency, in suggestions for activities belonging to the pedagogy, to view ‘characters as individuals giving expression to all human experience rather than as representatives of particular social groupings or ideologies’ (Doyle and Longhurst 55); or as psychologically coherent ‘real people’ rather than expressions of a creative writing process (which might draw on type and symbolism). This is evident among the classroom activities in the CSS editions: ‘What’s Macbeth like? (in pairs) Macbeth has not yet appeared, but already he has been much talked of. From your reading of this scene [1.2], brainstorm a list of the qualities that you think Macbeth possesses’ (Gibson *Macbeth* 6). It could be argued that, at its worst, active methods merely replaces early-twentieth-century written character analyses with the equivalent in actions and the spoken word.

In addition, new historicists and cultural materialists have criticised the way in which active methods stress the universality of Shakespeare, including his characters – apparently placing the author and the student ‘outside history, society and politics’ (Thomson *King Lear* and

the Politics of Teaching Shakespeare' 142). Yet Gibson, alongside pronouncing Shakespeare's work to be universal, argues strongly for a contextual angle within active methods teaching. Apparently indifferent to the inconsistency in his values, he writes that 'wherever possible, exploration, discussion and analysis of the history and value underlying or embodied in any interpretation (*Secondary School Shakespeare* 5). In addition to his emphasis on the social nature of teaching and learning the plays (discussed in 3.2), Gibson encourages teachers to impart the social context of their production: 'Acknowledge social as well as psychological aspects of the plays. Remember the characters inhabit *social* worlds. Encourage your students to discuss the society, history, ideologies of those social worlds – and of their own' (*Secondary School Shakespeare* 9). Gibson may then be more securely indicted for his catholic, even contradictory, values than for ignoring advances in critical theory.

The progressive values which active methods draws on were scorned in *The Black Papers* of the 1960-70s – although, significantly, their co-author C.B. Cox later embraced and endorsed progressivism in writing the National Curriculum for English, only to face resistance from the Thatcher government (see chapter one). Such ongoing resistance to the ideology is echoed in David Hornbrook's chapter in *The Shakespeare Myth* where he argues that progressivism damages working-class children's chances of gaining cultural capital through their schooling. Progressive values and pedagogies continue to be problematised today. For instance, beyond Shakespeare and looking at English education as a whole, Frank Furedi's *Wasted* and Gove's 2009 party conference speech both attributed 'failures' in the nation's educational achievement to a lack of authority and discipline in schools, which is in turn attributed to the misguided influence of progressivism (as they see it). In the latter, Gove praised as a 'hero' the new headteacher of a once-failing, now thriving school, for running his school with

discipline – including a uniform; for implementing subject streaming by ability; and for emphasising the traditional subject boundedness (‘Michael Gove’). Such constructions – which confuse progressivism with anarchism, management with pedagogy, and surface change with reform – constitute one of the key challenges to active methods becoming the dominant Shakespeare pedagogy.

Jane Coles has critiqued active methods from a teacher’s perspective, arguing that it constructs academics and actors as experts on classroom pedagogy over those who work on a daily basis with school students (‘Testing Shakespeare to the Limit’ 34). Yet more problematic for teachers, she contends, is that the impact of these ‘experts’ on students’ learning is mystified as an ‘unlocking’ of Shakespeare: accounts of their interventions assert *that* their techniques make an impact rather than showing *how* they do so (at a cognitive level, for instance) (34). From another perspective, she argues that it has been impossible to reconcile active methods for Shakespeare with the written SATs. She demonstrates the way in which teachers may resort to more transmission-style teaching approaches at the end of their period of study on a play, providing students with a sense of discontinuity and disjunction, where higher value is ultimately placed on knowing facts about the play and skills for writing exam responses. While she usefully exposes a gap between teacher ideology and practice in preparing for SATs, Coles’ criticisms are weakened by the slippage in her writing between criticism of the value of examining Shakespeare and the value of active methods teaching of his plays; between the possible ‘bad’ practice of active methods by one particular teacher and an inherent flaw in the pedagogy³⁷.

³⁷ The article is also out of step with policy changes: the announcement that SATs would be scrapped came in September 2008, while Coles’ piece was published a year later. This may, of course, reflect a time lag in the

In spite of these limitations, Coles' article is empirically evidenced and relatively objective. Other pieces on the subject indicate that it is difficult to assemble a body of criticism of active methods which does not sound right-wing or old-fashioned: as does Richard Wilson's labelling of the pedagogy as sugar-coated Shakespeare (63) and the accusation that 'this is Shakespeare by overkill' (Blocksidge 15)³⁸. After all, it is difficult to argue against values for Shakespeare as enjoyable, diverse, and inclusive.

Some of the criticisms above thus pertain to the fit (or lack thereof) between active methods and the school system, rather than treating the pedagogy as inherently flawed. For example, the boundedness of subjects under the National Curriculum poses potential difficulties for a pedagogy which seeks to utilise the objectives and methods of drama within the subject of English (whose objectives are clearly delineated in the National Curriculum). There is also a widely perceived incompatibility between active methods and the assessment of Shakespeare in the curriculum, for example the emphasis in the curriculum on producing written work. It is a supposed limitation of the method (or for its advocates, of the education system) which has an historic dimension: for Hudson, the struggle between active methods and assessment was to have Shakespeare's plays valued as works of drama. As such, his campaign involved petitioning for a new style of examination question which assessed pupils' 'impression of the whole play as a play, not as a series of texts' and their 'idea of what the dramatist is trying to do' (10). Gibson, working forty years later, campaigned for assessment to recognise the value of Shakespeare as a dynamic entity, involving social and collaborative interaction. For him active methods could flourish in schools if assessment took

process of publication – although it is curious that no afterword was added to draw readers' attention to this fact.

³⁸ These are discussed in chapters four and one respectively.

note of the student's process of producing a piece of work, rather than merely the end product (using coursework involving continuous assessment, such as journals). He also argues that multiple Shakespeares and the diverse ways in which students possess or 'grasp' Shakespeare could be preserved by offering a choice of assessment tasks and by embracing the aim of 'informed personal response'. Furthermore, he posits that the prevailing examination system could offer further scope to embrace, rather than inhibit, these values by including more 'experimental approaches' (*Secondary School Shakespeare* 7). In doing so, Gibson seeks to influence, rather than be influenced by, the values of powerful examination boards. The way in which the RSC education department has continued this lobbying of the government for change to its assessment policies is shown in chapter four. Finally, the abandonment by the Brown government of SATs testing at key stage three has weakened challenges to active methods based on its incompatibility with assessment practices in schools. Effectively, a potential criticism of active methods has been rebranded by its exponents as a criticism of the school system.

Despite challenging the state on its provision of education, the very fact that active methods strives to achieve endorsement within systems of formal education renders the pedagogy open to criticism from more radically progressive educators. This includes those working in the tradition of A.S. Neill, the founder of the Summerhill school, and Ivan Illich, author of *Deschooling Society*. Neill fought against the notion that pleasure and play should be the means to the end of a great educational project devised by adults and applied homogeneously to all children. Writing of Caldwell Cook's *The Play Way*, for example, he criticised the 'notion that unless a child is learning something the child is wasting his time is nothing less than a curse' (40). He also argued vehemently that 'great' literature and

classical music does not interest young students. As such, he contended, it was not a relevant or necessary part of education. Nor does it contribute to emotional growth or to life after school (10). Under Neill's leadership of Summerhill, Shakespeare was only acted in adaptation (71). Even more radical than Neill, who was prepared to school children who attended lessons voluntarily, Illich rejected the notion that the most valuable learning always occurs in schools and that children need an education system designed by adults to direct their learning. Instead, he posits a system where children identify their interests and are paired up with an 'instructor' who can teach them the requisite skills and knowledges (1-24).

For educators such as Neill and Illich, active methods could be seen as cultivating a pretence of progressivism which instead simply masks adult desires for children's acquaintance with Shakespeare. Furthermore, the determination of active methods proponents to persuade students into appreciating Shakespeare's writing constitutes an intention which is anathematic for those who believe in non-interference in and non-pressure on the growth of a child, including his or her literary tastes (91). Their influence is clear in Coles' argument, regarding Shakespeare in education, that 'affording "access" to a reified text becomes [active methods'] prime objective'. Moreover, that as a consequence the 'playtext, rather than the student, remains central to the enterprise throughout' ('Testing Shakespeare' 35). For these critics, active methods does not address fundamental questions of what education should be, or what its purpose is, in sufficient depth to merit the labels 'progressive' or 'radical'.

The above criticisms are united in their accusation, overt or otherwise, that active methods needs to reflect more deeply on its complicity in upholding conservative educational ideas.

Going some way to contradicting this indictment, the pedagogy shows some self-reflexivity in its examination of the practical limitations that constrain its take up in the classroom. For instance, Gibson (*Secondary School Shakespeare* 8), Wheale ('Introduction' 10) and Stredder (xiv, xiii) all acknowledge that the pedagogy may demand more space, time and expense than other approaches to Shakespeare. However, they simultaneously vindicate their own criticisms by demonstrating the adaptability of the approach to constraining conditions. Furthermore, they use the debate as an opportunity to fight for improved conditions within the education system to teach through active methods (demonstrating the active and emancipatory nature of their research which I pointed to earlier). It is this unity, in terms of the core values, influences and discourse of its proponents, as well as their correspondence with currently prevailing forces in education more widely (such as progressive educational theories and a vocal arts sector), which renders active methods dominant in pedagogic literature on Shakespeare.

3.6 Contextual approaches to Shakespeare in schools

Another alternative to traditional literary-critical methods for teaching Shakespeare, which has gathered strength over the last decade, is offered by a group of closely-related concerns and techniques. These include cultural materialism, new historicism and critical literacy. All three place an emphasis on context. Cultural materialism insists on 'texts as inseparable from the conditions of their production and reception in history; and as involved in the making of cultural meanings which are always, finally, political meanings' (Dollimore and Sinfield Foreword ix). New historicism foregrounds the 'textuality of history and the historicity of texts' (Montrose 20). Critical literacy is concerned with the relationships between texts, but also with texts' relationships to language, power and society: a core

tenet of critical literacy is that no text is neutral, and, therefore, that reading texts necessarily involves an examination of the assumptions which underpin them and their place in a culture. I will consider them together here under the umbrella term 'contextual approaches', since they share a common concern and their core tenets appear to be frequently dealt with together at secondary school level.

Literary-critical approaches, in schools at least, are primarily concerned to understand the plays by 'discovering' their inherent 'truths'. Active methods aim at understanding texts through enactment (in its broadest sense, not necessarily productions of a whole play). Contextual pedagogies, however, seek comprehension through an awareness of the constructed nature of the plays: by an author, by a set of socio-economic conditions, and by theatrical conventions past and present. Shakespeare's plays as taught through contextual approaches are necessarily recognised as contingent (socially, historically and politically), while Shakespeare himself is figured as a complexly constructed cultural icon: humanist and historicist; a source of pleasure and knowledge; intuitive and difficult. Such values can be seen in the writing of a group of Shakespeare educators from the 1980s and is captured in works such as Aers and Wheales' *Shakespeare and the Changing Curriculum*.

The value of Shakespeare as historically contingent is reflected in the significant body of literature that describes classroom practice, which is underpinned by a dialogue between text and context. Sue Gregory, for example, teaches her students about the cultural and political context of Shakespeare. Furthermore, she emphasises Shakespeare's agency in incorporating this into his writing (9). Sarah Beckwith's and Elaine Hobby's chapters in *Shakespeare in the Changing Curriculum* urge the incorporation into school Shakespeare of work on the plays' representations of gender and sexual politics as well as on early modern

patriarchal assumptions. More recently, Andrew Hiscock posits comparative reading strategies as a means to contextualising Shakespeare's tragedies. These include comparing texts from different linguistic, generic and historic traditions: for instance, studying *Hamlet* alongside non-Shakespearean tragedy such as *The Spanish Tragedy* or *The Malcontent*; historical documents; other plays from the European tradition; or 'with Shakespeare's Tudor antecedents or variant editions' (70-72)³⁹.

Active methods, as I have demonstrated, had a niche status in the teaching of Shakespeare from the 1950s onwards but were popularised through the work of Gibson and endorsed by curriculum authors in the 1980s. Contextual approaches, deriving from critical theories prevalent in the higher education sector during the 1980s, have similarly required a period of time to penetrate the teaching of literature in schools. They received official government endorsement in the Assessment Objectives for A-level issued as part of the Curriculum 2000 reforms, implemented by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). One of these objectives stipulates that:

AO5i (AS Level) Candidates should be able to show understanding of the *contexts in which literary texts are written and understood*.

AO5ii (A2 Level) Candidates should be able to evaluate the significance of *cultural, historical and other contextual influences* on literary texts and study.

(my emphases, McEvoy 99)

In the wake of the AO's introduction to A-level English literature, government strategies have applied the values which they embody to work on Shakespeare's plays with students at all levels. *Shakespeare for all ages and stages*, for example, describes itself as a 'framework of opportunities' for working with the 'historical and theatrical contexts in which

³⁹ Anthologies which thematically juxtapose non-literary with literary works already exists for the university students market, see Travistky and Prescott.

[Shakespeare] worked' (DCSF 5). This is represented across the key stages, in year-on-year learning objectives. These include, in year four 'to be familiar with Shakespeare's life, times and theatre'; in year eight to understand 'the cultural significance of Shakespeare and his place in our literary heritage' and 'to understand how characters' actions reflect the social, historical and cultural contexts of Shakespeare's time' (9). Similar objectives are reiterated for years ten and eleven.

Ways of encouraging students to see Shakespeare as historically-situated include having younger students act as Elizabethan theatre goers or identifying 'some of the most significant events of Shakespeare's life, e.g. his childhood at grammar school, member of the Lord Chamberlain's Players, birth and loss of children, building the Globe, acting before the Queen', and subsequently devising short dramas based on these incidents (17). Teaching Shakespeare through the potted life history above simultaneously strengthens the contextual approach to Shakespeare (making nationally available classroom activities informed by a notion of Shakespeare as contingent) and weakens it by basing these activities on under-evidenced, popularised assumptions about Shakespeare biography, in an effort to engage younger students (a potential criticism of the approach which I shall return to later)⁴⁰.

At the same time as effectively undercutting key theoretical tenets in attempting to suit them to children, *Shakespeare for all ages and stages* explicitly opposes the infantilizing of contextual approaches by implementing the requirement to use them with students to the end of key stage four. This is in keeping with the QCA's decision to legislate for the teaching and assessment of Shakespeare's context at A-level through the AOs. As a consequence, the

⁴⁰ For a better researched example of teaching about Shakespeare's life, see the SBT's education programme as described by Catherine Alexander.

pedagogy's status is not confined to that of a trivialized tactic for raising younger students' interest in the plays by, for instance, devoting 'a few initial lessons to the historical background of Shakespeare's theatre' (Harris 47). Text and context are juxtaposed for older students, for instance, by focussing 'on short extracts from plays which present views found in Elizabethan or Jacobean society, for example by, exploring the very real belief in witches and their malign influence as portrayed in *Macbeth*' (28); by examining the different ways Elizabethan and modern audiences would have regarded the character and treatment of Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice* (29); or by exploring 'the positive representation of leadership in plays such as *Henry V* and *Richard II* in the wider historical and political context of the latter years of Elizabeth's reign in order to idealise the Queen and set the standard for kingship' (36).

Again, while inspired by the value of Shakespeare as historically and politically contingent, this last activity assumes certain conscious motivations for writing the plays and attributes them unproblematically to Shakespeare. In doing so, it suggests that while the value of Shakespeare contextualised has translated from academia to policy, and hence the classroom, there are potentially worrying mistranslations in implementing how such values should be presented to students. The over-simplifications shown above expose the existence of a gap between the awareness of critical theory informing policy regarding literature/Shakespeare and the suggestions for its classroom implementation.

Seemingly regardless of or unconcerned by this and with the endorsement of New Labour's education policy, examining boards have embraced this approach more warmly than active methods. The Oxford, Cambridge and Royal Society of Arts' 2001 Shakespeare examination paper required students to discuss the relevance of Othello's Venetian setting to the play.

Meanwhile, the Northern Examinations and Assessment Board has set AS-level coursework tasks which include:

- A study of the performance history/reception of the text/s
- Comparison of different production(s) seen by the candidate
- Detailed study of how the text was established
- Detailed study of the text(s) in relation to audience (16th/17th century and contemporary) (McEvoy 101⁴¹)

Thus the value of Shakespeare as contextually contingent is reproduced through assessing students on a broad range of knowledges: including the plays' geographical settings, their textual production (potentially including the study of Early Modern print culture, for example), staging, and impact on Shakespeare's and contemporary readers/audiences. Contextual approaches may have been embraced more urgently than active methods because they are perceived to lead more seamlessly into the production of written work: the above tasks are all designed to culminate in traditional essay style responses. As such, they are perceived to be more suited to the existing examination system than the exercises that active methods students engage in.

With the value of Shakespeare as historically contingent endorsed by examining boards and government policy, publishing houses and the heritage industry have capitalised on expanding their own, existing adherence to this facet of contextual approaches to Shakespeare in education. A glut of editions and study guides were made available with 'fact sheets' on Shakespeare's theatre, life and times – notably the New Longman (many of which were reissued around the millennium, coinciding with the Curriculum 2000 orders) whose

⁴¹ McEvoy does not include a full citation for this document. Instead, he describes it in the body of his article as on 'the list of suggested coursework tasks for the examination of Shakespeare at AS-level in one of these specifications, AQA (Assessment and Qualification Alliance) "B" (101). I have not been able to locate a copy of the document myself.

section 'Background to Shakespeare' includes the sub-sections 'Shakespeare's England', 'Plays and playhouses', 'The Globe theatre' and 'The social background' (O'Connor). In terms of the SBT's education programmes, Catherine Alexander depicts the evolution of their courses in response to the interest from teachers, and beyond, in the context of Shakespeare's life, theatre and plays. She writes that while 'until very recently one could confidently offer, at school level, programmes that focused closely on language, narrative or the exploration of character, and that used practical or active methods of delivery', the Trust's users are now demanding a focus on how, as well as what, Shakespeare wrote (147-8). Suggesting the power of market forces to profit from a once radical and oppositional critique, this institutional promotion of Shakespeare's contingent value and fostering of contextual approaches to Shakespeare in education exists in spite of a fundamental tension. There is a contradiction in values between cultural materialism (with its anti-capitalist, anti-nationalist rhetoric) and these cultural organisations which have traditionally embraced the 'Shakespeare trade' and promoted Shakespeare's status as an English hero. I will broach further discontinuities between such organisations' apparent adoption of critical or educational theory and their practice of it with students in the following chapter.

3.7 Theoretical, political and pragmatic influences on contextual approaches

These political, pragmatic and multidisciplinary influences have converged to promote the teaching of Shakespeare in schools through contextual approaches. Ideas of Shakespeare as contingent and culturally constructed are espoused by politically and socially activist authors, originally drawn to left-wing ideology in response to the perceived oppressiveness of the Thatcher regime and committed to achieving social, sexual and racial equality more generally. Seminal publications include Dollimore and Sinfield's *Political Shakespeare* and

Hawkes' *That Shakespeherian Rag*. Eagleton's notion of contingent value – 'There is no such thing as a literary work of tradition which is valuable *in itself* ... "Value" is a transitive term: it means whatever is valued by certain people in specific situations according to particular criteria and in light of given purposes' (11) – is used in relation to teaching Shakespeare as a cultural construct. Meanwhile the idea of a 'Shakespeare myth', also the title of Graham Holderness' book on the cultural politics of Shakespeare, is taken up in references to the bard's 'mythological status' in monographs and journal articles aimed at teachers (Armstrong and Atkin 8, Yandell). Such cultural materialist and new historicist works emphasise the socio-cultural situation of texts and combat the idea that literary works have a fixed intrinsic value. Both of these notions have been incorporated into literature on the policy and practice of teaching Shakespeare.

Like supporters of active methods, educators who use contextual approaches value agendas for encouraging self-awareness in students; for imbuing them with critical literacy skills, such as the ability to identify and deconstruct ideologies (nationalist, capitalist etc.) at work in a given text; as well as promoting personal growth, for example, through inviting students to take subjective stances on issues. For these writers, fostering the ability to deconstruct operations of power is central to the purpose of education. Indeed, the activist implications of the academic literature may have secured its success with this particular generation of teachers, many of whom agreed with its responses to the Thatcher regime. For these teachers, statements such as Dollimore and Sinfield's assertion that 'cultural materialism registers its commitment to the transformation of a social order that exploits people on grounds of race, gender, sexuality and class' (*Political Shakespeare* x) may have been a call to (pedagogic) arms. The revolutionary tone of such theorists, reported in interviews and book

reviews in teaching periodicals such as *Shakespeare and Schools*, may have contributed to securing the spread of their influential ideas from the Shakespeare academy into primary and secondary education. For example, Gibson offers a synopsis of Sinfield's chapter in *Political Shakespeare* and quotes from Hawkes' *That Shakespeherian Rag* in the very first issue of *Shakespeare and Schools* (Autumn 1986). He continued to review theoretically-informed works, such as Nick Peim's *Critical Theory and the English Teacher* (featured in number 23, Spring 1994) throughout the publication's history.

In addition to the influence of critical theory and left-wing politics, other more pragmatic forces have played a role in the success of welcoming contextual approaches to Shakespeare into the English classroom and curricula. These include the last Labour governments' emphasis on cross-curricular learning as a way for teachers to meet multiple objectives simultaneously. The document *Shakespeare for all ages and stages* encourages teachers to link pedagogical approaches for Shakespeare to the National Curriculum History programme through an emphasis on context. For example, year four students' suggested study of Shakespeare's life and times 'relates closely to the National Curriculum history programme. Teachers are strongly encouraged to exploit such cross-curricular links in literacy learning and teaching' (DCSF 17).

The move to incorporate contextual approaches in teaching Shakespeare also reflects a shift in the concerns of the discipline of History. This change is represented by a growing emphasis on social history: a branch of history which takes as its focal point the working-classes, the domestic or mundane and challenges the subject's preoccupation with the experience of (predominantly) white, male ruling elites over that of women and other races. In addition, many techniques used within a contextual approach, to juxtapose texts from

different linguistic, generic and historic traditions, draw on those of comparative literary studies, which gained status (not least as subjects in university departments) in the late twentieth-century.

In terms of studying Shakespeare (one of those dead, white males), much criticism still emphasises his eminence – biographies and criticism alike treat him as a ‘genius’, an exceptional ‘life’ and ‘mind’⁴². However, the shift described above means that critical and popular authors alike now also read his works in relation to Elizabethan sexual practices, including same-sex relationships (Wells *Shakespeare, Sex and Love*); to the works of his contemporaries (Wells *Shakespeare and Co.*); and to his ‘world’ more generally. Titles which witness the explosion of this latter trend in the past few years include Stephen Greenblatt’s *Will in the World: How Shakespeare Became Shakespeare*; Bate’s *Soul of the Age: The Life, Mind and World of William Shakespeare* and Bill Bryson’s *Shakespeare: The World as Stage*, all published within the space of four years.

3.8 Criticisms of contextual approaches

In spite of the embrace of contextual approaches by government policy, publishers and the heritage industry, criticisms of the pedagogy do exist. Some critics tackle the theoretical tenets on which it is based. Some opponents argue that ‘texts clearly *can* be separated from their production – I can simply sit down and read the *Sonnets*’ (Inglis 64); that it assumes our experience of the text must be mediated, asking where does critical theory ‘leave those of us who believe, certainly...that poets are indeed men and women, speaking as directly as they can to other men and women?’ (65). Building on this, others have portrayed contextual approaches as a supplement to an implied core pedagogy (Francis 92) or echoed a criticism

⁴² These terms are taken from Jonathan Bate’s *The Genius of Shakespeare* and *Soul of the Age: The Life, Mind and World of William Shakespeare*.

made of active methods that it represents a 'sugar-coating', sweetening-up students for later literary-critical work (Armstrong and Atkin 9). Unlike the act of close reading the plays (whether done individually or with the class, in writing or discussion), which these critics naturalise, contextual pedagogies are decried because they 'lead us away from close engagement with the text, towards the phoney citadels of cultural, contextual and critical abstraction' (Francis 95). Such criticisms display a tenacity of belief that these approaches are a frivolous distraction from and interference in close communion between reader and text: an ideal which has arguably never been realised in schools given the mediating forces of the teacher and assessment requirements. Other critics have demanded that contextual approaches demonstrate an increased reflexivity towards the historical situation of critical theory as a response to 1970s world politics, 'the Thatcher/Reagan world of the 1970s' (McEvoy 103). Some authors point to its declining position in university English departments, as an approach which by no means still dominates the teaching and research of university English departments (Stern 133).

Additional criticisms relate to more practical concerns about the teaching of contextual approaches in schools. On the one hand, it is argued, not enough is known about Shakespeare's life (foregrounding Shakespeare's individual biography as an important context over social and theatrical contexts). This is a criticism which might be somewhat assuaged by the recent glut of biographies or by Alexander's descriptions of the SBT's properties and archival documents made available to schools (and the public) (147, 150). In describing the education department's work, Alexander shows that not only is contextual knowledge of Shakespeare pedagogically and epistemologically appropriate but it is also a

realistic aspiration; that there is a rich range of extant materials and resources with which to feed such enquiry.

On the other hand, concern is shown that contextual approaches would demand English teachers to provide a boundless body of knowledge; that English teachers 'would have to provide all sort of social, cultural, and historical information of an open-ended nature' (McEvoy 100). These criticisms, however, may have a limited effect in halting or altering the teaching of Shakespeare through contextual approaches, constituting, as they do, a belated reaction to his incorporation into classrooms and government strategies. Hence, contextual approaches to Shakespeare remain, for the time being, a key (and possibly growing) part of students' school experience of Shakespeare.

3.9 Common influences on pedagogy for teaching Shakespeare in schools

This chapter has shown that, while the National Curriculum for English is not overtly concerned with pedagogy, approaches involving ICT, media, drama, personal response and creative writing are demanded by the document itself. Furthermore, other policy initiatives such as the National Strategy, *Shakespeare for all ages and stages*, and Curriculum 2000 variously foster pedagogies including literary-critical, active methods and contextual approaches. While much of the emphasis in this chapter has been on elucidating differences between the approaches, I want to consider here some features which unite them. The first element is the liberal-humanism of these pedagogies which all effectively place an emphasis on Shakespeare and English (whether defined by the study of a literary canon, mundane texts or language) as central to education. Leavisite literary criticism casts the activities of reading literature and writing criticism as pivotal to a person's development as a human being: morally, socially, and mentally. Active methods are openly motivated by desires to

keep the teaching of Shakespeare a high priority in schools and to widen access to his works for all students. While many writers espousing contextual approaches seek to question Shakespeare's uniquely high place in the curriculum and the focus or methods of teaching practices, they rarely argue outright against the teaching of Shakespeare literature. Indeed, even initiating debate around Shakespeare's profile can be interpreted as recognition that he (and other literature) *matters*.

The second striking theme which has cross-cut this chapter is the influence on pedagogy for teaching Shakespeare in schools emanating from other cultural and educational institutions, such as the theatre and academia. This suggests a flow of inspiration akin to Bruner's notion of the cultural saturation of education, outlined in chapter one. As the influence of theatre education departments on students and teachers is a concern of the following chapter, I will dwell here particularly on the impact of higher education on Shakespeare in schools. The way in which school pedagogy is inflected with academic tenets (of varying ages and directions) is unavoidable. School Shakespeare is replete with Bradleyean notions of character; educational research on children's positive response to active methods; and conceptions of literary readings as contingent and literary icons as culturally constructed. Analysis of this using government policy documents and pedagogic literature suggests that there is a significant time lag between the inception of these ideas as radical in academia and their manifestation in school classrooms.

This is perhaps explained by the need for such notions to permeate that part of academia which offers a bridge between itself and the schoolroom: teacher training. Once the transition between these educational institutions has been made, however, this chapter suggests that the influence of ideas has considerable longevity. The pedagogies seem to

endure beyond the careers of a generation of teachers, beyond changes of government (and the subsequent changes to policy documents), perhaps aided by the (un)reasonable longevity of published resources available to students and teachers – such as editions of the plays.

The clichéd antagonism of teachers on the frontline of school education to idealistic academics in their proverbial ivory towers has not been apparent in the material which forms the basis of this chapter, with the possible exception of Coles' critique of active methods' assumptions ('Testing Shakespeare'). Far stronger, for example, has been the resistance to the perceived ever-changing demands of hyper-active government policy suggested in chapter two. This may be because the teachers reflecting on their classroom pedagogies in books or journals are necessarily those interested in connecting academic practice with their everyday teaching experience. Furthermore, current teachers are encouraged (or even required by their schools) to return to academia throughout their careers, undertaking study at masters or doctoral level along with other continuing professional development courses. Incorporating further study, research projects and academic publications into a teaching career may well blur boundaries between the traditionally distinct camps of 'them' (academics) and 'us' (schoolteachers).

Whatever the reason for the evident influence of academia on school Shakespeare, it demands that academics be involved in a dialogue with teachers and government. Such contact would also help ameliorate claims that their theories or research have been misunderstood or misrepresented in attempts to apply them (see the above discussion of the over-simplification of new historicist theory). However, there is a lack of concern with how Shakespeare is taught in the higher education sector, which is evident in research

outputs. The Capital Centre at the University of Warwick is engaged in ongoing collaborative research with the Royal Shakespeare Company. Research into Shakespeare in education has been dominated by the work of education, rather than English, departments. Consequently, research has been shaped by their particular agendas and methodologies, which include making policy recommendations and an emphasis on empirical data. In the mid 1990s, Maurice Gilmour's project for the Royal Society of Arts undertook and evaluated a programme of teaching Shakespeare with the aim of demonstrating that appropriate pedagogies can make his works accessible and enjoyable to all. It involved various schools and agencies predominantly around Leicester. Otherwise, beyond reports of individual teacher's lessons, there is little research activity to rival Gibson's project of the 1980s-1990s⁴³.

Publications on Shakespeare in education which go beyond recommending classroom practice to deal with theoretical or political issues are rarely forthcoming (in comparison to the volume of titles on performance history, literary criticism and the textual study of Shakespeare). Education panels at international Shakespeare conferences are few, although the British Shakespeare Association conference has shown a commitment to airing educational issues. When education-specific slots do occur, they are again preoccupied with individual accounts of teaching practice or with workshops on specific techniques. They are well attended by school teachers and drama lecturers but only to a negligible extent by those who drive the direction of Shakespeare studies, establish Shakespeare's texts and contexts, through research.

⁴³ Coles makes the same point in her recent article ('Testing Shakespeare' 34-35).

This paucity of research activity on Shakespeare in schools could be attributed not only to the concern with macro-educational issues demonstrated in chapter two, but also to the period of relative satisfaction, on the part of teachers and academics, with government intervention concerning the curriculum during Blair's and Brown's premierships: their time in power providing these two education sectors with less impetus to collaborate on research than the Thatcher government's abrasive policies. However, with almost every child nationally experiencing Shakespeare in the classroom, in terms of English as a subject in the academy, there is still much work to be done to balance literary-critical interests with cultural studies or cultural criticism; interest in Shakespeare's work (and life) with his afterlives. The following chapter will demonstrate that the gap left by academic engagement in Shakespeare in schools has been readily filled, with much acclaim from teachers, by the education departments of cultural organisations such as the Globe, SBT and RSC.

4. SHAKESPEARE IN THEATRE AND HERITAGE: THREE EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS

The two preceding chapters have been focussed on the value of Shakespeare in the classroom, as constructed through government policy and various pedagogies. In this chapter, I look beyond the classroom, to the Royal Shakespeare Company (a theatre company), the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (a heritage organisation), and the Globe (which represents a combination of these two industries). These organisations are internationally recognised providers of education programmes on Shakespeare, each with dedicated education departments. Although I concentrate here on their provision for school-age children, their work extends to higher and adult education, lifelong and leisure learning.

All three departments demonstrably share a belief in certain 'inherent' values of Shakespeare. These include Shakespeare as universal, relevant, entertaining, a genius, a keystone of national culture, and father of the English language. These values are apparent as received values, or clichés, circulating in wider culture – as such, they feature heavily in the discussion of Shakespeare in popular culture in chapter five. In addition to these intrinsic values, the organisations also manifest common ideas about the instrumental value of education departments in cultural institutions. These values are at least fourfold: they include Shakespeare's accessibility, the inclusivity of their provision of Shakespeare, their accountability as organisations to the public, and the high standard of the educational services they provide.

This consensus is partly strategic in that these values for arts education are a condition of public funding, on which the RSC is reliant. These values have been communicated to the arts sector through the writing and speeches of New Labour's Tessa Jowell (as Secretary of State for Culture) and David Lammy (as Minister for Culture). These politicians assert that

such institutions should exist to make 'Teaching, education and scholarship, available to all: the values of the Enlightenment kept alive for each generation' (Jowell 1). Additionally, they argue that these organisations possess 'the capacity...to contribute to enjoyment, to inspiration, to learning, to research and scholarship, to understanding, to regeneration, to reflection, to communication and to building dialogue and tolerance between individuals, communities and nations' (Lammy). While the SBT and Globe are not dependent on government subsidy (receiving a significant income from fund-raising activities undertaken with individuals and corporations), such values have become a standard which other donors and funders may also adopt. The potential outcomes listed above, which relate strongly to instrumental values for arts education (including the agendas for skills, standards and social inclusion discussed in chapter two), may also be attractive to these private sponsors – for example, companies looking to boost their corporate social responsibility portfolios. Pressure from government and interest from the private sector explains why such values for arts education within prominent cultural organisations have been universally embraced.

The homogenous nature of these three organisations' declarations of Shakespeare's and arts education's value, however, presents each of them with the same difficulty: they are commercial competitors in the Shakespeare education market (or, at least, quasi-commercial depending on the level of government subsidy they receive) and therefore need to differentiate the products and services they offer, partly through 'aggressive branding and marketing' (de Groot 240). Their commercialism has been encouraged by successive governments through Thatcher's severe cuts to the arts budget and New Labour's continuation of a Conservative policy of rendering public services more businesslike (discussed with regards to state education in chapter two). As with state education, these

policies have led to the widespread uptake of 'demand driven models' which 'empower the customer and emphasise choice, value and experience' (de Groot 240). In this 'competitive leisure market', each organisation needs to identify and market its experience of Shakespeare as uniquely valuable (240). This is akin to the unique selling point (USP) required for an advertised product to achieve an advantage over its rivals in the marketplace.

In the process of rendering themselves distinctive, these education departments 'assign [Shakespeare] particular values' and formulate diverse ways of knowing him (Hodgdon 194). It is these constructions of the exclusive value of Shakespeare as offered by these institutions with which this chapter is particularly concerned. Using publicity materials and education resources both in print and on their websites, as well as some first-hand observation of their activities, I argue that the SBT locates its unique and authentic experience in the supposedly physical proximity to Shakespeare which it offers. This nearness is constructed through its custodianship of historic Stratford houses and increasingly through activities such as re-enactment. For the Globe, it is achieved through its commitment to a 'Shakespearean' ethos of play and community. For the RSC, it is embodied in their use of the resources of the acting company (both tangible, such as rehearsal spaces, and intangible, such as techniques) to overcome the challenges which (it perceives that) Shakespeare presents to students.

Additionally the chapter elucidates ways in which these organisations need to differentiate their provision of Shakespeare, not only from that of their competitors but also from their past selves, to keep pace with social and economic changes as well as academic research. Previously, Hodgdon has highlighted such change in relation to the SBT, stating that in the

1980s Shakespeare was presented in accordance with the prevailing values of Western capitalism. For example, she argues that one of the ideal attributes of a successful person at the time was home ownership and that this ideal was retrospectively projected onto Shakespeare's Stratford life. Thus, Shakespeare's town houses come to epitomise his 'bourgeois existence', 'his membership in a rising middle-class of merchant gentry' (205, 207). Over a decade after Hodgdon, the SBT is having to adjust its provision around its visitors' use of new technologies; their self-conceptions as bloggers, tweeters and virtual tourists (Owen). In 2007, Diana Owen was appointed as Director of the organisation. Dr Owen had, in her previous position with the National Trust, contributed to the successful rebranding of that institution: widening participation through increasingly progressive, participatory and hands-on opportunities for the public. I will discuss their embrace of such an ethos further in 4.1.

Finally, Shakespeare's value and that of the organisations which propound him are often conflated. One example of this is the elision of notions of the curative value of Shakespeare on disengaged students with that of education departments' methods. Thus, the chapter closes with a case-study of the RSC as a cultural chemist, the value of whose prescriptions for the treatment of Shakespeare is demonstrably confused with that of his works. It suggests that the term 'cultural chemist' offers a means to critique the recently popular conception of Shakespeare as a cultural catalyst, a metaphor which obscures the agency of organisations and individuals in perpetuating the value of Shakespeare and implies that Shakespeare is unchanged by his place in education and culture. Furthermore, it enables a critique of the inconsistencies and tensions in the RSC's construction of its educational mission.

Throughout the chapter, my arguments are evidenced with analysis of ephemera including websites, play programmes, advertising material, and observation of events. These are plentiful sources, much used by – and presumably influential on – visitors to these organisations but rarely incorporated into academic writing on Shakespeare (with the possible exception of performance history). Thus, this chapter also serves to provide a snapshot of these organisations' educational offerings in 2009, something which may prove hard to research or reconstruct in years to come given the low archival status of much of this material. Produced to sell these organisations' Shakespeare(s) to students and teachers, these sources are rich in explicit constructions and declarations of Shakespeare's value. However, their commercial imperative notably influences the neutrality of their content: they represent, almost exclusively, positive and ideal experiences of Shakespeare. Any negative and/or real experience cited is the result of my own observation of events and productions targeted at, and often directly involving, school groups.

4.1 The value of Shakespeare at the SBT: constructions of a physical proximity

The value of the experience of Shakespeare through the education department of the SBT is constructed as one of proximity to Shakespeare's personal history (especially his childhood and retirement). This relates to the nature of its collections: unmissable on the streets of Stratford are the houses (and sites of houses) owned by Shakespeare and his family. A sense of Shakespeare as embodied in the houses is conveyed partly through reference to the 'birthroom' or the wooden settle and infamous (if inauthentic⁴⁴) bed at Anne Hathaway's, items which offer the possibility of a tangible connection to his body: a chance to reconnect

⁴⁴ With the possible exception of the settle, which may have been in the Hathaways continual possession since the sixteenth-century, the furniture in the house is either replica or period furniture from other properties (Elizabeth Sharrett, SBT guide and cultural history doctoral student, private conversation, December 2010).

with a physical thing now lost. The Birthplace is described as ‘the house...Shakespeare would have known...as a boy’ and Mary Arden’s as ‘the childhood home of Shakespeare’s mother’ (*Shakespeare’s Houses and Gardens: Discovery Pack*). These statements emphasise the SBT’s holdings as heritage in its most literal meaning: that of an inheritance, a legacy from Shakespeare. Meanwhile the library possesses archival documents relating to the lives, business transactions and public offices of himself and his relatives. Early publications of his works are also represented, offering perhaps a historical connection to his career as a playwright and time spent in London which Stratford might otherwise be lacking:

Our resources are second to none: the most significant Shakespeare library in Europe (and one of the most important of all world collections), unique documents relating to Shakespeare’s life, the archives of the RSC (representing a hundred and thirty years of Shakespeare in performance), and the house where Shakespeare was born, grew up, and in which he began to write. (*Stand Up for Shakespeare*)

It is evident in this description from the SBT website that two strands – Shakespeare’s life and works; his incarnations as Early Modern person and author – jostle for supremacy within the organisation. In terms of their educational provision, it seems that the first is targeted primarily at younger students and the latter at those older students completing GCSE exams or Advanced-level assessments. For younger students, especially, the proximity to this iconic figure and his historical context is heavily emphasised by the SBT. Shakespeare is made to re-inhabit the houses, resurrected, through a series of pamphlets for key stage two and three students visiting the properties which ‘he’ narrates: ‘Hi I am Will, that’s William Shakespeare to some’ (*Shakespeare’s Houses...Discovery Pack*). He guides students around the houses and their histories, pointing out items such as the mulberry tree – which, ‘he’ tells them, is *like* his favourite mulberry tree, now long since cut down.

Shakespeare's presence and absence sit uncomfortably alongside each other throughout these pamphlets and throughout the SBT's offerings more generally. Alongside the concrete such as Shakespeare's acquisition of New Place in 1597, tenuous authenticity is suggested through speculative connections to Shakespeare's inhabitation of the houses: of the parlour in the Birthplace, 'Will' says, 'This stone floor is the oldest in the house. I may once have stood on these very same flagstones' (*Shakespeare's Houses...Discovery Pack*). Shakespeare in the fabric of this building is thus 'everywhere but is also invisible' since 'none of the objects displayed actually belonged to him' (Hodgdon 202). Of Anne Hathaway's, he similarly tells us, 'Some of the trees in the orchard here are very old indeed. It is possible that these trees are descendants of ones I plucked apples from as a boy' (*Shakespeare's Houses and Gardens: Who was Shakespeare?*). In this way, the collections at each property can be said to 'constitute a cult of fragments, an assemblage of material objects that stand in synedochal, metaphoric, or metonymic relationship to Shakespeare; a context for the subject substitutes for the subject himself, its episteme, resemblance to a lost Elizabethan world' (Hodgdon 203). Thus the cult of authenticity turns out to be a cult where authenticity is almost irrelevant, or at least, constructed rather than absolute: it is the authentic 'feel and look' of the houses and visitors 'imaginative simulations' which seem to matter most (de Groot 9).

The two opposites, presence and absence, are also evident, intertwined, in narrator Will's recognition of his own historicity. He uses the past tense: 'My bed *was* like the one with the red cover on it' (my emphasis *Shakespeare's Houses...Who Was Shakespeare?*). Moreover he 'talks' about his own death: 'I don't like to discuss it too much, but probably my wife and daughters laid me out...They then wrapped me in a cloth called a shroud' (*Shakespeare's*

Houses...Discovery Pack). This renders his guiding a series of memories, gesturing towards an authentic cognitive process, yet invented by the pamphlet's author. His narrative voice and some of his knowledges (e.g. of his death and burial) expresses a consciousness of himself as a visitor to a lost Elizabethan age, to his own life. Shakespeare, rather than today's school students, becomes the time-traveller.

Awkwardly straddling his own past and our present times through his narration, Shakespeare in these pamphlets needs to be understood as part of the imagination, re-enactment, and willing suspension of disbelief which students (and other visitors) are asked to participate in at the SBT to bridge the gap between past and present, presence and absence. This represents part of a paradigm shift in the museum world itself over the past few decades, from defining their role as conservators and gatekeepers of heritage towards favouring interpretation and living history⁴⁵. The SBT, for example, promises to bring 'Tudors Alive!' through an 'all day hands-on workshop' for history students at Mary Arden's house, depicted as 'a real working farm from Shakespeare's time' (*Education Department*). Early modern life is physically recreated here, as students actively participate in domestic activities from the period using imitation implements and ancient processes: they will, the website promises, make, bake, churn, tease, spin, use, knit, launder, tend, hurdle, and thresh like a Tudor.

Firstly, this transition corresponds to increasingly accepted progressive notions about pedagogy, which favour 'empathetic engagement and interactive learning' as models for success (de Groot 42). That notions of empathy, interaction and participation have been

⁴⁵ An example of emphasis on interpretation over sheer volume of objects can be seen at the Imperial War Museum North, in Salford, where the symbolic architecture and minimalist display of collections offer a starting point for an interpretative light and sound display which visitors experience in the main gallery.

applied to the classroom teaching of Shakespeare in schools has already been demonstrated through my discussion of active methods in chapter three. Secondly, it coincides with the growth of participatory models of entertainment. In terms of television programming, for example,

Where Reithian BBC models conceived of the educative power of television as a transmitter of information, contemporary television experience is more fragmented and far more interested in participation. Interactivity is the key word of the digital TV revolution, for instance. A greater sense of choice, interaction and control is fundamental to the way that television channels now present themselves.

(de Groot 166)

'Viewers' are exhorted to join in by signing up to become the stars of reality television shows; to interact by voting contestants into or out of game shows; to view programmes at their leisure using software and websites such as BBC iPlayer or Channel 4 On Demand (C4OD); and to gain further information using the 'red button' on their digital remote controls. I discuss this phenomenon further in chapter five with relation to Shakespearean programming. Thirdly, this shift relates to the spread of capitalist, consumerist principals (such as consumer sovereignty and choice) and discourses, from economics into the realms of public services including education – as evidenced in chapter two.

The widespread nature of a movement towards participation, interactivity and choice does not however mean that it has been readily accepted by education departments such as that of the SBT. While a vast amount of that ethos is visible in the SBT's education resources and on their website, there is still evidence of more conservative approaches to learning which distance Shakespeare rather than embrace a sense of his proximity when this research was conducted. For instance, the 'Life on a Tudor Farm' half-day visit provides the opportunity for students to 'see' rather than taste 'the food they ate' and to 'learn all about' rather than

experience 'the lives of the people that lived on the farm' (*Education Department*). Students on the 'Rich Man, Poor Man' workshop at the Shakespeare Centre are assured of the opportunity to write, find out, handle, examine, make, and take – a rather less vigorous group of verbs than that used to describe learning at Mary Arden's house (*Education Department*). Although the SBT offers 'set text workouts', 'exploratory work', 'practical exercises', 'practical sessions' and 'practical engagement', it emphasises that these potentially lively activities are not an end in themselves, rather a means to 'intellectual reflection' and 'organised discussion' (*Education Department*). Thus it reinforces a hierarchy, where action and participation are figured as an introductory rather than integral element of learning. It is suggestive of the SBT's recent past in which academics have dominated its management and staff and its educational provision has been centred on traditional textual and historicist approaches.

Underlying this hierarchical view, Jerome de Groot explains, is a 'professional distaste' among historians for 'the various popular forms of history': a viewpoint which emerges from 'a critique of the popular and a theoretical model of the cultural industries which encourages a binary of high (History) versus low (heritage or 'the historical')' (4). This critique has its counterpart in early twentieth-century literary studies. The writings of Leavis and T.S. Eliot, as discussed in chapter one, bemoaned the debasing of literature and culture through then new, mass-produced forms such as cheap paperback fiction and cinema, polarising the academic and the consumer.

A frequently expressed concern on the part of such ideologues, which is relevant to the SBT's attempts to fall in line with wider cultural trends, is that the value of authenticity is neglected in favour of artifice by heritage institutions. The human geographer, David

Lowenthal, who has written widely on the relationship between history and cultural heritage, suggests that 'heritage practitioners take pride in creating artifice, the public enjoys consuming it' (de Groot 4). Similarly, Hewison has written that 'Heritage is gradually effacing History by substituting an image of the past for its reality' (*Culture and Consensus* 21). The main problem with this view is that it erroneously supposes that we *can* obtain the reality of the past. It ignores that what we have of the past is limited to some objects, ascertainable facts, contemporary narratives and subsequent interpretations of these – the experience of the past's reality will always, by its very nature, be elusive to us. There is no physical, objective entity called 'History', only clusters of processes and meanings which constitute it⁴⁶. Traditionally these processes have been cast as education and, even more narrowly, the accumulation of facts (the accession dates of kings and queens) and skills (source study). Long held sacrosanct, their proponents have clashed with newly popular attempts to constitute history as entertainment and experience witnessed by, de Groot argues, a forceful and insatiable appetite among the English public in recent years for 'cultural histories, celebrity historians, historical novels, star-studded historical films, TV drama, documentaries and reality shows, as well as cultural events and historical re-enactments' (i). That is to say, there is a demonstrable demand for history above and beyond that constituted by academic research.

The implications of this context for the SBT's valuing of its educational experience of Shakespeare as a proximate one, despite residual resistance from an old ideology which values critical distance over empathetic engagement and is wary of consumerism and

⁴⁶ Peim has previously noted that this is also true of English: 'There is no English – no real, essential English – outside of its institutional practice' (5). Literature is barely more tangible: despite the existence of physical books, not all such books are seen to constitute Literature.

populism, is that their provision offers a good fit to the newly 'voracious audience for all things historical' (de Groot i). That is to say, it matches the mood of a public which is more interested in early modern history and Shakespeare's life than his works (as evidenced in the forthcoming exploration of television programming in chapter five). What, however, are the implications for those visiting the houses as part of a formal educational experience – many of them English rather than history students? How does this value of Shakespeare as an immediate presence at the SBT – through their emphasis on the reconstruction of his historical context and a focus on his domestic life, through methods of guiding which require participation, whether empathetic or physical – sit with the requirements of the National Curriculum? Happily, for the SBT, it correlates well with the values of personal growth, new historicism and active methods witnessed in the National Curriculum for English, the attainment objectives introduced in 2000, and national strategies (such as *Shakespeare for all ages and stages*) previously discussed in chapter three.

4.2 The value of Shakespeare at the Globe: an ethos of play and community

In Globe education, the value of their proffered experience of Shakespeare is situated in what they claim is an authentically 'Shakespearean' ethos of play and community. This authenticity derives largely from the organisation's rebuilding of a theatre, for which Shakespeare wrote, acted, and in which he held a share, near its original site in Southwark – described by Sam Wanamaker as a prime site with 'national and international significance and value' (Holderness 'Sam Wanamaker' 17). The organisation's nature (as a reconstructed theatre) and location are seen to offer a connection to Shakespeare not only through the physical building and site but also through the Globe's ideology and methods, which include original practice stagings, Shakespeare read in the context of his contemporaries (through

the Read not Dead series of staged readings, run at the Globe since 1995) and, contrastingly, the encouragement of new works of drama (partly informed by the idea of fostering potential new 'Shakespeares' i.e. great play-writing talent).

'Play', both as a noun and as a verb, centrally contributes to constructing the value of Shakespeare in Globe education. The department's main page opens with a reference, ironically not to Shakespeare, but to the playwright John Marston and his concept of the play in performance as 'the soul of lively action' (15). This phrase recurs throughout the site, connecting the experience of a lively Shakespeare with live performance; linking the value of play and playwright to the process of playing. The importance of playing, in Globe education, amounts not only to productions of play, in the sense of a dramatic work performed by a group of actors, but also to the activities sometimes associated with the leisure activities of children and in modern education theory, regarded as an essential part of development and learning. 'Play', 'playful', 'play-filled', and 'playground' all occur in one paragraph on the website, consciously reinvigorating sense in which the Globe is a 'playhouse' (*Globe Education*). Thus the language of the organisation connotes, through its use of the word 'play', both Shakespearean authenticity and important developments in educational theory and pedagogy in modernity, from Rousseau to Montessori, whose writings promote experiential and experimental learning through play. Indeed, educational provision at the Globe is described on the website through a discourse of active methods: common phrases used include 'active engagement', 'practical exploration', and 'research activities' (as opposed to the more usual 'research interests').

The emphasis on the play in performance and active methods pedagogies at the Globe, like the movement towards living history at the SBT, has the effect of reinvesting Shakespeare

with life: the Globe proclaims 'Shakespeare Lives!' under the sub-heading 'Teaching Shakespeare Through Performance' on its website (*Globe Education*). Their use of this phrase connotes resurrections – from that of Christ as described in the Bible, and encapsulated in the phrase 'Jesus Lives!' used in Christian services, to conspiracy theories which suggest that the 'kings' of the music world, Elvis Presley and Buddy Holly live on (either figuratively, through their music, or literally, through conspiracy theories surrounding their deaths). Although the Globe cannot resurrect Shakespeare's body natural, it can and does make the claim that its summer schools will breathe new life into his works, his body politic. Through their methods, they assure teachers, Shakespeare's stories will '*live in the classroom*' (*Globe Education*). Shakespeare and his works will be reanimated through their exertions: 'words do not lie lifeless on the page in Globe Education workshops' (*Globe Education*). Bringing Shakespeare (back) to life through theatre (both by staging productions and adapting theatre into pedagogy) is at the centre of Globe education, and, as will be demonstrated in the next section, the RSC education department too.

To (re)build a theatre for playing with Shakespeare or, more specifically, experiments in early modern theatre and staging might seem a potentially exclusive thing to do, centred as it is around the needs of academic research. Yet the Globe Trust has always emphasised its other motives which include, in its founder Sam Wanamaker's words, 'the educationalist's wish to provide a demonstrative model of a Renaissance institution for pedagogic purposes' as well as 'a commercially viable and potentially profitable' tourist enterprise to fund its scholarly endeavours (thereby avoiding dependence on virtually non-existent public funding for the arts during the recession of the late 1980s and early 1990s) (Holderness 'Sam Wanamaker' 18). Nonetheless, the values of the Globe project were certainly interrogated as exclusive

and motivated by capitalism in Graham Holderness' 1986 interview with Wanamaker. Commencing with a discussion of the organisation's acquisition of land, which left-wing political campaigners argued should be used for new public housing and open space (16-17), Holderness questions Wanamaker on people's perceptions of the dispute as 'a conflict between "high culture" and housing needs' (17). In answer, Wanamaker points out that a 'community-benefit' contribution was built into the project by the Labour council which initially approved the development (before a new council, opposed to the project, was elected) (16-17). He adds that further community input has been initiated by the Globe including local community organisations and businesses on its advisory board, as well as running a programme of activities for local people (18). Throughout the interview he refers to two other, non-London-based Globe communities: national and international, making the organisation's apparent inclusivity, geographically, even wider (18).

Whatever the original need to ameliorate criticism of a possible capitalist, elitist imperative, the Globe continues to invoke a notion of the value of community (and its role in upholding that value), cast as authentically Shakespearean by its location in a London borough where the playwright lived and worked. Its mission for outreach is stated on its website: 'Shakespeare and the Globe should extend beyond our building, beyond schools and into the streets and homes of Southwark' (*Globe Education*). Furthermore, the website highlights its founder's, Sam Wanamaker's, belief 'in the power of the arts as a force for change to transform communities' (*Globe Education*). To demonstrate Wanamaker's continuing legacy in proliferating a sense of local community, the website refers to its 'Concert for Winter' led by Southwark school students – an event featuring, not Shakespeare, but the songs and music of the borough's diverse population. This event implicitly draws on Shakespeare's

Globe as a site of local entertainment rather than Shakespearean content for its authenticity. Much of the organisation's work thus goes beyond running workshops, tours, lectures and talks for visiting tourists and academics. There is a definite attempt to foster a shared consciousness of the theatre as situated within the community of this London borough as well as a wider (more geographically dispersed) community of creative types, theatre practitioners and academics. There is an 'adopt an actor' scheme for schools. Rutgers students 'work with Globe Education Practitioners in schools in the community to discover how actors can share their skills and knowledge with young people in workshops and projects'. Additionally, they explore the 'role and impact of the creative arts across the curriculum' with attention to the work of local (and national) arts organizations, artists, arts practitioners and teachers (*Globe Education*). Collaboration between 'theatre practitioners and academics', traditionally seen as two distinct and polarised communities, is also embraced through events such as the Shakespeare Globe Theatre History Seminars.

Related to its attempts to be seen as sharing its resources and knowledge with the local community, as well as past governments' values for social inclusion (discussed in chapter two) is the Globe's discourse of accessibility. The language of its website employs metaphors around the physical openness of their sites throughout to convey this point. The Globe declares itself, for instance, 'an open house and is open to all'; it quotes the *Merchant of Venice*, 'You are welcome, take your place' (IV.i.167); and claims that 'The Globe is never dark'. While this is patently untrue in a literal sense, it invokes the idea that light, enlightenment, illumination and learning are available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Furthermore, such statements emphasise the allegedly unconditional nature of this access: it is extended to all regardless of age, merit, race, sex, class and so on. While such

assertions seem overly-ambitious and unachievable, they have at least been matched by a concerted effort to realise the Globe's constant openness in a virtual environment. Providing that they have access to a computer, an internet connection and the skills to utilise them (a not insignificant assumption) any person can use, at any time, the three-hundred-and-sixty degree tour of the building on the Globe's website. They can also 'see' a production through the freely available podcasts of the 2009 production of *Romeo and Juliet*, commissioned by the Department for Children, Schools and Families; or access a range of resources from actors' character notes to articles from the programme, which are disseminated through the online facility Globelink. Thus the Globe offers itself, and its product, Shakespeare, as the focal point for a global internet community.

As demonstrated in chapter two, one specific aspect of accessibility aims to alleviate financial constraints on participation for those from socio-economically disadvantaged households. In its 'Education Events Summer 09' pamphlet, the Globe addresses this requirement by advertising 'Sam's Day', a celebration of the birthday of its founder, which involves 'free workshops, demonstrations and platform discussions' on a more narrowly Shakespeare-oriented theme (*Globe Education Events Summer 09*). These include twenty-minute versions of *Romeo and Juliet*, a look at unusual film adaptations of Shakespeare, and storytelling inspired by the plays. Interestingly, unlike the RSC's annual open day for which many events can be pre-booked (from backstage tours to costume department talks) and some of which (such as concerts and staged readings) attract a fee, the Globe offers access to these events on a 'first come first served basis – just turn up on the day to book' (*Globe ...Summer 09*). A move arguably intended to elide the advantage of those wealthier families with access to computers, broadband and telephones; with the time and opportunity to plan

and book ahead. Specifically, the arrangements may have been designed to stop middle-class families from capitalising on and dominating educational opportunities which are aimed at generating wider participation. It may therefore signal a deliberate response to perennial media headlines critiquing the ‘sharp-elbowed’ middle class monopolizing of public services and other opportunities⁴⁷.

I have suggested above that the Globe’s continuing policy of accessibility, especially as regards its local community, satisfied (and perhaps even offered an inspirational model for) the bent towards raising the inclusivity of participation in the arts under New Labour. Elsewhere the value of Shakespeare at Globe education as allied to an ethos of play intersects strongly with trends in educational theory and, in recent years, policy towards participatory, child-centered learning. It is particularly interesting that the values of this privately-funded organisation have coincided with some of the state’s. This cannot be explained simply by understanding the Globe as conforming to government policy – since much of its work began long before New Labour policies took root and it is less obliged to reach a concord with their policy than an equivalent publicly funded organisation, like the RSC. It is also unfeasible to propose that the Globe alone could influence government uptake of these policies. Yet it is possible that these two flows of influence, along with gradually changing trends in education (its purposes and pedagogies) have seen the Globe’s and New Labour’s values around Shakespeare cohere.

4.3 The value of Shakespeare at the RSC: the resources of the acting company

The value of Shakespeare in the RSC education department is constructed as embodied in the techniques and spaces of the acting company which it uses. These techniques and spaces

⁴⁷ These critiques can be seen, for instance, in early evaluations of the SureStart parenting initiative aimed at the most deprived families, as well as subsequent appraisal of the service by the Cameron government (Bennett).

are invoked as authentically Shakespearean in supposedly channelling those theatrical methods and spaces the playwright would himself have used, from co-operating on scripts with fellow company members to playing on a thrust stage. Moreover, the RSC channels the way Shakespeare is done now by actors, including at its own institution: working in ensembles and experimenting in the rehearsal room. The company publicises its use of 'ensemble learning' methods; 'creative learning methods adapted from the theatrical process'; and 'active, theatre-based approaches' modelled on the rehearsal process (an approach foregrounded by Gibson, as shown in chapter three) (*Royal Shakespeare Company: Education*, Gibson *Teaching Shakespeare* 12). Thus there is a sense of the early modern and contemporary acting company as dual models for classroom work. Whereas the SBT's educational provision focuses on learning through historic re-enactment, for the RSC the simulacra are theatrical ones (with the Globe incorporating elements of both).

The RSC's representations of its value are staked on its educational practices as the solutions to various 'problems' with Shakespeare, which it perceives to confront students and teachers. These include the restrictiveness of classroom practice and pedagogic ethos presented by government education policy, which I will examine in the following section. For now, I want to concentrate firstly on the RSC's perception of Shakespeare's language as both the source of his difficulty and beauty. The former is tackled by their use of 'fun' methods to build students' confidence. Secondly, the problematic themes and length of the plays for young people are addressed through productions targeted at young people: such as the abridged, physical theatre-informed *Comedy of the Errors* (first staged in 2009). In taking these measures, the RSC can also be seen as constructing a new form of disadvantage around Shakespeare: youth. The RSC, for example, writes on its website that students may

find 'Shakespeare's work remote or inaccessible' unless they are offered tailored education provision (such as 'In Role Approaches to Teaching Shakespeare'). In doing so, the company builds on a long tradition of reworking Shakespeare for children and young adults from the Bowdlers' editing of the plays in the eighteenth-century; the Lambs' *Tales from Shakespeare* in the nineteenth-century; cartoon Shakespeare, such as the Animated Tales Shakespeare of the 1980s and 1990s; and more recently, Manga Shakespeare.

The RSC promises to tackle young people's struggle with Shakespeare's language through immersing them in the spoken word. Indeed, it uses the term 'language' in its programme for the Regional Schools Celebration thirty-three times. In its emphasis, the RSC combines its traditional reputation as supreme and reverent handlers of his words in production with its more recent push towards playfulness in word and action, balancing educational gravitas with the appeal of 'fun'. It maintains a respect for Shakespeare's widely-accepted role as father of the English language, while recognising that the historical isolation of his early modern vocabulary and phrasing make it increasingly difficult for children and non-specialists, who encounter little other writing from the period, to understand. One of the techniques to introduce students to Shakespeare's language which the RSC has included in its pedagogical portfolio is the use of Shakespearean insults. This was also adopted by the SBT in its resources for key stage 2 and key stage 3 students which feature an 'insult creator' table, to help you 'mix and match your own Shakespearean sounding insult' (*Shakespeare's Houses and Gardens: Who was Shakespeare?*). The following insult exercise was suggested by the RSC as part of the template for a Romeo and Juliet-themed assembly entitled 'What has Shakespeare ever done for us?' This formed part of nation-wide events publicised across primary and secondary schools for the 'Stand up for Shakespeare' assembly week in January

2009. Teachers were encouraged to use the table below during the assembly, or to use it beforehand to allocate insults to the students who will represent the warring Montague and Capulet families:

Are you a Montague or a Capulet? Would you really like to annoy your enemies? Use this table to come up with your own insult using genuine Shakespearean words.

Pick one adjective from the first column, a noun from the second, put them together and you've got an insult that can start a duel in seconds:

| | |
|----------------|------------|
| gorbellied | boar-pig |
| rump-fed | maggot pie |
| pribbling | ratsbane |
| clapper-clawed | giglet |

(What has Shakespeare ever done...? 3)

The activity resembles an exercise which might be used with actors to get into character; to build emotion; to gain familiarity with archaic vocabulary; or to test their voice projection. Cicely Berry, for example, encourages actors to throw vowels, rather than insults, in a voice-coaching book based on her work at the RSC (41). Not only can the activity claim theatrical authenticity, it also explicitly claims to have Shakespearean authenticity with its reference to 'genuine Shakespearean words'.

Having demonstrated its theatrical and academic credentials, the activity can be seen as striving for another type of credibility: 'street-cred'. 'Shakespeare insult' badges are widely available at museum and gallery shops nation-wide (including the three institutions featured here), and for several years there has been a Facebook application dedicated to allowing users to invent and send such insults to their 'friends' (*Shakespearean Insult Generator*).

Thus the RSC education department, and their counterpart at the SBT, have capitalised on (and possibly further contributed to) a phenomenon from popular culture to convey the value of Shakespeare's language to their young learners. This flow between popular culture and education (and to some extent vice versa) adds to the examples of intersection already identified in this thesis.

Another instance of the RSC targeting the disadvantage faced by youth in approaching Shakespeare – involving a specially-tailored, theatre-based solution – is the Young People's *Comedy of Errors*. This seventy-five minute production of the play was specially adapted by the RSC, in collaboration with the, Shakespearean-titled, theatre company Told by an Idiot, to engage school audiences. It adopted much of the latter company's ethos to generate an 'experience' that would be universally accessible to primary and secondary school children: 'Through collaborative writing, anarchic physicality and a playful but rigorous approach to text, the company is committed to creating a genuinely spontaneous experience for the audience. Using a wealth of imagery and a rich theatrical language, we aim to tell universal stories that are accessible to all' ('Company History and Artistic Policy'). In this sense, the production represents Shakespeare *for* not *by* young people (unlike the same season's Youth Ensemble *The Winter's Tale*): something about which the title 'Young People's Shakespeare' is ambiguous. The production premiered in schools in the West Midlands, followed by a tour to Newcastle-upon-Tyne and a small run of seven performances at the RSC Courtyard Theatre in 2009 (although it has since been revived for the 2010 summer season). Here, unlike the other venues, members of the general public were able to attend – which noticeably extended the age-range of the audience upwards, and potentially the universal appeal which it can claim.

The production made two noticeable assumptions about what is problematic in staging Shakespeare for students: the adult concerns his plays deal with (their themes) and their length. With regard to *The Comedy of Errors*, its brevity and farcical elements could be seen as appealing to a younger audience, while its handling of emotionally demanding issues, likely to be relevant to some of the audience, such as the separation of siblings (through divorce or adoption perhaps) fit with long-held perceptions of the need for literary education, evidenced in previous chapters, to offer opportunities for personal, emotional and moral growth through vicarious experience. In this way, it might be seen as a good choice for an audience of children. However, much of *The Comedy of Errors* is concerned with adult themes – unhappiness in marriage and adultery, for example. In this production, however, such content was noticeably imbued with value for young people through the physical theatre style which drew attention towards itself and, to an extent, away from the challenging issues raised by Shakespeare’s plot.

The character of the Courtesan, for example, is difficult to present to school students, given the taboos around prostitution which persist in an education system that still insists on discussions of sex primarily in the context of anatomy-focussed biology lessons or as part of personal, social and health education (PSHE). In one, sex tends to be rendered as a scientific process, stripped of social and emotional significance. In the other, sex is overwhelmingly characterised as a part of loving, rather than pecuniary, relationships. In this production, while the Courtesan kept her title – surely bound to raise probing questions from uncomprehending children in the classroom and perhaps sniggers from any ‘in the know’ – her sexuality was rendered comic. With a long blond wig and eccentric but non-sexual dance moves, she narrated some of the story through a song. This was performed in the style of a

1960s style pop concert (complete with backing singers and a band provided by the other actors). Thus the courtesan became a wannabe starlet – possibly alluding to the notion of a courtesan as an entertainer – rather than a prostitute, that is to say, a woman who sells her body for sex. This treatment of the Courtesan constitutes part of the way in which adult themes were rendered child-friendly through the RSC's processes of adaptation and staging. In addition to the Courtesan, marital turbulence and the physical abuse of the Dromios by their masters is dealt with comically, used to produce laughter and as a vehicle for frenetic physical movement across the stage. Action is clearly perceived by the RSC to be something a young people's Shakespeare must not fall short of – 'see it live, do it on your feet, start it earlier', was the mantra of the 'Stand up for Shakespeare' campaign (*Manifesto*). As if to compensate for the humorous treatment of these issues in the production, the programme flags up the actors' process of exploring feeling in rehearsals and asks the audience (mainly students and teachers) to engage in empathetic analysis or stagecraft: 'How do you feel when Dromio is hit? How do the other actors make sure he doesn't get hurt?' (*The Comedy of Errors*). The play is made fast-paced and funny, with little time to absorb the seriousness of its themes during the show, while the programme indicates a space for education in anticipation or reflection of its performance. Furthermore, while effectively 'neutralising' the adulthood of the play which might render it inaccessible to a younger audience, the production and programme failed to highlight potentially fruitful social issues for class discussion. These include the sale of the Dromio twins into servitude – an example of the exploitation of children for economic gain, which students may encounter in school through contact with the Fairtrade movement or when studying slavery in history – as well as issues of justice surrounding Egeon's imprisonment and trial. Thus the RSC appears enlightened for

choosing to stage a play that is not generally deemed attractive to children. Yet it is also old fashioned, if not patronising, in its assumption that the best way to present certain adult themes to children is to render them comical.

In summary, the RSC appeals to children's faculty for enjoyment of Shakespeare using models of action and participation derived from actorly or directorial methods, often deployed in the physical environ of the theatre or an imagined theatrical context, to overcome young people's struggle to understand or engage with the plays. I will expand on this further, proposing the RSC (and specifically its Regional Schools Celebration) as an example of such institutions' agency in shaping experiences of Shakespeare in the following section.

To conclude the chapter so far, the ostensibly unique value of Shakespeare in each education department has been shown to be more a part of each organisations' branding through the discourse of their marketing materials, designed to accentuate (even construct) their unique selling points. Some difference in what they offer does emanate from their diverse natures as theatres, heritage organisations, libraries or a combination of these. However, their educational products and services are built out of fairly homogenous values. These include the value of Shakespeare as experience through their education programmes as liveliness, action, authentic (whether authenticity is attained through place, methods, or ethos), and accessible. Whether these values are inherent in Shakespeare or added-values which these organisations bring to his works needs to be considered further. The following section proposes that the two different loci of value are often conflated by organisations such as the RSC, using the metaphor of the 'cultural chemist'.

4.4 The Royal Shakespeare Company as 'cultural chemist'

'Shakespeare as cultural catalyst' was the theme of the 2010 International Shakespeare Association conference. At the conference many speakers made reference to Shakespeare as a cultural catalyst in their papers. Others still engaged with definitions of what it is to be a catalyst: literally, in chemistry, a substance which initiates or speeds up a reaction but remains itself chemically unaltered by that process. Jonathan Bate's paper, for instance, proposed Shakespeare to be a 'catalytic converter' (2010). Thus by modifying terms and proposing additional metaphors, some critique of the limitations of the original phrase began to emerge. The remainder of this chapter expands the critique, problematising the possibility that Shakespeare is a cultural catalyst, since a truly catalytic substance remains unaltered by the reaction. Narratives of Shakespeare as a cultural catalyst involve him unilaterally conferring kudos onto individuals, corporations and other organisations that associate themselves with his person, life and works, or acting as a spur to further creativity and greatness. However, I will demonstrate that Shakespeare *is* altered by the interaction between his works, institutions and audiences. My analysis examines the way in which the phrase, 'Shakespeare as cultural catalyst', fails to acknowledge that not all reactions are naturally occurring, unaided by human intervention. It contends that the phrase attributes Shakespeare with agency while obscuring the power of those who act on him. These agents include editors, directors, conservators, teachers and the institutions to which they belong. Their numbers are further swelled by independent scholars, Shakespeare enthusiasts and bloggers. I argue that these organisations and individuals, like chemists, *facilitate* reactions, or processes, around Shakespeare by bringing together the necessary ingredients. These

might include readers and students with his works; tourists with his Stratford houses and so on.

Furthermore, to describe the author as a cultural catalyst neglects the different subjectivities, contexts, objectives, and assumptions of those contributing to the catalytic process. In *Cultural Selection*, Gary Taylor argues that an author such as Shakespeare cannot endure, let alone continue to *dominate* vast areas such as English education, without the help of what he terms a 'survivor': 'Culture is not what was done but what is passed on. Culture therefore depends not only upon the maker who stimulates but upon the survivor who remembers, preserves, and transmits the stimulus' (*Cultural Selection* 89). If it is envisioned at all in Taylor's conception, the catalytic role is shared between the work's author and a survivor or survivors. Like many successful 'makers', Shakespeare has had multiple survivors or carriers (another term that Taylor applies to those who act in ways that secure an artist's legacy) who have promulgated his value – early examples include Heminges and Condell, editors of the Folio, as well as contributors to the volume, such as Jonson. In turn, they recruited new guardians of Shakespeare's value through their readers, through inspiring other editors, other eulogisers, and so the cycle continues. Policy makers render him compulsory while educators debate the value various pedagogies add to or detract from his works. This is necessary, explains Taylor, 'Because the dying of human carriers never ceases, the need to pass on memories to new carriers never ends' (*Cultural Selection* 8).

Given this naturally high turn-over of advocates, it could be argued that institutions rather than individuals offer a greater security or stability in ensuring Shakespeare's ongoing influence. Indeed, Terry Eagleton has argued that Shakespeare is brought to life as a

construct of institutions rather than as an authorial source (205). They include libraries like the Folger; places of study, such as the Shakespeare Institute; heritage organisations, for example, the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust; dedicated Shakespeare theatres along the lines of the Royal Shakespeare Company and the Globe; regular Shakespeare festivals, for instance, Ontario; as well as conference committees, like that of the Shakespeare Association of America. These organisations offer a strong degree of continuity, in terms of the size and focus of their operations, even as they evolve from time to time. For instance, Shakespeare remains at the core of these organisations whether they vary their purpose from conservation to providing access, from engaging a domestic audience to an international one.

To reinvest the discussion of Shakespeare as a cultural catalyst with a sense of institutional agency, I offer here a case-study of the RSC's role as a cultural chemist, through its provision for schools. My discussion draws particularly on the second Regional Schools Celebration and the Young People's *Comedy of Errors* staged in 2009, supplementing first-hand observation with analysis of printed material including programmes. It suggests that the RSC can be understood as wittingly combining various elements (play-texts, theatrical spaces, people, the company's ethos) to set in action, observe, and reflect on, processes around a pseudo-catalytic ingredient: Shakespeare. These processes include staging plays or educating teachers and students. As a consequence of these activities, Shakespeare, unlike a true catalyst, is altered. His value is reconstituted as the value of RSC ethos and pedagogy. A similar metaphor for the RSC has been previously deployed in Richard Wilson's article 'NATO's Pharmacy: Shakespeare by Prescription'. I have been inspired by Wilson's use of pharmaceutical imagery but also, to some extent, by the substance of his argument: for

example, his assertion of the hidden prescriptiveness that underlies progressive pedagogies used by the RSC in their teacher training (62-63).

I have anticipated the criticism that, in doing so, I am setting up yet another metaphor: that, I have failed to heed the warning, delivered by the eponymous heroine of *Educating Rita*, that 'any analogy breaks down eventually' (II.i). The risk of an analogy breaking down is even greater when using terms from outside one's own field of knowledge. Yet, although the idea of institutions as cultural chemists may not endure, I argue that the metaphor helpfully allows me to critique and delimit the use of the term 'cultural catalyst' by highlighting the changes Shakespeare and his value undergoes through contact with such organisations. It also underlines the agency of those involved in what is, after all, a cultural rather than scientific process⁴⁸. Although not my primary concern, I have found it impossible to ignore the potential for critiquing the institution itself which a notion of the RSC as cultural chemist facilitates. Thus throughout this discussion, I pause to show contradictions or gaps in the RSC education department's self-fashioning. The chapter concludes with a consideration of the organisation's interrelation with another institution and agent in shaping Shakespeare: government. In this way it connects with the other chapters in this thesis to suggest a dual and cyclical flow of influence, in determining the value of Shakespeare, between cultural institutions, such as theatres, and political ones.

That the values of the RSC are made, by the company, to stand in for the value of Shakespeare, in a way which changes what constitutes Shakespeare for students and teachers, is demonstrable through an analysis of events such as the Regional Schools Celebration. I contend that this value shift is represented through the use of the discourse of

⁴⁸ 'Cultural' in the modern sense of 'a process of human development' rather than the 'tending of natural growth' (Williams 87).

professional theatre, including an emphasis on ensemble work and the actor's journey; within that, the development and sharing of a discourse for Shakespeare which equates to a shaping of him in collective memory; slippages in discourse concerning terms such as 'text' and 'production'; and the promotion of Shakespeare done actively and outside the classroom as the supreme experience (both in terms of educational and personal development potential). Before addressing these elements directly, I will briefly outline the event itself.

4.5 The Regional Schools Celebration: setting the scene

The Regional Schools Celebration, held at the Courtyard Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon over two days in June 2009, was the culmination of the RSC Learning and Performance Network's interaction in that year with state schools nationwide. The network involves the RSC forming three-year partnerships with schools, many of which are situated in areas of economic and social deprivation. A key feature of the programme is that a smaller group of schools act as 'hub schools', sharing their knowledge and experience with a larger group of local schools to explore 'Shakespeare's work through performance' (*Regional Schools 2*). Teaching staff involved are drawn variously from English, drama and the arts more widely. For the Regional Schools Celebration, each of the eleven regions the schools fell into was assigned a Shakespeare play. Schools within the same region divided the play between them: each looked at different scenes or themes or characters to produce twenty minute performances. In addition to teachers' input, each school worked with an RSC practitioner before showcasing their work at a regional festival.

I attended the enthusiastic and enjoyable performances on June 16, when six schools from Cumbria, Yorkshire, Cheshire and Surrey performed their 'responses' to *Much Ado About*

Nothing, The Tempest, The Winter's Tale, The Comedy of Errors, King Lear, and Macbeth on stage at the Courtyard. The responses constituted cut down versions of the plays or specific scenes. Shakespeare's language was variously foregrounded or subdued depending on the age of the students: older students worked with lines directly from the plays while younger ones worked with varying combinations of 'edited Shakespeare text, negotiated adaptation and complete improvisation' as well as re-ordering and modern paraphrase (*RSC Regional Schools* 3). Three of the performing schools were primary (or junior) schools and three of them high schools, so the performers ranged in age from six to sixteen plus. Their audience consisted of the classes' fellow students and teachers, parents, RSC governors and some members of the general public.

While waiting for the performances to begin, images of the school groups and news clippings covering their work were projected onto the stage, provoking cheers from their student members in the audience. There was no interval in the two hours' running time, which included a welcome and a summing up by the writer, broadcaster and comedian Hardeep Singh Kohli, who also presented certificates after the performances. There was also a warm-up for the participants and audience taken from rehearsal room exercises designed to engage the actor's 'three tools' of body, voice and brain. This was run by the Masters of Ceremony Ann Ogbomo (an RSC actor and graduate of the Teaching Shakespeare programme jointly run by the RSC and the University of Warwick) and Steve Marmion (who has worked with the RSC as an Assistant Director). Ogbomo and Marmion's role included 'interviewing' a teacher and group of students from each school on stage, before their performance, as well as soliciting and fielding feedback from the audience after each production. Thus, without discussing the performances individually (a task beyond the scope

of this chapter), an intertwining of education and entertainment was evident throughout, from the figures of the presenters to the content of the event.

4.6 Determining the value of Shakespeare as theatre: the RSC's agency

The RSC is, by its very nature, an agent in presenting Shakespeare as theatre over other possibilities (Shakespeare as poetry, as artefact, or as the object of textual study), as evidenced in the previous discussion of theatre education programmes (which also included the Globe). The RSC determines Shakespeare's value as such and shares this valuation outside the theatre realm through its education programmes. Its naturalisation of Shakespeare as theatre is reinforced by its appropriation of certain strands of academic discourse, particularly the work of Rex Gibson, and establishment of ongoing academic collaborations (with, for instance, the University Warwick's Capital Centre) to affirm externally the validity of such a value.

That the RSC's ethos of teaching Shakespeare as theatre draws strongly on the work of Rex Gibson was acknowledged at the 2010 International Shakespeare Conference by Jonathan Neelands ('Stand Up for Shakespeare'). As shown in chapter three, Gibson asserts that 'Shakespeare was essentially a man of the theatre who intended his words to be spoken and acted out on stage. It is in that context of dramatic realisation that the plays are most appropriately understood and experienced' (*Teaching Shakespeare* xii). He also encouraged the use of rehearsal-room techniques in the classroom on the basis that they offer a connection with the way Shakespeare would have worked with his acting company (12). Divorced from their association with Gibson in the programme for the Regional Schools Celebration, these methods and discourse are implicitly rebranded as those of the RSC. The

contributors to the programme, including the teachers and students quoted in it, praise the 'rehearsal room techniques' and 'physical' 'work' involved in the production of this event.

The RSC's agency in constructing the value of Shakespeare as synonymous with theatre was also visible throughout the Regional Schools Celebration in their emphasis on the importance of taking a play from rehearsal to its realisation on the professional stage. This focus was noticeably transmitted to the teachers it collaborated with: 'From understanding and dramatising the Shakespearean language in small groups, to working with the RSC practitioner, to actually performing at the Festival, has been an incredible journey. Now, the Courtyard Theatre!', enthuses teacher Tracey Bennett (*Regional Schools 3*). Additionally, the actor's journey – not always attended to in the experience of playing Shakespeare in the context of an English classroom – is praised as a useful part of the process by teachers: RSC methods, writes Steven Little, a head of department, have enabled 'students to fully get "inside" the characters' (*Regional Schools 7*). That the students involved, as well as their teachers, have picked up on and see value in RSC professional theatre is evident in their absorption and use of its discourse to describe their experience. They write of 'putting this fantastic play together', of 'going on stage', declare that 'acting is a great way to learn', and that 'the thing I most enjoyed was playing the trust games because they made it easier to act in role as we were thinking about the motivation of our characters' (*Regional Schools 7, 9*). This discourse is arguably derived from that of the RSC itself, for example, their exhortation to 'do it on your feet' – a phrase deployed throughout their 'Stand Up for Shakespeare' campaign (*Manifesto*). It is their experience of (personal) development through the activities of the RSC that is evidently in their minds, rather than Shakespeare's plays which are notably absent from many of these quotations. This signals the confusion of intrinsic value with

instrumental; the value of Shakespeare with that of the methods used to teach him. These absences and confusions are problematic elements of the RSC's determination of Shakespeare's value. As such, they will be traced throughout the following discussion.

The RSC has also been successful in turning ensemble casting into a hallmark, not only of its productions, but of its education programmes – being inspired to do so by the artistic direction of Michael Boyd (Neelands and O'Hanlon). Half of the ten teachers writing in the programme identified as particularly valuable the collaboration of, as teachers including Diana Lucas and Michelle Thresher termed it, their 'ensemble' or 'cast':

Throughout the rehearsal process I have been impressed with the way in which these students have embraced the method of ensemble acting adapted from the Royal Shakespeare Company strategies. This has enabled them to take ownership of their scenes and work collaboratively to explore Shakespeare's language.

(Regional Schools 8-9)

Here, Thresher explicitly attributes the ensemble and collaborative methods with having positively impacted on her students' understanding and ownership of Shakespeare. Moreover, they become, through her words, branded 'RSC strategies', rather than Gibson's, or more generically, those belonging to 'active methods', 'practical' or 'dramatic' work (Stredder 15).

The transmission of an ethos from the RSC to teachers can be identified in the way that Thresher picks up and deploys the term 'ownership': a term used by the RSC in much of their literature to capture their mission 'to give young people ownership of Shakespeare by unlocking the power of his language and exploring the contemporary relevance of his plays' (*Education News*). Such examples illustrate the way in which a collective re-membling of Shakespeare is being successfully transmitted between 'survivors' through the use of a

common discourse (Taylor *Cultural Selection* 2-6). However, this mission statement also demands that some pressure be put on the sense in which the RSC is 'giving' 'ownership' of Shakespeare to students and teachers. Firstly, it must be remembered that although their website materials are freely accessible, as is some face-to-face contact, elements of the RSC's school education programmes are sold commercially through teacher training, INSET days and class excursions. Half day workshops on a play, for example, cost £180 for thirty students. Continuing Professional Development courses for teachers amount to £130 per teacher for a day's training (*Education*). Secondly, in claiming to be able to bestow ownership of Shakespeare on these groups, the RSC reinforces its ownership of a certain (in the above quotation, presentist) understanding of his works. It makes a public statement that Shakespeare is theirs to give: that they hold the key with which to 'unlock' his works. This imparting of ownership can also have a limiting effect on *what* Shakespeare is possessed: within the RSC's focus on Shakespeare as theatre, he is constructed, not as a wide range of knowledges and practices on which students will be assessed through coursework or examination, but primarily as performance and rehearsal.

A consequence of the RSC's emphasis on the value of teaching Shakespeare as theatre is that pedagogy and the plays are falsely elided, with the result that the non-Shakespeare-specific, perhaps unconsciously, comes to be valued over the Shakespearean. Physical theatre, ensemble work, the actor's journey and other elements of drama methods, portrayed above as the quintessential experience of Shakespeare, can all be used when studying other playwrights. If taken out of the context of the programme, the quotations cited in support of the RSC's education programmes – such as 'we all learnt to be more confident and join in more' – could be testimonials to the benefits of staging any play, by any

playwright (*Regional Schools 4*). Furthermore, during the Regional Schools Celebration, the audience's enjoyment was occasionally divorced, if only humorously, from any Shakespeare-specific grounding in the plays at all. Singh Kohli, for example, joked that hosting last year's Regional Schools Celebration offered him 'genuinely new insight into writing that's four-hundred years-old but mainly what I wanted to come back for was the hairstyles'. I will give further examples of the way in which comic iconoclasm (especially parody) works to reinforce Shakespeare's value in chapter five. However, the lack of Shakespeare specificity in this event raises the following question: are teachers and students being given ownership of Shakespeare or of a set of techniques which can be applied equally well to other authors as they can to the bard? What both of these scenarios share, however, are humanist values for the experience of literature (see also chapter three).

4.7 Defining the value of Shakespeare through RSC pedagogies and productions

A second way in which the RSC exercises agency in defining the value of Shakespeare is through promoting his plays done actively and outside the classroom as the ultimate experience of his works, both in terms of the potential for educational and personal development (a key component of C.B. Cox's rationale for English, and one which RSC education has made central to their own operations). This tenet of their education department has its origins in the RSC ethos, discussed above, that first and foremost Shakespeare is theatre and he is 'active'. The RSC's belief that performance is not just a pedagogy, but *the* pedagogy through which to experience, and with which to overcome barriers to, Shakespeare is made evident not only on stage but also in the pages of the Regional Schools Celebration programme. Michael Boyd explains, 'Through our manifesto for Shakespeare in schools, *Stand Up for Shakespeare*, we want to see young people doing

Shakespeare on their feet, seeing it live and starting it earlier. The schools taking part in our celebration today are the manifesto in action' (*Regional Schools 1*). Versions of the verb 'perform' appear seven times in sentences alongside 'Shakespeare'. For example, the Learning Performance Network is described as giving 'students the opportunity to explore and gain ownership of Shakespeare's work through performance' (*Regional Schools 2*). The emphasis on performance in the programme text is further reinforced by the high quality, colour images from the productions which adorn most pages, many of which capture the movement of the student actors.

Alternative pedagogies are dismissed in testimonials to RSC practice by teachers and students alike: 'My own memory of Shakespeare was in the third year at high school studying *Macbeth*, sat behind a desk with no visual idea of what on earth was happening' writes one teacher, incidentally denying her own capacity for imagination (*RSC Regional Schools 8*). Further anecdotal evidence of the RSC's superior pedagogies is drawn from student participants in their programmes. The following opinions from students, which express a belief in active Shakespeare as fun, represent a unanimous majority in these materials: 'I enjoyed learning practically. It was challenging but it was fun'; 'I liked today because we approached the play through games rather than just reading the text'; 'Shakespeare is so much better on your feet' (*Regional Schools 4, 9, 8*). These students certainly rate their RSC experience above other ways of learning Shakespeare; and thus rank RSC constructions of Shakespeare (as practical, on your feet, and as games) above others. However, the RSC must be recognised as the agent in putting forward the superior value of Shakespeare experienced in this way: it chooses and uses these anecdotes and sound-bites to confirm its narrative of desk-based, literary criticism as the proverbial 'bad old days'.

A related problem with the RSC's educational provision – premised as it is on the superiority of active pedagogies – is that prescriptivism is somewhat inevitable in trying to roll out any scheme, belief, or pedagogy on a nation-wide scale, however inherently liberal it might be. Richard Wilson has previously traced the way in which such unintentional prescriptiveness undermines not only the freedom to choose such pedagogies, but also freedom within the teaching itself. Using pharmaceutical metaphors to explain the dominance of active approaches to Shakespeare, he writes that: 'Gibson's "Shakespeare in Schools" project is charismatically anti-intellectual in its exhortation to joy, though his instructions to pupils sound like *matron's most muscular instructions to swallow the medicine whole*' (63). He also suggests that 'Music and movement in the aisles is the *sugar that makes the bitter pill go down* in Gibson's regime, which seems a *perfect prescription* for schools compelled by law to study Shakespeare yet starved of funds for critical or historical support' (63).

Rather than dismissing the value of active methods outright like Wilson, I want to convey here a sense that the relationship in RSC education between prescription and progressivism remains troubled, over a decade after Wilson identified it as such. At the Regional Schools Celebration, the RSC was unquestionably keen to share the way it values 'doing' Shakespeare with the schools involved in the event (and the long lead up to it). Its eagerness to do so, however, creates a potential contradiction between its ideology and actual practice. A discourse of progressivism is evident, with explicit references to child-centered learning, exploration and play (a word frequently used in proximity to Shakespeare throughout the Regional Schools Celebration programme) as well as overt criticism of traditional approaches, seen above. However, a more dogmatic, transmission-oriented approach was also discernible – in repeating relentlessly the *Stand up for Shakespeare* motto

(do it on your feet, see it live, start it earlier); having children in the audience chant ‘What’s happened to the Bard? I don’t know’; and correcting children’s responses to questions about their experience of Shakespeare. As an audience member, I witnessed one particularly striking incident in which a girl playing Cordelia was asked, on stage, what she had most enjoyed about the putting on *King Lear*. She answered by saying she had enjoyed playing a leading role. To this the RSC practitioner responded negatively, criticising her lack of ‘ensemble spirit’: ‘there’s no such thing as small parts, only small actors’. The value of Shakespeare for this girl (providing the opportunity to take a lead role) did not match the master’s of ceremony idealised value for the company (providing the opportunity of ensemble work, supposed equality among actors). Thus her experience of Shakespeare was effectively invalidated because it did not fit the RSC paradigm. Sharon O’Dair has suggested that much online Shakespeare activity instigated, run and censored by institutions (often with input from marketing and publicity departments) represents a faux-democratization of the bard – as opposed to that started and administrated by Shakespeare enthusiasts without a professional affiliation or salaried position (2010). Similarly, the gap here between acknowledged values for and the implementation of a progressive ethos, combined with blatant prescriptivism: ‘Stand up for Shakespeare!’, represents a faux-progressivism.

The third way in which I want to discuss the RSC as an agent in equating the value of Shakespeare with the value of its organisation is through the confusion of elements of the play with elements of the production, including slippages in the company’s use of discourse concerning text/production. ‘Play’ and ‘production’ are often used interchangeably, making the location of value hard to determine. The Young People’s Shakespeare *Comedy of the Errors*, along with the Regional Schools Celebration and the Youth Ensemble’s *Winter’s Tale*,

formed a cluster of RSC activities in 2009 aimed at engaging a school-age audience. This youthful target audience was evident in the programme, where traditional actor biographies were replaced with short actor interviews covering their 'favourite bit of this play' (not production), first experience of Shakespeare and favourite Shakespeare character. In answer to the first question, only three out of twelve actors named elements from the text of the play. These included Antipholus of Ephesus trying to enter his house when Adriana is inside with Antipholus of Syracuse; Antipholus of Syracuse hiding from Adriana in the priory; and the pursuit of Antipholus of Ephesus for debt. Noticeably, all these examples emphasise the potential for physical theatre afforded by the plot over other elements of the text. The other responses were exclusively concerned with characteristics of this individual production including their participation in a whole-cast song worked up from the Courtesan's lines: 'My favourite bit is playing the double bass with dark glasses on during the Courtesan song because I think it looks funny and I like the music' (James Traherne/Solinus); slapstick violence between Dromio and Antipholus – 'I love doing the scene where I get to dunk Richard in the water' (Dyfan Dwyor/Dromio) (*The Comedy of Errors*); a slow motion chase; and a puppet show which summarises the action before the reunions which end the play. What is being valued in the above quotations is not only production over play, but *added-value*, RSC-brand productions.

Other examples of RSC added-value include hallmarked features of their productions. The Chief Associate Director Greg Doran's use of puppets has become a trademark of his rendering of the plays, while the RSC has enviable resources in its music and choreography departments with which to create high-production value song and dance routines. In addition, the RSC's style of production is increasingly associated, away from a tradition bent

on verse-speaking, with the physicality of the actors' bodies, movement and set as determined by the director's concept (in this case, cartoon violence). To paraphrase the British department store Marks and Spencer's now-infamous marketing of their chocolate pudding, it's not *just* Shakespeare, it's *RSC* Shakespeare. Admittedly, an assumption that one is referring to a specific production in talking about a play is natural in the realm of theatre. However, for the purposes of a theatre's education department – working with school students who will face examiners who insist on rigid distinctions between the two – such an elision is a potentially problematic element of their provision.

The need for a clear distinction of key concepts in teaching students, through the RSC's brand of active methods, is further demonstrated in a story related in the programme for the Regional Schools Celebration. The ultimate confusion between author and company, between Shakespeare and the RSC, is jocularly expressed in the anecdote of a year two teacher, taken from the Regional Schools Celebration programme: 'having got over the shock and initial disappointment that Shakespeare himself was not coming to work with them, the children embraced Gemma [the RSC practitioner] as the next best thing' (*Regional Schools* 9). In these, admittedly young, students' minds Shakespeare and an RSC actor had become one and the same.

4.8 The cultural chemist in context: the RSC and government policy

I have suggested above many implicit ways in which the RSC effects an amalgamation of its values for education with values perceived as inherent to Shakespeare, in ways that alter how students and teachers define him. It is also important to acknowledge the RSC's agency in transforming Shakespeare explicitly and deliberately through campaigns, like Stand up for Shakespeare!, targeted at changing both teaching practice and government education

policy. In 2009, the RSC could well have claimed some victory in the abolition of the testing of Shakespeare at key stage three. This move, on the part of the government, marked the most radical change to the status of Shakespeare in education since he was rendered the only compulsory author in the 1989 *National Curriculum for English*. At first, the RSC welcomed the decision as allowing more freedom for teachers to embrace RSC-style pedagogies. The consequences of the change they had agitated for, however, were soon perceived as having a negative impact on the RSC education department's finances and on teachers' training. Jacqui O'Hanlon, the RSC's director of education, publicly decried the decrease in enrolment by teachers on their courses, with 40-50% of teachers booked on training courses cancelling (Lipsett). The same Guardian article quoted her as saying, 'School managers will not release teachers for a day's training because Shakespeare is no longer seen as a priority'. For school management, at least, she explained, unassessed Shakespeare equated to a devalued Shakespeare. She then linked these attitudes, on the part of schools, to a possible decline in student's 'entitlement' to Shakespeare. This unforeseen consequence of intervention demonstrates that cultural chemists cannot always predict the effects of their agency, or how forces and ingredients will react together.

The RSC not only lobbies to influence government education policy – another (even rival) agency in shaping Shakespeare – it also responds to it. This can be seen in the way the RSC fits its education activities to the requirements for attainment and programmes of study at each key stage, many of them non-Shakespeare specific. A catalogue of available RSC courses states that 'all our activities for young people are devised in line with the relevant curriculum requirements' (*Education News* 1). More subtly, the company's adherence to the goals of the curriculum is visible in their adoption of its language in their own publications.

The *RSC Education News*, for instance, echoes the curriculum's division of skills into reading and writing, speaking and listening (*Education News* 5). Moreover, the RSC aligns itself with government objectives for National Curriculum English as elucidated initially in the Cox Report and reaffirmed in subsequent publications. For example, in terms of personal growth, RSC courses commit to developing 'social and emotional intelligence' as well as 'confidence and understanding' (*Education News* 3-4). The *Curriculum 2000's* new attainment orders, AO4 and AO5, are reflected in the RSC's educational focus on awakening students to 'making interpretative choices' for themes, characters and current productions; seeing 'the play from different points of view'; and having them 'relate the plays to their social, cultural and historical context' (*Education News* 5). These are only a handful of examples of the RSC's fit to government education policy.

In terms of arts policy, this massively subsidised organisation is increasingly forced to justify its receipt of government funding in an environment where public value and the value of the arts is being hotly debated⁴⁹. The organisation needs to demonstrate its own worth – meeting criteria for funding including increasing participation, widening access, and improving their accountability for expenditure – as well as that of Shakespeare as a cultural icon. This perhaps explains, in addition to the use of anecdotes and sound bites, the recent surveying of students' attitudes toward Shakespeare resulting in the production of statistics with which to evidence the success of school groups' Shakespeare experiences at the RSC pedagogies (Neelands and O'Hanlon). Whether related to arts or education policy, the RSC's attempts to respond to government agendas demonstrate the way in which no chemist (cultural or scientific), especially one receiving significant government funding, works in

⁴⁹ See Tessa Jowell, *Government and the Value of Culture*; John Holden, *Publicly Funded Culture and the Creative Industries*; and Arts Council England's, *Call it a Tenner: The role of pricing in the arts*.

isolation from their political and economic context. The next chapter looks at the construction of the value of Shakespeare in another context: that of popular culture.

5. SHAKESPEARE ON TELEVISION: EDUCATIONALLY SATURATED CULTURE

This chapter steps outside explicitly educational arenas – education policy-making, classroom pedagogy and the education departments – to analyse the relationship between the educational value of Shakespeare and truisms in popular culture. As shown in my discussion of the influence of Leavis in chapters one to three, the term ‘popular culture’ ‘has frequently been interpreted as an aesthetic judgement, not taken literally, anything which millions enjoy...becoming immediately artistically suspect’ (Terris ‘Shakespeare and British Television’ 201). Such attitudes also found expression in the writing of a group of modernist writers and intellectuals, including T.S. Eliot and Virginia Woolf (Carey). Umberto Eco figures these as ‘apocalyptic’ intellectuals, who, revolted by the perceived debasement of culture by mass production and mass consumption, took refuge in (what they constructed as) elite cultural forms such as classical music, literature, painting, sculpture, and certain kinds of theatre (Bondanella, Caeser).

However, the 1960s saw a turn away from this negative aesthetic judgement. Critics including Eco and Williams (re)claimed mundane culture as a fit subject for study and research alongside literature. They sought to integrate mass culture into their writing – recognising that it is omnipresent, analysing its ideologies, and (for Eco, at least) contributing to both mass culture and academia by producing challenging but accessible work. Similarly, in this chapter, I want to pay close attention to popular culture as a rich resource for understanding our education and society, and their interrelatedness.

I define popular culture broadly as encounters with the playwright designed for, and occurring, outside formal education – that is to say, outside the school classroom or the education departments of institutions such as the RSC, Globe and SBT. The encounters

included herein involve television, film, and advertising, but could draw on endless others. As such, it builds on the work of Richard Burt; Olwen Terris, Eve-Marie Oesterlen and Luke McKernan; Anthony Davies and Stanley Wells; Mark Thornton Burnett and Ramona Wray, who have produced various guides to, databases on or analyses of Shakespeare on film, television, radio and other popular mediums. These themes have also been taken up by dedicated issues of *Shakespeare Survey* (e.g. volumes 39 and 61) which offer critical perspectives on Shakespeare in mass media. Their research shows that Shakespeare's presence can be found in all areas of popular culture over the last century.

The 'truisms' this chapter considers as constructing Shakespeare's popular (and which are frequently shared with his educational) value include Shakespeare as the father and a skilled user of the English language, a writer of universal truths, an authority, a genius and the epitome of national culture. For each of these clichés, observed in television programmes and commercials, I will demonstrate their existence in pedagogic literature and academic writing. This is not to suggest a simple causality between the two (e.g. Shakespeare is represented as universal in school and this filters down to popular culture). Firstly, such an argument would reinforce hierarchical, Leavisite views of education (highbrow) and mass popular culture (lowbrow). Secondly, it constructs the two areas as polarised, separated by a void between them: whereas, for example, trade books on Shakespeare combine academic research with elements of fiction and popular (auto)biography. A recent example includes Stanley Wells' *Coffee with Shakespeare*, where the author constructs a fictional interview with the playwright in order to convey facts about his life and work. There is also Germaine Greer's *Shakespeare's Wife*, in which the academic detail of Early Modern Stratford and married life provides the background for more sensational hypotheses about Anne

Hathaway and her relationship with Shakespeare. Thirdly, the clichés are not always transmitted straightforwardly: I will demonstrate the way in which they are treated in popular culture variously as serious and tongue-in-cheek, revered and satirised. Fourthly, it implicitly positions education as the point of origin for these values. Rather, I want to suggest that just as education is culturally-saturated (offering a microcosm *of* wider culture, as well as teaching *about* culture), so too is culture educationally saturated, in the sense of being soaked through or inflected with educational notions (see Bruner x). I do not wish to invoke the chemical definition of ‘saturated’, meaning unable to absorb more of a substance. Another way in which I could conceive of the relationship would be to understand education as reproducing culture and culture as reproducing education, a metaphor suggested by Peim’s discussion of ‘the consistent history of English as “reproductions”’ (5). However reproduction can connote the making of an identical copy, an implication which would fail to capture the messiness of the relationship between Shakespeare in these two sectors.

In particular, this chapter takes as evidence for the shared existence of Shakespeare’s clichéd value in popular culture, education and academia, two generically different television programmes, *The Supersizers Go Elizabethan* and *Dr Who: The Shakespeare Code*. These popular culture Shakespeares were not chosen strategically, for their acclaim, quality and so on. Rather they represent my encounters with him outside my own formal education: the Shakespeares that I have come across when switching on the television, browsing high street bookshops, and reading entertainment news during the three years of my doctoral studies. If anything, these are two of the Shakespeares I met while trying to escape ‘Shakespeare’. Admittedly, I have chosen two English programmes – to fit with the focus of the rest of this

thesis on that nation – as well as two examples from the same medium. My rationale for this decision perhaps relates unconsciously to the current prevalence of analyses of television in Shakespeare studies and the existence of a body of work (and discourse for) discussing it. Yet it also continues to be a major social presence in spite of competition from newer mediums. For example, ninety-seven per cent of British households own a television ('FOI: Facts and Figures'). This remains more widespread than household internet access, which is currently estimated at seventy-three per cent ('Internet Access'). On a personal level, *The Supersizers Go Elizabethan* appealed to my previous interest in researching food production and consumption, while *Dr Who* attracted my attention because of its phenomenal popularity in individual households, in the media and in high street shops which stock its merchandise. Having laid out personal and pragmatic reasons for my choice of texts in this chapter is not to say that my research is utterly devoid of a systematic approach. In addition to these serendipitous encounters, I undertook a survey of educational programming, maintained a timeline of education policy change over the past twenty years and read wide-ranging literature on British television. Instead, what I want to suggest is that encounters with Shakespeare in popular culture are unavoidable. They exist in realms as diverse as sci-fi and cookery. Like the phenomenon of 'Shakespeare' itself, 'television is a "multifarious" object of study, made up of institutions (organisations), practices (programme making), programmes (forms, representations and aesthetics), technology and, in a wider sense, its diffuse connections with society and culture ranging from the world of politics to domestic audiences' (Turnock 3). I will argue that it plays an important role in proliferating (and parodying) diverse values around Shakespeare which exist in other arenas, rather than

offering its own competing values (a fear for the impact of popular cultural forms expressed by the 'highbrows' discussed earlier).

Adding to this multiplicity is the way in which, apart from demonstrating divergent attitudes towards his value – often both manifest in the same item, Shakespeare in popular culture is characterised by dual agendas for entertainment and education in the sector – as influenced by, for example, the public service remit of several British broadcasting companies. It is necessary to outline briefly here the development of these values historically through the growth of broadcasting in the nation, to understand their continued impact on programme-making, before turning to an analysis of the individual programmes.

5.1 The value of education and entertainment in English broadcasting

Education and entertainment co-exist, inscribed together, in the public service remit of national broadcasting legislation. The Royal Charter, under which the BBC was established in 1926, states that the organisation should be a 'means of disseminating information, education and entertainment'⁵⁰ (DCMS 2006 2-3). The charter delineates the BBC's duties which include reporting parliamentary proceedings, being politically balanced (it is prohibited from reflecting political influences), and broadcasting government emergency announcements (Greenhalgh 654). The BBC is run at arm's length from the state, if not autonomously. For instance, it relies on the nation's parliament to set the level of the licence fee which funds it. In recent years, there has been debate over whether the proceeds of the licence fee should be shared with other broadcasters – putting even greater pressure on the BBC to impress the nation's government with its service. Additionally, some departments such as the BBC World Service have traditionally received funding directly from the Foreign

⁵⁰ Prior to the Royal Charter, a radio service was operated by the British Broadcasting *Company* from 1922 to 1926. This was dissolved and re-established, as the British Broadcasting Corporation.

and Commonwealth Office⁵¹. Beyond this, the government has always ‘influenced the construction and operation of television by acts of parliament and committees of inquiry’. Other channels are subject to some such control – although the demands made on them in terms of a public service remit are generally weaker (Turnock 4).

The purpose of television broadcasting in England was laid out and cemented by the BBC’s early leaders. The ordering of terms in the requirement to inform, educate and entertain is suggestive of the BBC founder Lord Reith’s priorities, informed by his moral idealism (criticised as patronising and parochial in subsequent decades, as I will demonstrate below). Successive Director Generals of the BBC echoed its founding ethos. For example, Sir Ian Jacob (Director General of the BBC from 1952-1960) writing in *The Listener* in 1954 declared that:

A public-service must set as its aim the best available in every field...It means that in covering the whole range of broadcasting the opportunity should be given to each individual to choose freely between the best of one kind of programme with which he is familiar and the best of another kind which may be less familiar⁵². (Turnock 24)

While ostensibly arguing for viewers’ freedom of choice, Jacob simultaneously demonstrated his inheritance of an interest from Arnold and Reith in making ‘the best that has been thought and said’ available to the whole population. His barely implicit objective for the organisation was to offer a television service that equated to a popular medium for self-education.

⁵¹ This looks set to change as of 2010, with the government now ordering the BBC to fund these services from within its overall budget (‘Spending Review 2010’).

⁵² *The Listener* magazine was instituted by Lord Reith in 1929 and ceased publication in 1991. In its early incarnation it published broadcast talks, previewed forthcoming literary and musical broadcasts, and reviewed books. It appears to have been conceived as an elite, intellectually-focussed equivalent to the *Radio Times*.

Such articulations of the BBC's principles were criticised when Independent Television launched a rival television broadcasting service in 1955. Although not as strict as the BBC's charter, ITV was still bound 'to meet certain standards for program content and quality' as part of the criteria for its franchise renewal (Greenhalgh 657). However, the new channel celebrated its comparative freedom in its listings magazine: 'Viewers will no longer have to accept what is deemed best for them..[we] aim to give viewers what viewers want' (Terris 'Shakespeare and Television Advertising' 43). In this statement, the channel exploited the perceived education/entertainment dichotomy for its own gain, casting the BBC's offerings as unpopular, elitist and irrelevant.

Despite (or, perhaps, because of) the channel's frankness about its mission, it received criticism of its content from Lord Reith and the *Pilkington Report* in the early 1960s for 'giving the public what it wanted in order to survive' (Terris 'Shakespeare and British Television' 202, see also Committee on Broadcasting). Such arguments represent 'an academic disdain for what is perceived to be commercial culture' which 'is both intellectually and culturally inherited' (Turnock 3). The station's output thus sparked ongoing debates about the role of broadcasters and their responsibility to educate and/or entertain. Numerous other publicly funded and commercial channels have launched since the 1960s, always to be heralded by similar debates to those outlined above, informed by the culturally conservative positions on culture described in 5.1.

However, the BBC's public service remit within the charter continues to render it, above other broadcasters, bound to the production of educationally saturated culture. The continuity of Reithian principles is evident in the *Communications Act 2003*, which requires public service television in Britain to 'reflect, support and stimulate cultural activity in the UK

by representing drama and performing arts alongside comedy, music, feature films, visual arts' (Greenhalgh 671). This cultural activity, for instance, includes English history programming which de Groot explains is frequently presented to Ofcom (the independent regulator and competition authority for the nation's communications industries) by relevant channels 'as evidence that they satisfy their duty to programme content of an educational nature and educational value' (157). Furthermore, the deliberate targeting of such documentaries at 'intelligent viewers' reveals that there still exists a sense among some television producers of an aspirational class which is 'separate and elite, non-populist' (153); which demands more than the momentary thrill of entertainment.

Nonetheless, an illusion of change, towards a more democratic relationship between broadcasters and their public, has been a strong feature of recent decades. Modern viewers, used to the principles of consumer sovereignty, are offered a 'greater sense of choice': 'interaction and control is fundamental to the way that television channels now present themselves' (de Groot 166). Indeed, there *is* a greater 'choice' of channels, providing one can afford a digi-box, the subscription to satellite or cable television, or a good internet connection to access the internet television channels available on, for example, *YouTube*. Consumers can, in this way, choose to opt-out of broadcasting which is subject to the public service requirements of tax-payer funded, free-to-air television. However, many of these extra channels' schedules consist substantially of repeats, previews or delayed broadcast of programmes also shown on sister channels, problematising the sense in which this is a real proliferation of choice. Viewers are also courted with promises of empowerment through participation across the channels – for example, the opportunity to determine the outcome

of series such as *Big Brother*, *The X-Factor* and *Strictly Come Dancing* through telephone voting. Yet, voting scandals for several of these reality television programmes have been rife. Typing 'X-factor voting scandal' into Google currently produces 364,000 items, many of them from tabloid newspapers which deal with allegations of fixes and riggings regarding public voting for contestants over the show's six year history. Rather than representing true choice for the viewer, it may be that such broadcasting instead provides another example of the false democratisation Sharon O'Dair has decried in relation to popular culture, discussed in chapter four ('Against Internet Triumphalism'). Indeed, the democracy implicit in the mass ownership of televisions by the nation's public this situation has never been fully realised, since the Royal Charter and other similar measures (organisations such as the watchdog organisation Ofcom) effectively police both broadcasters' output and viewers' tastes (Terris 'Shakespeare and British Television' 201).

Despite a large degree of continuity with the aims and inequalities of early twentieth-century broadcasting, there has been continual evolution in terms of technology and genre. Television audiences grew, especially after the Second World War, until, during the 1950s and 1960s, 'television changed from a minority interest watched by a small [wealthier] percentage of the population to being a cultural activity of national interest' (Turnock 2). In the twenty-first century, the nature and frequency of television viewing is being changed and challenged by other audio-visual mediums, including the internet and computer gaming. Broadcasters have had to adapt by offering on-demand access to their programmes online, which viewers can stream or download to their computer. The participatory, interactive nature of these alternative forms of entertainment has also forced a response from broadcasters in terms of the content they offer. The explosion of the reality television genre

at the turn of the millennium testifies to this. Purporting to capture real, often mundane, events and situations by filming the people involved at the time (although the extent to which such programmes are orchestrated or scripted by their makers varies), the genre blurs the boundaries between audience and 'actors' or participants.

Finally, such changes may contribute to shifting the traditional balance of television broadcasting between education and entertainment. At the very least, a widening of the gap in provision between the BBC and other channels, with a less firm informative and educational imperative, is to be expected. While moral or educational issues may well be at stake in the reality genre, the top-down transmission of a value system from producers to consumers is rarely visible in such programmes: 'Where Reithian BBC models conceived of the educative power of television as a transmitter of information, contemporary television experience is more fragmented and far more interested in participation. Interactivity is the key word of the digital TV revolution' (de Groot 166). Even if it has yet to be realised in policy and practice, the currently dominant broadcasting ideal (if not always a reality) is one where viewers and broadcasters actively negotiate provision, rather than viewers passively (and gratefully) receiving what the government and station controllers deem beneficial. This signals a profound change in the rhetoric, at least, surrounding the nation's broadcasting provision, from that of Reith.

5.2 Public service Shakespeare: the bard on the Beeb

This section focuses on ways in which the BBC can be understood as an enduring broadcaster of Shakespeare notwithstanding a general shift in their programming from broadcasting productions of his plays to screening films, drama and documentaries with Shakespeare, the man, as their subject. Terris suggests that to write of television

Shakespeare in Britain, is overwhelmingly to write of BBC Shakespeare. She calculates that since 1955 commercial television (ITV and Channel 4) have broadcast fourteen Shakespeare plays compared to the BBC's one-hundred and sixty ('Shakespeare and Television Advertising' 44). Besides these data, there is evidence of a more deeply wrought relationship between the BBC and Shakespeare, perhaps connected to their situation as iconic national institutions. There are architectural references to Shakespeare at Broadcasting House while the staff newspaper *Ariel* puns on the Shakespearean character, who is often interpreted as empowering his master with his magic knowledge, and the equipment which facilitates transmission and reception. Festive occasions such as Christmas have frequently seen the broadcast of the adaptation of one of his plays or fictions inspired by his figure (such as the *Shakespeare Code*, shown at Easter 2007). Adding to its construction of prestige through association with the playwright, the BBC inaugurated its radio programming with Shakespeare (Greenhalgh 654-55).

The BBC's unique position in British broadcasting, shaped by its funding, governance, and the legislation controlling it, has had a perceptible and continuing impact on their Shakespeare broadcasting. Terris has suggested that, despite their veneration of Shakespeare demonstrated above, the BBC's championing of the playwright is inspired by an instrumental conception of his value: his power to fulfil their cultural and educational remit, rather than a genuine belief in his inherent greatness. Despite Lord Reith's determination, there are grounds for believing that broadcasting the playwright as part of a public service remit has adversely affected the value of Shakespeare for the very public it is meant to serve. The ambitious *BBC Television Shakespeare* project, which broadcast the canon of plays between 1979 and 1985, has been described in terms of its conservative, culturally

authoritative, even unimaginative approach as ‘the greatest disservice to Shakespeare in the last twenty five years’ (Michael Bogdanov in Terris ‘Shakespeare and British Television’ 208, also Holderness ‘Boxing the Bard’ 181⁵³). The potential damage done to the pleasure value of Shakespeare through television results, not just, as feared from the technology’s inception, from compromises to the aesthetics in trying to suit Shakespeare to a mass audience, the lowest-common denominator, the domestic setting and routines within which it is consumed, low budgets or specific technological requirements. Indeed, it can be done before filming even begins – by the assumptions made about the high status of Shakespeare on the part of those administering broadcasting institutions, such as the BBC, which may operate to constrain producers and directors.

The BBC’s treatment of Shakespeare as an art form loaded with value and to be taken seriously (studied rather than enjoyed) is reflected in comments like those of Controller Norman Collins in 1949 that ‘there must be fun as well as fineness in the service, and a place for the Lido Cabaret as well as for *King Lear*’ (Terris ‘Shakespeare and British Television’ 201). The Lido Cabaret refers to the Parisian venue which, during this period, played host to popular singers such as Edith Piaf and Noel Coward. The juxtaposition hardly represents the greatest gulf between elite and popular cultural forms: understanding of Piaf’s French lyrics depends on an education in modern languages, while much of Coward’s work is concerned with high society. Such comments, casting Shakespeare as symbolising exclusive taste and the polar opposite of ‘fun’, have the effect of denying that he is, or can be, entertainment for the masses – just as his co-option into English at the university did in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century (Murphy *Shakespeare for the People* 177).

⁵³ It should be noted that Bogdanov featured in a documentary, *Shakespeare Lives!*, for a rival channel in 1982 and that this might have coloured his comments.

However, *The Supersizers Go Elizabethan* and *The Shakespeare Code* – which playfully use historical facts about the playwright, his works, and context – successfully represent elements of ‘a body of programmes where Shakespeare’s presence was always supposed to be part of the fun’ (Greenhalgh 665). These include variety, comedy, quiz and game shows featuring Shakespeare. Scenes from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* have appeared in comedy sketches by The Crazy Gang (1957) and The Beatles (1964). In addition, series such as *Morecambe and Wise* (BBC, then ITV), *Monty Python* (BBC), *Blackadder* (BBC1), *Dead Ringers* (BBC2) and *The Mighty Boosh* (BBC3) have all parodied the playwright (Greenhalgh 666). Meanwhile, contestants on *University Challenge* (BBC2), *Mastermind* (BBC2) and *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* (ITV) are routinely set questions from the Shakespeare canon: here the audience’s entertainment is provided by the participants’ struggle, and their resulting failure or success, to prove the range and bounty of their education (specifically defined by their knowledge of facts).

Institutional attempts to popularise Shakespeare’s plays in adaptation, however, continue to be fraught with the potential to backfire – on the organisation and the playwright. There are frequently hostile evaluations of the success of Shakespeare on television – criticised either as dumbed-down or overly ‘academic’, a shorthand phrase for something elite and irrelevant, and sometimes both. The former epithet was applied by some reviewers to the BBC *Shakespeare Re-told* series of 2005, which updates the language and setting of the plays. Michael Billington similarly alluded to them in his theatre blog for *The Guardian* as ‘crass modernised versions’ (‘Spacey is right’). Unintentionally then, both these interpretations of Shakespeare and the BBC itself were devalued through attracting such criticism (while hinting at the superiority of a mystified, authentic Shakespeare).

One profound impact of the public service remit on BBC Shakespeare is that the organisation's management returns time and again to the playwright as a solution to fulfil demands for education and entertainment, despite these slurs on the quality of their productions. This supports Susan Greenhalgh's argument that 'Television in Britain has only ever been true to Shakespeare in its own fashion, and for its own purposes' (653). While her pronouncement perpetuates the notion of one true Shakespeare, it is useful for the emphasis it places on instrumental attitudes towards the value of Shakespeare in, particularly BBC, broadcasting. Furthermore, attitudes which place an emphasis on Shakespeare's presence on televisions nationwide, rather than on the nature of that presence, enable multiple values of Shakespeare to co-exist within this medium. I will highlight several of these in the remainder of this chapter, with reference to two recent BBC programmes.

5.3 *The Supersizers Go Elizabethan and The Shakespeare Code*

Before considering the way in which these popular culture Shakespeares present a multitude of attributes and functions which together construct his value, I will offer a brief synopsis of the two programmes central to this chapter and their wider cultural context. *The Supersizers* was made by Silver River productions, which has produced other comedy, arts and documentary shows for the BBC and Channel 4. In contrast, *Dr Who* is an in-house, BBC production. Both these television programmes were broadcast on the BBC, which reflects Terris' observation that the majority of Shakespeare broadcasting has been, and continues to be, undertaken by this organisation ('Shakespeare and British Television').

On June 17 2008, BBC2 aired an Elizabethan-focused episode of *The Supersizers Go...series*, in which the restaurant critic Giles Coren, and the comedienne and broadcaster Sue Perkins,

inhabit the lives and dining rooms of a 'married' couple from six historical periods in Britain. The series spun out of a programme for the BBC4 2007 Edwardians season, *Edwardian Supersize Me*, featuring the same presenters and premise. The aim of the series is humorously to explore how the diet and lifestyle of those eras impacts on the bodies of its twenty-first century hosts. Coren and Perkins undergo a medical assessment at the beginning and end of each episode to ascertain how the lifestyle of each period has impacted on their overall health (blood pressure, cholesterol level and so forth). They also reflect on their experience of the diet in regular video diaries.

In having its presenters become subjects who participate in, and reflect on, their historical experience, *The Supersizers Go...* harnesses the popularity of the historical 'House' format 'in which a group of people are placed in a particular setting for a set amount of time and forced to act in the style of a historical period' (de Groot 165). Examples of the genre include *The 1900 House*, *The 1940s House*, and *The Edwardian Country House* (all produced by the company Wall to Wall for Channel 4, within four years). However, in choosing experienced presenters and experts in the field (Coren, for example, is a restaurant reviewer for *The Times*), as well as partially scripting the show, *The Supersizers* 'troubles the role of the academic or television historian as the gatekeeper of cultural product and historical fact' to a lesser degree than most reality television (165). Furthermore, it ensures a certain level of educational content, with the experts imparting information on the food or the Elizabethan period more generally to viewers. In this way, it is typical of incarnations of the 'House' format on the BBC: other examples which maintain a high balance of specialist expertise, educational content and entertainment in this way include *Tales from the Green Valley* and *Victorian Farm*. In these series, the subjects, re-enacting early modern and nineteenth-

century rural life respectively, are constituted from a group of experimental archaeologists and historians. They thus combine elements of education (teaching viewers about daily life in various historical periods) with entertainment (watching the presenters struggle with old machinery or farming techniques, anticipating whether a certain recipe will work, and hearing their personal accounts of the advantages and disadvantages of their adopted lifestyle).

This combination of documentary and reality is currently popular with broadcasters. One reason for this is that it boosts the viewing figures from those which 'straight' history series can expect to achieve. For example, according to the industry viewing-figures journal, *Broadcast*, the *Victorian Farm* gained audiences of up to 3.8 million ('Latest News'). Andrew Marr's *The Making of Modern Britain* (a more traditional multi-part documentary series) launched with 2.2 million viewers. To put these figures into further perspective, they must be compared with reality TV series such as *X-Factor* and *I'm a Celebrity*, whose millions of viewers were regularly in double figures ('Latest News').

Part-documentary and part-reality television, the *Supersizers* series can similarly be understood to fit within the television genre of 'infotainment', a term of American origin which refers to 'broadcast material which seeks to inform and entertain simultaneously; information presented in an entertaining way' (*OED*). This description of the genre reads like a tailor-made programming solution for the BBC, charged as it is with the multiple duties of informing, educating and entertaining the nation's public.

Indeed, the choice of title for the series communicates to prospective viewers that it contains all these elements through its multi-layered intertextual references to the popular film from the genre, *Super Size Me*. The term 'supersize', used as an adjective or noun, to

describe 'a person or thing that is extremely large – often a commercial product available in a larger than standard size' – is recorded by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as emerging in early twentieth-century American journalism. However, the definition of super-size as a verb in the *OED* appeared as a draft entry only as recently as 2004. It is recorded as a transitive verb meaning 'to increase the size of, esp. to extravagant proportions. Originally in the fast-food industry'. Two of the three citations given make a connection with McDonald's and their campaign to 'encourage patrons to trade up with the words "Super Size It!"' (*OED*).

This slogan was adapted satirically by the 2004 film *Super Size Me* in which Morgan Spurlock (director, writer and star of the film) and a medical team explored the impact of a fast food diet on his health through an autoethnographic experiment of consumption. The term connotes not only the request a consumer at McDonald's might make in ordering their meal but also the physically expanding self Spurlock experiences as a result of his research. The BBC's re-appropriation of the term for their series, *The Supersizers Go...*, thus provides some intertextual clues for its potential audience about the content and style of the shows: that they involve a reality television element in which the documentary-makers record the impact of historical diets upon themselves. The re-appropriation also invokes a presumption that the food featured will be generous in quantity (the tagline for *Super Size Me* was 'a film of epic portions') and that the effect of its consumption may be deleterious. As well as the expectation of a serious exploration of dietary health at the programme's core, *The Supersizers Go...* also seeks to recall both the popularity of the multi-award-winning film, which is classed as both comedy and documentary on the Internet Movie Database (IMDb) website ('Super Size Me').

Thus the use of 'supersizers' in the title of the BBC series implies that it has both entertainment and educational value. Its appropriation transfers a sense of both mock reverence for and part-humorous interrogation of institutions from McDonald's to the discipline of history and, as I will demonstrate later, the figure and works of Shakespeare. The promise of intertwined impiety and information is followed through in the content and style of each episode. Ways in which *The Supersizers Go...* seeks to educate includes the use of professional chefs, historians, and medical doctors to construct a narrative with expert cachet. However, it is simultaneously entertaining in the playful way that it handles and/or invokes the 'authentic' and the 'factual'. For instance, although costumed in period-appropriate dress for each of the programmes, Perkins wears her twenty-first century spectacles throughout the series. Much of the programme's humour is dependent on this mis-match between the past and present, in terms of speech, comportment and social mores as well as appearance. Thus education and entertainment co-exist throughout, blurring into one another – a tactic which seems designed to ensure the audience's attention is held throughout.

The Shakespeare Code episode of *Dr Who* was the second episode in the third 'new' series of the show. It was first broadcast on Saturday 7 April 2007, coinciding with Easter weekend, which (along with Christmas) traditionally draws large audience numbers and spurs the main stations into a competition for viewers: the BBC was successfully competitive, with the episode attracting an estimated 6.8 million viewers ('Fact File'). There are few peak-hour sci-fi shows to compare this with, but a survey of ratings on the website *Broadcast* suggests that serialised dramas of an equivalent length, similarly aimed at a family audience, and shown on weekend evenings, on BBC and ITV free-to-air channels generally draw between three

and five million viewers (for Channel 4 drama the figures are significantly lower) ('Latest News' 2010).

In this episode, The Doctor and his assistant, Martha, travel back in time to London in 1599 and attend a performance of *Love's Labour's Lost* at the Globe – a performance which ends with Shakespeare promising on stage to deliver a sequel, *Love's Labour's Won*⁵⁴. Martha piques the Doctor's curiosity when she asks him why she has not heard of this play. Unsure of the answer, he decides to investigate. This leads to their encounters with (a shamelessly flirtatious) Shakespeare and the discovery of a plot, already in progress, by the witches (Carrionites) to place a code name in the play's closing speeches by bewitching Shakespeare during the writing process. Doctor Who and Martha learn that when the tampered speech is enacted, it will enable the rest of the Carrionite species to invade Earth, supplanting the human race. Despite their attempts to halt the play's performance, it goes ahead. The crisis is only averted by Shakespeare's improvised use of what the Doctor terms 'powerful words' – and Martha's suggestion of the spell word 'expelliarmus' from the *Harry Potter* books. The audience applaud the battle between Shakespeare and the Carrionites, believing it to be part of the show's 'special effects', but the script is lost in the fracas. The next morning, Queen Elizabeth I appears threatening to execute the Doctor, who flees for the safety of the TARDIS with Martha.

Like *The Supersizers*, intertextual references have been built into *The Shakespeare Code* episode which give it credibility and recognition among its intended audience. Again, they involve not Shakespeare, but one of the most popular books (and film adaptations) of recent

⁵⁴ Even the choice of date for the episode, 1599, seems to have been geared around the audience's popular culture knowledge of Shakespeare, given James Shapiro's widely selling biography of Shakespeare's life focused on that same year.

years. Commentary available on the BBC podcast for the episode states that, while originally titled 'Love's Labour's Won', it was re-titled 'The Shakespeare Code' in reference to the best-selling thriller, by Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code* ('Episode 2'). This decision suggests that the connotation to that novel's themes of conspiracy and code-breaking, shared by this *Dr Who* episode, was placed at higher value than the connection to Shakespeare's lost play and its promised romantic subject. In summary, intertextual references are at work in both programmes in a way that highlights their belonging to various forms of popular entertainment (films and best-seller novels), arguably over their educational content. Having outlined these programmes and established the way in which they blend entertainment and education in dealing with Shakespeare, the remainder of the chapter considers in detail the way in which ideas from education and the academy inflect these examples of popular culture.

5.4 Shakespeare as father, and skilful user of, the English language

One of the values of Shakespeare represented in popular culture is his perceived role as father and skilful user of, the English language. Chapters throughout this thesis have already made reference to the treatment of this construct as an inherent value of Shakespeare. In chapter one, Shakespeare was seen to be associated with teaching school students to understand the evolution of the English language in the *Kingman* and *Cox Reports* (and, through the latter, the National Curriculum). Chapter two showed that Shakespeare's image as a role-model for the use of English helped secure his place on the National Curriculum in line with agendas for raising standards more widely. Chapters three and four suggested that pedagogic literature and education department activities encompass the contradictory stances that Shakespeare's language is a barrier to learning but also a treasured part of the

experience. Haddon, for instance, suggests that engagement and enjoyment, leading into multiple awarenesses, are objectives for teaching Shakespeare and that 'Among these [consciousnesses] is a discovery of a language which simply says more, which suddenly engages with, articulates or brings into existence our sense of something' (180-81). For Gibson, Shakespeare's skilful use of language is valuable not only for its own beauty, but as a tool for developing readers' capacities for written expression: 'Shakespeare's language is both a model and a resource for students. In its blend of formality and flexibility it offers unlimited opportunities for students' own linguistic growth' (*Teaching Shakespeare* 5).

This value of Shakespeare as a true craftsman working with the English language is evident beyond formal schooling, in the work of theatre education departments. I demonstrated in chapter four that Shakespearean insults exercises are used by both the RSC and SBT to introduce younger students to his linguistic creativity. The RSC education department also uses them explicitly to affirm Shakespeare's value as the father of the English language. In its 'Stand up for Shakespeare' assembly, 'What has Shakespeare ever done for us?', the organisation answers that question by stating that 'he gave us language' and points to our dependence on Shakespeare for certain descriptive expressions: 'Well, you couldn't have done *any* of these things without William Shakespeare – because he invented all these words' (*What has Shakespeare ever done...?* 2). Used here as a way of motivating children to value Shakespeare in education, the RSC's rhetoric derives from the journalism of Bernard Levin, based on citations of Shakespeare in the *OED*. His passage on quoting Shakespeare – which ends 'if you wish I was dead as a door-nail, if you think I am an eyesore, a laughing stock, the devil incarnate, a stony-hearted villain, bloody-minded or a blinking idiot, then – by Jove! O Lord! Tut tut! For goodness' sake! What the dickens! But me no buts! – it is all

one to me, for you are quoting Shakespeare' – is embodied in popular culture, emblazoned on the tea towels and posters available in heritage and theatre gift shops. A book of Shakespearean idiom is one of the bestsellers at the SBT. All of this builds on the fact that Shakespeare is frequently identified as the first known user, and therefore possibly inventor, of thousands of words by contributors to the *OED* – although Shakespeare's position may be overstated here because editions of his works were more readily accessible to its nineteenth-century founders than those of his fellow sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers⁵⁵. Thus, the value for Shakespeare as father and skilful user of the language is demonstrably held by policy-makers, education writers and practitioners, heritage organisations and dictionary editors.

The celebration of Shakespeare's value as that of a wordsmith, evident here, is also taken up in television programmes which feature his life, works and times. The dialogue in *The Supersizers* appropriates some of the spirit of Levin in compiling endless quotations. It is more banal, however, in that it lacks a well-defined role within the programme, whereas Levin's mass of quotations is key to his rhetoric about Shakespeare's impact on the language. *The Supersizers* also adds a parodic twist which punctures Levin's reverence (he concludes by arguing that Shakespeare's 'mind is an instrument of such stupendous understanding, depth and creativity that it towers over the human race' 168). In addition to the use of language from or invoking *The Taming of the Shrew* which is deployed as part of Coren's depiction of himself as a hen-pecked husband, the programme includes a joke about eating 'cheek by jowl' when tucking into a lamb's head (*Midsummer Night's Dream* III. ii.

⁵⁵ This position is taken and explained in greater detail by Schafer (1980).

339⁵⁶); a sarcastic ‘hey nonny, nonny’ about losing weight due to distaste for the Elizabethan diet (*Hamlet* IV.v.166); and Perkins’ witty description of Coren’s codpiece as ‘basically all sound and fury signifying nothing’ (*Macbeth* V.v.26-27) – part of her shrewish characterisation.

These examples represent the extent to which the show values Shakespeare as father of the English language. Although they work in part to construct Shakespeare as an authority on everyday life (see also 5.6) and to orient the viewer into the historical period (as part of the oral/aural texture or soundscape of Elizabethan life), the quotations from his plays in *The Supersizers* function overwhelming to amuse rather than educate. Perhaps dealing with etymology and semantics is considered too close to work on Shakespeare in formal education, potentially upsetting the show’s infotainment balance of fact and fun. More pragmatically, detailed analysis of the influence of Shakespeare on the English we speak today would be beyond the remit of a show about Elizabethan diet. Instead, the show’s references to Shakespeare provide a platform for humour. Rather than revering Shakespeare as a solemn progenitor of our language, *The Supersizers* emphasises that at least some of Shakespeare’s value resides in the laughter which, in certain contexts and with certain manipulation, his most mundane words, most tragic phrases, can evoke.

Like *The Supersizers Go Elizabethan*, references to Shakespeare in *The Shakespeare Code* are sometimes parodic. They also demonstrate what Annalisa Castaldo has termed the ‘cultural authority’ of the Doctor (who does most of the quoting) and the ‘cultural literacy’ of the audience – reinforcing these quotes as a ‘network of knowledge’ which viewers should possess (411-413). *The Shakespeare Code*’s writers work into its script a host of Shakespeare

⁵⁶ All quotations from Shakespeare in this chapter are taken from *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works* (Wells and Taylor), unless otherwise specified.

quotations. As the Doctor's TARDIS arrives into London, he remarks to Martha 'outside this door, a brave new world', citing *The Tempest* (V.i.186). Additionally, this quotation connotes Aldous Huxley's citing of Shakespeare in the title of his science-fiction masterpiece – creating an underlying connection between the genre and content of the show. Later on, as the Doctor coaxes information from a victim of the Carronites, he comforts them saying 'it was just a story, a winter's tale'; a witch warns human-kind to 'watch this world become a blasted heath', inverting Macbeth's use of the phrase 'blasted heath' to the witches (I.iii.75). Such use of Shakespeare's words confers some kudos on the characters and script writers of the show. It also tests the audience's cultural literacy and allows for self-congratulation from viewers who spot the quotations. At the same time, the panoply of sources for references in the episode, which include *Harry Potter* and the poetry of Dylan Thomas, also ensures that the show connects with its audience – supposedly more mainstream, family- and child-oriented than that of *The Supersizers Go*, a show originally devised for 'an overtly high-brow arts-and-ideas-focused channel' (Greenhalgh 656).

The character of the Doctor does not merely use the author's words, something which he has done in numerous other episodes. Rather, he overtly praises them, like Levin, as Shakespeare's strength as a writer – a value of Shakespeare integral to the plot of this episode as well as our culture. There is an overt celebration of the playwright's linguistic skill in the show's premise that only *his* 'powerful words' can prevent the destruction of the earth by the Carrionites. The Doctor comments to Shakespeare, 'You can change people's minds with words'. Later, he presses the playwright further on his powers: 'When you're locked in your room, the words just come, don't they? Like magic. Words: the right shape, the right sound, the right rhythm. Words that last forever. That's what you do Will, you

choose perfect words'. The Doctor also refers to him as 'the wordsmith' and explains to Martha, 'He always chooses the best words: new, beautiful, brilliant words'. A similar sentiment is expressed elsewhere, with the Doctor referring to Shakespeare's language as 'new words and glittering, from a mind like no other'. Such comments confer cultural authority both on the Doctor, for recognising Shakespeare's talent, and on Shakespeare, as the object of such praise. The almost-hyperbolic praise also functions to reinforce the trademark intensity which is part of the Doctor's character (offering a contrast to his aloof and flippant moods).

However, this potential sycophancy, on the part of the Doctor, is balanced with contrary suggestions throughout that Shakespeare's linguistic genius is derivative: gained from the witches' spell and gleaned from the Doctor, referring back to their encounters in previous episodes. This is evidenced in the exchanges below:

Shakespeare: Why this constant performance of yours?

Dr Who: All the world's as stage.

Shakespeare: I might use that.

Dr Who: *Love's Labour's Won*: It's a weapon. The right combination of words, spoken in the right place, with the shape of the Globe as an energy converter. The play's the thing. And, yes, you can have that

The Doctor feeds to Shakespeare lines which he supposedly has not yet written, or even thought of, but which the audience is well aware constitute, in part, his fame. Even more humour is added when Shakespeare rebuffs his own iconic line from *Hamlet*; when he finally

recognises that the Doctor is quoting a line from one of his plays, *Henry V*; and when the Doctor deflects him from 'plagiarising' Dylan Thomas⁵⁷.

Shakespeare: To be, or not to be?

Dr Who: You should write that down.

Shakespeare: Maybe not...bit pretentious.

Dr Who: Once more unto the breach.

Shakespeare: I like that. Wait a minute. It's one of mine.

Dr Who: Rage, rage, against the dying of the light.

Shakespeare: I'll use that.

Dr Who: You can't. It's somebody else's.

There is some added irony in these exchanges for viewing Shakespeare scholars, who can reflect on the fact that a phrase being 'somebody else's' would not necessarily prevent an Elizabethan playwright from adding it to their own work. Indeed, Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence* suggests that Early Modern literary culture actively encouraged writers to re-work each other's materials. It could also be a conscious reference to the authorship debate from the show's writer, Russell T. Davies. I have argued elsewhere that this is one of the most popular 'knowledges' about Shakespeare. Additionally, it can be understood as extending an existing popular trope which seems to question Shakespeare's linguistic creativity. For instance, in *Shakespeare in Love* (which this episode of *Dr Who* echoes visually, with scenes of Shakespeare writing in a garret and leading his actors in rehearsal) Will seizes on overheard lines for use in his own work.

Adding yet another layer to the exchange of quotations between Shakespeare and the Doctor for those viewing the episode recently is the fact that, since it was first broadcast,

⁵⁷ The episode's researchers clearly chose plays to quote from with some care. Wells and Taylor date the writing of *Henry V* to Spring 1599 (509). *As You Like It* appears in the Stationer's Register in 1600 and *The Revenge of Hamlet Prince [of] Denmark* in 1602 (627, 653).

David Tennant has played Hamlet for the RSC, attracting widespread publicity (although he had already played other Shakespearean roles for the company, including Romeo). Shakespeare is thus quoted in this episode by the character of Shakespeare and the character of the Doctor, who is also a Shakespearean actor. If there is a point to be taken from this layering up of quotation – apart from seeing it as a typical display of wit from Davies – it might be that Shakespeare is on everyone’s tongues and that his users make it him their own.

Viewers are again invited to reconsider Shakespeare’s status as a supremely talented user of English, when his creative fallibility is ‘exposed’ during the episode. For instance, Martha asks of the audience’s reaction to the real on-stage battle: ‘Do they think it’s special effects’, to which Shakespeare flirtatiously replies ‘Your effect is special indeed’, only to receive Martha’s retort, ‘That’s not one of your best lines’. The two also swap jokes, which prove equally impenetrable to the other. Shakespeare quips, ‘a heart for a hart, a dear for a deer’, while Martha offers up ‘Shakespeare walks into the pub, and the landlord says, “you’re barred”’. This exchange can be interpreted as an insightful comment on language change by the scriptwriters, suggesting that Shakespeare would feel as isolated from our modern use of language (and from his reputation as ‘the Bard’) as many readers feel from his Early Modern plays.

Overall, Shakespeare’s linguistic stumblings in this episode force a tongue-in-cheek cultural reconsideration of Shakespeare as inventor of the English language, momentarily devaluing him and simultaneously reinforcing his cultural status as a subject worthy of parody. Part of a long-tradition, or ‘cultural genealogy’ (Desmet 233), of Shakespearean parody, the episode can be understood as involving the programme-makers and playwright in an act of

Bakhtinian dialogism, rather than a struggle for dominance. This dialogic, whereby works continually inform and are informed by each other in addition to supporting or challenging each other, 'helps sustain Shakespeare's cultural pre-eminence as much as it reveals fissures within it' (Greenhalgh 664). Moreover, his value as a father and skilled user of the language helps constitute other values for Shakespeare in popular culture, and the academy. For instance, I will explore his portrayal as a genius later in this chapter.

5.5 Shakespeare's universality

Assumptions of the value of Shakespeare's universality (his ability to speak to people of all ages, nationalities, across historical periods), by policy-makers, educators, theatre and heritage departments, have pervaded much of the writing analysed in this thesis. In chapter two, Shakespeare's universality was seen to fit with broader political agendas for social inclusion. His universality is a quality which underpins early twentieth-century literary criticism's approach to the value of Shakespeare's plays as a matter of unearthing the plays' truisms through close reading of the text. I demonstrated the way in which a great quantity of pedagogic literature (and logically classroom practice) continues to be inflected with these notions, despite being challenged by contextual approaches, in chapter three. For instance, Katherine Armstrong and Graham Atkin's assertion that 'through studying Shakespeare we learn about society, the ways individuals behave' assumes an ahistorical approach to society and behaviour (3). For the theatre education departments analysed in chapter four, notions of his universality testify to the continuing relevance of teaching his works. The RSC, for instance, writes that 'Shakespeare's plays are still performed today because he wrote about issues and ideas that are still relevant today. People are still driven by ambition like Macbeth, and they still fall in love at first sight like Romeo and Juliet' (*What has Shakespeare*

ever done...? 8). Shakespeare's universality is invoked in a plethora of academic writing. It also relates to Jan Kott's idea of Shakespeare as 'our contemporary', the Presentist movement, and Gibson's concept of the playwright's 'abiding themes'. This phrase is informed by a Jonsonian notion that Shakespeare, uniquely among his peers (and, it is sometimes suggested, among all other writers), composed works which transcend differences in historical period, geography, and gender to be for all people, 'for all time' (*Teaching Shakespeare*). Across these models, Shakespeare is held up as universally provocative: 'Shakespeare's plays are so rich that in every age they can produce fresh meanings' (Cox *Cox on Cox* 82). He is presented to us as continually powerful, versatile, and as having an extensive understanding of and sympathy for the mundane experiences and concerns of today's population: from how we treat our partners to our relationships with food and alcohol.

Although this value has been critiqued in recent decades by cultural materialists and new historicists who suggest that he is better understood in terms of his social and historical situatedness, *The Shakespeare Code* draws sporadically on a model of similarity between Shakespeare's times and our own very early in the episode. Walking through the streets of London, the Doctor remarks that there was 'popular entertainment for the masses [referring to the Globe] containing the man himself'. He adds,

You'll be surprised. Elizabethan England. Not so different from your time. Look over there, they've got recycling [points to a man shovelling dung into a bucket]. Water cooler moment [two men talk over a barrel]. Global warming [a priest they pass warns that 'the earth will be consumed by flames'].

Not delving into the plays, the programme constructs universalities, or, perhaps more realistically, analogies, between historic periods, and between modern forms of entertainment and the plays which Shakespeare acted in and penned.

However, this evaluation of the relationship between past and present is by no means the only one constructed in the episode. The programmes do also highlight the differences between the Early Modern period and today. For example, apparent reference is made to the work undertaken in academia on post-colonial theory, or at the very least to modern notions of political correctness and equal opportunity, which situates Shakespeare firmly in an early modern historical context. For example, scriptwriters play with Shakespeare's response to Martha, played by an Afro-British actress. He asks the Doctor, 'who is your delicious Blackamoor lady?' Martha, stunned, asks 'what did you say?' eliciting Shakespeare's response, 'Whoops, isn't that a word we use nowadays? An Ethiop girl? A swab? A Queen of Afric?' The Doctor cuts in, 'It's political correctness gone mad, Martha's from a far off land' – a reference not only to her ethnic origin but also to her temporal dislocation from Shakespeare's England. The Doctor's comments neither quite condone Shakespeare's use of common Early Modern racial discourse nor attempt to apply our social standards retrospectively. It is ambiguous as to whether he is dismissing modern mores or Shakespeare's attitudes as ridiculous. Rather the programme exposes the uncomfortableness (and, perhaps, even the risqué humour) of this collision of Shakespeare's and Martha's different world views, as informed by their different historical contexts and racial origins⁵⁸. Thus in *The Shakespeare Code*, contradictory academic positions on

⁵⁸ Holderness has also suggested that Martha is constructed here as the inspiration for Shakespeare's Dark Lady (Author! Author! 18).

Shakespeare, his life and times, co-exist. They are offered to the audience as a series of alternative viewpoints, but remain ultimately unexamined and unresolved.

In my other key programme in this chapter, *The Supersizers*, references to Shakespeare as 'our contemporary' are fewer but, in contrast to *The Shakespeare Code*, they are play- and character-specific. An example of this is one of Coren's voiceovers: 'Day six and we're going to carry on the gluttony in the spirit of one of Shakespeare's best loved comic characters. Falstaff was a fat, drunken, lecherous lay-about who idled his time away in taverns. *My kind of guy*' (my emphasis). Here, Shakespeare's character is described as someone a modern-day man like Coren can empathise with, whose desires and pastimes resonate with Coren, and who, were he real, could even be appropriated as a friend.

It is tempting to see the otherwise absence of references to Shakespeare's universality or contemporariness as a result of the programme having been touched by critical theory debates (especially new historicist, cultural materialist, feminist and post-colonialist) in academia. Such theories were supposed to have shattered the myths of 'universality' and 'truth' inhering in literature, exposing them as homogenising, self-serving white, male, middle-class, imperialist impositions (Joughin 21, Sinfield 135-38). McEvoy argues that this once-radical view has now penetrated school education: 'The new AOs have at least partially undermined the notion of a universal genius existing outside history' (111, see also 3.6).

A more obvious explanation, however, emanates from the genre of the show which draws, in part, on historical documentary. Shakespeare in *The Supersizers*, like the food it features, is necessarily being historicised: represented as something old, strange and different. In an article for *The Times*, Coren describes the 'age of Shakespeare' as:

the earliest period into which we lunged, and the most immediately shocking. For a start, I was dressed in big, puffy knee-length trunk hose and tights with a giant codpiece, all attached to my doublet so that I couldn't wee without getting totally naked: less of a problem than you might think, since I wasn't drinking a single cup of tea or coffee, neither having yet arrived in England.

It is Shakespeare's Elizabethan specificity rather than his universality which is prized by this piece of programming.

Both programmes are invested in travelling back, through science-fiction or historical re-enactment, to Shakespearean England. This orientation goes some way towards explaining why they are ambivalent about the value of Shakespeare's universality: if Shakespeare is truly universal why the frequent need or desire to revisit him in his early modern setting? In presenting this ambiguity, the programmes refuse notions of universality which are constantly pressed upon readers in, for example, the type of academic writing which reiterates received wisdoms, such as 'his works continue to reverberate' (Burnett and Wray 1), without problematising them. What these programmes instead suggest about Shakespeare's value today is far narrower, more fragmented, relative and pragmatic: that we perceive continuities between Shakespearean and modern forms of entertainment, of elements of daily life. This is to say, that some of his characters, or most quotable phrases, resonate with some of us, some of the time. Invoking Shakespeare's universality only as one of many tropes about his place in our society, the programme-makers can be seen as presenting a challenge to once-dominant liberal humanist notions of Shakespeare's universal value.

5.6 Shakespeare as an authority

The idea of Shakespeare's value as an authority on life has been partly underpinned in education by ideas about the power of literature to contribute to our moral growth, as seen in the writing of Arnold, Newbolt and Leavis. Shakespeare is also presented as a widely accepted source of skill and a superior role-model for writing. Newbolt figures him as 'our greatest English writer' with 'wonderful powers' of story-telling and characterisation added to his 'incomparable mastery of word-music' (311-313). Simultaneously, writers such as Shakespeare confer authority onto their readers, through inducting them into a shared knowledge, 'the most direct and lasting communication of experience by man to men' (Newbolt 9). In the modern education system, students' claims to this authority are policed by assessing them on their ability to respond to Shakespearean texts as well as their own creative writing endeavours.

The sense in which Shakespeare constitutes an authority in the education sector (university, in particular) has been put into question by critical theories such as postcolonialism and feminism, which indict Shakespearean representations of race and gender. Cox, for instance, acknowledges challenges to the value of the institutionalisation of 'a literature whose main non-white representatives are Othello, Man Friday in *Robinson Crusoe* and the savages in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*' (Cox on Cox 71). Representing this line of thinking, several theories effectively further diminish the value of Shakespeare's authority by deconstructing the way in which his pre-eminence is socially and culturally constructed by institutions, from the ruling classes of imperial Britain setting Shakespeare questions in civil service examinations to the public funding of the Royal Shakespeare Company, which is 'committed to the regular revival of all his works' (Bate *The Genius of Shakespeare* ix).

Such scepticism concerning Shakespeare's authority is reflected in the twenty-first century treatments of him in *The Shakespeare Code* and *The Supersizers Go Elizabethan*. Reverent attitudes towards Shakespeare's weightiness are critiqued in the former, since although he is touted by the Doctor as the person best equipped with the skills of word-creativity to stop the witches, his powers nearly fail him: Martha has to come up with the final flourish. The authority of his writing is also questioned by one of his actors who, skimming through the script (which, unknown to him, has been written in part by the witches), says: 'You seen the last bit? Must've been dozing off when he wrote that. I don't even know what it means'. Upon this another actor chimes in, 'That goes for most of his stuff'. This humorous depiction of Shakespeare's inability to convey his meaning is clearly inviting empathy from an audience who may themselves have struggled to see, what is held up as, Shakespeare's wisdom through his alien language.

In *The Supersizers Go Elizabethan*, the authority of Shakespeare's 'knowledge' about women, especially shrewish, wifely behaviour becomes the basis for parodying misogynist attitudes, with Coren pretending to derive his understanding of marital relations, relations between the sexes, from *The Taming of the Shrew*. For comic effect, he deliberately misunderstands Shakespeare's play as a literal guide to, rather than representation of, managing women and attempts to apply its 'wisdom' to his on-screen 'wife'/fellow presenter. This has the initial effect of rendering Shakespeare's 'authority' rather unpalatable to those with modern, feminist sensibilities, although Coren's attempts to 'tame' Perkins are always rebutted with her wit. In addition to evoking early scenes from the play, her behaviour in turn exposes his Shakespeare-derived notions as outdated and unacceptable to a twenty-first century woman only playing at the role of an early modern lady (and, indeed, at heterosexuality).

In contrast to the humorous debasement of Shakespeare's authority above, on a rare, serious note, Coren anticipates a banquet he and Perkins are hosting in a voiceover which constructs Shakespeare as the source of knowledge, the authority, on Elizabethan dining: 'You always have this idea of great feasts that you read about in Shakespeare'. However, as we see later, Coren finds the food unappetising to his modern palate and inedible. Whereas reading Shakespeare for knowledge about female behaviour provided a comic disconnect between ostensibly old and modern views, plays and realities, here the disconnect between Shakespeare's representation of feasting and the reconstructed 'reality' of it produces disappointment. Reading Shakespeare as an authority on food is shown to be problematic, his descriptions untrustworthy. Thus in both these programmes, expectations of Shakespeare as a figure of authority, whom people turn to for knowledge, opinions or skills, are represented. However, his authority is shown to be frequently fallible – in part because people's expectations of him are unfeasible. That is to say, they read his plays as translations of 'real' Elizabethan life rather than as dramatic works, whose representations of life are inevitably coloured by theatrical conventions, genres and so forth. Rather than accept their own lack of authority, in this misunderstanding of his work, this quality of unreliability is transferred across to Shakespeare in an act of comedic iconoclasm.

Despite casting Shakespeare himself as a problematic source of authority, *The Shakespeare Code* goes some way towards perpetuating his value in conferring authority onto those who hold knowledge about his works. The series' premise relies on perpetuating esteem for its central character, Dr Who, as almost omniscient. Hence, the ability to quote, adapt and play with Shakespeare's words is, for example, used by the programme-makers as a marker of his intellectual superiority and beyond-human powers. Not only does it invite viewers to be

impressed at his knowledge directly, but it also communicates this desirable reaction to viewers through the responses of other characters – notably Martha, who often asks the Doctor for explanation or clarification of what she does not understand in relation to the bard's life and works.

Annalisa Castaldo's conception of quoting Shakespeare for 'cultural authority' suggests that Shakespearean references, in television programmes and other cultural products, also bestow authority on the genre and makers of the product (its writer, producer, financial backers and so on). As Terris explains: 'There are many reasons why television executives have produced Shakespeare on television, few of them related to a strong commitment to the beauty of his dramatic verse' (*Teaching Shakespeare* 207). This is increasingly evident in the small number of plays broadcast, compared to those which adapt Shakespeare into modern language, or focus on his biography or historical context (where snatches of his verse may make occasional appearances as, for example, evidence about Shakespeare's/early modern sexuality). Rather, Terris suggests that programmes involving Shakespeare 'are made to further personal ambition [and]...to gain ascendancy in franchise rivalries over cultural output, or as a filmed record of a stage production: almost all are made as an act of faith over the realities of economic projections' (207). Mark Thornton Burnett and Ramona Wray have tracked a similar function for Shakespeare in the film industry: 'Shakespeare's association with authority and authenticity are the cues for film production' (8). The value of Shakespeare as a cultural authority, these writers suggest, is widespread across the cultural industries.

In addition to Terris, Susan Greenhalgh has tracked this particular value of Shakespeare in detail with regard to the history of the BBC. She highlights the number of Shakespeare-

related productions which, like the *Dr Who* episode, still ‘bear the BBC logo’ and are produced ‘in-house’ (Greenhalgh 654). Greenhalgh even argues that the BBC sees itself as having ‘the potential to be the modern equivalent of Shakespeare’ (655). That is to say, as becoming a cultural authority in its own right. Logically, the authoritative Shakespeare invoked here is one available and accessible to a mass popular audience, rather than a feared literary object perceived to be elite or irrelevant.

The discussion of Shakespeare on television so far has focussed on the positive value of his authority: the way in which knowledge of the playwright confers intelligence and taste onto consumers/viewers as well as the individuals and institutions behind the product/programme⁵⁹. However, also pronounced in *The Supersizers* is a more negative sense in which being an authority on Shakespeare, randomly and sometimes gratuitously quoting or referencing his works, can be devalued as ‘showing off’. This is evident in the following exchanges:

[*Taming of the Shrew* is invoked by Coren in an argument between him and Perkins over the ingredients of a custard].

Perkins: [sarcastically] What is this? Just name some plays? *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *All’s Well that Ends Well*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

Perkins: ...the faded, jaded nature of Tudor masculinity. [Points to codpiece] That, basically, is ‘all sound and fury signifying nothing’.

Coren: [sarcastically, childish tone] Ooh, she can quote Shakespeare.

In the first example, Perkins trumps Coren’s attempt to establish himself as an authority with a list of plays to match his reference to a single play. Moreover, most of the plays she names are among the more obscure of the Shakespeare canon, less often acted, less well known –

⁵⁹ The developments of intelligence and taste have long been deemed two of the goals of education, discussed in chapter one. Although the explicit cultivation of taste is now unfashionable it continues under other guises – New Labour’s development of the concept of ‘aspiration’, for example, featured in chapter two.

which in that moment shows her authority to be deeper, more specialist than his. In the second instance, her authority, the use of the quote from *Macbeth* (V.v.26-27), allows her to make a veiled joke about Coren's anatomy. Interestingly, it is her use of Shakespeare which Coren picks up on in his retort, rather than seeking to refute her slur directly. Quoting Shakespeare effectively enables Perkins, and disables Coren, on multiple levels: he is literally unmanned by her authority, even if it is only part of the pretend marital relationship between the two⁶⁰. He is reduced to ridiculing her skill with Shakespeare as not worthwhile – to denying that knowledge of his works has significant cultural or educational value – to win his battle. This incident thus offers a rare example, in this thesis, of Shakespeare's shared negative value in popular culture and education as Coren mimics a surly schoolboy disparaging his clever classmate.

5.7 Shakespeare as a genius

Contributing to the value of Shakespeare an authoritative figure, the author is also esteemed as a genius across academia and popular culture. This follows a tradition which emerged in the seventeenth-century, when, for example, Jonson figured Shakespeare as a guiding 'star' for other dramatists in his dedicatory poem to the First Folio. It flourished during the eighteenth-century under the influence of David Garrick, who termed him the 'blest genius of this isle' in his 'Ode' for the Stratford Jubilee (Vickers 345). Chapter two has already demonstrated the perceived educational value of this conception of Shakespeare. It argued that his place in the National Curriculum has been seen by policy-makers as a way of ensuring that his 'genius' becomes a model for students, a way of raising the standard of

⁶⁰ The fact that their staged battle of the sexes derives from the plot and characters of *Shrew* only heightens the sense in which Shakespeare is an authority on the trials of married life, presenting a (misogynist) version that exists in popular consciousness of, a truism about, 'how it is'.

their own work. His genius offers a way of explaining the worth of the National Curriculum in facilitating a socially-inclusive entitlement to the author's works in pedagogic literature: 'Every student is entitled to make the acquaintance of genius. Shakespeare remains a genius of outstanding significance in the development of English language, literature, and drama' (Gibson *Teaching Shakespeare* 6). Shakespeare's genius is also linked to (and ostensibly proven by) specific elements of his work, such as the richness of the texts and the seemingly endless possibilities for interpretation and performance (Peim 24, Taylor *Reinventing Shakespeare* 311). For Sinfield, such conceptions of Shakespeare's 'free-standing' genius have traditionally been reinforced in examination papers, disregarding the play's social context, past and present (140). This has, however, been somewhat undercut by the more recent assessment objectives for A-level discussed in chapter three. Indeed, that this configuration of Shakespeare's elite capacities may have been on the wane, at least in the Brown government's policy circles, is a suggestion strengthened by the absence of the term 'genius' from the National Strategy (DCSF).

In spite of critical theory's interrogation of Shakespeare's genius, some writers continue to expound its value. At the end of the twentieth century, Jonathan Bate – a prolific Shakespearean, writing for both academic and general audiences, the success of whose publications depends on winning round readers to believe in Shakespeare's unsurpassed brilliance – asserted that 'for the last two-hundred years only the wilfully perverse (and Tolstoy) have denied the validity of the opinion that Shakespeare was a genius' (*The Genius of Shakespeare* 157). Shakespeare's *undeniable* genius became central to the rationale underpinning Shakespeare's place in English education from the late 1880s onwards. Cyril Burt, a psychometric psychologist and eugenicist who contributed to several policy-making

reports on secondary education by the Board of Education from 1919 to 1938⁶¹ (Mazumdar 2004), argues that ‘No one, not even the most convinced egalitarian, would deny that a few outstanding personalities, like Shakespeare or Newton, are born geniuses’ (47). Interestingly, in the light of Sinfield’s comments demystifying old conceptions of Shakespeare’s genius as ‘free-standing’ (which instead place him within the context of Early Modern writing practices as well as contemporary cultural practices regarding literature), Burt was writing from the position of a researcher who fully, and controversially, believed that an individual’s intelligence was genetically and biologically pre-determined. Intelligence, was not, held Burt, influenced by children’s nurturing within the family and society as they grow. Exams requiring the analysis of a stand-alone Shakespeare text, for Burt, testify to both the writer’s and the successful candidate’s intellectual prowess. Bate and Burt echo each other, not only in name, but also in the way in which they use their rhetoric to assure us of Shakespeare’s inarguable, almost inalienable, genius: their statements leave little room for disagreement, unless one wants to be branded ‘wilfully perverse’ or radically left-wing.

Gary Taylor examines this phenomenon in *Reinventing Shakespeare*, adding the ‘foreign’, the ‘mad’ and rival poets (and playwrights, if we include G.B. Shaw among Shakespeare’s harshest critics) to the categories used to discredit those who question, even partially, Shakespeare’s genius (*Reinventing Shakespeare* 399-400). He adds that these writers ‘have generally been treated as though, by criticizing Shakespeare, they had made fools of themselves’ (399). Such treatment works to discourage dissent from the dominant idea of Shakespeare’s genius, since foolishness is not a quality which many people would court an

⁶¹ His ideas on intelligence testing, the relation of social inequality to a biological basis, and a meritocracy of intelligence coincided with the introduction of the tripartite education system in the UK. His work was later discredited owing to the falsification of evidence.

association with, especially when they could instead share in the refracted glory of Shakespeare's genius. It also works on a wider level as a kind of literary protectionism to safeguard his place in wider culture. For cultural conservatives, such measures are necessitated since, although Shakespeare is widely invoked from programmes to commercials, and lauded as a genius; high craftsman of the English language; an authority; and an epitome of national culture, he faces increasing competition, on many of these fronts, from other poets, playwrights and diverse forms of entertainment⁶². Parody, however, does escape the wrath traditionally heaped on dissenters from this myth. This is perhaps because parody must necessarily be rooted in common assumptions, 'known' facts, and clichéd beliefs and is therefore widely held to be a mechanism for perpetuating Shakespeare's genius in some form.

The rhetoric of Bate and Burt is the rhetoric of an enduring, popular tradition which found, indeed still finds, intense reinforcement in the realms of education (from schools to the academy), dominating over alternative models (such as Shakespeare's collaborative genius) and valuations of Shakespeare, and thus continues to saturate culture. Shakespeare is represented as a genius in popular culture, in ways that merge the trope of the brilliant, solitary master often applied to artists, inventors, poets and scholars, with that of the person endowed with super-powers of speed, resourcefulness and empathy. A popular subject of hero narratives from classical mythology to American comic book culture, the latter characters are often also 'loners', isolated from normal society by their powers (like Superman's Clark Kent). Despite being increasingly at odds with constructions of his working

⁶² Terris notes a definite, significant and declining trend in the broadcast of Shakespeare's plays on television, for example ('Shakespeare and British Television'). It remains to be seen whether the resurrection of television Shakespeare at Christmas 2009 was an anomaly or part of a changing trend.

methods from academic research, Shakespeare continues to be depicted as a lone genius in popular culture, often in a tongue-in-cheek manner. In *The Shakespeare Code*, the playwright retires to a candle-lit room in an alehouse, and, seated at a desk, prepares to spend the night dashing off a script for *Love's Labour's Won* – a scene which has strong visual parallels to the film *Shakespeare in Love*. Some sense of Shakespeare's genius as the product of interaction is generated as at other points throughout the episode, he displays his willingness to 'plagiarise' Dr Who's words (which are, unbeknownst to Shakespeare, his own). This is the only hint we have of Shakespeare's genius as collaborative – demonstrating that in culture, as in education, 'the myth of the solitary genius' still prevails, despite the writings of critics such as Jack Stillinger and Gary Taylor (*Cultural Selection* 55); the increasing emphasis on collaboration in editions; and the use of ensemble techniques in theatre productions.

Similarly, a recent commercial for the energy drink, Red Bull, depicts Shakespeare alone at his writing desk, working on the 'To be or not to be' soliloquy from *Hamlet*, aided only by a can of Red Bull. When he puts the can down, and it is cleared away by a maid, Shakespeare is stymied. His flow of words dries up. 'Genius does suffer without Red Bull', he opines ('Red Bull'). As with the *Dr Who* episode, the advertisement combines irony (perhaps his powers were not as naturally great as we have believed) with a degree of seriousness about Shakespeare's cultural authority and iconic talent. It is part of a series seemingly inspired by the notion of genius – another advertisement features Isaac Newton working on gravity. That Red Bull enhances intelligence seems a logical sales pitch for a drink enamoured of students cramming for exams or doing 'all-nighters' on their essays. Its use of easily recognisable, iconic figures is also a clever marketing ploy which allows its short

advertisements to make a quick impact on viewers⁶³. Regardless of its purpose, the advertisement is complicit in perpetuating a cultural myth about Shakespeare's working habits, and implicitly his genius. Moreover, it relies on a base level of knowledge about Shakespeare (or of Newton's experiments), provided by a national system of education, for recognition of its allusive nature and for people to 'get' the joke. As such, it further demonstrates the interdependence of culture and education.

Together with the solitary nature of his authorship, the idea that he was unusually prolific is central to constructions of Shakespeare's genius in both formal, school education and works which straddle the academic and popular divide. Gilmour declares, 'His output was prodigious' (5), while Armstong and Atkin write that students admire Shakespeare's range, a legacy of his large canon (10). In *The Genius of Shakespeare*, Bate has written 'that there is something out of the ordinary in Shakespeare's plays. That his powers of invention were astonishingly quick and wide' (Bate 157). Those who construct Shakespeare's superiority in this way do not seem to heed accusations that they are mythologizing him; that relative to his contemporary playwrights, authorship of thirty-seven plays could be deemed slender – if we consider seriously Thomas Heywood's claim in the preface to *The English Traveller* (1633) to have had 'an entire hand or at least a main finger in two hundred and twenty plays' (108). This comparison invites us to consider the way in which Shakespeare's genius can be problematised by contextualising him – whether by academics in terms of discussing other writers in the period or in popular culture with regards to the competition he faces from other cultural forms.

⁶³ The Shakespeare and Newton advertisements both run for thirty seconds.

In the programmes on which this chapter has focussed, however, apart from the authorship debate, concerns which cast Shakespeare's value as relative are frequently set aside in favour of celebrating his abundant output. In *The Supersizers Go Elizabethan*, Coren, summing up the Elizabethan diet, comments, 'I'm basically feeling in such fine fettle that I may well write thirty-seven very good plays in the next few weeks'. Thus he humorously attributes Shakespeare's quality and quantity of output to his dietary intake. The audience may laugh at the ridiculousness of the claim (since we have watched Coren and Perkins picking at their food, suffering minor ailments, feeling lethargic and quaffing large amounts of sack) but also perhaps in disbelief at the seemingly gargantuan scale of Shakespeare's own feat (notwithstanding its exaggeration here – Shakespeare took at least two decades, rather than two weeks, to produce his body of work). The joke simultaneously constructs and jests at Shakespeare the archetypal genius-author 'knocking out' play after play. A trope relating to Shakespeare's commercial productivity which has been identified elsewhere in popular culture (see Linnemann on the cartoon 'Shakespeare got to get paid, son' 100). Similarly, the intellect that could produce this volume of plays is held up as extraordinary in *The Shakespeare Code*, with Dr Who labelling Shakespeare, 'incredible', 'the one true genius', 'a mind like no other', 'the only man clever enough to do it [defeat the Carrionites]'.

To a greater degree than his intellectual powers, Shakespeare is held up in education as exemplifying unusual powers of feeling – as well as the power to stimulate emotional growth among his readers. 'Shakespeare can increase students' competence and confidence across the widest range of developmental possibilities...Shakespeare develops the understanding heart' (*Teaching Shakespeare* 5), writes Rex Gibson. The National Strategy document

contains at least five activities based on students identifying or imagining character's feelings (DCSF 12, 15, 10, 31, 37). Like this pedagogic literature, Dr Who portrays Shakespeare's emotional capacity as similarly outstanding. In talking of Shakespeare's reaction to his son Hamnet's death, he tells Martha that Shakespeare's grief was 'the grief of a genius, grief like no other', inspiring and elevating his work beyond that of his peers and successors. Shakespeare's understanding of emotions is conceived as producing an unmatched emotional realism, universality and verisimilitude in his characters. His characters, beyond those of other authors, are constructed as soliciting vast amounts of empathy from Shakespeare's audience and readers. In *The Supersizers Go Elizabethan*, Falstaff, for example, is idolised by Coren as 'my kind of guy' and by Perkins as 'one of Shakespeare's best loved characters', 'the one everyone quotes', 'the one everybody goes to see'. Falstaff is said to draw audience members to the play but also is shown to live beyond it in people's imaginations, identity and speech.

In summary, what the programmes deploy and constitute as Shakespeare's genius is his use of language (which invites others' appropriation of it), his intellect, his elevated emotions, his characters, the quantity and quality of his literary output. These elements of his work are also demonstrably admired among teachers and academics. Furthermore, it is these traits, which, as I have suggested already, many people historically, of diverse backgrounds, political dispositions and so forth, have sought to associate themselves with – to share some of the value of his genius through quotation and emulation, even parody. Hence the value of Shakespeare's genius is partly an impression of his largesse, his bountifulness, whether it enhances our entertainment or education (a point which I will return to in the following section and 6.2).

5.8 Shakespeare as the epitome of national culture

The phrase ‘England’s own timeless genius’ demonstrates the way in which three of the values attributed to the author are frequently figured as co-dependent (McEvoy 114). Having discussed representations of his universality and cognitive brilliance already, I will focus here on his portrayal as an (if not, *the*) epitome of English national culture. I concentrate predominantly on England, rather than Britain (in line with my focus on the English National Curriculum and in recognition of the heterogeneity of the countries within Great Britain), however mention of certain British institutions, for example the BBC, is unavoidable.

The value of Shakespeare’s quintessential Englishness has been identified as inhering in almost every facet of his work – from his characterisation to his use of the landscape, from his contributions to the genre of English history plays to the way that Shakespeare’s rhythms shape those of today’s English (Kingman 2:21). The *Kingman* and *Cox Reports* emphasise the value of Shakespeare in education as an epitome of, and the binding force for, our present national culture (see 2.4). His words and thoughts, they argue, shape not only the English language but also England’s cultural values and beliefs, the social lives of its citizens (Cox 18).

In pedagogic literature, rationales for studying Shakespeare are sometimes constructed in terms of his role as ‘a figurehead of Britain’s national identity’ (Armstrong and Atkin 8) and his place at the head of the evolution of a uniquely English linguistic, literary and dramatic tradition (Gibson *Teaching Shakespeare* 6). Haddon echoes this idea of the author as a repository of knowledge on English culture in writing an answer to his students’ question ‘why are we studying this [a Shakespeare play]?', that ‘we can argue truthfully that in the process of studying Shakespeare they will develop their knowledge of the English language, of literature and history’ (178). In relation to the last subject area, it has been widely

recognised that Shakespeare's rendering of history does not necessarily equate to historical fact – though this mismatch may in itself constitute a springboard for learning (Bullough). The features which make Shakespeare's writing characteristically English are more rarely detailed in educational literature. Moreover any such claims seem to problematise the widespread notions of his universality in pedagogic texts. Thus recent writing for older students and teachers makes reference to arguments that Shakespeare's unique place in the curriculum has more to do with 'tradition, national identity and ideological coercion than it has to do with his intrinsic literary merit' (Armstrong and Atkin 3). This assertion strengthens the argument of this section that Shakespeare is valued in education for his Englishness, while often simultaneously questioning the legitimacy of such a valuation.

Throughout the previous chapters, some of the popular titles which put Shakespeare at the forefront of 'our' 'national' culture have been evident: he is variously termed the 'national poet', 'the national playwright', the 'national author'. Patrick Cheney's *Shakespeare, National Poet-Playwright* combines these epithets in a work which reassesses the critical emphasis on Shakespeare as playwright to the neglect of, for example, his narrative poems. Such terms are also stock phrases used by the media in discussing Shakespeare-related news. Shakespeare also features in articles titled 'The Voice of a Nation' (Bostridge) and 'What is it to be English, today' (Shields)?

At the turn of the century, Radio Four's *Today* programme conducted a poll, the outcome of which named Shakespeare as the 'British Person of the Millennium'. This poll suggests the way in which a small but vocal group maintain Shakespeare's supremacy: 45,000 people voted (from a population of over 60 million), with Shakespeare beating Churchill to come first place with 11,717 votes (from a shortlist of six dead, white males). Constructions of

Shakespeare as the epitome of national culture and the foundation for an English education, in which an elite claim to speak for the majority, can be found in historic tourist guides and recent academic writing alike. William Salt Brassington promoted the value of Shakespeare's Englishness – and simultaneously maligned those who fail to realise this value – in his *Picturesque Warwickshire* (1906), stating

we feel sure that no English home is worthy of the name where a copy of Shakespeare's works cannot be found. To us these mighty poems represent the embodiment of our national spirit. They show us the path of virtue, and how evil-doing carries with it its Nemesis: they teach us patriotism, the love of our fellow-men, and our love of Nature. (Quoted in Hawkes *That Shakespearian Rag* 14)

Brassington's construction that an English home must include a copy of Shakespeare, is echoed strikingly in a passage by contemporary Shakespearean, Michael Dobson, who critiques the implication that to be British one must enjoy Shakespeare. He argues that from the mid-eighteenth century 'Shakespeare has been as normatively constitutive of British national identity as the drinking of afternoon tea'...'it is now probably as hard for any educated Briton to imagine not enjoying the former as it would be to imagine forgoing the latter' (7). His words expose the binding of nationality and patriotism to notions of cultural capital ('educated Briton') and to a pastime (taking 'afternoon tea') that is at least middle-, if not upper-, class and which may well be specific to older generations. It melds nostalgia for the lost golden age of Shakespeare (evidenced in the work of early twentieth-century critics such as E.M.W. Tillyard) with nostalgia for an idealised pre-Second World War society life, where cucumber sandwiches are eaten on the terrace.

Shakespeare as the epitome of national culture was among the values which, as shown in the first two chapters, motivated Cox and the Thatcher government to render study of his

works compulsory for schoolchildren. Shakespeare was positioned especially by this government as a solution to an allegedly fragmented national identity. Such attitudes to literature are also evident in earlier education policy. While Newbolt cautioned against teachers promulgating the notion of 'a sacred English institution called 'Shakespeare'', his report dedicates more space to Shakespeare than any other single author. Newbolt also wrote that 'For English children no form of literature can take precedence of English literature' (14) and asserted the 'unifying tendency' which the study of English literature would have on its people. The workings of such convictions are explained by John Drakakis, building on Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, who argues that "'Englishness" is a question of an imagined community whose fictive ethnicity is capable of being projected onto other cultures...[Shakespeare is] the site upon which the "nation" reaffirms its fictive ethnicity' (334). The Shakespeare canon combined with education policy, such as that produced by Newbolt and Cox provides the means to generate shared knowledges and beliefs, in this explanation of national culture-building.

Such hailing of Shakespeare as a national beacon both inside and outside the classroom, which mandates appreciation of his plays as a prerequisite of nationality, has been criticised by educators such as Nigel Wheale, who labels the rhetoric that supports it 'ignorant fundamentalism' and denounces Shakespeare's use in what he perceives to be a nationalist educational agenda as a 'defensive, backward-looking nostalgia for a small island with a supposedly "homogenous" racial identity' (27). The appropriation of Shakespeare in the past and present centuries 'by national institutions of education and interlocking cultural institutions' to serve nationalist, even allegedly authoritarian, agendas has been critiqued, especially by cultural materialists in the academy (Longhurst 71). Like Wheale, they read the

assertion of Shakespeare as the key stone of national culture as a symptom of a politics which finds class, racial and 'linguistic diversity threatening, a force to be contained or even eliminated' (Cameron and Bourne 151). They also highlight the way in which nationalist politics uses narratives of Shakespeare's iconic Englishness to rally citizens 'whether at the ballot box or on the battlefield' and 'to raise fundamental questions of just who belongs and who does not' (Samuel and Thompson 18).

Such ambivalence about lauding Shakespeare as an epitome of national culture, might explain why *The Shakespeare Code* refrains from making sweeping statements about his essential Englishness. Instead, Shakespeare is shown to be symbolically English through juxtaposition with other people and places connoting Englishness: *Harry Potter*, London, mundane oak-beamed pubs, landmark buildings such as stately homes, and Elizabeth I, not to forget Dr Who himself. According to a 'fact file' on the episode, Shakespeare and Elizabeth I previously appeared in the *Doctor Who* episode *The Chase*, where the Doctor watched Elizabeth giving the bard the idea for *Hamlet* on his 'time television', while in *City of Death* the Doctor claimed to have helped pen *Hamlet* after Shakespeare sprained his wrist writing sonnets ('Fact File'). Points of intersection between Shakespeare and Elizabeth can often be observed in such historically-themed programmes and many more items of popular culture besides. These imagined connections include Elizabeth watching a Shakespeare play, a trope deployed in myriad texts historically from *No Bed for Bacon* to *Shakespeare in Love*, and even the idea that 'Shakespeare' was Elizabeth's son, hinted at in Robert Nye's *The Late Mr Shakespeare* and espoused in Paul Streitz's *Oxford: Son of Queen Elizabeth I*⁶⁴. Clearly inspired by apocryphal stories of a meeting between the two, the figures have become

⁶⁴ For a more detailed survey of texts representing fictional relations between the playwright and the queen see Helen Hackett's *Shakespeare and Elizabeth: The Meeting of Two Myths*.

further fused together by the mutually nourishing status and celebrity they enjoy in English culture (e.g. as historical icons and epitomes of national culture).

Symbolic, almost stereotypical, English creations are pressed into service in a similar way in *The Supersizers Go Elizabethan*. Its sampling of 'Greensleeves' on the soundtrack is a curious choice: on one hand it is perhaps the most immediately recognisable piece of Early Modern music, with a mythologised connection to Henry VIII; on the other, it is only tenuously Shakespearean: Henrican music is elided with Elizabethan, which is in turn conflated with the Shakespearean. To complicate matters further, the version used is a punk reworking. This is suggestive of the programme's attempt to communicate its supposedly irreverent attitudes, to stand out from the tranche of Elizabethan documentaries.

The use of Handel's 'Zadok the Priest' in the soundtrack does at first seem even more problematically 'English'. Not only was it written over a century after Shakespeare's death but Handel, with his German origins and service of the House of Hanover, cannot claim quite the same salt-of-the-earth British pedigree as Shakespeare, with his family tree rooted firmly in the West Midland's Forest of Arden. 'Zadok', however, was written for George II's coronation as King of Great Britain and Ireland and has been used at all successive coronations thereby confirming both the piece and its composer as lynchpins of British society and establishment culture. Thus, through the programme's interweaving of figures and sounds associated with Englishness, with Shakespeare's plays and characters, Shakespeare (despite being, in *The Supersizers Go Elizabethan*, a subplot of a programme oriented around food) is continually established, and deployed throughout, as a common referent of national culture.

Moreover, it is notable that both these programmes establish Shakespeare's Englishness as a relative quality, unlike the absolute titles so often deployed to describe him. They thus put forward a collective Englishness made up of sights, sounds, people and places, in which Shakespeare's literature and language has a place, but not necessarily alone or at the pinnacle. In addition to being a part of this collective Englishness, I have suggested that Shakespeare can also stand-in, as a short-hand, for this identity (and others, such as, 'Early Modern'). Furthermore, the broadcasting of these programmes on the BBC is suggestive of a continuity in that institution's role from the Second World War onwards, discussed at the start of this chapter, as 'a means whereby components of social life, such as sports, royal ceremonials, [and] a national education system...were synthesized into something that could aptly be called a national culture, experienced as a sense of collective belonging', or for some, exclusion (Greenhalgh 655).

Shakespeare's value as an epitome of national culture in these programmes is, like the BBC's own value in that respect, pieced together from many and varied component parts and interconnections. This section, like the chapter as a whole, has demonstrated that while education and culture are saturated with broadly similar conceptions of Shakespeare's value, there is room within that for nuance, parody, and plurality. Indeed, Shakespeare's multitudinous nature and generosity in accommodating diverse values, and attitudes towards them (serious or parodic), has become apparent through this discussion of his representation in popular culture. In the final chapter, which concludes this thesis, I want to consider the implications of this multiplicity for the future of Shakespeare (see 6.2).

6. CONCLUSIONS ON THE VALUE OF SHAKESPEARE IN EDUCATION

The question which this thesis has sought to explore is that of how Shakespeare is valued in education. The question was further, and more narrowly, defined by the decision to concentrate on Shakespeare in the subject of English, in England, largely between the National Curriculum's implementation, in 1989, and 2009. The focus on the construction of the value of Shakespeare was opened out through the comparison of different sectors within education such as policy-making, pedagogic literature, and reported classroom practice in schools. It also included the educational provision of theatre and heritage organisations. Finally, the value of Shakespeare in popular culture was found to be closely related to his value in school education and academia, as well as being characterised by plurality.

In the first chapter, I contextualised the momentous rendering of Shakespeare as the only compulsory author in the National Curriculum for English within the nineteenth-century history of Shakespeare in the English classroom and the growth of English itself as a discipline. More recent context was provided through an examination of various twentieth-century critical definitions of Shakespeare. These were considered alongside perspectives on his value from governments and the cultural industries. I outlined the struggles over value involved in forming the National Curriculum. This included the Conservative impetus towards English as a repository of educational and cultural value.

Chapter two wove between meta-educational policy and micro-educational policy concerning Shakespeare to demonstrate again the impact of broader values (those of the Thatcher and New Labour governments) on Shakespeare in the National Curriculum. It focussed specifically on governments' agendas for skills, standards and social inclusion – a

triumvirate which dominates the hyperactivism in education policy over the last twenty years. I argued that Shakespeare as constituted by the National Curriculum is seen by both Labour and the Conservatives to support (or at least, not conflict with) agendas for skills and standards. In this sense their values can be seen to overlap in spite of their differing ideologies. Moreover, much of the education policy of the Conservative government during the late nineteen-eighties and early nineteen-nineties has demonstrably been substantially maintained but re-spun by the Labour government. True innovation in policy, I contended, is constrained by the weight of existing legislation and the nature of its evolution. However, where social inclusion is concerned, Shakespeare is viewed by the Conservative party as a solution to the perceived problem of cultural fragmentation – a way of implementing inclusiveness through a model of assimilation. Yet, for the Labour party, who envision achieving inclusion through diversity and multiculturalism, Shakespeare's supremacy (with its colonialist and chauvinist associations) posed a problem.

In chapter three, I demonstrated that the value of Shakespeare is informed by the situation of the pedagogies used to teach it within a wider network of values, influences and discourses from progressive education theory, the theatre sector, literary criticism, and government strategies (e.g. for cross-curricular learning). I discussed in detail three broad approaches: literary-critical, active and contextual. The first of these invokes Shakespeare's value by casting the playwright as the author of an inherently valuable set of literary texts, while the other two are predominantly concerned with the value of Shakespeare as a set of processes. All three approaches can be seen to derive from academic writing and research, among other influences. Although there is often a significant time lag between the publication and discussion of ideas in academia, and their implementation in pedagogy, once

arrived in the school sector their influence is long-lived. This pervasive influence, I have argued in the chapter, demands a renewed engagement between teachers and researchers in both sectors.

Poised between state education and popular cultural experiences of Shakespeare, the education departments of the RSC, the Globe and the SBT, were the concern of chapter four. I asserted here that the value of Shakespeare is constituted to an extent by its convergence with the value of two of the pedagogies featured in the previous chapter, active methods and contextual approaches, as well as with paradigms such as progressive educational theory. Moreover, each institution combines these approaches with the strengths of their activities or collections and their own institutional philosophy to produce a branded ethos around teaching Shakespeare. That is to say, they construct Shakespeare as being given value through *their* ideologies and pedagogies. In terms of their agency in constructing his value, they can be understood as cultural chemists. These organisations compete for supremacy in the Shakespeare education market, differentiating their educational provision of Shakespeare from other institutions in their sector and, indeed, with that offered in schools. Where it is perceived to be in their interest, however, these education departments variously reinforce the value of Shakespeare in schools or seek to negotiate it with other stakeholders such as the government, through campaigns such as the RSC's 'Stand up for Shakespeare'.

That Shakespeare is present in diverse forms of popular culture has been proved by much existing research. It is evident in clearly constructed (and often parodied) values including Shakespeare as the father and skilful user of the English language, as universal, an authority, a genius and an epitome of national culture. It has also been argued in previous research

that the value of Shakespeare in education is culturally saturated (Hawkes, Holderness, Bruner). This finding is corroborated in the evidence that this thesis has presented for the influence of larger cultural movements and individual cultural organisations on pedagogy for teaching Shakespeare (chapters three and four), or of the impact of political ideology in shaping the curriculum (chapters one and two). More excitingly, this chapter extended the existing literature by positing the idea that the value of Shakespeare in culture is educationally saturated. Thus, the process of rendering his value can be seen to involve a two-way flow between culture and education. That is to say, Shakespeare's value is continually (re)created within society by an education system which constitutes and, in turn, *is constituted by* culture.

6.1 Loose beginnings: tying up this project and envisaging further research

Having summarised the arguments of this thesis on a discrete chapter-by-chapter basis above, I want here to gather together some concrete themes within it which have not yet received sufficient attention because of the nature in which they cross-cut the chapters. They do not constitute a single, overarching conclusion to this thesis. Nor do I wish to resort to cliché in terming them loose endings. Rather, I would like to think of them as loose beginnings: observations which might inspire further research.

Firstly, the influence of a few key individuals or individual institutions on defining the value of Shakespeare in education is inescapable. In chapter one, the work of Leavis was seen as fundamental to defining the subject of English in universities and schools. In terms of the *National Curriculum for English*, a struggle over the value of the subject was fought between the chairman of the committee responsible for writing the curriculum, C.B. Cox, and the minister in charge of education, Kenneth Baker, acting on Thatcher's instructions. Despite

their wrangling over the role of English education in supporting a common national culture and raising standards, Shakespeare emerged in the unparalleled position of prominence in the National Curriculum for English that he maintains today. Where pedagogic innovation in the last two decades is concerned, I posited in chapter three that Rex Gibson's influence in promoting active methods pedagogies is unsurpassed. Despite criticisms of his formulation of active methods (see 3.8), his impact is attested to by the number of people and publications that continue his work. This includes the widespread acceptance of his methods within theatre education, government departments such as the DCSF, and the QCDA.

In terms of the influence of individual organisations in shaping Shakespeare's value, the key players featured in this thesis have been the RSC, Globe and SBT. The pre-eminence of this triumvirate is reflected in, for example, national media coverage of the former company's engagement with issues of teaching and performing the playwright's works to young people (4.8). Had scope and time allowed, I would have been interested in investigating the extent to which the work of smaller, regional theatre education departments connects with the events and activities of these larger, leading institutions. Regarding popular culture, the views of Lord Reith remain prevalent through the continuing centrality of the Royal Charter (first established when Reith led the organisation) to the work of the BBC. They are also evident in the annual Reith lectures given in the form of a radio broadcast since 1948, in honour of the first Director-General, by leading figures in a range of areas – science, the arts, politics – on significant contemporary issues in their field. These remnants of Reith's influence perpetuate his endeavour to define and fix the purpose of public television broadcasting as a force for moral and educational improvement in the face of growing

competition, as well as technological and social change, which has included the (re)valuing of entertainment for entertainment's sake.

What has rendered the influence of these individuals (and individual organisations) on the value of Shakespeare unrivalled? In part, it is their personal energy, passion for their subject, commitment to it, and unwavering conviction – sometimes in the face of opposition, occasionally even derision. These individuals forged for themselves voices that stretched beyond their immediate institution, editing or contributing to journals and magazines, or gaining publishing contracts for monographs and memoirs. These publications have also endowed these figures with a degree of immortality, at least where their words, opinions and arguments are concerned. However, I also want to emphasise here the institutional mechanisms involved in these individual people and organisations shaping the value of Shakespeare. Elements which they have in common are positions in or affiliations with prominent institutions – for Reith, the BBC (which once had a monopoly on television broadcasting); for Cox, access to government and the civil service; for Gibson and Leavis, the University of Cambridge⁶⁵.

Having established that one cross-cutting theme of this thesis is the abiding influence of certain individuals, I would like to add to it the endurance of certain paradigms. The influence of early twentieth-century literary criticism, which often played a role in constructing notions of a 'golden age' of Literature, can itself be seen as constituting a golden age of criticism: not because there is nostalgia for them as lost methods but because, as shown by this thesis, they continue to assert an influence on policy and pedagogy.

Chapter three demonstrated that literary critical approaches are subject to a series of time

⁶⁵ Leavis' relationship with the university, however, was notably strained by what he deemed its failure to offer him a full-time lectureship in the English faculty until thirty years after he first taught there (MacKillop).

lags between their inception as 'radical', their use and their critique within the academy, sometimes followed by their acceptance within school education and popular culture (or, alternatively, a falling out of favour).

For example, progressive educational theory can be seen to have peaked in the 1950s and 1960s. It inspired a forceful backlash in the late 1960s and 1970s, represented in education policy by works such as Cox and A.C. Dyson's *Black Papers on education*. This reaction, in turn, inspired the conservative education policy of the Conservative government which led the nation from that period to the mid-1990s. Nonetheless, thinly-veiled progressive ideology abounds in writing on active methods and in the rationale for Shakespeare in the education departments of the RSC, despite the evidence in chapter two that Labour failed to reform education policy radically during its time in office. This contradiction can be explained by the way in which the radicalism of progressive ideals has been neutralised and rendered mainstream by policy's borrowing of soundbites and application of isolated concepts from the movement. Such adaptation has simultaneously ignored the wider narrative of progressivism, and deeper, structural challenges to education. These include questions of whether the most effective learning happens in schools, raised by leading figures including Neill and Illich.

Similarly, new historicist approaches represented innovative and significant epistemological shifts in the English academy of the late 1970s and 1980s. However, they have only in the past decade been overtly embraced by school policy and classroom practice as a revolutionary new method to teach Shakespeare (and even then, as I asserted in chapter three, they are frequently misinterpreted or poorly implemented, producing more of the

same old historicism)⁶⁶. In part, this represents the accepted life-cycle of these ideas: confronting old theoretical tenets and practices when first published, radical thought is then included in university teaching of students, some of whom then join the teaching profession, where they pass their knowledge onto school students, who experience it as the *status quo*. The naturalisation of this cyclical process in England's educational culture may well constitute an explanation of why the process of teaching Shakespeare has continually received relatively little critical attention.

The absorption of radical pedagogy into previously existing government policy and pedagogy, is in parallel to the maintenance of the *status quo* around Shakespeare by successive governments of different political persuasions. Even the Thatcher government's cementing of Shakespeare as a gold standard in the National Curriculum represents a radical approach to policy rather than practice – since the playwright was already widely taught and had been required knowledge for various levels of assessment. In addition, the Thatcher government were less concerned with access for all to Shakespeare than with the imposition of models such as Standard English onto the teaching of spelling and grammar.

None of the governments that followed Thatcher, and inherited the National Curriculum from her premiership, have so far made a remarkably different statement about the value of Shakespeare. Their 'reform' has instead largely involved tweaking the structure and format of the curriculum and adjusting assessment in an overwhelmingly piecemeal way. One could argue that Major's inclusion of Shakespeare in the English SATs at key stage three went beyond his predecessor's vision for Shakespeare in the curriculum, yet the playwright's use

⁶⁶ It is clear from the *Newbolt Report* that Shakespeare's context, biography and theatres existed as areas of learning before the advent of New Historicism – however, there is little suggestions that these topics were to be treated as tools for re-reading the plays rather than as discrete areas of knowledge about Shakespeare (314).

in assessment was already firmly established at GCSE and A-level. Similarly, the removal of Shakespeare SATs at key stage three could be said to represent a major statement about the value of Shakespeare. However, as shown in chapter three, English SATs were not the only tests to be abandoned after 2008 – the year which followed a major fiasco over examination-marking arrangements. Instead, all key stage three SATS were abolished suggesting that larger policy issues with assessment were the cause. The Cameron government have, in their first months in office, proposed changes to the meta-school system heralded by the ‘Academies Bill’ (an Act of Parliament as of 27 July 2010). In terms of education reform, they have thereby continued the trend for altering structures rather than acting to change curriculum content⁶⁷.

6.2 Drawing strength from splinters, blurring and contradictions

The argument made above that culture is educationally saturated is concerned with the spread of the value of Shakespeare over diverse social realms. The question of the value of Shakespeare has mainly been addressed in terms of how his value is constructed rather than by identifying what it is. It is not easy (or perhaps even possible) to state a single ‘value of Shakespeare’ in education and especially not beyond education, in the realms of popular culture. Moreover, I want to argue that such an endeavour is not desirable – it would necessarily neglect many tensions, convergences, variations, continuities and changes over time. Instead of eliding these to posit a single answer to the question of Shakespeare’s worth, in this section, I will highlight the multitudinous nature of the ways in which he is valued.

⁶⁷ Although such possibilities have been proposed, witness Gove’s criticism of the history curriculum at a past party conference (‘Michael Gove’).

The plural values of Shakespeare represent a phenomenon which Gary Taylor refers to as the author's 'boundless intellectual hospitality', a term which he used originally in a cynical way but which I wish to reclaim as a positive and sincere way of explaining the multiple values of Shakespeare (*Reinventing Shakespeare* 311). To do this, I want to probe the way in which Taylor's own position (and therefore his values) may have shifted, thus liberating the phrase from the context of its first usage. In *Reinventing Shakespeare*, Taylor criticises the seemingly perpetual belief in Shakespeare's largesse, arguing that, for example, the endlessly proliferating productions of his plays have nothing which is significantly new to offer (311). Instead, Shakespeare, he writes, represents the 'singularity', or centre, of a literary black hole: 'a point at the center of a once vast, now collapsing star where matter is crushed by its own inescapable gravity into literally zero volume', where 'light, insight, intelligence, matter – all pour ceaselessly into him, as critics are drawn into the densening vortex of his reputation; they add their own weight to his increasing mass' (410-411). As a consequence, Taylor contends, Shakespeare's 'accreting disk will go on spinning, sucking, growing' (410-411). This metaphor combines into one image the opposite forces of expansion and loss, growth and destruction. Moreover, it questions whether, if Shakespeare is continually growing, such growth is meaningful: black holes expand exponentially, but they emit no light.

In an afterword to *Shakespeare and Appropriation*, written nine years later, Taylor uses a different metaphor, which emphasises Shakespeare's contraction less equivocally: he posits the author as 'the incredible shrinking bard' ('Afterword'), connoting the titles of Richard Matheson's novel *The Incredible Shrinking Man* and the popular film adaptation of 1957. The story concerns the struggle of a man's survival in the face of his slow and continual

diminution after he is accidentally exposed to radiation and pesticides. Both novel and film admit the possibility that Carey will eventually dwindle to nothing, although they end before he meets any such fate.

Taylor's shifting position was undoubtedly inflected by his work as one of the general editors of *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*. This weighty volume seeks to raise the profile of an early modern playwright whom he believes has been overshadowed by Shakespeare's fame. Throughout his promotion of this volume, Taylor suggested that Middleton should instead be valued equally with Shakespeare, only half joking at a promotional event for the edition in the University of Birmingham's Mason Croft, that the place should be renamed the 'Shakespeare & Middleton Institute': the half joke consisted of the sexual innuendo which such an acronym inevitably connotes.

However, as of 2009, Taylor embarked with colleagues on a new edition of the Oxford *Complete Works* of Shakespeare. Thus he is now complicit in a very physical, as well as intellectual, proliferation of Shakespeare. Even if the edition acknowledges that a 'complete Shakespeare' is becoming unfeasible – as knowledge of early modern collaborative theatre writing practices is advanced; works such as *Double Falsehood* are added to the Shakespeare canon; scholars' attitudes to attribution evolve (the inclusion of *Macbeth* in the collected Middleton, for example) – the volume will effectively 'grow' Shakespeare, at least in quantity. The 'incredible shrinking bard', under Taylor's aegis, continues to be expanded. This metaphor is thus easier to refute than that of the black hole.

Yet, writers cannot resist analogies as a tool to understanding intangible phenomena such as Shakespeare's value (see the discussion of Shakespeare as a 'cultural catalyst' in 4.4), while parents and teachers use metaphor on a daily basis to help children learn complex,

sometimes abstract, phenomena. Moreover, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson have argued that metaphor could be the primary mode of mental operation for humans. Providing further evidence for this impulse, I want to posit my own analogy here. It differs from Taylor's in emphasising the value of Shakespeare not as a unified (w)hole which is increasing or diminishing but as manifold, widespread and fragmented. It is inspired by the 2008 film, *Doubt*, which explores the impact of an accusation of sexual misconduct made against a Catholic priest by the school's principal. The priest in question, Father Brendan, tells a parable about the dangers of gossip:

[A woman confesses to committing the sin of bearing false witness against her neighbour. In atonement for which, her confessor, Father O'Rourke, charges her] 'to go home, take a pillow up on your roof, cut it open with a knife, and return here to me.' So, the woman went home: took a pillow off her bed, a knife from the drawer, went up the fire escape to her roof, and stabbed the pillow. Then she went back to the old parish priest as instructed. 'Did you cut the pillow with a knife?' he says. 'Yes, Father.' 'And what were the results?' 'Feathers,' she said. 'Feathers?' he repeated. 'Feathers; everywhere, Father.' 'Now I want you to go back and gather up every last feather that flew out onto the wind,' 'Well,' she said, 'it can't be done. I don't know where they went. The wind took them all over.' 'And that,' said Father O' Rourke, 'is gossip!'

That pillow can also be figured as Shakespeare, the feathers as Shakespeare's reputation and value. Spread far and wide, through time and space, across various sectors from education to popular culture, his value is fragmented. It refuses to be unified and centralised, contained in a comfortable, convenient pillow- or black hole-like mass – despite the best efforts of education policy such as the *National Curriculum for English* and other publications.

The value of Shakespeare – indeed, I should perhaps accentuate my point and write 'the values of Shakespeare', or even 'the value of *Shakespeares*' as others have before me in

recognition of his multifarious incarnations – is fragmented further because it is interpreted and produced in distinctive (but sometimes overlapping) ways by different organisations and individuals. In each chapter, I have shown how the value of Shakespeare is subject to and situated within a network of values from policy, pedagogy, theatre and heritage institutions, and popular culture. These values may also, as I have shown throughout this thesis, be in agreement or opposition or negotiation. Often Shakespeare's pre-eminence is based on claims for his synergy with other values in the network (the value placed on 'play' in progressivism, for example). In other cases, however, the value of Shakespeare is constructed as surviving in spite of conflicting values – values for vocational education that boosts the economy or for the study of more inclusive and diverse literature, for example. Like gossip, or the feathers which represent it in the above anecdote, the dispersal and diversity of the value of Shakespeare is a significant part of his strength. It actually guarantees his survival since the refusal of his value to be pinned down makes him a difficult target for those who would refute his worth.

In addition to being multitudinous and fragmented, the value of Shakespeare is dynamic. As I have demonstrated, this is in part because it (like policy-making) involves an ongoing process of accretion, sedimentation, metamorphosis and so on (see 2.5). Looking back at my descriptions of value throughout the preceding chapters I have variously described it as ascribed, produced, constructed, received, consumed, and projected. There has been an emphasis on processes throughout. These included the forces and institutions producing historical continuity (and, sometimes, change) between Shakespeare in education past and present, in chapter one; government policy making in chapter two; ways of teaching Shakespeare in chapters three and four; saturating popular culture with education, by film-

makers, television producers, and advertisers, in chapter five. I have argued that values 'flow' and 'saturate'. Concerning Shakespeare particularly, I have demonstrated that as a society and, to some extent, as an academy, we are overwhelmingly interested in the processes he and his work underwent: how he has been represented (through portraiture, for example); how he lived his life (the renewed popularity of writing and reading autobiography) and how he produced his writing – witness the ongoing authorship debate, which occasionally erupts, capturing the attention of scholars and the general public. An interest in processes is also demonstrated in the academy through textual studies, bibliography and work on attribution.

Additionally, the dynamism of Shakespeare's value is accentuated by the way in which further values continually accrete around it (as, for example, it is multiplied in new mediums such as *YouTube* videos, *Twitter* and rap which lend Shakespeare some of their kudos). Nonetheless, Shakespeare is also surprisingly stable in terms of the perpetuation of old values (his universality, genius and other values discussed in chapter five) even when he is produced in new forms. Again, this seemingly boundless capacity for Shakespeare to be both one thing (dynamic) and its opposite (stable) can be attributed to the splintered nature of his value.

6.3 Pushing the boundaries of knowledge into a boundless bard

The dynamic and multitudinous nature of Shakespeare is reflected in the high volume and diversity of criticism and research which his work, life and, indeed, afterlife has spawned – some of which I outlined at the outset of this thesis. In this section, I want to reflect on the ways in which my own research can be said to have pushed the boundaries of knowledge into the value of Shakespeare in education between 1989 and 2009. I have advanced two

key arguments. Building on existing thought about the cultural saturation of education, the first concerns the educational-saturatedness of culture, that is to say, the way in which culture is shot through with educational tenets, references, and assumptions. The second regards the way in which Shakespeare derives strength and longevity from his manifold, fragmented form/s, which have progressed critical discussion in this area. Perhaps more significantly original, however, has been my contribution to expanding the scope and methods of research into Shakespeare in education.

My research counteracts the comparative lack of engagement with Shakespeare's value in education within the English discipline – a neglect which is out of step with the context of burgeoning media attention to issues around the teaching of English and literacy in schools as well as education more generally (see again appendix 1); the concern with the value of education and analysis of education policy in educational research (Ball, Pring, Whitty); and with Shakespeare's reception and dissemination in culture more broadly (Bristol, Lanier, Murphy, and Taylor, as well as most cultural materialist critiques).

In aiming to revive the value of Shakespeare in education as an area of thriving debate in English studies, my research has attempted to break down some of the barriers between these previously all too well-defined fields of endeavour (English, educational research, the media and popular culture), encouraging a dialectic between them to demonstrate their mutual influence. This approach makes it hard to categorise my research within any one discipline or tradition. Does it belong to English? Literary criticism remains a staple act which students of the subject are expected to engage with, yet no 'literary' texts are analysed herein. The readings of films and commercials in chapter five arguably owe more to cultural studies. Perhaps it can be deemed cultural criticism? If so, I hope that my work avoids the

dogmatism around popular culture that characterises many of its predecessors in the field, notably Arnold and Leavis. Does it belong to education? The thesis lacks the standard structure of most postgraduate endeavours in this discipline, characterised by the progression through a sequence of rigidly defined chapters: literature review, methodology, empirical evidence and analysis (see also 1.5).

Offsetting the limitations elucidated here, this thesis has strived towards an interdisciplinarity with which to reach conclusions that would have been impossible to arrive at from a solely educational research or Shakespeare studies perspective, literature or methodology. My findings have been informed by and juxtaposed with those of the critical literature from sundry disciplines including English, educational research, teacher training, sociology, public policy, film and media studies.

My research also adds a critical, analytic edge to the type of literature on Shakespeare in education which tends to focus on formulating pedagogy, responding to policy changes, and describing classroom practice. The emphasis of such material fits well with its practical objectives of professional teacher development. It speaks effectively to its target audience, constituted almost exclusively by the teaching profession but has, on the whole, failed to attract the attention of the Shakespeare academy, perhaps because of this boundedness. Free to go beyond the immediate concerns and constraints of research for instant application in the classroom, my research has been able to push back into the historical and theoretical influences on teaching methods. This has enabled me to explore *why*, as well as what, is happening in Shakespeare education.

My topic also allowed me to contribute an increased level of critical attention, beyond the classroom, to the work of theatre and heritage education departments in England. Such a

focus has previously existed in a more limited way in short articles (Alexander, Hodgdon) as well as interviews in the first *Shakespeare and Schools* newsletter with leaders from RSC education, the Shakespeare Globe Trust, and the SBT (Gibson 1986 12-13, 15).

I want to end by acknowledging the limitations of this thesis. In doing so, I will identify yet more scope for future research. The specificity of some of the data used in my research obviously restricts the period for which it will remain current rather than historic. I had already conducted my analysis of the *National Curriculum for English* when the *National Curriculum for England* at key stages 3 and 4 was implemented in 2008 affecting key stages three and four ('The Secondary Curriculum'). This did not significantly alter the content of the previous curriculum document nor, therefore, the provision of Shakespeare in state education. Rather it focused on improving the coherence and flexibility of the document through a revised format; implementing three curriculum 'aims' for successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens (suggested by the document *Every Child Matters*); delivering greater impetus towards children's personal growth and the potential for greater personalisation through assessment and qualifications. These aims correspond to successive governments' education policy agendas, as discussed in chapter two. Moreover, another adjustment of the curriculum is an example of the policy hyperactivism which was also a strong feature of that chapter. Even if such change is not significant – is not the deep change that we would associate with revolution or reform – the volume of it must be acknowledged by research such as this thesis.

In addition to education-specific changes, there have been alterations in governments themselves (four prime ministers from two parties, for instance) which, between 1989 and 2009, contributed to largely superficial change in the policy arena in terms of the content of

the curriculum. Chapter two demonstrated that overall agendas have remained stable, while ministers come into and go out of office; the names and organisation of departments evolve; the quantity of reports and strategies proliferate. In terms of the fallibility of this thesis, however, chapter two offers a reading of the impact of two party politics on Shakespeare in education. Yet, as of May 2010, England found itself governed by a coalition government including the Liberal Democrats, a party whose education policies I omitted to consider. It remains to be seen whether this rebalancing of power will lead to deeper transformations in education. Even if reform occurs, it will be difficult to determine the extent to which it derives from a different political power structure rather than the economic context of the current recession.

Outside education policy, new handouts for visitors to the SBT's houses continue to be developed. Websites have been updated. This transience is not a complaint particular to research using new media as a source: though the volume of texts 'published' is larger, hard to ensure the updating of, and policies for their archiving by public institutions still evolving. Their ephemeral nature should not be used to disparage research endeavours, since the use of these texts has more to offer than description or fact (elements which are, in any medium, always prone to revision). Over a decade old, the content of Hodgdon's chapter on Stratford tourism is now rendered out-of-date by the closure of some attractions and the rebranding of various companies. However, it remains a detailed and thorough record of that period, which allows readers to analyse change and continuity as well as to develop insights into places they can no longer physically attend themselves. Moreover, her research methods are evident in this piece and remain available for other researchers to experiment with in their own work. Like Hodgdon's work, my research has some value in preserving

ephemeral sources or experiences which will not survive time, technological change or individual memory; and which may not be collected by libraries or even the institutions which published them. These have included websites, government policy documents, printed ephemera such as theatre programmes and pamphlets, observation of productions of Shakespeare, television programmes and advertisements – analysed primarily through discourse analysis and literary critical close reading techniques. Consequently, the analysis of these sources in this thesis offers potentially transferable methods for those researching Shakespeare in other arena or the cultural afterlife of other literary figures.

Finally there are limitations of this research which exist purely because of the constraints of time, scope and funding on doctoral research. A contribution to academic knowledge of Shakespeare in education could be extended by future research which gives closer consideration to the primary school, further, and higher education sectors. It could include organisations which offer informal educational provision, such as Stratford-on-Avon's Shakespeare Club. Another project could attend to Shakespeare's role in the subjects of drama or theatre studies; to the policy, pedagogies and popular culture of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales; or even to a comparison of countries outside the United Kingdom. There is much scope to push the boundaries of knowledge in this field even further.

It is in this spirit of recognising that there is always more to be said, and more to be done, that I want to conclude. While my research has moved the field along, there is further opportunity to achieve tangible change. For instance, in chapter three, I criticised the outdated scholarship which informs many of the editions which target themselves at and are affordable to the school market. Related to which, I also reflected on the time lag between innovations in critical theory and their implementation in schools. Few existing series at this

level (apart from the Cambridge School Shakespeare and perhaps the New Longman) take into account recent developments in pedagogy and theory – except where knowledge of them is a statutory requirement. Education, like the value of Shakespeare, is dynamic, composed of processes of continuity and change. In so far as is humanly and technologically possible, editions and other publications for students and teachers need to reflect that. I hope this discussion will give some impetus towards the publication of new school editions of Shakespeare's plays.

Education is an arena which is characterised by relentless contestation, as the title of Ball's monograph, *The Education Debate*, acknowledges. Occasionally, as the ground shifts under your feet, or under your fingers hitting the keypad, as a researcher and writer, it is difficult not to resent the changes, however trivial. It is also hard to relinquish the vision of offering a monumental contribution to the debate, something that will prove as enduring or infinitely hospitable as Shakespeare's works. Nonetheless, I have been inspired to embrace the state of flux by the progressive educator A.S. Neill. Writing at the age of eighty-four, on what he envisaged as his final contribution to educational literature, Neill declared: 'Only an empty windbag would assume that his work is the last word on the subject' (92).

APPENDIX 1

Table of selected education-related programmes broadcast on English television: 2007-08

| Programme or series name | Educational issue addressed | Genre | Station |
|---|---|-------------|----------------|
| Books for Boys: a mission impossible? | The use of creative writing to combat the perceived decline in reading among boys | Documentary | BBC 4 |
| Child Genius | The educational experiences of a group of child geniuses | Documentary | C4 |
| The Choir – boys don't sing | The decline of school choirs and music education, particularly in terms of boys' participation in choral music | Reality | BBC1 |
| The Dangerous School for Boys | One headmaster's vision of reforming curriculum and pedagogy to address issues concerning boys' achievement and behaviour | Documentary | C 4 |
| Dispatches: Why our kids can't read | A survey of possible pedagogies for improving literacy | Documentary | C4 |
| Ian Hislop's Scouting for Boys | The impact of informal education and extra-curricular activity on boys' behaviour outside the classroom | Documentary | BBC4 |
| Ladette to Lady | A finishing school for young women which addresses as problematic their behaviour (and the morality underpinning it) and attempts to reform it using early twentieth-century values | Reality | ITV |
| Lost for words: last chance kids | The progress of a whole school reading programme using synthetic phonics to overcome illiteracy | Documentary | C4 |
| The Primary | An account of everyday life at a multicultural school in Birmingham | Documentary | BBC1 |
| Rocket Science | The use of pedagogy to combat the decline in numbers of children studying science | Documentary | BBC2 |
| The Sex Education Show vs. Pornography | The alleged lack of quality of sex education in secondary schools and impact of the internet on informal sex education | Documentary | C4 |
| Summerhill | A dramatisation of the school's battle with Ofsted to maintain its unique ethos & progressive pedagogy | Drama | BBC2 (CBBC) |
| That'll Teach 'Em | A group of under-achieving students attend a school run along '1950s' pedagogies and policy lines. | Reality | C4 |
| The Unteachables | A pedagogic experiment to redress the disruptive behaviour of a group of under-achieving students | Reality | C4 |
| Why Reading Matters | The impact of the information technology 'revolution' on literacy and reading | Documentary | BBC4 |

WORKS CITED

The 1900 House. Channel 4. 22 September 1999.

The 1940s House. Channel 4. 2 January 2001.

Abbs, Peter. *Living Powers: The Arts in Education*. London: The Falmer Press, 1987.

Aers, Lesley. 'Shakespeare in the National Curriculum'. *Shakespeare in the Changing Curriculum*. Ed. Lesley Aers and Nigel Wheale. London: Routledge, 1991. 30-39.

Aers, Lesley and Nigel Wheale, eds. *Shakespeare in the Changing Curriculum*. London: Routledge, 1991.

Adams, Richard, ed. *Teaching Shakespeare: Essays on Approaches to Shakespeare in Schools and Colleges*. London: Robert Royce, 1985.

Alexander, Catherine M. S. 'Shakespeare at the Centre: the Educational Work of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust'. *Shakespeare in Education*. Ed. Martin Blocksidge. London: Continuum, 2003. 141-61.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London: Verso, 1991.

Andrews, John F. 'From the Editor'. *Shakespeare Quarterly*. 35.5 (1984): 515-516.

Armstrong, Isobel. 'Thatcher's Shakespeare?' *Textual Practice*. 3 (1989): 1-14.

Armstrong, Katherine, and Graham Atkin. *Studying Shakespeare*. Hemel Hempstead: Prentice Hall Europe, 1998.

Arnold, Matthew. *Culture and Anarchy*. 1869. Ed. John Dover Wilson. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1960.

Arts Council England. *Call it a Tenner: The role of pricing in the arts*. London: Arts Council England, 2007.

Arts Council England. *Children, Young People and the Arts*. London: Arts Council England, 2005.

Baldick, Chris. *The Social Mission of English Criticism: 1848-1932*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983.

Ball, Stephen J. *The Education Debate*. Bristol: Policy Press, 1998.

Balls, Ed. 'Ed Ball's Speech to Labour Conference'. *Labour*. The Labour Party. 2009. 1 December 2010. <<http://www.labour.org.uk/ed-balls-speech-conference,2009-0930>>.

Bate, Jonathan. 'Catalytic Converter?' Shakespeare as a Cultural Catalyst. International Shakespeare Conference. The Shakespeare Institute, Stratford-upon-Avon. 13 August 2010.

---. *The Genius of Shakespeare*. London: Picador, 1997.

---. *Soul of the Age: The Life, Mind and World of William Shakespeare*. London: Viking, 2008.

Bate, Jonathan and Eric Rasmussen, eds. *Hamlet*. By William Shakespeare. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2008.

Bauman, Zigmunt. *Modernity and Ambivalence*. Oxford: Polity Press, 1991.

---. *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000.

Becker, Gary S. *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to Education*. 3rd ed. Chicago, University of Chicago Press: 1993.

Beckwith, Sarah. 'The power of devils and the hearts of men: notes towards a drama of witchcraft'. *Shakespeare in the Changing Curriculum*. Ed. Lesley Aers and Nigel Wheale. London: Routledge, 1991. 143-161.

Beehler, Sharon A. "'That's a certain text': Problematizing Shakespeare Instruction in American Schools and Colleges'. *Shakespeare Quarterly*. 41.2 (1990): 195-205.

Bennett, Rosie. 'Poor turned off Sure Start by middle-class mothers: Families in deprived areas losing out'. *Times Online*. 6 October 2006. 13 September 2010. <<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article663212.ece>>.

Berry, Cicely. *Voice and the Actor*. London: Harrap, 1974.

- Bergonzi, Bernard. *Exploding English: Criticism, Theory, Culture*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1990.
- Billington, Michael. 'Spacey is right: the BBC hates theatre'. *Guardian*. 31 March 2008. 18 October 2010.
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/stage/theatreblog/2008/mar/31/thebbcsattitudetotheatrei>>.
- Bissell, Chris. 'Putting the accent on dialects'. *Independent. Nexis*. 11 January 1990. 1 December 2010.
<<http://www.lexisnexis.com/uk/nexis/auth/checkbrowser.do?t=1292866057312>>.
- Blockside, Martin, ed. *Shakespeare in Education*. London: Continuum, 2003.
- Bloom, Harold. *The Anxiety of Influence: a theory of poetry*. New York: Oxford UP, 1973.
- Bondanella, Peter. *Umberto Eco and the Open Text: Semiotics, Fiction, Popular Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997.
- Bostridge, Ian. 'The Voice of a Nation'. *Guardian*. 6 July 2007. 15 December 2010.
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2007/jul/06/classicalmusicandopera>>.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. Trans. Richard Nice. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1984.
- Bowles, Samuel and Herbert Gintis. *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977.
- Bristol, Michael. *Big-Time Shakespeare*. New York: Routledge, 1996.
- Brocklehurst, Liz. 'Marking Sats has always been a total fiasco'. *Guardian*. 23 July 2008. 24 December 2010. <<http://www.spectator.co.uk/essays/all/852326/marking-sats-has-always-been-a-total-fiasco.shtml>>.
- Bruner, Jerome. *The Culture of Education*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard UP, 1996.
- Bryson, Bill. *Shakespeare: the World as a Stage*. London: HarperPress, 2007.
- Bullough, Geoffrey. *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*. New York: Columbia UP, 1957.

- Bunting, Catherine. *Public Value and the Arts in England: Discussion and conclusions of the arts debate*. London: Arts Council England, 2006.
- Burnett, Mark Thornton and Ramona Wray, eds. *Screening Shakespeare in the Twenty-First Century*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2006.
- Burt, Cyril. 'The Mental Differences between Children'. *The Black Papers on Education*. Ed. C.B. Cox and A.E. Dyson. London: Davis Poynter, 1971. 45-63.
- Caeser, Michael. *Umberto Eco: Philosophy, Semiotics and the Work of Fiction*. Malden, Massachusetts: Polity Press, 1999.
- Caldwell Cook, Henry. *The Play Way: an essay in educational method*. London: Heinemann, 1917.
- Cameron, Deborah and Jill Bourne. *Grammar, Nation and Citizenship: Kingman in linguistic and historical perspective*. London: Institute of Education, 1989.
- Carey, John. *The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice among the Literary Intelligentsia, 1880-1939*. London: Faber & Faber, 1992.
- Castaldo, Annalisa. 'Fictions of Shakespeare and Literary Culture'. *Shakespeares after Shakespeare: An Encyclopaedia of the Bard in Mass Media and Popular Culture*. Vol. 2. Ed. Richard Burt. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood, 2007. 408-412.
- Cheney, Patrick. *Shakespeare, National Poet-Playwright* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004.
- Coles, Jane. 'Alas, Poor Shakespeare: Teaching and Testing at Key Stage 3'. *English in Education*. 37.3 (1993): 3-12.
- . 'Testing Shakespeare to the Limit: Teaching *Macbeth* in a Year 9 Classroom'. *English in Education*. 43.1 (2009): 32-41.
- The Comedy of Errors*. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Paul Hunter. Perf. Jonjo O'Neill, Dharmesh Patel. Courtyard Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon. 2 July 2009.
- The Comedy of Errors* [programme]. Stratford-upon-Avon: RSC, 2009.

'Company History and Artistic Policy'. *Told By An Idiot*. Told By An Idiot. 12 May 2010.
<<http://www.toldbyanidiot.org/about/history/>>.

Coren, Giles. 'Dinner? It was historic'. *Times*. Nexis. May 15 2008. 1 September 2010.
<<http://www.lexisnexis.com/uk/nexis/auth/checkbrowser.do?t=1292866057312>>.

Cox, C.B. *Cox on Cox: An English Curriculum for the 1990s*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1991.

---. *Cox on the Battle for the English Curriculum*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1995.

---. *The Great Betrayal: Memoirs of a Life in Education*. London: Chapman's, 1992.

Cox, C.B. and A.C. Dyson, eds. *The Black Papers on Education*. London: Davis-Poynter, 1971.

Davies, Anthony and Stanley Wells, eds. *Shakespeare and the Moving Image: the plays on film and television* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994.

Davison, Jon. 'Literacy and social class'. *Issues in English Teaching*. Ed. Jon Davison and John Moss. London: Routledge, 2000. 243-259.

Davison, Jon and John Moss, eds. *Issues in English Teaching*. London: Routledge, 2000.

Day, Gary. *Re-reading Leavis: Culture and Literary Criticism*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996.

Desmet, Christie. 'Paying attention in Shakespeare parody: from Tom Stoppard to YouTube'. *Shakespeare Survey* 62. Cambridge: Cambridge UP. 2008. 227-238.

Dixon, John. *Growth Through Education: Report Based on the Dartmouth Seminar*. London: Oxford UP/NATE, 1969.

Dobson, Michael. *The Making of the National Poet*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1994.

Dollimore, John and Alan Sinfield. 'Series editors' foreword'. *The Shakespeare Myth*. Ed. Graham Holderness. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1988. ix-x.

---, eds. *Political Shakespeare: new essays in cultural materialism*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1985.

Doubt. Dir. John Patrick Shanley. Perf. Philip Seymour Hoffman, Meryl Streep. Miramax. 2008.

Douglas-Fairhurst, Robert. 'A.C. Bradley's Shakespearean Tragedy'. *Use of English*. 57.2 (2006): 126-137.

Doyle, Brian and Derek Longhurst. 'The cultural production of Shakespeare in education'. *Australian Cultural Studies* 3 (1985): 40-61.

Drakakis, John. Afterword. *Shakespeare and National Culture*. Ed. John Joughin. Manchester: Manchester UP. 1997. 326-338.

Durkheim, Emile. *Sociology and Education*. New York: The Free Press, 1956.

Dymoke, Sue, ed. *English in Education*. 44.3 (2010).

Eagleton, Terry. 1983. *Literary Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.

Education. RSC. 30 December 2010. <<http://www.rsc.org.uk/education/>>.

The Education Department. SBT. 25 November 2008.
<<http://www.shakespeare.org.uk/content/view/425/436/>>.

Education News: Activities for Students and INSET for Teachers. Stratford-upon-Avon: RSC, 2009.

The Edwardian Country House. Channel 4. April 2002.

Edwardian Supersize Me. BBC4. 22 December 2007.

Ellis, Alec. *Educating Our Masters: Influences on the Growth of Literacy in Victorian Working Class Children*. Aldershot: Gower, 1985.

'English standards'. *Times*. Nexis. 6 January 1989. 1 December 2010.
<<http://www.lexisnexis.com/uk/nexis/auth/checkbrowser.do?t=1292866057312>>.

'Episode 2: The Shakespeare Code'. *Dr Who*. 7 April 2010.
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/doctorwho/s4/episodes/S3_02>.

- 'Fact File: The Shakespeare Code'. *Dr Who*. Comp. Peter Ware. 7 April 2010.
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/doctorwho/episodes/2007/facts/fact_302.shtml>.
- 'FOI: Facts and Figures'. *TV Licensing*. 1 January 2011.
<<http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/about/foi-licences-facts-and-figures-AB18/>>.
- Francis, Joseph. 'Shakespeare at Eton College'. *Shakespeare in Education*. Ed. Martin Blocksidge. London: Continuum, 2003. 69-96.
- Freedman, Barbara. 'Pedagogy, Psychoanalysis, Theatre: Interrogating the Scene of Learning'. *Shakespeare Quarterly*. 41.2 (1990): 174-186.
- Furedi, Frank. *Wasted: Why Education Isn't Educating*. London: Continuum, 2009.
- Gibson, Rex, ed. *Macbeth*. By William Shakespeare. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993.
- , ed. *Secondary School Shakespeare: Classroom Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge Institute of Education, 1990.
- , --. *Shakespeare and Schools Newsletter*. 1 (1986).
- , --. *Shakespeare and Schools Newsletter*. 9 (1989).
- , --. *Shakespeare and Schools Newsletter*. 11 (1990).
- , --. *Shakespeare and Schools Newsletter*. 12 (1990).
- , --. *Shakespeare and Schools Newsletter*. 15 (1991).
- , --. *Shakespeare and Schools Newsletter*. 22 (1993).
- , --. *Shakespeare and Schools Newsletter*. 23 (1994).
- . *Teaching Shakespeare*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998.
- Gilmour, Maurice, ed. *Shakespeare for All in Secondary Schools*. London: Cassell, 1997.
- Globe Education*. Shakespeare Globe Trust. 25 November 2008. <<http://www.shakespearesglobe.org/globeeducation/>>.

Globe Education Events Spring 09. London: Shakespeare's Globe, 2009.

Globe Education Events Summer 09. London: Shakespeare's Globe, 2009.

Gove, Michael. 'Michael Gove: failing schools need new leadership'. *Conservatives*. 7 October 2009. 19 September 2010.
<http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2009/10/Michael_Gove_Failing_schools_need_new_leadership.aspx>.

Greenblatt, Stephen. *Will in the World: how Shakespeare became Shakespeare*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2004.

Greenhalgh, Susan. "'True to You in My Fashion": Shakespeare on British Broadcast Television'. *Shakespeares after Shakespeare: An Encyclopaedia of the Bard in Mass Media and Popular Culture*. Vol. 2. Ed. Richard Burt. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood. 2007. 651-673.

Greer, Germaine. *Shakespeare's Wife*. London: Bloomsbury, 2007.

Gregory, Sue. 'Making Shakespeare Our Contemporary'. *Shakespeare in Education*. Ed. Martin Blocksidge. London: Continuum. 2003. 20-39.

de Groot, Jerome. *Consuming Histories*. Oxford: Routledge, 2009.

Hackett, Helen. *Shakespeare and Elizabeth: The Meeting of Two Myths*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2009.

Haddon, John. *Teaching Reading Shakespeare*. London: Routledge, 2009.

Halpern, Richard. *Shakespeare Among the Moderns*. New York: Cornell UP, 1997.

Hamlet. By William Shakespeare. Dir. Greg Doran. Perf. David Tennant. Courtyard Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon. 14 August 2008.

Harris, Elaine. 'New Town Shakespeare: a comprehensive school approach at Key Stages Three and Four'. *Shakespeare in Education*. Ed. Martin Blocksidge. London: Continuum, 2003. 40-68.

Hawkes, Terence. *That Shakespeherian Rag: Essays on a critical process*. London: Methuen, 1986.

---, ed. *Alternative Shakespeares: Volume 2*. London: Routledge, 1996.

Hepburn, Alexis and Jonathan Potter. 'Discourse analytic practice'. *Qualitative Research Practice*. Ed. Clive Seale, David Silverman, Jaber Gubrium and Giampietro Gobo. London: Sage, 2003. 180-196.

Hewison, Robert. 'Heritage: an interpretation'. *Heritage International*. Ed. David Uzzell. London: Belhaven, 1989. 15-23.

---. *Culture and Consensus: England, Arts and Politics since 1940*. London: Methuen, 1995.

Heywood, Thomas. *Three Marriage Plays*. Ed. Paul Merchant. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1996.

Hirsch, James. 'Teaching Paradoxes: Shakespeare and the Enhancement of Audience Skills'. *Shakespeare Quarterly*. 41.2 (1990): 222-210.

Hiscock, Andrew and Lisa Hopkins. *Teaching Shakespeare and Early Modern Dramatists*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Hobby, Elaine. "'My affection hath and unknown bottom": homosexuality and the teaching of *As You Like It*'. *Shakespeare in the Changing Curriculum*. Ed. Lesley Aers and Nigel Wheale. London: Routledge, 1991. 125-142.

Hodgdon, Barbara. *The Shakespeare Trade*. Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998.

Holden, John. *Capturing Cultural Value*. London: DEMOS, 2004.

---. *Cultural Value and the Crisis of Legitimacy*. London: DEMOS, 2006.

---. *Publicly Funded Culture and the Creative Industries*. London: Arts Council England, 2007.

Holderness, Graham. "'Author! Author!": Shakespeare and Biography'. August 2008. University of Hertfordshire. 1 January 2011. 1-18.
<<https://uhra.herts.ac.uk/dspace/bitstream/2299/4567/1/903395.pdf>>.

- . 'Boxing the Bard: Shakespeare and television'. *The Shakespeare Myth*. Ed. Graham Holderness. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1988. 173-189.
- . 'Sam Wanamaker'. *The Shakespeare Myth*. Ed. Graham Holderness. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1988. 16-23.
- , ed. *The Shakespeare Myth*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1988.
- Hornbrook, David. 'Go play, boy, play'. *The Shakespeare Myth*. Ed. Graham Holderness. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1988.
- Hudson, A.K. *Shakespeare and the Classroom*. London: Heinemann, 1954.
- Illich, Ivan. *Deschooling Society*. New York: Penguin, 1970.
- The Incredible Shrinking Man*. Dir. Jack Arnold. Perf. Grant Williams. Universal Pictures. 1957.
- Inglis, Fred. 'Recovering Shakespeare: innocence and materialism'. *Shakespeare in the Changing Curriculum*. Ed. Lesley Aers and Nigel Wheale. London: Routledge, 1991. 58-73.
- 'Internet Access'. *Office for National Statistics*. 27 August 2010. 1 January 2011.
<<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/CCI/nugget.asp?ID=8&Pos=6&ColRank=2&Rank=144>>.
- Jackson, Peter, Sarah Olive and Graham Smith. 'Myths of the Family Meal: Re-reading Edwardian Life Histories'. *Changing Families, Changing Food*. Ed. Peter Jackson. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. 131-145.
- Jackson, Peter, Graham Smith and Sarah Olive. 'Families Remembering Food: reusing secondary data'. Working paper, 2007. 14 January 2010.
<<http://www.shef.ac.uk/familiesandfood/resources.html>>.
- Johnson, Lesley. *The Cultural Critics: From Matthew Arnold to Raymond Williams*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1979.
- Joughin, John J. *Shakespeare and National Culture*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1997.
- King, Neil. 'Starting Shakespeare'. *Teaching Shakespeare*. Ed. Richard Adams. London: Robert Royce, 1985. 57-76.

- 'Kingman gets a pasting'. *Education Guardian. Nexis*. 24 May 1988. 1 December 2010.
<<http://www.lexisnexis.com/uk/nexis/auth/checkbrowser.do?t=1292866057312>>.
- Knights, L.C. and Donald Culver. 'A Manifesto'. *Scrutiny*. 1.1. May (1932): 2-7.
- Kott, Jan. *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*. Trans. B. Taberski. London: Methuen, 1964.
- Kress, Gunther. *Writing the Future: English and the making of a culture of innovation*.
Sheffield: NATE, 1995.
- Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago
Press, 1980.
- Lammy, David. 'David Lammy, Minister for Culture, keynote address to Museums
Association Conference'. 26 October 2005. 13 September 2010.
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.culture.gov.uk/global/pre-ssnotices/archive_2005/lammy_ma_speech.htm>.
- Lanier, Douglas. *Shakespeare and Popular Modern Culture*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010.
- 'Latest News'. *Broadcast*. 18 October 2010. <<http://www.broadcastnow.co.uk/>>.
- Leach, Susan. *Shakespeare in the Classroom: What's the matter?* Bucks: Open UP, 1992.
- . 'Student teachers and the experience of English: How do secondary student teachers
view English and its possibilities?' *Issues in English Teaching*. Ed. Jon Davison and
John Moss. London: Routledge, 2000. 148-163.
- Leavis, F.R. 'Eliot's "Axe to Grind" and the Nature of Great Criticism'. *English Literature in
Our Time and the University*. Ed. F.R. Leavis. 1969. 85-108.
- . *The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad*. 1948. London: Penguin,
1993.
- . 'Valuation in Criticism'. *Valuation in Criticism and other essays*. Ed. G. Singh. Cambridge:
Cambridge UP, 1986. 276-284
- Leavis, F.R. and Denys Thompson. *Culture and Environment: the training of critical
awareness*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1960.

Linnemann, Emily. *The Cultural Value of Publicly Funded Theatre*. Diss. U of Birmingham, 2010.

Lipsett, Angela. 'Shakespeare suffers slings and arrows of Sats fortune'. *Guardian*. 26 November 2008. 10 September 2010.
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2008/nov/26/rsc-education-shakespeare-english-sats>>.

Longhurst, Derek. "'You base football-player'": Shakespeare in Contemporary Popular Culture'. *The Shakespeare Myth*. Ed. Graham Holderness. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1988. 59-73.

Lott, Bernard. *Hamlet*. By William Shakespeare. 1968. Harlow: Longman, 1999.

Lowenthal, David. 'Fabricating heritage'. *History & Memory*. 10.1 (1998): 5-24.

MacKillop, Ian. 'Leavis, Frank Raymond (1895–1978)'. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. October 2009. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 1 November 2010. <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31344>>.

Manifesto for Shakespeare in Schools. RSC. 1 September 2008.
<http://www.rsc.org.uk/standupforshakespeare/content/manifesto_online.aspx>.

Mansell, Warwick. 'Was the government to blame for the Sats marking fiasco?' *Guardian*. 15 September 2009. 24 December 2010.
<<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2009/sep/15/sats-marking-fiasco-government-blame>>.

Marston, John. *The Malcontent*. Ed. George K. Hunter. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2000.

Matheson, Richard. *The Incredible Shrinking Man*. New York: Bantam, 1969.

Mazumdar, P. M. H. 'Burt, Sir Cyril Lodowic (1883–1971)'. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. May 2006. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. 22 April 2010
<<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30880>>.

McEvoy, Sean. 'Shakespeare at 16-19'. *Shakespeare in Education*. Ed. Martin Blockside. London: Continuum, 2003. 97-119.

- Monaghan, F. and B. Mayor. 'English in the curriculum'. *Learning English*. Ed. Neil Mercer, Joan Swann and Barbara Meyer. Abingdon: Routledge, 2007. 151-176.
- Montessori, Maria. *The Montessori Method*. Trans. Anne E. George. Rev. Ed. London: Heinemann, 1919.
- Montrose, Louis. 'Professing the Renaissance: The Poetics and Politics of Culture'. *The New Historicism*. Ed. H. Aram Veenser. London: Routledge, 1989. 15-36.
- Moser, Claus. *A Fresh Start – improving literacy and numeracy*. London: DfEE, 1999.
- Mulhern, Francis. *The Moment of Scrutiny*. London: NLB, 1979.
- Murray, Braham. 'On Your Imaginary Forces Work'. *Teaching Shakespeare*. Ed. Richard Adams. London: Robert Royce, 1985. 41-56.
- Murphy, Andrew D. 'Shakespeare and the Cultural Trajectories of Victorian Ireland: W.B. Yeats vs Edward Dowden'. Shakespeare as a Cultural Catalyst. International Shakespeare Conference. The Shakespeare Institute, Stratford-upon-Avon. 11 August 2010.
- . *Shakespeare for the People: Working-Class Readers, 1800-1900*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008.
- National Treasures*. BBC Radio 4. 8 August – 5 September 2007.
- Neelands, Jonothan. *Learning through Imagined Experience*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1992.
- Neelands, Jonothan and Jacqui O'Hanlon. 'Stand Up for Shakespeare'. Shakespeare as a Cultural Catalyst. International Shakespeare Conference. The Shakespeare Institute, Stratford-upon-Avon. 9 August 2010.
- Neill, A.S. *Summerhill*. London: Pelican, 1970.
- Nye, Robert. *The Late Mr Shakespeare*. London: Penguin, 2000.
- O'Connor, John. *Macbeth*. By William Shakespeare. Harlow, Essex: Pearson, 2004.

O'Dair, Sharon. *Class, Critics and Shakespeare: Bottom Lines on the Culture Wars*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2000.

---. 'Against Internet Triumphalism'. Shakespeare as a Cultural Catalyst. International Shakespeare Conference. The Shakespeare Institute, Stratford-upon-Avon. 9 August. 2010.

OED Online. November 2010. Oxford UP. 1 January 2011. <<http://www.oed.com>>.

Olive, Sarah. "'Read on this book": the impact of the National Curriculum on Shakespeare in key stage 3-4 classrooms'. *Use of English*. 57.2 (2006): 138-145.

Owen, Diana. 'Putting our Arms around Shakespeare: The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust in the 21st Century'. Shakespeare as a Cultural Catalyst. International Shakespeare Conference. The Shakespeare Institute, Stratford-upon-Avon. 10 August 2010.

Ozark Holmer, Joan. "'O, what learning is!": Some Pedagogical Practices for *Romeo and Juliet*'. *Shakespeare Quarterly*. 41.2 (1990): 187-194.

'Parents Slam Lady GaGa For Penis Talk at Australian Concerts'. *Take 40*. 19 March 2010. 30 June 2010. <<http://www.take40.com/news/18658/parents-slam-lady-gaga-for-penis-talk-at-australian-concerts>>.

Peim, Nick. *Critical Theory and the English Teacher: Transforming the Subject*. London: Routledge, 1993.

Pring, Richard. 'Labour Government Policy 14-19'. *Oxford Review of Education*. 31.1 (2005): 71-85.

'Red Bull – Shakespeare'. *tellyAds*. 30 June 2009. <http://www.tellyads.com/show_movie.php?filename=TA10557>.

Regional Schools Celebration [programme]. Stratford-upon-Avon: RSC, 2009.

'Reluctant Grammarians' *Times*. *Nexis*. June 24 1989. 1 December 2010. <<http://www.lexisnexis.com/uk/nexis/auth/checkbrowser.do?t=1292866057312>>.

Restoration. BBC2. 8 August 2003 – 9 May 2005.

- Reynolds, Peter. 'Active Reading: Shakespeare's Stagecraft'. *Teaching Shakespeare*. Ed. Richard Adams. London: Robert Royce, 1985. 118-132.
- . *Practical Approaches to Teaching Shakespeare*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1991.
- Richards, I.A. *Practical Criticism*. 1929. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973.
- Rocklin, Edward L. "'An Incarnational Art": Teaching Shakespeare' *Shakespeare Quarterly*. 41.2 (1990): 147-159.
- Romeo + Juliet*. Dir. Baz Luhrmann. Perf. Leonardo Di Caprio, Claire Danes. Twentieth Century Fox. 1996.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Emile*. 1762. Teddington, Middlesex: Echo, 2007.
- Royal Shakespeare Company: *Education*. RSC. 21 May 2008.
<<http://www.rsc.org.uk/learning/Learning.aspx>>.
- Royal Shakespeare Company. *The RSC Shakespeare Toolkit for Teachers*. London: Methuen, 2010.
- Russell, Willie. *Educating Rita*. 1980. Ed. Suzy Graham-Adriani. Harlow, Essex: Longman. 1991.
- Salway, John. 'Will the real Shakespeare stand up?' *Shakespeare and Schools Newsletter*. 1. Autumn (1986): 8.
- Sampson, George. *English for the English*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1921.
- Samuel, Raphael and Paul Thompson. *The Myths We Live By*. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Saunders, John. 'Circe and Cyclops: A Shakespearean Adventure'. *Teaching Shakespeare*. Ed. Richard Adams. London: Robert Royce. 1985. 97-117.
- Schafer, Jurgen. *Documentation in the Oxford English Dictionary: Shakespeare and Nashe as Test Cases*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1980.
- Scheil, Katherine. 'Stratford'. Shakespeare Association of America. *SAA Bulletin*. June 2010.

Shakespeare in Love. Dir. John Madden. Perf. Joseph Fiennes, Gwyneth Paltrow. Miramax. 1998.

Shakespearean Insult Generator. Facebook. 30 December 2010.
<<http://www.facebook.com/apps/application.php?id=2453208254>>.

'The Shakespeare Code'. *Dr Who*. BBC1. 7 April 2007.

Shakespeare, William. *The Merchant of Venice*. Ed. Jay L. Halio. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1993.

Shakespeare Lives! Channel 4. 4 January 1982.

Shakespeare's Houses and Gardens: Discovery Pack. Stratford-upon-Avon: SBT, 2010.

Shakespeare's Houses and Gardens: Who was Shakespeare? Stratford-upon-Avon: SBT, 2010.

Shakespeare Re-told. BBC1. 7-28 November 2005.

Shapiro, James. *1599: A year in the life of Shakespeare*. London: Faber, 2005.

Shepherd, Jessica. 'A-level results: Top universities secretly list 'banned' subjects'. 20 August 2010. 23 August 2010. <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2010/aug/20/a-level-subjects-blacklist-claim>>.

Shields, Rachel. 'A cup of tea and a game of cricket? What is it to be English, today?' *Independent*. 21 November 2010. 15 December 2010.
<<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/homenews/a-cup-of-tea-and-game-of-cricket-what-is-it-to-be-english-today-2139728.html>>.

Sinfield, Alan. 'Shakespeare and Education'. *Political Shakespeare*. Ed. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1985. 134-154.

Spencer, T.J.B. *Hamlet*. By William Shakespeare. London: Penguin, 2005.

'Spending Review 2010'. *Foreign and Commonwealth Office*. 21 October 2010. 1 January 2011. <<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-us/what-we-do/spend-our-budget/2010-spending-review>>.

St. Clair, William. *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004.

Steiner, George. *Real Presences: is there anything in what we say?* London: Faber, 1989.

Streitz, Paul. *Oxford: Son of Queen Elizabeth I*. Darien, Connecticut: Oxford Institute Press, 2001.

Stillinger, Jack. *Multiple Authorship and the Myth of Solitary Genius*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1991.

'Students to perform in Shakespeare's home town'. 9 May 2008. *The Henley Standard*. 15.

'The Supersizers Go Elizabethan'. *The Supersizers Go...* BBC2. 17 June 2007.

Super Size Me. Dir. Morgan Spurlock. Perf. Morgan Spurlock. Samuel Goldwyn, 2004.

'Super Size Me'. *Internet Movie Database*. 15 April 2008.
<<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0390521/>>.

Tales from the Green Valley. BBC2. 19 August 2005.

Taylor, Gary. 'Afterword: The incredible shrinking Bard'. *Shakespeare and Appropriation*. Ed. Christie Desmet and Robert Sawyer. London: Routledge. 1999. 197-206.

---. *Cultural Selection*. New York: Basic Books, 1996.

---. *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History from the Restoration to the Present*. New York: Oxford UP, 1989.

Taylor, Gary and John Lavagnino, eds. *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007.

Terris, Olwen. 'Shakespeare and British Television'. *Shakespeare Survey 61*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP. 2008. 199-212.

---. 'Shakespeare and Television Advertising'. *Shakespeare on Film, Television and Radio: The Researcher's Guide*. Ed. Olwen Terris, Eve Oesterlen and Luke McKernan. London: British Universities Film and Video Council, 2009. 40-50.

- Terris, Olwen, Eve Oesterlen and Luke McKernan. *Shakespeare on Film, Television and Radio: The Researcher's Guide*. London: British Universities Film and Video Council, 2009.
- Thomas, Peter. 'Shakespeare Page to Stage: An Active Approach to Othello'. *English in Education*. 28.1 (1994): 45-52.
- Thompson, Ann. 'King Lear and the Politics of Teaching Shakespeare'. *Shakespeare Quarterly*. 41.2 (1990): 139-146.
- Thompson, Denys. 'What Shall We Teach?' *Scrutiny* 2.4. March (1934): 379-386.
- Travitsky, Betty S. and Anne Lake Prescott. *Female and Male Voices in Early Modern England: An Anthology of Renaissance Writing*. New York: Columbia UP, 2000.
- Turnock, Rob. *Television and Consumer Culture: Britain and the Transformation of Modernity*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2007.
- Twitter. 4 January 2011. <<http://twitter.com/>>.
- Tytler, David. 'Importance of grammar restored to curriculum'. *Times*. Nexis. June 23 1989. 1 December 2010.
<<http://www.lexisnexis.com/uk/nexis/auth/checkbrowser.do?t=1292866057312>>.
- Vickers, Brian, ed. *William Shakespeare: The Critical Heritage*. Vol. 5. Oxford: Routledge, 1979.
- Victorian Farm*. BBC2. 8 January 2009.
- Wells, Stanley. *Coffee with Shakespeare*. London: Duncan Baird, 2008.
- . *Shakespeare and Co*. London: Allen Lane, 2006.
- . *Shakespeare, Sex and Love*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010.
- Wells, Stanley and Gary Taylor, eds. *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*. By William Shakespeare. Oxford: Clarendon, 1986.
- What has Shakespeare ever done for us?: a Primary School Assembly*. Stratford-upon-Avon: RSC, 2009.

Wheale, Nigel. Introduction. *Shakespeare in the Changing Curriculum*. Ed. Lesley Aers and Nigel Wheale. London: Routledge, 1991. 1-29.

Whitty, Geoff. 'Education, Economy and National Culture'. *Social and Cultural Forms of Modernity*. Ed. Robert Boccock and Kenneth Thompson. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992. 267-320.

---. 'Twenty Years of Progress? English Education Policy 1988 to the Present'. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*. 36.2 (2008): 165-184.

Widdowson, Peter, ed. *Rereading English*. London: Methuen, 1982.

Wilby, Peter. 'Baker's worst of all worlds'. *Independent*. Nexis. July 6 1989. 1 December 2010.
<<http://www.lexisnexis.com/uk/nexis/auth/checkbrowser.do?t=1292866057312>>.

Williams, Raymond. *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. London: Fontana, 1983.

Wilson, Richard. 'NATO's Pharmacy: Shakespeare by Prescription'. *Shakespeare and National Culture*. Ed. John J. Joughin. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1997. 58-82.

Yandell, John. 'Reading Shakespeare, or Ways with Will'. *Changing English*. 4.2 (1997): 277-294.

YouTube. 30 March 2008. <<http://www.youtube.com/>>.

Great British policy documents cited

Academies Act 2010. 27 July 2010. 4 January 2011.
<<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/32/contents/data.htm>>.

Board of Education. *The Teaching of English in Secondary Schools: Circular 753*. London: HMSO, 1910.

Committee on Broadcasting. *The Future of Sound Radio and Television: a short version of the report of the Pilkington Committee*. London: HMSO, 1962.

Communications Act 2003. 17 July 2003. 1 January 2011.
<<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/21/introduction>>.

- DCMS. *Broadcasting: Copy of Royal Charter for the continuance of the British Broadcasting Corporation*. Norwich: TSO, 2006.
- DCSF. *Shakespeare for all Ages and Stages*. Nottingham: DCSF Publications, 2008.
- DES. *English for Ages 5-16: proposals of the Secretary of State for Education and Science and the Secretary of State for Wales*. London: HMSO, 1988.
- DES/Welsh Office. *English in the National Curriculum No.2*. London: HMSO, 1990.
- DFE/Welsh Office. *English in the National Curriculum*. London: HMSO, 1995.
- DfEE. *Circular 7/98: School Prospectuses in Primary Schools*. Sudbury, Suffolk: DfEE, 1998.
- . *Circular 8/98: School Prospectuses in Primary Schools*. Sudbury, Suffolk: DfEE, 1998.
- . *Excellence for All Children: meeting special educational needs*. London: HMSO, 1997.
- . *The Implementation of the National Literacy Strategy: a summary for primary schools*. London: DfEE, 1997.
- . *The Learning Age: a renaissance for a New Britain*. Sudbury, Suffolk: DfEE, 1998.
- . *Learning to Succeed: a new framework for post-16 learning*. Sudbury, Suffolk: DfEE, 1999.
- DfEE/QCA. *English: The National Curriculum for England, key stages 1-4*. London: TSO, 1999.
- DfES. *14-19 Education and Skills*. White Paper. London: HMSO, 2005.
- . *14-19: Extending Opportunities, Raising Standards*. Green Paper. London: HMSO, 2002.
- . *14-19: Opportunity and Excellence*. Annesley: DfES, 2002.
- . *Higher Standards, Better Schools for All – more choice for parents and pupils*. London: TSO, 2005.
- Education Act*. London: HMSO, 1996.

Education and Employment Committee. *Disaffected Children*. London: HMSO, 1998.

Education Reform Act. London: HMSO, 1988.

Education (Schools) Act. London: HMSO, 1992.

Every Child Matters: next steps. London: DES, 2003.

HM Government. *Youth Crime Action Plan*. London, HMSO, 2008.

Jowell, Tessa. Foreword. *Understanding the Future: Museums and 21st Century Life*. By DCMS. London: HMSO, 2005. 1.

---. *Government and the Value of Culture*. London: DCMS, 2004.

Kingman, J.F.C, comp. *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Teaching of English Language*. London: HMSO, 1988.

Newbolt, Henry. *The Teaching of English in England*. London: HMSO, 1921.

QCA and Arts Council England. *From Policy to Partnership: developing the arts in schools*. London: Directory of Social Change Books, 2000.

'The Secondary Curriculum'. *National Curriculum for England at key stages 3 and 4*. QCDA. 2007. 12 June 2009. <<http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk/key-stages-3-and-4/>>.