



University of New Hampshire
College of Liberal Arts

REvisions: UNH English

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banner courtesy of Kayla Barron, UNH '20

Faculty Spotlight: Professor Douglas Lanier

Bringing Shakespeare—and his “literary afterlives”—to UNH

What are you working on?

My current research moves in two directions. I'm continuing to work on a book about what I'm calling "reparative Shakespeare," Shakespeare performance that seeks to address traumas suffered by marginalized social groups such as prisoners, refugees, veterans, the disabled, gay youth, the economically disadvantaged, and the elderly. And I'm also writing a series of articles on various recent developments in the world of popular Shakespeare—right now I'm working on something about the phenomenon of drunk Shakespeare.

What are you excited about teaching this year?

I've been studying adaptations and performances of Shakespeare for quite a while, but it's the first time I've been able to teach a graduate course, English 897: Special Studies in Literature, about adaptation, and the “literary afterlives” of Ovid, Shakespeare, and Austen, in general. It's an ambitious class, and we're going to look at a wide range of items from all kinds of cultures, ranging from contemporary drama to musicals to web series to international films. In my undergraduate Shakespeare class, English 657: Shakespeare, I'll be teaching how to use a number of digital resources to study Shakespeare.

What is the best thing you've read, listened to, or watched recently?

I really like the Spanish TV series *Heist*—I'm a sucker for heist films, and this is about a particularly intricate crime, with complex relationships between the thieves and all kinds of plot twists and turns. The latest Coen Brothers film, *The Ballad of Buster Scruggs*, is also terrific, a rather brutal take on the American Western; one sequence in that film, "Meal Ticket," is one of the most heartbreaking, unforgettable

commentaries on the STEM craze ever created. I also enjoyed Dave Eggers' new novel *The Parade*, the startling ending of which has stayed in my mind for months.

What's a favorite moment from teaching or from research?

Viewing *Le marchand de Venise*, a French film version of *The Merchant of Venice*, at the CNC archive in France. This very seldom seen film was produced in the first few years after World War II and starred one of the beloved giants of 20th century French film, Michel Simon. I suspect I may have been the first non-archivist to view it in 40 years. Traveling to the archive itself was itself quite an adventure, and the film ended up being an extraordinary adaptation of Shakespeare's play, well worth the trouble to find. Since I had set myself the goal of seeing every extant film of *The Merchant of Venice* for a screen history I was working on, getting to see one of the two remaining prints of this rare gem was a thrill.



Watch for
English 657: Shakespeare
in spring 2020!

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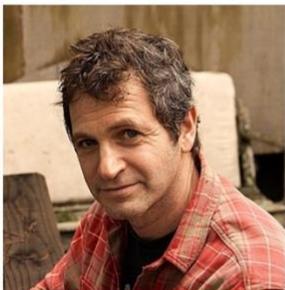
University of
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2019-2020 Department of English Writers Series

Author of 'Maggie Brown & Others' (2019)
and National Book Critics Circle Finalist for 'Am I Alone Here?'

PETER ORNER



Thursday,
September 19, 2019
5:00 p.m.
Hamilton Smith
Hall 210

Visit the English Department website for more information
about this speaker. <https://cola.unh.edu/english>

This event is free and open to the public. Contact the UNH English Department
for more information: (603) 862-1313.

Great Writers Influence Great Minds

Peter Orner is the author of two novels, *The Second Coming of Mavala Shikongo* and *Love and Shame and Love*, and two story collections, *Esther Stories* and *Last Car Over the Sagamore Bridge*. *Am I Alone Here?*, a memoir, was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award. Orner's fiction and non-fiction has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Granta*, *The Paris Review*, *McSweeney's*, *The Southern Review*, and many other publications. Orner has been awarded the Rome Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the American Academy in Rome, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a two-year Lannan Foundation Literary Fellowship, as well as a Fulbright to Namibia. Currently, he is a Professor of English and Creative Writing at Dartmouth College and lives with his family in Norwich, Vermont.

MFA student Vanessa Van Biesen explains:

Peter has a gorgeous way of describing his most recent short story collection. In an interview with *Tin House* he said, "I like to think of a collection as exactly this: a collection of individual souls who may or may not have anything to do with each other, but they're human and have some of the same preoccupations and worries and desires and fears. Say you're walking down the street in a city where you couldn't possibly know everyone, and yet what if you could? What if for every different person you walked by, you got into their heads, began to understand what makes them tick—all their common expectations, all their common disillusionments? We're all more connected than we ever realize."