

Renaissance and Reformation

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Shakespeare's Words. Edition

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Situating Conciliarism in Early Modern Spanish Thought
Situier conciliarisme dans la pensée espagnole de la première
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the *ISE*? What could we do better?” I look forward to seeing the ways it evolves and hope it strengthens its usability and usefulness for scholars and students through additional peer review and modern-spelling editions, continued updates to its performance artifacts, and streamlined paths to information.

ELIZABETH ZEMAN KOLKOVICH

The Ohio State University

Crystal, David, and Ben Crystal, creators.

***Shakespeare's Words*. Edition.**

Prague, CZE: Fineart Studio, 2004. Accessed 20 March 2019.

shakespeareswords.com/.

Designed by David and Ben Crystal, the website *Shakespeare's Words* (shakespeareswords.com) is a companion to the 2002 book titled *Shakespeare's Words: A Glossary and Language Companion* (Penguin). David Crystal is an honorary professor of linguistics at the University of Wales, Bangor; his training and expertise are evident in the research and academic grounding of the site. Ben Crystal is an actor and author; the father-son team are probably best known for their work with Original Pronunciation productions. This book-companion project aims high and attempts to be a comprehensive source for everything to do with the language of Shakespeare's plays; in the author's words, to be “the No. 1 location for anyone wanting to explore Shakespeare's works like never before” (“History of the site”). Designed as a resource for students, actors/practitioners, and scholars, the strength of this site is its thorough and accessible explanations of linguistic principles for a non-specialist audience. It would be very useful for college and secondary courses, and for scholars who want to think about individual words, both in and out of context.

As a companion to the book “published by Penguin,” the authors “had to use the Penguin editions” of the texts (“Introducing the original texts”). They have supplemented this edition with variants from other “major editions,” including the First Folio and “early Quartos” (“Introducing the original texts”). The previous version was very much a companion to the book; for example, what are now “Themes” were previously catalogued as “Appendices.”

The revised site could more properly be called an *edition* of the original book, with updates, more examples, and improved navigation: it seeks to fill a perceived gap in the availability of “high-quality Shakespearean lexicography” (“About the book”). The navigation of the site is fairly user friendly, though the attempt at comprehensiveness means that students might need guidance on where to focus their attention. The top menu includes a helpful “Starting Points” option, where the user can find links to “Topics,” “Themes,” and so on. The overall design is colourful, using a style of block navigation popular in late 2018–early 2019; the navigation in fact reflects its very recent 2018 redesign. Crystal and Crystal state they are already thinking of a “ShakespearesWords.com 4.0” and solicit suggestions and feedback (“History of the site”).

This site is comprehensive, but not exhaustive; effectively, it compiles things that are available in other places (explanations of grammatical shifts, historical definitions of words, full texts of plays) into one site. This is probably its greatest advantage; and it is also probably why the site is paywalled (more details below). Importantly, the site is privately run and for profit. It does not integrate external resources, nor does it provide suggestions for users who might wish to do further research. The website design and maintenance are performed by Fineart studio, a Czech company.

What distinguishes *Shakespeare’s Words* from other digital databases of Shakespearean texts, like *shakespeare online* (shakespeare-online.com) or *Open Source Shakespeare* (opensource-shakespeare.com), is the “Circles & Parts” feature, found under the “Works” menu. This interactive feature provides a visualization of various character clusters, or circles, and diagrams how each character relates to others in that circle, as well as how circles relate to other circles. Users can also click a character name, and be taken to a view of that character’s part that has both “original” and “modern” text side by side, and the line number (what the authors call the “key line”). In this view all lines are displayed sequentially, without any line breaks; this is why the key line view would be necessary in order to distinguish between acts and scenes. This feature is a handy view for students who are approaching the plays for the first time or for practitioners who are seeking to learn a part, as well as for scholars who would like a refresher, or who want to follow a single character throughout a play.

The interface can be a bit difficult if you are attempting to navigate between the circles and other top-level menus. On a large desktop, I could not

see the full circles visualization for a given play without tweaking my browser's parameters. For example, when viewing the circle for *Antony and Cleopatra*, I had to experiment with both browser size (changing the size of the window itself) and page view size (zooming in and out on the circle) in order to actually view the whole circle at once (I could not scroll from side to side). Attempting to return to the About menu took me to the Second Servant's part; the circle had disappeared behind the top-level menu, but its link functionality remained. The mobile interface did not have this issue; navigation was easier on mobile or laptop than desktop, suggesting the designers are prioritizing the smaller screen experience. Other moments of instability in navigation included the varying outcomes of clicking the links for video "Guided Tours" of the site's features; sometimes the links worked, and sometimes they did not.

In addition to the "Circles & Parts" feature, what characterizes *Shakespeare's Words* is an alphabetized grid of topics that, broadly, distinguish Shakespeare's English from modern English. The authors helpfully clarify various grammatical as well as semantic distinctions; a point to notice, under the "Functional Shift" heading, is an explanation of how the "loss of inflectional endings in the early Middle Ages" led to a new way of inventing words in Shakespeare's time, by "changing [the] word class, or part of speech." The authors are firmly on the side of Shakespeare as unique innovator; their argument is that if a word's first appearance in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is connected to Shakespeare, then Shakespeare must have invented the word. This point is likely less contentious for students than for scholarly experts.

This does speak to the overall presentation of the project. David and Ben Crystal are Shakespearean partisans, and have devoted immense time and energy to projects like original pronunciation. This is less a project on the words of Elizabethan London than it is emphatically about *Shakespeare's* words. As a teaching companion this site is a wonderful guide for students; what would make it potentially indispensable is a collection of original pronunciation resources, or at the least links to videos that David and Ben Crystal have already produced.

In order to take full advantage of the site, however, the user will rapidly come up against a paywall. There are a few freely-viewable pages; the user is then asked to pay to continue using the site. (Details of the paywall and subscriptions are clearly featured on the "About" page.) The paywall barrier is low (an individual can pay £100 or \$130USD for ten years of access, and an institution can pay £1,550 or \$2,000USD for five years of unlimited access for

as many users as desired from that institution's location); but for institutions on a limited budget, the authors offer applications for a "Robin Hood Ticket" for schools to "Pay What You Can." Individuals do not have this option, but can pay £1 or \$1.25USD for 24 hours of access. For many individuals, a daily or monthly pass will likely be plenty.

This site aims to be an exhaustive resource for every word in Shakespeare's plays, as demonstrated by the Glossary that claims to include all words in Shakespeare that "no longer exist in Modern English, have changed their meaning since Shakespeare's day, or have an encyclopedic or specialized sense that would make them unfamiliar to many modern readers." Combining a Glossary with the other features of the site—the "Circles" feature, the ability to see all lines for an individual character, the "Topics" and "Themes" features that explain mythological or historical concepts—suggests the greatest strength of the site: it collates multiple resources in one place. For students and practitioners, this is what could make it invaluable, but it also might be attempting to do too much. Looking up a word in the Glossary, for example, provides a brief definition and one Shakespearean example. A scholar could very well prefer the additional information and contextualization available through the *OED*.

To sum up, *Shakespeare's Words* is a site that is undeniably useful as a teaching resource for secondary and post-secondary instructors who are introducing students to Shakespeare; more advanced researchers will likely prefer to collate their own grouping of digital sources.

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Johnson, Eric, creator.

Open Source Shakespeare. Edition.

Fairfax, VA: George Mason University, 2003. Accessed 8 May 2019.
opensourceshakespeare.org/.

Rachel Aanstad is the director of the Rose City Shakespeare Company (imagineshakespeare.wordpress.com). Laura Estill interviewed her for this review of Open Source Shakespeare. The interview was transcribed by otter.ai and edited for length and clarity.