

CREST Residential Fellowship Application Cover Sheet
Academic Year 2009-2010

Name David Morrow

Rank Assistant Professor

Department English

Campus address 444 Western Avenue

Campus phone [REDACTED] Home phone [REDACTED]

Email address [REDACTED]

Previous CREST Residential Fellow? No If yes, give year _____

Title of Research Project: "Commonwealth ideology in Shakespeare's late plays"

Application materials:

- a. One copy of proposal narrative of roughly 1,500 words with cover sheet attached. Proposals should describe the project clearly and concisely for a multidisciplinary evaluation panel and address its relevance to current directions of research in the field. Please double-space proposals and use a 12-point type.
- b. One copy of bibliography not to exceed one page.
- c. One copy of *curriculum vitae*

Note to department heads:

- a. Residential Fellows will be released from one course during the fellowship year.
- b. This semester will tentatively be Fall 2009 or Spring 2010 (please circle one)

Department Head signature Catherine Cavanaugh

Printed Catherine Cavanaugh

If appointed in two departments:

Additional Department Head signature _____

Printed _____

Signature of Applicant David Morrow

Applications must be received by Thursday, January 15, 2009

Please mail to:

Dr. John Williams-Searle, Director
Center for Citizenship, Race, and Ethnicity Studies (CREST)
The College of Saint Rose
432 Western Avenue
Albany, NY 12203-1490

David Morrow
Assistant Professor, Dept. of English
Proposal Narrative

Commonwealth ideology in Shakespeare's late plays

My project situates Shakespeare's late work within the great political and economic movements of early modern England: the development of agrarian capitalism; the centralization of state power; and the nation's early imperialist and colonialist forays. Here I read several of his tragicomic romances (*Pericles*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, and *All is True*) as both determined by and engaged in debate over issues that we can now see as effects of these processes. I am interested in continuing to think through why and how Shakespeare uses tragicomic romances to intervene into issues of social change, as well as in exploring how the genre shapes his responses. On my reading of the late plays, Shakespeare imaginatively resolves crises created these processes by assuming an ideal stable, hierarchical social relations based on the face-to-face relationships of village life and, in a larger frame, the localized structures of feudal society. I call the set of values, beliefs, and practices on which he draws "commonwealth ideology." My use of this concept overlaps with "moral economy" and "customary consciousness" charted by E.P. Thompson, Joyce Appleby, Neal Wood, and others. Along these lines, I see Shakespeare's late plays as having significant ideological correspondences with the works of England's Commonwealthmen—sixteenth-century politicians (among whom we would include Thomas More, John Ponet, and Sir Thomas Smith) who decried the effects on England's poor, and the social order in general, of the enclosure of common fields and other elements of incipient rural capitalism, authors writing in response to the century's many popular rebellions, as well as against the deprivations of agrarian capitalism. While Shakespeare's late plays are similarly ideologically resistant to the sort of changes that would shape England as a world power, I also want to emphasize the complexity of Shakespeare's position: his works do